









A L A R G E  
C O L L E C T I O N

O F A N C I E N T

Jewish and Heathen Testimonies

To the T R U T H of the

C H R I S T I A N R E L I G I O N ,

W I T H

N O T E S A N D O B S E R V A T I O N S .

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V O L . I I .

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Containing the T E S T I M O N I E S of H E A T H E N W R I T E R S  
of the Second Century.

To which is prefixed a P R E F A C E , with farther Observations upon the Para-  
graph in the Works of J O S E P H U S , concerning our Blessed Saviour.

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By N A T H A N I E L L A R D N E R . D . D .

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NOTICE

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

LANDS

IN THE

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OF

NEW YORK

IN

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A

P R E F A C E,

M. S. 10. 1. 11

*With some farther Observations upon the Paragraph in the Works of Josephus concerning our Blessed Saviour.*



Otwithstanding all that has been said by me, and others, for shewing, that the paragraph concerning our Saviour, now found in the Antiquities of Josephus, is not genuine, but an interpolation, some learned men are still tenacious of it. I therefore intend to offer here some farther observations upon it.

I have as yet taken no notice of an argument, which is entitled, *A Dissertation upon the Account supposed to have been given of Jesus Christ by Josephus: Being an attempt to shew, that this celebrated Pas-*

*Dr. Forster's Dissertation considered.*

*sage, some slight corruptions only excepted, may reasonably be esteemed genuine.* At Oxford, in the year 1749. p.p. 69. beside a short preface.

The Dissertation is without a name, but is generally ascribed to Dr. N. Forster. As great regard has been shewn to it by (a) some, I think it not improper for me to consider the merits of it.

Says the learned Author, p. 12. 13. “ First then I consider the  
 “ account itself, as a mere simple narrative, in which there is not a  
 “ sentence, that, when properly read and understood, betrays the  
 “ writer to have had any suspicion, that Jesus was the Messiah, or  
 “ even a teacher sent from God. On the other hand, some expres-  
 “ sions plainly imply him to have been persuaded of the contrary.  
 “ And the whole, taken together, seems to be the composition of  
 “ a person, perfectly satisfied, that the Christian scheme could not  
 “ be true : astonished however at some amazing appearances in it’s  
 “ favour, but artfully evading the force of them, avoiding to enter  
 “ into the merits of the affair, and yet affecting to give a seemingly  
 “ plausible account of it’s original.”

And at p. 49. 50. “ But a short view of the whole paragraph  
 “ will best illustrate and confirm what has been observed. It may,  
 “ I think, be fairly rendered in the following manner. *But about  
 “ this time appears one Jesus, a man of great abilities, if indeed he  
 “ may be properly stiled a mere man. For he was a worker of won-  
 “ ders, a teacher of people, who embraced his new and extraordinary  
 “ doctrines with eagerness. And he led away many, not only of the  
 “ Jews, but also of the Gentils after him. This was the person so well  
 “ known by the name of Christ. And though Pilate, upon the impeach-  
 “ ment brought by the principal persons of our nation against him, caus-  
 “ ed him to be crucified, they who had before entertained an affection  
 “ for him, did not desist. For he appeared to them to be alive again  
 “ on the third day, their own preachers at least having reported both  
 “ these and numberless other wonderfull things concerning him. And*  
 “ the

(a) See Dr. Sharpe’s Argument, taken from the concessions of Adversaries. p. 39.



## P R E F A C E.

“ *the sect of the Christians, who received their denomination from this person, are not extinct even to this day.*”

In support of this interpretation, the learned writer proposeth two alterations, as emendations of the present text in Josephus. And instead of men, *who received the truth with pleasure*, τῶν ἡδονῆ τ' ἀληθῆ δεχομένων, he would read τὰ ἀίθη, *new, strange, unheard-of, extraordinary doctrines*. p. 27. . . 29. And instead of τῶν θείων προφητῶν, *the divine prophets*, he is for reading τῶν γε ἰδίων, *their own prophets or preachers*. p. 41. . . . 44.

Upon all this I must say, *first*, that this is indeed giving a new turn to the passage, never so understood before, so far as we know, by any ancient Christian writers. But still, the objections, taken from *the want of connexion*, in the place, where the passage stands, and from *the silence of all ancient Christian writers before Eusebius*, and of some others after him, remain in their full force. Some things are offered by the learned Author of the Dissertation to diminish the force of those considerations. But they are of small moment. Nothing material can be said here. Interpret the paragraph, as you please, it was worth alledging. If the things here mentioned are the declarations, not of the ancient Jewish Prophets, but of the first Preachers among the Christians, or the disciples of Jesus, their testimonie was fit to be taken notice of. Nor could it have been omitted by the early Apologists for Christianity. The Apologists, and other Christians of the second and third centuries, who were continually speaking of Jesus, and his resurrection from the dead, and his wonderfull works, as proofs of a divine mission, would have not failed to remind their adversaries, and all men, that their doctrine was no other than the doctrine of the first disciples of Jesus, and that *Josephus*, a learned Jew, and an unbeliever, who was contemporarie with Christ's first disciples, and wrote before the end of that age, had bore witness of it in his writings to all the world.

*Secondly*, the alterations, proposed by the learned Author of the Dissertation, as emendations of the text, are destitute of authority.

The

The paragraph is twice quoted by Eusebius, and afterwards, in the space of a few centuries, by many others: by Jerome in his book of Illustrious Men, in Latin, by his Interpreter, in Greek, by Isidore of Pelusium, Sozomen, Suidas, and others, and all in the like manner, without affording any the least countenance to either of the proposed alterations. I therefore do not see how they can be admitted, or approved of by any sober and cautious critics, who are concerned for the integrity of ancient writings. I do not think it needful for me to say any thing more (*b*) here. I therefore proceed.

Thirdly, in this paragraph it is said of Jesus, *He performed many wonderfull works*: or, *He was a worker of wonders*. Ἦν γὰρ παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητής. Which I think could be said by none but a Christian.

But let us see what this learned writer says: P. 25. “And what Jew almost either ancient or modern that has written of Jesus, does not say the same?” And in a note at the same page: “This is not merely a periphrasis for ἐποίησε, but somewhat more express and particular. He was by profession and character παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητής. This was what he was chiefly remarkable for, the light, in which, according to our author (*Josephus*) he is principally to be considered.”

I am rather of opinion, that few or none will admit miracles to have been performed by any, but such as they believe to have been teachers, who acted with divine authority.

However, let us not perplex ourselves about the opinions of *modern* Jews. We are examining a paragraph in an ancient writing. Let us therefore observe the sentiments of the ancients.

When

(*b*) Indeed, I cannot think it needful to enlarge here. And yet I know not how to forbear to confront the proposed τὰ ἀλήθη for τὰ ληθῆ, with a reference to a letter of *Isidore of Pelusium*, who after having quoted the paragraph in *Josephus*, according to the present reading, reflects upon it in these words: Εγὼ δὲ λίαν θαυμάζω τ' ἀνδρὸς ἐν πολλοῖς μὲν τὸ φιλάληθες· μάλιστα δὲ, ἐν δὲς εἶπε, διδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἡδονῆ τ' ἀληθῆ δεχομένων. L. 4. ep. 225.

When Nicodemus came to our Lord, he said: John iii. 2. *Rabbi, we know, that thou art a teacher come from God. For no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* Which I take to be a certain truth, and that no man can work miracles, unless he have the special presence of God with him. I suppose this to have been the opinion of the Pharisees, and all Jews in general, in the time of our Saviour. The poor man, who had been born blind, and had been healed by our Lord, was of this opinion, and openly declares it, and argues from it, before the Jewish Council. John ix. 30. . . 33. *Herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not whence he is. And yet he has opened my eyes. Now we know, that God beareth not sinners. But if a man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he beareth. Since the world began was it not heard, that any man opened the eyes of one born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.*

It is said Acts iv. 13. . . 18. that when Peter and John were brought before the Council, after healing the lame man at the temple: *And beholding the man which was healed, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the Council, they conferred among themselves, saying: What shall we do to these men? For that a notable miracle has been done by them, is manifest to all them that dwell at Jerusalem. And we cannot deny it.* So they say, privately, in a consultation among themselves. The meaning is: “It is not our business to dispute about it, or, contest the truth of the miracle, with the people.” Or, as Dr. Doddridge: “Nevertheless, it is equally plain, that both our credit and our interest require us to suppress the rumour of it, as much as we can.” Which they did. They did not publicly declare the miracle, as *Josephus* is here made to do. *But that it spread no farther among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them, not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus.*

The sentiment of the unbelieving Pharisees at that time may be clearly

clearly discerned in the debate between the Council, and the man who had been healed of blindness. John ix. 18. . . 22. *But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, untill they called the parents of him that had received sight. And they asked them, saying: Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doeth he now see? His parents answered them, and said: We know, that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But by what means he now seeth, we know not: or, who hath opened his eyes, we know not. He is of age. Ask him. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews. For the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.*

The parents did not dare to own, either the miracle, or the consequence. But the man, who had been healed, acknowledgeth both: that his cure was miraculous, and that Jesus, by whom it had been performed, was a Prophet. For which he was reviled by the Council, and then excommunicated.

Let us now observe the sentiment of Josephus himself in this point. speaking of Elisha, he says. “ And (c) not long after the Prophet “ also died, a man celebrated for his virtue, and manifestly favored “ by God. For through his prophecies were shewn wonderfull and “ extraordinarie works, and such as were worthie of an honorable re- “ membrance among the Hebrews.”

Josephus therefore supposed the performance of wonderfull works to be a proof of divine favour, and a prophetic character.

However, still our learned author proceeds, p. 26. “ The fact “ then, which Josephus mentions, could not be dissembled. But the “ conciseness and ambiguity, with which it is expressed, are ex- “ tremely

(c) Μετ' οὗ πολὺ δὲ καὶ ὁ προφήτης ἀπέθανεν· ἀνὴρ, ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνῃ διαβήσας, καὶ φανερῶς·  
σπουδασθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶ Θεοῦ. Θαυμασὰ γὰρ καὶ παράδοξα διὰ τῆς προφητείας ἐπεδείξατο ἔργα, καὶ  
μνήμης λαμπρᾶς παρὰ τοῖς Ἑβραίοις ἀξιοθέητα. *Antiq.* l. 9. cap. 8. §. 6. p. 494.

“ tremely proper. Silent entirely with regard to the great variety  
 “ and singular nature of the miracles, which Jesus had done, he is  
 “ satisfied with simply representing him as a worker ἔργων παραδόξων,  
 “ a word, which all who are acquainted with it’s natural and origi-  
 “ nal signification, and more particularly with the uses, to which Jo-  
 “ sephus commonly applies it (denoting any thing, *strange*, extraor-  
 “ dinary, or unaccountable, of what kind and degree soever it may  
 “ be :) will perceive it to be one of the most equivocal, and conse-  
 “ quently the best adapted to his dubious character of the person con-  
 “ cerned, that this extensive and capacious language could have af-  
 “ fected him.”

I do not perceive this to be rightly said. I have not observed the use of  
 the word *παραδόξος* in Josephus, to be so ambiguous and equivocal. It  
 has with him a precise and determinate meaning, and is equivalent to  
*miraculous*. So it is used by him, in the place before cited, where he  
 speaks of the works of Elisha, which manifested his favour with  
 God. It is easie to allege other places in the writings of Josephus,  
 where this word has the same sense. When Moses in the wilder-  
 nesse saw the burning bush, all in a flame, the fruit not hurt, nor the  
 green leaves blasted, he was astonished at the *wonderfull sight*. Exod.  
 iii. 3. Ὁ δὲ καὶ αὐτὴν μὲν ἑίδεισε τὴν ὄψιν τὴν παράδοξον γενομένην. *Ant. l. 2.*  
*cap. 12. p. 105.* We call it, *this great sight*, agreeably to the He-  
 brew, as do also the seventy. Certainly, it was miraculous, and a  
 token of the divine presence, and allowed to be so by Josephus.  
 When the water in Egypt had been turned by Moses into blood, he  
 says, “ The water had not only the colour of blood, but it also caus-  
 “ ed great pains to those who drank of it. So it was to the Eryp-  
 “ tians, and to them alone. For to the Hebrews it was sweet and  
 “ potable, and not at all altered in it’s nature. When the King saw  
 “ this wonderfull thing, he was much perplexed, being concerned  
 “ for the welfare of the Egyptians. And he gave leave for the He-  
 “ brews to depart.” . . . Πρὸς ἔν τὸ παράδοξον ἀμηχανήσας ὁ βασιλεὺς  
 καὶ δείσας περὶ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων, συνεχώρει τοῖς Εβραίοις ἀπιέναι. *Ant. l. 2.*  
 VOL. II. b c. xiv.

c. xiv. §. 1. p. 108. See *Exod. viii. 19. . .* After relating the safe passage of the Israelites through the red sea, and the destruction of Pharaoh, and his armie, he says: “ The Hebrews having obtained “ this wonderfull deliverance, Moses led them toward Mount Sinai,”  
*Παραδόξω δὲ τῆς Εβραίοις τῆς σωτηρίας ἕτω γενομένης. κ. λ. Ant. l. 3. cap. i. in. Comp. Exod. xiv. and xvi.* In Numb. xvii. is the contention for the priesthood, which is determined in favour of Aaron, and the tribe of Levi, by the budding and blossoming of the rod of Aaron, which had been laid up in the tabernacle. Josephus calls this also a *wonderfull* thing: and says, that thereupon all the people readily acquiesced in the *divine judgement and determination.* *Εκπλεγέντες δ' ἐπὶ τῷ παραδόξῳ τῆς θεας, εἰ καὶ διὰ μίσους ἦν ὁ Μωϋσῆς καὶ Ααρῶν, ἀφέντες τῆτο, θαυμάζειν ἤρξαντο τὴν τῷ Θεῷ περὶ αὐτῶν κρίσιν καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν, ἐπευφημῶντες τοῖς δεδογμένοις τῷ Θεῷ, συνεχάρην Ααρῶνι καλῶς ἔχειν τὴν ἀρχιεροσύνην. Antiq. l. 4. cap. 4. §. 2. p. 203.* Going over the miracles of Elisha, and observing those recorded, 2. Kings. ch. vi. and particularly what is mentioned ver. 19. 20. he calls it a *divine and wonderfull work. . .* *Ἐν ἐκπλήξει δὲ δεινῇ καὶ ἀμηχανίᾳ τῶν Σύρων, ἴσιον εἰκόσ, ἐφ' ἕτως θείῳ καὶ παραδόξῳ πράγματι κειμένων. . . κ. λ. l. 9. cap. 4. §. 3. p. 479.*

In all these places the Greek word signifies *miraculous.* And so it must do in this paragraph. And as Josephus allowes miracles to be divine works, and a proof of a prophetic character, and of the special favour and approbation of God, he could not say this of Jesus, unless he was a Christian. I might add, that Josephus often speaks of God's confirming the mission of Moses by signs and wonders. See particularly *Antiq. l. 2. cap. xii. xiv.* And if Josephus owned, that Jesus had performed *wonderfull*, or miraculous works, he must have received him as a divine teacher, and the Messiah, and must have embraced the Christian Religion: and would have been quite another man than what he really was, and we now see him to be in all his works.

Indeed, it is not Josephus, but Eusebius, or some other Christian  
 about

about his time, who composed this paragraph. Every one must be inclined to think so, who observes the connexion in his Evangelical Demonstration, where is the first quotation of it. In the third book of that work Eusebius has a chapter, or section, *against those who do not give credit to the historie of our Saviour's wonderfull works.* πρὸς τὰς ἀπειθέοντας τῇ τῷ σωτήρος ἡμῶν περὶ τῶν παραδόξων πράξεων διηγήσει. Dem: Ev. l. 3. c. vii. p. 109. Where follows an excellent argument, taken from the internal characters of credibility in the evangelical historie, the successe of the Gospel, among Greeks and Romans and Barbarians, and the zeal, intrepidity, and sufferings of Christ's Apostles, and the first Christians. Then he says: "Tho' (d) the testimonie of such men concerning our Saviour must be esteemed fully sufficient, it cannot be amiss for me to add over and above the testimonie of Josephus, a Hebrew, who in the eighteenth book of his Jewish Antiquities, writing the historie of affairs in the times of Pilate, speaks of our Saviour in these words." Where follows the paragraph, which we are considering. Where our Lord is said to be a *worker of wonderfull works.* Ἦν γὰρ παράδοξων ἔργων ποιητής. Which way of speaking is so agreeable to Eusebius, and has such a similitude with his stile, that I am disposed to put down below some instances from (e) him. Which must be of use to satisfy us, that the stile of this paragraph is very Christian, if it be not the composition of Eusebius himself, as Tanaquil Faber suspected.

4. Once more, the learned author of the Dissertation argues, that it was very unlikely, that Josephus should be silent about our Savi-

b 2

our.

(d) Ἀυτάρκεις μὲν οὖν καὶ τῶν δε τυγχάνει περὶ τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν μαρτυρία. κ. λ. Dem. E-wang. l. 3. p. 124. A.

(e) Καὶ δὴ σκεψόμεθα, ὅσαν καὶ ὅταν σὺν ἀνθρώποις τὰς διατριβὰς πεποιμένως, παραδόξων γέγονε ποιητῆς ἔργων Dem. Ev. l. 3. c. 4. p. 107. 6.

Ὅσα ἢν σευρότερον τῷ πλάττισθαι, ὅτι τῶν τοιῶνδε ποιητῆς ἔργων παραδόξων γέγονεν, τὸ γράξεν ὅτι μηδεὶς αὐτῶν περὶ αὐτῶν συνέβη. . . κ. λ. Ib. p. 123. D.

. . . πᾶς οὐκ ὄν εἶεν ἄξιον καὶ ἐν λοιποῖς, διὰ ἐμαρτύρησαν αὐτῶν παραδόξων; κ. λ. P. 124. A.

our. p. 51. 52. “ Now though I entirely agree with this great  
 “ writer, (*the author of the Divine Legation of Moses,*) that preach-  
 “ ing up Christ was an affair, which Josephus would studiously de-  
 “ cline : and have always deemed the appearances of this kind con-  
 “ siderable objections to the passage in question, as it is usually read  
 “ and understood, yet I cannot but think, (as many persons have  
 “ already observed) that it is very improbable, that he should omit  
 “ all account of Jesus, a person, so remarkable in Judaea, who so  
 “ lately had been the cause of so great commotions among his coun-  
 “ treymen, and whose fame was at this very time spread by his fol-  
 “ lowers throughout the world. Christianity was an affair, which  
 “ made some noise at this very time. . . . Some account of it there-  
 “ fore seems to have been unavoidable in a person treating of the  
 “ extraordinary incidents of that period. And silence with regard  
 “ to so remarkable and conspicuous an object, would have been only  
 “ shutting his own eyes, that others might not see it.”

I must own, that I did not expect to see this learned author en-  
 large so much, and set so high value, upon a worn-out argument,  
*which*, as he says, *many persons have already observed*, to little pur-  
 pose, in my opinion. I shall only say, that this argument proves  
 too much, and therefore it proves nothing. It has been ob-  
 served (*f*) by some learned men, that Josephus has said nothing of  
*the golden calf* made by the Jewish people in the wilder nesse: thus  
 (*g*) dropping a very remarkable and important narrative, with a va-  
 riety of incidents, recorded in one of the books of Moses himself,  
 the Jewish Lawgiver, the most sacred of all their scriptures. Yet,  
 if we please, we may argue with a great deal of seeming probability,  
 that he did, and has taken notice of that transaction. “ Was it not  
 “ well known in the world? Is it not recorded in one of the sacred  
 “ books

(*f*) See vol. i. of this work, p. 172.

(*g*) Mr. Whiston's wrong, and indeed absurd method of accounting for that omis-  
 sion, may be seen in his second Dissertation, §. 28. p. xlv. and a confutation of it may  
 be seen in Dr. Warburton's Divine Legation. Vol. 2. p. 430.



“ books of the Old Testament ? Is it not in the Hebrew original ?  
 “ Is it not also in the Greek version ? made before the times of Jo-  
 “ sephus, and in the hands of many Greeks and others ? Does not  
 “ he say at the beginning of his Antiquities, that he should write of  
 “ the Jewish affairs, as he found them recorded in the sacred books,  
 “ without adding to them, or taking away from them. Therefore  
 “ he could not avoid mentioning this. Is not Josephus an historian  
 “ in great repute ? And can it be consistent with that character, to  
 “ omit so remarkable an event ? Upon the whole therefore, it may  
 “ be concluded with great probability, if not with certainty, that  
 “ this storie is in his works, or was there formerly.”

So men may harangue very plausibly, but yet to little purpose. And therefore it may be applied to the present case. If Josephus had reasons which induced him to pass by that transaction, recorded in the ancient historie of his people : he might also have reasons, which induced him to be silent about some remarkable occurrences in his own time.

I have now, as I think, paid due regard to the Author of the aforesaid Dissertation.

II. Since the publication of the first volume of this work, I have received a letter from a learned friend, with several objections to what has been said by me for shewing this paragraph in Josephus to be an interpolation. And, if I am not mistaken, my friend is well acquainted with the abovementioned *Dissertation*.

*Objections of learned Friends and Correspondents.*

1. Says my friend : “ It is introduced with great propriety, as what  
 “ happened under Pilate’s administration, and as what was one occa-  
 “ sion of the disturbances amongst the Jews in his time. Give me  
 “ leave to add, that this paragraph concerning Jesus, doth not seem  
 “ to me so much to interrupt the course of the narration, as is com-  
 “ plained of. It is introduced under the article of Pilate, and placed  
 “ between two circumstances, which occasioned disturbances. And  
 “ was not the putting Jesus to death, and the continuance of his a-  
 “ postles

“ postles and disciples after him, declaring his resurrection, another  
 “ very considerable circumstance which created very great disturban-  
 “ ces? And though Josephus does not expressly say this, and per-  
 “ haps had good reasons for not saying it; yet, perhaps he intimates  
 “ it, by placing it between the two causes of commotion, by giving  
 “ so honourable a testimony to Jesus, and telling us, that he was cru-  
 “ cified at the instigation of the chief persons of the nation.”

To which I answer, that there is not in this paragraph any intimation of *disturbances* occasioned by Jesus, or his followers. And I shall here repeat the words of Mr. Tillemont, which were quoted formerly, vol. i. p. 157. “ It must be owned, says he, that there  
 “ is one thing embarrassing in this passage, which is, that it inter-  
 “ rupts the course of the narration in Josephus. For the passage that  
 “ immediatly follows, begins in these terms: *About the same time*  
 “ *there happened another misfortune, which disturbed the Jews.* For  
 “ these words, *another misfortune*, have no connexion with what  
 “ was just said of Jesus Christ: which is not mentioned as an un-  
 “ happiness. On the contrarie, it has a very natural referencē to  
 “ what precedes in that place: which is a sedition, in which many  
 “ Jews were killed or wounded.” Therefore the paragraph, concern-  
 ing Jesus, was not originally there, but was inserted by some interpolator afterwards. So likewise says Vitringa. “ Take away  
 “ the paragraph concerning Jesus, and the preceding and the follow-  
 “ ing paragraphs exactly agree, and tally together.” Sed restat lon-  
 ge maxima difficultas, de cohaerentia horum verborum Josephi, qui-  
 bus Christo testimonium perhibet cum sequentibus: *Circa eadem*  
*tempora aliud etiam Judaeos turbavit incommodum, &c.* Quae tamen  
 verba, si testimonium de Christo e contextu Josephi sustuleris, egre-  
 gie cum praecedentibus conspirabunt. *Vitringa, quoted. vol. i. p.*  
*163. in the notes.*

“ He testifies, that he was a *wise man*. Is uncertain, *whether he*  
 “ *was not something more than a common man.* Which is the mean-  
 “ ing of the words, εἶγε ἄνδρα αὐτὸν λέγειν χρηῖ. Josephus, upon  
 “ Jewish

“ Jewish principles; could not but think him a man, though he was  
 “ uncertain, whether he was not somewhat greater and more extra-  
 “ ordinary than any mere man. And your own quotation from Jo-  
 “ sephus about Moses, p. 158. *that he was a man superior to his nature,*  
 “ accounts for the character given to Jesus.”

I alleged that place, to shew, that the expression, here used, is not altogether without example in the stile of Josephus. But I did not intend to say, or intimate, that Josephus had as high an opinion of Jesus, as he had of Moses. Nor can any think, that Josephus believed Jesus to be equal to Moses, unless they suppose him to have been a Christian.

“ He says, he was *παραδόξων ἔργων ποιητής*. That the Jews them-  
 “ selves, his contemporaries, and enemies, acknowledged. *Matt.*  
 “ *xiii. 54. xiv. 2. &c.*”

This has been considered already in the remarks upon the *Dissertation*.

“ I think, as you allow with great reason his testimonie to the Bap-  
 “ tist to be genuine; it is not to be accounted for, that he should  
 “ wholly omit to say any thing of Jesus.”

So says my very learned and very ingenious friend. And another very ingenious man (*b*) is reported to have said, *that Tanaquil Faber threw himself into innumerable difficulties by attacking the genuinness of the passage concerning Christ, and defending that where John the Baptist is mentioned.*

I am, undoubtedly, in the same case with Tanaquil Faber. I receive the passage, where John the Baptist is mentioned, and reject that concerning Jesus. But I do not here feel the weight of any difficulties. I am not at all embarrassed thereby.

For, *first*, many Jews (*i*) may have respected John the Baptist, as a man of an austere character, who did not receive Jesus as the  
 Christ.

(*b*) *The Abbé de Languerue. See Langueruana, Vol. 2. p. 70.*

(*i*) *See the first volume of this work, p. 148. 149. and this second volume. p. 273.*

Christ. And Origen (*k*) in his books against Celsus has quoted the passage of Josephus relating to John the Baptist. But he, and all other Christian writers before Eusebius, are silent about the paragraph concerning Jesus, now found in the Jewish Antiquities. Surely, this makes a difference.

*Secondly.* Josephus says nothing of that, which is the distinguishing character of John the Baptist, that he was the *barbinger*, or *the fore-runner of the Messiah*. This is the true and genuine character of John. He would not have existed, he never would have been at all, if it had not been for the sake of another, who was to come after him, and was greater than he.

Concerning Jesus John testified: *This is he, of whom I said: After me cometh a man, which is preferred before me. And I knew him not. But that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.* &c. John i. 30. 31. And see Matt. iii. 11. 12. Mark i. 6. . . 8. Luke i. 16. 17. 76. 77. iii. 16. 17. John iii. 18. and other places. Josephus's entire silence about this true and genuine character of *John the Baptist*, by which he is distinguished from all the men and prophets, that ever were, affords a cogent argument, that Josephus is not the author of the paragraph concerning Jesus, now found in the same book of his Antiquities: wherein Jesus is said to have been *more than a mere man, a worker of miracles, the Christ,* and the like.

I hope, my honoured friend will accept of these answers to the principal objections, which he has sent me.

*General  
Observations.*

III. I now intend to recollect and sum up the argument with some additional observations.

That this paragraph, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, is not Josephus's, but an interpolation, is argued from these several following (*l*) considerations.

1. It

(*k*) Vol. i. p. 144.

(*l*) See Vol. i. p. 150. . . . 163.

1. It is not quoted, nor referred to by any Christian writers, before Eusebius, who flourished at the beginning of the fourth century, and afterwards.

2. This paragraph was wanting in the copies of Josephus, which were seen by Photius in the ninth century.

3. It interrupts the course of the narration.

4. It is unsuitable to the general character of Josephus, who is allowed not to have been a Christian.

It is here said, that *Jesus was a wise man, if he may be called a man*, so that the writer of the paragraph, was uncertain, whether Jesus was not somewhat greater, and a more extraordinarie person, than a mere man. *He performed wonderfull works: or was a worker of wonders.* The original word, rendered wonders, is equivalent to miracles, in Josephus, and in Eusebius, who first quoted this paragraph. And if Josephus had ascribed miracles to Jesus, he must have owned him to be a teacher come from God. Afterwards it is said: *This was the Christ.* That is the genuine, and only meaning of the Greek words, Ὁ Χριστός οὗτος ἦν. And every thing else said in this paragraph confirms that sense.

*And when Pilate, at the instigation of the chief men among us, had condemned him to the crosse: they who before had conceived an affection for him, did not cease to adhere to him. For on the third day he appeared to them alive again, the divine Prophets having foretold these and many other wonderfull things concerning him.* All very Christian. And every thing here said, is in all our copies of Josephus, and in the first quotation made by Eusebius, and in all the quotations since made by other ancient writers.

That this last clause, *the divine prophets having foretold these, and many other wonderfull things concerning him*, was always in this testimony, we are assured by Eusebius, who so quotes it. And presently after quoting it makes a remark upon the passage, which shews,

he so read it. For he presently adds: “ And (*m*) the book of the “ Acts of the Apostles assures us, that many thousand Jews believed “ him to be the Christ of God, whom the Prophets had foretold.” See Acts xxi. 20.

How Christian is all this? And said likewise to be agreeable to the predictions of the *divine Prophets*? Which is suitable to many texts of the New Testament, and even resembles them. Luke xxiv. 25. 26. 44. Acts xvi. 22. 23. Rom. i. 1. . . 4. 1. Cor. xv. 4. Throughout all the works of Josephus, there is not any the least notice taken of Christ, or the Christians, or their affairs. But in this short passage are inserted almost all the articles concerning Jesus Christ, which were in the ancient Christian Creeds, except his miraculous nativity, and his ascension to heaven: *suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. The third day he rose again from the dead.*

And, to compleat this testimonie, the great progresse of the Christian Religion in the world is here asserted, and that this Jesus had brought over to him many Jews, and many Gentils. The steadinesse of his followers in their zeal for him is also plainly intimated. *They who had conceived an affection for him, did not cease to adhere to him. And the sect of the Christians, so called from him, still subsists.* Which are the expressions of a person, who lived some good while after the rise of Christianity, and later than the time of Josephus. Nor is it any great wonder, that his followers should be so attached to him, since they were *men, who received the truth with pleasure*, and had at first given up themselves to him, as a *teacher* of it. The Bishop of Gloucester therefore, in considering this (*n*) passage, aptly calls it *preaching up of Christ*, and assigns a reason, why Josephus should *studiously decline* the so doing. And therefore makes no scruple to call this passage *spurious*.

5. If

(*m*) Μαρτορεϊ δὲ καὶ ἡ τῶν πράξεων τῶν Αποστόλων γραφή, ὅτι πολλαὶ μυριάδες ἦσαν Ἰουδαίων ἀνδρῶν πεπεισμένων αὐτὸν εἶναι τὸν Χριστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸν ὑπὸ τῶν Προφητῶν καταγγελλόμενον. *Dem. Ev. p. 124. D.*

(*n*) *The Divine Legation of Moses. B. v. Sect. 4. Vol. 2. P. 432. &c.*

5. If Josephus were the author of this paragraph, it would be reasonable to expect in him frequent mention of Christ's miracles: Whereas he is every where else silent about them.

All these considerations were mentioned formerly. But I have now made enlargements under the fourth. And I beg leave to add here a thought or two more.

6. The word *Christ*, or *Messiah*, appears not in any place in all the works of Josephus, excepting two: namely, the paragraph, which we have been considering, which is now in the eighteenth book of his Antiquities: and another, in the 20. book of the same Antiquities, where is mention made (o) of *James, the brother of Jesus, who is called Christ*.

This appears to me a good argument, that these two passages are interpolations. For Josephus had many, yea innumerable occasions for mentioning that word, and speaking of the expected Messiah. But \* that word is not to be found any where in him, excepting these two passages, where he is made to speak of *Jesus Christ*. He must have designedly, and studiously avoided that expression. And it is incredible, that he should bring it in for the sake of Jesus, our Saviour, for whom he cannot be supposed to have had any favourable regard.

7. Finally, to conclude, it appears to me to be the wisdom, and the interest of Christians, to adhere to, and improve the genuine works of Josephus, and to maintain their integrity, instead of attempting to vindicate passages, which are so justly suspected to be interpolations.

(o) Καὶ παραγαγὼν εἰς αὐτὸ τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰησοῦ τῷ λεγομένῳ Χριστῷ, Ἰάκωβος ὄνομα αὐτῶ, καὶ τινὰς ἑτέρας. *Ant.* 20. cap. ix. §. 1. p. 976.

\* I understand the learned author of the *Dissertation* to allow this, where he says, p. 34. 35. "Not, as the adversaries of this passage on the one hand, or it's advocates on the other, equally misled by Christian notions, have generally interpreted it: *This was the Christ, or the person SAID TO BE THE CHRIST*, viz. as a Jewish appellation, or title of office and dignity, concerning which he has carefully avoided dropping the least hint throughout his whole history."

His works are valuable, and useful, and highly deserving the esteem of Christians upon divers (*p*) accounts.

*First*, his rehearsal, or paraphrase (*q*) of the books of the Old Testament, as it is called by Isidore of Pelusium, is very valuable, notwithstanding some alterations by way of omission, or addition.

*Secondly*, his account of the state of things among the Jewish People from the conquest of Judea by Pompey to the commencement of the War, and during the ministry of our Saviour and his Apostles, is very valuable, indeed above all price.

*Thirdly*, his testimonie to the fulfilment of our Saviour's predictions concerning the destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem, and the overthrow of the Jewish nation by Vespasian and Titus, is also invaluable, and has always been so esteemed by all Christians in general.

Such a testimonie to all these several things from a learned Jew, contemporarie with the Apostles of Jesus, zealous (*r*) for the law, and in some respects an enemy to us, deserves the attentive regard, and high esteem of all friends to Christianity.

(*p*) See the judgement of Fabricius, before alleged, vol. i. p. 171. note (1).

(*q*) . . . καὶ τὴν παλαιὰν διαθήκην μετὰ ἀληθείας παραφράσας. . . Isidor. l. 4. ep. 225.

(*r*) Εγένετο δὲ τις Ἰσραήλιος ἄκρος, καὶ τοῦ νόμου ξηλωτής. κ. λ. Isidor. l. 4. ep. 225.





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*To be corrected.*

- P. 64. line 1. for vii. r. viii.  
P. 68. l. 16. r. *Tifernum*  
P. 71. l. 1. r. *Colonia*  
P. 77. l. 7. for viii. r. ix.  
P. 207. l. 19. for *Pontias* r. *Ponticas*

*To be corrected in the Notes.*

- P. 17. line 5. after Trajanum insert consulere  
P. 33. note (f) lin. 2. l. *μωόντων*  
*Ibid.* lin. 3. l. p. 98.  
P. 36. note †† lin. 2. l. *μέτρων*  
P. 56. note (n) l. *Patr.*  
P. 65. note (p) lin. 2. l. ignoscit  
P. 66. note (r) lin. 4. l. ridebat  
P. 68. note (d) lin. 1. l. decurionibus  
P. 360. note (u) lin. 2. l. *διεστάσθαι*



TESTIMONIES

O F

HEATHEN WRITERS

O F T H E

SECOND CENTURY.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
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*Testimonies of ancient Heathen Authors to the  
Truth of the Christian Religion.*

C H A P. IX.

PLINY THE YOUNGER, AND  
TRAJAN.

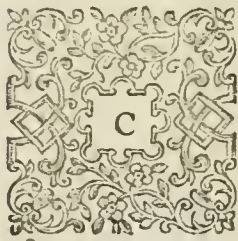
The Letter of Pliny the Younger to Trajan concerning the Christians, and Trajan's Rescript, with Notes and Observations: and an Account of the Persecution in the Time of that Emperour, generally reckoned the third Heathen Persecution.

- I. *The Historie of Pliny, and the Time of his provincial Government.* II. *Pliny's Letter to Trajan, and Trajan's Rescript.* III. *Eusebius his Account of the Persecution in the Reign of Trajan.* IV. *Pliny's Letter*  
VOL. II. B 2 *rehearsed*

rehearsed with Notes and Observations. V. Trajan's Rescript rehearsed with Notes and Observations. VI. Whether Trajan did by any Edict put an End to the Persecution. VII. The judgements of divers learned Men upon the preceding Letter and Rescript. VIII. The Characters of Pliny and Trajan represented with Freedom, Candour, and Impartiality. IX. Observations, shewing the Uses of the two foregoing Epistles.

A. D. I.  
106.  
and 107.

His Hi-  
storie,  
and Time.



CAIUS PLINIUS CAECILIUS SECUNDUS, or PLINY THE YOUNGER (*a*), son of *Lucius Caecilius*, and a sister of the elder *Pliny*, by whom he was adopted for his son, was born at *Como*, near *Milan*, in the year of *Christ* 61. or 62. He was *Praetor* under *Domitian*, and afterwards *Praefect* of the *Treasurie* of *Saturn*. Which trust seems to have been conferred on him joyntly by (*b*) *Nerva* and *Trajan*. He (*c*) was *Consul*, in the third year of the reign of *Trajan*, in the year of our *Lord* 100. When he pronounced his celebrated *Panegyrick* upon that *Emperour*. He was also *Augur*, and for a while *Governour* (*d*) of *Pontus* and *Bithynia*. It is very probable, that he did not survive *Trajan*, who died (*e*) on the 10th of *August*, in the year

(*a*) *Vid. Voff. de Hist. Lat. l. i. cap. 30. Fabr. Bib. Lat. l. 2. c. 22. Masson de Vita Plin. Jun. Tillemont H. E. Trajan art. 28.*

(*b*) *Ut primum me, Domine, indulgentia VESTRA promovit ad praefecturam aerarii Saturni. Lib. x. ep. 20.*

*Sed primum mea, deinde patris tui valetudine, postea curis delegati a VOBIS officii retentus. &c. Ib. ep. 24.*

(*c*) *Nondum biennium compleveramus in officio laboriosissimo et maximo, quum tu nobis, optime principum, . . . consulatum obtulisti. Paneg. cap. 91.*

(*d*) *Vid. Ep. L. x. ep. 109. et 113.*

(*e*) *Pagi Ann. 117. num. vi. Basnag. ann. 117. num. ii.*



year 117. It is more reasonable to think, that he died several years before him : forasmuch as there is nothing extant, either in his epistles, or elsewhere, that should induce us to think, he lived long after his provincial government.

A. D.  
106.  
and 107.

Plinie had not the title of Proconsul, but was sent into the province by the Emperour, as his Lieutenant, and Propractor, with Proconsular Power : as appears from some ancient inscriptions, still (*f*) remaining.

But learned men are divided about the time of his government, and consequently of his letter to Trajan, which must be alleged presently. The great Joseph Scaliger (*g*) acknowledged the difficulty of this point.

Some think he (*b*) went into the province in the year 101. and that the persecution, which the Christians underwent, in his time, happened in the year 103. Others suppose, that (*i*) he got into the province, in the later part of the year 103. and left it in the summer of 105. staying there about eighteen months. Which term of his government is generally agreed to. Basnage and Cardinal Noris were

(*f*) C. PLINIUS  
CAECILIUS. SECUNDUS  
COS. AUGUR. LEGAT. PRO. PRAET  
PROVINC. PONTI. CONSULARI. PO  
TESTATE. IN. EAM. PROVINCIAM. AB  
IMP. CAESARE. NERVA. TRAIANO  
AUG. GERMANICO. MISSUS

*Ap. Gruter. pag. 454. 3. Et Conf. p. 1028.*

(*g*) *Vid. ejus Animadversiones in Euseb. Chron. p. 207.*

(*b*) That was the opinion of James La Baune, editor of the ancient Panegyrist in usum Delphini. *De Vita Plinii.* It was likewise the opinion of Mr. Dodwell. *Missus est in provinciam Bithyniam anno sequente, cr. . . Ita inciderit persecutio*

illa Plinii in annum Domini, ciii. accuratissime. *Dodw. Diss. Iren. i. §. xvi.*

(*i*) So Tillemont. *Persecution de l'Eglise sous Trajan. art. iv. Hist. des Emp. Tom. 2.* Which was also the opinion of J. Maffon de Vita Plin. *Jun. A. ciii. p. 129. &c.*

A. D.  
106.  
and 107.

were inclined to think, that (*k*) Plinie went thither in the year 109. and left it in 111. Pagi's computation makes it still later. For he says, that (*l*) Plinie did not enter into the province before the year 110. *Le Clerc*, in his Ecclesiastical Historie of the first two centuries, follows Pagi, placing Plinie's letter concerning the Christians in the year 111.

In order to form a judgement concerning this point, some things may be observed by us. In the *first place*, it is generally allowed, that (*m*) the Emperour Trajan was at Rome all the time that Plinie was in the province. Which appears to be very evident from his letters writ to Trajan in that space. This does not favour the early date of Plinie's government. For at that time Trajan must have been engaged in the Dacian wars. *Secondly*, another thing, which much weakens the supposition of that early date is this. Plinie was Consul in the Year of our Lord 100. But he did not go into his province the year after. Several years passed between his Consulship, and his provincial government. As has been shewn by divers learned (*n*) men.

Nevertheless I do not see sufficient reason to defer his government so long as some have done. And I am inclined to think, that Plinie was sent into the province in the year 106. and left it in 108. I see no good reason to believe, that Trajan was absent from Rome in that space of time. The Dacian wars, and the two triumphs  
for

(*k*) *Currente anno injunctam esse Plinio Bithyniae legationem, cum eruditissimo Norisio, pobabilissimum existimamus. Basn. ann. 109. num. ii.*

(*l*) *Plinius igitur anno Christi centesimo decimo Bithyniam intravit. Pagi Crit. in Baron. ann. 102. num. vi.*

(*m*) *Tandem supponendum, per totum illud temporis spatium, quo noster in provincia moratus est, Trajanum Romae e-*

*gisse. Quod certum ex lib. x. ep. 13. 14. 15. &c. Masson ubi supra. Ceterum recte Loydio observatum, totum illud tempus Trajanum Romae egisse, quo Plinius in Bithynia fuit. Pagi ann. 102. viii. Vid. et Basnag. ann. 107. num. iii.*

(*n*) *Vid. Pagi Crit. in Baron. ann. 102. n. vii. viii. Basnag. ann. 103. num. ii.*

for them, (o) might be over by the end of the year 105. or the middle of 106.

A. D.  
106.  
and 107.

We can perceive from Plinie's Panegyrick, pronounced in the begining of September, in the year 100. that (p) the war against the Dacians was even then designed by Trajan, and that, probably, preparations were then making for it.

The Dacian wars began in that (q) same year, or (r) in the year following, and (s) lasted five years. They ended therefore in the year 105. or the begining of 106.

In the year 102. Trajan obtained a signal, though difficult victorie over the Dacians, and triumphed at Rome upon that account in the year 103. Of this there is full (t) proof. The first war therefore was compleated (u) in two years. The second could not last much longer.

After

(o) Optime facis, quod bellum Dacium scribere paras. Nam quae tam recens, tam copiosa, tam lata, quae denique tam poetica materia? Dices, immissa terris nova flumina, novos pontes fluminibus injectos . . . pulsum regiã, pulsum etiam vitã, regem nihil desperantem. Super haec, actos bis triumphos: quorum alter ex invita gente primus, alter novissimus fuit. *Plin. ad Caninium. Ep. 4. L. 8. Conf. Dion. Cass. l. 68. p. 1123. . . . 1133. ed. Reimar.*

(p) Quod si quis barbarus rex eo insolentiae furorisque processerit, ut iram tuam indignationemque mereatur, nae ille, sive interfuso mari, seu fluminibus immensis, seu praecipiti monte defenditur, omnia haec tam prona, tamque cedentia virtutibus tuis sentiet, ut subsedisse montes, flumina exaruisse, interceptum mare, illatasque sibi non esse classes nostras, sed terras ipsas, arbitretur. *Paneg. cap. 16.*

(q) Primum ab octobri mense, A. U. C. 853. [A. D. 100.] usque ad finem anni 855. duravit, triumpho acto sequenti anno 856. *Reimar. ad Dion. 1130.*

(r) Anno praeterito Trajanus expeditionem in Dacos susceperat, in quo magna quidem caedes hostium facta, multo tamen sanguine Romanorum victoria consistit. *Basnag. ann. 102. ii. Vid. et Ann. 101. i.*

(s) Επέχθη δὲ καὶ τὸ ἔργον τὸτο ἐν ἐπι-  
αυτοῖς ἔσωσε πέντε. *Trajan. ap. Julian. Caes. p. 327. D. ed. Spanheim.*

(t) Trajanus hoc anno e Dacia Romam redux de Decebalo Dacorum rege triumphavit, ut certum facit nummus a Card. Nofisio in Epistola Consulari ex Thefauro Mediceo productus. *Pagi ann. 103: viii. et Basn. ann. 103. i.*

(u) Quare biennium in id infumtum, *Reimar. ad Dion. p. 1130.*

A. D.  
106.  
and 107.

After these wars Trajan staid a long while at *Rome*. For, though some learned men have thought otherwise, it seems to me to have been well shewn by (x) Pagi, and (y) Basnage, that Trajan did not go into the East before the year 112. During that stay at Rome he received the solemn ambassies of divers eastern princes, raised many new buildings, and repaired others, built his Forum, and erected the famous column, which was not finished and dedicated (z) before the year 112. or 113.

What has been already said, must be sufficient to render it probable, that Trajan was at Rome in the year 107. and afterwards.

Another argument for the time of Plinie's government offers itself here from the martyrdom of Ignatius, which must be supposed to have some connexion with the Rescript of Trajan, to be produced hereafter, and which cannot be removed (a) from the tenth of Trajan, and the 107. of our Lord, where it is placed by Eusebius in his Chronicle, and by Jerome in the chapter of Ignatius, in his book of Illustrious Men. Eusebius could not be mistaken about the time of the martyrdom of a Bishop of a city, so near his own.

And by the Acts of Ignatius, which we have, his martyrdom is placed in the time of *Sura and Senecio*, who were Consuls in the tenth of Trajan, and the year of Christ 107.

Those Acts indeed are not sincere and incorrupt, nor, perhaps, of the highest (b) antiquity. In them it is supposed, that *Ignatius* was condemned at Antioch by Trajan in person, and sent by him to Rome. Which is inconsistent with the just mentioned Consulship: at which time *Trajan* was not at *Antioch*, as was before shewn.

Nor

(x) *Ann.* 105. ii. iii. et 112. iii.

(y) *Ann.* 107. iii. et 112. ii. iii.

(z) Pagi *ann.* 104. ii. 113. i. *Basn.*  
*ann.* 113. i.

(a) Ejus certum tempus habemus in Actis Ignatii, Consulatum Suræ et Senecionis, annum Domini CVII. *Dodw.*

*Diff. Cypr.* xi. §. 18. *Vid. et Basnag.*  
*ann.* 107. v. . . viii. *And the Credibility.*  
*&c. P.* 2. *ch.* v. *vol.* i. *p.* 153.

(b) Nos vero sententiae sumus ejusmodi, post Eusebium nata esse Acta haec Ignatii. *Basnag. Ann.* 107. viii.

Nor does Eusebius, or Jerome after him, say any thing of Ignatius having been condemned by Trajan himself: a remarkable circumstance, which, if true, could not have been omitted by writers, who have enlarged so much in their accounts of this Bishop and Martyr. Moreover, if Trajan had been at Antioch, Ignatius would have suffered in that city. His being sent to Rome, is an argument, that Trajan was there. So now, as we shall see presently, Plinie having some Christians brought before him, who were Citizens, he sent them to Rome, where Trajan certainly was at that time. And that Trajan was at Rome, when Ignatius suffered there, is expressly said by a Christian writer (*c*) of the ninth centurie.

Plinie, then, was sent from Rome in the summer of the year 106. He went by the way (*d*) of Ephesus, and arrived in Bithynia (*e*) on the 18. of September, which was the genuine, or natural birth-day of Trajan. He seems also in one of his epistles (*f*) to speak of the same birth-day in another year. Whilst he was in the province, he twice (*g*) celebrated the day of Trajan's accession, or the anniversary of his empire. The first time may have been on the 27. of Januarie, in the year 107. the next, or second, on the

(*c*) Quod si audiatur Ado, Romae adfuit Trajanus, cum excessit Ignatius, ut legitur in libello de Festivitatibus Apostolorum. *Basnag. ann. 107. viii.*

(*d*) *Vid. l. x. ep. 26. et 28.*

(*e*) Rursus, quum transissem in orarias naviculas, contrariis ventis retentus, aliquanto tardius quam speraveram, id est, xv. Calend. Octobris, Bithyniam intravi. Non possum tamen de morâ queri, cum mihi contigerit, quod erat auspiciatissimum, natalem tuum in provinciâ celebrare. *L. x. ep. 28.*

... diem illum, triplici gaudio lac-

tum, qui principem abstulit pessimum, dedit optimum, meliorem optimo genuit. *Paneg. cap. 92.*

(*f*) Opto, Domine, et hunc natalem, et plurimos alios, quam felicissimos agas. *L. x. ep. 89. Vid. et ep. 90.*

(*g*) Diem, Domine, quo servasti imperium, dum suscipis, quantâ mereris laetitiâ celebravimus. &c. *L. x. ep. 60.*

Quantâ religione ac laetitiâ commilitones cum provincialibus, te praeunte, diem imperii mei celebraverint, libenter, mi Secunde carissime, cognovi ex literis tuis. *Ep. 61, Vid. et ep. 103. et 104.*

A. D. same day of Januarie, in the year 108. It is likely, that he did not leave the province, before the summer of that year. Consequently, he was there eighteen months, or longer.

106.  
and 107.

According to this computation, Plinie's letter to Trajan concerning the Christians was writ in 107. and the Emperour's Rescript, or answer to it, in the same year.

## II. The Letter of Plinie is in these words.

Pliny's  
Letter to  
Trajan,

“ Plinie to the Emperour Trajan wisheth health and happiness.” (b)

“ It (i) is my constant custom, Sir, to refer myself to You in all matters, concerning which I have any doubt. For who can  
“ better

(b) C. Plinius Trajano Imp. S. Lib. x. ep. xcvi.

(i) Solenne est mihi, Domine, omnia, de quibus dubito, ad te referre. Quis enim potest melius vel cunctationem meam regere, vel ignorantiam instruere? Cognitionibus Christianorum interfui nunquam. Ideo nescio quid et quatenus aut puniri soleat, aut quaeri. Nec mediocriter haesitavi, sit ne aliquod discrimen aetatum, an quamlibet teneri nihil a robustioribus differant: detur poenitentiae venia, an ei qui omnino Christianus fuit, desuisse non profit: nomen ipsum, etiamsi flagitiis careat, an flagitia cohaerentia nomini puniantur. Interim in iis qui ad me tanquam Christiani deferebantur, hunc sum secutus modum. Interrogavi ipsos, an essent Christiani. Confitentes iterum ac tertio interrogavi, supplicium minatus: perseverantes duci jussi. Neque enim dubitabam, quaecunque esset quod

faterentur, pervicaciam certe, et inflexibilem obstinationem, debere puniri. Fuerunt alii similis amentiae: quos, quia cives Romani erant, annotavi in Urbem remittendos. Mox ipso tractu, [al. tractatu] ut fieri solet, diffundente se crimine, plures species inciderunt. Propositus est libellus sine auctore, multorum nomina continens, qui negarunt se esse Christianos, aut fuisse, quum, praecunte me, Deos appellarent, et imagini tuae, quam propter hoc jufferam cum simulachris numinum afferri, vino ac thure sacrificarent, praeterea maledicerent Christo: quorum nihil cogi posse dicuntur, qui sunt revera Christiani. Ergo dimittendos putavi. Alii ab indice nominati, esse se Christianos dixerunt, et mox negaverunt: fuisse quidem, sed desuisse, quidam ante triennium, quidam ante plures annos, non nemo etiam ante viginti quoque. Omnes et imaginem tuam, Deorumque simulachra venerati

“ better direct me, where I hesitate, or instruct me, where I am  
 “ ignorant? I have never been present at any trials of Christians.  
 “ So that I know not well what is the subject matter of punish-  
 “ ment, or of inquirie, or what strictness ought to be used in  
 “ either. Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine, whe-  
 “ ther any difference ought to be made upon account of age, or  
 “ whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust,  
 “ ought to be treated all alike: Whether repentance should entitle  
 “ to pardon, or whether all who have once been Christians, ought  
 “ to be punished, though they are now no longer so: Whether the  
 “ name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only be-  
 “ longing to the name, ought to be punished. Concerning all these  
 “ things I am in doubt.”

“ In the mean time I have taken this course with all who have  
 “ been brought before me, and have been accused as Christians.  
 “ I have put the question to them, whether they were Christians.  
 “ Upon their confessing to me, that they were, I repeated the

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“ question

venerati sunt. Ii et Christo maledixerunt. Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse summam vel culpaе suae, vel erroris, quod essent soliti statim die ante lucem convenire, carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem: seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent: quibus peractis morem sibi discedendi fuisse, rursusque coeundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen, et innoxium: quod et ipsum facere desuisse post edictum meum, quo secundum mandata tua hetaerias esse vetueram. Quo magis necessarium credidi, ex duabus ancillis, quae ministrae dicebantur, quid esset veri et per tormenta

quaerere. Sed nihil aliud inveni, quam superstitionem pravam et immodicam. Ideoque dilata cognitione ad consulendum te decurri. Visa est enim mihi res digna consultatione, maxime propter periclitantium numerum. Multi enim omnis aetatis, utriusque sexus etiam, vocantur in periculum, et vocabuntur. Neque enim civitates tantum, sed vicos etiam et agros superstitionis istius contagio pervagata est. Quae videtur sisti et corrigi posse. Certe satis constat, prope etiam desolata templa coepisse celebrari, et sacra solemnia diu intermissa repeti: passimque vaenire victimas, quarum adhuc rarissimus emptor inveniebatur. Ex quo facile est opinari, quae turba hominum emendari possit, si sit poenitentiae locus.

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and 107.

“ question a second, and a third time, threatening also to punish  
 “ them with death. Such as still persisted, I ordered away to be  
 “ punished. For it was no doubt with me, whatever might be  
 “ the nature of their opinion, that contumacie, and inflexible ob-  
 “ stinacie, ought to be punished. There were others of the same  
 “ infatuation, whom, because they are Roman Citizens, I have noted  
 “ down to be sent to the City.”

“ In a short time, the crime spreading itself, even whilst under  
 “ prosecution, as is usual in such cases, divers sorts of people came  
 “ in my way. An information was presented to me, without men-  
 “ tioning the author, containing the names of many persons, who  
 “ upon examination denied, that they were Christians, or had ever  
 “ been so. Who repeated after me an invocation of the Gods,  
 “ and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image,  
 “ which for that purpose I had caused to be brought, and set be-  
 “ fore them, together with the statues of the deities. Moreover  
 “ they reviled the name of Christ. None of which things, as is  
 “ said, they who are really Christians can by any means be com-  
 “ pelled to do. These therefore I thought proper to discharge.”

“ Others were named by an informer, who at first confessed  
 “ themselves Christians, and afterwards denied it. The rest said  
 “ they had been Christians, but had left them, some three years  
 “ ago, some longer, and one, or more, above twenty years. They  
 “ all worshiped your image, and the statues of the Gods. These  
 “ also reviled Christ. They affirmed, that the whole of their fault,  
 “ or errour, lay in this, that they were wont to meet together on a  
 “ stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alter-  
 “ nately a hymn to Christ, as a God, and to bind themselves by an  
 “ oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be  
 “ guilty of theft, or robbery, or adulterie, never to falsify their  
 “ word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them, when called  
 “ upon to return it. When these things were performed, it was  
 “ their custom to separate, and then to come together again to a  
 “ meal,



“ meal, which they ate in common, without any disorder. But  
 “ this they had forbore, since the publication of my edict, by  
 “ which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.”

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“ After receiving this account I judged it the more necessarie, to  
 “ examine, and that by torture, two maid-servants, which were  
 “ called ministers. But I have discovered nothing, beside a bad  
 “ and excessive superstition.”

“ Suspending therefore all judicial proceedings, I have recourse  
 “ to You for advice. For it has appeared unto me a matter highly  
 “ deserving consideration, especially upon account of the great  
 “ number of persons, who are in danger of suffering. For many  
 “ of all ages, and every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused,  
 “ and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this supersti-  
 “ tion seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open  
 “ countrey. Nevertheless it seems to me, that it may be restrained,  
 “ and corrected. It is certain, that the temples, which were al-  
 “ most forsaken, begin to be more frequented. And the sacred so-  
 “ lemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims like-  
 “ wise are every where bought up, whereas for some time there  
 “ were few purchasers. Whence it is easie to imagine, what num-  
 “ bers of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those  
 “ who shall repent.”

So writes Plinie. We are now to observe the Emperour's Re-  
 script.

“ *TRAJAN* to *PLINIE* wisheth health and happines (*k*)”.

*Trajan*  
*Rescript*

“ You (*l*) have taken the right method, my *Plinie*, in your  
 “ pro-

(*k*) *Trajanus Plinio S.*

(*l*) *Lib. x. ep. 98. Actum quem de-*  
*buiti, mi secunde, in excutiendis causis*  
*eorum qui Christiani ad te delati fuerant,*

*secutus es. Neque enim in univsum a-*  
*liquid, quod quasi certam formam habeat,*  
*constitui potest. Conquirendi non sunt.*  
*Si deferantur, et arguantur, puniendi*  
*sunt:*

A. D. 106. and 107. “proceedings with those, who have been brought before you as Christians. For it is impossible to establish any one rule, that shall hold universally. They are not to be sought for. If any are brought before you, and are convicted, they ought to be punished. However, he that denies his being a Christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is, by supplicating to our Gods, though he be suspected to have been so formerly, let him be pardoned upon repentance. But in no case, of any crime whatever, may a bill of information be received, without being signed by him who presents it. For that would be a dangerous precedent, and unworthie of my government.”

I have put together these two letters, that we may make our remarks upon them joyntly, and without interruption.

It may be observed here, that the genuinnesse of these letters is unquestioned. They are found with the other letters of Plinie to Trajan, and Trajan's letters to him. And they are both particularly mentioned by (m) Tertullian, in his Apologie for the Christians, and by (n) Eusebius from him, not now to mention any later writers.

III. But before we enter upon any particular remarks upon these epistles, it may be of use, to take Eusebius's account of the persecution of the Christians in the reign of Trajan.

*Eusebe's  
Account  
of the Per-  
secution  
under  
Trajan.*

In the 32. chapter of the third book of his Ecclesiastical Historie; he expresseth himself to this purpose. “After *Nero* and *Domitian*,  
“ in

sunt: ita tamen, ut qui negaverit se Christianum esse, idque re ipsa manifestum fecerit, id est, supplicando Diis nostris, quamvis suspectus in praeteritum fuerit, veniam ex poenitentia impetret. Sine

auctore vero propositi libelli, nullo in crimine, locum habere debent. Nam et pessimi exempli, nec nostri seculi est.

(m) *Apol. cap. 2.*

(n) *H. E. l. 3. cap. 33.*

“ in the time of him, of whom we are now speaking, we have  
 “ understood, that in several places, and in divers cities, there was  
 “ a persecution, occasioned by the tumults of the people.” After  
 which he there relates the martyrdom of *Simeon*, son of *Cleophas*,  
 Bishop of Jerufalem. Who at the age of an hundred and twenty  
 years was crucified by order of *Atticus*, Governour of Judea under  
 Trajan.

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In the next chapter he writes thus: “ And indeed so heavie a  
 “ persecution was there against us in many places, that *Plinie*, a  
 “ Governour of great eminence and distinction, being moved at the  
 “ multitude of the martyrs, could not forbear writing to the Em-  
 “ perour concerning the multitude of those who were slain for the  
 “ faith. At the same time informing him, that he had not disco-  
 “ vered any wickednesse they were guilty of, or any thing done by  
 “ them contrarie to the laws. Only that rising early in the morn-  
 “ ing they sang together a hymn to Christ, as a God: that they  
 “ condemned adulterie, murder, and all such crimes: and that  
 “ they acted in all things according to the laws. In answer to  
 “ which Trajan sent an edict to this effect: *that the Christians*  
 “ *should not be sought for, but if any were brought before him, they*  
 “ *should be punished.* By which means the violence of the perse-  
 “ cution against us was in some measure abated. Nevertheless they  
 “ who had a mind to disturb us, did not want pretenses for so do-  
 “ ing: in some places the people, in other places the Governours of  
 “ provinces, laying snares for us. So that though there was no  
 “ open [or general] persecution, there were persecutions in several  
 “ places and provinces, and there were many faithful men who un-  
 “ derwent divers kinds of martyrdom.”

So writes *Eusebius*, I believe very truly, and I think judiciously,  
 and with good temper, though not with elegance, or accuracie  
 of expression. He then proceeds to transcribe a part of *Tertul-*  
 lian's

A. D. 106. and 107. lian's Apologie, where he speaks of Plinie and Trajan, of which I may take farther notice hereafter. At present I transcribe below (o) what we find upon this subject in Eusebius his Chronicle.

*Pliny's  
Epistle  
rehearsed,  
with  
Notes.*

IV. I now intend to go over the two epistles above transcribed.

*It is my constant custom, Sir, to refer myself to you in all matters, concerning which I have any doubt.*

That this was Plinie's constant custom, sufficiently appears from his many letters sent to Trajan, whilst he was in the province. He seems to have had some particular encouragement from the Emperour (p) so to do. But the introduction to this letter is rather more formal than ordinarie, because of the importance of the present subject of inquirie. And indeed it was a frequent practise of the Governours of provinces, upon special occasions, to consult the Roman Emperour, the supreme magistrate (q).

*I have never been present at any trials of the Christians.*

This manner of speaking shews, that the Christians were then well known in the world. Plinie does not say to the Emperour, that

(o) Plinius Secundus, quum quendam provinciam regeret, et in magistratu suo plurimos Christianorum interfecisset, multitudine eorum perterritus, quaesivit de Trajano, quid facto opus esset, nuncians ei, praeter obstinationem non sacrificandi, et antelucanos coetus ad canendum cuidam Christo, ut Deo, nihil apud eos reperiri: praeterea ad confoederandam disciplinam vetari ab his, homicidia, adulteria, latrocinia, et his similia. Ad quae

commotus Trajanus rescripsit, hoc genus quidem inquirendos non esse, oblatos vero puniri oportere. *Euseb. Chron. p. 165.*

(p) Summas, Domine, gratias ago, quod inter maximas occupationes, iis, de quibus consului, me quoque regere dignatus es: quod nunc quoque facias, rogo. *L. x. ep. 64.*

(q) *Vid. C. Kortholt. Comment. in Ep. Plinii et Trajani de Christian. p. 11.*

that he had now unexpectedly met with a certain sort of men in his province, called Christians. No. There were people well known to himself, and the Emperour, who bore the denomination of Christians. When he says, *he had never been present at any trials of the Christians*; it seems to be implied, that he knew of some such trials, though he had not been concerned in them. And there (r) may have been such trials in this province, before he came into it.

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*So that I know not well, what is the subject matter of punishment, or of inquirie, or what strictnesse ought to be used in either.*

Hence it may be argued, that when Plinie came into his province, there (s) were no edicts in force against the Christians. If

(r) Certe jam ante se cognitiones in provincia fuisse de Christianis habitas, initio literarum suarum noster significat. Ac eum quidem, qui proxime ante Plinium Bithyniae praefuerat, fuisse persecutorem, inde manifestum puto, quod Plinius refert nonnullos ad se productorum dixisse, *se jam ante triennium desisse esse Christianos*. Sua autem sponte eos, non metu supplicii, id fecisse, verisimile non est. *C. A. Humanni Disput. de Persecutione Christian. Plinian. §. iv. p. 124. Ap. Diff. Syllog. Tom. i. P. i.*

(s) Fuisse aliquod Trajani de interficiendis Christianis certum edictum ante Plinii relationem, non existimo. Si quod enim fuisset, Plinius non dubitasset: aut Trajanum certe consulendo, ejus edicti mentionem fecisset. *Fr. Balduin. Comm. ad Edict. Princ. Roman. de Christianis. p. 28.*

Quid Trajanus A. C. 103. seq. contra

eos tentaverit, ex Plinio constat, cujus Epistola indicat, vexatos quidem esse Christianos variis in locis, absque ulla tamen haecenus Caesarum rescripto. Unde Plinius ea de re Trajanum necessum habuit. *Lampe Synops. Hist. Ec. l. 2. cap. 3. num. xxxiii. p. 112.*

Quum Trajanus, primus Imperatorum hujus seculi, reipublicae gubernationi admoventur, nullae aderant in Christianos leges et edicta. Quod cum aliae res, tum Plinii notissima epistola, extra omnem dubitationem ponit, qua Imperatori significat, quomodo cum Christianis agendum esset. Quod vir juris et consuetudinum Romanarum consultissimus non ignorasset, si leges in Christianos extitissent. Neronis nimirum leges Senatus, Domitiani Nerva Imperator abrogaverat. *Moshem. De Reb. Christian. ante C. M. Sec. 2. §. vii. p. 231.*

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there had, Plinie, who was a learned man, and well acquainted with the Roman laws, must have known them. The reason, why there were then no edicts in force against the Christians, I suppose to be, that the edicts of Nero and Domitian had been abrogated.

*Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine, whether any difference ought to be made on account of age, or whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust, ought to be treated all alike.*

Mr. Melmoth's translation is thus: *Whether therefore any difference is usually made with respect to the ages of the guilty, or no distinction is to be observed between the young and the adult. . . .* I have allowed myself to be more diffused, and somewhat paraphrastical, because I have imagined, that Plinie's question relates not only to those who were tender upon account of their age, but also upon account of their sex.

Some have thought, that (t) Trajan gives no answer to this question. Whether he does, or not, will be considered hereafter.

Le Clerc is much offended, that Plinie should not know, whether (u) a difference ought to be made between the young and the adult, especially in matters of religion, where children are very likely to follow the judgement of their parents. However, I apprehend, that this question is proposed by Plinie with a good intention, and hoping, that Trajan would determine favorably, that  
the

(t) *Nec mediocriter haesitavi, sit ne aliquod discrimen aetatum. Huic dubitationi non respondet Trajanus. Balduin. ubi supra.*

(u) In aliis criminibus ratio aetatis habebatur. Neque enim pueri, rerum omnium imperiti, eodem modo atque adulti, qui scientes et prudentes deliquerant, habebantur. Mirum est, in religionis nego-

tio, dubitare posse Plinium, an esset aliquod discrimen aetatum, an quamlibet teneri nihil a robustioribus differrent: cum liquidum sit, teneram aetatem sequi parentum iudicium. . . . Hic homo, alioqui doctus, et acutus, talpâ caeciorem se praebuit. Usque adeo verum est, pravis religionibus hebetes homines fieri. *Cleric. H. E. p. 547.*

*the young, and the tender,* should not be treated in the same manner with those of mature age, and robust constitution.

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Another Commentator upon Plinie observes, “that (x) in other cases regard was had to age by the Roman laws: but that this equity was not shewn in the treatment of Christians.” As indeed is well known from the ancient Apologists, and other ancient Christian writers, who often speak of the sufferings, and of the courage, resolution, and patience of young people, and women. Of which a few instances shall be placed (y) below, in their own words.

And perhaps Plinie himself did really hesitate here. In other cases regard was usually had to age. But the prosecutions of the Christians were carried with so much violence: and there was such vehemence in the complaints against them, brought before him, as enemies to the Gods, and for neglecting the worship at the temples, and all the sacred solemnities, that he was in doubt, whether they ought to partake in the common equity.

*Whether repentance should entitle to pardon, or whether all who have been once Christians should be punished, though they are now no longer so.*

Upon this *Le Clerc* observes, “that (z) if Christianity were

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“sup-

(x) Aetatis magna omnino in poenis irrogandis haberi solet ratio. Unde non tantum definiunt Icti, quae aetas delicti sit capax: sed etiam docent, si maxime capax sit, ob aetatem tamen tenellam et florecentem, mitiorem debere poenam infligi. . . . Ceterum ut haec ita sint, de fide tamen Christianâ quando res erat, omni aetatis discrimine posthabito, in ipsos etiam pueros puellasque crudeliter saeviebatur. *Kortholt. ubi supr. p. 12.*

(y) Pueri et mulierculae nostrae cruces et tormenta, feras, et omnes suppliciorum terriculas inspiratâ patientiâ doloris illudunt. *Min. Fel. cap. 37.*

. . . Nostri autem (ut de viris taceam,) pueri, et mulierculae tortores suos taciti vincunt. . . . Ecce sexus infirmus, et fragilis aetas, dilacerari se toto corpore, urique perpetitur. &c. *Lact. Inf. l. 5. c. 13.*

(z) Dubitabat idem, an dari oporteret  
*poeni-*

A. D. 106. and 107. “supposed to be an error only, nothing more could be expected of him who had erred in embracing it, than renouncing it upon being convinced of his error. And as the Christians were charged with no crime, that should expose them to punishment, it was highly reasonable, that pardon should be granted upon repentance.”

And I am apt to think, that this is what Plinie aimed at in this inquiry. We may be rather disposed to think so, because he plainly recommends it afterwards, nearer the end of his letter.

*Whether the name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name, ought to be punished. Concerning all these things I am in doubt.*

This is Plinie's third question, and of great importance. If rightly determined, the Christians could no longer suffer upon account of their religion. But I do not discern any hint from Plinie, in favour of the right answer, nor any intimation, how he wished to have it answered.

Plinie speaks in the language of those times. We find this complaint frequently in our ancient Apologists, that (a) they were punished

*poenitentiae veniam, &c. At si statuamus errorem esse Christianismum, quid potuit ab errante aliud postulari, nisi ut erroris convictus se errasse fateretur, et meliora edoctus rectius de religione sentiret? &c. Cleric. H. E. Ap. cxi. n. v.*

(a) Hanc itaque primam causam apud vos collocamus iniquitatis odii erga nomen Christianorum. *Tertull. Ap. cap. i.*  
... Sed illud solum expectatur, quod odio publico necessarium est, confessio

nominis, non examinatio criminis. *Ib. cap. 2.*

Ideo torquemur constantes, et punimur perseverantes, et absolvimur negantes, quia nominis praelium est. *Ib. cap. 2. p. 4. B.*

Porro sententiae vestrae nihil nisi Christianum confessum notant. Nullum criminis nomen exstat, nisi nominis crimen est. *Id. ad Nation. l. i. cap. 3. et alibi passim.*



nished for the *name only*, as Christians, without proof of any crimes they were guilty of.

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When Plinie first formed these three questions, this last in particular, he might, possibly, be in doubt, whether the Christians were not guilty of some crimes. But before he wrote this letter, and sent it away to *Trajan*, he had good proof, and must have been well satisfied, that there were no crimes, *belonging to, or inhercent in the name*, or the profession of Christianity. As we shall see by and by. At present, we go on.

*In the mean time, says Plinie, I have taken this course with all who have been brought before me, and accused as Christians.*

Le Clerc thinks (b) it strange, that whilst Plinie had such doubts, he should proceed to act as if he had been well satisfied what was fit to be done, and treat the Christians very severely.

*I put the question to them, whether they were Christians. Upon their confessing to me, that they were, I repeated the question a second, and a third time, threatening also to punish them with death. Such as still persisted I ordered away to be punished.*

Mr. *Melmoth* very softly and cautiously translates in this general manner. *If they confessed, I repeated the question twice again, adding threats at the same time: when, if they still persevered, I ordered them to be immediately punished.* But to me it seems, that Plinie's expressions

ὄνοματος μὲν ἐν προσωνομίᾳ, οὔτε ἀγαθὸν οὔτε κακὸν κρίνεται, ἀνευ τῶν ὑποπιπτουσῶν τῷ ὀνόματι πράξεων. *Justin. M. Ap. p. 54. D. Paris. 1636. Vid. et p. 55. A. B.*

Ὅου γὰρ τὰ ὀνόματα μίσης ἀξία, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀδίκημα θύτης καὶ τιμωρίας. *Athen. Ap. p. 3. . . . ἐπὶ μόνῳ ὀνόματι προσπιλεμένων*

ἢ μὲν τῶν πολλῶν. *Ib. Par. p. 280. Bened.*

(b) *Quamvis Plinius animi, ut vidimus, penderet, ac proinde rem deferre debuisset, quasi exploratum ei fuisset, quid factu opus esset, pessime habuit Christianos. Ib. n. vii. in.*

A. D. fions (c) require the interpretation, that I have given. Which is  
 106. also agreeable to Mr. Tillemont's (d) French version.  
 and 107.

The obvious meaning of the last words, *perseverantes duci jussi*, is that of being had away to be punished with death. The phrase (e) frequently occurs in that sense in Latin authors, and is equivalent to the (f) Greek word in Acts xii. 19.—and commanded, that they should be put to death.

However, the word is also used for being had away to (g) prison. And Tertullian, representing Plinie's conduct in the province, as from his own letter, which we are now considering, says: "Some (b) Christians he condemned to death, others he degraded." And in like manner Eusebius (i) in his Greek quotation of Tertullian's Apologie. Possibly therefore Tertullian supposed, that in the word, *duci*, were included several kinds of punishment. Or else, he understood *duci*, as I have translated, *put to death*: and by *degrading others* he explains what Plinie says of sending some, who were Citizens, to Rome. Nevertheless, in the Chronicle, before (k) transcribed by us, Eusebius writes, "that Plinie, when he presided in  
 " a certain province, and had put to death many Christians in the  
 " time

(c) *Perseverantes duci jussi.*] nempe ad mortem. Sic enim, ut omnes norunt, loqui solent Latini scriptores. *Cleric. ibid.*

(d) Quand ils ont avoué, je leur ai fait deux ou trois fois la mesme demande, en les menaçant mesme de la mort, s'ils ne renonçoient à cette religion. Ceux qui ont persisté dans leur aveu, je les ai fait mener au supplice. *Tillem. La Persecution sous Trajan. art. iv. H. Emp. T. 2.*

(e) . . . a calvo ad calvum duci imperavit. *Suet. Calig. cap. 27.* . . . ducique ad supplicium imperavit. *Tib. cap. 57.* . . . paucis duci jussis. *Tertull. ad Scap. cap. ult.* . . . innocentes duci jubentur. *L.*

*Caec. de Mort. Persec. cap. 40.* ad supplicium deductae. *Ib.* . . . innocentes occisas esse testatur. *Ib.*

(f) . . . ἐκέλευσεν ἀπαχθῆναι.

(g) . . . ducique in carcerem jussit. *Sucton. Caes. cap. 20.*

(h) Plinius enim Secundus, cum provinciam regeret, damnatis quibusdam Christianis, quibusdam gradu pulsus, ipsa tamen multitudine perturbatus, &c. *Apol. cap. 2.*

(i) . . . κατακρίνας χριστιανὸς τινὰς, ἃ τῆς ἀξίας ἐκβαλῶν, κ. λ. *Euseb. H. E. l. 3. c. 33. p. 105. D.*

(k) See before, p. 16. note (o).

“time of his government, being concerned on account of the multitude of those who were in danger of suffering, he wrote to the Emperour for advice what should be done.”

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Plinie here says: *I put the question to them, whether they were Christians. Upon their confessing to me that they were, I repeated the question a second, and a third time, threatening also to punish them with death.*

Here I must say, that so far as I am able to judge, Plinie acted the part of a true and thorough persecutor: “advising these persons, well to consider of the matter, and to have a due regard to their own welfare. If they departed from their first confession, mercie might be shewn them: but if they persisted in it, nothing less than death could be expected.”

But there is no real argument in such fine speeches, or such threatenings. Indeed Plinie did all that was in his power, to make them recant, without, and contrarie to conviction. And undoubtedly he subdued the consciences of some, and made them fall from the faith. It is implied in what he says presently afterwards. *Such as still persisted, I ordered away to be punished.* Therefore all did not persevere. Some were overcome by his promises and threatenings. I must transcribe below some observations of (l) Le Clerc upon this passage of Plinie, which to me seem very just, and not at all too severe.

Nevertheless some learned men have of late apologized for Plinie, and they blame (m) Le Clerc, and propose to correct him. They say,

(l) Cur vero interrogabat, an essent Christiani? Si ex animo essent, an volebat homines mentiri, et id quod erant se esse negare? . . . Qui religioni ducebant alium, praeter rerum omnium Creatorem, colere, an erant vi adigendi, ut se aliter sentire falso dicerent? Attamen hoc ip-

sum volebat Plinius, qui *supplicium* utique non *minabatur*, nisi ut eos negare cogeret. Quod erat improbum et impium, si revera cum Christianis sentiebant, &c. *Cleric. ib. n. vii. p. 549.*

(m) Adjungo Jo. Clericum, qui *Hist. Eccl.*

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say, "that (o) Plinie did all this out of kindnesse and good-will to the Christians: hoping, they might be induced to disown their first profession, [*that is, I think, to deny Christ:*] and that he " might not be obliged to put them to death."

This appears to me exceeding strange. I think, that Plinie had as much kindnesse for the Christians, as other Heathen persecutors: and that his treatment of them was exactly the same with what they met with from their worst enemies, in the times of the worst persecuting Emperours.

The Irenarch, who apprehended Polycarp, said: *What (p) harm is it to say, Lord Cesar, and sacrifice, and save your life?* And afterwards, the Proconsul himself, endeavoring to persuade him to deny Christ, said: "*Reverence (q) thy age, and other things common upon like occasions. Swear by Cesar's fortune. Repent. Swear, and reproach Christ, and I will dismiss thee.*" To all which Polycarp made a resolute, and proper answer.

Eusebius giving an account of the martyrdoms of *Phileas*, Bishop

*Ecl. sec. 2. p. 546. . . . 553. suas ad totam hanc epistolam protulit meditationes: sed, ut ex hac mea Dissertatione, apparebit, iusto festinantius excussas. Illud in primis errat vir doctissimus, quod longe aliter in Christianos putat affectum fuisse Plinium, quam revera fuit. Heuman. Disput. de Persecutione Christianor. Plinian. n. i. ubi supr. p. 120. not. (c).*

(o) Interrogavit igitur eos, an essent Christiani, non ideo, ut se Christianos faterentur, sed ut negando effugerent supplicium. Quapropter non semel eos interrogavit, sed iterum, sed tertio, et, quasi cum ignaris periculi ageret, addita tandem *comminatione mortis*. Quam cum essent, qui fortiter contemnerent, invitae

fidei Christiani, hos necessitate magis, quam ira, cogente, *duci*, hoc est, supplicio affici iussit. Non enim putabat iniquum, contemtores tantae suae humanitatis, et mortem pro vita libenter eligentes, at ne precantes quidem humiliter, ut sibi parcat, mori. *Heuman. ib. §. vi. p. 127. 128.*

De Plinii benigno in Christianis animo mihi non est dubium, quin huc spectarint ipsius interrogationes, ut eos in vita potius fervaret negantes Christianismum. *Ritterbusius in loc. et ap. Heuman. l. c. p. 127. not. (z).*

(p) *Euseb. H. E. l. 4. cap. 15. p. 131. B.*

(q) *Ibid. p. 131. D.*

shop of Thmuis in Egypt, and *Philoromus*, Receiver General at Alexandria, who suffered under the persecuting Emperour Maximin, says: “When (*r*) many of their kindred, and other honorable friends, and some of the magistrates, and even the Judge himself, advised them to take pity upon themselves, and to consider their wives and children, they would not by all their entreaties be induced, out of a regard to their own lives, to transgress the divine laws concerning denying and confessing our Saviour — and having withstood all the threatenings and abuses of the Judge, they were beheaded.”

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Lactantius (*s*) is far from reckoning them merciful Governours, who took great care, to save the lives of Christians, by inducing them to deny their first confession, and who sometimes mightily pleased themselves, when they left their provinces, that their government had been unbloudy. And he speaks with great disdain, of a Governour of Bithynia, and therefore a successor of our Plinie, “who exulted, as if he had gained a victorie over a whole nation of Barbarians, when one Christian at last seemed to give way, who with signal fortitude had for two years withstood all his cruel attacks.”

(*r*) *H. E. l. 8. cap. x. p. 301. And see the Credibility. &c. P. 2. Vol. v. p. 346. 347.*

(*s*) Illud vero pessimum (Praesidium) genus est, cui clementiae species falso blanditur. Ille gravior, ille saevior est carnifex, qui neminem statuit occidere. Itaque dici non potest, hujusmodi iudices quanta, et quam gravia tormentorum genera excogitaverint, ut ad effectum propositi sui pervenirent. Haec autem non tantum ideo faciunt, ut gloriari possint, nullum se innocentium peremisse: (nam

et ipse audivi aliquos gloriantes, quia administratio sua, in hac parte, fuerit incruenta:) sed invidiae causa, ne aut ipsi vincantur, aut illi virtutis suae gloriam consequantur. Itaque in excogitandis poenarum generibus, nihil aliud, quam victoriam excogitant. . . . Vidi ego, in Bithynia, praesidem, gaudio mirabiliter elatum, tanquam Barbarorum gentem aliquam subegisset, quod unus, qui per biennium magna virtute restiterat, postremo cedere visus est. *Instit. l. 5. cap. xi.*

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But it would be endless to rehearse all the ancient instances of this (*t*) kind.

The true and only kindnesse of any in such cases, whether they be magistrates, or others, can be none but this only : They who have power ought to discharge men brought before them, and accused, if, upon inquirie, they appear to be innocent, and free from such crimes, as deserve punishment. And real friends should exhort them to persevere in the profession of the truth, and not to do or say any thing contrarie to conviction, through fear of suffering.

*For it was no doubt with me, whatever might be the nature of their opinion, that contumacie and inflexible obstinacie ought to be punished.*

*Whatever might be the nature of their opinion, "that is, says " (u) an Author, favorable enough to Plinie, whether their religion tended to make them wicked, or good men."*

The observation of Le Clerc is to this purpose. "But (*x*) the " constance of these men, who were convicted of no crimes, or " wicked principles, as our President will acknowledge by and by, " ought not to be called *contumacie* and *obstinacie*. Perseverance " in what is good deserves commendation, so far is it from expo-  
" sing

(*t*) *They who desire to see more instances, may consult Kortholt, as before, p. 37. &c.*

(*u*) . . . *qualecunque esset quod faterentur* : hoc est. sive improbos redderet ipsos religio sua, sive bonos. *Heuman. ubi supr. n. vi. p. 128.*

(*x*) *Atqui pertinacia et obstinatio dici nullo jure potuit eorum constantia, qui nihil flagitiosum, (quod mox de Christi-*

*anis agnosceret noster,) fatebantur. Perseverantia in re bona non potest non laudari, nedum ut jure poenas dare debeat. Praeterea quibus legibus pertinaciae mors erat imposita, nisi res per se mala esset, quae pertinacius fieret? Itaque debuisset Secundus, antequam duci Christianos juberet, in eorum religionem inquirere, non, qualecunque esset quod faterentur, eos damnare. Cler. ib. n. viii. p. 549.*

“sing men to punishment. By what law was death ever appointed for *obstinacie*, without any other fault? Plinie therefore, before he ordered any Christians away to be punished, should have inquired into the principles of their religion, and not have resolved to condemn and punish them, whatever their opinions were.” So says that rational and judicious writer.

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The learned Lawyer, Fr. Balduinus (*y*) does not speak more favorably of this determination of Plinie, than *Le Clerc*.

Indeed, these are hard words, very improperly applied to men, who were open to conviction, and willing to satisfy others, if they might have leave to speak. But they would not be persuaded by fair promises, and severe menaces, to deny what they thought to be truth. And, as *Kortbolt* says: “Who (*z*) can forbear to admire such magnanimity?”

*There were others of the same infatuation, whom, because they are Roman Citizens, I have noted down to be sent to the City.*

Upon this part of Plinie’s epistle we may farther remark, as follows:

*First*, I believe, we may hence reasonably conclude, that the Christians underwent many hardships in several places from Governours of provinces, when there was no general persecution.

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*Secondly,*

(*y*) Mira vero profani hominis, et causam, de qua pronunciat, non intelligentis, confidentia, cum de religione, hoc est, de re maximam quaerebatur. Causa capitis agebatur. Audit, reos quidem factum fateri: sed constanter defendere, se jure facere, atque adeo pie et religiose. Quid illud tandem sit, neque intelligit, neque inquit. Et tamen non dubitat

damnare. Certe religionem non abjicere, improbae obstinationis non est, sed optima constantiae. *Balduin. ubi supr. p. 40.*

(*z*) Et quis eorum non suspiceret *λειστέων*, quos nec exilium, nec carcer . . . nec gladius, nec crux, ad abnegandam fidem adigere potuit? *Kort. ib. p. 59.*

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*Secondly*, it appears to me, that Plinie acted very arbitrarily, and unrighteously, in his treatment of the Christians in his province. Some, perhaps, yea, probably, many, \* he put to death: and others, who were Roman Citizens, he sent from their native country, or the place of their usual abode, to Rome. What they suffered, we cannot say: but he sent them away, to be dealt with, as Christians. But what right had Plinie to act in this manner? By what law, or laws, did he punish those with death, who, upon examination before him, persisted in the profession of Christianity? There was not at that time any Imperial Edict in force against the Christians, as was observed some while ago.

There had been such laws in the time of Nero, and Domitian. But they were abrogated. Nor were any like edicts since published. And upon other occasions Plinie expresseth great dislike of those two Emperours, as enemies to liberty, and mankind.

The old Romans protected people of all sects and religions: as was largely shewn by us (a) formerly. Nor were any of their priests, or worshipers molested, or their rites prohibited, unless they were guilty of some misdemeanour, contrarie to good manners, and inconsistent with the welfare of society. Nothing of that kind had been proved to Plinie against the Christians. I do not therefore perceive, how they could be punished by virtue of any laws of the Emperours, or any ancient laws of the Senate and People of Rome. I think, that there were not, and could not be any laws against them, as Christians. When St. Paul pleaded before Festus and Agrippa, and that numerous, and august assemblie at Cesarea by the sea-side, the residence of the Roman Governour, he gave a large and distinct account

\* So says Eusebius in his Chronicle, cited above at p. 16. note (o). Plinius Secundus, quum quendam provinciam regeret, et in magistratu suo plurimos Christianorum interfecisset, multitudine eorum

perterritus, quaesivit de Trajano, quid facto opus esset . . . &c.

(a) See the *Credib. P. i. B. i. ch. viii.* p. 380. &c.



count of himself, and his doctrine, and his conduct: what he had preached to Jews, and Gentils, and with what zeal he had acted in recommending this doctrine to all men. And when he had finished his discourse, they all agreed in their verdict, saying: *This man doth nothing wortbie of death, or of bonds.* Then said Agrippa to Festus: *This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cesar.* Acts xxvi. 31, 32.

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Therefore there were no Roman laws against the Christian Religion, or it's professors, or teachers. Consequently, Plinie, in putting Christians to death, as such, acted without law and authority.

That they suffered without law, appears from himself. He punished them for *inflexible obstinacie*. But who can allege any law of the Roman Empire, which condemned men to death for *contumacie and obstinacie*, whatever might be the nature of their opinion? We proceed.

*In a short time, the crime spreading itself, even whilst under prosecution, as is usual in such cases, divers sorts of people came in my way. An information was presented to me, without mentioning the author, containing the names of many persons, who upon examination denied, that they were Christians, or had ever been so. Who repeated after me an invocation of the Gods, and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image, which for that purpose I had caused to be brought, and set before them, together with the statues of the deities. Moreover they reviled the name of Christ. None of which things, as is said, they who are really Christians, can by any means be compelled to do. These therefore I thought proper to discharge.*

This is a remarkable paragraph. We hence learn, that (b)  
Trajan

(b) Vel hinc apparet, quid habendum de assertione Eutropii, l. ix. et Cassiodori, et Eusebii in Chronicis, quod inter Imperatores primus ut Deum adorari se jufferit Diocletianus. *Kortholt. Comm. in Plin. et Trajan. Ep. p. 81.*

A. D. Trajan was worshiped as a God, in his life-time. And here we see  
<sup>106.</sup>  
 and 107. many people, brought before Plinie, and accused as Christians, who  
 were not so, and, as it seems, never were. But they were men-  
 tioned by name in an Information, which was not subscribed. It  
 appears to have been a malicious accusation. Le Clerc says, "We  
 " (c) hence perceive, how dangerous a thing persecution is: when  
 " also innocent persons are involved in it, or are without reason sus-  
 " pected. Which in the affair of religion may be of bad conse-  
 " quence."

Though these persons were not now Christians, and never  
 had openly professed Christianity, they may have been men  
 of a mild and moderate disposition. Possibly, they had some-  
 times spoken favorably of the Christians, and intimated, that they  
 thought they were treated too rigorously, and were not so bad people,  
 as some insinuated. These we may consider, as low-church Gentils,  
 though they were not Christians.

All these persons Plinie, our Pro-Praetor, discharged: but not  
 without strict examination, and good assurance, that they were not  
 Christians. First, he puts the question to them. And they deny,  
 that they were Christians, or had ever been so. And, as he says,  
 they afterwards invoked the Gods in a form prescribed by himself:  
*me praeunte*. It is implied, and to be understood, that they did  
 every thing else, hereafter mentioned, in the like manner: that is,  
 in a form prescribed by him, they *made supplication to Trajan's image,*  
*and reviled the name of Christ.*

A learned man, who not long since wrote a commentarie upon  
 this letter of Plinie, and with a design to correct the mistakes of  
 former Commentators, says, "that (d) Plinie seems to have confi-  
 " dered

(c) Vel hinc quam periculosa sit per-  
 sequutio, intelligere est: cum etiam inno-  
 centes eâ involvantur, aut certe immeri-  
 to suspecti fiant. Quod est, in religionis

negotio, periculosissimum. *Ib. num. ix.*  
*p. 550.*

(d) Christum quidem pro altero So-  
 crate

“ dered Christ, as another *Socrates*, who both by a pious life, and  
 “ a pious doctrine, excited his disciples to the love of virtue, and an  
 “ abhorrence of vice.” I think, we may do well to take our notion  
 of Plinie’s character and sentiments from himself, rather than from  
 our own imagination. How he treated the name, or person of  
 Christ, and how he required others to treat it, we have just seen.  
 What he thought of the Christian Religion, we saw before, when  
 he called it *infatuation*, or madness, *amentia*. Moreover he inflicted  
 death upon several of the faithful followers, and steady disciples  
 of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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*Others were named by an informer, who at first confessed themselves  
 Christians, and afterwards denied it. The rest said, they had been  
 Christians, but had ceased to be so, some three years, some longer,  
 and one, or more, above twenty years. [or, as Mr. Melmoth, a few  
 above twenty years agoe.] They all worshiped your image, and the  
 statues of the Gods. These also reviled Christ.*

These were presented to Plinie in a libel, or information: and,  
 as we may reasonably think, properly subscribed, with the name of  
 the accuser. Nevertheless his accusations seem to have been malici-  
 ous. For they were not all true. Some, whom he accused, as  
 Christians, were not so at that time.

The persons, first mentioned, are described by Plinie after this  
 manner: *they confessed themselves to be Christians*, that is, when  
 brought before Plinie, and interrogated by him, they said, they  
 were Christians: *and afterwards denied it.*

Here we are to recollect, what Plinie assured Trajan, was his  
 constant method of proceeding. *I have taken this course*, says he,  
*with*

crate videtur habuisse, qui cum piâ vitâ,  
 tum piâ doctrinâ, discipulos suos excitâvit

ad studium virtutum, fugamque vitiorum.  
*Heuman. ib. n. v. p. 126.*

A. D. <sup>106.</sup>  
and 107. *with all who have been brought before me, and accused as Christians. I put the question to them, whether they were Christians. Upon their confessing to me, that they were, I repeated the question a second, and a third time, threatening also to put them to death. So he had acted toward those, of whom he is now speaking. Upon his first putting the question to them, whether they were Christians, they confessed, they were. But when he repeated the question the second, or the third time, adding menaces, they denied, that they were (e) Christians: that is, they gave way, and their courage failed them, being terrified by the Governour's threatenings. Here we see more persons overcome by the artifices and menaces of our Proprætor, who was an ingenious man, and soon became an expert persecutor.*

*After them, he mentions others, who said, they had been Christians, but had ceased to be so, some three years, some longer, and one at least above twenty years.*

What were the occasions of their leaving the Christians, we cannot say particularly, but probably, it was not willingly, and of their own choice, but rather through fear of suffering for the profession of the Christian Religion. However, the change of some may have been owing to the fickleness and inconstance of their own temper, or to some worldly considerations, less moving than open persecution. All these are deserters, and apostates, some made so by Plinie himself, others by other Governours, and some possibly through their own unsteady temper. All these Plinie examines, and reports their testimonies. Which we are next to observe.

*They affirmed, that the whole of their fault, or errour, lay in this, that they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light,*  
and

(e) Quamquam admiranda erat, et plane inusitata Christianorum plerorumque, si persecutiones aestuarent, constantia, παρρησία, et ἀπιστία; multi tamen

tormentorum metu, multi etiam ex merâ animi levitate, vel seculi vanitate fascinati, a fide defecerunt. *Kortholt, in loc. ubi supra. p. 95.*

*and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as a God, and to bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adulterie, never to falsify their word, not to deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it. When these things were performed, it was their custom to separate, and then to come together again to a meal, which they ate in common, without any disorder. But this they had forbore, since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.*

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Here, perhaps, some may wish, that *Plinie* had expressed himself more distinctly. For they who had deserted the Christians several years ago, could not of their own knowledge inform him about what had been done by them, since he came into the province. However, we before observed, that the persons first mentioned, professed themselves Christians, when they were brought before him. They therefore could inform him of their late conduct. And concerning other times all here present could bear witness.

*They affirmed, they solemnly attested, that the whole of their fault, or error, lay in this, that they were wont to meet together on a stated day: doubtless meaning the Lord's-day, or Sunday: on which, as Justin relates particularly in his first Apologie, all (f) the Christians in general, in any city, and in the neighboring countrey, came together for divine worship.*

*... before it was light.*

(f) Καὶ τῆ τῆ ἡλίου λεγομένη ἡμέρα πάντων κατὰ πόλεις ἢ ἀγροὺς μενόντων ἐπὶ τὰ αὐτὰ συνέλευσις γίνεται. *Ap. i. p. 88, D. Par. 83. D. Bened.*

Τὴν δὲ τῆ ἡλίου ἡμέραν κοινῇ πάντες τὴν συνέλευσιν ποιούμεθα. *P. 99. B. al. 84. A.*

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Justin Martyr, in his large and particular account of the Christian worship, says nothing of this (g) circumstance. It is likely therefore, that (b) this was not chosen, but only out of necessity, when they were disturbed by enemies, either the common people or magistrates.

And sang among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ, as a God. Mr. Melmoth thus: And addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some God. What Plinie means by *secum invicem*, which I have rendred among themselves alternately, I cannot say distinctly. Justin says, “they (i) stood up, and offered up prayers and “thanksgivings together, and when the President had concluded, “all the people said, Amen.” Perhaps, this is what Plinie means. The prayers were common, the people joynd therein with the President, and signified their assent by a loud Amen, at the conclusion. (k)

Tertullian representing Plinie's account, says: “He (l) discovered “nothing beside their meeting together before it was light, and singing  
“ing

(g) *Vid. Ap. i. sub fin.*

(b) *Stato die ergo, hoc est, Domini-  
co, convenire solebant, idque ante lu-  
cem, ne persecutioni, quae in ipsos fae-  
viebat, se obnoxios redderent. Bevereg.  
Cod. Can. cap. 3. n. vii.*

Non fugiebant certe lucem, non quae-  
rebant tenebras Christiani. Sed quid fa-  
cerent? Interdictum iis erat locis publi-  
cis, et ipsa prope luce solis, ut igni et a-  
quâ. Certe ubi licuit, in apertâ et pub-  
licâ luce convenerunt. *Fr. Balduin. in  
loc. Ap. Edic. Prin. Roman. p. 46. Vid.  
et Kortholt. ubi supr. p. 105.*

(i) . . . Ἐ συνετέλεσσαν τὰς εὐχὰς καὶ εὐ-  
χαριστίας, πᾶς ὁ παρὰν λαὸς ἐπευφημῆ ἑ-  
γών. Ἀμίου. *Ap. i. p. 97. D. al. 82. E.*

. . . ἔπειτα ἀνιστάμεθα κοινῇ πάντες, καὶ εὐχὰς  
πέμπομεν. . . καὶ ὁ πρεσβὺς εὐχὰς ἑμοίως καὶ  
εὐχαριστίας, ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ, ἀναπέμπει,  
καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐπευφημῆ λέγαν τὸ ἀμήν. *p. 98.  
D. E. al. p. 83 D. E.*

(k) . . . at confiteor tamen, nihil ob-  
sistere arbitremur, Plinium exprimere hoc  
uno vocabulo voluisse, quod Christiani  
pluribus ipsi verbis narraverant, presbyte-  
rorum unum, seu episcopum, formulam  
precum dictare, populum vero eam repe-  
tere, atque voculâ Amen claudere solere.  
*Moshem. De Reb. ante C. M. p. 148.*

(l) . . . nihil aliud se de sacramentis eo-  
rum comperisse, quam coetus antelucanos  
ad canendum Christo et Deo. *Ap. cap.  
2. p. 3.*

“ing to Christ and God:” or, as some would read, *to Christ as a God*. And *Eusebius*, speaking of the same matter from *Tertullian*, says, *they (m) sang a hymn to Christ, as to a God*. Such are their expressions, though *carmen*, the word used by *Plinie*, does (*n*) not always signify a composition in metre: but may denote a prayer in any form.

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*And sing together a hymn to Christ, as to a God*. This is a heathen way of speaking. And it has been questioned, whether (*o*) *Plinie* speaks here in his own words, or those of the Christians who were brought before him, Heathen people being willing to deify eminent men. Jesus Christ was such an one, especially in the esteem of Christians. All knew he had died, and that the Christians said, he was risen again from the dead, and was ascended to heaven. Heathen people therefore might naturally enough say, they worshiped Christ, as a God.

*Justin Martyr* nevertheless says: “In (*p*) all our oblations we praise the Creator of all through his Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.” And, “The (*q*) President gives praise and glorie to the Father of all in the name of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” And,

F 2

says

(*m*) . . . ἡ τὴν χριστὸν θεὸν δίκην ὑμνῶν.  
*H. E. l. 3. c. 33.*

(*n*) Alias *carmen* Romanis vocatur quicquid conceptis verbis dicitur: sic ut quancumque praescriptis verbis conceptam precationem *Pliniana* innuere possit narratio. *Kortholt ut supra, p. 109.*

*Plinius* *carmen* vocat, Romano more, quod conceptis verbis dicitur. *Justinus* scribit, praeunte ministro conceptas fuisse publicas Christianorum preces, totumque populum assentientem respondisse: Amen. Nullius autem cantus meminit. Et sane *carmen* quoque Latine dicitur, precatio, praescriptis verbis concepta, Sed

*Tertullianus* hic intelligit, quod canebatur. *Balduin. ib. p. 46.*

(*o*) Vocabula, quasi *Dec*, qua vi praedita hic sint, determinare, haud audeo. Incertum enim est, suis hic verbis *Plinius* loquatur, an Christianorum. *Mosheim, ut supr. p. 148.*

(*p*) Ἐπὶ πάντι τε εἰς προσεφθέμεθα, εὐλογῶμεν τὸν ποιητὴν τῶν πάντων διὰ τὸ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, καὶ διὰ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου. *Ap. i. p. 98. C. al. 83. C.*

(*q*) Καὶ οὗτος λαβὼν αἶνον καὶ εὐξεν τῷ πατρὶ τῶν ὄλων διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου, ἀναπέμψα. *P. 97. C. al. 82. D.*

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says Tertullian, “ the (*q*) God, whom we worship, is the God who made this whole universe, and every thing therein, by his powerful word.” Again, “ We (*r*) worship God through Christ. Call him “ a man, if you think fit. It is by him, and through him, that “ we have been brought to the knowledge, and the worship of “ God. And the Jews themselves were taught how to worship God “ by the man Moses.”

Mr. Melmoth, as before seen, translates those words in this manner : *And addressed themselves in a form of prayer to Christ, as to some God.* And I must acknowledge, that his translation appears to me as proper, as my own. For *carmen*, or ὕμνος, (as before hinted,) does not always denote a metrical composition. Julian concludes his Oration upon *the Mother of the Gods*, with ( \* ) what he calls a *hymn to her honour*, which is a prayer in prose. And, unquestionably, Julian speaks properly. Therefore Pliny's *carmen Christo quasi Deo*, may have been a prayer to God, in the name of Christ, a prayer upon Christian principles, in which God was praised for all the blessings of the Christian revelation. I may here observe likewise, that Marinus, in his Life of Proclus, says, Some †† hymns [ to the Gods are in metre, others in prose.

... and to bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but to forbear adulterie, theft, and all vice in general.

About

(*q*) Quod colimus, Deus unus est, qui totam molem istam, cum omni instrumento elementorum . . . verbo quo jussit . . . de nihilo expressit in ornamentum majestatis suae. *Ap. cap. 17. p. 18.*

(*r*) Dicimus, et palam dicimus. . . . Deum colimus per Christum. Illum hominem putate. Per eum, et in eo se cognosci vult Deus, et coli. Ut Judæis re-

spondeamus. Et ipsi Deum per hominem Moysen colere didicerunt. *Ib. cap. 21. p. 23.*

( \* ) Αλλά τί πέρας ἔσαι μοι τῶν λόγων, ἢ δῆλον ὡς ὁ τοῦ μεγάλης ὕμνος Θεῷ; *Orai. v. p. 179. Spanh.*

†† Καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸς ὕμνος κομψότερον ἐργάζονται τὸς μὲν ἐν μέτροις, τὸς δὲ καὶ ἀνευ μέτρων. *Marin. de Vita Procli. cap. i.*



About the interpretation of these first words learned men have differed. It is plain, that *Plinie* does not here send *Trajan* an account of the several parts of the Christian worship, reading, and explaining the Scriptures, and delivering explications and exhortations from them, nor of the eucharist. To me therefore it seems, that in these words *Plinie* aimed to represent the general design of their worship, in their religious assemblies. Which was to engage themselves to the practise of all virtue, and to avoid all vice. This seems to be the meaning of *Tertullian's* expressions, though, perhaps, somewhat obscure. Who says, *Plinie* tells *Trajan*, “ that (*s*) accepting an obstinate refusal to sacrifice, he had detected nothing in their mysteries, beside their assembling together early in the morning, before day-light, to enforce the observation of their discipline: forbidding murder, adulterie, fraud, cheating, and all manner of wickedness.” *Eusebius* representing the same thing, speaks exactly to the (*t*) like purpose. In short, *Plinie* tells *Trajan*, that the design of their religious assemblies, so far as he could discover, was to establish themselves, and each other, in the firm belief of the principles of their institution, and to engage themselves, not to the practise of any wickedness, but to avoid all wickedness of every kind. This *Plinie* calls *binding themselves by an oath*.

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So *Justin Martyr*, in his account of the Christian worship says: “ (*u*) the memoirs of the Apostles, and the writings of the Prophets are read: When the Reader has finished, the President makes a discourse, recommending, and exhorting to the imitation of the good

(*s*) . . . allegans, praeter obstinationem non sacrificandi, nihil aliud se in sacramentis eorum comperisse, quam coetus antelucanos ad canendum Christo et (vel ut) Deo, et ad confederandam disciplinam: homicidium, adulterium, fraudem, per-

fidiam, et cetera scelera prohibentes. *Tert. Ap. c. 2. p. 3.*

(*t*) . . . Καὶ πρὸς τὸ τὴν ἐπισήμην αὐτῶν διαρπάσσειν. κ. λ. *Euf. H. E. l. 3. cap. 33. p. 106. A.*

(*u*). *Ap. i. p. 98. D. al. 83. D.*

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Mr. Mosheim (y) explains Plinie after the same manner that I have now done.

*Which things being performed, it was their custom to separate, and after some time to come together again, to a meal, which they ate in common. But this they had forbore, since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I had prohibited assemblies.*

There can be no doubt, but that Plinie by this *meal*, or supper, means what was called by the Christians ἀγάπη, or a *love-feast*: of which mention is made by (z) Tertullian, and other ancient writers. Of which likewise, as is generally supposed, St. Peter speaks 2 Ep. ii. 13. and St. Jude, ver. 12. It is plain from what Plinie says, that this meal was not eat in the morning, at the time of their solemn worship, but some while afterwards, and, probably, in the evening.

Some

(x) Coimus ad literarum divinarum commemorationem. . . Certe fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, disciplinam praeceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus. Ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, et censura divina. *Ap. cap. 39.*

(y) Ego quidem Christianos dixisse opinor, se quoties eongregarentur, supremo numini sancte vitam puram, et omnis criminis expertem promittere. Id Plinius, religiosum promissum, et jusjurandum parum discernens, formulâ Romanâ, *sacramento obstringere*, quo fortius mentem Trajani moveret, exprimebat. *Moshem. ubi supr. p. 150. in notis.*

(z) Coena nostra de nomine rationem sui ostendit. Id vocatur, quod dilectio penes Graecos. Quantiscunque sumptibus constet, lucrum est pietatis facere sumptum: siquidem inopes quosque refrigerio isto juvamus. . . nihil vilitatis, nihil immodestiae admittit. Non prius discumbitur, quam oratio ad Deum praegustetur. Editur quantum esurientes cupiunt: bibitur, quantum pudicis est utile. Ita saturantur, ut qui meminerint, etiam per noctem adorandum Deum sibi esse. *Ap. cap. 39.*

Some have thought, that this feast generally accompanied the eucharist. But Mr. Hallett, in his Discourse on the Agapae, or Love-Feasts of the ancient Christians, having considered the testimonies of ancient writers, says, "it (a) was a supper, and that "the eucharist did not attend it, either before, or after." Again: "the *agapae*, or love-feasts, being suppers, were not concomitants, "or appendages of the eucharist. They were entirely distinct and "independent things." "This may be farther confirmed by observing, that *Justin Martyr*, in his account of the public worship of the Church, and particularly of the eucharist, does not "say one word of the *agapae*, or *love feasts*, as tacked to it, either "before, or after."

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Others represent this in a different manner. "As (b) the worship of the Christians in Bithynia was for some reasons performed "early in the morning, they were obliged to have their love-feast "separate: though at other seasons, when they had more liberty, "this and their solemn worship were joyned together, both by "them, and by other Christians. The morning was not a time for "a meal. This therefore they deferred till noon, or after." So Mr. *Moshcim*.

The

(a) See his *Notes and Discourses on several Texts of Scripture*. vol 3. p. 235. &c.

(b) Hoc igitur [stato] die binos conventus agebant Bythynienses Christiani: alterum ante lucem, Dei colendi, firmandaeque pietatis causa: alterum sole lucente, meridiano sine dubio tempore, communis cibi capiendi causa. Non divellebant hac ratione officia, quae Leo debebantur, reliqui Christiani, verum uno omnia conventu, quae cultus publici lex imperabat, nullo intervallo, peragebant.

Bithyniensibus vero cur in duo tempore divisos actus cultum divinum distribuerent, haec erat magni momenti ratio. Propter hostium insidias in die ad cultum publicum congregari non poterant, sed ante lucem convenire debebant. Id vero antelucanum tempus cibo capiendo haud commodum erat. Quare differendum erat convivium amoris in illud diei tempus, quo corpora reliqui cives reficere solebant. *Mosh. de Reb. Christ. ante C. M. p. 147.*

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The accounts, which Plinie had received of this meal, represented it as harmless, and free from disorder. And it may be reasonably supposed, (*c*) to have been very frugal, and without delicacies, as Tertullian says, and Plinie (*d*) seems to intimate.

However, this meal, or feast, as Plinie was assured, the Christians in Bithynia had forbore, and discontinued, since he published the Emperour's order, forbidding fellowships or assemblies. Mr. Dodwell thought, that (*e*) Trajan's order did not include a prohibition of their meetings for religious worship. But Tillemont (*f*) does not assent to this. Whether that opinion be right, or not, the Christians continued to meet early in the morning for religious worship, to enforce, and secure the great design of their institution. But omitted the other assemblee.

And, as seems to me, we have here a remarkable instance of that sincere regard, which the primitive Christians had for the commands of civil magistrates in all things, within the compass of their authority. These *love-feasts* were of early original, and had been long in use. Nevertheless, they were not considered, as a divine command, or an institution of the (*g*) Gospel. When therefore Plinie published his edict, forbidding assemblies, they omitted them: whilst they continued their other meeting: forasmuch as the great design of these, the providing for the poor and destitute, might be secured some other way, by private contributions and benefactions.

We

(*c*) See before note (*z*). p. 38.

(*d*) *Promiscuus cibus* opponitur hic, ut arbitrer, exquisito et delicato. *Moshem. ib. p. 151.*

(*e*) Sed et illud *Agapas* duntaxat spectavit, non item *synaxes ecclesiasticas*, quae quidem *Eucharistiae* percipiendae gratia celebrarentur. &c. *Diss. Cypr. xi. §. 25.*

(*f*) *Persecution de l'Eglise sous Trajan. art. v.*

(*g*) Says Mr. Hallett, as before, p. 255. "I cannot find, that the Christians looked upon their love-feasts, as religious, or divine institutions, like the Lord's supper. If they had, their Councils would no more have banished them out of the churches, than the Lord's Supper itself."

We may form an idea of the *assemblies prohibited* in Plinie's edict, by observing another letter of his to Trajan. There (*g*) had been a dreadful fire in Nicomedia, the chief city of Bithynia, whilst Plinie was absent in some distant part of the province. By that fire had been consumed many private houses, and two public buildings. Of this Plinie informs the Emperour, and makes a proposal to this effect: "You (*b*) will consider, Sir, whether it may not be advisable, to "institute a college of smiths, [or a companie of fire-men] consisting only of one hundred and fifty." And he tells *Trajan*, "that "as this college will consist of so small a number, it will be easie enough to keep them under a proper regulation."

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Nevertheless the Emperour did not approve of that proposal. And says, in his answer to Plinie: "Whatever (*i*) name we give them, "and for whatever purposes they may be founded, they will not "fail to form themselves into assemblies, however short their meetings may be." This is sufficient to shew, how jealous Trajan was of such societies. I shall refer to two other (*k*) letters, which have some affinity with these.

By Philo (*l*) we are assured, "that Flaccus, President of Egypt, "near the end of the reign of Tiberius, prohibited their *ἐταυρίαις*, fellowships, or assemblies at Alexandria: which they held under a "pretense of religion indeed, but made use of for drunkenness, and "other excesses." However, such were not the love-feasts of the Christians, as we are well assured, but sober, and harmless meals.

(*g*) Quum diversam partem provinciae circumirem, Nicomediae vastissimum incendium, multas privatorum domos, et duo publica opera . . . absumsit. *l. x. ep. 42.*

(*b*) Tu, Domine, dispice, an instituendum putes collegium fabrorum, duntaxat hominum CL. . . Non erit difficile custodire tam paucos. *Ibid.*

(*i*) Quodcunque nomen, ex quacunque causa dederimus iis qui in idem contracti fuerint, hetaeriae quamvis breves fient. *Ep. 43.*

(*k*) *L. x. ep. 117. 118.*

(*l*) *Phil. in Flac. p. 965.*

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*After receiving this account, I judged it the more necessarise to examine, and that by torture, two maid-servants, which were called Ministers. But I have discovered nothing, beside a bad and excessive superstition.*

We may be apt to think, that Plinie might have been satisfied with the accounts received from deserters or apostates: who were several in number, who had ceased to be Christians, some, many years agoe, others more lately, at different times: who had all given a clear, and an agreeing, testimonie to the innocence of the Christian Worship, and the sobriety of their manners. Nevertheless he is still dissatisfied, and now proceeds to an examination by torture. Surely, this Governour's moderation is not here very conspicuous! However, he gets into his hands two of the weaker sex, hoping, I presume, that if the Christians had among them any secrets, still concealed from him, he should now find them out. One, or other, of these women must needs give way, and open all, when put to the question.

*Two maid-servants.* Some think, that these were chosen, because they were slaves. But I suppose that others, beside slaves, might be legally put to the torture, though Roman Citizens might not. I cannot easily believe, that *Deaconesses* in Christian churches were slaves. Nor do I think it very likely, that (m) they should be domestic or hired servants. We now all know, what is meant by a *Deaconesse* in Christian writings. But I suspect, that Plinie was misled by the ambiguity of the Greek word *διάκονος*, which (n) is sometimes used for slaves, or such as performed the lowest services, usually appropriated

(m) *Ancillas* vocat Plinius. Sed vix crediderim Diaconissas servili conditione fuisse, in tanto apud Bithynos Christianorum numero. *Cleric. H. E.* p. 551. not. 15.

(n) . . . καὶ διάκονοι ἄραῖοι . . . τὴν ἐσθῆτα, καὶ τραπέζας, καὶ ἐκτόματα, καὶ διακίνας. κ. λ. *Lucian. Gall.* p. 168. Tom. 2. ed. *Graev.* Et sic passim apud Graecos audivimus.

ated to slaves. I say, I am apt to think, that Plinie was not sufficiently aware of the different meanings of the word *διάκονος*, *deacon*, in common use, and in the ecclesiastical sense. Rom. xvi. 1. *I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church, which is in Cenchrea.* ὄυσαν διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχρεαῖς. She was a servant of that church. But it does not follow, that she was either a slave, or a hired servant to any one member of it.

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A thought offers itself here, which will aggravate the severity of this torture. For, very probably, these women were in years: such only being qualified for the office of Deaconess. See 1 Tim. v. 9. However, Plinie made no scruple to try the torture upon them. For their office, and their age, would lead him to think, that they were thoroughly acquainted with what passed among the Christians, in their assemblies, and in their own houses. Lord Orrery, in his notes upon Pliny's Epistles, Vol. 2. p. 430. says: "Age might have pleaded in defense of these unhappy *ancillae*. But no circumstance was sufficiently strong to stem the torrent of religion."

Well. Plinie put to the question, and examined these two women, Deaconesses among the Christians in Bithynia. But all he could discover was no more than *a bad and excessive superstition*. By *bad*, *pravam*, meaning, I think, absurd, wrong, different from the commonly received religion. And he calls it *excessive*, *immodicam*, because they who embraced it, were fond and tenacious of it, and would rather die, than deny and forsake it. And many of them were active in propagating it, and recommending it to others.

By *bad*, he could mean nothing more, than wrong, and absurd, and contrarie to the prevailing religion. If Plinie in these examinations had discovered any thing vicious, any lewdness, any cruelty, practised in their worship: any seditious principles, any attempts, or designs, to subvert the government of the province, or the state of the Roman Empire: he must have given hints of it. He must have mentioned it distinctly. His regard for the welfare of Roman People,

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ple, his respect for the Emperour, which is well known to have been very great, would have prevented all concealment, and would have obliged, and induced him to be very explicit and particular. We may hence therefore absolutely conclude, that the Christians held no principles, and were guilty of no practises, that could justly expose them to punishment from civil magistrates. Their only offense was their religion, and that was innocent in all respects: though different from the idolatrous worship of the nations.

*Suspending therefore all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice. For it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially upon account of the great number of persons, who are in danger of suffering. For, many of all ages, of every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open countrey.*

Thus does (o) Plinie bear witness to the great number of converts to Christianity in *Pontus* and *Bithynia*, over which he presided. The words of Tertullian, who wrote some while afterwards, representing (p) the great encrease of Christianity and the multitude of it's professors, of all ranks and orders of men, are very strong and emphatical. And yet Plinie does in a manner confirm the whole of what he says.

*Never-*

(o) Hinc liquet, in Bithynia ingentem Christianorum, jam iis temporibus, numerum fuisse: ac proinde per Asiam longe lateque religionem Christianam, invitis Ethnicis et Judaeis, solâ suâ praestantiâ, propagatam fuisse. *Cleric. A. cxi. p. xii.*

(p) Obsessam vociferantur civitatem. In agris, in castellis, in insulis, Christianos. Omnem sexum, aetatem, conditionem, et jam dignitatem transgredi ad hoc nomen quasi detrimento moerent. *Ap. cap. i.*

Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia comple-



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*Nevertheless it seems to me, that it may be restrained, and corrected. It is certain, that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented. And the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims likewise are every where bought up, whereas for some time there were few purchasers. Whence it is easie to imagine, what numbers of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those who shall repent.*

From what Plinie says, of the desolation of the temples, and the neglect of the sacred solemnities, and the few purchasers of victims, which there had been for some while, it has been argued, “ that (q) this persecution was begun, and fomented by the Priests and their adherents, and such others, as had a dependence on the sacred solemnities.” Which may be true in this, as well as some other persecutions.

And I am willing to allow, that Plinie here adopts the language of those people, who brought these complaints, and who magnified the danger of the downfall of their religion. However, we are hereby assured, that the progress, which the Christian Religion had made in Pontus and Bithynia, was very considerable.

Learned men, I say, observe, that this persecution was begun and fomented

plevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia . . . Sola vobis relinquimus templa. *Ib. cap. 37. Conf. cap. v. et ad Nat. l. i. c. 1. et alibi.*

(q) Hos vero delatores Christianorum sacerdotes fuisse, manifestum esse reor ex his Plinii verbis . . . Causam hic moti ergo Christianos belli clarissime Proconsul indicat: *Templa in Bithynia desolata erant, sacra solemnia intermissa, victimae raro*

offerebantur. Haec vero causa nullos tangebatur, nisi sacerdotes, sacerdotumque antistites, quorum intererat unice, ut templa frequentarentur, et victimae coederentur. Quae ergo hi sine dubio apud Plinium erant, religiones Deorum, in summo discrimine versari, atque populum incitaverant, ut clamoribus supplicia Christianorum posceret. *Moshem, ut supr. p. 232. notis.*

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fomented by the Priests: to whom, as I suppose, many (*r*) others would joyn themselves, who had a zeal for the prevailing religion. But learned men seem to forget, that Plinie himself, our Propraetor, was a Priest, and that the Emperour, to whom he writes, was High-Priest, Pontifex Maximus. We need not, we ought not, to impute to Plinie any thing mean and sordid. He was above such things, which must have been far from his temper. But I think we may reasonably suppose, that he was sincerely concerned for the honour of the Gods, and of the priesthood: that he was desirous, the sacred solemnities should be upheld in all their splendour, and that the Priests should continue to enjoy their usual emoluments and perquisites, without diminution. I should think therefore, that it is not at all unreasonable to suppose, that Plinie himself was not a little moved at the abovementioned complaints, when made to him.

Some learned men have of late said, that (*s*) what Plinie did against the Christians, was done by him unwillingly, and not without some sort of compulsion. But I cannot discern any the least reason for this persuasion, in his letter.

I am unwilling to advance any thing without ground and reason. And therefore I forbear to say, that very probably, the arrival of this Propraetor who was Augur, in the province, a man well known for his exactness in all the solemnities of the ancient religion, raised great expectations in the minds of many, in the province, zealous for the established rites, and encouraged accusations and prosecutions against  
the

(*r*) Cum his sociabat sese innumerabilis varii generis turba, cui superstitiones publicae quaesui erant, mercatores, qui thura, bestias, aliaque vendebant Deorum cultoribus necessaria, architecti, caupones, aurifices. Act. xix. 25. fabri lignarii, statuarii, sculptores, tibicines, citharoedi, et alii, quibus omnibus Dii, eorumque ministri, templa, caeremoniae, dies festi,

magnas afferebant ad vitam beate ducendam opportunitates. *Moshem. ut supr. p. 103.*

(*s*) Certum est ex hac epistola, Plinium ipsum Christianos non aggressum fuisse, sed invitum a delatoribus et accuatoribus coactum, ut eos in jus vocaret, et puniret. *Moshem. ib. p. 232.*

the Christians. However, I must say, that this severe persecution under Plinie is a strange phenomenon. And would appear still stranger, and almost unaccountable, if it had no encouragement from him.

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Though great numbers of men had embraced the Christian Religion, or, as Plinie's expressions are, *though the contagion of this superstition had seized many*: he was of opinion, that it might be restrained and corrected. For this end he proposeth, that *pardon should be granted to those who repent*. And says, *it is easie to imagine, what numbers of men might then be gained*.

Every one should judge for himself. But to me it seems, that in all this there is no indication of favour to the Christian Religion, or good-will to the professors of it. I think, that Plinie proposes these measures to the Emperour, as the most likely to secure the interests of the old religion. He really thought, this method the most likely and most effectual to abolish what he calls an *absurd superstition*, and to reduce, and gradually extirpate the professors of it. And I suppose, that from our remarks upon his epistle it may appear, that *Plinie* himself had found the benefit of this scheme, and he had too much success in drawing men off from the open profession of the Christian doctrine. The Earl of Orrery [p. 431.] has already said the same, that I now do. For He allows, that Pliny expresses a *detestation* of Christianity, calling it *amentia, superstio prava et immodica*. “And the proposal, he says, which Pliny made to the Emperour, to give room for repentance, seems rather an act of policy, than of good nature.”

Having now gone over this letter, I beg leave to say: It seems to me, that there is a remarkable omission. Plinie fails not to tell *Trajan*, that the Christians worshiped Christ, *as a God*, and that they refused to worship his image. He should also have told Trajan, “they assured him, however, that they offered supplications to the God of the universe, for the health and long life of the Empe-  
“ rour,

A. D. 106. and 107. “ rour, and for the peace and prosperity of the Empire, and that “ God would grant him wise counsellors, and faithful servants and “ officers : and that they were obliged by the rules of their reli- “ gion so to do.” These things do so often occur in the (t) ancient Apologists, and other Christian writers, that it may be reckoned certain, and taken for granted, that some of the Christians, who plead- ed before Plinie, whether Roman Citizens, or others, did sufficiently assure him of their dutiful respect for the Emperour, and other Ma- gistrates, and of their love toward all mankind, even enemies, as well as others. This one omission alone, so far as I am able to judge, is enough to persuade us, there was some defect of equity and can- dour in Plinie’s treatment of the Christians.

It has been said, “ that (u) Pliny’s Letter is throughout an apologic for the Christians.” If so, is it not also his own condemnation? He had received many testimonies to the Christian innocence. These he reports to the Emperour. Nor could he do less. In this report the Christian principles, worship, and manners, appear in a good light. But then, is not Pliny blamable, who inflicted death, and other penalties, upon such men, and that without any express law?

I am

(t) Oramus etiam pro Imperatoribus, pro ministris eorum, ac potestatibus, pro statu seculi, pro rerum quiete, pro morâ finis. *Tertull. ap. cap. 39. Conf. cap. 31.*

Colimus ergo et Imperatorem sic, quomodo et nobis licet, et ipsi expedit, ut hominem a Deo secundum : et quicquid est, a Deo consecutum, et solo Deo minorem. Itaque et sacrificamus pro salute Imperatoris, sed Deo nostro et ipsius, sed quomodo praecepit Deus, pura prece. Non enim eget Deus, conditor universi-

tatis, odoris aut sanguinis alicujus. *Ad Scap. cap. 2. Vid. et Athenag. Leg. sub fin. et Origen. Contr. Cels. l. 8. et passim.*

(u) Apologia enim Christianorum est, quod facile patet, tota Plinii epistola, quâ calumnias, quibus illi premebantur, convellere studet, et mentem Trajani ad lenitatem et clementiam erga homines, quos ille a Romanorum quidem religione alienos, rerum sceleris puros cognoverit, inclinare. *Moshem. ut supr. p. 147.*

I am willing to make allowance for prejudices. And I believe, that the supreme Judge, when he shall take the final cognizance of human affairs, will pass an equitable sentence upon all, according to the advantages, or disadvantages of their condition, in their state of trial. The farther vindication of Pliny I leave to those, who are pleased to undertake it. And I am very willing, that my readers should observe and consider what is said by such advocates, as are favorable to him.

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Having done this, I must applaud the steadiness of those Roman Citizens, and others, in *Pontus and Bithynia*: who when *interrogated* by the Proprietor a *second*, and a *third time*, persevered in their first confession of the name of Christ, unmoved by his fair promises, and cruel threatenings. Who can forbear to think, that those Christians were mindfull of what St. Peter had writ to them? 1 ep. iv. ver. 12. to the end.

To them, and other such men, I humbly conceive, it is owing, that there is now any such thing, as virtue in the world. To them, and others like them, it is owing, that many great men, so apprehensive of inquisitiveness in things of religion, have been at length awakened, and induced to examine, and consider, and also to embrace the Christian Doctrine, and then to adorn it by the practice of all the virtues becoming their reasonable nature, and their high stations.

V. We now come to Trajan's Rescript, which \* \* is short, and

*Trajan's  
Rescript  
rehearsed.*

\* \* The Earl of Orrery, in his preface to the tenth book of Pliny's Epistles. Vol. 2. p. 323. expresseth himself in this manner: "Such a correspondence between a sovereign and a subject is no less curious, than extraordinary. But, if we are to pass an impartial judgement upon the two correspondents, the Em-

"peror's Epistles will certainly outshine  
"those of Pliny, to which they are an-  
"swers. The conciseness and sagacity,  
"which run through Trajan's stile, and  
"manner of writing, shew him an ar-  
"tist, if I may use the expression, in the  
"epistolary science."

A. D. concise, writ in the stile best becoming Lawgivers. And which is  
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 and 107. now to be rehearsed by us, with Notes and Observations.

*You have taken the right method, my Plinie, in your proceedings with those who have been brought before you as Christians.*

Plinie's proceedings, as I suppose, had been in some respects extraordinary, and unsupported by express law. And (x) yet Trajan declares his approbation of them. And hereby he also ratifies and confirms the proceedings of other Governours of provinces, if any of them had acted in a like manner, without express law: as, very probably several had.

*For it is impossible to establish any one rule, that shall hold universally.*

This, as seems to me, relates more especially to Plinie's first question: *whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust, ought to be treated all alike.* And Trajan seems to leave this very much to the discretion of Governours, to do as they thought best. Accordingly, as we well know, many, in succeeding times, both young people, and women, did suffer as Christians.

With regard to Plinie's second question, whether *pardon should be granted to those who repent*, he allows of it, if good proof be given of repentance.

As to the third question, Trajan peremptorily decides, that (y)  
*the*

(x) *Actum quem debuisti, &c. Actum* vocat extraordinariam Plinii quaestionem. Extraordinarium hoc crimen, de quo agebatur, erat. Nulla enim de eo lex certa erat. Trajanus esse etiam debere hoc iudicium extraordinarium, hoc est, magis-

tratum cognitioni et imperio relinquentum esse putat. *Baldin. ut supr. p. 63.*

(y) Cum Trajanus simpliciter rescribit, Christianos esse puniendos, neque aliam causam poenae requirit: satis significat, nomen

*the name is punishable, without any crime annexed. But he says, they should not be sought for.*

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I shall now recite the very words of this part of the Rescript.

*They are not to be sought for. If any are brought before you, and are convicted, they ought to be punished. However, he that denies his being a Christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is, by supplicating to our Gods, though he be suspected to have been so formerly, let him be pardoned upon repentance. But in no case, of any crime whatever, may a bill of information be received, without being signed by him, who presents it. And what follows. This last clause is very reasonable, as will be allowed by all. The rest we must consider.*

As I said just now, Trajan allows pardon to be granted, if good proof be given of repentance: *If he makes it evident in fact by supplicating to our Gods.* It has been said, by some Commentators, that here is a sign of Trajan's modestie, in that he does not add, *and by sacrificing to our image*: and that here is a proof of his moderation, in not adding, *and by reviling the name of Christ.* But I cannot persuade my-self to think, that such observations are at all material. Trajan (z) knew very well, that the Governours of provinces would not fail to supply those articles, though omitted by him. Trajan approves of *Plinie's* method, and what had been his, would be the

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nomen ipsum puniri. Et Tertullianus in Apolog. ostendit, nihil fuisse, quod in Christianis puniretur, praeter nomen. *Fr. Balduin. ut supr. p. 36.*

Quaesiverat Plinius, nomen ipsum Christianorum, etiamsi flagitiis careat, an flagitia cohaerentia nomini punienda sint? Trajanus dum rescribit simpliciter, si deferantur Christiani, et arguantur, id est, ejus esse sectae convincantur, puniendos

esse, nec aliam poenae causam requirit; quod nomen ipsum debeat puniri, satis indicat. Atque sic confirmat *nominis* illud *proelium*, quod praeter jus omne et fas sustinuisse fideles, ex queribundo tot veterum ore supra, ad Plinii consultationem, audivimus. *Kortholt. ut supr. p. 194.*

(z) Satis interim sciebat provinciarum Praefides hac parte non defore suo officio: *Voss. Comment.*

A. D. 106. and 107. method of other Governours, and actually was so, as is well known.

Tertullian has ridiculed this decree of Trajan, as inconsistent, and contradictoric. “ He (*a*) forbids the Christians to be sought for, “ supposing them to be innocent. And he orders them to be punished, as guilty. If they are criminal, why should they not be “ sought for? If they are not to be sought for, why should they “ not be absolved.”

However, for certain, here is fresh proof of the Christian (*b*) innocence. If they had been criminal: if *Trajan* had not known, and been well satisfied, that they were guilty of no great crimes, he would not have forbid inquiring after them. And since they were guilty of no offenses, contrarie to the peace of society, they should have been protected. And Trajan's Rescript should have been very different from what it is. It should have been to this effect. “ You have well done, my Plinie, to inquire into the principles and “ conduct of the Christians. As you have detected no crimes committed by them, and you recommend pardon upon repentance, “ and forsaking their error, I readily grant it, if it be needful. And I “ hereby declare, that no Christians ought to suffer without proof “ of some crime. For to inflict penalties upon innocent men, “ would be a disparagement of my government. And it has “ been a maxim with me from the beginning of my empire, not “ to let any good men suffer (*c*) death.”

So,

(*a*) Tunc Trajanus rescripsit, hoc genus inquirendos quidem non esse, oblatos vero puniri oportere. O sententiam necessitate confusam. Negat inquirendos, ut innocentes, et mandat puniendos, ut nocentes. Parcit, et faevit. Dissimulat, et animadvertit. Quid temet ipsum censurâ circumvenis? Si damnas, cur non et inquiris? Si non inquiris, cur non et absolvis? *Ap. cap. 2.*

(*b*) Ex his iterum liquet, nullius criminis reos factos fuisse Christianos, nisi deorum minime cultorum. *Cleric. ib. n. xiv.*

(*c*) Ως δὲ αυτοκράταρ ἐγένετο, ἀπέσειλε τῇ βελῆ αὐτοχερίᾳ ἄλλα τε, καὶ ὡς ἐδένα ἀνδρα ἀγαθὸν ἀποσφάζει, ἢ ἀτιμάσει. *Diion, L. 68. p. 1122.*



So, I think, Trajan might, and should have said. And so he would have said, were it not, that people were not then disposed to treat Christians, as they did other men. But the time was not yet come, that Christians should be exempted from suffering, as such, and on account of their Lord and Master, who had died for them, and was risen again.

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This Rescript of Trajan, which we are now considering, was designed not for the direction of Plinie only, but of all Governours of provinces in general: as is observed by (*d*) that judicious Lawyer, Fr. Balduinus. And, as *Tillemont* (*e*) says, “this unreasonable edict subsisted for almost an age, and was the rule of action to the Romans, till the persecution of Severus.”

VI. Before we proceed any farther, it may be fit, that we should consider a question, whether Trajan ever put an end to the persecution by an order from himself.

*Whether  
Trajan  
put an  
end to the  
Persecu-  
tion.*

Suidas (*f*) says, “that Trajan relaxed the persecution against the Christians. For Tiberian, who was Governour of what was called the first part of Palestine, wrote to him, that he was wearie of killing the Christians, because they offered themselves to punishment. Wherefore Trajan gave orders to all his subjects, that they should no more punish the Christians.”

This is supposed to be taken by Suidas from (*g*) John of Antioch,

(*d*) Tandem Trajanus, quid opus esse facto putet, rescribit: ut non solum in causa Ponticorum aut Bithynorum Christianorum id sequatur Plinius, sed et alii Praefides in suis provinciis observent. Atque hoc quidem primum rescripto lex Romana de Christianis certa que constitutio aliqua edita fuisse videtur. *Fr. Bald. ut supr. p. 29.*

(*e*) Cependant cette ordonnance si de raisonnable subsista près d'un siècle, et fut la règle des Romains jusques à la persecution de Severe. &c. *Tillem. Persec. de l'Egl. sous Trajan. art. v.*

(*f*) *Suid. V. Τραιανος.*

(*g*) *Vid. Vales. Excerpta ex Johanne Antiocheno. p. 818.*

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och, or John Malala, a writer near the end of the sixth centurie, and of little credit.

To this purpose, then, writes Malala. “ While (b) the Empe-  
“ rour Trajan was at Antioch of Syria, consulting about the affairs  
“ of war, he received a letter from Tiberian, Governour of the  
“ first Palestine, to this effect. *To the invincible Emperour, Cesar,*  
“ *the most divine Trajan. I have to the utmost of my power performed*  
“ *your order for killing the Galileans, who go under the denomination*  
“ *of Christians. But they cease not to discover themselves, and offer*  
“ *themselves to be put to death. I have discountenanced this by my ad-*  
“ *vices, and even by threatenings, telling them, that they should not*  
“ *come to me, to accuse themselves of holding that opinion. But all to*  
“ *no purpose. I must therefore entreat you to determine in this point,*  
“ *as shall seem meet to your invincible majesty.* And the Emperour  
“ sent an order to him, and to all the Prefects every where, that  
“ they should no longer put to death any that were called Christi-  
“ ans. After which the Christians had a short breathing time from  
“ the afflictions, which they had endured.”

So writes *Malala*. But Mr. Dodwell (i) has examined this letter of *Tiberian*, and has argued, that it is a downright forgerie. He says, that if there had been such a letter writ to Trajan by a Governour of Palestine, Eusebius could not have been ignorant of it. He also says, that the province of Palestine was not divided into two parts, till long after the reign of Trajan. He likewise observes, that the titles here given to Trajan by Tiberian, are not suited to that age. For these, and other considerations, he rejects that letter as a forgerie. And his argument has been approved of by all learned critics (k) in general.

As

(b) *J. Malalae Chronogr. p. 356. Oxon. 1691.*

(i) *Dissertat. Cyprian. xi. §. xxiii. xxiv.*

(k) *Vide Pagi ann. 116. num. ii. Basnag. ann. 117. n. iii. Cleric. H. E. ann. 113. Dr. Fortin's Remarks upon Ecclesiastical History. Vol. 2. p. 82. 83. Where that learned*

As Trajan directed, that the Christians should not be *sought for*, it is not unlikely, that toward the later part of his reign the persecution was moderated in some places. The account, which Sulpicius Severus gives of this persecution, is to this purpose: "Not (l) long after Domitian, the third persecution was raised by Trajan, who, when after strict inquiries made by racks and tortures, no discoverie was made of any thing done by them worthie of death, or other punishment, he forbid their being any longer persecuted." The expression is strong. Yet, perhaps, no more is intended, than 'this Emperour's prohibition to *seek for them*, which is in his Rescript to Pliny.

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VII. The observations of Commentators and Ecclesiastical Historians upon the foregoing Letter and Rescript are so numerous, that I am induced to mention some more general remarks, beside those which have already appeared under the several paragraphs of each of them.

*Observations of learned Men upon these Letters.*

It is certainly a just observation, that (m) some writers have aggravated

learned writer having alleged such reasons, as shew the Letter of Tiberianus not to be genuine, concludes: *So I hope we shall no more hear of it henceforward, either for or against the behaviour of the Martyrs.*

(l) Non multo deinde intervallo, tertia persecutio per Trajanum fuit: qui cum tormentis et quaestionibus nihil in Christianis morte aut poenâ dignum reperisset, saeviri in eos ultra vetuit. *Hist. Sacr. l. 2. cap. 31. p. 244. edit. Cleric.*

(m) Apparet hinc, cum grano salis accipiendum quod ait Orosius, lib. 7. cap.

xii. *In persequendis sane Christianis errore deceptus, tertius a Nerone, cum passim re- pertos cogi ad sacrificandum idolis, ac detraçtantes interfici praecepisset, plurimique interficerentur, Plinii Secundi, qui inter ceteros judices persecutor datus fuerat, relatu admonitus, eos homines, praeter confessionem Christi, honestaque conventicula, nihil contrarium Romanis legibus facere, fiducia sane innocentis confessio- nis nemini mortem gravem ac formidolosam videri, rescriptis illico lenioribus temperavit edictum.* Nam, ut recte hic monet Franc. Balduinus, si quod fuisset Trajani de interficiendis Christianis

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gravated the severity of Trajan, and that we ought to exercise moderation in our reflexions upon the proceedings of former times, and even of those who have been unfriendly to us. Paul Orosius, a Christian writer not far from the beginning of the fifth centurie, speaks “as if the persecution was begun by Trajan’s order, and “that Plinie and other Presidents were sent by him into the provinces, for this very purpose, to carry on the persecution of “Christians.” Which is evidently contrarie to Plinie’s Letter, which we have largely considered. He carried not with him any edict against the Christians, nor any particular directions concerning the method of treating them. But they were brought before him, after his arrival in the province. And he had occasion to refer himself to the Emperour for advice, in several things relating to them.

Moreover Eusebius, as before quoted, acknowledgeth, that the persecution in the time of Trajan was first occasioned by the clamours and tumults of the people.

It seems to me likewise, that in the Martyrdom of Ignatius, (*n*) in all the editions of it, whether Greek or Latin, Trajan’s earnest concern to extirpate the Christian Religion by a general persecution is aggravated. Which, together with other things, may be reckoned an argument, that it was not composed, as is generally said, by such as were contemporaries of the Emperour, and the Martyr.

On the other hand, I think, the mildnesse of Trajan has been beyond measure extolled, and the benefits of his edict too much mag-

fianis edictum certum ante Plinii relationem, non dubitasset iste, aut sane, Trajanum consulendo, ejus edicti mentionem fecisset. Neque Plinius judex datus est, ut Christianos persequeretur, sed aliis de Caussis in Pontum et Bithyniam missus,

(Vid. Ep. l. x. 29. 41. 118.) non nisi casu quodam, in eorumdem cognitionem incurrit, quibus tunc provinciae illae redundabant. *Kortholt. Comm. in Plin. et Traj. Ep. p. 11.*

(*n*) *Vid. Parr. Apost. Tom. 2.*

magnified by some (*o*) of late times: as if after the publication of the above-mentioned Rescript, Christians might meet together and worship God securely in their own way, provided they observed only the common rules of prudence.

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I think, that Tertullian's censure of this edict above taken notice of, in which he shews the inconsistency of it, is very just. And in another paragraph he acknowledges all the benefit of it, saying; "that (*p*) Trajan had in some measure defeated, restrained or moderated the decrees of Nero and Domitian, against the Christians, by forbidding inquirie to be made after them."

What that amounts to, I should think, might be easily computed. It implies no more, than this, that the Presidents of provinces, or other Magistrates, should not, or need not, send out their Irenarcks, their Serjeants, or other peace-officers, to search for, and apprehend the Christians, as was usual to be done for apprehending heinous criminals. But it does not hence follow, that the Presidents of provinces always observed this rule. And as to other people, they are left at liberty to do as they saw good. Among them, certainly the Christians had many enemies. And if they were brought before the Governours, and accused as Christians, the Governours are required to punish them, unless they denied their Christianity, and gave proof of it by sacrificing to the Gods. All which was frequently done. This must be the truth of the case, as it is agreeable to what Eusebius says, who could not but know very well what was the

(*o*) Peccavit quidem in eo non leviter, quod Christianos desertae majorum religionis convictos, et cedere nolentes, capitali poena jussit affici. . . . Sed valde tamen profuit Christianis, quod inquisitionem et investigationem eorum vetuit. Hac enim sublata secure Christiani secretos conventus suos celebrare, atque hostium suorum invidiam, modo prudentiae obedirent, ef-

fugere poterant. &c. *Moshem. de Reb. Chr. ante C. M. Sec. 2. §. i. p. 233. 234.*

(*p*) Quales ergo leges istae, quas adversus nos soli exequantur impii, injusti, turpes, truces, vani, dementes? Quas Trajanus ex parte frustratus est, vetando inquiri Christianos. *Ap. cap. 5.*

A. D. 106. and 107. state of affairs after the publication of this edict. “ Nevertheless, “ says he in the place before cited, they who had a mind to disturb “ us, did not want pretenses for so doing: in some places the people, in “ other places the Governours of provinces, laying snares for us. “ So that though there was no general persecution, there were per- “ secutions in several places and provinces, and there were many “ faithful men, who underwent divers kinds of martyrdom.”

Le Clerc therefore justly says, that (*q*) in this Rescript there is little more than an appearance of moderation, without any real kindnesse. And the learned writer, whom I have already quoted several times, and who, I think, sometimes too much magnifies the kindnesse, and the benefits of this Rescript, acknowledges, “ that (*r*) it being placed “ among the laws of the empire, and being long in force, occasi- “ oned the death of many excellent men, under divers succeeding “ Emperours, of good character, and that by virtue of this very “ edict *Simeon* Bishop of Jerusalem, and *Ignatius* of Antioch, were “ put to death.” And yet the same learned writer, in the very next words, says, “ that (*s*) however severe this law may appear, the “ Christians of a warm temper were displeas'd at it, because it de- “ prived

(*q*) Re vera species tantum erat moder-  
ationis in Trajani rescripto. Nam  
quamvis magistratus in Christianos publice  
quaestiones non haberent, inimicis tamen  
suis tradebantur Christiani, quos satis e-  
rat deferri ad magistratus, ut plecterentur,  
nisi Religioni Christianae nuncium re-  
mittere vellent. Numquam autem iis de-  
fuisse inimicos apud Ethnicos, facile est in-  
tellectu. *Cleric. A. cxi. n. xv.*

(*r*) Haec Trajani lex inter publicas Ro-  
mani Imperii sanctiones relata, efficiebat,  
ut deinceps etiam sub Imperatoribus opti-  
mis et justissimis multi Christiani perirent.  
. . . . Hac igitur lege jubente, *Simeon*,  
*Cleopae* filius, antistes Hierosolymitanus,

centum et viginti annorum, senex in cru-  
cem agi debebat. Ex ejusdem legis prae-  
scripto, ipse Imperator eodem anno mag-  
num illum *Ignatium*, Antiochenum epis-  
copum, a sacerdotibus delatum, et ipsius  
Imperatoris minas spernentem, Romam  
abduci et bestiis objici jubebat. *Mosheim.*  
*ib. §. x. p. 234.*

(*s*) Quod vero valde mireris, dura fa-  
tis haec et inhumana lex fervidioris animi  
Christianis displicebat, quod viam eis ad  
gloriosam pro Christo mortem obeundam,  
magistratu non inquirente, et accusatore  
saepe deficiente, occluderet. Hinc multi  
passim ipsi nomina sua deferebant apud ju-  
dices. *Ibid. p. 235.*

“prived them of the honour of suffering a glorious death for Christ.” But if the Christians disliked this edict, as too mild, how came it, that so warm a man as Tertullian complained of it, as unjust and severe? And why were there so many apologies writ soon afterwards by *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, and others, complaining of the severities, with which they were treated, and offering every argument that could be thought of by innocent and good men, for moderating and averting the sufferings, which they underwent, or were liable to? However, for proof of this assertion is alleged a storie told by Tertullian, who says: “When (s) *Arrius Antoninus* in Asia grievously persecuted the Christians, all the Christians of the city, in which he was, came together in a body to his tribunal, offering, that he might do with them as he saw good. He ordering away a few of them to be put to death, said to the rest: O miserable people, if you have a mind to die, you may find precipices and halts enough.”

As this passage has been alleged by Mr. Dodwell also, I shall now immediatly put down his argument upon (t) it. Only premising, that whereas the learned man before mentioned, placeth this affair in the reign of Adrian, and as consequent upon Trajan’s Rescript; Mr. Dodwell supposeth it to have happened in the reign of Trajan, at the same time that Plinie was persecuting the Christians in Bithynia. He argues, that many did not suffer in that persecution, because when the Christians of that place, offered them-

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selves

(s) *Arrius Antoninus* in Asia cum persequeretur instanter, omnes illius civitatis Christiani ante tribunalia ejus se manu facta obtulerunt. Cum ille, paucis duci jussis, reliquis ait: Ω δειδῖ, εἰ θέλετε ἀποθνῆσκειν, κερμυδὲς ἢ βεβήχους ἔχετε. *Ad Scap. cap. ult.*

(t) Eodem ni fallor tempore, quo persecutus est in Bithynia Plinius, persecutus etiam est in Asia Proconsulari *Arrius An-*

*toninus*, avus maternus *Antonini Pii*, ad quem scripsit etiam nonnullas epistolas ipse Plinius. De hujus persecutione ira Tertullianus. *Arrius Antoninus* in Asia. Et hic sese offerentium multitudine, ut Plinius multitudine periclitantium, impeditus est, quo minus pro libitu suo saeviret . . . Ceterum multos fuisse probabile non est, quos ita paucos, tam frigide censuit esse animadvertendos. *Diff. Cypr. xi. §. xxvii.*

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A. D. selves at the Governours tribunal, it is said, he *ordered away a few*  
<sup>106.</sup> *of them to be put to death.*" But does not this learned writer forget  
 and 107. the word *instanter*, in the former part of the sentence? Antonin had  
 persecuted some while. And that word implies somewhat very grie-  
 vous, either for the manner, or the length and duration of the per-  
 secution, carried on by that President in Asia. So that it may be  
 reckoned not improbable, that many Christians had suffered death  
 by his order.

Which also overthrows Mr. Mosheim's observation. Those Chri-  
 stians did not offer themselves, because of the mildness of Trajan's  
 Rescript, and (u) accuse themselves, because there were none to ac-  
 cuse them. But it was the Governour's severe treatment, which oc-  
 casioned their acting in that manner. Which interpretation is mani-  
 festly the sense of the paragraph itself, and is confirmed by the co-  
 herence in (x) Tertullian. The persecution of *Arrius* was so violent,  
 and so long continued, that the Christians in *Asia* were reduced to  
 great distress. Under this affliction they came in a body to the  
 Governour, and told him, *he might e'en take them all, if nothing*  
*else would satisfy him. For they were not afraid to die.* This reso-  
 lution of mind in those generous Christians astonished him. And  
 putting a good countenance upon his proceedings, he shut up that  
 disagreeable scene, and concluded the persecution in the manner be-  
 fore related.

If this account be right, these Christians were (y) not so con-  
 temptible,

(u) . . . omnes illius civitatis Christiani  
 ante tribunalia ejus se manufacta obtulerunt :  
 moleste nimirum ferentes, nullum sibi  
 accusatorem obtigisse, et Proconsulem in-  
 quirere nolle, quod Imperator vetuerat,  
 ipsi accusatorum sibi partes sumebant.  
*Mosb. ibid. p. 235. notis.*

(x) Crudelitas vestra est gloria nostra.  
 Vide tantum ne hoc ipso, quod talia sus-

tinemus, ad hoc solum videamur erumpe-  
 re, ut hoc ipsum probemus, nos haec  
 non timere, sed ultro vocare. *Arrius &c.*  
*Tertull. cod. cap. ad Scap. p. 88. A.*

(y) Itaque paucis, ut terreret ceteros,  
 condemnatis, reliquam multitudinem cum  
 indignatione ac contemptu dimittebat.  
*Mosheim, ut supr. p. 235. notis.*



temptible, as has been insinuated: and Mr. *Mosheim* might have spared a reflexion, unworthie of himself, which so generous minds do not deserve.

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Before we quite dismiss this affair, it may be worth the while, to consider, who this *Antonin* was, and the time of his persecution.

There were three of this name Proconsuls of Asia, in the space of a centurie, or less. The (*z*) first, I take to be *Arrius Antoninus*, of whom Tertullian here speaks, the second *Antoninus*, afterwards Emperour, and furnamed *Pius*. The third, named *Arrius Antoninus*, was Proconsul of Asia, afterwards, in the time of Commodus. *Casaubon* supposeth this to be the person intended by Tertullian. Several (*a*) other learned men have been of opinion, that the person intended by Tertullian was the Emperour Antonin's grandfather by the mother's side, and the same, to whom some of Plinie's letters are sent. Which opinion, as already hinted, appears to me very probable. Hereby we may be led to the time of this event. By *Mosheim*, as before observed, it is placed in the reign of Adrian, and also (*b*) by Mr. *Lampe*, but by Mr. *Dodwell*, as already mentioned, in the time of Trajan, and whilst Plinie was in Bithynia.

But

(*z*) Proconsulatum Asiae sic egit, ut solus avum vinceret. *Jul. Capitol. Antonini Pii. cap. 3.*

Here I put down part of *Casaubon's* note upon the above place. Avus hic, quem intelligit, est Pii avus maternus, Arrius Antoninus. Ambo Proconsules Asiae fuerunt, et Pius, et avus. De Pii proconsulatu loquitur Marcianus libro secundo de judiciis publicis. . . . De avo illius Proconsule Asiae, et immortalis laude, quam inde reportavit, P.inius in epistola ad ipsum Arrium Antoninum. *Quod semel.*

Invenio et tertium Arrium Antoninum, Asiae itidem Proconsulem, virum longe

clarissimum, qui principe Commodus occisus scelere Cleandri, tantum Imperatori invidiam apud vulgus, et omnes bonos concitavit, ut eam ferre Commodus cum non posset, Cleandrum plebi ad poenam donaverit. Historiam habes apud Lampridium. [Vit. Commodi cap. 7.] Hic videtur esse, de quo Tertullianus ad Scapulam. *Casaub.*

(*a*) See *Casaubon* in the preceding note.

(*b*) Neque sub Hadriano Imperatore res Christianorum in Oriente fatis pacatae erant: sub quo Asiam administravit Arrius Antoninus, qui Christianos male habuit. *Lampe Synopsis. H. L. p. 113.*

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But if he be the same, to whom Plinie wrote, it must have been sooner. For Plinie, in one (*c*) of his letters to him, speaks of his having been twice Consul, and then Proconsul of Asia, some time before. Consequently, he had been Proconsul of Asia, before Plinie went into Bithynia. For I cannot discern, that any of Plinie's letters, now extant, were writ after his provincial government. Indeed, Arrius Antoninus was an old man, at the time of Plinie's writing to him. And if this be the person intended by Tertullian, here is another consideration, that overthrows Mr. Mosheim's reasonings.

When *Arrius Antoninus* was Proconsul of *Asia*, I cannot say exactly, whether in the time of Domitian, or some while afterwards: but plainly, before Plinie was sent into Bithynia.

This Antonin was a learned and ingenious man, and has a good character in (*d*) Plinie, and other (*e*) Writers. Nor do I think he was a bad man. I only say he acted badly for some while, toward the Christians: whom the great men of those times did not suppose entitled to the common equity, vouchsafed to all other people. However, he also, like our Plinie, was at length overcome by their resolution and stedfastness, in the cause of what they were persuaded was the truth, and important truth.

I have taken notice of the sentiments of some learned men of late times, who have been very ready to magnify the moderation of Trajan, and his Proprætor Plinie. I shall now take notice of some other things. For Grotius, who (*f*) thought Trajan to be pointed at  
by

(*c*) Quod semel atque iterum Consul fuisti, similis antiquis: quod Proconsul Asiae, qualis ante te, qualis post te vix unus et alter, (non finit enim me verecundia tua dicere, qualis nemo :) quod sanctitate, quod auctoritate, aetate quoque princeps civitatis, est quidem venerabile et pul-

chrum. Ego tamen te vel magis in remissionibus miror. &c. *lib. 4. ep. 3. vid. et ep. 18. et l. 5. ep. 10.*

(*d*) See before note (*c*).

(*e*) *Vid. Jul. Capitolin. Antonin. cap. i. et Victoris Epit. cap. xii.*

(*f*) *Vid. Annot. ad Apoc. cap. xiii. ver. 18.*

by St. John Rev. xiii. 18. says, that (g) Trajan shed as much Christian Blood as Nero and Domitian. Which may be true. For the cruel edicts of Nero and Domitian were soon abrogated. But Trajan being generally reckoned by the Romans a good Emperour, his Rescript subsisted long in force, and by virtue of it many suffered in every part of the Empire, for a long time. As Plinie says in a letter to Trajan, in which he proposeth, his making an ordinance for settling some affairs relating to Pontus and Bithynia. "For (b) it well becomes You, whose every word and action deserves immortality, to give laws, that shall be for ever permanent."

I shall now also subjoyn some other observations of Grotius, in which he declares it to be his opinion, that (i) the persecution ordered by Trajan, began in the tenth Year of his reign, and that by virtue of his edict, *Simeon* Bishop of Jerusalem, and *Ignatius* Bishop of Antioch, suffered Martyrdom.

## VII.

18. et Comment. ad loca quaedam N. T. quae de Antichristo agunt. p. 470. Opp. Tom. 3.

(g) Multum vero errant, qui sub Trajano, quamvis cetera non malo principe, minus sanguinis effusum putant, quam sub Nerone et Domitiano. Horum enim saevitia ferme circa Romam stetit, illius per omnes provincias pervagata est. Nec quisquam est qui hujus persecutionis oblitus sit veterum Christianorum, qui persecutionum nobis numerum recensent, ut Eusebius, Augustinus, Orosius, alii. In Epistola ad Plinium inquiri quidem eos vetat: sed puniri vult, si accusentur. Accusatores autem nusquam decrant. *Grot. Responf. ad St. Curcell. in calc. Annot. ad N. T.*

(b) Nam quod in perpetuum mansurum

est, a te constitui debet, cujus factis dictisque debetur aeternitas. *L. x. ep. 113.*

(i) Sub Domitiano, ut omnes sciunt, acerbissima fuerat Christianorum vexatio. Nerva uno edicto omnia Domitiani edicta sustulit, inter quae et alia contra Christianos, quorum plurimi ab exiliis reversi, ut Eusebius in Chronico et Historia notat. Resuscitavit saevitiam novo edicto Trajanus anno principatus sui decimo, ut idem Eusebius notat Historiae iii. 27. . . . Quibus addi potest notissima Plinii epistola de poenis Christianorum, et Tertullianus Apologetico. Ex eo edicto crucifixus Simon filius Cleopae, Hierosolymorum Episcopus: Ignatius Antiochenae Ecclesiae Episcopus Romae feris objectus, notante utrumque Eusebio. *Grot. ut supr. T. 3.*

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and 107.*The Cha-  
racters of  
Pliny and  
Trajan.*

VII. As I have enlarged in my remarks upon the foregoing Letter and Rescript, and have passed very free censures upon the writers of them; it may be of some use to observe their several characters more distinctly. Whereby, possibly, we may be able to discern how it came to pass, that so renowned men as Plinie and Trajan, treated the Christians so hardly.

Plinie, as I suppose, was a dutiful child, and he was very respectful to the memorie of his uncle, by whom he was adopted for his son. He evidently was a loving husband, a good master, a faithful friend, and a kind and generous benefactor to many. He was also a friend to civil liberty, and an enemy to tyrants. With all he was a good writer. To that he owes the immortal fame, of which he (*k*) was desirous. To that we likewise are indebted for the advantages, which we may receive from his Panegyrick, and Epistles, still remaining. If to a friendly temper for particular persons, he had added a love of mankind in general, his conduct might have been more unexceptionable than it was. His virtue and his wisdom had a trial, when he met with Christians in the province, which he was sent to govern. And when they were brought before him, he failed, as seems to me, in a proper regard to the rules of justice and equity.

But before I proceed to any such things, as may be imagined to have been in part the sources of some wrong conduct, I must expatiate farther in the detail of his amiable qualifications, which may be easily collected from his letters, and are such as may deserve the imitation, and excite the ardour of Christians themselves.

Several of his letters are writ to his friend *Tacitus*, all of them very agreeable. One (*l*) of them, particularly, is a mirrour of intimate, sincere, and delightful friendship.

Many

(*k*) Me autem nihil aegue ac diuturnitatis amor et cupido sollicitat: res nomine dignissima, praesertim qui nullius sibi con-

scius culpaе, posteritatis memoriam non reformidet. *L. v. ep. 8.*

(*l*) *Lib. 7. ep. 20.*

Many of his letters express compassion and tenderness for the distressed and afflicted. His letter to Marcellinus, where (*m*) he laments the death of Junius Avitus, is very affecting. Catanaeus (*n*) admires and commends it, as superior to all the rest.

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In another letter he well represents the benefit of sickness. "Then, says (*o*) he, we recollect, that there are Gods: and we know ourselves to be but men. And he thinks it may be laid down as a short rule, more valuable, than many volumes of philosophical speculations, that we should endeavour to be in health, what we promised to be, when sick."

He has an excellent letter, writ in a fine turn of expression, in behalf of forgiving injuries, or at least covering and hiding any offences, which we have received. I must transcribe (*p*) below a large part of this letter, though I do not translate it. However, he recommends it, as a good rule, "to be inexorable to our own failings, whilst we treat those of the rest of the world with tenderness, not excepting even such as forgive none but themselves."

After reading these, and other letters, writ in a moving and affectionate manner, we may be disposed to wish, that Plinie had never met with those people called Christians, whose only fault was, that

(*m*) *Lib. 8. ep. 23.*

(*n*) *Impar igitur tanto dolori, (concepto ex Junii Aviti morte,) Marcellino rem totam per hanc epistolam exponit, inter pulchriores pulcherrimam, inter tristiciores tristissimam, inter amantiores amantissimam. Catan.*

(*o*) *Tunc Deos, tunc hominem esse se meminit. . . . Possum ergo, quod pluribus verbis, plurimis voluminibus philosophi docere conantur, ipse breviter tibi mihi-que praecipere, ut tales esse sani perseveremus, quales nos futuri profitemur infirmi. L. 7. ep. 26.*

(*p*) *Atque ego optimum et emendatissimum existimo, qui ceteris ita agnoscit, tanquam ipse quotidie peccet: ita peccatis abstinet, tanquam nemini ignoscat. Proinde hoc domi, hoc foris, hoc in omni vitae genere teneamus, ut nobis implacabiles simus, exorabiles istis etiam, qui dare nisi sibi nesciunt. . . . Fortasse quaeris, quo commotus haec scribam? Quidam nuper. Sed melius coram. Quamquam ne tunc quidem. &c. L. 8. ep. 22.*

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they differed from him, and most others, in things of religion: and whose great unhappineffe it was, that they were generally despised, and their principles unknown, and supposed (*q*) to be unworthie to be inquired into and considered.

When old *Simeon* saw the child *Jesus* presented by *Joseph* and *Marie* at the temple, he said, under the influence of the prophetic spirit: *Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign, which shall be spoken against . . . that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.* Luke ii. 34. 35. Which prophecie was afterwards fulfilled among the people of *Israel*, in the times of our Saviour, and his Apostles. And has been oftentimes verified since in other people, and other countreys. By the proposal of the gospel men have been tried, and it has been discovered, whether they were lovers of truth, and open to conviction, or not. I therefore proceed.

It has been said, that (*r*) *Plinie* was indifferent about things of religion. On the other hand, I think, he was credulous, and superstitious. His credulity is sufficiently manifest from his long letter, in (*s*) which he gravely relates diverse silly stories in support of the reality of apparitions. I might also refer to (*t*) his long letter concerning the dolphin at *Hippo*, that carried boys upon it's back: though  
that

(*q*) Unum gestit interdum, ne ignorata damnetur. . . nolentes audire, quod auditum damnare non possint. Hanc itaque primam causam apud vos collocamus iniquitatis odii erga nomen Christianorum, . . . ignorantia scilicet. Quid enim iniquius, quam ut oderint homines quod ignorant, etiam si res meretur odium? Tunc enim meretur, cum cognoscitur, an mereatur. Vacante autem meriti notitia, unde odii iustitia defenditur? *Tertull. Ap. cap. i.*

(*r*) Quare nec oderat eos, licet deorum contemtores, quos quippe et ipsemet, homo philosophus contemnebat, ac secum animo suaviter videbat. Exemplo scilicet avunculi sui, qui *Hist. Nat.* 2. vii. patriae suae deos ridet, et foecordiam esse iudicat, credere deos innumeros. *Heuman. De Persec. Plinian. §. v.*

(*s*) *L. 7. ep. 27.*

(*t*) *L. 9. ep. 33.*

that letter is writ with more pleasantry. And perhaps we may hereafter observe more proofs of this weaknesse of our author.

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His veneration for the Gods is apparent, and shews itself upon every occasion. \* \*

Plinie begins (*u*) and ends (*x*) his Panegyrick upon Trajan in very devout addressses and thanksgivings to Jupiter, and the other deities, Founders and Guardians of the Roman Empire. I before referred to some of his letters to Trajan from the province, shewing, how (*y*) devoutly he and the people there celebrated the anniverfarie of his Empire.

Upon occasion of private, as well as public concerns, he always adores the Gods. His wife having had an abortion, he writes to her grandfather, that (*z*) he should however give thanks to the Gods for her safety, and that there were still hopes of her having children.

In a letter to one of his friends, he tells him, he *had lately purchased with a legacie that was left him, a statue of Corinthian brasse, which appeared to him to be antique, and was so highly finished, as to deserve the attention of the curious.* Well, how is this masterpiece to be disposed of? He goes on. *I bought it (a) not with any intent of*

K 2

placing

\* \* I cannot but wonder, that this should have been over-looked by any learned men. It is acknowledged again and again by *Colonia*, tom. 2. p. 49, 50. Il fit toujours gloire d'être fort religieux. &c. See him quoted more at large, by and by.

(*u*) Bene ac sapienter, Patres C. majores instituerant, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium a precationibus capere: quod nihil rite, nihilque providenter homines sine deorum immortalium ope, consilio, honore auspiciarentur. . . Quo magis aptum piisque est, te Jupiter optime maxime, antea conditorem, nunc conservatorem imperii nostri, precari, ut mihi

digna Consule, digna Senatu, digna Principe contingat oratio. *Paneg. cap. i.*

(*x*) In fine orationis praesides custodisque imperii deos ego Consul pro rebus humanis, at te praecipue, Capitoline Jupiter, precor, ut beneficiis tuis faveas, tantisque muneribus addas perpetuitatem. *Cap. 94.*

(*y*) *Lib. x. ep. 44. 45. 60. 61. 101. . . 104. Vid. et ep. 9.*

(*z*) Igitur . . . sic debes agere diis gratias, quod ita in praesentia pronepotes negaverint, ut ferverint neptem. &c. *L. 8. ep. 10. Conf. l. 8. ep. 1.*

(*a*) Emi autem, non ut haberem domi,  
(nc-

A. D. 106. and 107. placing it in my own house, (for I have nothing of that kind there:) but with a design of fixing it in some conspicuous place, in my native country, and in the temple of Jupiter. For it is a present worthie of a temple, and a God.

He built several temples at his own expense. His letter relating to the temple of *Ceres* deserves to be read throughout. It begins with these words. "In (*b*) compliance with the advice of the Aruspices, I intend to rebuild and enlarge the temple of *Ceres*, which stands upon my estate."

Concerning another temple of his building he writes in a letter to Fabatus his wife's grandfather. He and his wife were going to make him a visit. But Plinie makes excuses for a short delay, because he would first go and consecrate that temple. "We (*c*) shall stop only once, and that for a short time; intending to turn a little out of the way in order to go to *Tuscanie* . . . There is a town near my estate, called *Tiforum upon the Tiber*, which put itself under my patronage, when I was yet a youth. . . That I may return their good offices, I have built a temple in this place, at my own expense. As it is finished, it would be a sort of impiety, to omit the dedication of it any longer: *differre longius irreligiosum est*. We design therefore to be there on the day that the ceremonie is to be performed. "And I have resolved to celebrate it with a grand feast."

He speaks of erecting another temple, which was entirely new, in a place, where had been none before, where (*d*) he intended to place all the statues of the Roman Emperours, which he had in his possession.

(neque enim ullum adhuc Corinthium domi habeo,) verum ut in patriam nostram celebri loco ponerem, ac potissimum in Jovis templo. Videtur enim dignum templo, dignum Deo donum. *L. 3. ep. 6.*

(*b*) Aruspicum monitu reficienda est mihi aedes Cereris in praediis in melius et in majus. *L. 9. ep. 39.*

(*c*) *L. 4. ep. 1.*

(*d*) . . . ego statim de curionibus scripseram, ut adsignarent solum, in quo templum pecuniâ meâ exstruerem. *L. 2. ep. 24.*



possession. And he asks leave of Trajan, that he might set up his statue there also.

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In a letter to Maximus, who was going into Achaia he writes to this purpose. “ You (*e*) will consider yourself, as sent to that noble province of Achaia, the real and genuine Greece. . . Revere the gods their founders, those venerable deities. Respect the ancient glorie of this people. . . . Pay a regard to their antiquity, to their noble exploits, and even to their fictions.”

This letter of advice is writ with uncommon earnestness, that Maximus might act worthy of himself, and not lose in Greece any part of that reputation, which he had gained by his Quæstorship in Bithynia, and the discharge of other offices, in which he had been employed. And can we think, that Plinie neglected such rules himself, when he was Governour in Bithynia?

Plinie, as before said, was Augur. It was an office, which he much valued, and which he asked of Trajan in this manner: “ I (*f*) beg you would be graciously pleased to add either the office of Augur, or Septemvir (both of which are now vacant,) to the dignity, which I already enjoy by your indulgence: that I may have the satisfaction of offering up those vows for your prosperity, from the duty of my office, which I daily prefer to the Gods in private, from the affection of my heart.”

Plinie was greatly delighted with his being appointed Augur. “ My (*g*) advancement, says he to *Arrian*, is indeed an honour that justly merits the congratulation, which you give me. . . . It is also an ancient and sacred institution, which has this high and peculiar privilege annexed to it, that it is for life. Other sacerdotial honours, though they may be not much inferiour in dignity: yet as they  
“ are:

(*e*) Cogita, te missum in provinciam Achaia, illam veram meram Graeciam. . . Reverere conditores deos, numina deorum. Reverere gloriam veterem. . . . Sit

apud te honor antiquitatis, sit ingentibus factis, sit fabulis quoque. L. 8. ep. 24.

(*f*) L. x. ep. 8. al. 13.

(*g*) L. 4. ep. 8.

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“ are given, so they may be taken away. Upon this fortune has  
“ no power, but to bestow it. What recommends this dignity to  
“ me still more is, that I have the honour to succeed so illustrious  
“ a person, as *Julius Frontinus* : who for many years upon the nomi-  
“ nation-day of proper persons to be taken into the sacred college,  
“ constantly proposed me, as if he had a view to my being his succes-  
“ for.”

This last mentioned particular certainly deserves some notice. Plinie’s usual character was such, as to shew him to be a very fit person for this honorable priesthood.

In another letter also he relates, how (*b*) that eminent man *Virginius Rufus* often recommended him as a person well qualified for the priesthood.

The business of the Augurs, as is said, was to interpret dreams, oracles, prodigies, and to foretell, whether any action should be fortunate, or prejudicial to particular persons, or to the whole commonwealth. And it appears from our Plinie’s letters (*i*) to his friends, that he thought he had a happy talent for interpreting dreams, and could give a shrewd conjecture at least, how far they were to be depended upon, and whether they foreboded success, or disappointment, in any undertaking.

None can contest his credulity and superstition, who observe what he says describing the river *Clitumnus*. “ Near it, says (*k*) he, stands  
“ an ancient and venerable temple: wherein is placed [the river  
“ God] *Clitumnus*, clothed in a splendid robe. Whose immediate  
“ presence the prophetic oracles, there delivered, sufficiently testify.”

I am not singular in my judgement concerning Plinie’s respect for  
the

(*b*) . . . sic illo die, quo sacerdotes solent nominare quos dignissimos sacerdotio judicant, me semper nominabat. *L.* 2. *ep.* 1.

(*i*) *Vid. l. i. ep.* 18. *Conf. l. 5. ep.* 5.

(*k*) Adjacet templum, priscum et religiosum. Stat Clitumnus ipse amictus ornatusque praetexta. Praesens numen, atque etiam fatidicum, indicant sortes. *L.* 8. *ep.* 8.

the Heathen Deities, and his zeal for upholding their worship. *Colonia* expresseth himself very clearly to the like (l) purpose.

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I think, I ought not to omit, that Plinie did not condemn combats of Gladiators, or other things, usually accompanying those cruel entertainments. He seems to have approved of them upon some occasions. This appears from a letter to his friend Maximus. “ You  
“ (m) were extremely in the right, says he, to promise a combat  
“ of gladiators to our good friends, the citizens of Verona : not only  
“ as they have long distinguished you with their peculiar esteem and  
“ veneration : but as it was thence also you received the amiable  
“ object of your affection, your late excellent wife. And (n) since  
“ you owed some monument, or public shew to her memorie, what  
“ other spectacle could you exhibit more proper to the occasion? . . .  
“ The readinesse, with which you granted this request, and the  
“ magnificent manner, in which you performed it, is much to your  
“ honour : . . I am sorry, that the African panthers, which you had  
“ largely provided for that purpose, did not arrive time enough. But  
“ though they were delayed by the tempestuous season, the obliga-  
“ tion to you is equally the same, since it was not your fault, that  
“ they were not exhibited.”

The

(l) Mais il eut encore une attention plus particuliere à faire fleurir par tout le culte des Dieux. Car il fit toujours gloire d' être fort religieux, comme il paroît entre autres choses, par les grands mouvemens qu'il se donna pour faire transporter dans un lieu plus decent le vieux temple de la Grand Mere des Dieux, c'est-à-dire de Cybèle, qui étoit à Nicomedie, [l. x. ep. 58.] et par le soin qu' il eut de faire bâtir à ses propres frais un temple dans une de ses terres, assez pres de Tifer-num. .

Cet entêtement singulier de Plinie pour les dieux, et pour les erreurs de Paganif-

me, doit paroître certainement quelque chose d' assez bizarre dans un aussi bel esprit que lui, qui devoit, ce semble, par mille raisons s' être mis fort au dessus des frivoles prejugez du vulgaire. *Colonia La Religion Chrétienne autorisée, &c. T. 2. p. 49. 50.*

(m) Recte fecisti, quod gladiatorium munus Veronenfibus nostris promiffisti. *L. 6. ep. 34.*

(n) . . . cujus memoriae aut opus aliquod, aut spectaculum, atque hoc potiffimum, quod maxime funeri, debeatur. *Ibid.*

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and 107.

The Emperour Trajan has been admired and applauded by many. And it must be owned, that he was an eminent person, and had many good qualities. Crevier begins his historie of this Emperour in this manner. "Trajan is justly esteemed the best and greatest prince the Romans ever had." His distinguished title was that of Optimus, given (o) him by the Senate, and all the people in general. But, as a learned man says, "that (p) title among the Romans does not denote a man of excellent morals, as if he were another Socrates: "but only kind, courteous, obliging, agreeable: implying that (q) "he behaved respectfully toward the Senate, and was gracious and "condescending toward the people, conversing familiarly with them, "indulging them in their pleasures, gratifying their humour, and "affording them magnificent spectacles."

And it may be not unfitly observed by us, that we have not Pliny's Panegyrick upon Trajan, as it was pronounced by him in the Senate. For, as we know from himself, he (r) afterwards enlarged

(o) Jam, quid tam civile, tam senatorium, quam illud additum a nobis Optimi cognomen? *Plin. Pan. cap. 2.*

Justifne de caussis Senatus Populusque Romanus Optimi tibi cognomen adjecit? *Ib. cap. 88.*

*Conf. Dion. l. 68. p. 1138. Vid. ibid. Reimar. not. § 44. Tillem. note vi. sur Trajan. et Pagi ann. 103. n. ix. et ann. cxi.*

(p) Cum Trajanus nominatus fuit a Romanis *Optimus*, hoc vocabulum non significat hominem virtutum moralium, et alterum quasi Socratem. Romani enim tales homines non magni faciebant. . . . Quid ergo sibi volebat ille Romanorum titulus? Scilicet significabant eos Traja-

num habere mores, qui ipsis placerent maxime. Faciebat enim quicquid gratum esse Senatui intelligebat, quicquid Populo. Hujus voluptatibus, illius ambitioni indulgendi nullam dimittebat occasionem. En Imperatorem judicio populi optimum. *Heuman. De Persecutione Christian. Plinian. p. 146.*

(q) Καὶ τῷτε δήμῳ μετ' ἐπιεικίας συνεγένετο, καὶ τῇ γερουσίᾳ σεμνοπρεπῶς ἀμίλει ἀγαπητὸς μὲν πᾶσι, φοβερὸς δὲ μηδενὶ, πλὴν παλαιμίοις ἂν. *Dion. p. 1124.*

(r) Officium consulatus injunxit mihi, ut Reipublicae nomine Principi gratias agerem. Quod ego in Senatu quum ad rationem et loci et temporis ex more fecissem,

larged and improved it, not only for more fully doing justice to the Emperour himself, but also that it might be the model of an excellent prince, for the imitation of others in time to come.

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Trajan's piety to the Gods is acknowledged. The Emperour's and his Panegyrist's piety go hand in hand. In that justly admired performance Pliny celebrates his master, as (*s*) a humble worshipper of the Gods. And he says, "that (*t*) Trajan placed his predecessor, Nerva, among the Gods, not to please the people, nor out of any disrespect to the Deities, nor with a view of honour to himself upon that account, but because he really believed him to be a God." And in a letter, formerly referred to, representing his own vows, and the vows of the province, in which he was, he says, "We (*u*) implored the Gods to preserve you and the Republic in safety and prosperity, with that peculiar mark of their beneficence, which not only your other many and great virtues, but particularly your distinguished piety and reverence of them, deserve."

Though Trajan has been much applauded by men of former and later times, as (*x*) excelling in the arts of peace and war, temperate,

ciffem, bono civi convenientissimum credidi eadem illa spatiosius et uberius volumine amplecti: primum ut Imperatori nostro virtutes suae veris laudibus commendarentur: deinde, ut futuri principes non quasi a magistro, sed tamen sub exemplo praemonerentur, quâ potissimum viâ possent ad eandem gloriam niti. *Plin. l. 3. ep. 18. Conf. ep. 13. Vid. et l. 6. ep. 27.*

(*s*) Tu delubra non nisi adoraturus intras. Tibi maximus honor excubare pro templis, postibusque praetexi. *Paneg. cap. 52.*

(*t*) Quem tu lachrymis primum, ita

ut filium decuit, mox templis honestassi: non imitatus illos, qui hoc idem, sed aliâ mente fecisti. . . Tu fideribus patrem intulisti, non ad mentem civium, non in contumeliam numinum, non in honorem tuum, sed quia Deum credis. *Paneg. cap. xi.*

(*u*) Frecati Deos, ut te remque publicam florentem et incolumem eâ benignitate servarent, quam super magnas plurimasque virtutes praecipua sanctitate consequi Deorum honore meruisti. *L. 10. ep. 101. Conf. ep. 9.*

(*x*) Hoc aegre clarior domi, seu militiae

re-

A. D. rate, mild, equitable ; such was the impartiality of divers of the  
 106.  
 and 107. ancient historians, that they have not scrupled to record some very  
 great faults, which he was guilty of.

He is said to (*y*) have indulged himself at some seasons in excess of eating and drinking. And he is charged (*z*) with a vice not fit to be named. Some (*a*) would set aside this charge, as if the testimonie of Dion Cassius was liable to suspicion. But there is no reason for it. Dion was as likely to be well informed, as any man. His only fault is, that he does not condemn the vice with the severity, which it deserved. And (*b*) Trajan's guilt is attested also by other witnesses, altogether unexceptionable.

Trajan

reperietur. . . . Aequus, clemens, patientissimus, atque in amicos perfidelis. *Sextus Aur. Viſt. de Caesaribus. cap. 13. Conf. Viſtor Epit. cap. 13. in Eutrop. l. 8. Dion. Cass. l. 68. p. 1122. &c. Julian. Caes. p. 327. 328. ed. Spanhem.*

(*y*) Trajanum familiaris profecutus est: quandoquidem et indulgisse vino se dicit, Trajani moribus obsequentem: atque ob hoc se a Trajano locupletissime muneratum. *Spartian. de Adrian. cap. 3.*

Quinetiam vinolentiam, quo vitio, uti Nerva agebatur, prudentiâ molliverat, curari vetans jussa post longiores epulas. *Viſtor. de Caesaribus. cap. 13.*

. . . nisi quia cibo vinoque paullulum deditus erat. *Viſtor. Epit. cap. 13. de Trajano.*

Illa tamen, quibus Trajanus aspersus est, vinolentiam, et cupiditatem triumphandi, usque eo detestatus est, ut bella non moverit, sed invenerit: prohibueritque lege ministeria lasciva, psaltriasque commissionibus adhiberi. &c. *Id. cap. 48. De Theodosio.*

Ὅν γὰρ ἦν ἕξω τῷ δύνασθαι ῥητορεύειν, ὑπὸ

δὲ τῆς φιλοσοφίας, ἀμβλύτερος ἐαυτῷ πολλὰ κες ἦν. *Julian. Caes. p. 327. C. Spanh. et Conf. ib. p. 318. C.*

(*z*) Ὅνδ' ἔστιν ὁ τι οὐκ ἄριστον ἔχε. Καὶ οἶδα μὲν ὅτι καὶ περὶ μεράνια, καὶ περὶ οἴνου ἐσπεδάκει· ἀλλ', εἰ μὲν τι ἐκ τούτων ἢ αἰχρῶν ἢ κακῶν ἢ ἐδεδράκει, ἢ ἐπεπόθει, ἐπιγορίαὺν ἂν ἔχε· νῦν δὲ τῶ τε οἴνῳ διακόπως ἔπινε, καὶ νήφων ἦν, ἔν τε τοῖς παιδικαῖς ἐδένα ἐλύπησεν. *Dio. l. 68. p. 1124.*

(*a*) A Dione, fortasse ex odio in Romanorum Imperatorum Graecis insito, ebrietatis et praeposteræ libidinis notatus. *J. de la Baune De Vita Traj. sub fin.*

(*b*) Fuitque in amore Trajani, nec tamen ei per paedagogos puerorum, quos Trajanus impensius diligebat, Gallo favente, defuit. *Spartian. Adrian. cap. 2.*

Corrupisse eum Trajani libertos, curasse delicatos, eosdemque sepelisse per ea tempora, quibus in aulâ familiarior fuit, opinio multa firmavit. *Id. ib. cap. 4.*

Ἰδὲν δὲ αὐτὸν ὁ Σελινὸς ἔρη . . . ὅρα νῦν τῷ δεσποτῇ Διὶ σκοπεῖν, ὅπως ὁ Γαυμηθῆς αὐτῷ φερῆσεται. *Julian. ib. p. 311. C.*

Trajan was fond of the combats of gladiators. Dion says, “ that (c) after he had triumphed for his first victorie over the Dacians, he exhibited in the amphitheatre shews of gladiators, of whom he was very fond, and introduced dansers into the theatre, being enamored with one of them.” And after the second victorie over the Dacians, the same historian, or Xiphilin from him, says, there (d) were shews continued for a hundred and three and twenty days, in which were slain eleven thousand beasts, wild and tame, and there were combats of ten thousand gladiators.

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and 107.

The Emperour’s great fondness for gladiators has been supposed by some to be one reason, why Pliny speaks so honorably of those shews in his (e) Panegyrick.

Trajan’s introducing pantomimes into the theatre is the more remarkable, because they had been prohibited, or restrained by (f) Domitian. Nerva (g) disliked them, though (h) to please the people, he allowed them at Rome. Pliny has more than once plainly condemned them in his (i) letters. Which is much to his honour.

L 2

And

(c) Τραϊανὸς δὲ τότε νικητήρια ἤγαγε . . . ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ μονομάχους συνέβαλε· καὶ γὰρ ἔχαιρεν αὐτοῖς· καὶ τὸς ἀρχιερεῖς ἐς τὸ θέατρον ἐπανήγαγε· καὶ γὰρ ἐνδὸς αὐτῶν τῶ Πυλάδῃς ἦρα. *Dion. l. 68. p. 1127. al. 774. B.*

tra domum quidem exercendi artem jure concessio. *Sucton. Domit. cap. 7. Vid. et Nero. c. 16.*

(g) *Dio. l. 68. p. 1119. al. 770. B.*

(h) *Plin. Pan. cap. 46. Conf. Reimar. not. 82. ad Dion. p. 1127.*

(d) *Dio. ib. l. 68. p. 1131. al. p. 777.*

(e) Satisfactum, quâ civium, quâ socio-  
rum utilitatibus. Visum est spectaculum  
inde non enerve, nec fluxum, nec quod a-  
nimos virorum molliret et frangeret, sed  
quod ad pulcra vulnera contemptumque  
mortis accenderet: quum in fervorum,  
etiam noxiorumque corporibus amor lau-  
dis et cupido victoriae cerneretur. *Pa-  
neg. cap. 33.*

(i) Gymnicus agôn apud viennenses,  
ex cujusdam testamento, celebrabatur.  
Hunc Trebonianus Rufus, vir egregius no-  
bisque amicus, in duumviratu suo tollen-  
dum abolendumque curavit. . . Placuit  
agona tolli, qui mores Viennensium infe-  
cerat, ut noster hic omnium. Nam Vien-  
nensium vitia intra ipsos resident, nostra late  
vagantur. Utque in corporibus, sic in im-  
perio, gravissimus est morbus, qui a capite  
diffunditur. *L. 4. ep. 22. Vid. et l. 7. ep.  
24.*

(f) Interdixit histriónibus scenam, in-

A. D. And indeed, I take him to have been a much better man than his  
 106. admired master.  
 and 107.

It seems to make no small abatement in Trajan's reputation for wisdom, and his regard for the prosperity of the Empire, that he so long deferred to nominate his successor. Pliny (*k*) extols Nerva for appointing Trajan to succeed him. And it is always reckoned a point of wisdom in princes to make early provision against their own mortality. But Trajan, though he reigned almost twenty years, did not adopt Adrian, his successor, till he was dying, if he did (*l*) then. And whenever this was done, whether before or after his death, it is (*m*) represented to be owing to the good conduct of the Empress *Plotina*, who was favorable to Adrian, and has a great character (*n*) for virtue and discretion.

They who will consider all these things, may, perhaps, see cause not to be much surpris'd at the hard treatment, which Christians met with from the great men of those times.

It ought not to be thought by any, that I take pleasure in detracting from the merit of those, who have been distinguished by their high stations, or their eminent abilities, or their usefull services to mankind, of any sort. For indeed the disadvantageous part of this detail has been made, and carried on, not without great reluctance, much diffidence, and tenderesse: Whilst commendable things have

(*k*) . . . tibi terras, te terris reliquit: eo ipso carus omnibus, ac desiderandus, quod prospexerat, ne desideretur. *Paneg. cap. x.*

(*l*) At Trajanum non prius Hadrianum adoptasse, si tamen adoptavit, quam in morbum inciderit . . . certo deducitur. *Pagi ann. 117. n. v. And see Crevier's Historie of Trajan, near the end.*

(*m*) *Vid. Dion. l. 69. in. Eutrop. l. 8. cap. 6. Victor. de Caesarib. cap. 13. Spartian in Adrian. cap. 4.*

(*n*) *Plin. Paneg. cap. 83. Dion. l. 68. p. 1123. in. al. p. 771. D. Victor. Epit. in Constantia. cap. 42. sub fin.*



have been chearfully acknowledged. And if we now think, and judge, and act better than many in former times, it is owing to our superior advantages: such especially, as we have received from the Christian revelation, by which our minds have been enlightened, and enlarged. For which we ought to be ever thankfull, still thinking modestly of ourselves, and giving God the glorie of all.

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VIII. There still remains some general remarks upon the foregoing Epistles to be mentioned here, though divers of them may have been in part hinted before.

*Observations for shewing the use of these Epistles.*

1. These Epistles are justly esteemed by learned men, as very valuable. They are the only authentic accounts of the persecution in Pontus and Bithynia, which we have. Indeed those Epistles have been referred to by Tertullian, and Eusebius, and other later writers. But (o) we have no historie of it by any Christian writer, who lived at that time. Whence this has come to pass, cannot be certainly said. We may regret it, but we cannot help it, and should acquiesce, and emprove what we have, as well as we can.

2. We see here one ground of offense against Christians. They drew men off from the worship of the Heathen Deities. Their temples were not so much frequented, as formerly. The Priests, and all who had a dependence upon the temples, the sacrificers, the statuaries, the painters, the engravers, and others, were deprived of their wonted gain. This must have made the Christians many fierce enemies

(o) Verum hisce temporibus, et hoc quidem anno, coepit *tertia*, quae vocatur, *persequutio*, ut liquet ex Epistola Plinii, qui Bithyniae Proconsul erat, . . . quam integram recitabimus, quod sit unicum persequutionis illius *tertia*e monumentum,

tempori aequale. Tanta fuit Christianorum eo aevo, in scribendo religionis suae historia, negligentia, aut scriptorum illius aetatis jaçtura. *Cleric. H. E. Ann. cxi. n. i.*

A. D. 106. and 107. mies in all parts. An early instance of this kind is recorded by St. Luke, Acts. xix. 23. . . 41.

3. Here is a remarkable evidence of the great progress of the Christian religion in a short space. There never was any such thing as Christianity heard of in the world, before the reign of Tiberius. It was not fourscore years, since the crucifixion of Jesus, when Plinie wrote this letter, nor seventy years, since the disciples of Jesus began to make any mention of him to Gentils. And yet there were at this time great numbers of men, whom Plinie once and again plainly calls *Christians*, in that part of Asia, where he presided, at a great distance from Judea. Christians there were every where, throughout the whole extent of his province, in cities, in villages, and in the open country. There were persons of all ages, of every rank and condition, and of each sex, and some Roman Citizens, who had embraced this principle. They abounded so much in those parts, that there was a visible desertion of the temples. Beasts, brought to market for victims, had few purchasers. The annual sacred solemnities were much neglected. So many were accused, and were in danger of suffering upon account of the prevalence of this opinion, as gave the President no small concern.

Moreover, there were not only many at this time, who bore that name: but there had been such people there a good while: some several years before: and one, or more, brought before Plinie, had professed Christianity and forsaken it, twenty years before. By which we are assured, that there were Christians here before the year of our Lord ninety, and within sixty years after the crucifixion of Jesus. And indeed the great number of Christians found in this country by Pliny affords good reason to believe, that Christianity had been planted there many years before his arrival. Such an increase must have been the work of time.

I do not say, nor think, that the Christians were the majority of the people in Pontus and Bithynia. But I suppose we may conclude

clude from what Plinie writes, that there were then many Christians in every part of those countreys.\* \*

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and 107.

4. They who were called Christians, were very resolute, and steady in this profession. Which must have been owing to some cause, or other. Jesus had been crucified, as a malefactor. And yet there were great numbers of men, who had a great respect for him, and could not by any means be compelled, as Plinie was assured, to speak ill of him. And this Governour found those informations, which had been given him, to be true. For there were men brought before him, who, when he interrogated them, whether they were Christians, confessed they were. And though threatened by him with death, they persevered in that confession, and therefore were by him ordered away for execution.

It is reasonable to think, that this was owing to some authentic informations, which they had received concerning Jesus, and his

ex-

\* \* Says Mr. Mosheim : *Tota igitur provincia, non quaedam ejus pars, Christianis repleta erat. Postremo non obscure significat, Deorum caussam magno in discrimine paullo ante versatam esse, pluresque Christo, quam Diis servivisse. Hoc ex eo manifestum est, quod templa deserta fuisse, sacra solemnia diu intermissa, sacrificia perpauca Diis oblata memorat. Certe, satis constat, prope jam desolata templa coepisse celebrari. &c. Aut fabulam hero suo narrare Plinium statue . . . aut certum puta, provinciam Ponticam plures ejus tempore Christianos habuisse, quam Deorum superstitioni deditos, saltem maximam incolarum partem ad deserendam avitam religionem inclinasse. Mosh. De Reb. Christian. ante C. M. p. 218. 219.*

But it seems to me, that in a preceding note, the same learned man speaks more judiciously in a remark upon Tertullian. *Oracula fundere Tertullianus plurimis videtur in Apologetico. cap. 37. Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus . . . palatium, senatum, forum. Sola vobis relinquimus templa. Ego virum, ad exaggerandum naturam factum, declamare, modumque excedere, arbitror. Tolle distributionem illam rhetoricam, fallacem certe et insidiosam, et hanc habebis sententiam: Plurimi sunt in orbe Romano Christiani, et nullus fere ordo est, qui prorsus illis careat. Id. ib. p. 217.*

A. D. 106.  
and 107. exemplarie life, and excellent doctrine, confirmed by miraculous works, and a full persuasion of the truth of them, as also of his resurrection from the dead, and his exaltation to power and dominion after his crucifixion.

It could not well be owing to any thing, but such evidences of these things, as are contained in the books of the New Testament. What else could have induced so many men to take upon them the name of Christ, and profess themselves to be his followers? though all men knew, he had suffered an ignominious death? They lived near enough to the time of Jesus, to know, whether there had been any extraordinarie appearances in his favour, during his abode on this earth, at his death, and after it. Without credible information of some such things, it is unaccountable, that any number of men should take upon them this profession, and persevere in it, notwithstanding the many difficulties, to which they were exposed.

If it should be said, they were not all constant: There were some, who abandoned this profession. It is allowed. Some such there were. But they seem to have been but few, in comparison of those, who persevered. For Plinie saw, that great numbers of all sorts of people were exposed to danger. Besides, the constance of a few, in such a case as this, is of more weight than the inconstance of many. There were many temptations to renounce this profession, even contrarie to conviction. But there were no worldly inducements of any kind, to persist in it. Unsteadinesse might be owing to worldly considerations: Perseverance could be owing to nothing, but a firm persuasion of the truth.

5. We are here assured of divers important things concerning the religious belief and worship of the first Christians, in which they agree with the principles and precepts delivered in the New Testament.

1.) They disowned all the Gods of the Heathens. They would not worship the images of the Emperours, or of their Gods.

The

The people who embraced this religion, forsook the Heathen temples and altars, and offered there no sacrifices.

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and 107.

2.) They met together on a stated day, undoubtedly meaning Sunday, or the Lords-day, on which Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead. And we are assured by Justin Martyr, in his Apologie, writ not very many years after this time, that this was the practise of all Christians in general.

3.) When they were assembled, as Plinie says, *they sang a hymn to Christ, as a God. And also engaged themselves, as by an oath, not to commit theft, or robbery, or adulterie, never to falsify their word, or betray any trust committed to them.*

Which account is much to the honour of these Christians. Their religion did not lye in abstruse speculations, or numerous rites and ceremonies, but in the worship of the one God, through Jesus Christ, and the practise of moral virtue.

4.) The Christians in Pontus and Bithynia had Love-feasts, or *Agapai*, as they are also sometimes called. Many other Christians had the like, as we learn from (p) Tertullian. Those of the Christians in Bithynia were not held at the same time with their more solemn worship, but afterwards. And for avoiding offense they had omitted them.

5.) They also had Church-officers. Plinie expressly mentions two women, who were *Ministers*, or *Deaconesses*, whom he also calls *maid-servants*. But, as before hinted, he might be mistaken about their condition.

Whence it came to pass, that he has mentioned no other officers among the Christians, such as Bishops, or Presidents, or Elders, or Deacons, cannot be said. But it may be allowed, that the persons pitched upon by him, to be examined by torture, were as likely as any to answer his purpose, of obtaining a knowledge of their secret practises, if the Christians had any such among them.

(p) *Ap. cap. 39.*

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and 107.

6. We are here assured of the innocence and virtue of the first Christians. Both these epistles, that of Plinie, and that of Trajan, bear testimonie to their innocence, in their solemn worship, in their meal, some time afterwards, and in their whole lives. There was not any crime, beside that of their religion, proved against any of those that were brought before Plinie. Even their accusers and prosecutors appear not to have alleged any thing else against them, but that they were Christians. He examined deserters. He put to the torture two women, who were ministers, or deaconesses. And yet he discovered nothing but what was quite harmless. The only charge against them is, an absurd superstition, and obstinacie therein.

Trajan's Rescript affords as strong proof of the innocence of these men. He knew not of any offense they were guilty of, excepting only, their not supplicating to the Gods. He (*q*) forbids inquiries to be made after them. And he allows pardon to those who would give proof, of their renouncing Christianity, by a public act of worship paid to the Gods, then generally received.

The honesty and innocence of these men, oblige us to pay a great regard to their belief and profession of the Christian Religion. If they were sober and discreet, before they embraced it, we may hence argue, that there were then such evidences of it's truth, as approved themselves to serious persons. If they are supposed to have been in fore time vicious and irregular, here is a strong proof of the truth and goodnesse of Christianity, in that it had so great an influence on mens minds at a time, when they might easily know,

(*q*) Conquirendi non sunt. Si deserantur, et arguantur, puniendi sunt: ita tamen, ut qui negaverit se Christianum esse, idque re ipsa manifestum fecerit, id

est, supplicando Diis nostris, quamvis suspectus in praeteritum fuerit, veniam ex poenitentia impetret. *Trajanus.*

know, whether it was well grounded, or not. . Either way, it is an honour to these principles, that they who embraced them, maintained such innocence in their lives, that their enemies, by the strictest inquiries, could discover nothing criminal in them.

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and 107.

7. At the same time, that these Christians appear resolute in their adherence to Christ, and his doctrine, and will by no means be compelled to give religious worship to the Emperours, or the Heathen Deities, they pay due obedience to the orders of the civil magistrate. Their evening-meeting, for partaking together in a common meal, was not a sacred ordinance of the Christian institution. When therefore Plinie published an edict forbidding *assemblies*, which was often done by the Roman Governours of provinces, because of the licentious practises, which usually attended them, these Christians forbore those meetings, though they had not been used to commit any disorders in them.

8. I would now take occasion to observe the expedience and usefulness, the value and importance, of inquisitiveness in things of religion.

Improvements in any science depend upon inquisitiveness, carried on and continued with diligence. These are the only methods of obtaining a knowledge of the principles of any science, and the grounds, reasons and evidences of them. For the want of which there is so much ignorance in the world. Nor is there any thing less cultivated, than the knowledge of religion. How easily might some great men, and many others, have avoided the faults, which they fell into, and have acted more for their own honour, and the benefit of mankind, than they did, if they could but have been persuaded to attend to the principles of the Christian Religion, and the evidences of their truth and certainty, apparent in their intrinsic excellence and reasonableness, and in the extraordinarie

A. D. works accompanying the original revelation of them : which shewed, that they were promulgated with divine authority?  
 106.  
 and 107.

That Christianity had appeared in the world a good while agoe, and that there were many Christians at Rome, and elsewhere, in the reign of Nero, and Domitian : and that these Christians had suffered much, and still persisted in the faith of Christ, were things well known to *Tacitus*, and *Suetonius*, friends of our *Plinie*, and indeed to all the world, at the time, when the eminent men, just mentioned, lived and wrote. But how little regard did they shew to this? Did they consider the evidences, which those Christians alleged, as the ground and reason of their firm and disinterested belief and profession? Did those persons admit any doubts about the grounds of the ancient worship? or make any serious inquiries after religious truth? It does not appear that they did.

We have a collection of Pliny's letters in ten books. The tenth and last contains the correspondence between him and the Emperour Trajan. In the other nine books are more than two hundred and forty letters, many of them writ to *Tacitus*, and *Suetonius*, and other men of great distinction for their learning, and ingenuity, and high station, and the offices, which they had bore in the Roman Empire. Is there any thing in these letters relating to the Christian Religion, or the Christians, it's honest professors? Not one word. There is total silence upon that subject throughout! Do any of them ask Pliny, whether he could inform them concerning the Christian Philosophie, which had made such progress in the world, in a short time? Or does Pliny ask any of them, whether they had examined the pretensions of those people, and considered, whether there was not somewhat extraordinarie in this new sect? No, there  
 are



are no inquiries of this sort sent by Pliny to any of his learned and honorable friends: nor to him by any of them, so far as appears! They are all well satisfied in the ancient way. They hesitated not to proceed in the observation of all the idolatrous rites and ceremonies, practised by their ancestors. If they would not inquire, how should they know? And if they did not know, how should they act wisely, as the circumstances of things might require?

A. D.  
106.  
and 107.

And in all ages, ignorance will be culpable, if men neglect the means of knowledge, and will not inquire. And they must bear the consequences of their own neglects.

I beg leave to transcribe here the pathetic addressè of *Justin Martyr* to Antonin the Pious, and the Senate and People of Rome, at the end of his first Apologie, to induce them to attend to, and examine the evidences of the Christian Religion, and to give such treatment to the professors of it, as in all equity they had a right to expect. And I the rather transcribe it here, because I am persuaded, the like things were said to Pliny, and repeated to him more than once, by those Christians, who were accused before him, and examined by him. And, possibly, yea very probably, they came also to the ears of the Emperour Trajan himself.

“ On (r) the day called Sunday we all meet together. . . .  
 “ On which day Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead.  
 “ On the day before Saturday he was crucified. And on the  
 “ day after Saturday, which is Sunday, he appeared to his A-  
 “ postles

(r) *Justin. p. 99. Paris. 1636. p. 84. Bened.*

A. D. 106.  
and 107.

“ postles and Disciples, and taught them those things, which  
 “ we have set before you, and refer to your consideration. If  
 “ these things appear agreeable to reason and truth, pay a regard to  
 “ them. If they appear trifling, reject them as such. But do not  
 “ treat as enemies, nor appoint capital punishment to those who  
 “ have done no harm. For we foretell unto you, that you  
 “ will not escape the future judgement of God, if you persist in un-  
 “ righteousness. And we shall say: The (s) will of the Lord be  
 “ done.”

(s) ὁ φίλον τῷ Θεῷ, τίτο γενέσθω.



## C H A P. X,

## EPICTETUS, the Stoic Philosopher.

- I. *His Life and Time.* II. *A Storie, representing his great Patience.* III. *That he was learned.* IV. *A general Account of the Stoic Principles.* V. *Of Arrian, who drew up the Enchiridion, and Discourses of Epictetus.* VI. *Passages in Epictetus, relating to the Christians, with Remarks and Observations.*

I. **E**PICTETUS (*a*) was a celebrated Stoic (*b*) Philosopher. But there are not many particulars of his life, that are known with certainty. He is in Suidas. And I shall take the historical part of his article for my text.

A. D.  
109.  
*His Life,  
and Time.*

“ *Epictetus*, says that (*c*) Author, born at Hierapolis in Phrygia,  
“ a Philosopher, was slave of Epaphroditus, one of the Emperour Ne-  
“ ro’s Body-Guards. He was lame in one leg, occasioned by a defluxi-  
“ on.

(*a*) *Vid. Fabr. Bib. Gr. l. 4. c. 7.*  
*Tom. 3. p. 257. &c. Tillemont Adrien. art.*  
*xx.*

(*b*) *Epictetus Stoicorum vel maximus.*  
*Ap. A. Gell. l. 1. c. 2.*

*Maximus Philosophorum. Ib. l. 17.*  
*cap. xix.*

(*c*) *V. Επικτητος.*

A. D. 109. "on. He dwelt at Nicopolis, a city of new Epirus. And reached  
"to the time of Mark Antonin. He wrote many things."

*Epietetus, born at Hierapolis in Phrygia.* Which I do not think to be certain. And I have observed, that (d) divers learned men speak doubtfully of this particular, as not entirely relying upon the authority of Suidas.

The names and quality of his parents are no where mentioned.

*He was a slave of Epaphroditus, one of Nero's Body-Guards, and (e) was lame in one leg, occasioned by a defluxion.*

That Epictetus was for some while a slave, and always poor, and likewise lame, are things attested by many ancient writers, and need not to be disputed. They are mentioned by (f) Aulus Gellius, who was contemporarie with our Philosopher, but survived him. Who mentions a short Greek epigram, which he also ascribes to Epictetus himself, to this purpose.

*A slave, in body maim'd, as Irus poor:  
Yet to the Gods was Epictetus dear.*

Simplicius, whose authority is very good, says, "that (g) Epictetus

(d) Natum Hierapoli Phrygiae tradunt.  
*Lips. citat. in notis ad A. G. l. I. cap. 2.*

On le fait natif d' Heraple en Phrygie.  
*Tillem. ut supr.*

(e) πηρωθὲς δὲ τὸ σκέλος ὑπὸ ρέυματος.  
*Suid.*

(f) De Epicteto autem, philosopho nobili, quod is quoque servus fuit, recentior est memoria, quam ut scribi quasi oblitteratum debuerit. Ejus Epicteti etiam de se scripti duo versus feruntur. . . .

Δῆλος Ἐπίκτητος γενόμενος, καὶ σώματι πηρὸς,  
καὶ πενίην ἴσως, καὶ φίλος ἀθανάτοις.

*A. G. l. 2. c. 18. Et Macrobi. l. I. c. xi. sub fin.*

(g) "Ὅτε αὐτὸς ὁ ταῦτα λέγων Ἐπίκτητος, καὶ δῆλος ἦν, καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἀσθενὲς, καὶ χολῶδες ἐκ νέας ἡλικίας, καὶ πενίαν ἀκροτάτην ἐπετήδευσεν, ὡς τὸ ἐν Ῥώμῃ οἰκημα αὐτῷ μηδέποτε κλάθηναι δεηθῆναι, ὅτι μηδὲν ἔνδον ἔχου, εἰ μὴ τὴν σιβάρδα καὶ τὴν ψίαθον, ἐφ' ἧν ἐκαθέδεν."  
*Simpl. in Epictet. Ench. cap. 13. p. 102.*

“ tetus was a slave, of an infirm constitution, and lame from early  
 “ age, and so well satisfied with extreme poverty, that his small  
 “ house at Rome needed no securities, having nothing in it but his  
 “ couch and matts, upon which he lay.”

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109.

Hence I think it may be collected, that while Epictetus lived at Rome, he was, for some time at least, a freeman, and had a house of his own. And it may be supposed, that there were some, who were willing to support him, and furnish him, with such things as were necessary. This may be argued also from some preceding words of Simplicius, where having represented a like case, he says: “ Who \* would not be willing to maintain such an one, at the same time thinking that he rather receives than confers a benefit?”

In another place of the same work Simplicius says: “ The (b) admirable *Epictetus* for the greatest part of his life dwelt alone. “ But afterwards, [or in his advanced age] he was attended by a “ woman, whom he took to nurse a child, which he intended to “ bring up, and which otherwise, a friend of his, who was very “ poor, would have exposed.”

Though Simplicius mentions no other furniture of this Philosopher's house, beside a couch and matts; undoubtedly, there was also a lamp. Which as we learn from (i) Lucian, was sold after his death for three thousand drachms, or a hundred pounds of our money. Which high price, however, was not owing to the value of the materials, for it was earthen: but the reputation of the proprietor.

Epictetus himself refers to his lameness (k) several times. And Origen (l) supposeth him to have been a slave.

\* τις γὰρ ἐκ ἀγαπᾶ τρέφει τὸν τοιοῦτον, λαμβάνειν χάριν μᾶλλον ἢ πρὸς δίδουσι νομίζων; *Ib.* p. 102.

(b) *Ibid.* cap. 46. p. 272.

(i) *Adv. Indoct.* p. 386. T. 2. *Græc.*

(k) *Ap. Arrian.* l. 1. c. 8. *sub fin. et c.* 16. *sub fin. Cantabr.* 1655.

(l) *Contr. Cels.* l. 3. p. 144. al. §. 54.

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Suidas says, that (*m*) *Epaphroditus* was one of *Nero's* Body-Guards. By which (*n*) some have understood Chamberlain. And others, from this place of Suidas, as I apprehend, have been led to think, he was (*o*) Captain of the Guard, or Praefectus Praeterio. Which must be a mistake. Suetonius (*p*) calls him Master of the Requests. For certain, he was (*q*) *Nero's* freed-man, and one of his favourites. He is generally supposed to be the same, to whom Josephus inscribed his Jewish antiquities, and of whom he speaks honourably.

But I think it doubtful, whether Epictetus ever was his slave. "It is certain, says (*r*) Tillemont, that he was a slave. Suidas says, "he was slave of Epaphroditus, one of Nero's body-guards." Of this last particular therefore he speaks doubtfully.

Epictetus has thrice (*s*) mentioned Epaphroditus in his Discourses, recorded by Arrian. In one of those places he calls Epaphroditus Nero's freed-man. And tells a storie very disadvantageous to his character, exposing him to contempt and ridicule. And it is manifestly fictitious, in part at least. But would Epictetus treat Epaphroditus in that manner, if he had been his master, and had made him free! Moreover, if Epictetus's master had been so great, and so well known a person, as Epaphroditus, he would have been sometimes called his freed-man, as Epaphroditus is called Nero's: and Phlegon (*t*) Adrian's. And Stephanus Byzantinus, under the word *Bithynion*, says "it (*u*) was the native place of *Pinytus*, who taught  
" Gram-

(*m*) ∴ τῶν σωματοφυλάκων τῆ βασιλείας  
Νέρωνος.

(*n*) Epaphroditus, qui libertus, et cubicu-  
larius Neronis. *Fabr. B. Gr. T. 3. p.*  
257.

(*o*) Capitaine des gardes de Neron. *Mo-*  
*rery.*

(*p*) . . a libellis. *Sueton. Neron. c. 49.*  
*Domitian. c. 14.*

(*q*) *Tacit. Ann. l. 15. cap. 55.*

(*r*) Il est certain, qu'il a été esclave.  
Suidas dit, qu'il le fut d' Epaphrodite-  
garde du corps du Neron. *Ibid.*

(*s*) *Ap. Arrian. l. 1. cap. 1. et 19. et*  
26. *Cantabr. 1655.*

(*t*) *Vid. Spartian. Adrian. cap. 16. et*  
*Phot. cod. 97.*

(*u*) ἀφ' ἧ Πίνυτος ἐγένετο Ρώμης γραμμα-  
τικὸς Ἐπαφροδίτη τῷ Νέρωνος ᾧν ἐξελεύθηρος.  
*Steph. Byz.*

“ Grammar at Rome: who was the freed-man of *Epaphroditus*,  
 “ as he was Nero’s.” Not now to add any more like instances.

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*He dwelt at Nicopolis, a city of new Epirus.*

We know from (x) Suetonius, and other authors, that in the reign of *Domitian*, about the year of Christ 94. the Philosophers were ordered by a decree of the Senate, to depart from Rome, and Italie. Among them was Epictetus, who then went to Nicopolis, and taught philosophie there.

Epictetus may refer to this banishment of the Philosophers, when some of them, as may be supposed, to conceal their character, and avoid the public resentment, took (y) off their beards.

That Nicopolis was the place of his abode, is expressly said (z) by himself once at least, in his Discourses preserved by Arrian; and it is implied in what he says, in (a) several other places.

*He reached to the time of Mark Antonin.*

And to the like purpose (b) Themistius. Nevertheless there are divers learned (c) men, who do not assent to this. And what they say is of no small weight. For they observe, that he is not mentioned

N 2

oned

(x) . . . philosophos omnes Urbe Italiaque submovit. *Sueton. Domit.* 10.

Neque illis solum temporibus, nimis rudibus, necdum Graecâ doctrinâ expolitâ, Philosophi ex urbe Româ expulsi sunt. Verum etiam, Domitiano imperante, senatusconsulto ejecti, atque Urbe et Italia interdicti sunt. Quâ tempestate Epictetus quoque Philosophus propter Senatusconsultum Nicopolin Româ decessit. *A. Gell. l. 15. cap. xi.*

(y) Ἄγε ἐν, Ἐπίκτητε, διαζύρσαι. κ. λ. *Arrian. l. i. c. 2. p. 89.*

(z) . . . ὃς ἀπὸ ἐν νικηπόλει. *L. 2. c. 6. p. 184.*

(a) *L. i. c. 10. et 19. fin. et c. 25. p. 147. l. 4. c. 1. p. 376.*

(b) *Or. 5. p. 63.*

(c) *Salmaf. Animadv. in Epictet. et Simp. p. 1. . . 4. Gataker. ad M. Antonin. l. 8. cap. 31. Kuster. Ann. in Suid. V. Επικτητης. Fabric. et Tilleu. ut supra.*

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oned by (*d*) Mark himself, nor by (*e*) others, among those Philosophers, by whose instructions he had been benefited, and who were cherished and favored by him. And that Emperour himself acknowledgeth his obligations to Junius Rusticus (*f*) for procuring him a sight of Epictetus's Discourses.

Epictetus is mentioned (*g*) by Spartian among those Philosophers, to whom Adrian shewed great regard. If that be true, Epictetus must have lived to his time. And some have hence argued, that he returned to Rome. But I rather think, he never left Nicopolis, after he had settled (*h*) there. And he might receive marks of esteem from Adrian, without going to Rome.

His own Discourses, as seems to me, afford the best help for settling his time. In the second book he says, there (*i*) was then war between the Romans and the Getes, or Dacians. According to a computation formerly (*k*) made, Trajan's wars with the Dacians lasted five years, beginning in the year 100. or 101. and ending in 105. or 106. In the (*l*) third book, he speaks of there being then peace all over the Roman Empire. Which may be that time of profound and general tranquility, which succeeded the victories and triumphs over that people. In (*m*) the fourth book Trajan is mentioned by name. And it may be supposed, that he was then living. Which may induce us to think, that all the philosophical discourses of Epictetus, recorded by Arrian, were spoken before the end of that Emperour's reign.

It

(*d*) *De Rebus suis*, cap. 2. 3.

(*e*) *Vid. 7. Capitolin. M. Anton. Phil. cap. 3.*

(*f*) Καὶ τὸ εὐτοχεῖν τοῖς Ἐπικτιτέοις ὑπομνήμασιν, ὧν ὀικοθεν μετέδωκε. *De Reb. suis. l. 1. §. 7.*

(*g*) In summa familiaritate Epictetum et Heliodorum . . . habuit. *Spart. Adri-an. cap. 16.*

(*h*) Nec post id tempus Romam illum

puto rediisse, sed ibi mortem obiisse. *Salmaf. ib. p. 4.*

(*i*) Καὶ νῦν Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς Γέτας. *L. 2. c. 22. p. 244. Cantab.*

(*k*) See before, p. 7.

(*l*) *L. 3. c. 13. p. 292.*

(*m*) Τίνα ἔχει τὸν χαρακτήρα τὸτο τὸ τετρασσορον; Τραϊανῶ. *L. 4. c. 5. p. 390. Cant. p. 602. Upt.*



It is allowed, that Epictetus lived to old age. He is called an old man (*n*) in A. Gellius, and (*o*) Lucian. He speaks of himself, as (*p*) an old man in the first book of his Discourses.

It is generally allowed by learned men, that (*q*) Arrian did not publish the Discourses of Epictetus, till after his decease. It is manifest, that Epictetus was dead, when (*r*) A. Gellius published his Noctes Atticae. And (*s*) Arrian's Collection was abroad in the world, when A. Gellius studied at Athens. Which, probably, was in the time of Adrian. Consequently Epictetus did not survive Trajan, or however, not long. Lucian, who flourished in the time of M. Antonin, speaking of the person, who bought Epictetus's lamp after his death, says, "he was (*u*) one of our time, and might be still living." Which implies, that the purchase had been made some good while before. All the Discourses of Epictetus, which we have, were delivered at Nicopolis, as is (*x*) manifest. And from his settlement in that city to the death of Trajan (in 117.) or thereabout, must be reckoned the time, when he chiefly flourished.

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109.

Le

(*n*) *L. i. cap. 2.*

(*o*) . . . τῷ θαυμαστῷ ἐκείνῳ γέροντι. *Adv. Indoel. T. 2. p. 386.*

(*p*) . . . γέρον χολός. *L. I. c. 16. fin.*

(*q*) Atqui non eos videtur composuisse, nisi post mortem Epicteti. *Salmaf. in Epictet. et Simp. p. 4.*

. . . illas dissertationes habuit, quas in literas deinde ipso defuncto retulit Arrianus. *Fabr. ut supr. p. 259.*

Et notabis, jam Epictetum tum defuisse, cum Enchiridion hoc Messalino inscriberet Arrianus. *Salmaf. ib. p. 5.*

(*r*) *A. G. l. 2. c. 18.*

(*s*) . . . Jussitque (Herodes Atticus)

proferri Dissertationem Epicteti digestarum ab Arriano, secundum librum, in quo venerandus ille senex. . . *A. G. l. i. c. 2.*

Atque ibi coram ex sarcinulâ suâ librum protulit Epicteti philosophi, quintum Διαλέξεων, quas ab Arriano digestas congruere scriptis Zenonis et Chryssippi non dubium est. *Id. l. 19. cap. 1.*

(*u*) . . . ὅτε καθ' ἡμᾶς αὐτὰς ἐγένετό τις, καὶ ἐτι ἐστὶν ὄντως. *T. 2. p. 386.*

(*x*) Et profecto omnes ejus sermones ac dissertationes, quas scripto mandavit Arrianus, quaeque hodie exstant, Nicopolis habitae sunt. *Salmaf. ut supr. p. 4.*

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109.

Le Clerc, in his Ecclesiastical Historie, speaks of Epictetus at the year of Christ 104. Which is not at all amiss, as must appear from what has been just said. But, as my observations may relate to the whole collection of his Discourses, some of which might be spoken later, I have chosen to place him at the twelfth of Trajan, and the 109. year of our Lord.

*He wrote many things.* Which will be considered by and by.

*His Pa-  
tience.*

II. Having now gone over what is said by Suidas, we will observe a storie told of Epictetus by Celsus in his books against the Christian Religion. “ That (y) when his master tortured his leg, he “ smiling, and not at all discomposed, said: you will break it: And “ when it was broke, he said, did I not tell you, that you would “ break it.” This Celsus magnifies, as exceeding every thing recorded of our Saviour’s patience.

Here again (z) Tillemont hesitates. And indeed we might have been well pleased to find this account in Aulus Gellius, or some other ancient author, not writing in controversie. However, there certainly is some foundation for it: though (a) the storie is not always told in the same way. Epictetus is several times brought in as an example of Heathen patience in (b) Gregorie Nazianzen, and (c) the Dialogues ascribed to his brother, Caesarius.

Possibly

(y) . . . κεν̄ν Επικτητου; ὅς τε̄ δεσπότης σρεβλῆντος αὐτῷ τὸ σκέλος, ὑπομειδιῶν, ἀνεπλήκτως ἔλεγε κατάσσεις. ἢ κατὰξαντος, οὐκ ἔλεγον, εἶπεν, ὅτι κατὰσσεις; *Orig. C. Cels. l. 7. p. 268 al. §. 53.*

(z) On trouve quelque chose de cela dans les Dialogues de Caesareus, et dans Gregoire de Nazianze. Mais non pas dans un endroit d’ Aulu-Gelle, dont on le cite, et dont le temoignage rendroit cette histoire plus assurée. *Tillem. as before.*

(a) Sed ne crus quidem Epicteti silentio praeterierim. Quod cum ipsi a tyranno quodam vinctum fuisset, ac diuturno post tempore ille ex ipso quaesivisset, an solvi vellet, inquit, an vinctus sum? &c. *Eliae Cretens. Comm. in Greg. Naz. Or. 3. p. 326.*

(b) Καὶ τὸ Επικτήτου σκέλος. *Gr. Naz. Or. 3. p. 77. Vid. et Ep. 64. al. 58. p. 822.*

(c) Epicteti vero crure, a moroso domino

Possibly some may think, that *Epietetus* himself refers to this occurrence of his past life: when in the first book of his Discourses, speaking of death, exile, imprisonment, and other pains, which men ought to endure patiently, and chearfully, he says: "I must (*d*) die." And must I die groaning too? "Be fettered." Must "it be lamenting too? "Exiled." And what hinders me, then, "but that I may go smiling, and chearful, and serene? "Betray a secret." I will not betray it. For this is in my power. "Then I will fetter you." What (*e*) do you say, man? Fetter "me? You will fetter my leg: but not Jupiter himself can get the "better of my choice. . . . These things ought Philosophers to study, . . . and in these to exercise themselves."

However, though there may be some foundation for this storie, we can perceive, that the lameness of *Epietetus* was not owing to a violent fraction, or dislocation. For we are informed by *Suidas*, that his lameness was owing to a *defluxion*, and by *Simplicius*, that he was *lame from early age*.

We likewise perceive from the writers above alleged, that *Epietetus* was not always a slave. In the later part, and perhaps the longer part of his life, he was a freeman. He was a Philosopher, living at ease, in his own house, attended by a woman, with the child of a friend, whom he intended to bring up. All which particulars lead us to think, that *Epietetus* had a sufficiency, or competence, though not superfluities. Nor can it be at all doubted, that his friends and disciples would, and did furnish him with all things necessary, during his abode at Rome, and afterwards at Nicopolis.

Where

no convulso, multis Philosophis silentii, et in periculis, occasio doctrinae fuit. *Caesar. Dialog.* 4. p. 804. *B. ap. Bib. PP. T. V.*

(*d*) Here I take *Mrs. Carter's translation*.

p. 5.

(*e*) Ἀλλὰ δῆσω σε. Ἀνθρωπε, τί λέγεις; ἐμέ; τὸ σκέλος με δῆσεις, τὴν προαίρεσιν δὲ ἐνδὲ ὁ Σεῦς νικῆσαι δύναται. *L. i. c. II.* p. 85.

A. D. 109. Where we suppose him to have ended his life. And where he seems to have had many hearers, and disciples, and some of good condition: who would not fail to allow him handsome gratuities for his instructions, which they highly valued.

*That he was learned.*

III. We have seen what ancient writers say, of the furniture of this Philosopher's house. It consisted, they say, of *a couch and matresse, upon which he lay, and a lamp.* I have sometimes thought, they should have added, *and a librerie,* the books of which he carefully read and studied. For *Epicetetus* was learned. I cannot say, that I have seen this observation in any writers of his life. And yet it is very obvious. Nor is it reasonable to think, that the only use of the lamp was to enlighten his room in the dark night, or to dress his victuals by the light of it. Very probably, he read, and studied by it.

*Epicetetus's* learning is conspicuous in his Discourses. He knows very well the historie of Greece and Rome, and (*f*) the customs of all nations, Jews, Syrians, Egyptians, as well as Romans. He is intimately acquainted with the principles, the historie, the sayings, the writings, of the ancient Greek Philosophers. The (*g*) *Iliad* and *Odyssy* are familiar to him. He (*b*) also quotes *Hesiod*. He (*i*) had read the tragedies of *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, and the (*k*) comedies of *Menander*, and (*l*) the orations of *Lysias* and *Isocrates*. In a word, he was no stranger to any part of polite literature. And *Mrs. Carter* says: "He (*m*) often quotes, with great applause, the sentences of many writers, not of his own sect." But how could that be done, without having read?

We

(*f*) *L. 1. ch. xi. p. 114. Vid. et l. 2. cap. ix. p. 192.*

(*g*) *L. 1. c. 28. p. 155. et passim.*

(*b*) *L. 2. c. 12. p. 201. Vid. Hesiod. Theog. ver. 87.*

(*i*) *L. 1. c. 24. p. 145. et c. 28. p. 157.*

(*k*) *L. 3. c. 26. p. 351.*

(*l*) *L. 3. c. 23. p. 325.*

(*m*) *Introduction. §. 40. p. 31.*

We have no distinct account of his education. But his own discourses are a proof, that he had read, and studied, as well as thought.

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IV. I am not obliged to give a distinct account of his philosophical principles. I shall put down here only a few general observations from Mrs. Carter's Introduction, Sect. 33. "Stoicism is, indeed, inferior to the doctrine of Socrates: which did not teach, that all externals were indifferent: which did teach a future state of recompence: and, agreeably to that, forbad suicide." And in another Section of her Introduction, the same philosophical Lady says: "There is, I think, very little evidence to be found, that they believed future rewards and punishments, compared with that which appears to the contrary: at least the reader will observe, that Epictetus never asserts either." Sect. 20. p. xiii.

*The Stoic Principles*

V. I must now give some account of (*m*) Arrian, to whom we are indebted for what we have of Epictetus.

*Of Arrian, who published the Discourses of Epictetus.*

In Photius (*n*) are several articles concerning his works. One of the last of which was a History of his own countrey, Bithynia. Wherein Arrian says, "he (*o*) was born, and bred, and educated in Nicomedia: and that he was Priest of Ceres and her daughter, to whom that city was dedicated."

In

(*m*) *Vid. Suidas Voss. de Historicis Gr. Fabr. Bib. Gr. L. 4. c. 8. T. 3. p. 269. &c. Biographia Classica. Vol. 2. p. 67. &c. Lond. 1740. Tillemont Adrien. art. xx. Dictionnaire de Morery.*

(*n*) *Cod. 58. p. 51. Cod. 91. 92. et 93.*  
(*o*) *Cod. xciii. p. 233.*

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In another article, Photius, having given an account of several of his works, says: “ This (*p*) Arrian was by profession a philosopher, and one of Epictetus’s friends. He flourished in the times of Adrian, Antonin the Pious, and Mark Antonin. He was called the young Xenophon. On account of his uncommon abilities, he was entrusted with divers civil employments, and attained to the dignity of the Consulship. Beside (*q*) those already mentioned, he wrote other works: as Dissertations of his master Epictetus in eight books, so far as we know: and Homilies [or Discourses] of the same Epictetus, in twelve books. And it must be owned, that his stile much resembles that of Xenophon.”

Suidas (*r*) mightily agrees with Photius, saying: “ Arrian, of Nicomedia, an admirer of Epictetus’s philosophie, and called the young Xenophon, lived at Rome in the times of the Emperours Adrian, Mark, and Antonin. And upon account of his distinguished abilities, attained to the dignity of the Consulship, as Heiconius says. He wrote very many books.”

Lucian (*s*) says: “ Arrian, a disciple of Epictetus, was a man of the first rank among the Romans, who employed his whole life in the studie of Literature.”

I have no concern at present with any works of Arrian, excepting those relating to Epictetus. I therefore now proceed to Simplicius, who has been already cited more than once: who in the sixth centurie wrote a commentarie upon the Enchiridion of Epictetus. His preface to that work begins with these words. “ Arrian, (*t*) who  
“ compiled

(*p*) *Cod. Iviii. p. 52. &c.*

(*q*) Εγραψε δὲ βιβλία καὶ ἕτερα, τῶν μὲν διατριβῶν Ἐπικτήτου τῆ διδασκαλίας, ὅσα ἴσμεν βιβλία ὀκτώ· τῶν δὲ ὁμιλιῶν τῆ αὐτῆ Ἐπικτήτου βιβλία δώδεκα. *Ib. p. 53.*

(*r*) *V. Ἀρριανῆος.*

(*s*) *Pseudom. p. 747. Tom. i. Graev.*

(*t*) Περὶ μὲν τῆ βίης τῆ Ἐπικτήτου, καὶ τῆς αὐτῆ τελευτῆς, Ἀρριανὸς ἔγραψεν, ὁ τῆς Ἐπικτήτου διατριβῆς ἐν πολυσίχοις συντάξας βιβλίους· καὶ ἀπ’ ἐκείνου μαθεῖν ἔστιν, ὁποῖος γέγονεν τὸν βίον ὁ αὐτῆρ. κ. λ. *Simpl. p. 1.*

“ compiled the dissertations [or discourses] of Epictetus in several  
 “ prolix books, wrote concerning the life and death of Epictetus.  
 “ From him may be learned what a sort of man he was. The same  
 “ Arrian composed this book, which is called the *Enchiridion* of  
 “ Epictetus, selecting out of the several parts of his discourses [λόγων]  
 “ such things as are most important, and most necessarie in philo-  
 “ sophie, and most likely to affect mens minds. As the same Arri-  
 “ an says in his epistle to Mesgalenus, [or Messalinus,] his own  
 “ friend, and especially a great admirer of Epictetus.”

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Hence it may be concluded, that Epictetus published nothing himself. *Suidas* therefore is mistaken, when he says, that *Epictetus wrote many things*, unless he may be understood to mean, by his disciples.

Learned men are now generally of opinion, that Arrian published three or four books, one concerning *the Life and Death of Epictetus*, another called his *Dissertations*, and a third his *Discourses*, beside the *Enchiridion*. I rather think, that beside the *Enchiridion* he composed but one, called his *Dissertations*, or *Discourses*, “ whence may be known, what sort of man he was, how he lived, and how he died.” I understand *Simplicius* to speak of but one work only, which I suppose to be that, which we now have, in four books: though, possibly, something at the end may be wanting: as we have also lost Arrian’s epistle to his friend Messalinus, which he prefixed to the *Enchiridion*.

*Photius* speaks of Arrian’s composing two works, *the Dissertations*, and *the Discourses* of Epictetus. But he speaks doubtfully of the number of books, of which the *Dissertations* consisted. And I am apt to think, he had read none of them. He multiplies the works, being led into a mistake by the different titles of one and the same work, sometimes called *Dissertations*, at other times *Discourses*.

I do not perceive Mark Antonin to speak of more than one work,  
 O 2 called

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called by him. (*u*) *Memoirs of Epictetus*. Which title well suits the Discourses, now in our hands. Aulus Gellius quotes a (*x*) long passage of the second book of his *Dissertations*, which we have: another (*y*) of the fifth book of the *Dissertations*, which we do not find. Simplicius in his preface useth both those words, indifferently, *Dissertations* and *Discourses*. Arrian himself, in his epistle to L. Gellius, prefixed to the work, which we have, useth the expressions of *Discourses*, and *Memoirs*: λόγους ὑπομνήματα.

Thus I had writ long before I had met with Mr. Upton's edition of Epictetus. And it was not without some surprize, as well as pleasure, that I have observed how nearly we agree in sentiment upon this point. For he likewise supposeth, that (*z*) Arrian published nothing of Epictetus, beside the *Enchiridion*, and his *Discourses*, some books of which are now lost.

I must now transcribe a part of what Arrian says in his preface or dedication to Lucius Gellius. “ I (*a*) neither composed the discourses of Epictetus, in such a manner, as things of this nature are commonly composed: nor did I myself produce them to public view,

(*u*) . . . τοῖς Ἐπικτητέοις ὑπομνήμασιν. L. I. §. 7.

(*x*) Jusfitque proferri dissertationum Epicteti digestarum ab Arriano secundum librum. L. I. c. 2.

(*y*) . . . librum protulit Epicteti Philosophi quintum Διαλέξεων, quas ab Arriano digestas, &c. L. 19. cap. i. Vid. et l. 17. cap. xix. in.

(*z*) Ex hisce locis credas primâ facie, plurimos olim existisse libros, quos de Epicteto composuit Arrianus: I. Περὶ τῶν Ἐπικτήτου Διατριβῶν. βιβ. ή. II. Περὶ τῶν Ἐπικτήτου ὁμιλιῶν βιβ. ιβ. III. Περὶ τῶν βίβ. Ἐπικτήτου καὶ τῆς τότε τελευτηῆς. IV. Ἐπικ-

τήτου λόγοι. V. Ἐπικτήτου ἐγχειρίδιον. VI. Ἐπικτήτου ὑπομνήματα. VII. Περὶ τῶν Ἐπικτήτου Διαλέξεων. De hisce libris quid sentiam, palam profiteri nullus dubito, licet in aliam a doctis viris iverim sententiam: neinpe esse a manu Arriani duo tantum inter tot memorata volumina. Vid. Περὶ τῶν Ἐπικτήτου Διατριβῶν: cujus operis nonnulli intercidērunt libri: et Ἐπικτήτου Ἐγχειρίδιον. cujus quoque ad Messalinum praefatio seu dedicatio interit. &c. Upt. Not. in Epictet. p. 4. 5.

(*a*) Here I use Mrs. Carter's translation. p. xli.



“ view, any more than I composed them. But whatever sentiments  
“ I heard from his own mouth, the very same I endeavoured to set  
“ down in the very same words, as far as possible, and preserve as  
“ memorials, for my own use, of his manner of thinking, and free-  
“ dom of speech.”

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“ These discourses are such as one person would naturally deliver  
“ from his own thoughts, extempore, to another : not such as he  
“ would prepare to be read by numbers afterwards.”

Here therefore it should be observed, that what I am about to transcribe from this work, ought not to be considered, as said by *Arrian*, but by *Epicætetus* himself, whose sentiments *Arrian* has recorded in his own words, as near as could be done.

For this reason I have been careful to settle the time of *Epicætetus*. About the time of *Arrian* I have not been so solicitous. But I am inclined to believe, that he published these discourses of his master soon after his death, about the year of our Lord 120. and the fourth of the Emperour *Adrian*.

VI. In these Discourses there are two passages, which have been supposed by many learned men, to relate to the Christians.

*Passages concerning the Christians.*

1. In the (*b*) first *Epicætetus* blames those, who assume the profession of Philosophie, or any other character, without acting up to it.  
“ Why, says he, do you call yourself a Stoic? Why do you deceive  
“ the multitude? Why should you pretend to be a Greek, when you  
“ are a Jew? Do you not perceive, upon what terms a man is called a Jew, a Syrian, an Egyptian? When we see a man inconstant  
“ to his principles, we say, he is not a Jew, but only pretends to be  
“ so.”

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“ so. But (c) when he has the temper of a man dipped, and \* \* \*  
“ professed, then he is indeed, and is called a Jew. Even so - we  
“ are counterfeits, Jews in name, but in reality something else.”

It appears to me doubtful, whether Christians are here intended, or only Jews, and profelytes to Judaism : who sometimes lived like Jews, and sometimes like Greeks. It is reasonable to think, that many did so in the time of Epictetus, when Jews were hardly treated by Domitian.

2. In the other place Epictetus is speaking of intrepidity, or fearlessness, and particularly with regard to a tyrant, surrounded by his guards and officers, and says : “ Is (d) it possible, that a man  
“ may arrive at this temper, and become indifferent to those things,  
“ from madness, or from habit, as the *Galileans* ? And yet that  
“ no one should be able to know by reason and demonstration, that  
“ God made all things in the world . . . ?”

Some have thought, that by the *Galileans* 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. Our Lord had dwelt in Galilee, the greatest part of his life here on earth. He was called *the Prophet of Galilee* (e). Most of his wonderful works were wrought  
in

(c) Ὅταν δ' ἀναλάβῃ τὸ πάθος, τὸ τῷ βε-  
βαιμένῳ καὶ ἠρημένῳ, τότε καὶ ἔστι τῷ ὄντι, καὶ  
καλεῖται Ἰουδαῖος. Ὅσα καὶ ἡμεῖς παραβη-  
πισαί· λόγῳ μὲν Ἰουδαῖοι, ἔργῳ δ' ἄλλο τι.  
Ib.

\* \* \* Instead of ἠρημένῳ, Mr. Upton and Petavius would read περιηρημένῳ *circumci-  
sed*. But it is a mere conjecture, without

the authority of any manuscript, or ancient printed edition. See Upton's notes, p. 124.

(d) Ἐἵτα ἐπὶ μανίας μὲν δύναται τις ἔτω  
διατιθῆναι πρὸς ταῦτα, καὶ ἐπὶ ἔθους οἱ Γαλι-  
λαῖοι. L. 4. c. 7. p. 400. *Cambr.* p. 621.  
Upton.

(e) *Matt.* xxi. 11.

in that country, or near it. And his disciples were called *Galileans* (f). Such things often occur in our Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. So that it is not at all unlikely, that in early days, as well as afterwards, the Christians might be opprobriously called by some *Galileans*.

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Suidas says, “ that (g) in the time of the Emperour Claudius, “ they, who before had been called *Nazareans* and *Galileans*, received a new name at Antioch, and were called *Christians*.” Mani, in the third centurie, sometimes called the Catholics *Galileans* : as appears from (b) one of his Epistles, still extant. I think, there can be no question made, but that the Christians, in general, were sometimes called Galileans, before the time of the Emperour Julian.

It is however very observable, that this Stoic is much displeas'd with some people, who had exceeded his own sect in fortitude and patience. A like reflexion we shall meet with hereafter, in a passage of the Emperour, *Mark Antonin*, likewise a Stoic Philosopher, by whom the Christians are expressly named.

Mrs. Carter, who by her translation of the Discourses of Epictetus has done honour to herself, and to her sex, has a note upon this place, which deserves to be transcribed here. “ *Epictetus*, says she, “ probably means, not any remaining disciples of Judas of Galilee, “ but the Christians, whom Julian afterwards affected to call Galileans. It helps to confirm this opinion, that M. Antoninus [L. 2. “ Sect. 3.] mentions them by their proper name of Christians, as “ suffering death out of mere obstinacy. It would have been more “ reasonable,

(f) *Act.* i. 11. ii. 7.

(g) Ἰσίου δὲ, ὅτι ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου βασιλείᾳ Ῥώμῃς . . . ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ, μετωνομάσθησαν οἱ πάλαι λεγόμενοι Ναζαραῖοι ἢ Γαλιλαῖοι, Χριστιανῶσι. Suid. V. Ναζηραῖος. Vid et V. Γαλιλαῖα. et Χριστιανοί.

(b) τῶν Γαλιλαίων δὲ οἱ εἰσεὶς ἐνομαζόντων ἔχεν τὸν Χριστὸν, πλατὸν καταχέρομεν γέλωτα. κ. λ. Mani. ap. Fabr. B. Gr. Tom. v. p. 285.

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“ reasonable, and more worthy the character of these great men, to  
 “ have inquired into the principles, on which the Christians refused  
 “ to worship Heathen Deities, and by which they were enabled to  
 “ support their sufferings with such amazing constancy, than rashly  
 “ to pronounce their behaviour the effect of obstinacy and habit.  
 “ Epictetus and Antoninus were too exact judges of human nature,  
 “ not to know, that ignominy, tortures, and death, are not merely on  
 “ their own account, objects of choice. Nor could the records of any  
 “ time, or nation, furnish them with an example of multitudes of  
 “ persons of both sexes, of all ages, ranks and natural dispositions,  
 “ in distant countreys, and successive periods, resigning whatever is  
 “ most valuable and dear to the heart of man from a principle of  
 “ obstinacy, or the mere force of habit: not to say, that habit could  
 “ have no influence on the first sufferers.”

I shall just add: It was the opinion, of *Tanaquil Faber*, that (g)  
 by *Galileans*, the Christians are here intended.

3. Some may think, I might conclude here. But I must proceed.  
 Epictetus's Discourses, as was observed above, abound with quota-  
 tions of Greek authors, and references to ancient historie. Never-  
 theless we observe not any mention made of *Moses*, or *David*, or  
*Solomon*, or any of the Jewish Prophets, nor yet of *Matthew*, or  
*Mark*, or *Luke*, or *John*, or *Paul*, or *Peter*. The disciples of Jesus  
 wrote in Greek, and the books of Moses, and the Jewish Prophets,  
 had been before his time translated into the Greek language. I do  
 not say, he had read them. But he could not be altogether ignorant  
 of them. Nor were any of them undeserving the regard of a mor-  
 al Philosopher. But they were Unitarians. Nor could they be al-  
 leged,

(g) [Ἐκείνους ἐκείνους δεσφάζων.] Martyres  
 nostras designat, quos Epictetus, vel Ar-  
 rianus aiebat id facere ὑπὸ μανίας ἢ ὑπὸ  
 ἔθεος. Quos enim ibi Galilaeos vocat,

nullus dubito, quin sint Christiani. Lib.  
 4. cap. vii. *T. Fab. annot. ad Lucian.  
 de Morte Peregrini. T. 2. p. 567. Graev.*

leged, or taken notice of, without hurting, if not overthrowing the polytheistic scheme.

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4. In the sixteenth Chapter of the first book of his Discourses, Epictetus has such expressions, as these. "What else can I, a lame old man, do, but sing hymns to God? . . . Since I am a reasonable creature, it is my duty to praise God. . . . And I exhort you to join in the same song." No Christian can read this passage, without thinking of David's Psalms, and, perhaps, some other parts of Scripture. Justly therefore does Mrs. Carter observe, in a note upon that passage. "Beautiful and affecting examples of such praise and exhortation, may be seen in Pf. xxxiv. civ. cxlv. . . . and other parts of the sacred writings."

5. In the time of Epictetus, and his disciple Arrian, Christians were numerous and well known, at Rome, and most parts of the Roman Empire, as we are assured by what Tacitus, Plinie, and Suetonius, have writ concerning them: not now to insist upon any Christian writers, however celebrated, or however credible they may be.

Nor was Epictetus unattentive to things that passed in the world about him, in his own time: as all must be sensible, who read his Discourses. Nevertheless the Christians are not mentioned at all, or very seldom. It is hard to believe, that this silence was not affected. Epictetus, I apprehend, was high-minded, and the Christians were contemptible. He had his share of the common philosophic pride. He did not think it worth the while to inquire into their principles. Nor was it proper to mention them often in his Discourses, least the curiosity of his hearers should be excited, and they should be induced to make more particular inquiries after them.

6. However, let him have due praise for all the good, he has said, or done. Origen, that great Christian Philosopher, whose mind was contracted by no narrow sentiments, who read all sorts

A. D. 109. of writings himself, and advised others (*b*) to do the same, who had leisure and abilities, assures us, that (*i*) Epictetus was more acceptable to people of lower rank, than Plato, who was more polite.

7. The whole design of his philosophie is said to (*k*) have been comprehended in this short and fine maxim, consisting only of two words: *Bear, and Forbear.* *Ἀνέχεσθαι καὶ ἀπέχεσθαι.* Which I have not observed among his Fragments, neither in Mr. Upton, nor in Mrs. Carter: though it is particularly mentioned by Aulus Gellius, and ascribed by him to Epictetus himself.

(*b*) See the *Credibility, &c.* Vol. iv. p. 484.

(*i*) *Contr. Cels.* l. 6. *sub in.*

(*k*) Praeterea idem ille Epictetus, quod ex eodem Favorino audivimus, solitus dicere est, duo esse vitia multo omnium gravissima ac teterrima, intolerantiam et incontinentiam: quum aut injurias, quae sunt ferenda, non toleramus, neque feri-

mus: aut a quibus rebus voluptatibusque nos tenere debemus, non tenemus. Itaque, inquit, si quis haec duo verba cordi habeat, eaque sibi imperando, atque observando curet, is erit pleraque, impeccabilis, vitamque vivet tranquillissimam. Verba duo haec dicebat: *Ἀνέχεσθαι καὶ ἀπέχεσθαι.* *A. Gell. l. 17. cap. 19.*



## C H A P. XI.

## The Emperour ADRIAN.

- I. *His Time, and Character.* II. *His Rescript, in Favour of the Christians, to Minucius Fundanus, Proconsul of Asia.* III. *His Letter to Servian, concerning the Christians in Egypt.* IV. *Whether he erected, and intended to consecrate Temples to the Honour of Jesus Christ.*

I. **P**UBLIUS AELIUS ADRIANUS, (*a*) or the Emperour ADRIAN, (*b*) was born at Rome on the 24. day of Januarie, in the year of Christ 76. and died on the tenth day of July, in the year 138. being then more than sixty two years of age. He reigned twenty years and eleven months from the death of Trajan, on the 10th or 11th day of August, in 117.

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*His Time,  
and Character.*

P 2

As

(a) *Vide Dion. Cass. lib. 69. Spartian. in Adriano. Eutrop. lib. 8. cap. vi. vii. Victor. de Caesar. cap. xiv. Victor. Epit. cap. xiv.*

(b) *Vide Pagi ann. 138. n. iii. Basnag.*

*ann. 117. viii. Tillemont L'Emp. Adrien. art. i. and Crevier's Historie of the Roman Emperours, vol. vii. p. 213. Dictionnaire de Bayle, Hadrien.*

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As I may not enlarge either on his character, or historie, it may be best for me to be quite silent. I shall only say, that both have been writ by ancient Roman and Greek authors, with great freedom: and that he is reckoned one of those princes, who had great virtues, and great vices. He is also represented (*c*) to have been very various and inconstant.

*His Rescript to Minucius Fundanus*

II. Adrian is not generally reckoned among the persecuting Emperours, because (*d*) he published no new edicts against them. But Trajan's edict was still in force. Many Christians therefore might suffer in his reign, as there certainly did. Jerome supposeth, that the persecution (*e*) in his reign was for a while very violent, and that it was moderated upon occasion of the apologies, which Quadratus and Aristides presented to Adrian at Athens. These apologies we have dated (*f*) in the year of Christ 126. Sulpicius Severus (*g*) placeth the fourth persecution in his reign. But he allows, that afterwards the same Emperour restrained it, referring, as it seems, to the Rescript, which shall be produced at length hereafter. Orosius does not number him among the persecuting Emperours, and (*b*) placeth the fourth persecution in the time of Mark Antonin.

We

(*c*) Idem severus, laetus: comis, gravis: lascivus, cunctator: tenax, liberalis: simulator, faevus, clemens, et semper in omnibus varius. *Spartian. Adrian. cap. 14.*

(*d*) . . . quas [*leges*] nullus Hadrianus, quanquam curiositatum omnium explorator . . . impressit. *Tertull. Ap. cap. v. p. 7.*

(*e*) Quadratus Apostolorum discipulus, et Atheniensis Pontifex ecclesiae, nonne Adriano principi Eleusinia sacra invisenti, librum pro nostra religione tradidit? Et tantae admirationi omnibus fuit, ut perfe-

cutionem gravissimam illius excellens sedaret ingenium? Aristides Philosophus vir eloquentissimus, eidem principi apologeticum pro Christianis obtulit. &c. *Hieron. ep. 83. al. 84.*

(*f*) See *Credib. P. 2. ch. 28. Vol. 2. p. 647. &c.*

(*g*) Quarta sub Adriano persecutio numeratur, quam tamen post exerceri prohibuit: *injustum esse* pronuncians, *ut quicumque sine crimine reus constitueretur.* *S. Sever. H. S. l. 2. cap. 46.*

(*b*) *Oros. l. 7. cap. xv.*



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We are informed by Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical Historie, “ that (i) *Serenius Granianus*, Proconsul, wrote to *Adrian*, that it “ seemed to him unjust, that the Christians should be put to death, “ only to gratify the clamours of the people, without trial, and “ without any crime proved against them: and that *Adrian* in answer to that letter, wrote to *Minucius Fundanus*, Proconsul of “ Asia, ordering that no man should be put to death, without a “ judicial proceffe, and a legal trial.”

It is manifest from the conclusion of Justin Martyr’s first Apologie, which was presented to Antonin the Pious, and the Senate of Rome, that (k) the Rescript of Adrian was subjoined to it. And from Eusebius we know, that it was in (l) Latin. He translated it into Greek, and inserted it in his Ecclesiastical Historie: whence we have it, and whence it has been put at the end of Justin’s Apologie, in the same language, the Latin original being lost.

The reason, why this Rescript was sent to *Minucius Fundanus*, is supposed to be, that *Serenius’s* Letter to the Emperour was not writ, till the time of his government was near expiring.

Beside Justin Martyr’s early and express authority, this Rescript is also mentioned by Melito in his Apologie to Mark Antonin, whom he reminds, “ that (m) his grandfather Adrian had writ in “ their favour, as to others, so particularly to *Fundanus*, Proconsul “ of

(i) Ετι δ’ αὐτὸς [Ἰουστίνος] ἰσορεῖ δεξιόμενου τοῦ Ἀδριανου παρὰ Σερένιου Γρανιανῶ λαμπροτάτου ἡγουμένου γράμματα ὑπὲρ Χριστιανῶν, περιέχοντα, ὡς ἔδίκαιον ἔρη ἐπὶ μηδενὶ ἐγκλήματι, βεβαῖς δὴμῳ χαριζομένους ἀρετίαις κτείνεν αὐτοῖς, ἀντιγράφει Μινυκίῳ Φουνδάνῳ ἀνθυπατῶ τῆς Ἀσίας, προσάπτοντα μηδένα κτείνεν ἀνευ ἐγκλήματος καὶ ἐυλόγου καταγορίας. *H. E. l. 4. cap. 8 p. 122. D.*

(k) Ὑπετόξαμεν δὲ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς Ἀδριανῶ τὸ ἀντίγραφόν, ἵνα καὶ κατὰ τὸ αὐθιγένει ἡ-

μῶς γναρίζητε. *Justin. Ap. p. 84. Bened.*

(l) Τέτοις ὁ μὲν δηλωθεὶς ἀνὴρ αὐτὴν παρατέθειται τὴν ῥωμαϊκὴν ἀντιγραφὴν. Ἡμῶς δ’ ἐπὶ τὸ ἑλληνικὸν κατὰ δύναμιν αὐτὴν μεταλήραμεν, ἕχκοι ἰσίδε. κ. λ. *Euseb. l. 4. c. 8. p. 123.*

(m) . . . ἐν πότιπος σὺ Ἀδριανῶς. ποίλοις μιν καὶ Φουνδάνῳ δὲ τῶ ἀνθυπατῶ ἢ . . . ἰαίαις γράφων φαίνεται. *Ap. Euseb. . . 26. p. 148. C.*

A. D. " of Asia." This Rescript is also referred to by Sulpicius Severus, as  
 117. before observed. The genuinnesse of it therefore is indubitable.

It is very reasonably supposed, that beside the letter of *Serenius Granianus*, the Apologies of *Quadratus* and *Aristides*, presented about the same time, contributed to procure this favourable Rescript. As much is plainly hinted in Jerome's Latin edition of Eusebe's (*n*) Chronicle. I now proceed to translate it, literally, from the Greek of Eusebius.

*Adrian (o) to Minucius Fundanus. I have received a letter writ to me by the illustrious (p) Serenius Granianus, whom you have succeeded. It seems then to me, that this is an affair, which ought not to be passed over without being examined into: if it were only to prevent disturbance being given to people, and that room may not be left for informers to practise their wicked arts. If therefore the people of the province will appear publickly, and in a legal way charge the Christians, that they may answer for themselves in court: let them take that course, and (q) not proceed by importunate demands and loud clamours only. For it is much the best method, if any bring accusations, that you should take cognizance of them. If then any one shall accuse, and make out any thing done contrarie to the laws, do you determine according to the nature of the crime. But, by Hercules, if the charge be only a calumnie, do you take care to punish the author of it, with the severity it deserves."*

By

(*n*) Quadratus discipulus Apostolorum, et Aristides Atheniensis noster Philosophus, libros pro Christiana religione Adriano dedere compositos. Et Serenus Granianus legatus vir apprime nobilis literas ad Imperatorem misit, iniquum esse dicens, clamoribus vulgi innocentium hominum sanguinem concedi, et sine ullo crimine, nominis tantum et sectae, reos

feri. Quo commotus Hadrianus Minucio Fundano Proconsuli Asiae scribit, non sine objectu criminum Christianos condemnandos. *Chr. p. 167.*

(*o*) *H. E. l. 4. cap. 9.*

(*p*) λαμπροτάτη ἀνδρῶς.

(*q*) ... ἀλλ' ἵνα ἀξιώσασιν, ἰδὲ μοναῖς βααῖς.

By importunate demands, and loud clamours, or in other words, by clamorous petitions, learned men generally understand, the popular cry of those times, (*r*) *The Christians to the lions*. Nor was it an unusual thing, as Valefius observes in his note upon the place, for the people at Rome, or in the provinces, in the time of public shews, when they were got together in the theatre, by loud cries, and a tumultuous behaviour, to gain their will of the Presidents, and even of the Emperour himself. This method had been practised against the Christians. And it is likely, that men were often brought before the Presidents with general accusations, without distinct proofs. The Emperour was apprehensive, that evil minded men should sometimes hurry on to death men who were not Christians. Therefore he directs the Proconsul, that no men should be punished as Christians, without a fair and public trial before himself in court.

The Emperour's orders are obscure. *If (s) any one shall accuse, and make out any thing contrarie to the laws, do you determine [or punish] according to the nature of the crime.* Some may be apt to think, that the Emperour now appointed, that none should be punished for being Christians, unless some real crime were alleged, and proved upon them. But that does not clearly appear to be the (*t*) meaning. Nor can we reasonably suppose, that Trajan's edict is here

(*r*) Si Tiberis ascendit ad moenia, si Nilus non ascendit in arva, si coelum stetit, si terra movit, si fames, si lues, statim: Christianos ad leonem. *Tertull. Ap. cap. 40.*

(*s*) Ἐἰ τις ἐν κατηγορίᾳ, ἢ δέκνυσί τι παρὰ τὰς νόμους πράττωντας, ἕτως ὀρίζε κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀμαρτήματος.

(*t*) "Afterwards Adrian gave a Rescript to Minucius Fundanus, which is

"obscure. It doth not manifestly exempt Christians from punishment: and yet it seems in some degree to favor them, and might be so interpreted by a Judge, who was disposed to put the mildest construction upon it. The Christians often appealed to it." *Dr. Fortin's Discourses concerning the Christian Religion.* p. 59.

A. D. here repealed: according to which, if a man was accused, and  
 112. proved to be a Christian; a President is required to punish him, unless he recant. Nevertheless this Rescript must be allowed to have been beneficial to the Christians. Several ancient writers, as we have seen, say, that afterwards the persecution, which before had been violent, was restrained, and moderated.

The Christians were hereby taken out of the hands of the common people, and tumultuous rabble, and brought before the Governours of provinces, to be examined in open court, and not to be condemned without evidence: This must have been a considerable advantage to men, who were much disliked by the generality of their neighbours, as the Christians were.

Melito, as before quoted, says, *that Adrian wrote in favour of the Christians, as to divers others, so particularly to Fundanus, Proconsul of Asia.* By which we are led to understand, that this Rescript was sent to other Governours of provinces, as well as to *Fundanus*: or, that this Rescript, sent to him, was to be the rule of conduct, not to him only, but to other Governours likewise.

From this Rescript, and from the Letter, which gave occasion to it, we learn, that there were then Christians in Asia. It is probable, they were there in great numbers. For the affair appeared worthie of the Emperour's consideration. But Christianity, as is apparent, was odious to the generality of the people in that countrey. Therefore men must have had some good reasons for embracing a profession, which rendered them obnoxious to their neighbours.

From what we have seen of *Quadratus*, and *Aristides*, two learned Christian Apologists, and the Emperour *Adrian*, and also *Serennius*, and *Fundanus*, two Governours of the province of Asia, it may be concluded with certainty, that the Christians were now well known to the Roman Emperours, and throughout the Roman Empire. Indeed the Christians diligently embraced all favorable opportunities

portunities to make themselves, and their own innocence, and the principles of their religion, and the grounds and reasons of their belief, well known to all men, and especially to the Emperours, and other magistrates. By that means they propagated their religion, and gradually wiped off the calumnies, that had been invented against them, and with which they were loaded for a while: Quadratus and Aristides presented their Apologies to Adrian at the time of the celebration of the *Eleusinian* Mysteries at (*u*) Athens. When there was a concourse of men of all ranks, especially of the highest, and of the most eminent, and most distinguished for their learning, and zeal for the established rites.

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At that very time those Apologists made a public appearance, and pleaded the cause of their religion, and of their brethren, the professors of it. Nor did they make a contemptible figure. Their discourses were rational, eloquent, and persuasive. And they were followed by a relaxation of the violence of the persecution, which for some while had raged in several provinces, through the prevailing animosity of the people. And, as it is particularly observed by Eusebius, in his Evangelical Preparation. “ In (*x*) the reign of  
Adrian

(*u*) Quadratus Apostolorum discipulus. . . . Quumque Hadrianus Athenis exegisset hiemem, invisens Eleusinam, et omnibus pene Graeciae sacris initiatus, dedisset occasionem his, qui Christianos oderant, absque praecepto Imperatoris vexare credentes, porrexit ei librum pro religione nostra compositum, valde utilem, plenumque rationis et fidei, et apostolica doctrina dignum: in quo et antiquitatem suae aetatis ostendens, ait, plurimos a vivos, qui sub Domino variis in Judaea oppressi calamitatibus fanati fuerant, et qui

a mortuis resurrexerant. *Hieron. de V. I. cap. xix.*

Aristides, Atheniensis Philosophus eloquentissimus, et sub pristino habitu discipulus Christi, volumen NOSTRI DOGMATIS RATIONEM continens, eodem tempore, quo et Quadratus, Hadriano principi dedit. *Ib. cap. xx.*

*And see before. p. 108.*

(*x*) . . . μέχρι των Αδριανῶν χρόνων. . . . Ουτος δὴ μάλιστα ἦν χρόνος, καθ' οὗ ἡ σωτηρία εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἠκμασε διδασκαλία. *Pr. Ev. l. 4. c. 17. p. 164. D.*

A. D. Adrian the Christian Religion shone out in the eyes of all  
117. men."

There are others, beside our two Apologists, who are entitled to applause in this place. *Serenius Granianus* is stiled by Adrian in his Rescript, *an illustrious man*, λαμπροτάτε ἀνδρὸς, and by Jerome in his Chronicle, *a truly noble person*, *vir àpprime nobilis*. We cannot but believe, that he was a man of a generous mind, a lover of justice and equity, who pleaded the cause of the Christians, when the current ran violently against them. His successor, *Fundanus*, to whom the Rescript was sent, may have been a man of a like disposition. Nor can we forbear saying somewhat here to the honour of the Emperour *Adrian*. It does not appear, that he ever issued out any orders for persecuting the Christians. The persecution, which they had suffered in the beginning of his reign, was owing to the blind bigotry and violence of the common people. When the Proconsul of Asia, sent him a letter, representing the hardships, which Christians lay under, beyond most other men, he sent a favorable Rescript, which could not but be, and actually was, of advantage to them. And he received the apologies of *Quadratus* and *Aristides*, in behalf of a despised and persecuted people, without resentment. So far from being provoked at their importunity, he gratified their request, and moderated the displeasure of men against those, whose cause they had pleaded. If moderation be a virtue, (as it certainly is) it is more especially commendable in men of power, and high stations.

A passage formerly (y) omitted, shall be now transcribed from the Apologie of *Quadratus*, which probably was the first written apologie presented to a Roman Emperour. It is in these very words. "The (z) Works of our Saviour were always conspicuous. " For they were real: both they that were healed, and they that " were raised from the dead: who were seen not only, when they  
" were

(y) See *Credib.* Vol. 2. p. 647.

(z) *Euseb. H. E. l. 4. cap. 3.*

“ were healed, or raised, but for a long time afterwards. Nor only  
 “ whilst He dwelled on this earth, but also after his departure, and  
 “ for a good while after it: insomuch that some of them have rea-  
 “ ched to our times.” Jerome supposeth, that (a) Quadratus him-  
 self saw several of those persons, who had been the subjects of our  
 Saviour’s miracles.

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III. Beside the Rescript, there is a letter of Adrian to Servian, husband of Paulina, the Emperour’s sister, who was Consul in 134. It is preserved in Vopiscus, one of the writers of the Augustan Historie, who (b) flourished about the year 300. Adrian had been some while in Egypt. Having left it, when he got into Syria, he wrote that letter to his brother-in-law, in the year 134. I shall transcribe it from the historian, with the connexion.

*Adrian’s  
Letter to  
Servia-  
nus.*

“ The (c) Egyptians, as you well know, says Vopiscus, are vain,

Q 2

“ fond

(a) See before, p. 113. note (u).

(b) Vid. Vof. Hist. Lat. L. 2. cap. 7.  
Fabric. Bib. Lat. l. 3. cap. 6. Tillemont  
L’Empereur Aurélien. art. xv.

(c) Sunt enim Aegyptii (ut satis nosti,) viri ventosi, furibundi, jactantes, injuriosi . . . novatores rerum . . . versificatores, mathematici, aruspices, medici. Nam et Christiani, Samaritani, et quibus praesentia tempora cum enormi libertate displiceant. Ac nequis mihi Aegyptiorum irascatur, et meum esse credat, quod in literis retuli, Adriani epistolam ex libris Phlegontis liberti ejus proditam, ex qua penitus Aegyptiorum vita detegitur, indidi. *Adrianus Aug. Serviano Coss. S. Aegyptum, quam mihi laudabas, Serviane carissime, totam didici levem, pendulam, et ad omnia famae momenta volitantem. Illi qui Serapim colunt, Christiani sunt: et devoti*

*sunt Serapi, qui se Christi episcopus dicunt. Nemo illic Archisynagogus Judaeorum; nemo Samarites, nemo Christianorum Presbyter, non Mathematicus, non Aruspices, non Aliptes. Ipse ille Patriarcha, quum Aegyptum venerit, ab aliis Serapidem adorare, ab aliis cogitur Christum. Genus hominum seditiosissimum, vanissimum, imperiosissimum. Civitas opulenta, dives, foecunda, in qua nemo vivat otiosus. Alii vitrum constant, ab aliis charta conficitur, alii linyphiones sunt: omnes certe cujuscunque artis et videntur et habentur. Podagrosi quod agant habent: habent caeci quod agant: ne chiragrici quidem apud eos otiosi vivunt. Unus illis Deus est. Hunc Christiani, hunc Judaei, hunc omnes venerantur et Gentes. &c. Flav. Vopiscus in Saturnino. cap. 7. et 8.*

A. D. 117. “fond of innovations, men of all characters. . . For there are among  
 “them Christians, and Samaritans, and such as take a prodigious  
 “liberty in censuring the present times. That none of the Egyp-  
 “tians may be offended with me, I shall produce a letter of Adrian,  
 “taken from the books of Phlegon, his freed-man, in which the  
 “character of the Egyptians is clearly represented. *Adrian Augustus*  
 “*to the Consul Servianus wisheth health. I have found Egypt, my*  
 “*dear Servian, which you commended to me, all over fickle and incon-*  
 “*stant, and continually shaken by the slightest reports of same. The*  
 “*worshippers of Serapis are Christians: and they are devoted to Serapis,*  
 “*who call themselves Christ’s Bishops. There is no Ruler of the Jewish*  
 “*synagogue, no Samaritan, no Presbyter of the Christians, no Matthe-*  
 “*matician, no Southsayer, no Anointer: Even the Patriarch, if he*  
 “*should come to Egypt, would be required by some to worship Serapis,*  
 “*by others Christ. A seditious, and turbulēt sort of men. However,*  
 “*the city is rich and populous. Nor are any idle. Some are employed*  
 “*in making glass, others paper, others in weaving linen. . . They have*  
 “*one God. Him the Christians, Him the Jews, Him all the Gentil*  
 “*people worship.”*

It cannot be needfull for me to explain all the several sorts of people, here spoken of. Nor ought it to be thought strange, that Christians share in the Emperour’s satyr, and are represented by him, as fickle and inconstant, like the other Egyptians. It appears from this letter, that the Christians were numerous at Alexandria, and in other parts of Egypt, when Adrian was in that countrey. Which, certainly, is very remarkable: that in a centurie after the resurrection of Jesus, he should have so many followers in Asia, and Egypt, as is manifest from this one Emperour’s authentic writings. Without any countenance from the civil government, and under a great deal of opposition from it, as well as from most other ranks of men, and especially from the lower sort of people, Christ’s Bishops were already become as considerable, as the Priests of Serapis.



IV. Once more. *Aelius Lampridius*, another writer of the Augustan Historie, who flourished about the end of the third, and the begining of the fourth centurie, in the Life of the Emperour *Alexander Severus*, says: “ He (*d*) intended to build a temple to Christ, “ and to receive him among the Gods. Which *Adrian* also is reported to have designed: who ordered temples to be erected in all “ cities without statues. Which therefore to this day are called *Adrian’s*: it being said, that he built them for that purpose. But he was “ hindred by some, who having consulted the oracles, were assured, “ that if that were once done, all men would be Christians, and the “ other temples would be deserted.”

This account is received by some (*e*) as true: by (*f*) others it is rejected, as destitute of any good foundation. I have referred below to several learned and judicious men, on this side the question. And I would willingly find room at the bottom of the page for (*g*)

Ca-

(*d*) Christo templum facere voluit, eumque inter Deos recipere. Quod et *Adrianus* cogitasse fertur, qui templâ in omnibus civitatibus sine simulachris iusserrat fieri. Quae hodie idcirco, quia non habent numina, dicuntur *Adriani*, quae ille ad hoc parasse dicebatur. Sed prohibitus est ab iis, qui consulentes sacra, repperant, omnes Christianos futuros, si id optato evenisset, et templa reliqua deferenda. *Ael. Lampr. in Alex. Sever. cap. 43.*

(*e*) *Huet. Dem. Evang. Prop. 3. §. xxii. Tillem. Persecution d'Adrien. art. vi.*

(*f*) *Casaub. Annot. in Lamprid. cap. 43. Pagi Crit. in Baron. ann. 134. n. iv. Basnag. ann. 126. n. v. vi. Dictionnaire*

*de Bayle. Hadrien. Cleric. H. E. ann. 129. n. iii. Moshem. De Reb. Christian. Sec. 2. §. xii. p. 237.*

(*g*) *Quod et Hadrianus cogitasse fertur.* De *Tiberio* narrant hoc *Tertullianus* et alii patres *Graeci* et *Latini*. De *Hadriano* vero nemo illorum, si satis memini, simile quicquam. Et mirum profecto, tam nobilem historiam, tot fidei Christianae propugnatores acerrimos, viros undecumque doctissimos, et quorum intererat hoc scire, potuisse fugere. Sed videtur haec de *Hadriano* suspicio multo post ejus seculum hominum mentes infedisse: cum neque *Justinus Martyr*, neque *Athenagoras*, neque *Tertullianus*, neque *Cyprianus*, aut omnino quisquam ex illa teruna

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*Adrian*  
said to  
have in-  
tended to  
build  
Temples  
to Christ.

A. D. 117. Casaubon's observations upon this section of Lampridius: and the rather, because they have been judged so material by Pagi, as to be transcribed by him into his Critique upon Baronius. " Casaubon " then, and diverse other learned men after him, or agreeably to " him, observe, that somewhat of this kind has been related of Ti- " berius by Tertullian, and other ancient Latin and Greek writers " of the Church, who are quite silent about this storie of Lampridius. If there had been any truth in it, they say, so remarkable " a thing could not have been omitted by Justin Martyr, Athenago- " ras, Tertullian, Cyprian, and all other ancient writers of the se- " cond and third centuries, who had many occasions to mention it, " if there had been any ground for it. Nor is this mistaken opinion " of

terum patrum manu, vel tenuissimam ejus rei suspicionem fando unquam accepissent. Unde autem vulgo multi seculo Lampridii hanc de Hadriano concepissent opinionem, declarat auctor, cum subjicit: *qui templa in omnibus civitatibus sine simulachris jusserat fieri: quae hodie idcirco, quia non habent numina, dicuntur Hadriani, quae ille ad hoc parasse dicebatur.* En fontem et originem hujus opinionis. Jusserat Hadrianus, templa fieri in omnibus civitatibus, suo nomini sine dubio consecranda: quod et Spartianus in vita sua testatur. Sed mortuo Hadriano prius quam haec templa absolverentur, mansere pleraque illorum imperfecta, neque unquam dedicata sunt. Exemplo esse potest illud quod Tiberiade magnifice inchoatum, mox relictum est necdum absolutum, tandemque in usum balnearum a civibus destinatum. Epiphanius contra Eubionaeos. H. 30. n. xii. *ναὸς μέγιστος ἐν τῇ πόλει Τιβερίადι προσηύχθη τάχα ὀνομαζομένην Ἀδριανέου τῶτο ἐκάλουν. Ἀτελὲς δὲ τῶτο τὸ*

*Ἀδριανέου, διαμένου, οἱ πολῖται εἰς δειρόσιον αὐτῶν ἐπερῶντο ἐπισκευάσαι.* Talia aedificia in plerisque civitatibus adhuc Lampridii aetate exstabant, inchoata solum, non perfecta, non dedicata; ac proinde, ut ait ipse sine numine et simulachro ullo. Eo factum, ut in animum inducerent multi, quibus assentitur hic Lampridius, non sibi Hadrianum illa templa extruxisse, verum Christo. Erat quidem Lampridius, ἑλλην religionē, et a pietatis Christianae sacris, ut ejus scripta ostendunt, alienus: sed norat ille, quod ignorare poterat nemo, et Judaeos olim in Hierosolymitana aede εἶδος καὶ ἀγαλαματος χαρῆς, ut Strabo quoque ac Dio scribunt, Deum coluisse: et suis etiam temporibus Christianorum templa ejusmodi esse, qualia adhuc memoria sua beatissimus Augustinus cum alibi prodit fuisse, tum etiam in Psalms ciii. enarratione, sane luculenter. Casaubon. annot. in Lamprid. cap. 43. Et Conf. Pagi ann. 134. iii. iv.

“ of Lampridius, and some others in his time, very hard to be ac-  
 “ counted for. Adrian had erected, or ordered to be erected, tem-  
 “ ples in many places. He intended to have set up in them an al-  
 “ tar, or statue, to himself. But he died, before they were consecra-  
 “ ted, and some of them were left unfinished. It was well known,  
 “ that the Jews and Christians had no images in their places of  
 “ worship. Lampridius therefore, and some others in his time, en-  
 “ tertained a notion, that these temples were built in honour of  
 “ Christ.”

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That Adrian intended them in honour of himself, is confirmed by what Spartian says in his Life of this Emperour. “ That (*b*)  
 “ when he had returned from Africa to Rome, he soon went away  
 “ again into the East. Coming to Athens he dedicated the buildings  
 “ that had been begun by him, particularly the temple of Jupiter  
 “ Olympius, and an altar to himself. In like manner travelling  
 “ through Asia, he consecrated temples of his own name.”

That seems to be the most probable account. But though it cannot be reasonably supposed, that Adrian intended those temples to the honour of Jesus Christ, some may imagine that (*i*) according to the doctrine of Numa and Pythagoras, Adrian might design to erect temples, where the gods might be worshiped without images.

Cre-

(*b*) Denique quum post Africam Romam redisset, statim ad orientem profectus per Athenas iter fecit, atque opera, quae apud Athenienses coeperat, dedicavit: ut Jovis Olympii aedem et arcem sibi: eodemque modo per Asiam iter faciens, templa sui nominis consecravit. *Spartian. in Hadrian. cap. 13.*

(*i*) Extructa tamen ea Christo templa, quae simulachrorum vacua erant, nostrum in animum inducere non sustinemus. A-

liae igitur nobis sunt tentandae caussae. Legitur in Victore: *Adrianus pace ad Orientem composita, Romam regreditur. Ibi Graecorum more, seu Pompilii Numae, caeremonias, leges, gymnasia, doctoresque curare coepit.* Est ergo vero proximum, more atque instituto et Pythagorae, et Pompilii Numae, Adrianum, philosophiae peritum, templa quoque sine simulachris firui voluisse. *Basnag. ann. 126. n. vi.*

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Crevier's judgement upon the point is to this purpose. "He (*k*) paid but little attention to the religion of those nations, whom the Romans and Greeks considered as barbarians, they appearing to him as only deserving of contempt. This makes it difficult for me to believe, upon Lampridius's testimony, that he formed a design to consecrate in honour of Jesus Christ, a great many temples, which he had begun, but not finished, in the several cities of Asia and Egypt, and which remained without a dedication or statue. It is much more probable, that he intended them for himself, and for his own proper worship."

Indeed, I think, the opinion, that Adrian intended to consecrate temples to the honour of Jesus Christ, is without any good foundation; it being inconsistent with his (*l*) known principles, and unsupported by the testimony of those ancient Christian writers, who must have known it, and would have mentioned it, if it had been true.

However, though there is no good ground for this storie of Lampridius, it (*m*) is honourable to the Christian Religion, which was a spreading doctrine. And it was apprehended by those who were far from wishing it succeſſe, that if a little encouragement were given to it, it would soon be the prevailing religion.

(*k*) *History of the Rom. Emp. Vol. 7. p. 167.*

(*l*) . . . κατ' ἐμὴν βασιλείαν, Ἀδριανῶν, τῆς τε ἐς τὸ θεῖον τιμῆς ἐπιπλεῖσον ἐλθόντος. *Pausan. l. i. cap. v. p. 14.*

(*m*) Casaubon sans doute n'a point de

fort de rejeter cela comme fabuleux. Ce que je trouve de vraisemblable est cette crainte des Paiens, que leur Religion ne fût desertée, si l'on eût toléré publiquement le Christianisme. *Bayle Dictionnaire. Hadrien, note (2).*

## C H A P. XII.

## BRUTTIUS PRAESENS.

*His Testimony to Domitian's Persecution. With Remarks.*

**E**USEBIUS, in his Ecclesiastical Historie, speaking of the persecution under Domitian, says: "Moreover, (a) at this time the doctrine of our faith was so conspicuous, that writers averse to our sentiments have not forbore to insert in their histories an account of this persecution, and the martyrdoms that happened in it. 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, was banished

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(a) Ἐἰς τοσούτων δὲ ἄρα κατὰ τὰς διηγουμένων ἢ τῆς ἡμετέρας πίστεως διδασκαλία διέλαμπεν, ὥς καὶ τὸς ἀποθιν τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς λόγῳ συγγραφεῖς, μὴ ἀποκνήσαι ταῖς αὐτῶν ἰστορίαις τὸν τε διωγμὸν, καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ μαρτυρία παραδύναί. Οἷγε καὶ τὸν καιρὸν ἐπ' ἀκριβὲς ἐπισημῆσαντο· ἐν ἔτει πεντεκαιδεκάτῳ δε-

μετιανῶ κατὰ πλείων ἑτέρων καὶ Φλαβίαν Δομιτίλλαν ἰσορήσαντες, ἐξ ἀδελφῆς γεγονούτων Φλαβίου Κλήμεντος, ἑνὸς τῶν τιμηκῶδε ἐπὶ Ρώμης ὑπάτων, τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν μαρτυρίας ἕνεκεν, εἰς νῆσον Παντίαν κατὰ τιμαρίαν δεδύσθαι. H. E. l. 3. cap. 18. p. 89. A.

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“ to the island Pontia, for the profession of the Christian Religion.”

In his Chronicle, at the fifteenth year of Domitian, Eusebius says: “ And (b) Bruttius writes, that many Christians suffered martyrdom under Domitian. Among whom was *Flavia Domitilla*, niece by the sister’s side to Flavius Clemens the Consul, who was banished to the island Pontia, because she confessed herself to be a Christian.”

I need not transcribe any thing from (c) Nicephorus. But in the Paschal Chronicle, at the year of Christ 94. are these words. “ Brutus (d) relates, that many Christians suffered martyrdom in the fourteenth year of Domitian.”

There were several eminent men of this name in the second century. There is a (e) letter of the younger Plinie to *Praefens*, whom some think to have been also called Brutius, or Bruttius. We meet with Bruttius Praefens, who was Consul with Antonin the Pious, in the year 139. C. Bruttius Praefens, who was Consul with Astarturius Rufinus in the year 153. and L. Fulvius Bruttius Praefens, Consul the second time in the year 180. with Sex. Quintilius Condidianus. The daughter of this Bruttius (f) was married to Commodus, with the consent of Mark Antonin. And (g) Pagi supposeth that to be the reason, why he was honoured with a second Consulship.

Sca-

(b) Et scribit Brutius plurimos Christianorum sub Domitiano fecisse martyrium: inter quos Flaviam Domitillam, Flavii Clementis Consulis, ex sorore neptem, in insulam Pontiam relegatam, quia se Christianam testata est. *Chron.* p. 164.

(c) *Vid. Niceph.* l. 3. cap. 9.

(d) Ἰσοπέϊ ὁ Βρῦτος, πολλὰς χριστιανὰς κατὰ τὸ 14<sup>ον</sup> ἔτος Δομετιανῶς μεμαρτυρήκηναι. *Chron. Pasch.* p. 250.

(e) *L. 7. ep. 3.*

(f) Filio suo Brutii Praefentis filiam junxit. [Marcus Aurelius.] *Ful. Capitol. de M. Anton. Phil. cap. 27. p. 394.*

(g) Erat Bruttius Praefens pater Crispinae uxoris Commodi, ob idque altero Consulatu hoc anno a M. Aurelio decoratus. *Pagi ann. 180. num. i.*

Scaliger (*b*) supposeth, this Bruttius, who had been Consul with Antonin, and afterwards a second time, whose daughter was married to Commodus, or a relation of his, to be the historian, intended by Eusebius.

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Tillemont (*i*) says, he may have been Bruttius Praefens, who was Consul in the year 139. or Praefens, to whom the younger Plinie wrote: though, as he adds, there were others of the same name about that time.

Mr. Dodwell's (*k*) conjecture is, that (*l*) he is the same, who was Consul with Antonin the Pious, as I understand him, though his manner of expression is ambiguous.

Some remarks may now not be improper. In the first place, it may be fit to observe, that *Brutus*, and *Bruttius*, and *Brettius*, as in the (*m*) Greek of Eusebe's Chronicle, are all one and the same name, as Scaliger has shewn.

Remarks.

Secondly, I suppose, no one will hesitate to allow, that Bruttius was an Heathen historian, though he is not expressly called so in any of the places, where he is named. The manner in which he is mentioned by Eusebius in his Chronicle, and by the author of the Paschal Chronicle, would lead us to suppose him not a Christian.

R 2

tian.

(*b*) Aut Bruttius Praefens, qui cum Imp. Antonino Consul fuit, et cujus filia Imperatoris Antonini filio nupta fuit, aut saltem ejus gentilis quidam fuerit historicus iste. Scalig. in Euseb. p. 205. a.

(*i*) Saint Fl. Domitille. Mem. Ec. T. 2. p. 127.

(*k*) Ethnicum scriptorem protulit Eusebius, quem Brutium appellat in Chronico, forte eundem, qui consulatum gesserit sub [forte cum] Antonino. Diff. Cypr. xi. §. 16.

(*l*) P. 80.

(*m*) In Graecis est Βρέττιος. In Casauboni Chronico Βρούττιος, ut hic. Nam non audiendi sunt, qui hic Erutius substituant, aut Bruttianus. Sat enim est, eos Graeca lectione confutari. Nam quemadmodum Βρούττιος et Βρέττιος, Italiae populi, indifferenter vocantur; ita etiam Βρούττιος et Βρέττιος pro eodem scriptore usurpari potuerit. Scal. ibid. p. 205.

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tian. And the passage in the Ecclesiastical Historie of Eusebius, compared with his Chronicle, I think puts it out of doubt.

*Thirdly*, Nothing has appeared in our ancient authors to satisfy us, whether Bruttius was a Latin or a Greek writer. But (*m*) Vossius placeth him among Latin Historians.

*Fourthly*, 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 Pandeteria, which lay near to Poetia, upon the same coast of Italie. This has given occasion to a dispute, whether there were two of this name, who suffered for Christianity about the same time. Some (*n*) supposing one and the same person to be intended, others (*o*) again contending, that there were two. The matter is of no great importance. Nevertheless, perhaps, we may hereafter give it some farther consideration, in the chapter of Dion Cassius.

*Fifthly*, It seems somewhat probable, that the author of the Paschal Chronicle did not copy Eusebius, but took his account from the work of Bruttius itself. For Eusebius making particular mention of Domitilla only, who was not banished till the year 95. says, that *historians of different sentiment from us had accurately marked the time of that persecution, to be in the fifteenth year of Domitian*. But the Paschal Chronicle affirms from Bruttius, that many suffered in the 14. year of that reign. And (*p*) Pagi hence argues, and not without some appearance of probability, that the persecution began in the 14. year of Domitian.

*Sixthly*, I wish that either Eusebius, or the last mentioned author, had given us the very words of Bruttius. He did not say, *the Christians suffered martyrdom*. The stile of Heathen authors in such matters

(*m*) *De Hist. Lat. lib. 3. B. fin.*(*o*) *Tillem. Mem. Ec. Tom. 2. p. 126.*(*n*) *Basnag. ann. 95. num. vii. Vid. et* 127.*Scal. ubi supr. p. 205.*(*p*) *Ann. 94. num. 2.*



matters is curious, and entertaining, and more satisfactorie, than any other whatever.

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Once more, *seventhly*, Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical Historie, speaks in the plural number, and says, that *writers of a different sentiment from us had given an account of Domitian's persecution in their histories*: But we have not found more than one named in his Chronicle, nor in the Paschal Chronicle. Dion Cassius wrote before Eusebius. Whether he ever read him, does not now appear. But we shall quote him upon the same subject in his place and time.

I have been very much at a losse, where to place this writer. One would think from Eusebe's manner of expression in his Ecclesiastical Historie, that he had been contemporarie with Domitian's persecution. And in his Chronicle Bruttius is placed at the year of Christ 95. Nevertheless none can suppose, that to be the real time of his writing. However, that I may not be charged with entering him too late, I place him at the year of Christ 136. the twentieth year of Adrian. And, if this Bruttius be the same, (as divers learned men have thought) who was Consul with Titus Antonin in the year 139. I have placed him early enough.



## C H A P. XIII.

## PHLEGON, THALLUS, and DIONYSIUS, the Areopagite.

- I. *Phlegon. His Time, and Works.* II. *A Passage in Him concerning our Saviour's Foreknowledge.* III. *Another Passage, supposed to relate to the miraculous Darknesse at the Time of our Saviour's Crucifixion, with Remarks and Observations.* IV. *Thallus, supposed also to speak of the same Darknesse.* V. *Dionysius the Areopagite, supposed likewise to speak of the same Event.*

A. D. 138. *Phlegon. His Time.* I. **P**HLEGON, (*a*) freedman of the Emperour Adrian, was born at Tralles in Lydia. He was author of several works. One of which was entitled (*b*) *The Olympiads*, or (*c*) *A Collection of Olymp-*

(*a*) *Vid. Spartian in Hadrian. c. 16. Vorise. Saturnin. c. 7. 8.*

(*b*) Φλέγων Τραλλιανός . . . . ιστορικός. Ἐγραψε Ὀλυμπιάδας ἐν βιβλίοις 15. Ἐστὶ δὲ

μέχρι τῆς σκθ' Ὀλυμπιάδος τὰ πραχθέντα πανταχῶ. *Suid.*

(*c*) Φλέγωντος Τραλλιανῶ, ἀπελευθέρου τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Ἀδριανῶ, Ὀλυμπιακῶν καὶ χρονικῶν

Olympiads and Chronicles, in sixteen books. It was a kind of general historie of the world from the first to the 229. Olympiad, or to the times of Adrian. If the last Olympiad was compleat, as (*d*) some think, it reached to the fourth year of Antonin the Pious: if it was incompleat, as (*e*) others suppose, the work ended in the year 138. in which Adrian died. At which time I also place him. It was inscribed to *Alcibiades*, one of the Body-Guards of Adrian. Which may afford an argument, that the work did not go lower, than the reign of that Emperour, and was published in the year 138. or soon after. Basnage speaks of Phlegon at the year 141.

I write not the historie of Phlegon, or his works. I therefore refer to (*f*) other learned moderns.

Out of the large work, above-mentioned, some passages have been alleged by ancient Christian writers, of which some notice must be taken here.

II. Origen, in his books against Celsus, has this passage. “How-  
“ever (*g*) Phlegon in the thirteenth, or, as I think, the fourteenth  
“book of his Chronicles, ascribes to Christ the knowledge of some  
“future things: though he makes a mistake in the person, naming  
“Peter instead of Jesus. And he allows, that the things foretold  
“came to pass.”

Fore-  
knowledge  
ascribed  
to Christ.

Upon

κᾶν συναγωγῆ. Προσφωεῖ τὸ σύνταγμα πρὸς  
Αλκιβιάδην τινα, ὃς εἰς ἦν τῶν εἰς φυλακὴν  
τεταγμένων τῷ Ἀδριανῷ . . . κατέσειε δὲ, ὡς αὐ-  
τός φησι, μέχρι τῶν Ἀδριανῷ χρόνων. Phot.  
Cod. 97. p. 265.

(*d*) J. Scaliger. *Animadv. in Euseb. Chron.* p. 185. Pagi ann. 136. n. viii. alii-  
que.

(*e*) Fabr. *Bib. Gr.* l. 4. c. 13. T. 3. p. 401.

(*f*) Voss. *de Hist. Gr.* l. 2. cap. xi.

Fabr. *B. Gr.* l. 4. c. 13. Tillemont. *Adri- en.* art. 18. *Dictionnaire de Bayle Phle- gon.*

(*g*) Φλέγων μέντοι ἐν τρισκαίδεκάτῳ, ἢ τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτῳ, ὅμαί, τῶν χρονικῶν, καὶ τὴν περὶ τινῶν μελλόντων πρόγνωσην ἔδωκε τῷ Χριστῷ, συγχυθεὶς ἐν τοῖς περὶ πέτρου ὡς περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ· καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν ὅτι κατὰ τὰ ἐρημίνα ὑπὸ αὐτῷ τὰ λεγόμενα ἐπλήτυσε, *Contr. Cels.* l. 2. p. 69. al. §. 14.

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Upon this I must be allowed to say, *first*, that Origen seems to have trusted to his memorie in this quotation. *Secondly*, If Phlegon named *Peter* instead of JESUS, it is a mark of carelessness and inaccuracy. *Thirdly*, We should have been glad to see this passage of Phlegon more at length. For want of which we cannot form any clear judgement about it. *Fourthly*, Phlegon was so credulous, that his testimonie concerning things of a marvellous kind must be of little weight. His credulity, and uncommon regard for all sorts of oracles, are manifest in the (*b*) character of his Olympiads given by Photius, and in the fragments of his works, published by Meursius. I would also refer to the article (*i*) Ταρραχίνη, in Stephanus Byzantinus, where Phlegon speaks of a child, who was able to converse with others, when it had been born not more than nine and forty days: and to Salmasius's (*k*) character of Phlegon's Olympiads in his notes upon Spartian's Life of Adrian. *Fifthly*, Origen is the only person, that has mentioned this. I do not recollect any other ancient writer, who has taken any notice of it. Consequently, I think we must say, that upon the whole this citation (*l*) is of no great moment.

Of the  
Darkness  
at our Sa-  
viour's  
Passion.

III. But there is another passage of this author, which may be reckoned more material, many learned men of late times having been of opinion, that it relates to the darkness at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion.

The

(*b*) Καὶ ἡ περὶ τῆς χρησμῶν ἀκαιροῦ φιλοπονοῖα τε καὶ φιλοτιμία, ἐς κέρρον ἀπάγασα τὸν ἀκροατὴν . . . χρησμῶν δὲ πανταίους ἐς ὑπερβολὴν ἔσι κεχηρημένος. Phot. Ibid.

(*i*) Φλέγων ὀλυμπιάδι ἑκατοσῆ ὄγδοσος ἢ πρώτη. Ὅτι παιδίον ἐκ δίδυμοῦ, γενόμενον, τῇ ἐνάτῃ καὶ τεσσαρακοσῆ τῆς γενέσεως τὸν προσαγορεύσαντα ἀντιπροσγορεύσαι. Steph. v. Ταρραχίνη.

(*k*) Ex quo loco apparet, quale fuerit

argumentum librorum Olympiadum Phlegontis. Nam sub quâque Olympiade, quid toto orbe gestum esset recensabat, prodigia praecipue et monstra, resque alias mirabiles memorabilesque. Salmas. in Spartian. Hadrian cap. 16. p. 152.

(*l*) De Domino etiam mentionem egit, si fides Origeni. . . Basnag. ann. 141. n. vii.

The Greek of *Eusebius*, in his Chronicle, which I must transcribe at large, is to this purpose: "Jesus Christ (*m*) the Son of God, " our Lord, according to the prophecies concerning him, came to " his passion in the 19. year of the reign of Tiberius: about which " time we find these things related in other, even Gentil memoirs, " in these very words: *the sun was eclipsed, there was an earthquake " in Bitbynia, and many houses were overturned in Nice.* All which " things agree with what happened at the time of our Saviour's pas- " sion. So writes and says the author of the Olympiads, in the " thirteenth book, in these words: *In the fourth year of the 202. " Olympiad there was an eclipse of the sun, the greatest of any known " before. And it was night at the sixth hour of the day, so that the " stars appeared in the heavens. And there was a great earthquake in " Bitbynia, which overturned many houses in Nice.* So writes the " forementioned author."

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I shall also transcribe and translate this article as it appears in Jerome's Latin version of Eusebe's Chronicle.

"Jesus Christ (*n*) according to the prophecies, which had before " spoken

(*m*) Ἰησοῦς ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς περὶ αὐτοῦ προφητείας, ἐπὶ τὸ πάθος προίει, ἕτους ἰθ' τῆς τιβερίας καίσαρος βασιλείας καθ' ὃν καιρὸν καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις μὲν ἑλληνικοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν ἔνυρμεν ἰσορέμενα κατὰ λέξιν ταῦτα· Ὁ ἥλιος ἐκλέλιπεν· βίθυνία ἐσείσθη· Νικαίαις τὰ πολλὰ ἔπεσεν. Ὁ καὶ συνάδει τοῖς περὶ τὸ πάθος τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν συμβεβηκόσι. Γράφει δὲ καὶ λέγει ὁ τὰς ὀλυμπιάδας. . . περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐν τῷ ἰγ', εἰρημασιν αὐτοῖς τάδε· τῷ δ' ἔτει τῆς CB ὀλυμπιάδος ἐγένετο ἐκλείψις ἡλίου μεγίστη τῶν ἐγνωρισμένων πρότερον, καὶ μὲξ ἄρα τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο, ὥστε καὶ ἀσέφας ἐν ὀφρανοῖς φανῆναι, σεισμός τε μέγας κατὰ Βιθυ-

νίαν γινόμενος τὰ πολλὰ Νικαίας κατεσείσθη. Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὁ δηλωθὲς ἀνὴρ. *Euseb. Chr. p. 77.*

(*n*) Jesus Christus, secundum prophetias, quae de eo fuerant prolocutae, ad passionem venit anno Tiberii xviii. quo tempore etiam in aliis Ethnicorum commentariis haec adverbium scripta reperimus. *Solis facta defectio: Bitbynia terrae motu concussa: et in urbe Nicaea aedes plurimae corruerunt.* Quae omnia his congruunt, quae in passione Salvatoris acciderant. Scribit vero super his et Phlego, qui Olympiadarum egregius supputator est, in tertio decimo libro ita dicens: Quarto

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“ spoken of him, came to his passion in the 18. year of Tiberius :  
 “ at which time in other, even Heathen memoirs, we find it writ-  
 “ ten to this purpose : *There was an eclipse of the sun : Bithynia was*  
 “ *shaken by an earthquake, and in the city of Nice many houses were*  
 “ *overthrown.* All which things agree with what happened at the  
 “ time of our Saviour’s passion. And so writes Phlegon, an excel-  
 “ lent compiler of the Olympiads in his thirteenth book, saying :  
 “ *In the fourth year of the 202. Olympiad there was a great and extra-*  
 “ *ordinarie eclipse of the sun, distinguished among all that had happened*  
 “ *before. At the sixth hour the day was turned into dark night, so*  
 “ *that the stars in the heavens were seen, and there was an earthquake*  
 “ *in Bithynia, which overthrew many houses in the city of Nice : so writes*  
 “ the above-named author.”

Phlegon is twice quoted, after the same manner, in the Paschal Chronicle (o) composed in the seventh centurie.

Many learned men (p) have supposed, that Eusebius here speaks of another, beside Phlegon, who had bore witness to the darknesse at the time of our Saviour’s crucifixion. They think, that Eusebius refers to *Tballus*, as well as Phlegon. I think, that Eusebius speaks of one only. His first expressions are general. He observes, that beside what is said by Prophets, and by the Evangelists, there are Heathen authors, who have bore testimonie to this darknesse. Nevertheless he means one only. And having given a general account of what was to be found in other memoirs, beside the sacred, he produces distinctly the passage of Phlegon, and concludes : *so writes*  
*the*

Quarto autem anno ccii. Olympiadis magna et excellens inter omnes, quae ante eam acciderant, defectio solis facta : dies horâ sextâ in tenebrosam noctem ver-  
 fus, ut stellae in coelo visae sint, terrae-  
 que motus in Bithynia Nicaeae urbis mul-

tas aedes subverteret. Haec supradictus vir. *Euseb. Chr. p. 158.*

(o) *Chr. Pasch. p. 219. et. 222.*

(p) *J. Scaliger. ut supr. p. 186. et Tillemont, note xxxv. sur J. C.*

*the fore named man.* I need not enlarge farther. To me it appears exceeding manifeſt, that Euſebius ſpeaks of one writer only, meaning Phlegon, the compiler of the Olympiads. The two quotations in the Paſchal Chronicle, as well as St. Jerome's verſion, are all to be underſtood in the like manner.

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Before making any remarks upon this paſſage of Phlegon, I would take notice of ſome authors, more ancient than Euſebius, who have referred to Phlegon, or are ſuppoſed to have referred to him.

Of theſe, undoubtedly, Tertullian is the moſt ancient. “ At (q) “ the ſame time, ſays he, at noon-day there was a great darkneſſe. “ They thought it to be an eclipse, who did not know that this alſo was “ foretold concerning Chriſt. And ſome have denied it, not know- “ ing the cauſe of ſuch darkneſſe. And yet you have that remark- “ able event recorded in your archives.”

I think, that Tertullian refers, not to *Phlegon*, or any other author, whoſe teſtimonie could be no other than a private record, but to ſome public Acts of the Romans, and, probably thoſe, in which was kept regiſtered *the Relation of Pontius Pilate*, ſent to the Emperour Tiberius, concerning the crucifixion of our Saviour, and the wonderfull circumſtances of it.

Huet (r) underſtands Tertullian to refer to ſome public Acts : and in like manner (s) Grotius. And Dr. Clarke, in the firſt edition of

S 2

his

(q) Eodem momento dies medium orbem ſignante ſole ſubducta eſt. Deliquium utique putaverant, qui id quoque ſuper Chriſto praedicatum non ſcierunt : ratione non deprehenſa negaverunt. Et tamen eum mundi caſum relatam in arcanis [al. archivis] veſtris habetis. *Apol. cap. 21. p. 22.*

(r) Merito itaque Chriſtianorum cauſam apud Ethnicos agens in Apologetico

[cap. 21.] Tertullianus miraculi hujus teſtes citat tabularia ipſorum, et publica inſtrumenta : ſive quae a rectoribus provinciarum, ſive quae ex inſtituto Caefaris Romae conficiebantur, in quae diurna referiebantur Acta Populi et Senatus. *Huet. Dem. Evang. Prop. 3. §. viii. p. 30.*

(s) Exſtabant olim et libri, tum privatorum, ut Phlegontis, tum et Acta Publica, ad quae Chriſtiani provocabant, quibus

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his sermons at Mr. Boyle's Lecture, where he quoted Phlegon, and in the eighth edition, where he omitted Phlegon, represents the sense of this place of *Tertullian* after this manner, and in the same words: "And (*t*) divers of the most remarkable circumstances attending our Saviour's crucifixion, such as the *earthquake*, and miraculous *darkness*, were recorded in the public Roman Registers, commonly appealed to by the first Christians, as what could not be denied by the adversaries themselves."

What *Tertullian* says here has a great resemblance with what is said by the martyr *Lucian*, in his Apologie, as represented by *Rufin* in an (*u*) addition to *Eusebe's Ecclesiastical Historie*: where he says: "Look (*x*) into your own Annals. There you will find, that in the time of *Pilate*, when Christ suffered, the sun was obscured, and the light of the day was interrupted with darkness."

For the present, I pass by *Africanus*. The author therefore, that next offers himself to our consideration, is *Origen*, who in his books against *Celsus* says: "But (*y*) of the eclipse, which happened in the time of *Tiberius*, in whose reign Jesus was crucified, and of the great earthquakes, which were at that time, *Phlegon* writes, in the thirteenth, or, as I think, the fourteenth book of his Chronicle."

Afterwards, in the same work: "But (*z*) *Celsus* thinks both the  
"earth-

bus constabat de eo sidere, quod post Christum natum apparuit, de terrae motu, et solis deliquio, contra naturam, plenissimo lunae orbe, circa tempus, quo Christus crucis supplicio affectus est. *Grot. de Verit. Rel. Christ.* l. 3. cap. xiv.

(*t*) See the first edition. p. 325. and the eighth edition. p. 357.

(*u*) See the *Credib.* ch. 58. vol. v. p. 279. and p. 292. &c.

(*x*) Solem vobis ipsum horum produco testem. Qui cum hoc fieri per impios videret in terris, lumen suum meridie ab-

scondit in coelo. Requirite in annalibus vestris: invenietis, temporibus *Pilati*, Christo patiente, fugato sole, interruptum tenebris diem. *Euseb. H. E.* l. 9. c. 6. ex versione *Rufin*.

(*y*) Περὶ δὲ τῆς ἐπὶ τιβερίου καίσαρος ἐκλείψεως, ἢ βασιλέωντος καὶ ὁ ἰησοῦς ἔοικεν ἐσαυτῶσθαι, καὶ περὶ τῶν μεγάλων τότε γενομένων σεισμῶν τῆς γῆς, ἀνέγραψε καὶ φλέγων ἐν τῷ τρισκαιδεκάτῳ ἢ τῷ τεσσαρεσκαιδεκάτῳ ὄμμαι τῶν χρονηῶν. *Contr. Cels.* l. 2. p. 80. *Cant. al.* §. 33.

(*z*) Ὅκται δὲ τερατεῖαν εἶναι καὶ τὸν σεισμόν.



“ earthquake and the darknesse to be only fictitious wonders. To  
 “ which we have already answered, according to our ability, says  
 “ Origen, alledging Phlegon, who relates, that such things happen-  
 “ ed at the time of our Saviour's passion.”

In the first of these two passages, Origen refers to the book, but does not quote the words of *Phlegon*. This second reference is not more distinct, nor more accurate.

There is another long passage of Origen, in his Commentaries upon St. Matthew's Gospel, which it may be expected I should transcribe here. And I shall do (a) so. But considering, that we have it

μὴν ἢ τὸ σκότος. Περὶ ἂν κατὰ δύνατον, ἐν τοῖς ἀνωτέρω ἀπελογησάμεθα, παραθέμενοι τὸν Φλέγοντα, ἰσορήσαντα, κατὰ τὸν χρόνον τῆ πάθῆς τῆ σωτήρος τοιαῦτα ἀπηντηκέναι. *Ib.* l. 2. p. 96. al. §. 59.

(a) Matt. xxvii. 45. Ad hunc textum quidam calumniantur evangelicam veritatem, dicentes, quomodo secundum textum potest esse verum quod dicitur, quia factae sunt tenebrae super omnem terram a sexta hora, usque ad nonam, quod factum nulla refert historia. Et dicunt, quia sicut solet fieri in solis defectio, sic facta est tunc defectio solis. Defectio autem solis, quae secundum consuetudinem temporum ita currentium fieri solet, non in alio tempore fit, nisi in conventu solis et lunae . . . in tempore autem, quo passus est Christus, manifestum est, quoniam conventus non erat lunae ad solem, quoniam tempus erat paschale, quod consuetudinis est agere, quando luna solis plenitudinem habet, et in tota est nocte. Quomodo ergo poterat fieri defectio solis, cum luna esset plena, et plenitudinem solis haberet? . . . Pone, quia extra consuetudinem fac-

ta est illa defectio solis in tempore non antiquo, sub principatu Romanorum, ita ut tenebrae fierent super omnem terram usque ad horam nonam: quomodo hoc factum tam mirabile nemo Graecorum, nemo Barbarorum factum conscripsit in tempore illo, maxime qui Chronica conscripserunt, et notaverunt sicuti aliquid novum factum est aliquando, sed soli hoc scripserunt vestri auctores? Et Phlegon quidem in Chronicis suis scripsit, in principatu Tiberii Caesaris factum, sed non significavit in luna plena hoc factum. Vide ergo, ne fortis est objectio haec, et potens movere omnem hominem sapientem, qui nec illis dicentibus, nec istis scribentibus consentit, sed omnino cum ratione et iudicio audit. . . . Dicimus ergo, quod Matthaeus et Marcus non dixerunt, defectioem solis tunc factam fuisse, sed neque Lucas, secundum pleraque exemplaria, habentia sic: *Et erat hora fere sexta, et tenebrae factae sunt super omnem terram usque ad horam nonam, et obscuratus est sol.* . . . Arbitror ergo, sicut cetera signa, quae facta sunt in passionem ipsius,

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it only in a Latin translation, which is obscure, I suppose I may be excused from attempting to translate it at length.

The substance of what Origen says, may be reduced to a few observations. “ He propoſeth an objection of unbelievers againſt the  
“ evangelical hiftorie. They ſaid, that an eclipse of the ſun never  
“ happens at full moon, as the darkneſſe, mentioned by the Evan-  
“ gelifts, did. And that if there had been an eclipse, or other dark-  
“ neſſe, over all the earth, laſting three hours, from ſix till three, it  
“ would have been mentioned by many authors, and eſpecially by  
“ writers of Chronicles. Origen allows, that if the Evangelifts had  
“ mentioned ſuch a thing, in all thoſe circumſtances, and had ſaid, it  
“ was general, all over the world, it would be reaſonable to expect  
“ to find the mention of it in many writers, both Greeks and Barba-  
“ rians. But he ſays, the Evangelifts ſpeak only of a darkneſſe in  
“ the land of Judea. Nor do they call it an eclipse. Other extra-  
“ ordinarie things, which are related by the Evangelifts to have  
“ happened at the time of our Saviour’s ſufferings, he ſays, were  
“ at Jeruſalem, or near it. *There the veil of the temple was rent,*  
“ *there the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent,* there, or near it,  
“ *the*

in Jeruſalem facta ſunt : ſic et tenebrae tantummodo ſuper omnem terram Judaeam uſque ad horam nonam. Quae autem dico, in Jeruſalem tantummodo haec facta ſunt : quod velum templi ſciſſum eſt, quod terra contremuit, quod petrae diruptae ſunt, quod monumenta aperta ſunt. Nec enim extra Judaeam petrae diruptae ſunt, aut monumenta aperta ſunt alia, niſi ea tantum, quae in Jeruſalem erant, aut forte in terra Judaea. Nec alia terra tremuit tunc, niſi terra Jeruſalem. Nec enim refertur alicubi, quod omne elementum terrae tremuerit in tempore illo, ut

ſentirent, verbi gratia, et qui in Aethiopia erant, et in India, et in Scythia. Quod ſi factum fuiſſet, ſine dubio inveniretur in hiftoriis aliquibus eorum, qui in Chronicis ſcripſerunt nova aliqua facta. Sicut ergo quod dicitur, *terra contremuit*, refertur ad terram Jeruſalem, aut ſi latius voluerit quis extendere ad terram Judaeam : ſic et *tenebrae factae ſunt ab hora ſexta uſque ad nonam ſuper omnem terram*, intellige, quod ſuper omnem terram Judaeam ſunt factae, aut certe ſuper Jeruſalem tantum. *Origen. in Matt. Tr. 35. p. 922. 923. Tom. 3. Bened.*

“ *the graves were opened.* So likewise it is to be understood, that  
 “ *at Jerusalem, and near it, or over the whole land of Judea, was*  
 “ *darknesse from the sixth to the ninth hour.* Finally, Origen observes,  
 “ and allows, that Phlegon did not say, that the eclipse, mentioned  
 “ by him, happened at the time of a full moon.”

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Tillemont, arguing upon this testimonie of Phlegon, observes.  
 “ Nevertheless (*b*) he did not say, that this obscurity, which he took  
 “ for an eclipse, happened at full moon, when it is impossible to  
 “ happen, according to the ordinarie course of nature. For which  
 “ reason Origen says very wisely, that we must not too positively  
 “ maintain against Heathen people, that Phlegon spoke of the dark-  
 “ nesse, which happened at the death of Jesus Christ.”

We are now coming to a main point.

I suppose my readers to be well acquainted with the Gospels, and  
 to know, that it is there related, that *from the sixth hour there was*  
*darknesse over all the land unto the ninth hour* : Matt. xxvii. 45. or,  
*when the sixth hour was come, there was darknesse over the whole land,*  
*untill the ninth hour.* Mark xv. 33. or, *and it was about the sixth*  
*hour, and there was darknesse over all the earth, [or land] untill the*  
*ninth hour. And the sun was darkened.* Luke xxiii. 44. 45.

1. In the first place, then, it appears to me very plain, that the  
 Evangelists, by *the earth, or the land,* mean Judea. So the origi-  
 nal word is sometimes used, as Luke iv. 29. Matt. xxiv. 30. So it  
 was understood in these texts by that great critic, Origen, as we  
 have seen. So likewise says that eminent man (*c*) G. J. Vossius,  
 and

(*b*) Il ne marquoit pas néanmoins que  
 cette obscurité, qu'il prenoit pour une e-  
 clipse, fust arrivée dans la pleine lune, où  
 il est impossible selon l'ordre de la nature  
 qu'il en arrive jamais. C'est pourquoi  
 Origene remarque fort sagement, qu'il  
 ne faut pas s'opiniâtrer à soutenir contre

les Payens, que Phlegon a parlé de ce qui  
 est arrivé à la mort de J. C. *Note 35,*  
*sur N. S. J. C. p. 449. M. E.*

(*c*) Putamus autem, per universam ter-  
 ram solam signari Judaeam. Quod et E-  
 rasmus arbitratur. in cap. xxvii. Matthæ.  
*G. Voss. Harm. Ev. l. 2. cap. x.*

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and divers (*d*) other learned moderns, of very good judgement. And Beza, for preventing ambiguity, useth the word (*e*) *region*, or *countrey*, instead of *land*, or *earth*. And upon Mark xv. 33. has a good note, (*f*) justifying that version. Indeed, it is so pertinent, that I am tempted to write out a good part of it below. This, I think, must be right. The Evangelists speak of things that happened in the land of Judea, the place of their residence, and within the extent of their knowledge. How should they know what happened abroad, throughout the whole world? There was darknesse at Jerusaleme, and near it, and in that whole countrey, where Christ was crucified, and among that people, who had been taught by his ministrie, who had seen his miracles, and now triumphed in his crucifixion. But there might be the light and brightnesse of the sun in other countreys, as probably there were.

A.

(*d*) Matt. xxvii. 45. *Now from the sixth hour, there was darknesse over all the land* [of Judea] *untill the ninth hour. Whitley. . . sur tout le pais. Le Clerc. Apparemment sur la Judée, comme Luc. iv. 29. Matt. xxiv. 30. Lenfant. See also Basnage ann. 33. n. cxviii.*

(*e*) . . . *super universam regionem. πᾶσιν τὴν γῆν, i. e. χῶρον. Vulgata, et Erasmus, universam terram, quasi omnes mundi plagae fuerint obscuratae. Bez. ad Matt. xxvii. 45.*

(*f*) Quaeritur autem a multis, an de Judaea duntaxat, an vero potius de universo orbe terrarum haec sint accipienda. Quod posterius videtur amplecti Tertullianus Ap. c. xxi. hoc solis deliquium vocans *mundi casum*, quem Romani in suis archivis habeant. Sed ego iis potius assentior, qui de Hierosolymis et tota vicina regione

hoc dictum accipiunt. Nam in Archivis annotari justius etiam prodigium illud potuit, quoniam fuit Judaeae peculiare. Familiare etiam est sacris scriptoribus, *terrae* appellatione, etiamsi nihil adjiciatur, intelligere terram Chanaan. Et γῆν pro χῶρον, id est, *terram* pro *regione*, reperimus alibi: ut Matt. ix. 26. et Luc. iv. 25. Confert autem hoc ad prodigii novitatem, si intellexerimus non modo die Paschae, id est in plenilunio, accidisse hanc solis eclipsis, sed etiam reliquum orbem illustrante sole, atque adeo in ipso meridie hunc unum orbis terrarum angulum, in quo tantum facinus patrabatur, in densissimis tenebris delituisse. . . Et si universale fuisset hoc prodigium, esset proculdubio omnium astrologorum monumentis celebratum. *Bez. in Mark. xv. 33.*

A. Bynaeus, after having carefully examined this point, expresseth himself to the same (g) purpose.

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2. There are such inaccuracies, and such differences in the quotations of Phlegon by several authors, as very much diminish the credit and authority of this testimonie.

Origen says no more, than that Phlegon speaks of an eclipse, and earthquakes *in the reign of Tiberius*, without mentioning what year of his reign. Eusebius, and Jerome, and the Paschal Chronicle, speak of an eclipse of the sun, and an earthquake, in the fourth year of the 202. Olympiad, meaning the 18 or 19. year of Tiberius, and the 32. or 33. year of our Lord, according to the common computation. But they do not say, in what part, or what month of the year, those things happened. Which would be very material, and tend to decide a reference to the darknesse at our Saviour's passion, if it had been said that the eclipse was in the spring, or such a month of the spring part of the year.

I now add some other quotations to those just mentioned.

J. Philoponus, who lived near the end of the sixth, and the beginning of the seventh centurie, writes to this purpose: "Phlegon  
" (b) also in his Olympiads, makes mention of this darknesse, or rather this night. For he says, that in the second year of the cii. Olympiad, there was the greatest eclipse of the sun that had been known  
" before,

(g) Profecto credibilis nihil est, quam scriptores sacros ortas hasce tenebras ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν, *super omnem terram*, vel ἐφ' ἑλὴν τὴν γῆν, *super totam terram*, dixisse, ut designarent, occupasse eas non Hierosolymam tantum, locumque, in quo Jesus suffixus cruci fuit, sed Judaeam, vel terram Israeliticam universam. De orbe toto enim nequit hic cogitari. Sed nec orbis intelligi Romanus potest, ad quem

Lucas, dum res describit in Judaea gestas, utique non attendit. &c. *Ant. Bynaeus. de morte J. C. l. 3 c. 8. §. ii. p. 410.*

(b) Λέγει γὰρ, ὅτι τῷ δευτέρῳ ἔτει τῆς Διακοσιοῦς δευτέρᾳ ὀλυμπιάδος ἐγένετο ἡλίος ἐκλείψις μεγάλη τῶν [αὐτῶν] ἐγνωσμένων πρότερον· καὶ πῦρ ἄρα ἔκρη τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο ὡσεὶ καὶ ἀέρας ἐν ἡρανῶ φανεῖται. *Philop. de Mundi Creatione. l. 2. c. 21.*

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“ before, and night came on at the sixth hour of the day : infomuch  
“ that the stars appeared in the sky.”

Afterwards the same Philoponus speaks of Phlegon, as saying, that (*i*) the eclipse happened in the fourth year of the ccii. Olympiad. Some may think, this to be an inconsistency. But, perhaps, there (*k*) were different ways of computing the Olympiads, or the years of each Olympiad.

In the Chronicle of *George Syncellus*, who flourished in the eighth centurie, Africanus is quoted in this manner. “ Phlegon (*l*) relates, “ that in the reign of the Emperour Tiberius, at the time of the full “ moon there was a total eclipse of the sun from the sixth hour to “ the ninth.”

It is obvious to observe here. It is not easie to believe, that Africanus said, Phlegon had mentioned an eclipse with those circumstances, because *Phlegon* (*m*) is not so quoted by any other writer. And *Origen* assures us, that *Phlegon* had omitted that circumstance, that the eclipse mentioned by him, was *in the time of the full moon*.

*Maximus*, of the seventh centurie, in his Scholia upon the pretended Dionysius the Areopagite, says : “ Phlegon (*n*) the Gentil “ Chronographer, in the thirteenth book of his Chronographie, at “ the 203. Olympiad, mentions this eclipse, saying that it happened “ in an unusual manner : but does not say, in what manner. And “ our Africanus in the fifth book of his Chronographie, and Euse-  
“ bius

(*i*) Τὴν δὲ ἐκλειψιν γεγονέναι ἐν τῷ τε-  
τάρτῳ ἔτει τῆς διακοσῆς δευτέρας ὀλυμπιά-  
δος. *Philop. Ibid.*

(*k*) *Vide Pagi ann. 32. n. xii. xiii.*

(*l*) Φλέγων ἰσορῆ, ἐπὶ τιβερίῃ Καίσαρος ἐν  
πανσελήνῳ ἐκλείψιν ἡλίου γεγονέναι τελείῃ  
ἀπὸ ἄρας ἔκτης μέχρις ἑνάτης. *Vid. G.*  
*Syncell. p. 322. 323.*

(*m*) *By alt means see Tillemont M. E.*

*Tom. i. note 35. sur Jesus Christ, p. 449-  
450.*

(*n*) Μέμνηται μὲν ἡ Φλέγων ὁ ἐλλήνικος  
χρονόγραφος ἐν τρισκαιδεκάτῳ χρονογραφίῳ  
ἐν τῇ σγ ὀλυμπιάδι τῆς ἐκλειψῆος ταύτης,  
παρὰ τὸ εἶδος αὐτὴν λέγων γενέσθαι, οὐ μὴν  
τὸν τρόπον ἀνέγραψε. κ. λ. *Maxim. ap.*  
*Dionys. Areop. T. 2. p. 97*

“bius Pamphili likewise in his Chronicle mention the same eclipse.”

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Ƴ. Malala, in the sixth or seventh centurie, in his Chronicle, writes to this purpose: “And (o) the sun was darkened, and there was darknesse upon the world. Concerning which darknesse, Phlegon, that wise Athenian, writes thus: In the 18. year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, there was a great eclipse of the sun, greater than those that had been known before: and it became night at the sixth hour of the day, so that the stars appeared.”

Such are the principal quotations of Phlegon in ancient writers. We may wish, they had been more distinct and accurate, and that there had been a nearer agreement between them. But we must take them as they are. Nor do they all place the eclipse, which they speak of, in the same year of the same Olympiad. However, I do not choose to enlarge on this particular. It is rather too critical for my present work. I therefore refer to (p) Pagi, who has spoken to the point with great learning and judgement, and must be of use to remove difficulties of this sort. Wherefore I proceed.

3. Phlegon says nothing of Judea. What he says, is, that in such an Olympiad *there was an eclipse in Bythynia, and an earthquake at Nice.*

4. Phlegon does not say, that the earthquake happened at the same time with the eclipse.

5. Phlegon mentions not any extraordinarie circumstances of the darknesse at the time of our Saviour's sufferings. We cannot perceive from the quotations, that have been made of him, that it is reasonable to believe, he said, that the eclipse mentioned by him, happened at the time of a *full moon*, or that it lasted *three hours*. These circumstances, could not have been omitted by him, if he had known any thing of them.

The acute Mr. Bayle, in his \* article of Phlegon, has enlarged upon

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(o) Ƴ. Malal. *Chronogr. lib. x. p. 310.*

(p) Pagi *ann. 32. num. xi. . . xiv.*

\* Phlegon. note D. *Disson. Critic.*

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upon this point, and as it seems to me, with good reason. “ Never  
“ was there any man more intent than Phlegon, to collect marvel-  
“ lous events, and to observe the supernatural circumstances of  
“ them. How then was it possible, that a man of this temper  
“ should omit to remark that which was most extraordinarie in this  
“ eclipse, I mean, that it happened at the time of a full moon.”

6. Phlegon speaks of an ordinarie *eclipse* of the sun. Therefore he cannot intend the darknesse mentioned by the Evangelists, which happened, when the moon was full. At which time an eclipse of the sun is impossible. Nor do any of the Evangelists use the word *eclipse* in their historie of this darknesse. Phlegon speaks of a total, or very near total eclipse of the sun, so that the stars were seen. Which is common, when there is a total eclipse, and the air is clear: but could not have been, if there had been clouds, which would have hid the stars also. G. J. Vossius (*q*) was clearly of opinion, that Phlegon speaks of an ordinarie, and natural eclipse of the sun. For which, and other reasons, he concludes, that Phlegon did not intend the darknesse in Judea, at the time of our Saviour's passion.

Scaliger (*r*) likewise understands Phlegon to speak of a natural eclipse of the sun.

7. It

(*q*) Phlego tamen pro naturali habuit eclipsi . . . Dixeris, videri eandem, quia Evangelistae dicunt, fuisse eo tempore terrae motum: ac Phlego itidem dicat, tempore eclipseos ejus, de qua agit, terrae motum fuisse in Bithynia, maximeque Nicaeae. Scio. Sed scrupulum injicit, quod fileat de terrae motu in Palaestina. At, inquis, potuit hoc ignorare: nec levem videri nobis auctoritatem Patrum debere, qui eandem faciunt eclipsim illam Evangelistis ac Phlegonti memoratam. Movit Patres, quod eundem in annum utraque

incideret. Sed falsos esse, arguit, quod si miraculosa eclipsis variis conspecta terris foret, non solus ejus Phlegon meminisset. Quid enim magis in natura stupendum, quam solem deficere in plenilunio? Ut jam mittam, quod ante dicebam, Phlegonti sermonem esse de eclipsi naturali, quae solum in novilunio. *G. J. Voss. Harmon. Evang. l. 2. cap. x.*

(*r*) Nam eclipsim quoque veram Phlegon putavit. *Scaliger Animadv. in Euseb. p. 186. a.*



7. It is reasonable to believe from what Phlegon writes, that there was a great eclipse of the sun in some year of the 202. Olympiad. According to the calculations of some able astronomers, there (s) was a great eclipse of the sun in the month of November, in the 29. year of our Lord, according to the common account, and the first year of the 202. Olympiad. But whether their calculations be right, or not, I think, we may be satisfied, that Phlegon thought there was a great eclipse of the sun about that time.

From all these considerations (however without insisting much upon that which is the *second* in order,) it appears to me, that we have not sufficient reason to think, that Phlegon has mentioned the darknesse which happened at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion at Jerusalem. Several learned men have been of the same opinion. I have already mentioned, and quoted, J. G. Vossius. I now (t) refer to several others, who may be consulted by the curious.

Colonia (u) puts great value upon the testimonie of Phlegon to the extraordinarie events attending our Saviour's passion. But I see no reason to make any remarks upon what he says. I refer however to divers other learned men (x) on the same side of the question.

## 8. I

(s) See Dr. Sykes's *Dissertation on the eclipse, mentioned by Phlegon*. p. 70. . . 79. and his *Defense of the same Dissertation*. p. 60. . . 67.

(t) Kepler. *Eclogae Chronicae*. p. 87. 126. He may be seen cited largely in Dr. Sykes's *Diss.* p. 70. . . 72. Dr. Sykes's *Dissertation on the eclipse, mentioned by Phlegon, and his Defense of the same Dissertation*. London. 1732. and 1733. to whom, I may add Dr. S. Clarke, who in the first edition of his *Sermons at Boyle's Lecture*, alleged the passage of Phlegon, but afterwards left it out. *Comp.* p. 325. of the first edi-

tion in 1706. and p. 357. of the 8. edition, in 1732. *Basnag. ann.* 29. num. 30. 31. and *Bayle's Dictionaire*, Phlegon. Note (D).

(u) *La Religion Chretienne autorisee par les Auteurs Payens*. Vol. i. ch. i. p. 1. . . . 44.

(x) Huet. *Dem. Ev. Prop.* 3. p. 30. &c. *Fabr. Bib. Gr. T.* 3. p. 403. Phlegon examined critically and impartially, and re-examined, by Dr. John Chapman. Cambridge. 1734. and 1735. *The Testimony of Phlegon vindicated by Mr. Whiston*. 1732.

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8. I must add one observation more, *eighthly*, the passage of Phlegon concerning an eclipse of the sun is very seldom mentioned by the ancient learned Christian writers, as a testimonie to the wonderful events at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion. Which induces me to think, they paid little or no regard to it: and that they did not judge it proper to be alleged, either for the satisfaction and confutation of adversaries, or for the confirmation of their own people.

I have already shewn what notice is taken of this passage of Phlegon by *Origen*, in his books against *Celsus*, and in his commentaries upon *St. Matthew's Gospel*: And I have also mentioned divers other authors, as low as the sixth and seventh centurie, chiefly writers of *Chronicles*. All which, however, amount to no great number in so long a period.

For there is very little notice taken of it by other ancient Christians, whether Apologists, Historians or Commentators.

To be more particular. No notice is taken of Phlegon, or his eclipse, and earthquake, by *Justin Martyr*, *Tatian*, *Bardesanes*, *Athenagoras*, *Theophilus ad Autolyicum*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian of Carthage*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*. They may mention the miraculous events, attending our Saviour's sufferings. But they allege not *Phlegon*, as confirming the truth of the evangelical historie. How those events are mentioned by (y) *Arnobius*, and (z) *Lactantius*, may be seen in their own words, which I place below. *Lactantius* has twice very  
par-

(y) Exutus at corpore . . . novitate rerum exterrita universa mundi sunt, elementa turbata, tellus mota contremuit, mare funditus refusum est, aër globis involutus est tenebrarum, igneus orbis solis tepesacto ardere dirigit. *Arnob. l. i. p. 32.*

(z) Et eadem horâ terrae motus factus. Et velum templi, quod separabat duo tabernacula, scissum est in duas partes: et sol repente subductus est: et ab horâ sextâ uf-

que in nonam tenebrae fuerunt. . . *Instit. l. 4. cap. 19.*

Quod facinus prodigia secuta sunt, ut intelligerent nefas, quod admiserant. Eodem namque momento, quo spiritum posuit, et terrae motus magnus, et deliquium solis fuit, ut in noctem dies verteretur. Haec omnia Prophetæ sic futura esse prædixerant. *Lact. Epit. cap. 45. ut 46.*

particularly rehearsed the extraordinarie things, that bore honour to our Lord when suffering by the hands of men. But he takes not any notice of Phlegon.

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*Eusebius* has the honour to sustain at once all the just mentioned characters, of Apologist, Historian, and Commentator. And yet, so far as I recollect, he has no where mentioned Phlegon, except in his *Chronicle*, which has been expressly cited by me. He has not distinctly quoted, or referred to this passage, that I remember, in his *Ecclesiastical Historie*, nor in his *Evangelical Preparation*, or *Demonstration*. All which works may be reckoned partly historical and partly apologetical for the principles of our religion. Nor does Phlegon appear in his commentarie upon the *Psalms*, or *Isaias*. In his *Ecclesiastical Historie* having mentioned the troubles, which *Pilate* met with, and his tragical end, he adds: "This (*a*) is related " by Greek writers, who have published *Olympiads*, with a historie " of events, and the times when they happened." Whether Phlegon was here intended, cannot be said. He is not mentioned. Nor has this any connection with the passage of Phlegon, which we are now considering. *Nicephorus* (*b*) going over again this same historie, is not more particular, than *Eusebius*. He mentions not Phlegon by name, nor any other writer of *Olympiads*. In his *Chronicle*, under the reign of *Caligula*, *Eusebius*, recording the death of *Pilate*, who laid violent hands upon himself, says: "This (*c*) is related by Roman historians."

Nor is Phlegon's eclipse any where taken notice of by *Jerome*, in any of his numerous and learned works, excepting only in his Latin version of *Eusebe's Greek Chronicle*, above quoted by us. *Scaliger* observes, that

(*a*) Ἰσορῶσιν ἑλλήνων δι τὰς ὀλυμπιάδας  
ἄμμα τοῖς κατὰ χρόνον πεπραγμένοις ἀνα-  
γράψαντες. *H. E. l. 2. cap. 7.*

(*b*) *Vid. Niceph. l. 2. cap. 10.*

(*c*) Pontius Pilatus incidens in multas  
calamitates propria se manu interfecit.  
Seribunt Romanorum historici. *Chron. p.*  
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that (*d*) Jerome seems to refer to this author, and his Olympiads, in his Commentarie upon Habakkuk, ch. iii. 9. 10. But Phlegon is not there named. Nor does he there speak of his eclipse, but of quite other things. I have transcribed below the passage referred to more distinctly from the Benedictin edition of Jerome, than it is quoted by Scaliger. Doubtless Jerome has several times spoken of the darknesse, and other extraordinarie events, at the time of our Saviour's passion: as in his Commentarie upon (*e*) Amos viii. 9. 10. And in his Commentarie upon Matt. xxvii. 45. he says: "They (*f*) who have writ against the Gospels, suspect, that the " disciples of Christ through ignorance speak of an ordinarie e- " clipse of the sun, which never happens, except at the time of " the new moon. But Jerome answers, that there could be no " ground for such a supposition. For our Lord suffered at the " time of the Jewish Passover, when the moon was at full, as all " know. The darknesse therefore must have been miraculous. " Moreover it lasted three hours. Which is sufficient to remove " all suspicion, that it was a natural eclipse."

So

(*d*) De illo, ut alibi diximus. intelligebat Hieronymus, quum haec scriberet Commentario in Habacuc, capite tertio. *Legimus in his, qui de mirabilibus consecerrunt volumina, et qui Olympiadas Graeciae ad nostram usque memoriam perduxere, exponentes quid in singulis annis novi acciderit in mundo, quod inter cetera terrae motu eruperint flumina, quae ante non fuerant, et rursus alia absorpta sint, et pessum ierint. Scaliger Animadv. in Euseb. Et conf. Hieron. T. 3. p. 1628. Ed. Bened.*

(*e*) Possumus hunc locum et in Domini intelligere passione, quando sol horà sextà retraxit radios suos, et pendentem in cruce Dominum suum spectare non ausus est. *In Amos. p. 1442.*

(*f*) Qui scripserunt contra Evangelia, suspicantur, deliquium solis, quod certis statutisque temporibus accidere solet, discipulos Christi ob imperitiam super resurrectione Domini interpretatos: quum defectus solis numquam nisi ortu lunae fieri solet. Nulli autem dubium est, Paschae tempore lunam fuisse plenissimam. Et ne forsitan videretur umbra terrae, vel orbis lunae soli oppositus, breves et ferrugineas secisse tenebras, trium horarum spatium ponitur, ut omnis caussantium occasio tolleretur. &c. *In Matt. cap. xxvii. Tom. 4. p. 139.*

So Jerome. But nothing is said of Phlegon, either here, or elsewhere. The silence about Phlegon in so learned a writer, as Jerome, appears to me remarkable.

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Nor does Phlegon appear at all in the homilies, or other writings of *Chrysostom*. In a homilie, remarking upon Matt. xxvii, 45. he says, "that (g) darknesse was not an eclipse, but a token of the divine displeasure: as is manifest from the time of it. For it lasted three hours: whereas an eclipse of the sun is over in a moment of time. This all know, who have seen an eclipse, as we have lately."

Nor do I remember, that Phlegon is mentioned by *Augustin* in any of his numerous writings. In that noble work his Apologie for the Christian Religion, called *Of the City of God*, he observes, "that (b) the darknesse at the time of our Saviour's passion, was not owing to an eclipse of the sun. For it was the time of the Passover, when the moon was at the full: whereas all natural eclipses are at the time of the new moon." But he does not call in Phlegon to bear witness to this. In like manner, in (i) one of his epistles, he argues excellently well, "that the darknesse at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion was miraculous and preternatural, and not owing to an interposition of the moon between our earth and the sun." But neither does he here take any notice of Phlegon.

I might go on to mention *Epiphanius*, *Leo the Great*, *Gregorie* the first, *Ambrose* of Milan, *Theodoret*, both an historian and a commentator, and other learned and voluminous writers of the fourth, fifth,

(g) Ὀργιζομένε γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῖς τολμομένοις ἦν τὸ σκότος ἐκεῖνο. Ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ ἦν ἕκλειψις, ἀλλ' ὀργή τε καὶ ἀγανάκτησις, καὶ ἐντεῦθεν μόνον δῆλον ἦν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀπὸ καιρῶ. Τρεῖς γὰρ ὥρας παρέμεινεν. Ἡ δὲ ἕκλειψις ἐν μιᾷ καιρῷ γίνεται ῥῆπῃ. Καὶ ἴσασιν οἱ ταύτην τε-

θεόμενοι· καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς γενεᾶς τῆς ἡμετέρας συνέβη. *Chr. in Matt. hom. 88. al. 89. p. 825. T. vii.*

(b) *De Civ. Dei. l. 3. cap. xv.*

(i) *Ep. 199. al. 80. ad Hefychium. cap. x. num. 34. Tom. 2. P. 2.*

A. D. 138. fifth, and following centuries, who are all silent about Phlegon, and his eclipse.

Nor is Phlegon named in *Oecumenius*, or *Theophylact*, both excellent commentators. But this last, in the eleventh centurie, in his note upon Matt. xxvii. 45. distinctly shews, that the darknesse at our Saviour's crucifixion was preternatural, and could not be an ordinarie eclipse of the sun.

There are many historians, partly secular, partly ecclesiastical, who, as we may think, might have been led, either occasionally, or on set purpose, to mention Phlegon: such as *Socrates*, *Sozomen*, *Orosius*, *Cassiodorius*, *Zonaras*, *Nicephorus*, and others: who nevertheless take no particular notice of him, or his eclipse.

*Orosius* indeed, near the beginning of the fifth centurie, rehearsing the affecting circumstances of our Saviour's sufferings, says: "And (k) divers writings of Greek authors confirm the evangelical historie." But he does not mention Phlegon, nor any other.

*Nicephorus* (l) in like manner, speaks of the darknesse, the earthquake, and other wonderfull concomitants of our Saviour's sufferings: But says nothing of Phlegon, or any other Heathen authors.

This silence about Phlegon, in many of the most judicious and learned ancient Christian writers, has induced me to think, they did not reckon the passage of Phlegon very material. If it had been reckoned by them clear, and important, we should have seen numerous quotations of it, and cogent arguments upon it. Indeed, if it had been clear, it must have been important. But not being as I suppose,

(k) Deinde anno ejusdem [Tiberii] decimo septimo, cum Dominus Jesus Christus voluntarie quidem se tradidit passioni, . . . et patibulo suffixus est, maximo terrae motu per orbem facto, saxa in montibus scissa sunt. . . . Eadem quoque die ad horam diei sextam sol in totum obscura-

tus, tetraque nox subito obducta terris est. . . . Quod non solum sanctorum Evangeliorum fides, sed etiam aliquanti Graecorum libri adtestantur. *Oros. l. 7. cap. 4.*

(l) *Vid. Niceph. l. i. cap. 31.*

suppose, reckoned by them, clearly to refer to the darknesse in Judea, at the time of our Lord's sufferings, they did not esteem it of much moment, and therefore did not alledge it.

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Many people of our times, I believe, suppose, that this passage of Phlegon is quoted and insisted upon by all ancient Christian writers in general. But so far is that from being the case, that it is to be found quoted in very few, one, perhaps, in a centurie or two, and those, chiefly, writers of Chronicles.

Petavius, speaking of Phlegon's eclipse, says: "that (*k*) this is the same, which happened at the death of Christ, all the ancient fathers have declared, as with one mouth." But what does Tillemont say to this? His remark is in these words. "But (*l*) Petavius makes use of an expression, which is rather too strong. For I think, that *all the fathers* are reduced to Jerome, who translated Eusebius:" [meaning his Chronicle:] "and (*m*) if by *fathers* he means ecclesiastical writers, it will not extend, perhaps, to more than four or five."

I hope, that what has been observed under this last particular, may be of use to satisfy some, who may not be fully convinced by the foregoing considerations. None, I think, can much dislike my declining to insist upon a passage, as a testimonie to the truth of the evangelical historie, which has been so little regarded, and so seldom quoted by ancient Christian writers, remarkable for their diligence, as well as for their learning and judgement.

U 2

IV. THALLUS

(*k*) Hanc esse illam ipsam, quae sub Christi mortem accidit, patres omnes antiqui velut uno ore pronunciarunt. *Petav. de Doctrina Temp. l. 12. cap. 21. p. 458.*

(*l*) Note xxxv. sur N. S. Jesus Christ. p. 449. *Mem. Ec.*

(*m*) Et si par les Peres il entend les auteurs ecclesiastiques, cela ne s'étendra peutestre à plus de quatre ou cinq. *Ibid.*

*Thallus.*

IV. THALLUS (*a*) a Syrian author, is sometimes alledged by (*b*) learned moderns, as bearing witness to the darknesse at the time of our Saviour's passion. Whether there is any good reason for so doing, may appear from a few observations.

In the fragments of Africanus, which are in the Chronicle (*c*) of G. Syncellus of the eighth centurie, and in the collections of Eusebe's Greek Chronicle, as made by Joseph Scaliger, that very learned ancient Christian writer, says: "there (*d*) was a dreadfull darknesse over the whole world, and the rocks were rent by an earthquake, and many buildings were overturned in Judea, and in other parts of the earth. This (*e*) darknesse Thallus calls an eclipse of the sun, in the third book of his histories: but, as seems to me very improperly. For the Jews keep the passover in the fourteenth day of the moon. At which time an eclipse of the sun is imposible."

Upon this passage I must observe 1. That it appears only in fragments of Africanus: whereas it often happens, that in collections of that kind we do not find so much accuracie, as might be wished. 2. The words of Thallus are not cited. For which reason we cannot presume to form a judgement concerning what he said. 3. This passage of Thallus is no where quoted or referred to by any other ancient writer, that I know of. It is not in any work of Eusebius, excepting those Greek collections of his Chronicle, which are very in-

(*a*) *Vid. Voss. de Hist. Gr. l. 3.*

(*b*) Quos inter praecipua est Thalli auctoritas, quem libro Historiarum suarum tertio eandem eclipsim memorare prodidit insignis temporum metator Africanus. *Huet. Dem. Ev. Prop. 3. §. viii.*

*Sc. See likewise Colonia, vol. i. p. 27.*

Ἐῶα

(*c*) *Ap. G. Syncell. p. 322.*

(*d*) *Euseb. Canon. Chron. Graece. p. 77.*

(*e*) Τὸ το σκότος ἐκλείψιν ἡλίου Θύλλος ἀποκαλεῖ ἐν τρίτῃ τῶν ἰστοριῶν, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, ἀλόγως. Ἐβραῖοι γὰρ ἄγχει τὸ πάσχα κατὰ σελήνης ἴδ. κ. λ. *Ap. Euseb. Chron. Gra. p. 77.*



inaccurate and imperfect. Nor is there any notice taken of it in Jerome's version of the Chronicle.

I might rest here, without adding any thing more. Nevertheless I shall proceed somewhat farther.

The time of Thallus seems not to be exactly known. If indeed there was any thing in his Historie, relating to transactions in Judea, in the time of our Saviour, he must have lived between that time and Africanus. But of that we want some farther proof.

In Eusebe's Evangelical Preparation (*f*) is quoted a long passage of Africanus, from the third book of his Chronologie. Where (*g*) are mentioned, all together, *Diodorus, Thallus, Castor, Polybius, and Phlegon*. "And afterwards (*h*) *Hellanicus, and Philochorus*, who "wrote of the affairs of Attica, *Castor and Thallus*, who wrote a "historie of Syria, *Diodorus, and Alexander Polybistor*." Whereby we learn, that Thallus was a Syrian, who wrote in the Greek language.

Thallus is quoted by divers ancient Christian writers. Justin Martyr (*i*) in his exhortation to the Greeks alledgeth Hellanicus, Philochorus, Castor and Thallus, as bearing witness to the antiquity of Moses, the Jewish Lawgiver.

Tertullian (*k*) and Minucius Felix (*l*) quote Thallus, and divers other

(*f*) *Pr. Ev. l. x. cap. x. p. 487. . . .*  
493.

(*g*) *Ib. p. 488.*

(*h*) Ἑλλάνικός τε καὶ Φιλόχορος, οἱ τὰς Ἀθηναίων, οἱ τε τὰ Σύρια, Κάστωρ καὶ Θάλλος.  
*x. l. p. 489.*

(*i*) *Ad Gr. Coh. p. 10. A. Par. p. 13.*  
*n. 9. Bened.*

(*k*) Saturnum itaque, quantum literae docent, neque Diodorus Graecus, aut Thallus, neve Cassius Severus, aut Cor-

nelius Nepos, neque ullus commentator ejusmodi antiquitatum, aliud quam hominem promulgaverunt. *Tertull. Ap. cap. 10.*

(*l*) Saturnum enim principem hujus generis et examinis omnes scriptores vetustatis, Graeci Romanique, hominem prodiderunt. Scit hoc Nepos et Cassius in historia: et Thallus, et Diodorus, haec loquuntur. *Minuc. Felix, cap. 22.*

other authors, as acknowledging Saturn to have been a man, who had lived on this earth.

Thallus and other writers are quoted with a like view by (*m*) Lactantius.

Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, about the year 180. in his (*n*) Letter to Autolicus, quotes Thallus to prove, that Belus lived long before the Trojan war. Which passage is quoted again from Theophilus by (*o*) Lactantius.

All these quotations of Thallus appear to be made properly. And he is so quoted with other writers of antiquity, that one might be apt to think, that he lived rather before, than after our Saviour's coming. Nor is there any thing here said of an eclipse. Which may induce us to think, that the passage in the fragments of Africanus is not material. Indeed, if I was not unwilling to admit any thing disrespectful to the memorie of so great and learned an ancient, as Africanus, I should suspect, that the eclipse, mentioned by *Thallus*, (whenever it happened,) was a natural eclipse of the sun. For it is not likely, that a learned historian, as Thallus was, should use that expression concerning any other darknesse, or obscurity. Consequently, what he said, could not have any reference to the darknesse in Judea, at the time of our Saviour's last sufferings.

Thallus;

(*m*) Omnes ergo non tantum poetae, sed et historiarum quoque, ac rerum antiquarum scriptores, hominem fuisse consentiunt, qui res ejus in Italia gestas memoriae prodiderunt: Graeci, Diodorus et Thallus: Latini, Nepos, et Cassius, et Varro. *Lact. Inst. l. i. cap. 13.*

(*n*) *Ad Aut. l. 3. p. 138. 139. Par. p. 399. n. 29. Bened.*

(*o*) Theophilus in libro de temporibus ad Autolycum scripto ait, in Historia sua Thallum dicere, quod Belus, quem Babylonii et Assyrii colunt, antiquior Trojanano bello fuisse invenitur 322 annis. &c. *Id. ib. l. i. cap. 23. Conf. ejusd. Epit. cap. 24.*

Thallus is not quoted upon this occasion either by (p) Grotius, or (q) Dr. Clarke.

V. It has been often said, that *DIONYSIUS the Areopagite*, when a young man, went into Egypt, for the sake of improvement in knowledge. “ And (a) being at Heliopolis, with his friend Apollophanes, when our Saviour suffered, they there saw a wonderfull eclipse of the sun. Whereupon Dionysius said to his friend: *Either (b) God himself suffers, or sympathizeth with the sufferer.*” *Dionysius the Areopagite.*

But as (c) all the works, ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, are now reckoned spurious, and are allowed, not to have been composed before the fifth, or sixth centurie, this storie is disregarded by all learned men in general. I shall put below the judgements of (d) Huet, and (e) Tillemont: who might be as likely to assert it, as any:

(p) *Vide de Veritate Rel. Christian. l. 3. cap. xiv.*

(q) *See his Sermons at Boyle's Lecture, the first ed. p. 325. the eighth edition. p. 357. A. D. 1732.*

(a) *Vid. Dionys. ep. ad Polycarp. T. 2. p. 88. Et Suidas V. Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεωπαγίτης.*

(b) *Ἡ τὸ Θεὸν πάσχει, ἢ τῷ πάσχοντι συμπάσχει.*

(c) *See the Credib. P. 2. ch. 143. vol. xi. p. 216.*

(d) *Poteramus et Dionysii Areopagitae testimonio pugnare, qui in epistola ad Polycarpum rem a se et ab Apollophane sophista Heliopoli Aegypti observatam narrat. Verum quoniam has Dionysii Epistolas, aliasque ejusdem scriptiones, in*

*controversiam vocari video, neque sane immerito, si quid judicio valeo, haec praetermittimus. Huet. Prop. 3. n. ix.*

(e) *Nous ne nous arretons pas à l'auteur des ouvrages attribuez à S. Denys l'Areopagite, qui pretend avoir remarqué à Heliopolis en Egypte les tenebres arrivées à la mort de J. C. et qui veut qu'elles vinssent d'une eclipse veritable, et causée comme les autres par l'interposition de la lune entre la terre et le soleil, quoique entièrement miraculeuse, et contre la nature des autres eclipses. Peu de personnes habiles se laissent persuader aujourd'hui par ces fortes d'autoritez. Tillemont. note 35. sur N. S. J. C. Mem. T. i.*

any: but do absolutely abandon, and give it up, as of no value. *Colonia* (*f*) likewise, after a good deal of parade, declares it inconsistent with sincerity to allege it among genuine and authentic testimonies in favour of Christianity.

(*f*) *La Religion Chrétienne autorisée.* &c. vol. i. p. 40. 41.



## C H A P. XIV.

## The Emperour TITUS ANTONIN the Pious.

I. *His Time, and Character.* II. *That he was favorable to the Christians.* III. *His Edict in their Favour sent to the States of Asia. The Genuinness of which is here asserted, with Remarks.*

I. **T**itus Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Antoninus Pius: or ANTONIN, surnamed THE PIOUS, or the Good, was born in the reign of Domitian, in the year of Christ, 86. He (*a*) succeeded Adrian on the tenth day of July, in the year of our Lord 138. and died on the seventh of March in 161. in the 23. year of his reign.

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*His Time,  
and Character.*

He is much (*b*) commended. And, indeed, seems to have been a man of as fair a character, as any of the Roman Emperours, not excepting

(*a*) *Vid Pagi ann. 161. n. ii. Basnag. ann. 138. n. xi. Tillem. L'Emp. Tite Antonin art. i. et xii.*

(*b*) *Vid. M. Aurel. de Reb. suis. lib. i. §. xvi. Dio. Cass. l. 69. p. 796. al. 1167. Jul. Capitolin. Victor. et Eutrop.*

A. D. 138. excepting (c) the most admired. And though he was above seventy years of age at the time of his death, he was as much lamented, as if he had died in the (d) prime of life.

When Xiphilin made the epitome of Dion Cassius's Historie, the seventeenth book of that work, which contained the reign of this Emperour, was wanting, excepting only a small part at the beginning. Having given a short account of that, Xiphilin proceeds. "It (e) is agreed by all, that Antonin was a good and mild Prince, who was oppressive neither to any of his other subjects, nor to the Christians, whom he protected and favored, even beyond what had been done by Adrian, as is shewn by Eusebius Pamphili." \*

That he was favorable to the Christians.

II. So writes Xiphilin. We are therefore led directly to the Ecclesiastical Historie of Eusebius, in which is the earliest account, we can expect to find of Antonin's regard for the Christians.

He

(c) Hunc fere nulla vitiorum labes maculavit. *Victor. de Caesar. cap. xiv.*

... tantae bonitatis in principatu fuit, ut haud dubie sine exemplo vixerit. *Victor. Epit. c. xv.*

(d) Perit anno septuagesimo: sed quasi adolescens desideratus est. *Jul. Capitolin. in Vit. Anton. cap. 12.*

(e) Ὁ γὰρ Ἀντωνίνος ἡμολογεῖται παρὰ πάντων καλὸς τε καὶ ἀγαθὸς γενέσθαι, καὶ οὔτε τῶν ἄλλων ὑπνύων τισὶ βάρυς, οὔτε χριστιανῶν ἐπαχθεὶς, ἀλλὰ πολλὴν τιμὰ τέτοις νέμων εἶδω, καὶ τῇ τῆ Ἀδριανῶ τιμῇ, ἣν ἐκεῖνος ἐτίμα χριστιανῶν, προσεθεῖς. κ. λ. *Dio. l. 70. p. 1173. al. 799.*

\* Mr. Ra Roche in his *New Memoirs of Literature*, vol. i. p. 81. . . 99. gives an account of a book in two volumes, 8vo. printed at the Hague, entitled, *Histoire de la Philosophie Pagenne, &c. A History of the Pagan Philosophy, or the Sentiments of the most famous Pagan Philosophers and na-*

*tions concerning God, the Soul, and the Duties of man.* Where, at page 98. Mr. La Roche says: "In the last chapter of this work, the Author shews, that there was not one perfect man among the Heathens. He examines the lives of Pythagoras, Aristides, Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Dion, Phocion, Timoleon, Cato the Censor, Cato of Utica, Brutus, Seneca, Apollonius of Tyana, Titus Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius. And finds them guilty of several vices. He highly commends the wise and just government of Titus Antoninus. But, says he, that Emperour had some faults, which however were not very prejudicial to his subjects." It is plain, that this Author had a very favorable opinion of Titus Antoninus. I should be very glad to see his work. But it has never come in my way.

He is not reckoned among the persecuting Emperours. Nevertheless the Christians were persecuted in his time. Otherwise, there could have been no occasion to present Apologies to him. And that Justin's first Apologie was addressed to him, is allowed. It is inscribed in this manner. "To the Emperour Titus Aelius Adrianus Antoninus, the Pious, and to his son Verissimus, and Lucius, and the Senate, and all the People of the Romans, in (*f*) behalf of men gathered out of all nations, who are unjustly hated and ill-treated, I Justin, son of Priscus, son of Bacchius, one of them, of the city of *Flavia Neapolis*, in that part of *Syria*, which is called *Palestine*, make this addresse and supplication."

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And, not to take notice of any other passages of it, the same apologie concludes in this manner. "If what has been now offered be material, pay a suitable regard to it. But if all this be of no moment, let it be slighted as trifling. But (*g*) do not treat as enemies, and appoint death for men, who are guilty of no crimes. And we foretell unto you that ye will not escape the future judgement of God, if you persist in this injustice."

Which plainly shews, that the Christians were then persecuted, even to death.

III. Eusebius (*h*) having given an account of Justin's Apologie, and quoted the beginning of it, goes on. "And (*i*) the same Emperour having been applied to by other of the brethren in *Asia*, complaining of the many injuries, which they suffered from the people of the country, sent (*k*) an edict to the

*His Edict  
to the  
States of  
Asia.*

X 2

" Common

(*f*) . . . ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκ παντὸς γένους ἀνθρώπων ἀδίκως μισουμένων καὶ ἐσθραζομένων, εἰς αὐτῶν τὴν προσφώνησιν καὶ ἐντευξίν ποιῆμαι. *Apol. pr. et ap. Euseb. H. E. l. 4. c. 12.*

(*g*) . . . καὶ μὴ ὡς κατ' ἐχθρῶν, κατὰ τῶν μηδὲν ἀδικούντων θάνατον ὀρίζεσθε. *Προλόγος.*

μεν γὰρ ὑμῖν, ὅτι ἐκ ἐκρέυξεσθε τὴν ἐσομένην τῷ Θεῷ κρίσιν, ἐὰν ἐπιμένετε τῇ ἀδικίᾳ.

(*h*) *L. 4. c. xi. xii.*

(*i*) *Cap. xiii. p. 126.*

(*k*) . . . τῆς αὐτῆς ἐξίσεως τὸ κοινὸν τῆς *Asias* διατάξεως.

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“ Common Council of Asia, which is to this purpose. *The Empe-*  
 “ *roure . . . to the States of Asia sendeth greeting. I am well satisfied, the*  
 “ *Gods will not suffer such men to be concealed. For undoubtedly they*  
 “ *are more concerned to punish those who refuse to worship them, than*  
 “ *you are. But you only confirm these men in their sentiments, and*  
 “ *make them more obstinate, by calling them impious, and giving them*  
 “ *vexation. For they are not so desirous to live, as to be prosecuted,*  
 “ *and suffer death for their God. Hence they come off victorious, laying*  
 “ *down their lives, rather than do what you demand of them. As for*  
 “ *the earthquakes of the former, or the present times, it may not be im-*  
 “ *proper to advise you, to compare yourselves with them, and your senti-*  
 “ *ments with theirs. For when such things happen, you are dejected,*  
 “ *but they are full of confidence in God. And you, in the ignorance you*  
 “ *are in, neglect the other Gods, and their rites, and the worship of the*  
 “ *Immortal likewise. And the Christians, who worship him, you banish,*  
 “ *and persecute to death. Before our time many Governours of provin-*  
 “ *ces wrote to our deified Father, about these men. To whom he wrote,*  
 “ *that they should not be molested, unless they did things contrarie to the*  
 “ *welfare of the Roman government. Many also have informed me*  
 “ *about the same men. To whom I returned an answer agreeable to*  
 “ *the Rescript of my Father. [Adrian.] If therefore any person will*  
 “ *still accuse any of these men as such, [as a Christian,] let the accused*  
 “ *be acquitted, though he appear to be such an one [that is, a Christi-*  
 “ *an:] and let the accuser be punished. Set up at Ephesus, in the com-*  
 “ *mon assemblee of Asia. And that these things were so done, adds*  
 “ *Eusebius, is attested by Melito Bishop of Sardis, who flourished at*  
 “ *that time, in what he says in his excellent apologie, which he made*  
 “ *for our religion to the Emperour Verus.”*

Melito's Apologie was presented to Mark Antonin (1) about the  
 year 177. From that apologie Eusebius in a following chapter,  
 makes a large extract. A part of which I also must transcribe here,  
 reserving

[ (1) See *Credib. ch. xv. vol. i. p. 325.*



reserving the rest till hereafter. “ Of (m) all the Roman Empe-  
 “ rours, says Melito to Mark, Nero and Domitian only, who were  
 “ misled by designing men, have shewn enmity to our religion. From  
 “ them have proceeded the evil reports concerning us, that are receiv-  
 “ ed and propagated by the vulgar. Which have often been check-  
 “ ed by your pious ancestors, who by edicts have restrained those  
 “ who have been troublesome to men of our religion. Among  
 “ whom is your Grandfather Adrian, who wrote, as to many others,  
 “ so, particularly, to Minucius Fundanus, Proconsul of Asia. And  
 “ your Father also, at the same time that you governed all things  
 “ with him, wrote to several cities, that they should not give us any  
 “ vexation, and among them to the Larissians, and the Thessaloni-  
 “ ans, and the Athenians, and to all the Greeks. And we are per-  
 “ suaded, that you, who cannot but have the like regard for us, and  
 “ are yet of a more human and philosophical disposition, will grant  
 “ all we desire.”

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So writes Melito. And hence, and from what Eusebius before said, may be concluded with certainty, that not only Justin presented an apologie to Titus Antonin, but that other Christians also, from divers parts, had applied to him, and that he had sent favorable orders to the Larissians in Thessalie, and to other Thessalonians, and the Athenians, and to all the Greeks in general, which may comprehend the Asiatics, for whom, Melito, in particular, seems to have pleaded.

Nevertheless there are difficulties, relating to that edict, before translated, said to have been sent to the Common Council of Asia. Some think, it was given by Titus Antonin, others by Mark Antonin. And others suspect it to be a forgerie, and really sent by neither of those Emperours.

And among the ancients there is some difference of opinion. By Eusebius, whom I have transcribed at length, it is supposed to have been sent by Antonin the Pious. This letter, or edict, is also at length.

(m) Euseb. H. E. l. 4. cap. 26.

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length in the Paschal Chronicle (*n*) and in (*o*) Nicephorus Callisti. By the former it is ascribed to Antonin the Philosopher, by the later to his predecessor. Zonaras (*p*) follows Eusebius, as does also Xiphilin, before quoted. Orosius does not expressly mention this edict. But he says, that (*q*) Justin presented an apologie to Antonin the Pious, and that thereby the Emperour was rendered favourable to the Christians.

Among the moderns likewise, as before hinted, there are various sentiments. Valesius, the learned editor of Eusebius, and the other Ecclesiastical Historians, dissent here from his author. He says, the (*r*) letter is Mark's, and that Eusebius was mistaken in ascribing it to the elder Antonin. Of the same opinion are (*s*) Scaliger, (*t*) Huët, (*u*) Basnage, and (*x*) Pagi. By (*y*) Baronius, (*z*) Cave, and (*a*) divers others, it is supposed to have been sent by Antonin the Pious. As the argument of the Benedictin editors, on the same side of the question, is not very prolix, I shall put a part of it below. They say, with Tillemont, “ That (*b*) the authority of Eusebius, who ascribes it to

“ Titus

(*n*) P. 259.(*o*) L. 3. cap. 28.(*p*) Tom. 2. p. 206.

(*q*) Verum Justinus philosophus librum pro Christiana religione compositum Antonino tradidit, benignumque eum erga Christianos fecit. *Oros. l. 7. cap. xiv.*

(*r*) Errat Eusebius, qui Antonino Pio hanc epistolam tribuit, cum sit divi Marci. *Annot. in Euseb. p. 66.*

(*s*) *Animadv. in Euseb. p. 219.*(*t*) *Dem. Evang. p. 42.*

(*u*) *Basn. ann. 139. n. vii. et ann. 164. n. iv.*

(*x*) *Pagi ann. 152. num. iv. v.*(*y*) *Baron. ann. 154. n. v.*(*z*) *H. L. de Justino M.*

(*a*) *Balduin. Edict. Princip. Rom. p. 86. . . 92. Tillem. Antonin. art. xi. S.*

*Justin M. art. xii et note xi. Moshem. de Reb. Christian. p. 86. . . 92.*

(*b*) Nam, ut Tillemontii, qui Antonino vindicat, rationum momenta breviter referam. 1. Eusebii auctoritas, qui eas Antonino tribuit, maximi debet esse ponderis. 2. Antonino conveniunt, qui Adrianum solus appellare potuit parentem suum, ac solus post Adrianum illa aetate favit Christianis. Hunc enim constat ea ad Civitates, ac nominatim ad Larissaeos, ad Thessalonicenses, ad Athenienses, ad universos denique Graecos scripsisse, quae in literis ad Commune Asia leguntur, nempe nequid novi adversus Christianos molirentur. At Marcus semper Christianis iniquus fuit. *Praef. ad Justin. M. Pars 3. cap. v. num. iii.*

“ Titus Antonin the Pious, ought by no means to be slighted. He  
 “ only could call Adrian his Father, and was the only Emperour  
 “ after him, who favored the Christians. For Mark was always  
 “ unfriendly to them. And it is certain, that he wrote the same  
 “ things to the Larisseans, and the Theffalonians, that are contained  
 “ in this letter to the states of Asia, that they should not be trouble-  
 “ some to the Christians.”

But some suspect the genuinnesse of this Letter, as Mr. Dodwell, who says, it (*c*) is so Christian, that he can hardly think it was writ by a Heathen Emperour. Thirlby (*d*) rejects it as a plain forgerie. Dr. Jortin goes into the same opinion, saying: “ It was forged by  
 “ some Christian before the days of (*e*) Eusebius.” And Reimar wisheth, that (*f*) some farther light might be obtained for clearing up the difficulties relating to it.

I think, this rescript could not be writ by Mark Antonin, who was always averse and unfriendly to the Christians, as we shall see hereafter. If this Letter had been writ in the first year of Mark's reign, as Valefius thought, or in the fourth of it, as Pagi and Basnage say, the Christians would not have suffered such persecutions in his time, as they did, in many places. Nor would there have been so many apologies presented to him, as we know there were. Nor could Melito have omitted to take notice of it. He reminds Mark of the Rescript  
 of

(*c*) Sed mihi fateor suspectum esse, magisque ad mentem Christianorum esse conceptum, quam illud concepturus fuerit gentilis Imperator. *Diss. Cypr. xi. num. 34.*

(*d*) Tot viros doctos et graves ludos fecit unus idemque non vaferrimus nebulo, qui hoc rescriptum confinxit. . . . Emendatione autem nostra dignum non censuimus figmentum ineptum et puerile. *Thirlb. in Justin. M. p. 101.*

(*e*) *Remarks upon E. H. vol. 2. p. 168. See also p. 174.*

(*f*) Quoniam vero ne veteres quidem sibi constant, utri Imperatorum adscribenda sit: et quaecumque teneas sententiam, difficultates aliae obstant inextricabiles: operae pretium fuerit, clariore quam factum est adhuc luce discutere dubia, ni tota illa epistola conficta quibusdam liberius judicantibus debeat videri. *Reimar. in notis ad Dion. Cass. p. 1172. al. 799.*

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of his grandfather *Adrian*, and the Letter of *Antonin* his father to several cities: Much more would he have reminded him of his own Letter in favour of the Christians, if there had been any such thing.

As for the suspicion of forgerie, I see no plain evidences of it. I do not discern the hand of a conceited and pedantic sophist: nothing, but what might come from a good-natured magistrate, as *Antonin* was. There (g) had been some earthquakes in Asia, and other countreys, not far off. The Heathen people were much terrified by them, and ascribed them to the vengeance of heaven, because the Christians were numerous among them. And they had thereupon committed great outrages: Of these injuries the Christians made complaints. And the Emperour in his Letter to the States pleasantly reprimands his own people, the Heathens, upon both those accounts, that is, for their timorousnesse, and for their cruel usage of the Christians, their neighbours. And he as agreeably commends the Christians for their intrepidity, or composure amidst such dangers. And sends orders, that they should not be any longer abused, as they had been.

I think, then, that this rescript was sent by *Titus Antonin* the Pious, as *Eusebius* \* \* supposed. But allowing that to be doubtfull, we learn several things from what has now passed before us. The Emperour *Antonin* the Pious must have had good knowledge of the Christians, and their principles. He was favorable to them, and must have been well satisfied of their innocence. To him *Justin* presented a long and excellent apologie, still extant, a most valuable remain

(g) *Adversa ejus temporibus haec provenerunt: fames, de qua diximus, circi ruina, terrae motus, quo Rhodiorum et Asiae oppida conciderunt. Quae omnia mirifice instauravit. Capitolin. Antonin. Pius. cap. 9. p. 168. Vid. et Dion. Cass. lib. 70. p. 1173.*

\* \* *Some more observations, for shewing that this Rescript was sent by Antonin the Pious, will appear near the end of the chapter of Mark Antonin, in what is there called the Summarie of the Argument.*

remain of Christian antiquity. By Eusebius, and others, we are assured it had a good effect. And if it had not been of some advantage to the Christian interest at that time, Justin would scarcely have thought of making any more addresses to Roman Emperours. And his addressing another apologie afterwards to Mark Antonin is an argument, that he had some encouragement to it by the success of his former apologie.

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To Antonin the Pious applications had been made also by other Christians, beside Justin. And he wrote to *the Larissians, the Thessalonians, the Athenians, and all the Greeks* in general, that they should forbear to give trouble to the Christians, as such, and unless they were guilty of some offense contrarie to the welfare of society, and the peace of the Roman government: by which we must understand at least, that he confirmed the Rescript of *Adrian*, sent to *Minucius Fundanus*, Proconsul of Asia. All this we are fully assured of from the apologie of Melito, presented to *Mark Antonin*. For none can admit the suspicion of an attempt to impose upon so knowing, and so great a man, as that Emperour. By all which we may be assured, that Antonin the Pious was persuaded of the innocence, both of the principles, and of the conduct of the Christians, which are largely insisted upon in the apologie of Justin Martyr.

And as it was the design of all the apologies at that time, to clear the Christians, from the charge of the crimes imputed to them, it is reasonable to believe, that all the other apologies from different persons and several countreys, agreeing in their accounts, they concurred together to give full satisfaction to this good and vigilant Emperour, Antonin the Pious. For that is one part of his character. He was inquisitive about every part of his government. “ He (*b*) knew all the concerns  
of

(*b*) Tanta sane diligentia subjectos sibi sua essent, curavit. *Jul. Capitol. Vit. Tit. Antonin. cap. 7. p. 261.*

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of the Empire, and of all the people subject to him, as distinctly, as he did those of his own familie." Nor were the least things overlooked by him. Which (*i*) is sometimes mentioned to his advantage: and at other times, as a fault, and almost the only fault, that could be charged upon him, that (*k*) he was too inquisitive and prying into little things. That (*l*) temper however must have been of use to divers people, and upon many occasions, this in particular. By most men at that time the Christians and their affairs were despised, as unworthie of regard. And it is one great concern of all the Christian Apologists, to excite the attention of the Roman Emperours, and the Roman Governours of provinces, and of all other people in general, and to induce them to inquire and examine, and take cognizance of the Christian cause, and their affairs. Which, as it seems, this Emperour had done, to his own credit and their benefit.

(*i*) Καὶ τὸ ζητητικὸν ἀκριβῶς ἐν τοῖς συμβεβηκόσι, καὶ ἐπιμονὴν, ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ προαπέσει τῆς ἐρρηυῆς ἀρκέτης ταῖς προχέροις συντασίαις. *Marc Anton. de Reb. suis. lib. i. cap. 16.*

(*k*) Ἰδὼν οὖν αὐτὸν ὁ Σελιπὸς ἔφη βασιλὶ τῆς μικρολογίας· Ἔσι ἐνὰί μοι δοκεῖ τῶν διαπρίοντων τὸ κίμνου, ὁ πρῆσβύτης ἔτος. *Julian Caes. p. 312. A. ed. Spanh.*

Λέγεται δὲ ὁ Ἀντωνίνος ζητητικὸς γινέσθαι, καὶ μηδὲ περὶ τὰ μίμρα καὶ τυχόντα τῆς ἀκρι-

βολογίας ἀφίσταται· ὅθεν αὐτὸν οἱ σκώπτες τες κυμνοπρίσιν ἐκάλεον. *Xiphilin. ap. Dion. l. 70. p. 1173.*

(*l*) Neque vero dubito, Xiphilinum loqui generatim, et intelligere accuratum et diligens studium, in quacumque re, etiam minima et obvia, inquirendi et rimandi id quod verum rectumque esset. *Reimar. ad Xiphilin. loc. modo. citat. not. (k).*

## C H A P. XV.

The Emperour MARK ANTONIN  
the Philosopher.

## The FIRST SECTION.

- I. *His Time, and Character.* II. *The Passage in his Meditations concerning the Christians, with Notes and Observations.*

I. *M*Arcus Aurelius Antoninus Philosophus, or MARK ANTONIN, surnamed *the Philosopher*, was (a) born in the reign of Adrian, the 26. day of April, in the year of Christ 121. He succeeded Antonin the Pious on the second day of March in the year of our Lord 161. and died on the 17. day of March in the year 180.

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The

(a) *Vid. Pagi ann. 180. n. ii. Basnag. M. Aurele. art. i. Fabr. Bib. Gr. l. 4. ann. 121. viii. et 180. i. Tillemont L'Emp. cap. 23. T. 4. p. 20. &c.*

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The virtues of his private and public life have been greatly commended, and highly celebrated. But if a comparison were to be made between Antonin the Pious and Antonin the Philosopher, I should be disposed to give the preference to the former.

Aristides, the Sophist, in his Panegyrick upon this Emperour, says, “ that (*b*) before he came to the empire, he restrained and prevented “ many disorders and mismanagements in the government of public “ affairs: and insinuates, that great injuries were done, and many “ things carried with violence and insult.” But, as (*c*) Tillemont observes, “ Aristides seems to have aimed to decry the government “ of Antonin, in order to extol that of Mark. But, as he adds, the “ Sophist therein shewed greater regard to the laws of oratorie, than “ of truth. For, according to historians, Mark did not at all excell “ Antonin in moderation, and the care of the publick.”

Some other learned men (*d*) have formed a like judgement concerning this Emperour.

Mark, however, deserves great commendation upon many accounts. Tillemont having given a historie of the rude and disagreeable treatment, which he received from Herodes Atticus, and Mark's obliging behaviour to him afterwards, adds. “ There (*e*) are many Christians,

(*b*) . . . ὁρῶν πολλά τῆς βασιλείας ἔκα-  
λῆς ἐδὲ δόσιος διοικέμενα, ἀλλὰ πολλὴν ἀν-  
θάδειαν καὶ ὕβριν καὶ ἀκολασίαν ἐγγινομένην, ἐκ  
ἐκ' ἀύξεσθαι. . . . Τοιοῦτος δὲ πρὸ τῆ βασιλευ-  
σαι ἦν. *Aristid. in Regem Orat. p. 107.*  
*al. 59. Tom. i.*

(*c*) *M. Aurele. art. iv.*

(*d*) Vide vero hic infelicitatem tempo-  
rum Marci, quo nullus Imperatorum ius-  
tior et sapientior putatur? Princeps mi-  
nime malus, philosophicis meditationibus  
animum pascebat, non admodum curio-  
sus eorum, quae in imperio gererentur.

Interea magistratus impune voluntati suae  
obsequabantur, quasque venerari videban-  
tur leges, turpissime violabant. *Moshem:*  
*[de Reb. Christianorum. p. 244.]*

Dubitavi dudum, tantus num fuerit  
Marcus, quantus esse plerisque omnibus  
et olim visus est, et hodie videtur. . . .  
Bonum virum fuisse, valde licet superstiti-  
osum, dubitare nolo: boni vero impera-  
toris et principis nomen mereatur, dubito.  
*Id. ibid.*

(*e*) *L'Emp. M. Aurele. art. xiv.*



Christians, whom this mildness of a Heathen Emperour will condemn in the last day."

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In the year 175. Avidius Cassius rebelled, and set up himself for Emperour, and was soon defeated. Mark's (*f*) clemence toward the familie and the accomplices of Avidius is univerversally allowed (*g*) to have been very extraordinarie, and even above all commendations. Upon that, and many other occasions, he shewed, that he was master of himself, and had a great government of his temper.

But to be a little more particular concerning this renowned Emperour, and much admired (*b*) Heathen Philosopher.

He (*i*) was a youth of great expectations, and was beloved by Adrian from his childhood. That (*k*) Emperour introduced him into the college of the priests, called Salii, at the age of eight years. And Mark made himself compleat master of all the rules of that order, so as to be able to discharge himself all the functions of the priesthood.

He (*l*) was early initiated in the principles of philosophie, and put under the tuition of the most able masters of the several sects. At (*m*)  
the

(*f*) Vid. *Capitolin. Vit. M. Antonin. cap. 24. 25. Vulcatius Gallicanus in Vita Avidii Cassii. cap. 7. &c. Basnag. ann. 175. Tillem. Marc. Aurele. art. 18 . . . 21.*

(*g*) Laudes Marci exuperat omnes, quod scriptas ad Cassium epistolas cunctas prius conscidit, quam legerit, ne cogere-tur quempiam invitus odisse. *Basnag. ann. 175. num. iv.*

(*b*) Propterea vir ille divinus, neque factis unquam cognitus, vel laudatus. *If. Casaub. ad Capitol. de Vita M. Aurel. cap. 2. p. 293.*

(*i*) Fuit a prima infantia gravis. *Capitolin. cap. 2. in. . . tantae admirationis adhuc juvenis. &c. Eutrop. l. 8. cap. xii.*

(*k*) Educatus est in Adriani gremio, qui illum (ut supra diximus) Verissimum nominavit: et qui ei honorem equi publici sexenni detulit, octavo aetatis anno in Salliorum collegium retulit. Fuit in eo sacerdotio et praeses et vates et magister, et multos inauguravit atque exauguravit, nemine praeunte, quod ipse carmina cuncta didicisset. *Capit. ib. cap. 4.*

(*l*) At ubi egressus est annos, qui nutricum foventur auxilio, magnis praeceptoribus traditus ad philosophiae scita pervenit. *Id. ib. cap. 2. in.*

(*m*) Philosophiae operam vehementer didicit, et quidem adhuc puer. Nam duodecimum annum ingressus, habitum philosophi.

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the age of twelve years he put on the habit of a Philosopher, and wore their cloak. He also practised austerities, so far as to lye upon the bare ground: and was difficultly persuaded by his mother to make use of a matrass, with a slight coverlid. When Emperour (*n*) he sometimes went on foot to the schools of Apollonius and (*o*) Sextus, stoic Philosophers. I do not know, whether it be worth mentioning, that (*p*) he placed in his private chapel golden statues of his deceased masters, and honoured them by visiting their sepulchral monuments, offering there sacrifices, and strowing upon them flowers.

Zonaras, entring upon the historie of a war in Germanie, to be taken notice of by us hereafter, says that (*q*) Mark was weak in body, and so intent upon his studies, that he went to school after he was Emperour, to hear several Philosophers, and others, whom he there names. Dion Cassius (*r*) speaks to the like purpose, and Zonaras seems to have copied him. But by the place where it is brought in, it seems to have been the intention of Zonaras to insinuate, that the great difficulty, into which Mark was brought in the war with the Quadi, was owing to his want of militarie skill, he having been so much taken up with philosophicall studies.

Before (*s*) he entred into the war with the Marcomans, and other people

sophi assumfit, et deinceps tolerantiam, quum studeret in pallio, et humi cubaret, vix autem matre agente instrato pellibus lectulo cubaret. *Id. cap. 2.*

. . . κ; τὸ σκίμπος κ; δὲ δὲ ἐπιθυμῆσαι, κ; ἴσα ταῦτα τῆς ἑλληνικῆς ἀγωγῆς ἐχόμενα. *De Reb. suis. l. i. §. 6.*

(*n*) Ufus est et Apollonio Chalcedonio Stoico philosopho. Tantum autem studium in eo philosophiae fuit, ut adscitus jam in imperatoriam dignitatem tamen ad domum Apollonii discendi causa veniret. *Capit. cap. 3.*

(*o*) *Philosfr. Vit. Sophist. l. 2. c. ix. Dion. Cass. l. 71. sub in. Suid. V. Μαρκος.*

(*p*) Tantum autem honoris magistris suis detulit, ut imagines eorum aureas in larario haberet, ac sepulchra eorum aditus hostiis, floribus, semper honoraret. *Capit. cap. 3.*

(*q*) *Zon. Tom. 2. p. 207.*

(*r*) *Dio. l. 71. sub in.*

(*s*) Tantus autem terror belli Marcomannici fuit, ut undique sacerdotēs Antoninus acciverit, peregrinos ritus impleverit, Romam omni genere lustraverit,

people in Germanie, he performed lustrations for the city of Rome, and called together priests from all quarters to offer sacrifices, and adopted even foreign rites. For the doing of all which things, his departure from Rome was delayed. He (*t*) seems to have been sometimes ridiculed for the great number of his sacrifices.

Mark had faith also in dreams. And says himself, that (*u*) he had thereby learned remedies for staying his spitting of blood, and for curing a dizzineffe in his head.

Of Antonin, his predeceffor, and father by adoption, he says: he (*x*) was religious without superstition: and in another place, that (*y*) he was not a superstitious worshiper of the gods. Mark therefore knew, that religion and superstition were different, and that there might be one without the other. Whether he was so wise, as to separate them, may be partly discerned from what we have now seen.

II. There is still remaining a work of this Emperour in twelve books, which we generally (*z*) call *his Meditations*. They must have been put together at several times, as he had leisure. However, some have computed, that (*a*) they were composed before the year 175.

In the eleventh book of that work there is an observation, which I shall now transcribe, and place here.

“ What (*b*) a soul is that, which is prepared, even now presently,  
“ if

retardatusque a bellica profectioe fit &c.  
*Capitol. ib. cap. 13.*

(*t*) Marci illius similis Caesaris, in quem id accepimus dictum. Ὅτι λευκοὶ εἶσι Μάρκῳ τῷ Καίσαρι: Ἄν σὺ νικήσης, ἡμεῖς ἀπολώμεθα. *Amm. Marell. l. 25. cap. 4.*

(*u*) Τὸ δὲ ἐνεργάτον βοηθήματα δοθῆναι, ἄλλα τε, καὶ ὡς μὴ πτίεν αἷμα, καὶ μὴ ἰλιγγίαν. *De Reb. suis. l. i. cap. ult.*

(*x*) Καὶ ὡς θεοσεβῆς χερὶς δεισιδαιμονίας.  
*ib. l. 6. c. 30.*

(*y*) Καὶ τὸ μήτε περὶ θεῶν δεισιδαιμονεῖν.  
*Ib. l. i. cap. 16.*

(*z*) Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτόν. *De Rebus suis.*

(*a*) See *Tillemont. Marc. Aurele. art. 28.*

(*b*) Ὅτι ἐστὶν ἡ ψυχὴ, ἡ ἔτοιμος, εἰάν ἤδη ἀπελυθῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος, καὶ ἦτοι σβενθῆναι, ἢ σκεδασθῆναι, ἢ συμμεῖναι: Τὸ δὲ ἔτοιμος  
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concerning  
the Chri-  
stians.*

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“ if needful, to be separated from the body, whether it be to be  
 “ extinguished, or to be dispersed, or to subsist still. But this rea-  
 “ diness must proceed from a well-weighed judgement, not from  
 “ meer obstinacie, like the Christians. And it should be done con-  
 “ siderately, and with gravity, without tragical exclamations, and so  
 “ as to persuade another.”

In the English translation, published at Glasgow, in 1742. the  
 same passage stands thus : “ How happy is that soul, which is pre-  
 “ pared, either to depart presently, or to be extinguished, or disper-  
 “ sed, or to remain along with it ! But let this preparation arise from  
 “ it’s own judgement, and not from mere obstinacie, like that of  
 “ the Christians : that you may die considerately, with a venerable  
 “ composure, so as even to persuade others into a like disposition,  
 “ and without noise and ostentation.” p. 259. 260.

Upon this passage Dr. Jortin has a remark, which is to this pur-  
 pose. “ The (c) Emperor Marcus was prejudiced against the Chri-  
 “ stians, and in his own book xi. 3. censures very unreasonably,  
 “ what he ought to have approved, this readiness and resolution to  
 “ die for their religion.”

Certainly, that remark is very just, and I think very mild. For,  
 if I were to allow myself to speak freely, I should say, that this is  
 the basest reflexion upon the Christians, that I remember to have  
 met with among all their old enemies. To say, it is unbecoming  
 a Gentleman, and an Emperour, is to say nothing. It is insensibi-  
 lity, and inhumanity, in a word, Stoicism. It is the worse, as it  
 comes from a magistrate, who, if he had been pleased to send pro-  
 per orders to the officers under him, and particularly to the Gover-  
 nours of provinces, he might have delivered the Christians from that  
 trial, which is here supposed.

It

μόν τῆτο, ἵνα ἀπὸ ἰδίας κρίσεως ἔρχηται, μὴ  
 κατὰ ψιλὴν παράταξιν, ὡς οἱ χριστιανοὶ ἀλλὰ  
 λογιζομένως, καὶ σεμνῶς, καὶ ὡσεὶ καὶ ἄλλου πεί-  
 σαι, ἀτραγώδως. L. xi. cap. 3.

(c) Discourses concerning the Truth of the  
 Christian Religion. p. 57.

It may seem strange to some, that (*d*) such a man as Mark Antonin should pass any censure upon the Christians fortitude. One would rather think, that as a Stoic, he should have admired, and commended their resolution. But it may be accounted for.

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1. The Christians refused to joyn in the common worship of the Heathen Deities. And they were likewise very free in their reflections (*e*) upon the Philosophers.

2. They (*f*) out-did the Stoics themselves in patience under all kinds of sufferings. The women and children and common people among the Christians had in a short time shewn more examples of true fortitude, than the Stoics had done, since the origin of their sect.

3. Once more. This Emperour was a bigot in religion and in philosophie: whereas bigotry in any one thing will have bad effects, and make the best tempers act contrarie to the laws of equity upon some occasions.

It will not be thought, that I speak with too great severity, if we examine the several particulars of this passage. Which I now intend to do. And afterwards I shall mention some corollaries.

1.) Mark's

(*d*) Nisi constaret, Stoicorum doctrinam, cui M. Aurelius addictus erat, plenam fuisse repugnantiam, quod singulari opere ostendit Plutarchus, mirum esset mortis contemptorem iis detrahere, qui eam despiciebant. Atqui non licuit Philosopho praesertim, in aliis damnare quae in se et suis probaret. *Cleric. H. E. ann. 165. n. iv.*

(*e*) *Vid. Justin. M. Ap. 2. p. 46. B. E. et 47. Paris. num. 3. p. 90. Bened. et Tatian centr. Gentes. p. 157. 162. al. num. 19. p. 260. et num. 25. p. 264.*

(*f*) Nostri autem, (ut de viris taceam,) pueri et mulierculae, tortores suos taciti

vincunt, et exprimere illis gemitus nec ignis potest. Eant Romani, et Mutio gloriantur aut Regulo. . . . Ecce sexus infirmus, et fragilis aetas dilacerari se toto corpore, urique perpetitur, non necessitate, quia licet vitare, si vellent: sed voluntate, quia confidunt Deo. Haec est vera virtus, quam philosophi quoque gloriabundi, non re, sed verbis inanibus jactant: differentes, nihil esse tam congruens viri sapientis gravitati, atque constantiae, quam nullis terroribus de sententiae proposito posse depelli. &c. *Lactant. Instit. l. 5. cap. 13.*

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1.) Mark's (*g*) expressions denote great uncertainty concerning a future state of existence: being doubtfull, whether the Soul, when separated from the body should be *extinguished, or be dispersed, or still subsist*. He speaks again to the like purpose elsewhere. "To (*b*) what purpose all this? . . . You have made your voyage, and arrived at your port. Go ashore: if into another life, the Gods are there: if into a state of insensibility, you will be no longer distracted by pains and pleasures, nor be in subjection to this mean vessel."

2.) The Christians had a strong persuasion, and good hopes of another life, a life of happiness without end, for all good and virtuous men. No men therefore could be ready to leave this world upon better grounds than they, when they could no longer live here with innocence.

3.) Mark ascribes the Christians willingness to die to *obstinacie*, and says, that men ought to resign life only *upon a well formed judgement, and consideratly*.

Did (*i*) not the Christians die in that manner? Should they have denied

(*g*) Nesciebant enim, [Stoici] an *qui corpore migrassent animi exstinguerentur, vel dispergeretur, vel permanerent*. Quod cum ita haberet, nemini poterant probare virtutem Numini gratam, vitium contra invisum esse: cum bonos et malos nullo discrimine negligeret.

. . . Quod si numen talia non curaret, quid opus erat homines, vel ipsius vitae jacturâ virtutem colere, et vitio adversari. . . Exclamationi ergo, aut interrogationi M. Aurelii, *qualis est anima, quae parata est, si jam e corpore migrare, aut exstingui, aut dispergi, aut permanere oporteat?* respondimus: Misera et infelix, quae nescit,

quid a summo Numine expectare virtus possit, aut vitium timere. Quod ferme perinde est, ac ignorare, an sit Deus, &c. Cleric. ubi *supr. num. v.*

(*b*) *De Rebus suis, l. 3. cap. 3.*

(*i*) Verum inquiet, Philosophus mortem spernit *proprio judicio, considerate*. . . Audio. Sed annon Christianus quivis mortem ferebat *ex proprio judicio*, qui cinctus Ethnicis furentibus, aut ridentibus, et a morte revocantibus, si modo Diis sacra faceret, moriebatur tamen, quod mentiri nollet, nec ore, nec factis: quia nefas putabat, veritatem ejurare. Annon *considerate fatis, qui deprehensâ Ethnicae religionis*

denied themselves to be Christians, when they were brought before Plinie, or other Governours, and were examined by them? Should they then have told a lye, and so redeem their lives by falshood, or by worshiping images contrarie to their judgement, and the principles which they had embraced after serious inquirie and consideration? Were not all wise and honest men persuaded, that a man ought to die, rather than do what he thought evil and dishonorable. Celsus, (*k*) who wrote against the Christians, says as much. Was there any way for a Christian's escaping, but by criminal hypocrisie and dissimulation, when statues of Heathen Deities were set before him, to be worshiped by him. Or, when he was required to revile Jesus Christ? They had taken up their principles upon consideration. And it was reasonable to adhere to them at all times.

4.) Mark says, it must be done *consideratly*.

The Christians took up their principles upon *consideration*. When they first embraced them, they could not but see, that as the world

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then

gionis falsitate, et veritate ejus, quam Christus et Apostoli docuerant, sese dudum pararat ad mortem, si quando vitari non posset, sine abnegatione veritatis? . . . Fac Epicureos fuisse rerum potitos, et furore quodam actos ad tribunalia sua traxisse Stoicos, omnibus suppliciis propositis et morte ipsâ intentatâ, nisi Zenoni, Cleanthi, Chryssippo, ceterisque sectae conditoribus maledixissent, negassentque se iis adfertiri, et facerent quaecunque principes sectae vetuerant, cum scirent se mentiri, et improbe facere; an se Stoicae familiae defensoribus, et mortem fortiter obeuntibus, exprobrasset M. Aurelius παράταξι. Immo vero summopere eos laudasset, ut laudati sunt apud Ethnicos omnes, qui maluerunt mori, quam quidquam

facere, quod inhonestum et impium judicabant. Si voluisset Socrates, contra animi sententiam loqui, et mentiri, ac sese ad pedes judicum abjicere, vitae suae sine dubio consulisset: sed ejus absolutionem aeterna infamia esset consequuta. Quod de ceteris omnibus, qui virtutis causâ mortui sunt, dictum puta. *Cleric. ib. num. iv.*

(*k*) . . . τοιαῦτά τινα λέγει· Ἐὰν μέντοι γε κέλονται τις, εἰ τύχοι, θρησκέοντα Θεῶν ἢ ἀσεβῆν, ἢ ἄλλό τι ἀίχρῶν εἰπεῖν, ἔδαμῃ ἔδοξας πισυτεῖον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τέτων πρόσαι βυσάνοισ ἐγκαρτερεῖται, καὶ πάντας θανάτους ὑπομενυτεῖον, πρὶν τι ἀνύσαιον περὶ Θεῶ, μὴ ὅτι γε εἰπεῖν, ἀλλὰ μελετήσαι. *Celsus ap. Orig. Contra Cels. l. 8. p. 421. al. num. 66.*

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then stood, the making a profession of them was very likely to expose them to many sufferings. And therefore, when (l) they first resolved upon Christianity, they must have resolved to adhere to it, whatever it should cost them. By this means they were always ready to die upon mature *consideration*, whenever the spite of their ignorant and prejudiced neighbours worked so far against them. And a constant readinesse for a violent death, in a good cause, is the most glorious fortitude, that can be imagined in a human creature.

5.) He says, it should be done *gravely, without tragical exclamations.*

Upon this Le Clerc well observes, “that (m) it is not a little strange, that a Stoic, whose writings are full of affectation, and are all over tragical, should blame the Christians for not dying without tragical noise and exclamation.” If they then called upon God, and Christ: if they then exhorted their brethren to constance and perseverance: if they expressed a contempt of this world, and it's fading enjoyments: if they spake in sublime strains of the felicities of the world to come: in a word, if they triumphed in death, as some of them did: there is nothing in it absurd, or unreasonable: nothing  
but

(l) Nos quidem neque expavescimus, neque pertimescimus ea quae ab ignorantibus patimur: cum ad hanc sectam utique suscepta conditione ejus pacti venerimus, ut etiam animas nostras auctorati in has pugnas accedamus, ea quae Deus repro-mittit, consequi optantes, et ea quae diversae vitae comminatur pati timentes. *Tertull. ad Scap. cap. i.*

(m) Verum et hoc mirum est, hominem Stoicum, et cujus liber plenus est exaggerationibus, vere *tragicis*, hoc est, tumidis et fideis, exprobrare Christianis, quod ἀπαργάδας non morerentur. Atqui nihil illi exaggerabant, cum vitam Deo repententi,

potius quam ab eo deficerent, libenter reddendum profitebantur. . . . Si qui, quod interdum factum negare nolim, crudelitate suppliciorum, propinquitate mortis, speque proximae beatitatis, extra se rapti, quaedam proferrebant, quae supra vulgi Ethnici captum erant, an tribuenda haec sunt ἀπαργάδες, obstinationi, vel perturbationi? Imo eo aut vitio, aut adfectu, vel maxime laborabant, qui innocentes excarnificatos occidebant, quod facere nolent, quae illicita, et a Deo improbari, pro certe statuebant. *Cleric. ib. ann. 165, n. iv.*



but what is truly admirable. The Heathen people around them wanted nothing to make them sensible of it, but a better knowledge of the Christian principles, such as a persuasion of the boundless power and goodnesse of the one God, Creator of all, and a well-grounded expectation of eternal life.

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6.) And lastly, Mark says, *it should be done so as to persuade another.*

This alone, if there were nothing else, would be sufficient to satisfy us, that Mark was influenced by prejudice in his judgement concerning the Christians. It has been often said, and very truly, that (*n*) the blood of the Martyrs was the seed of the Church. And some early believers have themselves assured us, that (*o*) they were led to inquire into the principles of the Christians, when they observed their manner of dying, and that this was the first means of their own conversion. The like is often testified by (*p*) Christian writers, who lived, when the followers of Jesus were in suffering circumstances, and martyrdoms were frequent. But if there were nothing of this kind in the remains of ancient Christian authors, since

(*n*) Nec quicquam tamen proficit exquisitior quaeque crudelitas vestra Illecebra magis est sectae. Plures effimur, quoties metimur a vobis. Semen est sanguis Christianorum. *Tertull. Ap. cap. 50.*

(*o*) Καὶ γὰρ οὗτος ἐγὼ τοῖς Πλάτωνος χαίρων διδάγμασι, διαβαλλομένοις ἀκίαν χριστιανῶν, ὄρων δὲ ἀφίβας πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἄλλα νομιζόμενα φεβερῶ, ἐνεύον ἀδύνατον ἔσθαι ἐν κακίᾳ καὶ φιληδονίᾳ ὑπάρχειν οὗτος. *Iustin. M. ap. 2. p. 50. a. al. p. 96. num. 12.*

(*p*) Multi apud nos ad tolerantiam doloris et mortis hortantur, ut Cicero in Tullianis, ut Seneca in Fortuitis, . . . Nec

tamen tantos inveniunt verba discipulos, quantos Christiani factis docendo. Illa ipsa obstinatio, quam exprobratis, magistra est. Quis enim non contemplatione ejus concutitur ad requirendum, quid intus in re sit? Quis non, ubi requisivit, accedit? Ubi accessit, pati exoptat? *Tertull. ap. cap. 50.*

Nec tamen deficient haec secta, quam tunc magis aedificari scias, cum coedi videtur. Quisquis enim tantam tolerantiam spectans, ut aliquo scrupulo percussus, et inquirere accenditur, quid sit in causâ: et ubi cognoverit veritatem, et ipse statim sequitur. *Ad Scap. cap. ult. Vid. et Lact. l. 5. c. 13. et alibi.*

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since there continued to be Christians in the world, and they suffered in every age, and were not extinguished, but remained and increased, as Heathen writers themselves acknowledge; we may depend upon it, that many did dye so as to persuade others: their brethren were animated to patience and courage by their example: and unbelievers were awakened, and excited to serious examination, till they were convinced, and converted.

As I have gone along, I have transcribed in the margin several remarks upon this passage of Mark Antonin from Le Clerc's Ecclesiastical Historie. I would also refer to (q) Mr. Mosheim, in whom likewise divers just observations may be seen upon the same.

But, perhaps, it will be said, that the Christians gave cause for these censures by their too great forwardness, and by offering themselves to death.

To which I would answer. *First*. Instances of this kind were not very common, and they were disliked, and condemned by the wiser sort. Some such instances there were, during the persecution in Asia, when Polycarp suffered. They (r) are particularly mentioned, and censured in the epistle of the church of Smyrna, which gives an account of the Martyrs in that city. And (s) St. Cyprian, in his last letter to his people at Carthage, in the persecution of Valerian, in the year 258. exhorts them to a quiet and peaceable behaviour, but not to offer themselves to the magistrates: forasmuch as the Lord had not required it of us, but to confess his name, when called

(q) *De Reb. Christianorum, sec. ii. p. 245. 246.*

(r) *Vid. Euseb. H. E. l. 4. cap. 15. p. 129. 130.*

(s) Vos autem, fratres carissimi, pro disciplina, quam de mandatis dominicis a me semper accepistis, . . . quietem et tranquillitatem tenere: ne quisquam ves-

trum aliquem tumultum de fratribus moveat, aut ultro se Gentilibus offerat. Apprehensus enim et traditus loqui debet: siquidem in nobis Dominus positus illa hora loquatur, qui nos confiteri magis voluit quam profiteri. *Ep. 81. al. 83. p. 239. Oxon.*

called upon so to do. And he reminds them, that this had always been his doctrine. *Secondly*, There could be no instances of this kind, but in times of persecution, and when there were magistrates, who were disposed to inflict death upon men, as Christians. *Thirdly*, The most remarkable instances of this kind happened, when the persecution was violent. So it was in the case (*t*) before taken notice of by us. When Arrius Antoninus, Proconsul of Asia, furiously persecuted the Christians in that countrey, a great number of them, in some city, where he was, came before his tribunal, telling him, he might do with them as he pleased, for they were not afraid to die. In like manner Scapula, Proconsul of Africa, persecuted the Christians with great severity. Some (*u*) he ordered to be burnt alive, though that was a punishment seldom inflicted even upon traitors, or the worst of criminals. Upon that occasion Tertullian (*x*) puts him in mind of the forementioned conduct of the Christians in Asia. And the more to alarm him, tells him the like might happen again, and at Carthage itself. And what would you do, says he, if you should see the Christians of that place present themselves in a body before your tribunal? What would you do, with so many thousands  
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(*t*) See p. 59.

(*u*) Pro tanta innocentia, pro tanta probitate, pro justitia, pro pudicitia, pro fide, pro veritate, pro Deo vivo cremamur. Quod nec sacrilegi, nec hostes publici, verum nec tot majestatis rei pati solent. *Ad Scap. cap. 4. p. 88. A.*

(*x*) Vide tantum, ne pro hoc ipso, quod talia sustinemus, ad hoc solum videamur erumpere, ut hoc ipsum probemus, nos haec non timere, sed ultro vocare. Arrius Antoninus in Asia cum persequeretur instanter, omnes illius civitatis Christiani ante tribunalia ejus se manu facta obtule-

runt . . . Hoc si placuerit et hic fieri, quid facies de tantis millibus hominum, tot viris ac feminis, omnis sexus, omnis aetatis, omnis dignitatis, offerentibus se tibi? Quantis ignibus, quantis gladiis opus erit? Quid ipsa Carthago passura est decimanda a te, cum propinquos, cum contubernales suos illic unusquisque cognoverit, cum viderit illic fortasse et tui ordinis viros et matronas, et principales quasque personas, et amicorum tuorum vel propinquos vel amicos. Parce ergo tibi, si non nobis: parce Carthagini, si non tibi. *Ad Scap. cap. 4.*

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of each sex, of every age, of every condition, and some of the most honorable persons of the city, some of them your friends, or friends and relations of your friends and counsellors!

After all, it must be acknowledged, that (y) the Christians readinesse to die, and their intrepidity in death, were sometimes perverted to their disadvantage. Nor do I think, that the primitive Christians were exempt from human frailty. Nevertheless I apprehend, that the exceptions and reflections of this kind were chiefly owing to the prejudices and ignorance of misguided and sensual men, who minded little or nothing but the affairs of this present life: who did not consider the importance of religious truth, nor the great virtue, and value of integrity, and a steady regard to the convictions of our own minds. So (z) says Lactantius. And Tertullian has spoken to this point excellently at the conclusion of his Apologie. “He (a) mentions  
“ *Mutius, Regulus*, and others, whose resolution had been admired  
“ and applauded by the Greeks and Romans. And indeed, says he,  
“ with you it is reputable to die for our country, for the common-  
“ wealth, for a friend: but to die for God and truth is reckoned re-  
“ proachfull and dishonorable.”

Certainly, the first Christians, who were men as we are, and had  
the

(y) Licet nunc sarmentitios ac semaxios appelletis, quia ad stipitem dimidii axis revincti sarmentorum ambitu exurimur. . . . Propterea enim Desperati, et perditii existimamur. *Tertull. Ap. cap. 50. Vid. et Minuc. Fel. cap. 8. Lactant. l. 5. cap. 9. et Epit. cap. 54.*

(z) Sed illi malitia et furore caecantur, ne videant: stultosque arbitrantur esse, qui cum habeant in sua potestate supplicia vitare, cruciari tamen, et emori malunt. *Lact. l. 5. cap. 13.*

(a) O gloriam licitam, quia humanam,

cui nec praesumptio perdita, nec persuasio desperata reputatur, in contemptu mortis et atrocitatis omnimodae: cui tantum pro patria, pro imperio, pro amicitia pati permissum est, quantum pro Deo non licet. Et tamen illis omnibus et statuas defunditis, et imagines inscribitis. . . quantum de monumentis potestis scilicet, praestatis et ipsi quodammodo mortuis resurrectionem: hanc qui veram a Deo sperat, si pro Deo patiat, insanus est. *Ap. cap. 50. p. 45.*

the same situations with us, were not wearie of life. Nor did they desire death. But (\*) as men engaged in a warfare, hazard their lives for the sake of victorie, and the advantages of it; so the Christians of those times, desirous to approve themselves to God, and hoping for the reward of eternal life, were ready, if required, to lay down their lives, rather than deny Christ, and the truths, which they had received from him.

The corollaries to be drawn from this passage are several. But they will be all easily admitted after what has been already said.

1. At that time the Christians were well known in the world.
2. The Emperour Mark was well acquainted with them, and had often heard of their sufferings. He knew, that many Christians had died in testimonie to their principles, and as Christians: and that the sufferings, which they had undergone, were in common estimation very grievous.
3. He knew, and here acknowledgeth, their resolution and steadinesse in the profession of their principles, for which they suffered death. This he calls *obstinacie*.
4. He had heard of their chearfulnesse in death, and in all the sufferings, which they had met with. This he endeavors to disparage by comparing it to the declamations of tragedies.
5. He was also persuaded of their innocence, or freedom from promiscuous lewdnesse, and other gross crimes in their assemblies, with which they were charged by some. If he had

(\*) Ergo, inquit, cur querimini, quod vos insequamur, si pati vultis: cum diligere debeatis, per quos patimini quod vultis? Plane volumus pati, verum eo more, quo et bellum nemo libens patitur, cum et trepidare, et periclitari sit necesse, tamen et proelietur omnibus viribus, et vincens in proelio gaudet, qui de proelio querebatur, quia et gloriam consequitur et

praedam. Proelium est nobis, quod provocemur ad tribunalia, ut illis sub discrimine capitis pro veritate certemus. Victoria est autem, pro quo certaveris, obtinere. Ea victoria habet et gloriam placendi Deo, et praedam vivendi in aeternum. *Tertullian. Apol. cap. 50. p. 44. B. C.*

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had known and believed, that they practised such things, he would have expressed himself very differently. 6. He despised, and scorned the Christians as a mean, illiterate, and unphilosophical set of men. 7. He was not at all inclined to interpose in their behalf, either for preventing, or for mitigating their sufferings. And hereafter we shall see, that when application was made to him by a Governour, for direction how to treat some men, who had been accused before him as Christians, and were in his custodie; this Emperour sent orders, that *they should be put to death*, unless they renounced the Christian doctrine. Once more, 8. I must beg leave to observe. That we can hence infer, that the Christian Scriptures were as yet held in contempt by the wise and great men of this world. The books of the New Testament were all published, and joined together in two codes or volumes, one called *Gospels*, the other *Epistles*, before Mark Antonin was born: And they were in the hands of great numbers of his subjects, and were highly prized, and diligently read and studied by them. But he had never read them, nor perhaps ever seen them. They might, possibly, be well known to some of the Philosophers his masters. But they knew how to be silent, and to keep their disciple in ignorance about what they did not desire he should know. Hence this great man, in the midst of light, was in darknesse. He had no just apprehensions concerning a life to come.

The Christian religion, considering the difficulties it had met with, and that it contained no worldly allurements, had made great progresse. But it was not yet the prevailing religion. The state of things in the world had still a resemblance with what it was in the time of St. Paul. *The Jews, says he, require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. And, Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. And Jesus himself, reflecting upon the successe of his ministration, after having preached the heavenly doctrine with unparalleled faithfulnesse and zeal, and observing, that they were chiefly of the meaner rank with whom it had met with a ready acceptance, expressed*

1 Cor. i.  
22. and  
26.

pressed his acquiescence in the event, and said. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. "I give glorie to thee, chearfully acquiescing in this dispensation of thy providence," that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

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*Mat. xi.*  
25.  
*Luke x.*  
21.

THE SECOND SECTION.

Of the Persecutions in his Time.

- I. *A general Account of the Persecutions in the Reign of this Emperour.* II. *Large Extracts out of the Martyrdom of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who with twelve others suffered in that City in the year 167. or 168.* III. *The Historie of the Martyrs at Lyons, who suffered in the Year 177.* IV. *Remarks and Observations upon the foregoing Historie.*

I. **I** Think it must be fit for me, to take some particular notice of the treatment, which the Christians met with in the reign of this Emperour, who by the ancients is always reckoned among the persecuting Emperours. Eusebius (a) placeth the fourth persecution under him: as does also (b) Orosius, who follows him.

*A general Account of the Persecutions in his Reign.*

A a 2

picius

(a) *Euseb. Chr. p. 169.*

(b) *Sed in diebus Parthici belli persecuciones Christianorum, quarta jam post Neronem vice, in Asia et Gallia graves*

*praecepto ejus exstiterunt, multique sanctorum martyrio coronati sunt. Oros. l. 7. cap. xv.*

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picius (*c*) thinking, that the Christians were persecuted by Adrian, reckons Mark's the fifth persecution.

And learned moderns seem now to be fully convinced, that Mark was unfriendly to the Christians. Says Dr. Jortin: "As (*d*) to the Emperour Marcus, with all his amiable and princely qualities, he did not love the Christians, as appears from unquestionable authority, even his own book. The Philosophers had probably contri- buted to set him against them. And his love of philosophy, and the respect, which he paid to the professors of it, was excessive, and indeed sometimes ridiculous."

Tillemont says, "There (*e*) were many instances of mildness in the reign of this Emperour, and very few of severity, excepting against the Christians, who the least deserved it." And in another place, the same diligent writer having put down some instances of this Emperour's exactness in the rites of the established worship, adds. "We (*f*) have taken notice of these things, to shew, that we ought not to be surpris'd, that a Prince, reckoned so mild and equitable, should persecute the true religion, as we know he did."

Pagi acknowledgeth the same. He says, that (*g*) this Emperour was not only averse to the Christians, but persecuted them in the former part of his reign, as well as afterwards: And elsewhere (*b*) he

(*c*) Quarta sub Adriano persecutio numeratur, quam tamen post exerceri prohibuit, *injustum esse* pronuncians, *ut quisquam sine crimine reus constitueretur*. Post Adrianum, Antonino Pio imperante, pax ecclesiis fuit. Sub Aurelio deinde, Antonini filio, persecutio quinta agitata. Ac tum primum intra Gallias martyria visa, serius trans Alpes Dei religione suscepta. *Sul. Sev. Sacr. Hist. l. 2. cap. 46.*

(*d*) Remarks upon Ecclesiastical Historie.

Vol. 2. p. 169. See also his Discourses. p. 57.

(*e*) L'Emp. Max. Aurele. art. vii.

(*f*) Ibid. art. ii.

(*g*) Ad haec Marcus non solum a Christianis alienus fuit, sed etiam saepe in eos saeviit, et quidem prioribus imperii annis, quibus Lucilla Lucio Vero uxor. data est. *Ann. 161. n. xi.*

(*b*) Vid. ann. 162. num. vi. et 163. num. ii. 177. n. iii. &c.



he observes, how grievous the persecutions were in this reign, and the reasons of it.

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Mosheim says, that (*i*) in the time of no Emperour after Nero the Christians suffered more or greater calamities, than under Mark. And he ascribes (*k*) this Emperour's ill will toward the Christians more to the instructions of the Philosophers, and the hard-hearted philosophic which he had embraced, than to his superstition.

The Benedictin editors (*l*) of Justin Martyr, and other ancient Greek Apologists, are likewise very sensible of this temper of Mark. And I transcribe in the margin some of their observations, to be perused by such of my readers, as are willing to cast their eyes downward.

This

(*i*) Itaque nullo sub Imperatore post Neronem plures et graviore calamitates perpeffi sunt Christiani, quam sub Marco, quem ceteris omnibus meliorem et sapientiore fuisse censent. *De Reb. Christi-an.* p. 246. *Confer. ejusdem. Institutiones H. E. Sec. 2. P. i. cap. 2. num. v. p. 74.*

(*k*) Mala haec Imperatoris in Christianos voluntas unde prodierit, nusquam memoriae proditum est. Proclive vero conjectu est, a Philosophis, quibus omnia dare solebat, inductum fuisse eum, ut Christianos absurdos, rationis itropes, obstinatos, et vanos esse duceret: ideoque quum ex lege philosophiae, quam profitebatur, justo durior esset, judicasse, fatius esse vecordes ejusmodi homines delere, quam tolerare. *Moshem. Ibid. p. 242. Vid. et p. 244. 245.*

(*l*) Quo anno Romam reversus sit Justinus, statuere non possumus: minime dubium, quin in hac urbe commoratus sit, cum gravissima persecutio sub Marco Aurelio grassaretur. Non jusserat praestantissimus princeps vexari Christianos. Sed,

ut observat Athenagoras [ap. num. 1.] dum injuriam ab eis non propulsat, dum nullam partem in eos derivat paternae illius sollicitudinis, quâ universos Imperii Romani cives tuebatur, omnibus inimicorum injuriis expositi fuere. Haec agendi ratio in optimo Imperatore summum odium declarat Christianae Religionis. Nunquam enim suum de illis patrocini-um clausisset, si quid de illis aequi sensisset. Sed plus apud eum et nefaria philosophorum consilia, et Romanorum ceremoniarum amor, quam avi et patris exempla, et insita omnibus justitiae et aequitatis elementa, valuerunt. Cum ergo omni ope destituti essent Christiani, gravissimae in eos undique exortae tempestates. *Praef. P. 3. cap. viii. n. i. p. 92.*

. . . tam inimica tempora non Antonini, qui illis favit, sed M. Aurelii imperium redolent, qui ne maximo quidem beneficio provocatus aequum se illis praebu-  
-it. *Ib. n. iv. p. 94. m.*

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This temper of Mark, which, as before hinted, prevailed in every part of his reign, has appeared to me the more strange, considering how favourable to the Christians Adrian was, and also his predecessor Antoninus. Nor can we forbear to observe, that Mark must have been well acquainted with the conduct of his predecessor, and the reasons of it. For it was the custom of that good Emperour *Titus Antoninus*, to determine nothing concerning the provinces, or any other affairs of the publick, without first (*m*) consulting his friends, of (*n*) whom Mark was one. Moreover during the whole time of his reign Mark lived in the same palace, and was almost constantly with him. As those two Emperours were so intimate, and Mark had so long experienced the favour of his predecessor and father Antonin, it is truly somewhat strange, that their temper and conduct toward the Christians should have been so different.

One thing we plainly hence discern, that Mark was not unacquainted with the Christians. He must have often heard of them, and of their sufferings, and of the apologies made by them. The Christians were well known to Adrian, and to Antonin the Pious, his grandfather, and father, and they had been favoured by them. Mark therefore must have had good knowledge of them, and have been acquainted with their circumstances, many years before he came to the empire himself.

We have seen, how learned men ascribe Mark's aversion to the Christians to his attachment to philosophie and the rites of the established deities. Nor is that judgement formed without probability. Nevertheless I have observed a passage at the beginning of this Emperour's Meditations, which may perhaps deserve to be taken notice of here.

(*m*) Neque de provinciis, neque de ullis actibus quicquam constituit, nisi quod prius ad amicos retulit. Atque ex eorum sententia formas constituit. *Capitol. in Vit. Ant. Pii. cap. 6.*

(*n*) . . . tantumque apud eum valuit, ut numquam quemquam sine eo facile promoverit. *Capit. in Vita M. Aurel. cap. 6.*

here. “ From (o) Diognetus, says he, I learned not to busy myself  
“ about vain things, nor to give credit to wonder-workers, and  
“ stories of incantations, and expelling demons, and such like  
“ things.”

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Possibly, Mark applied the instructions of Diognetus to the history of our Saviour's miracles, and to the relations of some extraordinary works, said to have been done by Christians: and he concluded the whole to be nothing, but imposture. If so, he might admit of an aversion to the Christians in general, who often spoke of these things, and relied much upon them.

I am indeed well satisfied, that Mark had never read, or looked into the books of the New Testament. But, if he could have been persuaded to read them, I think, (provided he had in him any real goodnesse, and could have detached himself for a few moments from subjection to the Philosophers,) he would have admired the sublime morality of the Gospels, and the Epistles: and then the miracles would have been distinguished from the pretensions of imposture, and would have been received by him as true and divine works, notwithstanding all the precautions of Diognetus. But that was not to be obtained. Mark scorned every thing that was Christian, their books, as well as their persons, and looked upon all, as void of merit.

But, whatever was the reason of it, we plainly perceive, the Christians to have been under great discouragements, during the reign of this Emperour. In that period were published many apologies, as *the second of Justin Martyr, the apologies of Tatian, Athenagoras, Apollinaris of Hierapolis, Melito of Sardis, Theophilus of Antioch.* In this reign likewise, or at the beginning of that of Commodus, is to be placed the apologie of *Miltiades.* In this period were many martyrs,

(o) Παρὰ Διογνήτου, τὸ ἀκρόσπυδον, καὶ τὸ ἀπισήτικον τοῖς ὑπὸ τερατευομένων, καὶ γοήτων καὶ ἐπωδῶν, καὶ περὶ δαιμόνων ἀποπομπῆς, καὶ τῶν τοιούτων λεγομένοις. *De Reb. suis. l. i. §. 6.*

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tyrs, some of great distinction, as *Justin, Polycarp, and the martyrs of Lyons*, with their aged Bishop, *Pothinus*.

Justin at the begining of his second apologie, presented in the early part of this reign, mentions *Ptolomee*, and two others, who had suffered martyrdom at Rome a short time before by the order of *Urbicus*, Prefect of the city, and speaks, as if the persecution was general. And he suffered himself not long after, in the year 166. or 167. if not sooner. “ Things (*p*) that have happened very lately  
“ but a few days ago in your city, and which are every where  
“ done in like manner by the Presidents without reason, have com-  
“ pelled me to make this address to you.” And he says, “ That (*q*)  
“ every where, if any Gentil was admonished, or reproved for a fault,  
“ by a father, or a neighbour, or a child, or a friend, or a brother, or  
“ a husband, or a wife, he would presently have his reprovor before a  
“ Governour, who would be willing to inflict death upon him.”

*Athenagoras* (*r*) is supposed to have been an Athenian. His apologie was presented to Mark and Commodus jointly, and therefore not till near the end of Mark's reign in the year 177. or 178. He tells the Emperours, “ That (*s*) all other people experienced the benefit of their equitable government: but, we Christians, says he,  
“ because no regard is had to us, nor any provision made for us,  
“ though we do no evil, and are in all things obedient to the Divine  
“ Being,

(*p*) Καὶ τὰ χθὲς δὲ καὶ πρόνυ ἐν τῇ πόλει ὑμῶν γενόμενα ἐπὶ Οὐρβίκε, ᾧ Ρωμαῖοι, καὶ τὰ πανταχῶ ὁμοίως ὑπὸ τῶν ἡγεμένων ἀλόγως πραττόμενα, ἐξηνάγκασέ με . . . κ. λ. *Ap.* 2. p. 41. *al. num.* i. p. 88.

(*q*) Πανταχῶ γὰρ, ὅς ἂν σωφρονίζηται ὑπὸ πατρὸς, ἢ γείτονος, ἢ τέκνου, ἢ φίλου, ἢ ἀδελφοῦ, ἢ ἀνδρὸς, ἢ γυναικὸς κατ' ἑλλειψιν, ὡς ἐν ἀρχοντας δαιμονιώντας φορεύειν ἡμᾶς παρασκευάζουσιν. *Id. ib.*

(*r*) See the *Credib.* Vol. 2. p. 404. &c.

(*s*) Ημεῖς δὲ οἱ λεγόμενοι χριστιανοὶ, ὅτι μὴ προνοήσθε καὶ ἡμῶν, συγκαρῆτε δὲ, μηδὲν ἀδικήντας, εὐσεβέστατα διακειμένους καὶ δικαιοτάτα πρὸς τε τὸ θεῶν καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν βασιλείαν, ἐλαύνεσθαι καὶ διώκεσθαι . . . καὶ δέομεθα ὑμῶν καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν τὶ σέψασθαι, ὅπως παυσόμεθά ποτε ὑπὸ τῶν συκοφάντων σφαττόμεναι. *Athen. Ap.* p. *al.* p. 180.

“ Being, and your government, are harassed and persecuted for the name only. . . We therefore entreat you to take care of us, that we may no longer be put to death by sycophants.”

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Athenagoras therefore does not speak of any edicts, issued out against them, but only, that they were neglected. They were accused by many, and put to death by the Presidents, as Christians, without any crime proved against them. And the Emperour took no care of them, to protect them from the abuses of their enemies. However, though Athenagoras mentions not any new edicts against the Christians, he supposeth, that their sufferings were not unknown to the Emperour, and that they had now for a long time been carried on with his connivance and permission.

In the same reign, about the year (t) 177. another apologie was presented by Melito, Bp. of Sardis, or Sardes. For the name is frequently writ in the plural number by the ancients. The apologie is lost: But Eusebius has preserved a large fragment of it in his Ecclesiastical Historie. I quoted a part of it (u) some while ago: I now take another paragraph (x) which is remarkable for politeness, as well as upon other accounts.

“ Pious men, (y) says he, are now persecuted and harassed throughout all Asia by new decrees, which was never done before. And impudent sycophants, and such as covet the possessions of others, taking occasion from the edicts, rob without fear or shame, and cease  
“ not

(t) See the *Credib.* as before. p. 325.

(u) See before. p. 157.

(x) *H. E. l. 4. cap. 26. p. 147.*

(y) Τὸ γὰρ οὐδέ πώποτε γενόμενοι, νῦν διώκεται τὸ τῶν θεοσεβῶν γένος καινοῖς ἐλαυνομένοι δόγμασι κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν. Ὅι γὰρ ἀκαιδῆς συκοφάνται, καὶ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἐρασαί, τὴν ἐκ τῶν διαταγμάτων ἔχοντες ἀφαρμῆν,

φανερῶς λησεύουσι, νύκτωρ καὶ μεθιμέραν διαρπάζοντες τὸς μηδὲν ἀδικῶντας . . . καὶ ἡμεῖς ἰδέως φέρομεν τῷ τοιούτῳ θανάτῳ τὸ γέρας . . . εἰ δὲ καὶ παρὰ σοὶ μὴ εἴη ἡ βολὴ αὐτῆ, καὶ τὸ καινὸν τοῦτο διάταγμα, ὃ μὴ δὲ κατὰ βαρβάρων πρέπει πολεμίων, πολὺ μᾶλλον δεόμεθα σοὶ, μὴ περιιδεῖν ἡμᾶς ἐν τοιαύτῃ ληηλασίᾳ. p. 147.  
B. C.

A. D.  
161.

“ not to plunder those who have offended in nothing. And afterwards: If these things are done by your order, let them be thought to be well done. For it is not reasonable to believe, that a just Emperour should ever decree what is unjust. And we shall cheerfully bear the reward of such a death. This request however we make to you, that you will first inform yourself concerning those who are engaged in this contention, [*meaning the Christians*] and then judge, whether they deserve death and punishment, or safety and quiet. But if this resolution, and new edict, which is not fit to be enacted against barbarians and enemies, proceeds not from you, [*as we hope*] much more would we entreat you, not to neglect us, and give us up to this public rapine.”

This paragraph is very observable. Melito seems to speak of *new edicts* against the Christians throughout Asia. Nor is it easie to contest, or evade this testimonie of Melito. For it may be well supposed to be only owing to prudent caution, that he expresseth a doubt, whether the edict, to which he refers, came from the Emperour or not. Tertullian indeed says, that (z) Mark published not any laws against the Christians. But Tertullian did not know every thing that passed in the Empire. There might be imperial edicts published in Gaul, and Asia, which he was not acquainted with: Ruinart (a) reckons this passage of Melito a proof, that there were then imperial edicts against the Christians. As does also (b) Mosheim, whose observations upon this Emperour's conduct toward

(z) Quales leges istae, quas adversus nos soli exequuntur impii, injusti, turpes, truces . . . ? Quas nullus Hadrianus, nullus Pius, nullus Verus impressit. *Ap. cap. 5.*

(a) Imperialia vero edicta adversus Christianos tunc temporis vulgata fuisse, testatur Melito Sardenfis in apologia apud

Eusebium. l. 4. cap. 26. *Ruinart. Praef. num. 40. p. 43.*

(b) Neque satis videbatur Imperatori suaena laxare hostibus Christianorum, quae parens ejus injecerat. Addebat etiam edicta Christianis inimica, per quae voluntas deferendi et accusandi accendi poterat. Diserte Melito in Apologia apud Eu-

ward the Christians I shall place below, to be considered by such, as are pleased to attend to them. Who also thinks, he has discovered the peculiar severity of those new edicts, to which Melito refers. He supposeth, that the Emperour sent an edict against the Christians, appointing also, that the accusers and prosecutors of the Christians should be entitled to their possessions, as a recompense for their zeal against them.

I should rather think, there was no occasion for an edict of the Emperour to put Christians to death. The case seems to me to have been this. Several, perhaps, many, Christians, had been put to death in Asia, at the importunity of the common people, and by virtue of Trajan's rescript. The Roman Proconsul in Asia was at a loss how to dispose of the effects and estates of those sufferers. He therefore sent to the Emperour for direction in this affair. The Emperour wrote back, that their goods and possessions should be given to the accusers and informers. This resolution, or edict, Melito says, was such, as was *not fit to be enacted against enemies and barbarians*. And he says to the Emperour, *if this edict be yours, we will bear the reward of such a death*: "We will endeavor contentedly to bear

B b 2

" the

Eusebium meminit novorum in Christianos edictorum in Asia permulgatorum, unde impudentissimi homines occasionem caperent palam diu noctuque grassandi. Et acerbissima fuerint haec edicta necesse est. . . . Tertium ergo locum sapientissimus ille Imperatorum Marcus, Philosophus ille, cujus hodie sapientiam admirari non cessamus, post Neronem et Domitianum inter vere et proprie dictos Christianorum persecutores meretur. . . . Vellem hoc Marci edictum ad nos pervenisset. . . . Quamquam in Melitonis loco inest aliquid, unde hujus generis atrox illud Marci edictum esset, conjecturam facere licet.

Perhibet illa, *impudentissimis et alienarum opum cupidos delatores*, lege Marci ad Christianos diu noctuque invadendos invitari. Igitur habebat aliquid edictum hoc, quod spem ostendebat hominibus avaris et argenti cupidis ex alienis opibus suas augendi. Hoc posito, quod apertum est, credibile videri debet, immo prope certum, Imperatorem, praemio proposito, accusatores Christianorum veluti evocasse, atque illis bona et opes eorum, quos in judicio criminis cujusdam convicissent, addici jussisse. *Mosh. De Reb. Christianor. &c. Sec. 2. §. xv. p. 241. &c.*

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“ the losse of our goods, with which others are rewarded for accusing us, and procuring our death.” For certain, such encouragements would make prosecutions frequent. And Melito might have reason to say, as he does at the beginning of the paragraph cited by us: *Pious men are now persecuted and harassed throughout all Asia.*

*Extracts  
out of the  
Martyr-  
dom of  
Polycarp.*

II. I shall take no farther notice of apologies, but immediately proceed to the martyrdoms of this reign. I shall say nothing more, than I have already done, of Justin (*c*) or other martyrs, mentioned by him at the beginning of his second apologie. But I shall give some account of the martyrdom of POLYCARP, and then a large account of the MARTYRS AT LYONS. The reasons of my doing so will be manifest hereafter. They are a necessarie part of the historie of this renowned Emperour. And the state of Christianity in this early age will be much illustrated.

The time of the martyrdom of Polycarp has been disputed. I still think, as (*d*) formerly said, that he died in the year of our Lord 167. or 168. His (*e*) death is placed by Eusebius, and Jerome after him, in the time of Mark Antonin, in what they call the fourth persecution. Says (*f*) Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical Historie, “ Antonin, surnamed the Pious, being dead, he was succeeded by Marcus Aurelius Verus, called also Antoninus, and Lucius Verus. At that time, the persecutions being violent in Asia, Polycarp ended his days by martyrdom.” Whereby, I think, Eusebius intends to intimate, that there were then persecutions in several places in Asia, and not at Smyrna only.

Some

(*c*) See *Credib. P. 2. Vol. i. p. 254.*  
&c.

(*f*) *H. E. l. 4. cap. 14. fin. cap. 15. in.*  
*p. 128.*

(*d*) *Ibid. p. 195.*

(*e*) *Hieron. De V. J. cap. 17. Chron.*  
*p. 169.*



Some while after the death of Polycarp, the Christians at Smyrna, sent an account of it in a letter to the Christians at *Philadelphia*, *Philomelium*, and other places, who had expressed a desire to have it from eye-witnesses. The letter is to this purpose. “ The (g) church  
 “ of God, which is at Smyrna, to the church at Philomelium, [*or*  
 “ *Philadelphia, in another copie :*] and to all the congregations of the  
 “ holy catholic church in every place, the mercie, and peace, and  
 “ love of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied.  
 “ We have written to you, brethren, concerning those who have  
 “ suffered martyrdom, and particularly concerning the blessed *Poly-*  
 “ *carp*: who by his martyrdom as it were sealed up and put an end  
 “ to the persecution.” “ After which, says Eusebius, before they  
 “ speak of Polycarp, they relate the sufferings of the other martyrs,  
 “ describing their constance under the torments, which they endur-  
 “ ed: And how all, who stood round them, were astonished, seeing  
 “ them scourged, till their veins and arteries were laid bare, and even  
 “ their entrails became visible. After which they were laid upon  
 “ the shells of sea-fish, and upon sharp spikes, fixed in the ground  
 “ with many other kinds of torture. In the end they were cast to  
 “ wild-beasts, to be devoured by them. They are particular in  
 “ their account of the generous *Germanicus*, who being corroborated  
 “ by the divine grace, overcame the fear of death implanted in the  
 “ nature of men. For when the Proconsul advised him to think of  
 “ his youth, and to spare himself, and not throw away his life, in  
 “ his flourishing age, he was not at all moved thereby. But, as they  
 “ say, he enticed, and stimulated the wild beasts to approach him,  
 “ that he might be the sooner dismissed from this evil world. Pre-  
 “ sently after that glorious exit, the whole multitude cried out, *A-*  
 “ *way with the impious. Let Polycarp be sought for.* There follow-  
 “ ing then a great noise and tumult, and having in view the wild-  
 “ beasts, and other tortures, *Quintus*, a Phrygian, was intimidated,  
 “ and gave way: as did also some others with him, who without a  
 “ truly

(g) *Euseb. H. E. l. 4. cap. 15. p. 128. &c.*

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“ truly religious fear had rashly presented themselves before the tri-  
 “ bunal. . . . When the admirable *Polycarp* heard of the demand made  
 “ for him, he was not at all disturbed, but continued to be in a firm  
 “ and composed temper of mind. And he resolved to stay in the city.  
 “ Nevertheless, at length he so far complied with the request of his  
 “ friends, as to retire to a countrey-house, not far off: Where he a-  
 “ bode with a small companie, spending the time, night and day, in con-  
 “ tinual prayers to God: offering up supplications for the peace of the  
 “ churches throughout the world. Which indeed was his constant  
 “ usage. Moreover three days before his apprehension, having been  
 “ at prayer, and falling asleep, in the night time, he had a vision  
 “ of the pillow under his head consumed by a flame of fire. When  
 “ he awoke, he related the vision to those about him, and letting  
 “ them know, that he thence concluded, that for the testimonie of  
 “ Christ he should lose his life by fire. And when they who were  
 “ sent out to apprehend him, were using their best diligence to find  
 “ him out, they say, that for the love of the brethren he was con-  
 “ strained to remove again to another place. However, in a short  
 “ time his pursuers by informations given them, were led to the place  
 “ where *Polycarp* was. Coming thither in the evening, they found  
 “ him resting in an upper-room. Whence it was not difficult for him  
 “ to remove to another house. But he would not, saying: *The will*  
 “ *of the Lord be done.* He then went down to the men, and talked  
 “ to them in a free and chearfull manner, and ordered meat to be  
 “ set before them, begging that they would allow him the space of  
 “ one hour, in which he might pray without disturbance. Prayer  
 “ being ended they set him upon an asse, to carry him into the city.  
 “ As they were going, he was met by Herod the Irenarch, and his  
 “ father Nicetas, who took him up into their chariot. As they sat  
 “ together, they endeavoured to persuade him, saying: *What harm*  
 “ *is it to say, Lord Cesar, and to sacrifice, and so to be safe?* At first  
 “ he made no answer. But when they were importunate, he said:  
 “ *I will never do what you advise.* They then began to reproach  
 “ him,

“ him, and they thrust him out of the chariot so hastily, that in get-  
 “ ting down, his leg was bruised. But he got up, and went on  
 “ chearfully, as if he had suffered no harm, till he came to the sta-  
 “ dium. When he was brought before the tribunal, there was a  
 “ great shout of the multitude. As he came near, the Proconsul (*b*)  
 “ asked him, if he was Polycarp. Upon his confessing that he was,  
 “ he endeavored to persuade him to deny Christ, and saying: *Re-  
 “ verence thy age, and other like things, customarie with them:  
 “ Swear by the fortune of Cesar. Repent. Say, Away with the im-  
 “ pious.* The Governour still urging him, and saying. *Swear, and  
 “ I will dismiss thee. Reprcach Christ.* Polycarp then answered.  
 “ *Fourscore and six years have I served him, and he has never done me  
 “ any injurie. How can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?*  
 “ The Governour was still urgent, saying, *Swear by the fortune of  
 “ Cesar.* Whereupon Polycarp answered. *How can you desire this  
 “ of me, as if you did not know, who I am. Here mè then openly pro-  
 “ fessing, I am a Christian. And if you have a mind to know the doc-  
 “ trine of Christianity, appoint me a day, and I will inform you. . . .*  
 “ The Proconsul said: *I have wild beasts, and I will cast you to them,  
 “ unless you change your mind.* But he answered: *Call for them. There  
 “ can be no alteration from good to bad. But it is good to change from  
 “ vice to virtue.* He said again to him. *Since you do not mind the  
 “ beasts, I will order you to be consumed by fire, unless you repent.* Po-  
 “ lycarp said: *You threaten me with fire, which burns for an hour,  
 “ and then is extinguished. But you are ignorant of the fire of the fu-  
 “ ture judgement, and everlasting punishment, reserved for the wicked.  
 “ But why do you delay? Appoint which you please.* The Proconsul  
 “ then

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(*b*) In the ancient Latin edition of this epistle, which may be seen in Ruinart, and elsewhere, the Proconsul's name, near the end, is said to be *Statius Quadratus*. Who is mentioned by Aristides the So-

phist, as Proconsul of Asia. And Vale-  
sius hence argues, that Polycarp suffered  
in the seventh year of the reign of Mark  
Antonin, or the year of Christ 167.

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161.

“ then sent the Cryer to make proclamation thrice in the midst of the  
 “ stadium. *Polycarp has confessed himself to be a Christian.* That pro-  
 “ clamation having been made by the Cryer, the whole multitude of  
 “ the Gentils and Jews inhabiting Smyrna, with furious rage, and  
 “ in a loud voice, cried out: *This is the teacher of Asia, the father of*  
 “ *the Christians, the destroyer of our Gods, who teacheth all men not to*  
 “ *sacrifice, nor to worship them.* Having uttered those words, they  
 “ cried out, and requested Philip the Asiarch to let out a lion upon  
 “ Polycarp. He said, he could not do that, because the amphetri-  
 “ cal shows of wild-beasts were over. Then they cried out with  
 “ one consent, that Polycarp should be burnt alive. Which was no  
 “ sooner said, than done. All immediatly joyning together in bring-  
 “ ing wood, and dried branches of trees, from the shops, and the  
 “ baths, the Jews also, according to their custom, assisting with the  
 “ greatest forwardnesse. When the pile was made ready, he un-  
 “ clothed himself, and untied his girdle, and endeavored to pull off  
 “ his shoes himself, which for a long time he had not done before,  
 “ the faithfull performing such offices for him, and that not only since  
 “ he became grey-headed, but in a more early age: such was the  
 “ veneration, in which he had been long held for the sanctity of his  
 “ life! Now all things being prepared, and put in order for the pile:  
 “ When they were about to nail him to the stake, he said. *Let me*  
 “ *be, as I am. He that enables me to bear the fire, will enable me also*  
 “ *to remain unmoved within the pile, without your fastening me with*  
 “ *nails.* They therefore did not nail him, but only bound him.  
 “ He then offered up a prayer to God. Which he concluded, say-  
 “ ing aloud: Amen. Then the officers, who had the charge of it,  
 “ kindled the fire. But Polycarp’s body not being so soon consum-  
 “ ed, as expected, the people desired, that the confessor should  
 “ be called for, and run him through with a sword. The faithfull  
 “ were now very desirous to have his body to be delivered to them.  
 “ But some there were, who moved Nicetas, father of Herod, to go  
 “ to the Governour to prevent his giving the body to the believers :  
 “ least,

“least, as they said, they should leave him that was crucified, to  
 “worship this man. This they said at the suggestion of the Jews,  
 “who also diligently watched us, that we might not carry off the  
 “body: little considering, that we can never forsake Christ, who has  
 “suffered for the salvation of all men. Him we worship, as the  
 “Son of God. The martyrs we love, as the disciples and imitators  
 “of the Lord. The centurion therefore perceiving the perverseness  
 “of the Jews, caused the body to be brought forth, and burnt it.  
 “We then gathered up his bones, and deposited them in a proper  
 “place. This is our account of the blessed Polycarp, who with  
 “twelve others from Philadelphia suffered martyrdom at Smyrna.”  
 Or, according to another reading, “Who together with those of  
 Philadelphia was the twelfth, who suffered martyrdom at Smyrna.”

It may be here asked by some, what was the death, which Polycarp endured? I answer, he was burnt alive. Some who were cast to wild-beasts were torn and mangled, but not killed outright by them. Their death was completed by the officer, called Confessor, who thrust them through with a sword, or some other weapon with which he was armed. So it now was with Polycarp. He was *burnt alive*. But by some means it so happened, that he lived a good while in the pile. For which reason it was determined, that he should be dispatched with a sword. Nor was there any exception made to that by the multitude. They even desired it, to secure his death.

Thus died the excellent, the aged and venerable Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna.

It is needless for me to make remarks, which may be obvious to every reader. Polycarp, and the rest with him, suffered as Christians. It does not appear, that any crime, beside that of Christianity, was proved, or even imputed to them. Their innocence of great crimes, punishable by law, is manifest. If they had been known, or even suspected to kill and eat children, and practise promiscuous lewd-

*Remarks.*

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101.

ness in their worship, they would not have been readily discharged upon a bare verbal renunciation of their religion.

We must be also persuaded, that the Christians were now well known in the world. How much soever the great men of those times might affect to seem unacquainted with them, they knew them very well. It is not conceivable, that an Emperour, who has any the least concern for the welfare of his people, and the peace of society, should neglect to inform himself about what is done in great cities, and in their theatres or amphitheatres. Mark therefore, and his Courtiers, and the Philosophers about him, knew very well what had now happened at *Smyrna*, in Asia. Nevertheless he took no pains to restrain the animosity of the people.

Let me say one thing more, that the steadiness of the Christians might have induced Mark, and his courtiers, to make inquiries after their scriptures, and the evidences of those principles, which they so firmly believed, and by which they were supported under so grievous sufferings.

*The Hi-  
storie of  
the Mar-  
tyrs at  
Lyons.*

III. I shall be rather more particular in my account of the sufferings of the *Martyrs at Lyons*, another instance of grievous persecution in the reign of the same Emperour. Of the histories of their martyrdom, and of that of Polycarp, as is well known, that great man, Joseph Scaliger, speaks with admiration. “The (*i*) minds of pious  
“and devout men, says he, must be so affected with them, as ne-  
“ver to be satiated with the reading of them. For my own part, I  
“never

(*i*) Ea, et Polycarpi Martyrium hodie exstant apud Eusebium in Historia Ecclesiastica, quae sunt vetustissima Ecclesiae Martyria, quorum lectione piorum animus ita afficitur, ut nunquam satur inde recedat. Quod quidem ita esse, unusquisque pro suo et conscientiae modo sentire potest. Certe ego nihil unquam in

historia ecclesiastica vidi, a cujus lectione commotior recedam, ut non amplius meus esse videar. Idem sentimus de Actis Martyrum Lugdunensium et Viennensium apud eundem Eusebium, quibus quid augustius, quid venerabilius in antiquitatis monumentis? *Jos. Scal. Animad. in Euseb. p. 221.*

“ never met with any thing in ecclesiastical historie, by which I have  
“ been so transported, as by these.”

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I formerly said, that (*k*) the historie of the sufferings of the Martyrs at Vienne and Lyons is the finest thing of the kind in all antiquity. The Martyrdom, or Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas, who suffered near the begining of the third centurie, in the time of the Emperour Severus, is likewise affecting, and curious in divers respects, as was also observed (*l*) formerly.

To relate this, in the way of an extract, would be to enervate what is in the highest degree affecting. And moreover, as before said, it is a necessarië part of the historie and character of this Emperour. I therefore intend to transcribe Eusebius at length, word for word, for the most part. After which I shall add some remarks.

Says Eusebius, in his preface to the fifth book of his Ecclesiastical Historie. “ At this time Eleutherus succeeded Soter in the see  
“ of Rome. And it was the seventeenth year of the Emperour Antonin: in which time, the persecution against us raged with great  
“ violence in several parts of the world, through the enmity of the  
“ people in the cities. What (*m*) vast multitudes of Martyrs there  
“ were throughout the whole empire, may be concluded from what  
“ happened in one nation. Which also have been committed to  
“ writing, that they may be delivered to others, and may be always  
“ remembred. The whole historie of these things has been inserted  
“ in our work, of the collection of martyrs, of which I here select a  
“ part (*n*).”

C c 2

Eusebius

(*k*) See *Credib. P. 2. Vol. i. ch. 16. p. 335.*

(*l*) *Ib. Vol. 4. p. 426.*

(*m*) Μυριάδας μαρτύρων ἀνὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην διατρέχει τοσάσμων λαβεῖν ἕνεστιν, ἀπὸ τῶν καθ' ἐν ἔθνος συμπεθεηκότων. *H. E. l. 5. Pr. p. 153.*

(*n*) That the persecution at Lyons, of which Eusebius here speaks, happened in the seventeenth year of the reign of Mark Antonin, and the year of Christ 177. was shewn formerly. *Cred. P. ii. Vol. i. p. 333. &c.*

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161.

Eusebius then goes on, in (o) the first chapter of that book. “ The country, in which those things happened, of which I am  
 “ now to speak, is Gaul. In which are two great and famous ci-  
 “ ties, Lyons and Vienne, both washed by the river Rhone, which  
 “ traverseth that country with a rapid stream. These famous  
 “ churches sent in writing an account of their martyrs to the churches  
 “ in Asia and Phrygia. I shall insert their own words. “ The ser-  
 “ vants of Jesus Christ dwelling in Vienne and Lyons to the bre-  
 “ thren in Asia and Phrygia, who have the same faith and hope of  
 “ redemption with us, peace, and grace, and glorie from God the  
 “ Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord. After a few things said in  
 “ the way of preface, they begin the narration in these words. The  
 “ greatnesse of the affliction in these places, and the excessive rage  
 “ of the people against the saints, and what the blessed martyrs have  
 “ endured, we are not able to describe in words, nor put down in  
 “ writing. For the enemy at the very first invaded us with the  
 “ greatest violence, shewing from the beginning what fore evils we  
 “ were to expect. Every thing was done to exercise his ministers,  
 “ and to train them to the practise of the utmost cruelty against the  
 “ servants of God. We were not only excluded from houses, [*of*  
 “ *friends, as it seems,*] and from the baths, and the market: but  
 “ we were forbid to appear in any place whatever. However, the  
 “ grace of God fought for us against the enemy: delivering such  
 “ as were weak, and setting up the pillars, which were firm and  
 “ stable, and able by their patience and fortitude to withstand all the  
 “ force of the enemy. They therefore came to a near combat with  
 “ him, undergoing all manner of reproach and suffering. Account-  
 “ ing the greatest afflictions to be small, they hastened to Christ:  
 “ thus shewing in fact, that *the sufferings of this present time are not*  
 “ *worthie to be compared with the glorie, which shall be revealed in*  
 “ *us.* First then they courageously endured the insults of the multi-  
 “ tude,

Rom. viii.  
18.

(o) H. E. l. 5. cap. i. p. 154. &amp;c.



" tude, gathered together about them in crouds, their shouts, and  
 " blows, and draggings about, pillaging their goods, throwing of  
 " stones, confinement to their dwellings, and all such things, as an  
 " enraged multitude is wont to practise against adversaries and ene-  
 " mies. Then being brought into the market, by the Tribune, and  
 " the chief magistrates of the city, they were examined before all  
 " the people. And having made their confession, they were shut  
 " up in prison, till the arrival of the (*p*) President. Afterwards,  
 " when they were brought before the President, who exercised all  
 " manner of cruelty against us, *Vettius Epagathus*, one of the bre-  
 " thren, full of love toward God and his neighbour, whose course  
 " of life also was so perfect, that, though a young man, he might  
 " deserve the character of old Zacharias, *that he walked in all the*  
 " *commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless*: and was un-  
 " wearied in the performance of all good offices to his neighbour,  
 " being full of zeal for God, and *fervent in spirit*. He being such  
 " an one, was not able to bear these so unjust proceedings against  
 " us, but being moved with indignation, requested, that he might  
 " be allowed to make a defense in behalf of the brethren, and  
 " shew, that nothing impious and irreligious was done by us. But  
 " they who were near the tribunal, cried out against him: (for he  
 " was a person well known) and the President refused to grant his  
 " request, though so reasonable, and asked him, whether he was a  
 " Christian.

A. D.  
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Luke i. 6.

Rom. xii.  
11.

(*p*) The name of the President is no where mentioned in this Epistle. But Valesius thinks, he was *Severus*, afterwards Emperour. And he thinks he was not Proconsul, but the Emperour's Legate, or Lieutenant: forasmuch as Spartian says, he governed the province of Lyons in that quality. Deinde Lugdunensem provinciam legatus accepit. *De Severo. cap. 4.* I shall add, that Dion Cassius also men-

tions his government at Lyons. Καὶ ἐν Λυγδύνοις ἀρχουσι . . . προσήλαθε. *Dion. p. 1243.* Reimar. And Fr. Balduinus was of the same opinion. Interea dum haec Romae exercerentur, Lugdunensem provinciam legatus regebat Septimius Severus. . . Non dubium est, quae tunc illic de Christianis sumpta supplicia esse dicuntur, hujus Severi imperio irrogata fuisse. *Ediſt. Princ. Rom. de Christianis. p. 97.*

A. D. 161. “ Christian. He answering with a loud voice, that he was a Christian, he was put into the number (q) of the martyrs, and was called the advocate of the Christians. And indeed he had within  
 Luke i. 67. “ him the Advocate, the Holy Ghost, in a greater measure, than Zacharias. Which he also shewed by the abundance of his love, being willing to lay down his own life in defense of the brethren. For he was, and is a genuine disciple of Christ, following  
 I John iii. 16. “ the lamb, whithersoever he goeth. After this, others were chosen  
 Rev. xiv. 4. “ out. And they proved to be illustrious, and well-prepared proto-martyrs: who with all alacrity of mind accomplished the solemn confession of martyrdom. They also were made manifest, who were unprepared, and unexercised, and still weak, and not able to bear the shock of so great a combat: of whom about ten in number fell away: causing in us great grief and unmeasurable concern, and damping the alacrity of those, who were not yet apprehended. Of whom however it must be acknowledged, that they kept companie with the martyrs, and did not forsake them, though they suffered considerably in so doing. At that time we were all in great consternation, being uncertain about the event of this confession: not dreading the torments that might be inflicted upon us, but apprehensive of the issue, and that some might fall in the trial. However, from day to day such were taken up, as were worthie to supply the number of such as had gone off: So that the most eminent men of the two churches, and by whom good order had been settled among us, were picked out and brought together. Moreover some Gentile servants of our people were apprehended. For the Governour had given public orders for making strict inquiries after us. They at the instigation of Satan, and dreading the torments, which they saw the saints suffer, the soldiers also exciting them to it, falsly char-  
 “ ged

(q) So Confessors are called in this, and many other ancient writings, about the same time.

“ged \* us with having the suppers of Thyestes, and the incestuous  
 “mixtures of Oedipus, and other such like things, which it is not  
 “lawful for us to mention, nor to think of, nor to believe that they  
 “were ever done among men. These stories being spread abroad,  
 “all men were incensed against us: insomuch that if any there were,  
 “who before had been civil to us, upon account of affinity, or  
 “friendship, they were then much offended, and exclaimed against  
 “us. And then was fulfilled what the Lord had said, *that the time* *John xvi.*  
 “*would come, when every one who killeth you, will think that he doth* *2.*  
 “*God service: [or, offers to God a sacrifice.]* After that the holy mar-  
 “tyrs underwent such torments, as are above all description: Satan  
 “doing his utmost to make them also to say such impious things:  
 “*[or to confess what had been declared by the Heathen servants.]* But  
 “the utmost excess of rage of the multitude, and of the President,  
 “and of the soldiers, fell upon *Sanctus*, Deacon at Vienne, and upon  
 “*Maturus*, newly baptised indeed, yet a most valiant champion, and  
 “upon *Attalus*, a native of Pergamus, who always was a pillar and  
 “support of the churches here: and upon *Blandina*, by whom Christ  
 “shewed, that those things, which among men seem mean, base, *1 Cor. i.*  
 “and contemptible, are by God accounted worthie of great honour, *27, 28.*  
 “for their love toward him, which is evidently manifested in great *2 Cor. v.*  
 “power, and not in appearance only boasted of. For when we were *12.*  
 “all in pain for her, and especially her mistresse according to the *Eph. vi.*  
 “flesh, (who likewise was one of the champions among the martyrs,) *5.*  
 “least upon account of the infirmity of her body she should not be  
 “able to make an open confession; she was furnished with such  
 “strength,

\* *Thyestes*, as is said, ate part of his own son, whom his brother Atreus, to be revenged on him for committing adultery with his wife, had killed, and then dressed, and set before him at an entertainment.

: . . *Oedipus*, as the storie is, married his mother, *Jocasta*, not knowing her to be so, and had children by her.

A. D.

161.

2 Cor. iv.  
16.Jhu viii.  
38.

“ strength, that they who by turns tortured her all manner of ways,  
 “ from morning to evening, became feeble and faint, and acknow-  
 “ ledged themselves overcome, there being nothing more that they  
 “ could do to her. And they wondred, that she had any breath left,  
 “ her whole body having been torn and mangled: and declaring, that  
 “ any one kind of torture, used by them, was sufficient to deprive her  
 “ of life, much more so many, and so great: But that blessed woman,  
 “ and renowned champion, renewed her strength in the midst of her  
 “ confession. And it was a refreshment and ease to her, and an abate-  
 “ ment of the torments inflicted upon her, to say: *I am a Christian.*  
 “ *Nor is there any wickednesse practised among us.* Sanctus likewise  
 “ having in a most extraordinarie manner, and beyond all human  
 “ power, courageously undergone all the tortures they could invent,  
 “ the wicked wretches hoping by the continuance and greatnesse of  
 “ the tortures to extort from him somewhat unbecoming, [*a confes-*  
 “ *sion of unbecoming practises among the Christians*] he withstood them  
 “ with such resolution, that he would not tell them his own name,  
 “ nor his countrey, nor the city whence he was, nor whether he  
 “ was a slave, or a freeman. But to all their interrogatories, he an-  
 “ swered in the Roman tongue: *I am a Christian.* That was what  
 “ he declared again and again, instead of his name, and city, and  
 “ countrey. Nor did the Gentils hear any other word from him.  
 “ Upon which account the rage both of the President and the tor-  
 “ menters was very great. And when there was nothing more that  
 “ they could do unto him, they at last clapt red hot plates of brasse  
 “ upon the most tender parts of his body. And his members were  
 “ burnt. Yet he stood firm, without yielding at all, and continued  
 “ stedfast, and unshaken in his confession: bedewed and strengthen-  
 “ ed with the heavenly living water, which flowed out of the belly  
 “ of Christ. His body shewed what had been done, being all over  
 “ wound and scarr, contracted and drawn together, having lost the  
 “ external shape of a man. In whom Christ suffering, performed  
 “ great wonders, defeating the enemy, and demonstrating, for an ex-  
 ample

“ ample to others, that nothing is formidable, where there is the  
 “ love of the Father, nor any thing painfull, where the glorie of  
 “ Christ is concerned. For when those wicked men a few days af-  
 “ ter began again to torture the martyr, supposing, that if they  
 “ should make use of the same tortures, whilst his body was swell-  
 “ ed, and his wounds enflamed, they should master him, since he  
 “ could not endure to be touched with the hand: or that he would  
 “ die under the torments, which might strike terrour into others:  
 “ not only no such thing happened to him, but contrarie to the opi-  
 “ nion of all men, his body became erect by means of those repeat-  
 “ ed tortures, and he recovered his former shape, and the use of his  
 “ limbs: so that by the grace of Christ the second torture became a  
 “ remedie instead of a punishment. Moreover the devil caused one  
 “ *Biblias* to be brought out, being one of those who had denied the  
 “ faith, and whom he considered as already devoured by him: but  
 “ was desirous to accumulate her guilt, by compelling her to utter  
 “ reproachfull things against us. And indeed she had shewn her-  
 “ self weak and timorous. But now in the midst of her torture she  
 “ recovered herself, and awaked as it were out of a profound sleep,  
 “ being by these torments which are but for a time, reminded of the  
 “ everlasting torments of hell. She then contradicted the slander-  
 “ ous reports concerning us, saying: *How should they eat infants, to*  
 “ *whom it is not lawfull to eat the bloud of brute animals!* And thence-  
 “ forward she confessed herself a Christian, and was added to the  
 “ number of the martyrs. But when these tyrannical measures were  
 “ rendered ineffectual by Christ, through the patience of those bleff-  
 “ ed men, the devil tried other devices, such as imprisonment in  
 “ dark and noisome dungeons, putting the feet into stocks and strain-  
 “ ing them to the fifth hole, and such other pains, as enraged mi-  
 “ nisters, and full of the devil, inflict upon those who are shut up  
 “ in prison. So that many were suffocated in their confinement,  
 “ even as many, as it was the will of the Lord should go out of the  
 “ world in that manner, thereby shewing forth his glorie. But

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“ some others, who had been grievously tortured, so that it was  
 “ thought they could not live, though the best methods of cure had  
 “ been afforded them, continued to live in prison: deprived indeed  
 “ of the help of men, but corroborated by the Lord, and strength-  
 “ ened both in body and mind: who also animated and comforted  
 “ the rest: Whilst others who were but young, and were newly ap-  
 “ prehended, whose bodies were not accustomed to hardships, were  
 “ not able to bear the inconvenience of confinement, and expired in  
 “ the prison. But the blessed POTHINUS, who was entrusted with  
 “ the administration of the episcopal office at Lyons, being more  
 “ than ninety years of age, and very weak in body, and scarcely  
 “ breathing by reason of his bodily infirmity, but strengthened in  
 “ mind with a desire of the martyrdom now in view, even he also  
 “ was dragged to the tribunal. His body was worn out by age and  
 “ distemper: but his soul yet remained in him, that by it Christ might  
 “ triumph. He being brought before the tribunal by the soldiers, the  
 “ city-magistrates also attending, and the multitude hooting him all-  
 “ along with loud shouts, as if he had been Christ himself, exhibited  
 “ a good testimonie. Being asked by the President, *who was the God*  
 “ *of the Christians*, he answered: *If you are worthie, you shall know.*  
 “ After that he was dragged about in an inhuman manner, and received  
 “ many blows: they who were near striking him with their hands and  
 “ feet, without any respect to his age. They who stood farther off,  
 “ threw at him whatever came to hand: every one thinking himself  
 “ guilty of an offense against religion, if he did not offer him some  
 “ abuse. For thereby they thought they should avenge their Gods.  
 “ And when there was scarcely any breath left in him, he was cast  
 “ into prison, where after two days he expired. And now appeared  
 “ a wonderfull dispensation of divine Providence, and the boundless  
 “ mercy of Jesus Christ. It was a rare instance indeed in the brother-  
 “ hood; but not beyond the power or wisdom of Christ. For they  
 “ who at their first being apprehended, had denied the faith, were al-  
 “ so shut up in prison, and partook of the same sufferings with others.

“ For

“ For their denial was of no benefit to them at that time. They who  
 “ confessed what they really were, were imprisoned, as Christians, no  
 “ other crime being laid to their charge. But these were confined as  
 “ murderers and malefactors, and therefore underwent a double pu-  
 “ nishment. For the joy of martyrdom, the hope of the promised  
 “ happiness, and the spirit of the Father comforted these. But the  
 “ conscience of the others was a torment to them: insomuch that in  
 “ their passage from the prison to the tribunal, the difference of their  
 “ countenances was manifest to all. The others appeared chearfull,  
 “ having in their countenances a mixture of gravity and pleasantness.  
 “ Their fetters gave them grace and comeliness, *like a bride adorned*  
 “ *with tresses of gold, wrought with divers colours,* having also a sweet  
 “ favour of Christ: so that some thought they were anointed with  
 “ terrestrial ointment. The others appeared dejected and dispirited,  
 “ and covered all over with deformity. And moreover, they were  
 “ reproached by the Gentils, as unmanly, and mean-spirited; hav-  
 “ ing brought upon themselves the accusation of being murderers,  
 “ and lost the honorable, and glorious and reviving appellation. [of  
 “ Christians]. When the rest beheld these things, they were esta-  
 “ blished. And, if after this any were apprehended, they presently,  
 “ without any doubt or hesitation, confessed, not admitting the least  
 “ thought of a diabolical suggestion. Having here interposed some-  
 “ things, says Eusebius, they go on. Henceforward the martyrdoms  
 “ were divided into all sorts. For having platted one crown of diffe-  
 “ rent colours, they offered it to the Father. And indeed it was fit,  
 “ that these generous champions, who had sustained various combats,  
 “ and had gloriously overcome, should receive a glorious and incor-  
 “ ruptible crown. *Maturus* then, and *Sanctus*, and *Blandina*, and  
 “ *Attalus*, were brought to the wild-beasts in the amphitheatre,  
 “ to be a public spectacle to the inhumanity of the Gentils: a day  
 “ for combats of wild-beasts having been purposely granted upon  
 “ our account. And *Maturus* and *Sanctus* did again undergo all sorts  
 “ of torments in the amphitheatre, as if they had before suffered no-

A. D.  
161.*Psal. xlv.*  
10... 15.

A. D.  
161.1 Cor. iv.  
9.1f. xxvii.  
1.1 Cor. ix.  
25.

“ thing at all. Or rather, having already overcome the adverſarie  
 “ in many encounters, and being now to contend for the crown it-  
 “ ſelf, they again endured, in the way to it the accuſtomed blows  
 “ of the place, and the tearings of wild beaſts, and whatever elſe the  
 “ mad multitude from all ſides called for and demanded. And after  
 “ all theſe things the iron chair, upon which when their bodies were  
 “ broiled, they yielded the offensive ſmell of burnt fleſh. Nor were  
 “ they yet ſatisfied, but were ſtill more enraged, being earneſtly de-  
 “ ſirous to overcome the patience of the ſufferers. However, they  
 “ could get nothing from Sanctus more than the confeſſion, which  
 “ he had made at the firſt. Theſe two therefore, (*Maturus and Sanc-*  
 “ *tus*) having undergone a ſevere combat, their life having continu-  
 “ a long while, they were at laſt ſlain, having been made through-  
 “ out that day a *ſpectacle to the world*, inſtead of all that variety,  
 “ which is uſually exhibited in the combats of gladiators, But Blan-  
 “ dina having been hung upon a ſtake, was left for a prey to wild-  
 “ beaſts, which were let out upon her. And, as ſhe ſeemed to hang  
 “ upon a croſſe, and prayed to God earneſtly, ſhe infused great ala-  
 “ crity into the combatants, they ſeeing with their own eyes, in the  
 “ perſon of their ſiſter, him who was crucified for us, that he might  
 “ perſuade all who believe in him, that all who ſuffer for his glorie,  
 “ ſhall have everlaſting communion with the living God. None of  
 “ the wild-beaſts touching her at that time, ſhe was taken down  
 “ from the ſtake, and ſent again to priſon, being reſerved for another  
 “ combat: that having overcome in many encounters, ſhe might ren-  
 “ der the condemnation of the crooked ſerpent inexcusable: and  
 “ that ſhe might be an encouragement to the brethren, when  
 “ ſhe, who was of little account, infirm, and deſpicable, be-  
 “ ing clothed with the great and invincible champion, having often  
 “ overcome the enemy, obtained an incorruptible crown of glorie.  
 “ Now Attalus was earneſtly called for by the multitude. For in-  
 “ deed he was an eminent perſon: and by reaſon of the clearneſſe  
 “ of his conſcience, came forth as a champion prepared for the com-  
 “ bat.



" bat. For he was well exercised in the Christian discipline, and  
 " was always a witness of the truth among us. He was led round  
 " the amphitheatre with a board carried before him, upon which  
 " was inscribed in the Roman tongue: *This is Attalus, the Christi-*  
 " *an*: the people all the while expressing great indignation against  
 " him. The President understanding, that he was a Roman, com-  
 " manded him to be taken away, and to be carried to the rest who  
 " were in prison: concerning whom he had sent to Cesar, and  
 " was in expectation of an answer. That interval of time was not  
 " idly spent, nor unprofitable to them: but through their patience  
 " the boundless mercie of Christ was manifested. By the living the  
 " dead members of the church were revived. The martyrs obtain-  
 " ed favour for those who were no martyrs. And there was great  
 " joy to the virgin mother, when she received those alive, which  
 " had been cast out as dead. For by the holy martyrs many of  
 " those, who had denied the faith, were *formed again in the womb*,  
 " and had their vital heat rekindled in them, and learned to confess  
 " themselves Christians. And having recovered life and strength  
 " came before the tribunal, that they might be again interrogated by  
 " the President. And God, who desireth not the death of a sinner,  
 " being propitious to them, put into them a better disposition. The  
 " Rescript of Cesar was, *that (r) they who confessed Christ, should (s)*  
 " *be put to death. But that if any denied themselves to be Christians,*  
 " *they might be set at liberty.* The public assemblie of this place be-  
 " ing now begun, at which there is a great concourse of people  
 " from all parts, the President ordered the blessed martyrs to be  
 " brought before the tribunal, exposing them as a public shew to  
 " the multitude. Having again interrogated them, as many as were  
 " found

A. D.  
161.Gal. iv.  
19.Ezek.  
xxxiii, 11.

(r) *Επισέλαντο; γὰρ τῷ Καίσαρι, τὸς*  
*μὲν ἀποτυμπανισθῆναι· εἰ δὲ τις ἀρνεῖντο,*  
*τάτους ἀπολυθῆναι. P. 162. D.*

(s) *Should be put to death. Ut confiten-*

*tes quidem gladio caederentur. Vales.*  
*And see his notes, and Gataker. Miscell.*  
*cap. 46. p. 912.*

A. D. 161. “ found to be Roman Citizens, he ordered to be beheaded. The  
 “ rest he sent to the wild-beasts. But Christ was greatly glorified in  
 “ those, who before had denied the faith: but now, contrarie to the  
 “ expectation of the Gentils, confessed themselves to be Christians.  
 “ They were interrogated apart, as being now to be dismissed, and  
 “ set at liberty. But making confession, they were added to the  
 “ number of the martyrs. However they remained without, who  
 “ never had the principle of faith, nor a regard to the wedding  
 “ garment, not having the fear of God in them, but were sons of  
 “ perdition, and by their conversation had caused the way of truth  
 “ to be blasphemed. All the rest were added to the church. And,  
 “ when the question was put to them, *Alexander*, a Phrygian by  
 “ nation, and by profession a Physician, who had lived in Gaul ma-  
 “ ny years, and was known to almost all men for his love of God,  
 “ and boldness in preaching the word, encouraged them. For he  
 “ was not destitute of apostolic grace. He standing near the tribunal,  
 “ and by nods encouraging them to confess the faith, he appeared  
 “ to those who stood round about the tribunal, as if he endured the  
 “ pangs of child-birth. But the multitude being greatly incensed,  
 “ that they who before had denied the faith, should now be admit-  
 “ ted to make confession, cried out against Alexander, as the occa-  
 “ sion of it. Whereupon the President caused him to be set before  
 “ him, and asked him, who he was. He confessing himself to be  
 “ a Christian, the President in a great rage condemned him to the  
 “ wild-beasts. The day following he came into the amphitheatre,  
 “ together with Attalus. For the President, (t) to gratify the people,  
 “ delivered up Attalus again to the wild-beasts. Which two having  
 “ undergone all the instruments of torture in the amphitheatre,  
 “ which were invented to torment them, and having endured a  
 “ great combat, were run through with a sword. Alexander  
 “ neither

(t) Καὶ γὰρ τὸν Ἀτταλον τῷ ὄχλῳ χαρίζομενος ὁ ἡγεμὼν, ἐξέδωκε πάλιν πρὸς θηρία.  
 P. 163. C.

“ neither sighed, nor said any thing at all, but in his heart conver-  
“ sed with God. Attalus, when he was set in the iron chair, and  
“ was scorched all over, and an offensive stench of burnt flesh pro-  
“ ceeded from his body, spake to the multitude in the Roman tongue:  
“ *This, says he, is to devour men, which is your practise. As for us,*  
“ *we neither devour men, nor do we commit any other wickednesse what-*  
“ *ever.* Being asked, what is the name of God, he answered: *God*  
“ *has not a name, as men have.* After all these, on the last day of  
“ the shows, Blandina was again brought in, with a young man  
“ named *Ponticus*, about fifteen years of age. Who also had been  
“ every day successively brought in to see the sufferings of the others.  
“ Now they were required to swear by their idols. But as they re-  
“ mained firm, and set their gods at naught, the multitude was great-  
“ ly incensed against them: so that they had no compassion on the  
“ age of the young man, nor any respect for the sex of the other:  
“ but exposed them to all manner of sufferings, and made them go  
“ through the whole circle of tortures, at times calling out to them  
“ to swear, without being able to effect it. For Pontius, animated  
“ and established by his sister, as the Gentils also perceived, after  
“ having courageously endured every kind of torment, expired. But  
“ the blessed Blandina, the last of all, having like a good mother, en-  
“ couraged her children, and sent them before her victors to the  
“ King, after having again measured over the same course of com-  
“ bats, that her sons had passed through, hastened to them, rejoy-  
“ cing and exulting at her departure, as if she had been invited to a  
“ wedding supper, and not cast to wild-beasts. After she had been  
“ scourged, after she had been exposed to wild-beasts, and after the  
“ iron-chair, she was enclosed in a net, and thrown to a bull. Hav-  
“ ing been often tossed by the beast (though she was all the while  
“ insensible, by reason of hope, and a firm assent to what she believ-  
“ ed, and familiarly conversing with Christ,) she also was run thro’  
“ with a sword: The Gentils themselves acknowledged, that there  
“ never had been any woman among them, who had undergone so  
“ many

A. D.  
161.Rev. xxii.  
11.

“ many and so great sufferings. Nevertheless their cruel rage against  
 “ the saints was not yet satiated. . . . Their abuses began again in a new  
 “ and peculiar manner against the bodies of the saints. They were  
 “ not ashamed, that they had been vanquished by them. And, as if  
 “ destitute of human reason, and understanding, their rage was far-  
 “ ther enflamed. And the Governour, and the people, like a wild-  
 “ beast, manifested a like degree of hatred against us, that the scrip-  
 “ ture might be fulfilled, which saith: *He that is unjust, let him be*  
 “ *unjust still. And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still.*  
 “ Those who had been suffocated in prison, they cast to the dogs,  
 “ carefully watching them day and night, least any of us should in-  
 “ terr them. Then they laid out the remainders of the bodies, left  
 “ unconsumed by the fire, partly torn, and partly burnt, and the  
 “ heads of the rest, with the trunks of their bodies. All these they  
 “ kept unburied with a guard of soldiers many days. Some were  
 “ filled with indignation, and gnashed with their teeth at the dead,  
 “ as if desirous to be farther revenged upon them. Some insulted  
 “ over them, and derided them, at the same time extolling their  
 “ idols, and attributing to them the punishment, that had been in-  
 “ flicted on the martyrs. Some, who were more mild, and seemed  
 “ in some measure to sympathize with us, nevertheless upbraided  
 “ us, saying: *Where is their God? and of what benefit has their re-*  
 “ *ligion been to them, which they have preferred above their lives?* In  
 “ the mean time we were greatly concerned, that we could not  
 “ bury the bodies in the earth. For neither did the darknesse of  
 “ the night afford us any assistance, nor would money persuade, nor  
 “ entreaties prevail. But they continued to watch the bodies very  
 “ carefully, as if some great matter were to be gained by their not  
 “ being buried. After interposing here some things, says Eusebius,  
 “ they proceed. The bodies therefore of the martyrs having un-  
 “ dergone all manner of ignominie, and having lain exposed in the  
 “ air six days, were burnt. And having been reduced to ashes by  
 “ those impious men, were by them thrown into the river *Rbone*,  
 which

“ which runs hard by, that no remains of them might be any long-  
 “ er visible on this earth. Thus they acted, as if they could be too  
 “ hard for God, and prevent their reviviscence: or, as themselves  
 “ said, that they might have no hope of a resurrection: *trusting (t)*  
 “ *to which they have brought in among us a strange and new religion,*  
 “ and despising the heaviest sufferings, are ready to meet death with  
 “ chearfulnesse. Let us now see, whether they will rise again, and  
 “ whether their God is able to help them, and to deliver them out of  
 “ our hands.”

A. D.  
161.

“ Such things, adds Eusebius, at the begining of the next chap-  
 “ ter, befell these churches of Christ in the reign of the foremention-  
 “ ed Emperour. Whence it may be reasonably concluded, what  
 “ happened in the other provinces.”

By which we are led to believe, that Eusebius supposed, there was a general persecution of the Christians, throughout the Roman Empire at that time.

Eusebius goes on. And I shall continue to transcribe him, hoping that my readers may not be unwilling to admit of some prolixity upon this occasion.

“ But, says (u) Eusebius, in the words next following, it may  
 “ be worth the while to take somewhat more from that Epistle,  
 “ wherein the meeknesse and humanity of the forementioned mar-  
 “ tyrs is described, and in these words. “ Who also were so far fol-  
 “ lowers and imitators of Christ: *who being in the form of God, did* *Phil. ii.*  
 “ *not covet to appear like God:* that tho’ they were in so great glorie, *6.*  
 “ having suffered as martyrs, not once only, or twice, but often:  
 “ although they had been tossed by wild-beasts, and then committed  
 “ again to prison: although they had the marks of fire, and scars  
 “ and wounds all over them; they did not declare themselves to be  
 “ martyrs,

(t) . . . ἐφ’ ἧ πεποιθότες, ξένων τινα ἑκατοντῶν ἡμῶν ἐισάγασι θρησκείαν. P. 165. D.

(u) *Ib.* cap. 2. p. 166.

A. D.  
161.

Rev. i. 5.

1. Pet. v.  
6.Acts vii.  
6.

" martyrs, nor allow us to call them by that name. But if at any  
 " time any one of us, either in a letter, or in discourse, termed them  
 " martyrs, they reprov'd us sharply. But they readily ascribed the  
 " honour of martyrdom to Christ, *the faithfull and true witnesse, and*  
 " *the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the life of God.* They  
 " also commemorated the martyrs, who were already departed out  
 " of this life, and said: These now are martyrs, whom Christ has  
 " vouchsafed to take to himself, in the midst of their confession,  
 " sealing their martyrdom by their death. We are mean and hum-  
 " ble confessors. And with tears they besought the brethren, en-  
 " treating, that earnest prayers might be made for them, that they  
 " might be perfected. And they demonstrated the power of mar-  
 " tyrdom in fact, using great freedom of speech in all their answers  
 " to the Gentils, and manifesting (x) a greatnesse of mind in their pa-  
 " tience, fearlesnesse, and undaunted courage under all their suf-  
 " ferings. But they refused the appellation of martyrs from the  
 " brethren, being filled with the fear of God. Again, after some.  
 " few things they say: *They humbled themselves under the mighty band,*  
 " *by which they are now exalted:* they apologized for themselves to  
 " all, but accused none. They loosed all, but they bound none.  
 " They prayed for those who grievously treated them, as did Ste-  
 " phen the perfect martyr. *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*  
 " And if he prayed for those who stoned him, how much more for  
 " the brethren? And again, after a few other things, they say.  
 " For that was the greatest encounter, which they had with the ene-  
 " mie, proceeding from their genuine love. And the beast being  
 " strangled brought up again alive, those whom before he supposed  
 " he had digested. They did not proudly glory over those that fell.  
 " On such as were indigent they bestowed those good things with  
 " which themselves abounded: having motherly bowels of compas-  
 " sion,

(x) . . . ἢ τὴν εὐγένειαν διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ ἀφοβίας, καὶ ἀτρομίας φανερὰν ἐποίησαν. P.  
166. D.

“ sion, they poured out many tears for them to the Father. *They*  
 “ *asked life, and he gave it them.* Which also they imparted to their  
 “ neighbour. And having been in all things conquerours, they went  
 “ to God. They always loved peace, they always recommended  
 “ peace, and in peace they went to God. Leaving no grief to their  
 “ mother, nor contention and war among the brethren, but joy and  
 “ peace, and concord and love.”

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*Pfal. xxi.*  
4.

Eusebius still goes on in another chapter, which I shall likewise here transcribe.

“ Moreover, says (y) he, in the same epistle there is another  
 “ thing, well deserving to be taken notice of. It is to this purpose.  
 “ For *Alcibiades*, one of the martyrs, who led a very austere course  
 “ of life, and hitherto had fed upon bread and water only, and still  
 “ observing the same course of life in prison, it was revealed to *Atta-*  
 “ *lus*, after his first combat in the amphitheatre, that Alcibiades did  
 “ not do well, in not using the creatures of God, and was an occa-  
 “ sion of scandal to others. And Alcibiades submitted, and after that  
 “ partook of all sorts of food promiscuously, and gave God thanks.  
 “ For, adds Eusebius, they were not destitute of the grace of God,  
 “ but the Holy Spirit was their director.”

*1 Tim. iv.*  
4.

#### IV. I shall now make some remarks.

1. The fierceness of the persecution at Lyons must have continued for some good while, several months at least. This must be manifest to all, so that I need not add any thing to shew it.

*Remarks upon the foregoing Historie.*

2. Here is a proof of the great progress of the Christian religion in a short time. There were now two churches in that part of Gaul, one at *Lyons*, the other at *Vienne*. Pothinus, Bishop of the church of Lyons, was a venerable man, of great age. The number of Christians in those two places must have been very considerable.

E e 2

There

(y) *Ib. cap. 3. p. 167.*

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There were among them men of distinction for their knowledge and understanding. *Attalus*, and divers others, were Roman citizens. *Alexander* was by profession a Physician. There were among them men of substance, who had a number of slaves, some of which were Heathens, others Christians, one of whom was the admirable *Blandina*.

As it may be of use to cast some light upon this remarkable storie, and upon the Epistle which we have just seen, I shall now transcribe some (z) observations of Valesius. “ Here ariseth, sayth he, a two-  
“ fold question. The *first* is, why was this Epistle writ joyntly by the  
“ two churches of Vienne and Lyons. The other is, why these Gauls  
“ wrote in Greek, and to the churches of Asia and Phrygia. As  
“ for the first, I suppose the reason to be, that the churches of Vienne  
“ and Lyons were joyned together, not only by vicinity of place, but  
“ also by the bonds of mutual love. And since they had suffered toge-  
“ ther in the same persecution, they joyn together in an account of  
“ their martyrs. And both the provinces seem to have been un-  
“ der the jurisdiction of one and the same President. For these rea-  
“ sons they joyned together in this account. For whereas some  
“ have supposed, that there was but one Bishop only of these two ci-  
“ ties, they are confuted by the Epistle itself: which calls Pothinus  
“ Bishop of Lyons, not of Vienne. Moreover they of Lyons out  
“ of respect name those of Vienne first: forasmuch as they of Ly-  
“ ons wrote the Epistle, and give an account of what was done in  
“ their own city. As for the *second question*: we perceive from the  
“ Epistle itself, that there were many Greeks in the church of Lyons.  
“ *Attalus* and *Alexander* were Phrygians. And *Alcibiades* also, as  
“ I suppose, came from Phrygia. *Irenaeus* likewise was born in Asia,  
“ and when young, conversed with *Polycarp*. The name of *Po-*  
“ *thinus* denotes it to be of Greek original. It is no wonder there-  
“ fore, that they who came into Gaul from Asia, should write to  
“ their

(z) *Annot. in Euseb. p. 85. 86.*



“ their brethren in Asia: from whom also, as may be supposed, they had before received an Epistle concerning the death of Polycarp, and others.” So writes Valesius.

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Sulpicius Severus referring to this persecution, says, “ And (a) now first of all martyrdoms were seen in Gaul.” It is manifest, that there were now two churches, one at Vienne, another at Lyons, though the Bishop of the former city is not expressly named. These words are very remarkable. “ However, (b) from day to day such were taken up, as were worthie to supply the number of such as had gone off. So that the most eminent men of the two churches, by whom good order had been settled among us, were picked out, and brought together.” We cannot hence conclude, when conversions were first made in this countrey. But we can hence reasonably infer, that these two churches had been for some while in a flourishing condition. And that the eminent men, who had been the authors of the good order among them, were still living, and several of them “ now suffered martyrdom.

And we have reason to believe, that though these two societies underwent a severe shock at this time, they were not shattered, or broken to pieces. They may have recovered themselves and flourished again. For Irenaeus, who was now (c) Presbyter, succeeded Pothinus in the episcopate, and lived and wrote with great reputation after (d) this. His large and excellent work against Heresies in five books is a work of leisure, and must have been writ in a time of peace and tranquillity.

3. The sufferings, which the Christians now underwent, were various,

(a) Sub Aurelio deinde, Antonini filio, persecutio quinta agitata. Ac tum primum intra Gallias, martyria visa: Serius trans Alpes, Dei religione suscepta. *Sul. Sev. l. 2 cap. 46.*

σίαν πάντας τὸς σπουδαίους, καὶ δι' αὐτὴν μάλιστ' αὐτοὺς συνέσκηκε τὰ ἐνθάδε. *P. 156. C.*

(c) *Euseb. l. 5. cap. iv.*

(d) *See the Credib. P. 2. Vol. i. p. 343. &c.*

(b) . . . ὡσεὶ συλλεγῆναι ἐκ τῶν δύο ἐκκλη-

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various, and very grievous. They need not to be here particularly rehearsed. We might have been apt to think, that the accounts of the Christians sufferings, which we meet with in Lactantius, and other ancient Apologists, are oratorical exaggeration. But here is an authentic account of eye-witnesses and fellow-sufferers, which assures us, that it is all matter of fact.

Such things may be thought to be a reflexion upon the Roman government. But we are to consider, that the Romans, and many other people at that time, were accustomed to the inhuman spectacles of gladiators, and that excessive cruelty was then practised upon many occasions. Since which time, the farther progress of the Christian religion has in a great degree corrected and mollified the tempers of men in this part of the world. We ought likewise to consider, that the sufferers, whose historie we have been reading, were Christians, whom many then thought to be the most contemptible of all men, and not entitled to the common rights of the human kind.

The excessive and repeated sufferings of Blandina were very extraordinary. But she was a slave, and therefore despised. And in the eye of prejudiced idolaters the provocation was very great, that she, a woman, and a slave, should withstand all attempts to induce her to pay homage to their deities.

Attalus was a Roman Citizen, and should have been beheaded. But being a Christian, his privilege was not allowed. The multitude demanded, that he should be tortured, and thrown to wild-beasts. And the President granted their request, relying, undoubtedly, upon impunity, though he acted contrarie to law. Such was the hard condition of the Christians at that time!

The persecution at Lyons was very severe. The tortures, made use of, were grievous, and various. And the sufferers were numerous. By the edict of Trajan, such Christians as were brought before a Governour's tribunal, and were convicted, were to be punished.

ed. *But they are not to be sought for, says that Emperour. But (e) the President at Lyons issued out public orders, that strict searches should be made for them.*

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4. The sufferings of these Christians in Gaul, cannot but be (f) a disparagement to the Emperour Mark Antonin. He could not be unacquainted with them, though he had not been applied to about them. But he was applied to. The Governour wrote to him for direction. *And he wrote back, that they who confessed themselves Christians should be put to death: but that they who denied it, might be set at liberty.* Certainly, Mark deserves to be put in the number of persecuting Emperours. If he had only connived at the sufferings, (as he may have done in some places,) that would not exculpate him: when he might have restrained and forbid them by his imperial authority. But here is a Rescript, with an order, that all, who upon examination confessed themselves to be Christians, *should be put to death.* And such Rescripts may have been sent by him to other Governours, and to other provinces.

Some may think, that (g) this Emperour was hardened by the principles of his sect. Nevertheless, I think, that will not fully account for his cruel treatment of the Christians. It was owing to want of equity to them. And he was a bigot to his religion, as well as to his philosophie. And he had been so from his childhood. For he could shew tenderesse enough for some men. As Tillemont said:  
some.

(e) ... ἐπει δημοσία ἐκέλευσεν ὁ ἡγεμὼν, ἀναζητεῖσθαι πάντας ἡμῶς. P. 156. D.

(f) Hic finis suppliciorum in Lugdunensi provinciâ fuit, quae mirum est, Marci Aurelii temporibus de innocentibus potuisse sumi, eâ tantum de Caussâ, quod Ethnicorum sacra suscipere nollent. . . . Haec ergo erit macula, quâ boni alias viri vita iniusta, infamem eum, crudelis superstitionis causâ, omnibus secu-

lis faciet, et philosophiae Stoicae contemptum merito creabit. Cleric. H. E. ann. 167. n. xv.

(g) Igitur tragice Christianos mori, non philosophice, censebat. Hinc etiam malis, quibus afficiebatur, parum movebatur, immo ex praescripto sectae, cui parebat, moveri nullo modo debuit. *Mem. ubi supra. p. 246.*

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some while (*b*) ago: "There were many instances of mildness in the reign of this Emperour, and very few of severity, excepting against the Christians, who the least deserved it."

However, it must be owned, that (*i*) the beginning of this persecution at Lyons was not owing to any new edicts, or to any express orders from the Emperour. For when the President perceived that Attalus was a Roman Citizen, he sent him back to those who were in prison. And wrote to the Emperour for directions, how to act toward those prisoners. And he deferred to proceed any farther, till he had received an answer from Him. Which answer was such, as we have just taken notice of. Indeed the persecutions in many places were very much owing to the clamours of the common people. So Eusebius, as we may remember, says in the preface to this fifth book of his Ecclesiastical Historie, and to his account of the persecutions in this reign: *At (k) which time, says he, the persecution against us raged with great violence in several parts of the world, through the enmity (or instigation) of the people.*

5. I presume it may be hence apparent, that the Emperour, and the Governour at Lyons, were persuaded of the innocence of the Christians: or, that they were not guilty of the crimes, sometimes imputed to them by the credulous, ignorant, and spitefull vulgar. If they had believed, that the Christians practised promiscuous lewdness in their assemblies, and that they killed, and ate little children, they would not so readily have set at liberty all who renounced Christianity. Which we see they did, or were willing to do. And with great regret they saw any who had once renounced Christianity, return to the profession of it. It is manifest, that they envied them the honour of it. Moreover, we plainly see throughout this narrative, that they who

(*b*) See before. p. 180.

(*i*) Inde collige, hanc persecutionem sine novis Imperatorum edictis motam esse. Ruinart. *Acta Mart. sincera*. p. 67.

(*k*) ... ἀναρρίπισθέντος τῶ καθ' ἡμῶν διωγμῶ ἐξ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν κατὰ τὰς πόλεις διημῶν... P. 153.

who suffered, suffered as Christians. When *Vettius Epagathus* would have apologized for them, the Governour refused to grant his request. And upon his owning himself a Christian, He committed him to prison with this character, *The Advocate of the Christians*. The title carried before *Attalus* was: *This is Attalus, the Christian*. Other things might be added to shew, that the contest between the accusers and the accused was of a religious kind. *Pothinus* was asked by the Governour, *who was the God of the Christians*. And *Attalus* was asked, *what was God's name*. When *Blandina* and *Ponticus* were brought in, *they were required to swear by the Heathen Deities*. And under their tortures they were again and again called upon *to swear*. That was all that was wanted. And they not complying, neither the Governour, nor the multitude, had any compassion upon them. When the executions were over, the Heathens insulted the bodies of the martyrs, and ascribed the victorie, which they had obtained, to their deities. And they did all they could to defeat the hope of a resurrection, as knowing it to be a principle, that had greatly contributed to the resolution and fortitude of the Christians under all the sufferings, which they had seen them endure.

6. The fortitude of the Christians at Lyons was truly admirable, and heroical. The sufferings set before them were very grievous. But neither death itself, nor all the preceding tortures inflicted upon them, could terrify them, or induce them to depart from their steadfastness. The (1) number of these patient sufferers was very great. Many were suffocated in prison, none of whom are expressly mentioned by name, beside *Pothinus*. The mistress of *Blandina* was among

(1) ... ἰδίᾳ μὲν τῶν ἀποτιμήσει κεφαλῆς τετελειωμένων· ἰδίᾳ δὲ τῶν θηροῖν εἰσβορᾶν παραβελλημένων· καὶ αὐτῆς τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς εἰρκτῆς κεκοιμημένων. *Euseb. H. E. l. 5. cap. 4. p. 168.*

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among the confessors or martyrs, but her name is not mentioned. Several Roman Citizens were beheaded, as is expressly said in the narrative. But none of their names are mentioned. Attalus was a Roman Citizen: but he had not the privilege of the city allowed him. Moreover among the remains of the dead, were heads and trunks of bodies: which must have been the remains of Roman Citizens, no others having been put to death by separating the head from the body. Some gave way. But a great part of these afterwards recovered themselves, and made a right confession, in defiance of the sufferings, by which they had been once terrified, and which they might now again justly expect. The rest were all along steadfast in their confession. And these were by much the majority of such as were publicly examined at the Governour's tribunal.

The testimonie of these men is very valuable. They are not such witnesses, as the apostles, and others, who were eye-witnesses of Christ, and his miracles. But they lived at a time, when the evidences of the truth of the Christian religion might be easily traced to the first original. Irenaeus, now a Presbyter in the church of Lyons, afterwards Bishop of the same church, in his younger days, was (*m*) well acquainted with Polycarp, disciple of St. John. Pothinus, now Bishop of Lyons, who was older than Irenaeus, and now suffered martyrdom, when he was ninety years of age, may be well supposed to have been acquainted with some of the first succession of Bishops, or Christians, next after that of the Apostles.

All these martyrs must have been firmly persuaded of the truth, and divine original of the Christian religion, and all the principles of it. They had embraced it upon the ground of such evidence, as appeared to them sufficient and satisfactorie. And, as their enemies themselves saw, and acknowledged, *they preferred their religion above their lives.* They believed, as they supposed, upon good ground, that Jesus Christ was a divine teacher, sent from God. They were,

(*m*) See the Credib. P. 2. Vol. i. p. 192. &c.

were, in particular, firmly persuaded, of the truth of his doctrine concerning future rewards for the good, and punishments for the wicked, and were thereby engaged to the sincere profession of the truth, and the abhorrence of falshood. Their knowledge of the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and their respect for them, are manifest from their frequent allusions to them, or quotations of (n) them.

7. They seem to have had among them gifts of the Spirit. Eusebius says, *they were not destitute of the grace of God, and the Holy Ghost was their director.* Of Alexander the writers of this Epistle say, *he was known to almost all men for his boldnesse in preaching the word. For he was not destitute of apostolic grace.* They likewise say of Attalus, *that after his first combat, it was revealed to him, that Alcibiades did not do well, in not using the creatures of God, and Alcibiades acquiesced, and thenceforward partook of all sorts of food promiscuously.* And it may deserve to be considered, that Attalus was a Roman Citizen, and not a mean person. To me those expressions likewise appear remarkable, where they say of these Confessors: *They demonstrated in fact the power of martyrdom, using great freedom of speech in all their answers to the Gentils, and manifesting a greatnesse of mind in their patience, fearlesnesse, and undaunted courage, under all their sufferings.* Certainly, the Christian sufferers had the presence of God with them. All men around them were adversaries. But God did not forsake them. He strengthened, and supported them.

8. Finally, by the example of these patient and victorious Confessors and Martyrs, let us be animated and encouraged to steadinesse in the cause of truth: humbly depending upon God, and earnestly praying, that we may have strength from above, equal to the trials, which we may meet with. For it is better to suffer for truth and

F f 2

virtue,

(n) *Their testimonie to the Scriptures makes a distinct chapter in the Credibility &c. P. 2. Vol. i. p. 332. &c.*

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virtue, though we should be put into the iron chair with Attalus, or be hung upon a stake, like Blandina, than to be a persecuting Judge upon a tribunal, or a persecuting Emperour upon a throne.

What is above was intended for the conclusion of this article. But some may be of opinion, that to my own thoughts upon this subject I ought to add the observations of that fine writer, and good Christian, Mr. Joseph Addison. “ Under (*o*) this head, says he, I cannot  
 “ omit that, which appears to me a standing miracle in the three first  
 “ centuries: I mean that amazing and supernatural courage or pa-  
 “ tience, which was shewn by innumerable multitudes of martyrs,  
 “ in those slow and painfull torments that were inflicted on them. I  
 “ cannot conceive a man placed in the burning iron chair at Lyons,  
 “ amidst the insults and mockeries of a crouded amphitheatre, and  
 “ still keeping his seat: or stretched upon a grate of iron, over coals  
 “ of fire, and breathing out his soul among the exquisite sufferings of  
 “ such a tedious execution, rather than renounce his religion, or  
 “ blaspheme his Saviour. Such tryals seem to me above the strength  
 “ of human nature, and able to over-bear duty, reason, faith, con-  
 “ viction, nay, and the most absolute certainty of a future state. Hu-  
 “ manity, unassisted in an extraordinary manner, must have shaken  
 “ off the present pressure, and have delivered itself out of such a  
 “ dreadful distress, by any means that could have been suggested to  
 “ it. We can easily imagine, that many persons, in so good a cause,  
 “ might have laid down their lives at the gibbet, the stake, or the  
 “ block: but to expire leisurely among the most exquisite tortures,  
 “ when they might come out of them, even by a mental reserva-  
 “ tion, or an hypocrisie, which is not without the possibility of be-  
 “ ing followed by repentance and forgiveness, has something in it,  
 “ so far beyond the force and natural strength of mortals, that one  
 “ cannot

(\*) *Addison of the Christian Religion. Sect. vii. numb. iv. p. 314.*



“ cannot but think, there was some miraculous power to support the  
“ sufferer.” So Mr. Addifon.

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The THIRD SECTION.

A remarkable Deliverance of this Emperour  
in his Wars in Germanie, and the historie  
of the Thundering Legion considered.

- I. *A general Account of the Deliverance obtained by  
Mark Antonin in Germanie, in the Year 174.* II.  
*The account given by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical  
Historie, where that deliverance is ascribed to the  
Prayers of a Legion of Christians in the Emperour's  
Armie.* III. *Observations upon that Historie.* IV. *A  
Summarie of the Argument.*

I. **T**HERE is yet one thing more relating to this Emperour,  
which must be taken notice of. If upon inquirie it should  
appear to be of small importance, some may be of opi-  
nion, that it might have been passed by in silence, or but slightly  
mentioned. On the other hand, since some have judged it to be of  
great moment, and there have been many controversies about it, in  
which

*A remark-  
able De-  
liverance  
of this  
Emperour  
in his  
Wars in  
Germanie.*

A. D. 161. which learned men of great eminence, on each side, have been engaged, it may be justly supposed to deserve particular consideration.

When Mark Antonin was engaged in a difficult war with the Quadi, a people in Germanie, in (a) the fourteenth year of his reign, and of our Lord 174. he was reduced to great straits, his armie being in want of water. Whilst they were in that distresse, there came a very seasonable and plentiful shower of rain, which refreshed him, and his soldiers. And he obtained a victorie over his enemies. This deliverance has been thought by many to have been miraculous, owing to the prayers of the Christians, who were in the Roman armie. And it has been supposed, that thereupon the Emperour wrote a letter to the Senate, which was very favorable to the Christians.

The Account of Eusebius.

II. I shall begin with reciting what Eusebius says of this matter in his Ecclesiastical Historie.

“ It (b) is said, that when Marcus Aurelius had drawn out his  
 “ forces against the Germans and Sarmatians, his armie was brought  
 “ into a great streight by reason of drought, so that he knew not  
 “ what course to take: That the soldiers of the Legion, called the  
 “ Melitenian Legion, which still subsists as a reward of their faith,  
 “ when the armies were going to engage, falling down to the earth  
 “ upon their knees, according to our usual custom in prayer, offered  
 “ up requests to God: That the enemies were greatly surprized at  
 “ that wonderfull sight, and that, as is (c) said, there soon after  
 “ followed a thing more wonderfull, a violent lightening, which  
 “ put the enemies to flight, and destroyed them: and also a show-  
 “ er,

(a) Vid. Pagi ann. 174. n. ii. Bafnog.  
 174. n. i. Ec. et Cleric. Hist. Ec. ann.  
 174.

(b) ... λόγος ἔχει. κ. λ. H. E. l. 5.  
 c. 5. p. 169. Ec.

(c) ... ἀλλό τι λόγος ἔχει. P. 169.  
 B.

“ er, which fell upon that armie, which had prayed to God, and  
 “ refreshed it, when they were all ready to perish with thirst. This  
 “ is related by such writers as are far from embracing our religion, but  
 “ were concerned to record the events of those times. It is also re-  
 “ lated by our authors. By other writers, who were averse to our  
 “ religion, the (*d*) wonderfull event is recorded. But they do not  
 “ acknowledge, that it was owing to the prayers of our people. But  
 “ by our authors, who were lovers of truth, what happened is related  
 “ in a plain and ingenuous manner. One of them is Apollinarius,  
 “ who says, that from that time the Legion, by whose prayers that  
 “ wonderfull deliverance was obtained, was by the Emperour’s order  
 “ called (*e*) in the Roman language, the Thunder-bolt Legion, a  
 “ name suited to the event. Tertullian is another witness, wor-  
 “ thie of credit: who in his Apologie for our faith, addressed to the  
 “ Roman Senate, in the Latin tongue, (of which we also before  
 “ made mention) strongly confirms the truth of this historie: say-  
 “ ing, that there is still extant the letter of that worthie Emperour,  
 “ Mark, in which he testifies, that when his armie was in great  
 “ danger of perishing in Germanie for want of water, it was saved  
 “ by the prayers of the Christians. He likewise says, that the same  
 “ Emperour threatened the punishment of death to such as should  
 “ accuse them. But (*f*) of these things let every one judge as he  
 “ sees fit. We now proceed in the course of our historie to other  
 “ matters.”

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III. I now intend to make some Observations, for clearing up  
 this Historie.

*Obs.* I. It seems, that Eusebius did not relye upon the truth of  
 this

*Observa-  
tions upon  
this Hi-  
storie.*

(*d*) . . . τίθειται μὲν τὸ παράδοξον. *P.*  
169. *C.*

(*e*) . . . κεραυνοβάλον τῆ Ῥωμαίων ἐπικλη-  
θεῖσαν φωνῆ. *P.* 169. *D.*

(*f*) Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ὅπη τις ἐθέλη τρ-  
βέσθω. Μετῴμεν δὲ ἡμῶς ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν ἐξῆς  
ἀκολουθίαν. *Ib.* p. 170. *A. B.*

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this historie. For, as we have seen, he begins the account in this manner. *It is said.* And in the end he leaves every one to judge of it, as he sees good. A like observation has been already made by (g) divers learned men.

*Obs.* 2. Eusebius quotes Apollinarius, as saying, that by Mark's order, there was a legion called the thundering, or thunder-bolt legion, in memorie of the wonderfull event here spoken of. But (b) he does not quote the words of Apollinarius, nor name the book, in which he said it. And moreover, it has been observed by learned men of late times, that (i) there had been a legion with that denomination, long before the times of Mark Antonin.

*Obs.*

(g) Sed et verba, quibus totam hanc narrationem concludit, satis indicant, ipsum de veritate rei dubitasse. Sic enim ait: *Αλλά ταῦτα μὲν ὅπη τις ἐθέλη τι θεῖσθαι.* Id est, sed de his quisque pro arbitrio suo judicet. *Vales. in loc. p. 93.*

Equidem, si certum fuisset, et a legione Christianorum advocatum fuisse imbrem, et Marcum hoc scripsisse Senatui, nunquam narrationi suae colophonem ejusmodi imposuisset Eusebius: *Sed de his quisque pro suo arbitratu statuatur.* Indicio, Eusebium ipsum ea de traditione dubitasse, etsi Tertulliani verba immutârît, omisso forte adverbio, quod habet Tertullianus. *Besnag. ann. 154. n. viii.*

(b) Qui et in eo peccat, quod Apollinaris locum non protulit, nec librum ipsum, in quo haec Apollinaris scripserat, indicavit. *Vales. ib.*

Le premier de ceux qu' Eusebe allegue sur ce sujet est S. Apollinaire Evêque d' Hieraple, dont le temoignage est d'autant plus authentique, qu'il vivoit au mesme

temps que ce miracle arriva. Mais il seroit à souhaiter, qu' Eusebe nous eust rapportée ses propres paroles. *Tillem. L'Emp. M. Aurele. art. xvi.*

(i) Jamdudum monuit Scaliger in Animadversionibus Eusebianis, legionem fulminatricem ab hoc miraculo cognominatam non fuisse, quippe quae diu ante tempora M. Antonini ita vocata fuerit. Docet id manifeste Dio Cassius in libro 55. ubi legiones omnes enumerat. Vetus quoque inscriptio, a Scaligero probata, id ipsum confirmat. Quamobrem de ipso quidem miraculo pluviae a Christianis militibus impetratae, et Apollinari et Tertulliano testantibus, facile credimus: legionem vero Melitinam ob id fulminatricem esse dictam a M. Antonino Imp. nondum mihi persuasit Apollinaris. Dicit fortasse aliquis, fulminatricem quidem legionem fuisse ante tempora M. Antonini, sed Marcum ob acceptum a Melitina legione beneficium, ei quoque fulminatricis cognomen indidisse. Verum, si ita esset, secunda

*Obs.* 3. Eusebius calls it the Melitenian Legion, or the Legion of Melitene, τὴς δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς Μελιτινῆς ἔτω καλεμένης λεγεῶνος στρατιώτας. If there was any legion so called, it is likely, that it had it's denomination from Melitene in Cappadocia, where the soldiers, of which it was composed, had been enlisted, or where it had resided. And it appears from writers of good authority, that (*k*) the twelfth legion, called also the thunderbolt-legion, was sometimes quartered in Cappadocia. However, Valesius denies, that (*l*) there was any legion called the Melitenian legion.

*Obs.* 4. Eusebius seems to have supposed, that the legion, of which he speaks, consisted chiefly, or entirely, of Christians: whereas it is not easie to think so of any legion at that time. There (*m*) may have been Christian soldiers in Mark's armie. But it is altogether improbable, that there should then have been an entire legion of Christians, or near it.

*Obs.* 5. Eusebius quotes Tertullian, as of great weight in this matter. *Tertullian*, says he, *is another witness worthe of credit: who in his Apologie for our faith, addressed to the Roman Senate, in the Latin tongue, strongly confirms the truth of this historie, saying, that there is still extant the letter of that worthe Emperour Mark, in which he testifies, that when his armie was in great danger of perishing in*  
Ger-

fecunda fulminatrix dici debuerat. Dio tamen nullamejus mentionem facit, quamvis omnes legiones a superioribus principibus conscriptas accurate recenset. *Vales. ib.*

(*k*) Καὶ τὸ δωδέκατον τὸ ἐν Καππαδοκίᾳ, τὸ κεραυνόφορον. *Dio. Cass. l. 55. p. 564. al. 795. Vid. ibid. annotata a Reimaro. Et conf. Gruter. p. cxciii. 3.*

(*l*) Itaque quod de Legione Melitina tradit Eusebius, parum mihi probabile videtur. Adde quod Rufinus hoc legionis

nomen consulto, ut arbitror, praetermisit: quippe qui nosset, Melitinam nomen esse oppidi minoris Armeniae, in quo legio 12. fulminea, adhuc sua aetate praetenderet. *Vales. ib. p. 92. Et Conf. Basn. ann. 174. n. v.*

(*m*) Ceterum ut ingenue dicam quod sentio, parum mihi probabile videtur, totam legionem militum Romanorum eo tempore Christianam fuisse, quod tamen affirmare videtur Eusebius. *Vales. ut supra.*

A. D. 161. Germanie, for want of water, it was saved by the prayers of the Christians. . . .

Now I shall transcribe below (*n*) the passage of Tertullian from his Apologie, in his own words.

In English they are to this purpose. “ Nero and Domitian have been our enemies. But among good Emperours we can allege a patron. If the epistle of that worthie Emperour Marcus Aurelius, be sought for, it will perhaps be seen, that he ascribes his deliverance from a great drought in the German war to the prayers of Christian soldiers.” I shall put below also (*o*) the account, which we find in Eusebe’s Chronicle, as we have it in Jerome’s Latin translation. And now it will be proper to make some remarks, upon what we have just seen.

1.) Hence it seems, that Eusebius chiefly relied upon Tertullian for the truth of this relation. He quotes him with the character of an author of good credit. He also mentions the name of his work, whereas he omits the title of the work of Apollinarius, to which he refers.

2.) Eusebius never saw any letter of the Emperour, in which he ascribed his deliverance in Germanie, to the prayers of Christian soldiers.

(*n*) At nos e contrario edimus protectorem. Si literae Marci Aurelii gravissimi Imperatoris requirantur, quibus illam Germanicam sitim, Christianorum forte militum precationibus impetrato imbri discussam contestatur. Sicut non palam ab ejusmodi hominibus poenam dimovit, ita alio modo palam dispersit, adjecta etiam accusatoribus damnatione, et quidem tertiore. *Ap. cap. 5. p. 6. D.*

(*o*) Imperator Antoninus multis adversum se nascentibus bellis saepe ipse inte-

rerat, saepe duces nobilissimos destinabat: in quibus semel Pertinaci, et exercitui, qui cum eo in Quadorum regione pugnavat, siti oppresso, pluvia divinitus missa est: quum e contrario Germanos et Sarmatas fulmina persequerentur, et plurimos eorum interficerent. Exstant literae M. Aurelii gravissimi Imperatoris, quibus illam Germanicam sitim Christianorum forte militum precationibus impetrato imbri discussam contestatur. *Euseb. Chron. p. 170.*

diers. If he had met with it, he would have inserted it in his Ecclesiastical Historie. So (*p*) says the great Joseph Scaliger.

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3.) Nor had Tertullian seen any such letter. He does not say, that he had seen it. And in the Latin original of Tertullian's Apologie, and also as cited in the Latin edition of Eusebe's Chronicle, there is an unlucky *forte*, or *perhaps*: wherein he seems to express a doubt, whether the Emperour did in his letter to the Senate expressly acknowledge, that his deliverance in a time of great drought was owing to the prayers of Christians. . . quibus illam Germanicam sitim Christianorum forte militum precationibus impetrato imbri discussam contestatur. This does not appear in Eusebe's Greek translation of Tertullian, which he inserts in his Ecclesiastical Historie. . . . ἐν αἷς αὐτὸς μαρτυρεῖ . . . ταῖς τῶν χριστιανῶν ἐυχαῖς σεσῶσθαι. Possibly, some may think, that we ought not to lay much streffe upon this observation. Nevertheless, it must be allowed, that if this *forte*, *perhaps*, has no meaning, it comes in here very unhappily. Nor am I the first, who have mentioned it. Basnage (*q*) also supposeth it a proof, that neither Tertullian, nor Jerome, who so alledgeth it in the Chronicle, had seen the Emperour's letter.

Before I proceed any farther, it may be observed, that in his book to Scapula Tertullian speaks again of this matter, where he says: " And (*r*) Marcus Aurelius in a German war, where he was in

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" danger

(*p*) Non igitur illam epistolam vidit, [Orosius,] non magis quam Tertullianus. Quinetiam ea non exstabat tempore Eusebii. Eam enim Graece a se conversam in sua Historia Ecclesiastica posuisset, quae est ejus diligentia, nulla ejusmodi praetermittere, ne Latina quidem, quae ipse convertere solet, ut multa ex Tertulliano. *Scal. in Euseb. p. 222. fn.*

(*q*) Si Marci literae exstitissent de impetrato a Christianis imbre, vix ac ne vix

quidem magnum Eusebium in conquirendis ejusmodi monumentis diligentiam effugissent. Atqui in has literas Christianorum nemo est, qui se conjecisse oculos scripto prodiderit. Non Tertullianus, non Eusebius, immo non Hieronymus, cujus haec verba sunt. . . . Dixisset ne *Christianorum forte militum precationibus*, si literas perlegisset? Siccine Marcus Senatus scripsit? *Basnag. ann 174 n. viii.*

(*r*) Marcus quoque Aurelius in Germanica

A. D. 161. “danger by a great drought, obtained rain by the prayers which the Christian soldiers offered to God.” But here he says nothing of the Emperour’s letter.

We now proceed to some other observations.

*Obs. 6.* There is little notice taken of this event in the most ancient Christian writers.

It would be without reason for any to allege here so late writers as (*s*) Nicephorus Callisti, and (*t*) Zonaras. I now intend early writers of the second, third, and fourth centurie. If indeed Mark Antonin had obtained a signal deliverance in a hazardous war, and had acknowledged the benefit to be owing to the Christian soldiers in his armie: we might expect to see particular notice taken of it, in Christian apologies, and other writings of Christian authors, published not long afterwards. I allow, that there is a reference to this storie in one (*u*) of Gregorie Nyssen’s homilies, near the end of the fourth centurie. But (*x*) I think, that if an Heathen Emperour and his armie had obtained a very extraordinarie deliverance by the prayers of

in anica expeditione Christianorum militum orationibus ad Deum factis, imbres in siti illa impetravit. *Ad Scap. cap. iv. p. 87. D.*

(*s*) *Niceph. Cal. l. 4. cap. 12. p. 297. &c.*

(*t*) *Zon. Ann. Tom. 2. p. 207.*

(*u*) *De quadr. Martyr. Or. 2. T. 3. p. 505.*

(*x*) Cum igitur ostensum sit, neque Romano in exercitu Christianam fuisse legionem, neque Marci animum id subisse cogitationis, quod a Christianis pluvia sit impetrata, consentaneum est, nullas Patribus Conscriptis a Marco literas datas esse, quibus hoc maximi beneficii Christianis scriberet. Quae res aliunde non pertinuis patefit argumentis. Post exhaustum bellum Marcomannicum scripta est Melitonis apologia, consorte jam imperii Commodo. Quo potius argumento uti Melito debuit, extinguendae persecutioni, quam beneficio, quo Marcus a Christianis affectus fuerat, dum una cum exercitu pene siti conficiebatur? Quod tamen argumenti non attulit. . . . At immerito negatur, Athenagorae apologiam Marcomannico bello fuisse posteriorem. Quid, meminitne Athenagoras pluviae a Christianis impetratae, ut eo beneficio Marci in memoriam revocato, miseris undique vexatis, benevolentiam conciliaret? At qui certe certoque meminisset. Inmo ea de re scriptas ad Senatum literas memorasset. *Basnag. ann. 174. n. vii.*

tum bellum Marcomannicum scripta est Melitonis apologia, consorte jam imperii Commodo. Quo potius argumento uti Melito debuit, extinguendae persecutioni, quam beneficio, quo Marcus a Christianis affectus fuerat, dum una cum exercitu pene siti conficiebatur? Quod tamen argumenti non attulit. . . . At immerito negatur, Athenagorae apologiam Marcomannico bello fuisse posteriorem. Quid, meminitne Athenagoras pluviae a Christianis impetratae, ut eo beneficio Marci in memoriam revocato, miseris undique vexatis, benevolentiam conciliaret? At qui certe certoque meminisset. Inmo ea de re scriptas ad Senatum literas memorasset. *Basnag. ann. 174. n. vii.*



of Christian soldiers in the year of Christ 174. and he had ascribed it to their prayers in a letter to the Senate, it would have been mentioned by many Christian writers, both Greek and Latin, before the end of the fourth centurie. This argument is largely insisted on by Basnage, whose words I have just now transcribed below. And this is also one of Mr. Moyle's arguments. It is his fifth proposition.

“That (y) the Christians in general did not believe this miracle, notwithstanding the testimonie of Apollinaris and Tertullian.”

“For this, says he, no better argument can be alledged, than the silence of all the Christian writers of the third centurie: not one of whom, except Tertullian, that I ever read or heard of, has made the least mention of this miracle. Is it possible, that so signal a testimonie, in favour of Christianity, could escape the knowledge and industrie of so many able Apologists, as wrote after Tertullian? Could they have failed to urge so strong an argument against the Heathens, as a miracle so publicly avouched and attested, and owned, as is pretended, by imperial edicts? No other rational account can be given for this silence, but that they gave no credit to the storie, and were too wise to expose their religion to the scorn of the Heathens, by employing so mean an artifice to defend it.”

“Eusebius, though he has given a full relation of the miracle in all it's circumstances, yet it appears plainly, by the close of his narration, that he did not believe it, as Valefius rightly observes. So that the whole credit of this miracle rests on the authority of Apollinaris and Tertullian. As for the first, I know little of his character, his works, I think, being all lost. But it is remarkable; that the only particular, which is preserved of his relation, is undoubtedly false. Tertullian wanted neither wit nor learning: but he must be allowed to be a very credulous writer, and an errant enthusiast.” So Mr. Moyle.

*Obs.*

(y) *Moyle's Works. Vol. 2. p. 97.*

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*Obs.* 7. Paulus Orosius, a Christian historian, who flourished not far from the beginning of the fifth centurie, and is placed by Cave at the year 416. gives a particular account of this Emperour's war with the Marcomans, Quadians, and other people in Germanie. " He  
 " says, that (z) the Roman armie was in a great strait, and likely to  
 " be overpowered by the enemie, and that the greatest danger was  
 " owing to a drought, which oppressed the Romans: that by the  
 " prayers of a few and illiterate soldiers, who openly, and with a  
 " lively faith, invoked the name of Christ, a plentiful shower was  
 " obtained from heaven, by which Antonin's armie was refreshed:  
 " At the same time lightening and hail fell upon the Germans, by  
 " which they were greatly annoyed, and many of them were killed.  
 " Whereupon the Romans fell upon them, and cut them almost  
 " all off, and gained a very glorious victorie. And it is said, that  
 " there still is in the hands of many persons a letter of the Emperour  
 " Antonin, in which he acknowledgeth, that the drought was re-  
 " moved, and the victorie obtained, by means of an invocation made  
 " of the name of Christ by Christian soldiers."

Whence

(z) Hoc quidem bellum [Marcomanicum] providentia Dei administratum fuisse, cum plurimis argumentis, tum precipue epistolâ gravissimi ac modestissimi Imperatoris apertissime declaratum est. Nam cum insurrexissent gentes immanitate barbarae, multitudine innumerabiles, hoc est, Marcomanni, Quadi, Vandali, Sarmatae, Suevi, atque omnis tunc Germania, et in Quadorum usque fines progressus exercitus, circumventusque ab hostibus, propter aquarum penuriam, praesentius fitis quam hostis periculum sustineret: ad invocationem nominis Christi, quam subito magna fidei constantiâ quidam milites effusi in preces palam fece-

runt, et tanta vis pluviae effusa est, ut Romanos quidem largissime, ac sine injuria resecerit, barbaros autem crebris fulminum ictibus perterritos, praesertim cum plurimi eorum occiderentur, in fugam coegerit. Quorum terga Romani usque ad interneccionem caedentes gloriosissimam victoriam et omnibus pene antiquorum titulis praeserendum, rudi parvoque militum numero, sed potentissimo Christi auxilio, reportarunt. Estare etiam nunc apud plerosque dicuntur literae Imperatoris Antonini, ubi invocatione nominis Christi per milites Christianos, et fitim depulsam, et collatam fatetur fuisse victoriam. *Oros. l. 7. cap. 15.*

Whence it is evident, that Orofius had never feen fuch a letter of Mark Antonin. And it may be argued, that there was not then extant any fuch letter. For if there had, Orofius, a learned and in- quifitive man, and a writer of hiftorie, would not have failed to pro- cure it. It is alfo very obfervable, that Orofius mentions not any legion by name, neither the Melitenian Legion, nor the Thunder- bolt Legion. Nor do any fuch expreffions proceed from him, as fhould lead us to think, there was then a legion of fouldiers in Mark's armie. Nay, he plainly fuppoſeth, that they were few in number. Finally, we may from all theſe particulars be diſpoſed to think, that Orofius took the account entirely from Tertullian. For he omits di- vers things, which are in Eufebius. And there is a great reſemblance in their expreffions. Both ſay, the (a) drought was removed by the prayers of Chriſtian ſouldiers. Tertullian (b) calls Antonin a worthie Emperour. So does Orofius in the ſame, or like words. And they both ſpeak at the ſame time with a like affurance, and a like diffi- dence, or uncertainty, about the Emperour's letter. Which neither of them had feen.

*Obf.* 8. Undoubtedly, Mark Antonin ſent a letter to the Senate of Rome, giving an account of his deliverance, and of the victorie, which he had obtained over the Quadians, and others, in Germanie. Which letter, as is (c) reaſonably ſuppoſed, was writ in the Latin tongue. But we do not meet with any ancient authors, who appear to have feen it.

However,

(a) . . . quibus illam Germanicam ſi- tim Chriſtianorum forte militum precati- onibus . . . diſcuſſam. . . *Tertull.*

Ubi invocatione nominis Chriſti, per milites Chriſtianos, et ſitim depulſam. &c. *Orof.*

(b) Si literae Marci Aurelii graviffimi Imperatoris requirantur. *Tertull.*

. . . tum praecipue epiftolâ graviffimâ ac modeſtiſſimi Imperatoris. *Orof.*

(c) . . . Latinae ſcilicet, quarum me- minit Tertullianus, cap. quinto Apolog. Non enim aliâ linguâ, quam Latinâ, ad Senatum ſcribebat. *Scalig. in Eufeb. p. 222. fin.*

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However, (d) there is extant a letter, both in Greek and Latin, which I shall now produce in an English version, without being very solicitous about exactness in my translation. It is to this purpose.

“ The Emperour Caesar, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus,  
 “ Germanicus, Parthicus, Sarmaticus, High-priest. . . To the people  
 “ of Rome, and to the sacred Senate greeting. I gave you an ac-  
 “ count of the greatness of the enterprize, which I had undertaken,  
 “ and what great difficulties came upon me in Germanie: how I  
 “ was surrounded and besieged in the midst of it, and afflicted with  
 “ heat and weariness. At which time I was overtaken at Carnutum  
 “ by seventy four regiments, who were not more than nine miles off  
 “ from us. Now when the enemy was come near us, our spies  
 “ gave us notice of it. And Pompeianus, my General, informed  
 “ me also of what I knew before. In our armie we had only the  
 “ first, the tenth, the double, and the Fretensian legions, to con-  
 “ tend with an innumerable company of barbarians. When I had  
 “ computed my own numbers with those of the enemy, I address-  
 “ ed our Gods in prayer. But not being regarded by them, and con-  
 “ sidering the distress we were in, I called for those whom we call  
 “ Christians. And upon examination I found, that they were a  
 “ great multitude, at which I was much displeas'd, though I should  
 “ not have been so. For afterwards, I understood how powerfull  
 “ they are. For which reason they began, not by preparing their  
 “ darts, or other weapons, or their trumpets: inasmuch as such  
 “ things are disagreeable to them on account of God, whom they  
 “ bear in their consciences. For it is reasonable to believe, that they  
 “ whom we call atheists, have God within them for a bulwark. As  
 “ soon therefore as they had cast themselves down upon the ground,  
 “ they

(d) *Ad calcem Justiniani Mart. Ap. i. al. Fr. Balduin. Edit. Prin. Roman. de Chri-  
 ii. Vid. et Fabr. Lex Evang. p. 228. et stianis. p. 87.*

“ they prayed not for me only, but also for the whole armie, for  
 “ relief under our great thirst and hunger. For it was the fifth day,  
 “ that we had no water, because there was none in that place. For  
 “ we were in the midst of Germanie, surrounded by their moun-  
 “ tains. But as soon as they had cast themselves upon the ground,  
 “ and prayed to a God, who was unknown to me, water came down  
 “ from heaven immediatly. Upon us it was very cool, but upon our  
 “ enemies it was fierce hail. And immediatly after their prayers we  
 “ found God to be present with us, as one that is impregnable, and  
 “ invincible. Begining here therefore, let us permit these men to  
 “ be Christians, least they should pray for the like weapons against  
 “ us, and obtain them. And I declare, that no man, who is a  
 “ Christian, is to be called in question as such. And if any man ac-  
 “ cuse a Christian, because he is a Christian, I declare that the Christi-  
 “ an who is accused, may appear openly: and that if he confesseth  
 “ himself to be so, but sheweth, that he is accused of no other crime,  
 “ but that he is a Christian, let his accuser be burnt alive. And as  
 “ to him that confesseth himself to be a Christian, and gives full evi-  
 “ dence of the same, let not the Governour of the province oblige him  
 “ to renounce his religion, nor deprive him of his liberty. I will,  
 “ that this be confirmed by the decree of the Senate. And I com-  
 “ mand, that this my edict be set up in Trajan’s Forum, that it may  
 “ be read by all. Vitrusius Pollio, Prefect of the City, will take  
 “ care, that it be sent into the provinces. Nor is any one, who de-  
 “ sires to have it, and make use of it, to be hindred from taking a  
 “ copie of this our edict, which is publicly set up by me. Fare-  
 “ well.”

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Upon this letter Joseph Scaliger (*e*) made such critical remarks,  
as

(*e*) Nam illa epistola, quae nomine Marci Aurelii Antonini super hac re ad calcem Apologetici posterioris apud Justi-

num legitur, tantum abest ut ab ipso Imperatore Graece dictata, aut ex Latino ipsius in Graecum sermonem translata sit, ut

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as have quite disparaged it in the opinion of most learned men. Even they, who are willing to assert the miraculous deliverance of the Emperour's armie, and that it was obtained by the prayers of Christians, give up (*f*) this letter, as spurious. The Greek letter, as Scaliger says, was not composed before the sixth centurie. And it is generally thought, that the Latin edition of the same letter is taken from the Greek, and is not more (*g*) authentic.

Without alleging here any abstruse critical observations, it must be obvious to all, that an edict so favorable to the Christians, could not come from Mark Antonin, in whose reign, from the begining to the end of it, the Christians were persecuted in some of the provinces by the tumults of the people, and put to death by Governours, without any controlle from this Emperour. And there were some edicts, or orders of his, particularly in Gaul and Asia, for putting them to death.

And if this letter had been set up in Trajan's Forum, at Rome, in the time of Mark Antonin, and had been sent to all Governours of provinces, with leave also for men to read it, and to take copies from those which were published by authority; copies of this letter would have been very common among Christians: whereas we cannot now find, that it was seen by any of them in the second, or third, or fourth, or even fifth centurie.

Obs.

ut infra seculum Justiniani Imp. ab imperitissimo Graeculo confictam fuisse manifeste appareat. &c. *Jos. Scaliger. in Euseb. p. 222. 223. Conf. Salmof. in notis ad Capitolin. Marc. Antonin. cap. 24.*

(*f*) Habetur harum Marci literarum ad Senatum exemplar apud Justinum, ad calcem Apologiae secundae: sed ejus falsitatem et suppositionem, tum etiam novitatem, quod Justiniano recentius sit, tot argumentis approbaverunt viri eruditi,

criticae artis principes, Josephus Scaliger, et Salmasius, ut nihil contra opponi possit. *Huet. Dem. Evang. Prop. 3 p. 40.*

(*g*) Non dissimulabimus tamen, a viris doctis esse productum exemplar Latinum hujus epistolae, quasi e Bibliotheca Vaticana, quod paullo melius conceptum videtur. Sed tamen, si propius inspiciatur, satis liquebit, e Graeca epistola supposita translatum fuisse. *Cleric. H. E. ann. 174. num. xvii.*

*Obs.* 9. Eusebius, in the passage above transcribed, says, that the Heathen historians of those times had mentioned this extraordinary event, but did not acknowledge it to be owing to the prayers of Christians. We cannot say, who are the Heathen writers intended by him. But I shall now take notice of such as we have.

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1.) *Dion Cassius* flourished at the end of the second and the beginning of the third centurie, not finishing his historie long before the year 230. Of Mark Antonin's wars in Germanie he writes to this purpose: " Mark (*b*) therefore, after having met with many difficulties, subdued the Marcomans and Jazugae. After (*i*) which he had war with the Quadians, and obtained a wonderfull victorie over them, or rather had it given him by God. For when the Romans were in great danger, the Divine Being delivered them in a very wonderfull manner. The Quadians having surrounded them in a place that was much to their advantage, the Romans fought very valiantly. At the same time the Barbarians relaxed the combat, expecting to see them wasted by heat and drought. They therefore carefully secured every place around them, that they might come at no water. Which was easily done by them, as they were much superior in number. The Romans were then in a great strait, wounded, and fatigued with labour, oppressed with the heat of the sun, and with thirst: and for that reason neither able to fight, nor to escape. They only stood still in their ranks, consumed with heat. On (*k*) a sudden there appeared a gathering of clouds, which was soon followed, not without divine appointment, with a plentiful shower of rain. For it is said, that Arnuphis, an Egyptian magician, who was present with Mark,

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invoked

(*b*) *Dio. Cass. l. 71. p. 805. 806. al.*  
p. 1182. 1183.

(*i*) . . . ἡ πόλεμος αὐτῶ συνέση μέγας ἡ  
νίκη παράδοξος ἐντυχίθη, μᾶλλον δὲ παρά  
Θεῶ ἐδαρήθη. Κινδυνεύσαντας γὰρ ἐν τῇ

μάχη τὸς Ῥωμαίους παραδοξότατα τὸ Θεῖον  
ἐξέσωσε. P. 1182.

(*k*) . . . νίκη πολλὰ ἐξαιτίας συνέδραμε, ἡ  
εἰς τὸς πολλοὺς οὐκ ἀθεοὶ κατεργάθη. P. 1183.

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“rites.”

Upon which Xiphilin, a Christian author of the eleventh centurie, who abridged Dion, says: “So this affair is related by Dion.  
“But he lyes, as seems to me, either knowingly and wilfully, or  
“through ignorance. But I rather think wilfully. And how should  
“it be otherwise? For he was not unacquainted with the legion of  
“soldiers, called the Thunderbolt legion, which himself has mentioned in his catalogue of the other legions. Nor has it been ever  
“said, that it obtained that denomination for any other reason than  
“upon account of what happened in that war: when it was the cause  
“of deliverance to the Romans, and of destruction to the Barbarians,  
“and not Arnuphis the Magician. Nor is it any where related,  
“that Mark was fond of magicians, or their tricks. The truth is  
“this. Mark had a legion, the soldiers of which were brought from  
“Mélitene, and were all Christians. At that time the Prefect of  
“the Praetorium, being in great perplexity, and apprehensive of  
“the losse of the whole armie, is said to have come to the Emperor, telling him, that there is nothing which Christians are not  
“able to perform by prayers, and that there was in the armie a whole  
“legion of that sort of men. When Mark heard that, he desired  
“them to pray to their God. When they prayed, God immediately heard them, and beat down their enemies with lightening, and  
“refreshed the Romans with rain. At which Mark being greatly  
“astonished, favored the Christians with an edict, and ordered, that  
“the legion should be called the thundering legion. It (1) is also  
“said, that there is an epistle of Mark concerning these things.  
“The Gentils know very well, and bear witness, that there is a  
“legion with that name, but they do not mention the reason  
“of it.”

And

(1) Λέγεται δὲ καὶ ἐπιστολὴν τῆα περὶ τέτων εἶναι τοῦ Μάρκου. P. 1184.



And now Dion proceeds again: "When the rain began to fall, says he, all looking up at first received it in their mouths. Afterwards, they caught it, some in their shields, others in their helmets: out of which they drank greedily, and also gave to their horses to drink. And when the Barbarians fell upon them, they drank, and fought at the same time. And some, who were wounded, drank water and blood together, which fell from their wounds into their helmets. And indeed they would have suffered greatly from the enemies who attacked them, when the greatest part of the army were employed in satiating their thirst, if a violent storm of hail, with lightening, had not fallen upon them: so that at the same time, and in the same place, might be seen water and fire coming down from heaven, whereby some were refreshed with drink, and others were burnt and consumed. Nor did the fire reach the Romans. Or, if it did, it was presently extinguished. Nor did the rain help the Barbarians, but rather increased the flame, like oil. So that though they were rained upon, they called for water. And some wounded themselves, that they might put out the fire with blood: and others went over to the Romans, as being the only people, who had wholesome water. Wherefore Mark had pity upon them. And he was for the seventh time proclaimed Emperour by the soldiers. And though he had not been wont to admit such a thing to be done, before it had been decreed by the Senate, he did not refuse it now, it seeming to come from heaven. About this he wrote to the Senate, and Faustina was declared Mother of the Camps."

So writes Dion Cassius. We may therefore rely upon it, that Mark Antonin was in a great strait, and was delivered, and obtained a victorie over the Quadians. And from the pompous stile of Dion upon this occasion, it may be inferred, that the Heathen people were very willing to magnify this event, and the circumstances of it, as very extraordinarie.

Dion in his account of this matter, above quoted, writes: *For it is*

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is said, that Arnuphis, an Egyptian Magician, who was present with Mark, invoked the aerial Mercurie, and other demons, with magical rites. I therefore shall observe, that in Suidas, the article of Arnuphis is in these very words. “ He was an Egyptian Philosopher, “ who being present with Mark the Philosopher, Emperour of the “ Romans, when the Romans labored under a great drought, is said “ to have caused a gathering of black clouds, which on a sudden “ poured down great rain with thunder and lightening. This (m) “ Arnuphis is said to have effected by a certain art. Others say, it “ was Julian, a Chaldean, who performed this wonderful work.” For whom likewise Suidas has another article, which may be consulted by such as are curious.

There is no need to make many remarks upon Xiphilin, after what has been already said upon the passage of Eusebius. Notwithstanding what is said by him, learned men are persuaded, that before this time there was a legion, called the thunderbolt-legion, from a thunderbolt engraved upon the soldiers shields. Xiphilin also supposeth, that there was in Mark’s armie a whole legion of Christians: which, as before shewn, is very unlikely. He also says, that after this, *Mark published an edict favorable to the Christians.* Which we are not assured of. He likewise adds. *It is said, there is an epistle of Mark concerning these things.* Nevertheless, Xiphilin had not seen that letter, or did not think it authentic, or to his purpose: as is evident from his manner of speaking.

2.) *Julius Capitolinus*, one of the writers of the Augustan Historie, who flourished near the end of the third, or the beginning of the fourth centurie, in his Life of Mark Antonin the Philosopher, says: “ When (n) his armie was in a great strait, and in danger of perishing  
“ ing

(m) Καὶ τὸ τὸ σοφία τινὶ ἐργάσασθαι Ἀρ-  
νῦφιν· Ὅτι δὲ φασὶν Ἰελιαυδὸν τὸν Χαλδαῖον τὸ το  
πεποικέναι τὸ θαυμάσιον. Suid. V. Ἀρ-  
νῦφιν.

(n) Fulmen de coelo precibus suis  
contra hostium machinamentum extorsit,  
suis pluviam impetrata, quum siti labora-  
rent. Capit. Marc. A. Phil. cap. 24.

“ing by thirst, he by his prayers obtained from heaven, lightening  
“against his enemies, and rain for his own people.”

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3.) *Aelius Lampridius*, another of those writers, who also flourish-  
ed about the same time, in his *Life of Antoninus Heliogabalus*, is  
supposed to refer to the same thing in a passage, which (o) I place  
below, without translating it.

4.) *Themistius*, in an oration, spoken in the year 381. and the  
third of Theodosius, ascribes the victorie, now under consideration,  
to the piety and prayers of Antonin. “When (p) that Emperour’s  
“armie was much incommoded by a drought, lifting up his hands  
“to heaven he said: By this hand, which has taken no life away,  
“I desire to appease thee, and I pray to thee the giver of life. With  
“which prayer the Deity was so well pleased, that the clouds pre-  
“sently poured down rain upon the soldiers. I have seen a repre-  
“sentation of this event, in which was the Emperour praying at the  
“head of his armie, and the soldiers receiving the rain in their hel-  
“mets, and refreshing themselves with drink that was the gift of  
“heaven. Of so great advantage is the virtue of a Prince to his sub-  
“jects.”

So speaks *Themistius* in an oration to a Christian Emperour. He  
ascribes all to the virtue and prayers of Antonin, without any the least  
notice of the Christians. He seems to refer to the *Columna Antonini-  
ana*: though we do not observe in that sculpture the Emperour stand-  
ing at the head of his armie, as here intimated.

5.) The

(o) Quum Marcomannis bellum infer-  
re vellet, quos Antoninus pulcherrime  
profligaverat, dictum est a quibusdam, per  
Chaldaeos et magos Antoninum Marcum  
id egisse, ut Marcomanni P. R. semper  
devoti essent atque amici, idque factis car-  
minibus et consecratione. *Lampr. Anton.  
Heliog. cap. 9.*

(p) . . . ἀνάσχων τῷ χεῖρε ὁ βασιλεὺς πρὸς  
τὸν ἔρανον, ταύτη ἔφη τῇ χειρὶ πρῶτον ἐλάμνη  
σε, καὶ ἐκέλευσα τὸν ζῶντος δοτῆρα, ἢ ζῶντος ἐκ  
ἀφειλόμην. Καὶ ἔτω κατήδεσε τὸν Θεὸν τῇ  
εὐχῇ, ὥστε ἐξ ἀθρίας ἦλθον νεφέλαι ὑδροφοροῦσαι  
τοῖς στρατιώταις. κ. λ. *Them. Or. 15. p.  
191.*

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5.) The poet *Claudian*, in his Panegyrick of the sixth Consulate of Honorius, in the year 404. speaking of the victorie of Mark Antonin over the Quadians, says: "It (*q*) was not owing to the valour or conduct of the Generals. The glorie of this victorie must be given by the Romans to heaven. There was a flaming shower, which fell upon the enemies, and put to flight them and their horses: Whether it was owing to Chaldean Magicians, who by their incantations brought the Gods to the assistance of the Romans: or whether the piety of the Emperour Mark, as I rather think, engaged the favour of Jupiter the Thunderer on their side."

So he also, without taking any notice of the Christians.

Eusebius, as we may remember, said: *By other writers, who were averse to our religion, the wonderfull event is recorded. But they do not acknowledge, that it was owing to the prayers of our people.* Which indeed is true of all those Heathen writers, which we now have. One of whom, *Dion Cassius*, is older than Eusebius. But we cannot certainly say, that Eusebius ever saw him.

*Obs.* 10. "Antoninus never ascribed this miracle to the prayers of the Christians."

That

(*q*) Clemens, Marce, redis, cum gentibus undique cincta  
 Exiit Hesperiam paribus Fortuna periclis.  
 Laus ibi nulla ducum. Nam flammeus imber in hostem  
 Decidit. Hunc dorso trepidum flammante ferebat  
 Ambustus Sonipes: hic tabescente solutus  
 Subdidit galeâ, liquefactaque fulgure cuspis  
 Canduit, et subitis fluxere vaporibus enses.  
 Tunc contenta polo mortalis nescia teli  
 Pugna fuit. Chaldaea mago seu carmina ritu  
 Armavere Deos: seu, quod reor, omne Tonantis  
 Obsequium Marci mores potuere mereri.

*Claudian, de Sexto Conf. Honor. ver. 340. &c.*

That is Mr. Moyle's (r) third observation, upon which he enlargeth in this manner. "Had this miracle been publicly owned by the Emperour, and ascribed by him to the prayers of the Christians; it is incredible, that all the Pagan Historians should with one consent, conspire to disown it in their writings, as Eusebius confesses they did. See *Dio Cass. l. 71. p. 805. Capitolin. in Antonin. cap. 24.* the nameless authors cited by Suidas in *Αρνῶφης*. Nor would Themistius [*de regia virtute ad Theod.*] and Claudian [*in vi. Conf. Honor.*] have dared to ascribe the honour of it to Hea-then Gods, in Panegyrics to Christian Emperours."

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"That Antoninus thought himself obliged to his own Gods for this miracle, we have a testimonie beyond exception in his own Pillar, which is still extant at Rome: of which I have seen a cut in Baronius's Annals, to whom I refer you for farther (s) satisfaction. The same is confirmed by a medal in the French King's cabinet, published by Morelli, which was struck the very year, in which this miracle is said to be wrought, viz. 174. On one side is the head of Antoninus, crowned with laurel: on the reverse is a Mercurie, with this inscription: *Religio Augusti*. Which exactly agrees with Dion's account of the miracle."

A like cut or print of the sculpture, or bas relief, in Antonin's Pillar, may be seen in Havercamp's edition of Tertullian's Apologie, and in (t) Colonia. Where is *Jupiter Pluvius*, the Giver of rain, sending down rain and thunder and lightening: by which the soldiers on one side are refreshed, and the others annoyed and terrified.

And

(r) *Vol. 2. p. 91.*

(s) At the top of the sculpture, to which Mr. Moyle refers, appears *Jupiter Pluvius*, sending down rain and lightening upon the two armies. Says Baronius: *Visitur adhuc in ea [Antonini columna] imago expressa rei gestae: sed iis plane*

*signis, ut Jovis, imbres dantis, et illis fulgura admiscantis, repraesentet effigiem: quam ex eâ graphice incisam, hac tibi formâ exprimendam curavimus. Baron. Ann. 176. num. xxiii.*

(t) *Colon. Tom. i. ch. vii. p. 110.*

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And Montfaucon, in his Antiquities, has exhibited an exact representation of this Jupiter. I shall transcribe him in his own (*u*) words. “ Jupiter Giver of rain was honoured by the Athenians, “ who erected an altar to him on the hill Hymettus. We give an “ extraordinarie figure of him, as he is represented in the Pillar of “ Antonin. It is that of an old man with a long beard, who has “ wings : : [*the wings are upon the upper part of the arms.*] with two “ arms, stretched out, the right hand raised somewhat higher than “ the other. The water flows in large streams from his arms, and “ from his beard. The Roman soldiers in Mark’s armie, whom the “ drought and thirst had reduced to the utmost extremity, receive “ the water in the hollow of their shields. The Romans, still plun- “ ged in Paganism, ascribed this prodigie to their Jupiter Pluvius. “ But they were, as Baronius with more reason says, the Christian “ soldiers, who obtained this rain, which saved the armie.”

So says Montfaucon, overpowered, as it seems, by the authority and credulity of his church.

*Obs.* II. I must be allowed to add, that other like things are recorded in the Roman historie. One instance is mentioned, as happening in the time of the Emperour Claudius, in the year of Rome

795.

(*u*) Jupiter Le Pluvieux, *Pluvius*, appellée par les Grecs Ζεύς ὀμβριος, et par Lucien Ὀβριος, étoit honoré par les Athéniens, qui lui avoient dressé un autel sur le mont Hymette. Nous le donnons d’une maniere bien extraordinaire, tel qu’il est représentée dans la Colonne Antonine. C’est un veillard à longue barbe, qui a des ailes, et qui tient les deux bras étendus, et la main droite un peu élevé. L’eau sort à grands flots des ses bras, et de sa barbe. Les soldats Romains de l’armée de M. Aurele, que la secheresse et la soif avoient réduits à une extrême necessité, reçoivent cette eau dans les creux de leurs bou-

cliers. Les Romains plonger encore dans le Paganisme, attribueront ce prodige à leur Jupiter Pluvieux. Mais ce furent, dit avec plus de raison Baronius dans ses Annales, les soldats Chrétiens, qui obtinrent cette pluie, qui sauva l’armée. *L’Antiquité Expliquée Tom. i. Liv. 2. ch. iii. Pl. xiii. à la p. 44.*

The concluding words of the Latin, in Montfaucon, are these. Romani multiplicium numinum errore adhuc obruti id prodigii Jovi Pluvio adscripserunt. At Baronius in Annalibus aquam a militibus Christianis a Deo impetratam affirmat.

795. of Christ 42. “ The (x) Moors had rebelled, and were reduced by Suetonius Paullinus, a man of Praetorian rank : [ *several times mentioned by Tacitus (y) upon account of his government and successes in Britain.* ] who wasted their countrey as far as Mount Atlas. . . There being fresh disturbances in that countrey afterwards, Cneius Hosidius, a man of the like rank, made an expedition against them, and obtained several victories over their General Salabus. The Moors fled into a sandy countrey. And Hosidius pursued them with a part of his armie : having beforehand furnished himself with such supplies of water, as he was able to get. But when that was spent, he was reduced to great straits, the Barbarians being better able to endure thirst than the Romans, and being also better acquainted with the places, where water might be had. It (z) was impossible for the Romans to proceed. Nor was it easie for them to retreat ; so that they knew not what course to take. At that time an inhabitant of the countrey, who was friendly to the Romans, came to Hosidius, and advised him to make use of magical incantations : assuring him, that by that means he had often obtained rain. The Roman General having followed that advice, there fell on a sudden great quantities of rain, which refreshed the Romans, and terrified their enemies. For they concluded, that the Gods favoured them. They therefore submitted, and accepted of the terms of peace proposed to them.” So (a) writes Dion Cassius.

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There

(x) *Dion. L. 60. p. 670. 671. al. p. 947. 948.*

(y) *Vid. Tacit. Ann. l. 14. cap. 29. et alibi.*

(z) Τοῖς δὲ δὴ Ρωμαίοις ἐκ τῶν ἐναντίων, ἀδύνατον μὲν προχωρῆσαι, χαλεπὸν δὲ καὶ ὑποσφραῖλαι ἦν ἀπορῦντα οὖν αὐτὸν ὅ, τι χρὴ πράττειν, ἀνέπεισέ τις τῶν ἐπιχωρίων τῶν ἀσπόνδων, ἐπαδαῖς τέ τισι καὶ μαγικαῖς χερσίν

σασθαι, λέγων, πολλάκις σφίσιν ἐκ τῶ τοιούτου πολὺ ὕδωρ δεδρόσθαι. Καὶ αὐτῷ παραχρηῖμα τοσούτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐβρύθη, ὥς καὶ αὐτὸ δίψας ἐξάκέσασθαι, καὶ τὰς πολεμικὰς προσκαταπαλῆσαι, νομίσαντας τὸ Θεῖον οἱ ἐπικουρεῖν. P. 948.

(a) *Loco citato. Vid. et Basnag. Ann. 42. num. i.*

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There was another like shower in the contention between *Niger* and *Septimius Severus*, particularly, in the last and decisive action, as related also by *Dion Cassius*. “ For (*b*) a while, he says, the battle was fought with doubtfull, and almost equal successe. Afterwards the armie of *Niger* by the superiority of their numbers, and the advantage of the situation, prevailed very considerably, and (*c*) the victorie had been compleat: were it not that on a sudden, when the skie was clear, nor a puff of wind blowing, there appeared clouds, and a violent shower of rain followed, with terrible thunder and lightening, which beat upon the faces of *Niger’s* men. At the same time the armie of *Severus* was not at all annoyed, as the storm was at their backs. This circumstance animated the armie of *Severus*, esteeming themselves favoured by the Deity. But the armie of *Niger* was dispirited, and gave way, thinking that heaven fought against them. In a short time the victorie became compleat. And not less than twenty thousand men were slain on the side of *Niger*.” So writes *Dion* (*d*) again. But I do not here see any notice taken of magical incantations. The storm therefore happened in the usual course of nature: though it was sudden and unexpected, (as such things frequently are) and it was favorable to the armie of *Severus*. This is supposed to have happened in the year of Rome 947. of Christ 194.

I add no more observations.

The Argument  
summed  
up.

IV. It may be reasonably expected, that this long argument should be now summed up, and reduced to some propositions. This summarie

(*b*) *Dion. lib. 74. p. 843. al. p. 1248.*  
1249.

(*c*) Καὶ παντελῶς ἐκράτησαν, εἰ μὴ νέφην  
ἐξ ἀιθρίας, καὶ ἄνεμος ἐκ νινεμίας, βρονταὶ τε  
σκληραὶ καὶ ἀσραπαὶ ἀξείαι μεθ’ ἑταῖ λάβρα

κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτοῖς προσέπειον. κ. λ. P.  
1249.

(*d*) *L. cit. et Conf. Basnag. ann. Ch.*  
194. num. iii.



summarie shall be now made according to the sentiments, and almost in the very words of the late (e) Mr. Mosheim.

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1. "In the first place, it is certain, that in the war with the Quadians and Marcomans in Germanie, Mark, with his armie, was in a great danger. Mark was a better Philosopher, than Emperour. Nor could he learn the art of war from the writings of the Stoics. And his imminent danger from theemie may be imputed to his own imprudence."

2. "It is also certain, that he was unexpectedly delivered out of that great danger, by a shower of rain, accompanied with thunder and lightening, and obtained a victorie."

3. "Farther, it is certain, that not only the Christians, but also the Emperour, and the Romans, ascribed that shower, the great cause of their deliverance and victorie, not to the ordinarie course of nature, but to an extraordinarie interposition of the divine power: they to the true God, and their own prayers: these to Jove, or Mercurie. This we learn from the Roman authors, *Dion Cassius, Capitolinus, Claudian,* and *Themistius*, and especially from the pillar at Rome, set up by Mark, and still remaining, in which Jupiter, the giver of rain, is represented refreshing the almost-expiring Roman foldiers by a plentiful shower of rain."

4. "There may have been many Christian soldiers in Mark's armie. If there were, it may be taken for granted, that in the time of the danger, they offered up prayers to God for deliverance: and that afterwards, they also gave thanks to God for it, and when they sent an account of it to their Christian brethren, they let them know, how great advantages God had vouchsafed to their prayers. Hence it is easie to suppose, that a rumour prevailed, and was also firmly believed, that the Romans had been miraculously saved by the prayers of the Christians."

5. "It

(e) *Mosh. de Rebus Christianor. ante Constant. M. Sec. 2. §. xvii. p. 248. . . .*  
253.

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5. "It is false, though supported by the authority of Apollinaris and Eusebius, that there was a whole legion of Christian soldiers in Mark's armie. Consequently, there is no reason to believe, that, when this imminent danger appeared, these soldiers drew up in a body, and falling down upon their knees presented their prayers to God, and that immediatly, before their prayers were over, a shower with lightening and thunder came down from heaven."

6. "It is not true, that Mark ascribed the safety of himself and armie to that legion, and thereupon honored it with the name of the Thundering Legion. Scaliger and Henry Valefius, and other learned men, have shewn, that the Thundering Legion is older than the times of Mark, and did not take it's denomination from this event. But some Christian, little acquainted with the militarie affairs of the Romans, having heard that there was such a legion, concluded, without reason, that it had derived it's name from thunder and lightening, obtained by the prayers of Christians: and then propagated his groundless imagination, which was received as true by too many, without examination, as is common in such cases."

7. "That Mark did not think, that he owed his safety to the favour, which the Christians were in with God, is manifest from the Pillar set up at Rome, with his consent and approbation, in which Jupiter is acknowledged to be the deliverer of the Romans."

8. "Consequently, all that is said of Mark's public letter, writ at that time, in which he is supposed to have extolled the piety of the Christians, and to have restrained their enemies and accusers, is entirely without foundation."

"The Letter, which we now have, and is generally placed at the end of one of Justin Martyr's apologies, is allowed, even by the defenders of the miracle of the Thundering Legion, to have in it manifest tokens of spuriousness, and to be the work of a man unskillfull in Roman affairs, and who probably lived in the seventh centurie."

\* But since Tertullian in the fifth chapter of his Apologie, makes mention

mention of such a letter of Mark, many are of opinion, that in his time it was really in being, but has been since lost, through the injurie of time. On (f) the other hand, says Tertullian, we can allege a Protector, as may appear, if the letter of Marcus Aurelius, a most worthie Emperour, be sought for, in which he acknowledgeth the remarkable drought in Germanie to have been removed by a shower, obtained perhaps by the prayers of Christian soldiers. Nevertheless this testimonie of Tertullian is weakened, and even overthrown by divers considerations. I forbear, says Mr. Mosheim, to insist here upon the word *perhaps*: whence some learned men have argued, that Tertullian himself doubted of this miracle, or that he had not seen the Emperour's letter. For (g) to me it appears clear, that it does not relate to Tertullian, but to the Emperour, and his letter. The meaning of what he says, is this: that Mark did not openly confess and declare, that the shower was obtained by the prayers of Christian soldiers, but spoke doubtfully, *that perhaps this great benefit was owing to the prayers of the Christians*. This I pass by. But there are two other considerations, by which this testimonie is absolutely enervated, and overthrown. *First of all*, what Tertullian says of the design of the Emperour's letter, if I am not greatly mistaken, manifests, that when he wrote this, he had in his eye the Edict of Antonin the Pious, ( \* ) (who is often confounded with Mark), which he sent to the community of Asia, of which we spoke formerly.

(f) At nos, ait Tertullianus, e contrario edimus protectorem. Si literae Marci Aurelii gravissimi Imperatoris requirantur, quibus illam Germanicam sitim Christianorum forte militum precationibus impetrato imbri discussam, contestatur. *Ap. cap. 5.*

(g) Manifesto nimirum pertinet, non ad Tertullianum, verum ad Imperatorem, ejusque epistolam, sensusque orationis hic

est: Marcum non aperte fateri ac decernere, imbrem militum Christianorum supplicationibus impetratum esse, verum dubitanter loqui, atque significare, forte magnum hoc beneficium Christianorum precibus deberi. *Mosheim. ibid. p. 251.*

( \* ) I also think, that edict, sent to the community of Asia, to be rightly ascribed to Antonin the Pious. It may be seen at length above, at p. 155. 156.

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merly. For so he says: *Who, (b) though he did not openly abrogate the laws against the Christians, yet, in another way he openly broke their force, appointing also a penalty to their accusers, and of the severest sort.* Let us now attend. First of all, Tertullian says, that *Mark did not openly abrogate the laws against the Christians*, that is, he did not openly forbid Christians to be punished. Then he adds, *but in another way he openly broke the force of the laws*, that is, he made a wise provision, that the Christians should not be easily punished by the judges. Lastly he says, *that he appointed a punishment for the accusers of the Christians.* All these three things exactly suit the edict of Antonin the Pious to the Common Council of Asia. There, indeed, he does not absolutely forbid the punishing of Christians. Nevertheless, when he appoints, that no Christian should be punished, unless he be convicted of some crime, he very much restrains their punishment, and contracts their sufferings in narrow limits: Lastly, he requires, that the accusers of the Christians, who could not convict them of some crime, should undergo the punishment of their own temerity. In this therefore, as I think, Tertullian was certainly mistaken, in ascribing the edict of Antonin the Pious to his successor Mark Antonin. And when he had been told, that Mark and his armie had been saved in a time of imminent danger by the prayers of the Christians, he imagined, that this benefit had induced Mark to pass that law in their favour. The *other consideration*, which invalidates this testimonie of Tertullian, is the persecution of the Christians at Lyons and Vienne, of which we spoke formerly. It happened in the year of Christ 177. three years after the victorie obtained over the Quadians and Marcomans. For who can believe, that the Emperour, who in a public letter to the Senate, in the year 174. had extolled the Christians, and appointed a hea-  

punishment

(b) Sic nempe loquitur : sicut non palam ab hujusmodi hominibus poenam dimovit, ita alio modo palam disperfit, ad-

jecta etiam accusatoribus damnatione, et quidem tetriore. *Apol. cap. 5.*

punishment to their accusers, should in the year 177. deliver them up into the hands of their enemies, and order them to be capitally punished, unless they renounced their religion?"

9. "There still remains one point to be considered: Whether (\*) the shower, by which the Romans were saved in the war with the Marcomans, ought to be placed in the number of miracles. But this question, in my opinion, may be solved without much difficulty. Learned men are now agreed, that nothing ought to be placed among miracles, which may be accounted for by the ordinarie powers of nature. But in this shower, though it happened unexpectedly, there is nothing beyond the power of nature, or which needs a divine interposition. For it is a very common thing, according to the laws of nature, for long droughts in the summer season to be followed with plentiful showers of rain, joyned with terrifying thunder and lightening. Nor ought it to be esteemed miraculous, that the lightening fell upon some of the enemies, and put their armie to flight. Forasmuch as all the people of Germanie supposed, that lightenings came from God, and they would form their judgement accordingly."

So writes Mr. Mosheim: and as seems to me, judiciously, and plausibly. I have transcribed him here, as summing up my argument, and making also some valuable additions to it.

I shall take this opportunity to correct a mistake, common among learned foreigners: that *Mr. King*, who had a debate with *Mr. Moyle*

(\*) That observation of Mr. Mosheim answers to what is the sixth observation of Mr. Moyle, p 99. &c. "*That the deliverance of the Roman armie, though undoubtedly true, was no miracle.*" Whereupon the same ingenious writer proceeds: "I see nothing supernatural in this deliverance of the Romans. Thunder and rain are no miracles, and they are ne-

ver the less natural, for happening in so critical a season. There are examples enough in the Greek and Roman storie of such casual events, which, because they were a little uncommon and surprising, and fell out in seasonable junctures of time, have been stiled miracles by the ignorance and superstition of the vulgar." &c.

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Moyle about the Thundering Legion, was Sir Peter King, afterwards Baron of Ockham, and Lord High Chancellour of England. So thought Mr. Mosheim (*i*) who translated these Letters into Latin, and in the main embraced Mr. Moyle's sentiments. But I am assured by those who are likely to know the truth, "that Mr. King, who disputed with Mr. Moyle, was a Clergiman, and Minister of Topsham, near Exeter: which last, was the place of his nativity, as well as Sir Peter's. He is the same King, to whom Mr. Locke wrote some letters, which are in the *posthumous collection of his Letters*, published by Mr. Collings. He is there stiled *the Reverend Mr. King.*"

It is pity, that the person, who corresponded with Mr. Moyle upon so curious a subject, should be so little known. Mr. King and Mr. Moyle must have been intimate friends. For Mr. Moyle's *Dissertation upon the age of the Philopatriis* was sent to the same person in several letters.

Since writing what is above I have received an authentic account from a Gentleman, personally acquainted with Mr. Moyle. It is in these words: "Mr. Moyle's correspondent in the affair of the Thundering Legion, was Mr. Richard King, Vicar of Topsham. Mr. Moyle died in 1721. Mr. King survived him many years."

(*i*) Post hos Petrus Kingius, Magnae Britanniae Cancellarius, et Gualterus Moylius, Eques Anglus, inprimis acutus et eruditus, de hac re epistolis egerunt: quas ex Anglico Latine conversas *synthemati Dissertationum ad disciplinas sanctiores pertinentium* cum observationibus non-

nullis adjeci. *Moshem. De Reb. Christian. ante C. M. p. 249.*

Walterus Moyle. *Diff. contra Petrum Kingium*, inserta tomo secundo ejus *Operum*, editorum Anglice Londin. 1726. 8. *Fabric. Lux Evangel. p. 139.*

## C H A P. XVI.

## APULEIUS, of Madaura, in Africa.

- I. *His Historie, Time, and Works.* II. *Passages, relating to the Christians.* III. *Miracles ascribed to him.* IV. *The Design of his Metamorphosis, or Golden Ass.*

I. **L**UCIUS APULEIUS (*a*) of Madaura in Africa, a Platonic Philosopher, flourished in the times of the Emperours Antonin the Pious, and M. Antonin the Philosopher. Madaura was a Roman colonie, and his familie was (*b*) considerable. He (*c*) appears to have had an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and studied at Carthage, Athens, and Rome. He was the author of many works, divers (*d*) of which still remain, monuments of great learning and ingenuity.

*His Historie, and Time.*

K k 2

He

(*a*) *Vid. Fabr. Bib. Lat. l. 3. cap. ii. T. i. p. 514. &c. Apuleii Vita et Scripta, ex Wowero, ap. Apul. in usum Delphin. Basnag. Ann. 163. n. v. Tillemont L'Emp. Marc. Aurele. §. 32. Bayle Dictionaire, Apulée.*

(*b*) *In quâ coloniâ patrem habui loco principe Duumviralem, cunctis honoribus perfunctum. Apul. p. 444. And farther see Bayle, as above, note (c).*

(*c*) *Vid. Apul. Ap. p. 442. et Florida. l. 4. num. 18. p. 813. et num. 20. p. 831.*

(*d*) *Metamorphosis, five Lusus Afini. Pro se apud Cl. virum, Cl. Maximum Proconsulem Apologia. De Habitudine Doctrinarum Platonis Philosophi. De Deo Socratis. De Mundo. Florida.*

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He had married a rich widow, named *Pudentilla*, against the will of her first husband's relations, which occasioned him a great deal of trouble. They accused him of the practise of magical arts to gain her consent. He pleaded for himself before *Claudius Maximus*, Proconsul of Africa, who had been Consul of Rome in the year of Christ 144. Which has induced learned men to place Apuleius, as flourishing about the year 163.

Passages  
concerning  
the Chri-  
stians.

II. Apuleius seems to have had some knowledge of the Christians, and their affairs.

The first place, which I shall quote, will be taken from his *Metamorphosis*, or *the Ass*, or THE GOLDEN ASSE, as it is sometimes called: Which is a fabulous storie, wherein are represented many events, observed by him, and disasters that befell him, whilst in the shape of an asse, enjoying human understanding. He (*e*) could see, and hear, and observe: but (*f*) he could not speak with human voice.

I. Among his many adventures in this state one is this. " He (*g*)  
" was

(*e*) Ego vero quamquam perfectus asinus, et pro Lucio jumentum, sensum tamen retinebam humanum. *Metam.* l. 3. p. 95.

(*f*) . . . sed jam humano gestu simul et voce privatus. *Ibid.*

(*g*) Pistor ille, qui me pretio suum fecerat, bonus alioqui vir, et apprime modestus, pessimam et ante cunctas mulieres longe deterrimam sortitus conjugem, poenas extremas tori larisque sustinebat: ut hercules, ejus vicem ego quoque tacitus frequenter ingemiscerem. Nec enim ullum vitium nequissimae illi foeminae deerat: sed omnia prorsus, ut in quandam coenosam latrinam, in ejus animum flagitia confluerant. Scaeva, faeva, vitiosa, ebriosa, pervicax, pertinax, in rapinis

turpibus avara, in sumptibus turpibus profusa, inimica fidei, hostis pudicitiae. Tunc spretis, atque calcatis divinis numinibus, in vicem certae religionis, mentitâ sacrilegâ praesumptione Dei, quem praedicaret unicum, confectis observationibus vacuis, fallens omnes homines, et miserum maritum decipiens, matutino mero, et continuo stupro corpus maniciparat. Talis illa mulier miro me persequebatur odio. Nam et antelucio recubans adhuc, subjungi machinae novitium clamabat asinum: et statim ut cubiculo primum processerat, insistens jubebat incoram sui plagas mihi quamplurimas irrogari: et cum tempestivo prandio laxarentur jumenta cetera, longe tardius applicari praesepio jubebat. *Metam.* l. 9. p. 282.



“ was sold to a Baker. Who, as he says, was a very good sort of a  
 “ man, but he had a very bad wife, who so abused her husband,  
 “ that he could not but lament his unhappy condition, as well as his  
 “ own. She had every vice, without any thing agreeable. She  
 “ was perverse, ill-natured, obstinate, given to drinking, she robbed  
 “ her husband, was profuse in her expenses, and unchaste. And  
 “ moreover, slighting the immortal gods, and their worship, instead  
 “ of the true religion, she adopted a false and sacrilegious opinion  
 “ concerning the deity, which she said was one only, and practised vain  
 “ observances, deceiving all men, and especially her miserable hus-  
 “ band, and devoting herself to drinking, and lewdness from morn-  
 “ ing to night. The mistress being such a woman, she was very  
 “ severe to the new-bought ass. She took care, he should be ear-  
 “ ly put to the mill. Nor would she let him be released, when the  
 “ other cattle were at noon. And what follows.”

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There can be no doubt, that Apuleius here designs to represent a Christian woman. And, as he was pleased to prolong his fiction with a great variety of incidents; we are not to wonder, that he brought in this character. The Christians at that time, being under persecution, often had their religious solemnities, and particularly the eucharist, early in the morning. Therefore Apuleius charges this woman with *getting up early to drink*. And as their assemblies for divine worship were then private, and sometimes in the night-season, he charges her with lewdness. It is also very likely, that Christian women were often charged with *robbing their husbands*, to give to poor Christians, or their Ministers. It cannot be thought very strange, that in such a work as this, Apuleius should gratify his own malice, and divert his readers with the character of a Christian, dressed up agreeably to the common reports, which prevailed among their enemies.

2. I now proceed to another place, which is in the Apologie, where Apuleius having mentioned his own initiations into the myste-  
 ries.

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ries of several deities, he goes on. “ But (*b*) I know some, and especially, that Emilian, (*brother of Pudentilla's first husband, by whom the present accusation was carried on,*) who laughs at all these things, and derides them. For, as I hear, from the accounts of those who know him well, he has never yet made supplication to any God, nor worshiped in any temple. When he passes by a consecrated place, he esteems it a crime to put his hand to his mouth by the way of adoration. Nor does he consecrate to the Gods of agriculture, who feed and cloth him, any first-fruits of grain, or of the vine, or of his flocks. Nor is there in his country-seat any chapel, nor indeed any consecrated grove, or other place whatever. But why do I talk of groves and chapels? They who have been there say, they never saw in his territories so much as a stone anointed with oyle, or a crowned bough. Insomuch that there are two surnames given him: *Charon*, as I said before, because of the fierceness of his look and temper: the other is *Mezentius*, upon account of his contempt of the Gods. Which last mentioned name, possibly, he likes the best of the two.”

There is very little here, that needs explication. But it may be proper to observe, that *Mezentius* is the name of a King of the Tyr-

(*b*) Atqui ego scio nonnullos, et cum primis Aemilianum istum, facetiae sibi habere, res divinas deridere. Nam, ut audio, percensentibus iis qui istum novere, nulli Deo ad hoc aevi supplicavit: si fanum aliquod praetereat, nefas habet, adorandi gratiâ manum labris admovere. Iste vero nec Diis rurationis, qui eum pascunt ac vestiunt, fegetes ullas, aut vitis, aut gregis primitias impartit. Nulum in villa ejus delubrum situm, nullus locus aut lucus consecratus: Et quid ego

de luco et delubro loquor? Negant vidisse se, qui suere, unum saltem in finibus ejus aut lapidem unctum, aut ramum coronatum. Igitur agnomenta ei duo indita: Charon, ut jam dixi, ob oris et animi diritatem: sed alterum, quod libentius audit, ob Deorum contemptum, Mezentius. Quapropter facile intelligo, hasce ei tot initiorum enumerationes nugae videri. &c. *Apol. p. 496. 497.*

Tyrrhenians, who is several times spoken of by Virgil, as (*i*) a contemner of the Gods.

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The place, first alleged by me, has been taken notice of by all commentators upon Apuleius in general. But this other was first observed by the learned Dr. *Warburton*, now Lord Bishop of Gloucester. (*k*) Who, from what Apuleius has said, concludes, that *Licinius Aemilianus*, his wife's brother-in-law, was a Christian: and that the accusation of magick, brought by him before the Proconsul of Africa, did not a little contribute to inflame our Author's bigotry for Gentilism, and encrease his aversion to Christianity.

3. I shall allege one place more, in the same Apologie, where he wards off the charge of magick, in procuring the marriage with Pudentilla, in this manner. "If (*l*) says he, they can shew any particular advantage, which I could propose to my-self in this marriage, let me then be esteemed Carinondas, Damigeron, or that Moses, or Jannes, or Apollonius, or Dardanus, or any other, who since Zoroaster and Hoftanes, have been most celebrated among Magicians."

In 2. Tim. iii. 8. mention is made of *Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses*. I do not say, that Apuleius had read this text, or any book of the New Testament. But the passage is a proof, that  
Moses

(*i*) Primus init bellum Tyrrhenis asper ab oris,  
Contemptor divum Mezentius, agminaque armat.

*Virg. Æ. l. 8. ver. 647. 648:*

Contemptorque Deum Mezentius.

*Ib. l. 8. ver. 7.*

(*k*) See the *Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated*. B. 4. sect. 4. p. 120. in the notes, the second vol. edit. 1741.

(*l*) Si una causa, vel minima fuerit inventa, cur ego debuerim Pudentillae nuptias, ob aliquod meum commodum appetere: si quamlibet modicum emolumentum probaveritis, ego ille sum Carinondas, vel Damigeron, vel is Moses, vel Jannes, vel Apollonius, vel ipse Dardanus, vel quicumque alius, post Zoroastrem et Hoftanem inter magos celebratus est. *Apol. p. 544.*

tum probaveritis, ego ille sum Carinondas, vel Damigeron, vel is Moses, vel Jannes, vel Apollonius, vel ipse Dardanus, vel quicumque alius, post Zoroastrem et Hoftanem inter magos celebratus est. *Apol. p. 544.*

A. D. 164. Moses was well known in the world, as a person of great eminence. And doubtless (*m*) he was esteemed the Jewish Lawgiver.

*Miracles  
ascribed  
to him.*

III. I have not observed any more passages in Apuleius, relating to the Christians. In the fourth and fifth centuries miracles were ascribed to him. Of which I say nothing now. But I propose to consider that point hereafter, in the chapter of *Hierocles*.

*The De-  
sign of the  
Meta-  
morphosis.*

IV. But, if it might not be reckoned too presuming, I would now consider the judgement passed upon the *Metamorphosis*, the principal remaining work of this author, by Dr. Warburton, now Bishop of Gloucester. Who supposes, that (*n*) *his design was to recommend the Pagan religion, as the only cure for all vice in general.*

Against that interpretation, it seems to be no small objection, that the author himself calls it a (*o*) *Milesian tale*, and (*p*) a *Greek Fable*: and the ancients always so understood it, as our great Author himself acknowledges.

“ The *Metamorphosis*, says he, p. 117. even from it's first appearance, hath had the character of a trifling fable. *Capitolinus*, in *Clodius Albinus*, tells us, that Severus could not bear with patience the honours, which the Senate had conferred on Albinus, especially the distinguishing title of *learned*, who was grown old in the study of old-wives fables, such as the Milesian-Punic tales of his countreyman and favourite Apuleius. Major fuit, (says *Severus* in his Letter to the Senate, on this occasion :) dolor, quod illum pro literato laudandum plerique duxistis, quem ille naeniis  
“ qui-

(*m*) *Vid. Strabon. l. 16. p. 760. al. 1103. Tacit. Hist. l. 5. cap. 4.*

(*n*) *See the Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated. Book iv. sect. 4. vol. 2. p. 117. &c. in the notes, ed. 1741.*

(*o*) *At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio va*

*rias fabulas conferam, auresque tuas bibulas [al. benivolas] lepido sufurro permulceam. Apul. Met. lib. i. p. 1.*

(*p*) *Fabulam Graecam incipimus. Lector intende, laetaberis. Ib. p. 4.*

“ quibusdam anilibus occupatus inter Milesias Punicas Apuleii sui et  
 “ ludicra literaria confenesceret. That poor, modern-spirited critic  
 “ *Macrobius*, talks too of Apuleius in the same strain. lib. 1. cap. 2.”  
 Again p. 118. “ The ancients, who stuck in the outside, considered  
 “ it, without refinement, as an idle fable.” And p. 123. “ The  
 “ Author introduces his Metamorphosis in this manner: At ego tibi  
 “ sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conferam, auresque tuas beni-  
 “ volas lepido susurro permulceam. . . . And his kind readers took  
 “ him at his word. And from that day to this never troubled them-  
 “ selves about any farther meaning.”

And why should not *his readers take him at his word*, and accept of his own account of the design of his work? And why should we trouble ourselves farther? Why may not we understand him, as the ancients did?

One reason against that is taken from the character of the writer, p. 117. “ However, *Macrobius* seems to wonder, that Apuleius  
 “ should trifle at this rate. And well he might. For the writer of  
 “ the Metamorphosis was one of the gravest and most virtuous Phi-  
 “ losophers of his age.”

I do not know, what assurance we have of this. I am not able to reconcile that character with the many horrible obscenities of that work, not inferior to the most offensive things of that kind in any of the works of *Lucian*. A grave Philosopher may, for the sake of diversion, propose in conversation, or writing, a tale, a *Milesian tale*, if you please: but not such a storie, as that of Apuleius's ass. *Marcus Aurelius* was a Philosopher of that same age. No man can believe him capable of such an obscene performance as this, notwithstanding his aversion to Christianity. I own, that Apuleius must have been studious. Otherwise he had not attained to such learning, as appears in his writings. And he had the character of a Philosopher. But his obscenity is a strong objection to his *virtue* and *gravity*.

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*vity*. And his Apologie also manifests great gayety of temper. Nor is it entirely free from obscenity.

P. 123. 124. "The fable opens with the representation of a young man, figured in his own person." For certain, it is *Lucius Apuleius* himself throughout, who speaks, and acts, and suffers, in this fable.

P. 125. "Matters growing still from bad to worse, his affairs come to a crisis. For being now about to perpetrate, in the ninth book, (*it should be said the tenth.*) one of the most shocking enormities, . . . he 'abhors the idea of his projected crime, evades his keepers, and flies to the sea-shore."

I must take the liberty to say, I do not perceive that to be the truth of the case. For (*q*) he had before *perpetrated that shocking enormity*, and has related the commission of it with shameful particularity. But (*r*) he scorned to repeat it in public, and made his escape from his keepers.

At the end, in the eleventh book, he recovers his original form. And he undergoes three initiations, into the mysteries of Isis, and then of Osiris, and lastly the Roman rites.

"All this considered, says the venerable and laborious Author, before named, p. 130. who can any longer doubt, but that the true design of this work was to recommend initiation into the mysteries, in opposition to the new religion?" meaning the Christian religion.

I do not yet perceive the certainty of that conclusion. Supposing a man, by some means, to have been transformed into an ass, and in that state to have been treated as a beast of burden, and to have undergone many hardships: it was natural for him, upon his recovering the human shape, to make acknowledgements to heaven, in a way agreeable to the religion, of which he makes profession, or as best suited his own temper. Lucian, whose regard for the gods

is

(q) *L.* 10. p. 336. &c.(r) *Ib.* p. 343. &c.

is not reckoned to have been very extraordinarie, having been transformed, as Apuleius is represented to have been, upon the recoverie of human shape, *sacrifices (s) to the Gods, his Saviours, and makes offerings to them.* Apuleius, who was more accustomed to religious rites, is initiated, as just shewn.

I must therefore still understand this to be a *Milesian Fable*, as the ancients did. And I cannot but consider the allegorical interpretation as a fiction without foundation.

But though I am not able to discern that deep and hidden design, which our great Author sees in this work; it may be allowed to be, (what (t) divers learned and ingenious men have supposed,) a perpetual satire of the tricks and irregularities of magicians, priests, debauchees, cheats and sharpers, with which the world was then filled.

Crevier's (u) character of Apuleius is absurd, and unaccountable. I put it below, with a remark or two. And perhaps, it may be remembered, when we come to the chapter of *Hierocles*.

Since writing what is above, upon reviewing the chapter, I have observed, that (x) Mr. *Mosheim* had seen, and examined the argu-

L 1 2

ment

(s) *Ἐνταῦθα, θεοῖς σπῆσιον ἔθουσ, καὶ ἀναθήματα ἔθουκα.* *Lucian. Asin. p. 117. T. 2. Graev.*

(t) *Tota porro haec Metamorphosis Apuleiana et stilo et sententiâ Satyricon est perpetuum, (ut recte observavit Barthius Adv. l. 51. cap. 11.) in quo magia deliria, sacrificulorum scelera, adulterorum crimina, furum et latronum impunitae factiones differuntur.* *J. Florid. annot. in Apul. in usum Delphin. p. 2.*

See likewise Bayle in *Apulée. note (s).*

(u) “ Apuleius ought to be ranked with the Philosophers, who pretended to join magick to philosophy. He was

“ an *Apollonius Tyanaeus* in miniature.  
 “ Miracles were ascribed to him, and a  
 “ supernatural commerce with the Gods.  
 “ In the main, all he did was mere impo-  
 “ ture, by which he proposed to raise his  
 “ character for knowledge, and to make  
 “ himself a subject of admiration.” *Crevier's Hist. of the Emperours. vol. vii. p. 344.*

So says that learned modern. Had he never read the *Apologie* of Apuleius? And did he suppose, every thing said in the *Metamorphosis*, or *Fable of the Ass*, to be real matter of fact?

(x) *De consilio vero fabulae de Asino, quod*

A. D. 164. ment of the Bishop of Gloucester. But after expressing just tokens of respect for his Lordship, he declares himself not to be fully satisfied with his representation of the design of the fable of the Ass.

quod commendationem mysteriorum, et Christianae religionis contemtionem, vir doctissimus esse conjicit, dubitare mihi liceat: quum nihil afferri videam ex ea,

quod difficulter in aliam partem accipi possit. *Moshem. De Reb. ante C. M. p. 563.*





## C H A P. XVII.

*A general Account of the early Adversaries of the Christians, who wrote against them: CELSUS, PORPHYRIE, HIEROCLES, JULIAN, FRONTO, and some others.*

**T**HE next Author to be quoted by me, is *CELSUS*, who in the second centurie wrote professedly against the Christians. And I shall now give a general account of all our ancient adversaries, or such Heathen Authors, who designedly opposed the Christian Religion.

*The principal Writers against the Christians.*

Doubtless, all the Heathen authors, hitherto quoted, were, in a sense, enemies to Christianity. For though they had heard of it, they did not embrace it, but rejected it. And usually they manifest ill-will and aversion, in their manner of speaking of Christians, and their principles. But now I intend such as on set purpose wrote against it, and endeavored to confute it. In these it is reasonable to expect more particulars concerning Christianity, than in others, who only speak of it by the by. We might at least expect this, if their treatises were now entire: or if there remain some considerable fragments of them. We might expect to see there the best reasons, which Heathens had to offer against it, and the arguments deduced at length, and the defects of the evidences of our religion, if indeed there are any. And if those adversaries employ only weak and inconclusive arguments,

ments, or make use of ridicule and calumnie; we may be thence farther confirmed in the persuasion of the truth of our religion. And it is very likely, that we should see fresh reason to admire the steadinesse and perseverance of the Christians of those times, who bore up, and held out, against the virulent pens of keen and witty adversaries, as well as against the sword of the magistrate, and the clamours of the common people.

The most noted adversaries of the Christian Religion, in the first four centuries, are *Celsus*, *Porphyrie*, *Hierocles*, and *Julian*. The three former wrote within the compasse of the first three centuries, and before the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire by Constantin. The last, not till after the middle of the fourth centurie, and after the reigns of several Christian Emperours, Constantin, and his sons. But, beside them, there were some others, not so considerable, of whom I shall take some notice here.

The principal adversaries were *Celsus*, *Porphyrie*, and *Julian*: as may be inferred from the distinct and frequent mention made of them by ancient Christian writers. Who when they are speaking of the enemies of our religion, sometimes mention those three only, without taking notice of any others. So Jerome (*a*) in the preface to his book of Illustrious Men: and also in another (*b*) place, where he

(*a*) Discant igitur Celsus, Porphyrius, Julianus: discant eorum sectatores, qui putant Ecclesiam nullos philosophos, et eloquentes, nullos habuisse doctores, quanti et quales viri eam fundaverint, extruxerint, adornaverint: et desinant fidem nostram, rusticae tantum simplicitatis arguere, suamque potius imperitiam agnoscant. *De Vir Ill. in Proem.*

(*b*) Scripserunt contra nos Celsus atque Porphyrius. Priori Origenes, alteri Metho-

dus, Eusebius, et Apollinarius fortissime responderunt. Quorum Origenes octo scripsit libros: Methodius usque ad decem millia procedit versuum: Eusebius et Apollinarius viginti quinque et triginta volumina condiderunt. . . . Julianus Augustus septem libros in expeditione Parthica adversus Christum evomuit, et juxta fabulas poetarum suo se ense laceravit. *Hieron. ad Magn. ep. 83. al. 84. T. 4. P. 2. p. 655.*

he likewise particularly mentions those learned Christians, who had published answers to them. I transcribe both those places below.

It is evident from a letter of (c) Constantin, that in his time the memorie of Porphyrie was made infamous, and that his books against the Christian Religion were by edict ordered to be burnt. There was afterwards another edict of (d) Theodosius the Younger, in 449. for abolishing the writings of Porphyrie, and of every one else, who had writ against the Christian Religion.

In that edict Porphyrie only is expressly mentioned. It is a proof of the great aversion, which Christians had for his memorie.

I do not by any means justify such proceedings. Which have been often blamed by (e) learned moderns, who regret the losse of those writings. However, I do not entirely ascribe the losse of them to imperial edicts: but rather to the general contempt, which they soon fell under. There is a remarkable passage in Chryostom, in which he says, “ that (f) the books writ against Christianity were so contemptible, that they had been all in a manner lost long agoe. “ Many

(c) *Ap. Socrat. H. E. l. i. cap. ix. p. 32.*

(d) Sancimus igitur, ut omnia, quaecumque Porphyrius sua pulsus infania, aut quivis alius contra religiosum Christianorum cultum conscripsit, apud quemcumque inventa fuerint, igni mancipentur. Omnia enim provocantia Deum ad iracundiam scripta, et pias mentes offendentia, ne ad aures quidem hominum venire volumus. *Cod. Lib. i. Tit. 1. l. 3. in. Vid. et Justinian. Nov. 42. cap. i.*

(e) Hinc Porphyrius, Syrus sive Tyrius, . . . vir inprimis subtilis et acutus, longum in Christianos opus componebat, quod Imperatorum Christianorum legibus periisse dolendum est. *Moshem. De Reb. Chr. ante Const. M. p. 561.*

At facile aliquis subscripserit virorum doctorum judicio, qui optent exstare, et Christianorum potius gloriae futurum putarent, si ad nos Porphyrii opus pervenisset. Verum non minus ego vehementer optem exstare opera, quae Porphyrio opposuerant Christiani doctores antiqui: Eusebius, Methodius, Apollinarius, et Philostorgius. *Fabr. Lux Evangel. cap. 8. p. 155.*

(f) Ἀλλὰ τοσούτος ἔστι τῶν ὑπ' αὐτῶν γεγραμμένων ὁ γέλως, ὥστε ἀφανισθῆναι καὶ τὰ βιβλία πάσαι, καὶ ἅμα τῶ δειχθῆναι, καὶ ἀπολέσθαι τὰ πολλὰ. Εἰ δέ περὶ καὶ εὐρεθῆναι διασθῆν, παρὰ χριστιανοῖς τῶτο σαζόμενον ἔντρο. *De S. Bab. Or. 2. Tom. 2. p. 539. Bened.*

“ Many of them perished, almost as soon as they appeared. But if  
 “ they are still to be found any where, it is among the Christi-  
 “ ans.”

*Hierocles.* Lactantius (g) makes particular mention of two persons in his own time, (though he does not name them,) who wrote against the Christian Religion. And he supposeth, that there might be others, who did the like about the same time, as well as in former times. One of the two, above mentioned, is supposed to be *Hierocles*, who wrote, as is computed, in the year of Christ 303. and was confuted by Eusebius of Caesarea. Of him we shall be obliged to take particular notice hereafter.

*Other  
 early  
 Writers.*

But beside them, I think, there were some others of an earlier age, possibly, about the same time with Celsus, or before him. *Minucius Felix* published his excellent apologie for the Christian Religion (h) about the year 210. It is in the form of a dialogue, or conference, between *Caecilius Natalis* a Heathen, and *Ostavius Januarius* a Christian, in which Minucius sits as judge.

*Caecilius*, the Heathen interlocutor, arguing against the Christians, speaks to this purpose. “ As (i) for the feast, it is a well known  
 “ thing. Every body talks of it. They come together upon an  
 “ appointed day, with all their children, their sisters, and mothers:  
 “ persons of each sex, and of every condition. And after feeding  
 “ plen-

(g) *Inst.* l. 5. cap. 2. 3. 4. 5. And see *the Credib.* vol. vii. p. 104.

(h) See *the Credib.* P. 2. Vol. 3. p. 1. &c.

(i) Et de convivio notum est. Passim omnes loquuntur. Id etiam Cirtensis nostri testatur oratio. Ad epulas solenni die coeunt, cum omnibus liberis, sororibus, matribus, sexus omnes homines, et omnis aetatis. Illic post multas epulas, ubi convivium caluit, et incestae libidini ebri-

etatis fervor exarsit, canis, qui candelabro nexus est, jactu ossiluae ultra spatium lineae, qua vinculus est, ad impetum et saltum provocatur. Sic everso et extincto conscio lumine, impudentibus tenebris nexus infandae cupiditatis involvunt per incertum fortis. Et si non omnes operantur, conscientia tamen pariter incesti: quoniam voto universorum appetitur, quicquid accidere potest in actu singulorum. *Min. Fel. cap. ix.*

“plentifully, when the lights are put out, they practise promiscuously incest, and all manner of uncleanness.”

To this *Octavius* refers, when it comes to his turn to speak. “The *Fronto* storie, says (*k*) he, of the incestuous mixtures is a mere fiction, a lye invented by demons. Nor does your *Fronto* attest it, as a positive witness. But he flings it out in the way of reproach, as an orator.”

It hence plainly appears, that one *Fronto* had published an oration against the Christians, in which was that odious calumnie, particularly taken notice of by Tertullian, and other ancient Christian Apologists. Several learned men (*l*) have been of opinion, that this *Fronto* is the same, who was master in the Latin tongue to Mark Antonin the (*m*) Philosopher. If so, we may the less wonder at that Emperour's antipathie to the Christians. For (*n*) *Fronto* was one of his masters, for whom he had a high respect. As Antonin's master was a professed orator and rhetorician, the conjecture that he is the same, who published the oration, here mentioned, is very probable.

But

(*k*) Et de incesto convivio fabulam grandem adversum nos daemorum coitio mentita est, ut gloriam pudicitiae deformis infamiae aversione [f. aspersione] macularet. . . Sic de isto et tuus *Fronto*, non ut affirmator testimonium fecit, sed convivium ut orator insperlit. *Ib. cap. 31.*

(*l*) Nam et ex eadem Africa prodibant hostes minime ignavi, neque improbi minus, quam vehementer calumniatores. Qualis, ne longius abeam, fuit ille, cuius jam memini, *Fronto*. . . Nollem hunc fuisse *Papirium Frontonem Juriscon-*

sultum, qui in Pandectis laudatur. *Suspitor*, potius fuisse *Cornelium Frontonem Rhetorem*, quem *Capitolinus* narrat fuisse praeceptorem *M. Antonini Philosphi Imp.* . . . *Balduin. in Praef. ad Min. Felic. cap. iii. Vid. et annotata a Rigaltio in cap. ix.*

(*m*) Latinas autem literas eum *Fronto* orator nobilissimus docuit. *Eutrop. l. 8. cap. xii.*

(*n*) Sed multum ex his *Frontoni* detulit, cui et statuum in Senatu petiit. *Jul. Capitol. M. Antonin. cap. 2.*

*Anony-  
mous Wri-  
ters a-  
gainst the  
Christi-  
ans.*

But beside this Fronto, who was of Cirtha in Numidia, expressly mentioned, both by *Caecilius*, and *Octavius* in their conference, there seem to be references to one or two more, who are *anonymous*. For before *Octavius* mentions Fronto, he says: “ And (*o*) he who tells “ against us the fiction of our worshipping the priest’s secret parts, on- “ ly strives to throw scandals upon us, which are his own, and belong “ to his own people.”

And soon afterwards. “ And (*p*) now; says *Octavius*, I would willingly speak to him, who says, or believes, that we are initiated with the murder and blood of a child.”

Here seem to me to be two different writers, who had aspersed the Christians, beside Fronto. But whether they were professed adversaries, who wrote a book against the Christians, as Fronto did: or whether they only occasionally flung out reflexions upon the Christians in some work, the principal part of which was some other subject, does not clearly appear. But they are authors. And as they are both taken notice of by *Octavius*, before he comes to Fronto, it is not unlikely, that they were at least as ancient as he: and probably, not very remote in time from Celsus, of whom we are now to speak more distinctly.

*Autolycus.*

I have not particularly mentioned *Autolycus*, to whom Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, near the end of the second century, addressed three books in the way of apologie for the Christians.

*Demetri-  
an.*

Nor *Demetrian*, to whom Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, about the middle of the third century, wrote a letter, with the same view: be-  
cause,

(*o*) Etiam ille, qui de adoratis sacerdotis virilibus adversus nos fabulatur, tentat in nos conferre quae sua sunt. *Cap.* 28.

(*p*) Illum jam convenire, qui initiari nos dicit, aut credit, de caede infantis et sanguine. *Cap.* 30. *in.*

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cause, though they were men of some learning, and of some consideration upon account of their worldly condition; it does not appear, that they ever wrote against the Christians, but only, so far as we can discern, cast reflexions upon them in their discourses, and sometimes even in the presence of the above-mentioned Bishops, to whom they were not absolute strangers.



## C H A P. XVIII.

## C E L S U S.

- I. *His Time, and Character, and his Work against the Christians.*
- II. *Passages in Celsus, representing the Jewish Expectation of the Messiah.*
- III. *Passages of Celsus, containing References to the Books of the N. T.*
- IV. *Passages of Celsus concerning Christian Facts, chiefly such, as are recorded in the N. T.*
- V. *Passages of Celsus, relating to the Christian Principles.*
- VI. *Passages relating to the Progress of the Christian Religion.*
- VII. *Passages of Celsus, in which he chargeth the Christians with magical practises.*
- VIII. *Passages relating to Christian Worship, and their religious Assemblies.*
- IX. *Passages in Celsus concerning those called Heretics.*
- X. *Passages in Celsus, containing Calumnies, or injurious Reflexions upon the Christians.*
- XI. *Remarks upon the Work of Celsus against the Christians, and upon Origen's Answer to it.*
- XII. *A Recapitulation of the preceding Extracts.*
- XIII. *Three Summaries of the fragments of the Work of Celsus, preserved in Origen, made by three several learned men.*

SECTION



## SECTION I.

*His Time, and Character, and his Work against the Christians.*

**T**HE book, which Celsus wrote against the Christians, was (a) entitled *The true Word*. Origen (b) says, he had understood, that there were two of this name, who were Epicureans: One lived in the time of Nero, the other in the time of Adrian, and afterwards. Him he takes to be the person, who had wrote against us.

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Concerning Celsus, and his work, divers learned moderns may be (c) consulted.

It was a time of persecution, when he wrote. For he several times speaks (d) of the Christians teaching their principles privately, and holding assemblies contrarie to law, and hiding themselves, because they were fought for to be put to death. This leads us to the reign (e) of Mark Antonin the Philosopher. It is also very probable,

(a) . . . λόγον ἀληθῆ ᾧ ἐπιγράψεν ὁ Κέλσος. *Orig. contr. Cels. in Pr. §. 4. Bened. p. 3. Spencer. seu Cant.*

Καὶ περιεγράψαμεν ἐν διατῶ βιβλίοις πάντα ὅσα ἔπρεπον εἶναι ἐνομιζόμενοι ὑπαγορεύσαι πρὸς τὸν ἐπιγεγραμμένον Κέλσῳ ἀληθῆ λόγον. *L. 8. §. 76. p. 428. et passim.*

(b) *Contr. Cels. l. i. c. 8. p. 9.*

(c) *Cav. H. L. p. 96. Fabr. B. Gr. I. 3. cap. 33. T. 2. p. 809. et Lux Evangel. p. 151. Tillem. Origene. art. 34.*

(d) Πρῶτον τῷ Κέλσῳ κεφάλαιόν ἐστι βεβλημένον διαβαλέον χριστιανισμόν, ὡς σαθῆ-

καις κρύβειν πρὸς ἀλλήλους ποιημένων χριστιανῶν παρὰ τὰ νομισμένα. *L. 1. §. 1. Bek. p. 4. Cant.*

Μετὰ ταῦτα περὶ τῶ κρύφα χριστιανῶν τὰ ἀρέσκοντα ἑαυτοῖς ποιεῖν καὶ διδάσκειν εἶπεν, καὶ ὅτι οὐ μάλιστα τῶτοι ποιῶσιν, ἅτε διαθίμνοι τῆν ἐπισημημένην αὐτοῖς δίκην τῶ θανάτου. *L. i. §. 3. p. 5.*

ὑμῶν δὲ καὶ πλανᾶται τις ἔτι λαοθάλασσον, ἀλλὰ ζητᾶται πρὸς θανάτου δίκην. *L. 8. §. 69. p. 424.*

(e) *Ut ut est, Celsus, quem confutat Ori-*

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ble, that this Celsus is the same, to whom Lucian inscribed his (*f*) *Alexander* or *Pseudomantis*, which was not writ untill after the death of the forementioned Emperour. He therefore reached to the time of Commodus. I choose therefore, upon the whole, to place him with his friend Lucian, (who will be in the next chapter.) in the year of Christ 176. not far from the end of the reign of Mark, who died in March in the year 180.

Against this adversarie of our religion Origen, at (*g*) the desire of his friend *Ambrose*, wrote an answer. It was published, as some think, in the year 246. according to others, in 249. an excellent work, greatly esteemed and celebrated, not only by Eusebius and Jerome, but also by many judicious moderns, particularly Du Pin: Who says, “ it (*b*) is polite and methodical: not only the best work “ of Origen, but the compleatest, and best written apologie for the “ Christian Religion, which the ancients have left us.”

This apologie of Origen consists of eight books, undoubtedly thus divided by that great master himself, that each book might be perused at a single reading, without disgust or wearinesse. But the Benedictins have now divided the books into sections. Which is a very usefull and acceptable service.

As Celsus undertook a labored argument against the Christians, and he wrote so late as the time of Mark Antonin, when too the  
Chri-

Origenes, suum *αληθῆ λόγον* scribere non potuit ante Marci Aurelii imperium, quandoquidem teste Origine l. 5. n. 62. non solum in eo opere meminerat Marcionitarum, qui circa annum Christi 142. orti sunt, sed ut Marcellianorum, qui nomen trahabant a Marcellina quadam ex Carpocratianorum secta muliere, quae teste Irenaeo lib. 1. cap. 24. Romam venit sub Aniceto post annum Christi 157. Verisimile autem admodum est illum hoc opus composuisse ardente Marci Aurelii adver-

sus Christianos persecutione, siquidem teste Origine lib. 8. num. 69. Christianos asserit ubique latere, ut mortis, ad quam quaerebantur, periculum evaderent. *Benedictin. Monitum ad libros Origenis contr. Cels. p. 313.*

(*f*) *Lucian..T. i. p. 746. edit. Gr.*

(*g*) *Contr. Cels. in Pr. et sub fin. libri octavi et ultimi.*

(*b*) *See the chapter of Origen in the Credib. Vol. 3. p. 208.*

Christians were openly persecuted, and their affairs were rendered better known by the persecution itself, and by the apologies then made for them; we may reasonably expect to find in his work many things, which may be now of great use to us: none, however, more valuable, than the testimonie here given to the books of the New Testament. As Chrysostom says: “Celsus. (i) and Bataneotes (meaning *Porphyrie*) are sufficient witnesses to the antiquity of our books. For, I presume, they did not oppose writings, which have been published since their own time.”

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As our collections from the remains of Celsus, preserved in Origen, will be large and various, it is very proper to divide them into several sections.

## SECTION II.

### *Passages in Celsus, representing the Jewish expectation of the Messiah.*

**N**OR ought it to be thought at all strange, that we find some things in Celsus concerning this matter, because in a large part of his work he personated a Jew.

1. “But (k) my Prophet said formerly at Jerusalem, that the Son of God will come a judge of good men, and a punisher of the wicked.”

Upon this Origen has divers observations, shewing, that these words are improperly put in the mouth of a Jew. *First*, he says, that the

(i) Ικανοὶ δὲ καὶ οἱ καθ' ἡμῶν ἐρμηκότες τὴν ἀρχαιότητα μαρτυρεῖσαι τοῖς βιβλίοις, οἱ περὶ Κέλσου καὶ τὸν βατανεάτην τὸν μετ' ἐκείνου. Ὅου γὰρ δὴ τοῖς μετ' αὐτῶν συντεθέσθαι αὐτέλεγον. *Chrysf. in ep. i. ad Cor. hom. vi. T. x. p. 47.*

(k) ΑΛΛ' ἔπειν ὁ ἐμὸς προφήτης ἐν Ἱερουσαλίμοις ποτὲ, ὅτι ἦξει Θεοῦ υἱὸς, τῶν ὁσίων κριτὴς, καὶ τῶν ἀδίκων κολαστής. *Contr. Celf. l. i. §. 49. p. 38.*

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the Christ was not prophesied of by one, but by many. *Secondly*, if by *my prophet* be meant Moses, here is another absurdity. For the name of Jerufalem was not known in his time. *Thirdly*, no Jew would say, that any Prophet foretold the coming of *the Son of God*, but the coming of *the Christ of God*. Not that we deny, says Origen, that the coming of the Son of God was foretold. But no Jew would allow of this.

2. “ There (*l*) are innumerable, says the Jew in Celsus, who confuse Jesus, affirming, that of themselves were said those things “ which were prophesied of concerning him:” that is, concerning the person, who was to come.

But those were impostors, as Theudas, and some others, who affirmed without proof: who neither said, nor performed such things: as Jesus had done: as Origen (*m*) well shews.

3. “ And, says he, (*n*) how could we, who had told all men, “ there would come one from God, who should punish the wicked, “ treat him injuriously, when he came.”

4. “ But (*o*) the Jew in Celsus says: For what reason could we reject him, whom we had before spoken of. Was it, that we might “ be punished more severely than other men?”

5. “ The (*p*) Jew adds: The Prophets say, that he who is to “ come, is great, and a prince, and lord of all the earth, and of all “ nations, and of armies.”

6. “ The (*q*) Jew in Celsus asks: What God ever came to men, “ who did not obtain acceptance, especially, if he came to them who “ expected him? Or, why should he not be acknowledged by them, “ who had long before expected him?”

7. “ Af-

(*l*) Τινές δὲ χ) ἐλεγχούσιν, ὡς φασιν ἰ παρα Κέλσφ. Ιεδαίος, μύριοι τὸν Ἰησοῦν, φάσκοντες, περὶ ἑαυτῶν ταῦτα ἐφῆσθαι, ἄπερ περὶ ἐκείνου προεφητέυστο. L. 1. §. 57. p. 44.

(*m*) *Ibid.* et l. 2. §. 8. in. p. 61. med.

(*n*) *Ib.* l. 2. §. 8. p. 61.

(*o*) L. 2. §. 8. p. 62.

(*p*) L. 2. n. 29. p. 78.

(*q*) L. 2. n. 75. p. 106.

7. “ Afterwards (*r*) the Jew, representing their sentiments, says: “ For we certainly expect a resurrection of the body, and eternal “ life. Of which he who is to be sent to us, is to be a pattern: and “ thereby to shew, that it is not impossible for God to raise up a man “ with a body.” But Origen makes a doubt, whether any Jews would say this of their expected Messiah.

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8. “ Afterwards (*s*) Celsus in his own person says: That the con- “ tention between the Christians and the Jews is very silly, and that “ all our dispute with one another about Christ is no better than a- “ bout the shadow of the asse, according to the proverb. And he “ thinks, the whole question is of no importance: both sides believ- “ ing, that it had been foretold by the Spirit of God, that a Saviour of “ mankind is to come. But they do not agree, whether he who has “ been prophesied of, is come, or not.”

9. There (*t*) are other places, where Celsus speaks of this same matter. Perhaps some of them may appear hereafter in our fourth section. Here is enough to shew, that the Jewish expectation of a great person prophesied of, was a thing well known: and that this expectation was in being before the appearance of Jesus in the world. And indeed their having generally such an expectation in the time of Celsus, is an argument, that they had it before the coming of Jesus. For they would not have taken up such a notion from his followers.

10. I must not go from this section, without putting down a remarkable observation of Origen, that (*u*) the Jews did not joyn John (the Baptist) with Jesus, and made a difference between the death of each of them.

## S E C T.

(*r*) *L. 2. n. 77. p. 109.*

(*s*) *Libr. 3. sub in.*

(*t*) *Lib. 4. sub in. et alibi.*

(*u*) *L. i. §. 48. p. 38. And see before  
Vol. i. p. 149.*

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## S E C T I O N III.

*Passages of Celsus containing references to the Books of  
the New Testament.*

I. **I**N some of these passages, we shall observe our Scriptures spoken of in general: in others there will be references to particular texts.

*Gospels,  
writ by  
Christ's  
Disciples.*

2. “ After that (a) says Origen, the Jew in Celsus goes on in this manner: I could say many things concerning the affairs of Jesus, and those true too, different from those written by the disciples of Jesus. But I purposely omit them.”

It is not easie to believe, that the Jew, or Celsus, would have done so, if he could have contradicted the disciples, upon good evidence, in any material points. This is only an oratorical flourish, as Origen well observes.

Celsus by *disciples of Jesus* does not mean his followers in general. For them he calls Christians, or believers, or the like. He therefore here useth that term in the most strict and proper sense, for those who had been taught by Jesus himself, that is, his Apostles and their companions.

We hence learn, that in the time of Celsus there were books well known, and allowed to be written by *the disciples of Jesus*: which books contained a historie of Him, and his teaching, doctrine, and works. The books here intended, undoubtedly, are the Gospels. And, possibly, there may be here also a reference to the Acts of the Apostles.

3. “ Then

(a) . . . ὅτι πολλά ἔχων λέγειν, καὶ ἀληθῆ, καὶ ἐκεῖνα παραλείπω. L. 2. §. 13. p. 67.  
περὶ τῶν κατὰ Ἰησοῦ γενομένων, καὶ ἐ παραπλή-  
σια τοῖς ὑπὸ μαθητῶν τῷ Ἰησοῦ γραφείσιν, ἐ-

3. “ Then (*b*) says Origen, he accuseth the disciples, and says: “ It is a fiction of theirs, that Jesus foreknew and foretold all things, “ which befell him.”

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He refers to our Gospels, in which it is often related, that Jesus spoke of his sufferings before hand, and likewise of the things that should befall his disciples, who were to be brought before Kings and Rulers for his name sake.

4. “ Afterwards (*c*) he says, that some of the believers, as if they “ were drunk, take a liberty to alter the Gospel, from the first writing, three or four ways, or oftener, that when they are pressed “ hard, and one reading has been confuted, they may disown that, “ and flee to another.”

*The Gof-  
pels.*

So that there was an ancient, original account: but the believers, or Christians of after times, had altered it, he says, to serve a purpose. But that is only a general charge, which is of no value, without particular instances: which, so far as we can perceive from Origen, Celsus did not specify. Origen, by way of answer says, he did not know of any, who had altered the Gospel, beside the followers of *Marcion* and *Valentinus*, and perhaps *Lucanus*: and that this is not the fault of the word itself, but of those who had been so daring as to corrupt the Gospels: and that the fault of those men, who introduce new opinions, ought not to be laid to the charge of genuine Christianity.

However, we hence perceive, that there were ancient written histories of our Saviour, composed by his own disciples. Nor is their genuinenesse disputed, but allowed of, as well known.

5. “ The (*d*) Jew in Celsus, says Origen, shuts up that argument in “ this manner. These things, then, we have alleged to you out of

N n 2

“ your

(*b*) *L. 2. n. 13. p. 67.*

(*c*) Μετά ταῦτά τινες τῶν πισευόντων φησιν ἕς ἐκ μίθης ἠκοντας εἰς τὸ ἐφεσάσαι αὐτοῖς μεταχαράττεν ἐκ τῆς πρώτης γραφῆς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τριχῶ ἢ τετραχῶ ἢ πολλαχῶ. κ. λ.  
*L. 2. n. 27. p. 77.*

(*d*) . . . ταῦτα μὲν ἐν ὑμῖν ἐκ τῶν ὑμετέρων συγγραμμάτων, ἐφ' οἷς ἕθενός ἄλλης μάστιγος χρῆζομεν. κ. λ. *L. 2. §. 74. p. 106.*

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“ are beaten with your own weapons.”

6. Origen expressly says, “ That (*e*) Celsus quoted many things  
“ out of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, as the star that appear-  
*Matt. ii.* “ ed at the nativity of Jesus, and other wonderfull things.”

*Matthew and Luke.* 7. “ Celsus (*f*) says, the composers of the genealogies of Jesus  
“ were very extravagant in making him to descend from the first  
“ man, and the Jewish Kings. And he thinks he says somewhat  
“ very extraordinarie, when he observes, that the carpenter’s wife  
“ was ignorant of her high original.”

Celsus plainly refers to both St. Matthew’s and St. Luke’s Gospels. For he speaks of composers of the genealogie in the plural number. And St. Luke only has carried up our Saviour’s genealogie to the first man. See *Matt. ch. i. and Luke iii.*

*Matt. v. and Luke vi.* 8. “ They (*g*) have likewise such precepts as these. *Resist not  
“ him that injures you : and, if a man strike thee, as his phrase is,  
“ on the one cheek, offer to him the other also.* That is an old saying :  
“ but here it is expressed in a more homely manner.” Then he  
quotes a passage from Plato’s *Crito* to the like purpose.

Celsus here refers to our Saviour’s sermon upon the mount, as it is called, and particularly to *Matt. v. 39. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil : but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.* See likewise *Luke vi. 29.* Celsus says, the same thing had been said before, and better expressed. This is not a place to enter into controversie upon that head. But Origen answers very well :

[(*e*) Ὅτι δὲ καινεργῶν ὁ Κέλσος ἐκ ἐξέθετο τὴν προφητείαν, [II. vii. 10. . . 14. *Matt. i. 22. 23.*] εἰλήν μοι γίνεται, ἐκ τῆ παραθέμενου αὐτὸν πολλὰ ἀπὸ τῆ κατὰ Ματθαίου εὐαγγελίου, ὡσπερ τὸν ἀνατέλαντα ἀστέρα ἐπὶ τῆ γενέσει τῆ Ἰησοῦ καὶ ἄλλα τῶν παραδόξων, μηδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν τέτα ἐμνημονεύεται. *L. i. n. 34. p. 27.*

(*f*) Ἰστοῦ δὲ ἀπιναδῆσθαι τὰς γενεαλογίαντας ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου φόντος καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἰουδαίῳ βασιλείων τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ διετάει τι εἰσφέρειν γενεαίαν, ὅτι ἐκ αὐτῆ καὶ τῆ τέκτονος γυνὴ πηλικέτι γένος τυγχάνουσα ἠγνόει. *L. 2. n. 32. p. 80.*

(*g*) *L. 7. n. 58. p. 370.*



well: "That (*b*) these precepts of Jesus thus expressed, as Celsus " says unpolitely, ἀγροικότερον, have been more beneficial in life, " than Plato's discourse in Crito, of which the vulgar have never " heard, and hardly they, who have gone through a course of Greek " philosophic."

9. " He (*i*) finds fault with Jesus after this manner. He threat- " ens, and feebly reproaches, when he says: *Woe unto you: and I* " *foretell unto you.* For thereby he plainly confesseth his disability to " persuade. Which is so far below a God, that it is even unwor- " thie a wise man."

I need not say, that here are references to our Gospels. But these are poor remarks.

10. " Celsus (*k*) asks, Why we may not worship angels, and de- " mons, and heroes? Why, the only reason, he says, is, because *it is* " *impossible to serve two masters.*"

Matthew  
and Luke.

He refers to some text, where are those words, either Matt. vi. 24. or Luke xvi. 13. This maxim Celsus has endeavored to expose (*l*) several times.

11. " O light, (*m*) o truth, says the Jew in Celsus: Jesus with " his own mouth expressly declares these things, as you have record- " ed it, that there will come unto you other men, with like won- " ders, wicked men, and impostors."

Matthew  
and Mark

Undoubtedly, he refers to some of our Saviour's predictions concerning the coming of deceivers, and false prophets: as Matt. vii. 15. xxiv. 11. 24. Mark xiii. 22. And the genuineness of the evangelical histories is here clearly acknowledged. They are here alleged, as containing our Lord's own words, there recorded. And (*n*) in other places

(*b*) *Ibid.* n. 61. p. 373.

(*i*) L. 2. n. 76. p. 107.

(*k*) L. 7. §. 68. p. 376. 377.

(*l*) L. 8. §. 2. 3. p. 380. 381. et §. 15.

p. 388.

(*m*) . . . ἀλλ' ἄρα ἴς καὶ ἀλήθεια, τῆ αὐτῆ φωνῆ διαρρήδην ἐξαγορεύει Ἰησοῦς ταῦτα, καθὰ καὶ ὑμεῖς συγγεγράφατε . . . κ. λ. L. 2. §. 53. p. 92.

(*n*) *Vid.* l. 6. §. 42. p. 303.

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places Celsus has taken notice of such like predictions of our Saviour.

Matthew  
and Luke,  
and John.

12. In another place Celsus is arguing, that Moses and Jesus, tho' both are said to be sent from God, do not agree. "Moses (o) encourages the people to get riches; and destroy their enemies. "But his Son, [meaning *the Son of God,*] the Nazarean man, delivers quite contrarie laws. Nor will he admit a rich man, or one that affects dominion, to have access to his Father. Nor will he allow men *to take more care for food, or treasure, than the ravens: nor to provide for clothing, so much as the Lillies: and to him that has smit once, he directs to offer, that he may smite again.*"

Beside the quotation from Matth. v. 39. or Luke vi. 29. which we had before, here are plain references to Mat. vi. 26. *Behold the fowls of the air. For they sowe not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.* And ver. 28. *Why take ye thought for raiment! Consider the Lillies of the field. . . or to Luke xii. 24. . . 27. Consider the ravens. For they neither sow, nor reap. Which neither have store-house, nor barn. . . Consider the lillies, how they grow. . .*

As to what Celsus says of our Lord's discouraging the seeking of riches, power, honour: it is indeed the tenour of our Lord's doctrine in his discourses, that we are to *seek the kingdom of heaven, and it's righteousness, in the first place.* Mat. vi. 33. And he condemns the seeking, principally, that honour, which comes from men. John v. 44. And in Luke vi. 24. he says: *Woe unto you, that are rich. For you have received your consolation: the very same chapter, in which he says, at ver. 29. And unto him that smiteth thee on one cheek offer also the other.* Which are the very words, to which Celsus seems to refer.

And he calls our Saviour, *the Nazarean man,* or man of Nazareth, referring

(o) . . . ὁ δὲ υἱὸς ἀρεῶν αὐτῶν, ὁ Ναζαρεαῖος ἄνθρωπος, ἀντινομιστὴς. κ. λ. L. 7. §. 18.  
p. 343.

referring to some texts of the Gospels, or the Acts, where Nazareth is mentioned, as the place of our Lord's education, and abode, till he appeared publicly in the world. See Matt. ii. 23. iv. 13. Mark i. 9. Luke i. 16. ii. 4. 39. 51. iv. 16. And he is often spoken of as *the Prophet of Nazareth*, as Matt xxi. 11. Mark i. 24. x. 47. Luke xviii. 37. xxiv. 19. John i. 45. xix. 19. Acts ii. 22. iii. 6. and elsewhere. This character of Jesus, therefore, Celsus learned from the historical books of the New Testament, though he is pleased to mention it in the way of contempt.

13. "Of that (*p*) saying of Jesus, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, he says, it was plainly taken from Plato: but Jesus had spoiled the observation of Plato, who says: To be very good and very rich is impossible."

Here was in Celsus a reference to Matt. xix. 24. or Mark x. 25. or Luke xviii. 15. where that expression is recorded. Origen has several good remarks upon this passage of Celsus. He says, it must appear ridiculous, not only to the followers of Jesus, but likewise to all other attentive persons, to say, that Jesus had read Plato: when according to the true records of his faithful disciples, he was a Jew; educated among the Jews, supposed to be the son of a carpenter, who had never been instructed neither in Greek, nor Hebrew learning. And he likewise asks, if that observation of Plato does not justify all that our Lord says in the Gospels concerning moderating our regards for riches, and other worldly goods?

14. "He (*q*) says, it is a saying of ours, that God was sent to sinners. And he asks: But why was he not sent to those who were free from sin? What harm is it, not to have sinned? God accepts  
" an

Matthew.  
Mark.  
Luke.

(*p*) Μετά ταῦτα τὴν κατὰ τῶν πλεσίων ἀσάφασιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰπόντος, Ευκοπότερον κάμηλον . . . φησὶν, Ἀντικρὸς ἀπο Πλάτωνος εἰρησθαι, τῷ Ἰησοῦ παραφθείροντος τὸ πλατωνικὸν, ἐν οἷς εἶπεν ὁ Πλάτων ὅτι ἀγαθὸν ὄντα διαρε-

ρόντως, ἢ πλεσίων εἶναι διαφερόντως ἀδύνατον. L. 6. §. 16. p. 286.

(*q*) Φησὶν ἡμᾶς λέγειν, ἀμαρτωλοῖς πέμψθαι τὸν Θεόν. κ. λ. L. 3. § 62. p. 148. 149.

A. D. 176. “ an unrighteous man, if he humbleth himself for his wickedness :  
 “ but a righteous man, who has practised virtue from the beginning, if  
 “ he looks up to him, he will not accept.”

Luke  
 xviii. 9.  
 —14.

Here is a manifest reference to what our Lord says in several of the Gospels: *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* Mat. ix. 13. Mark ii. 17. Luke v. 32. and likewise to the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, which last stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, and went down to his house (from the temple,) justified rather than the other. Luke xviii. 9. . . . 14.

Origen makes good answers to these cavils, which well deserve to be perused. But I must not stay to transcribe them.

15. He also adds: “ But (r) Celsus insinuates, that we give this  
 “ encouragement to sinners, because we are not able to persuade any  
 “ really good and honest men: and therefore we open the doors to  
 “ the most wicked and abandoned.” “ But, says Origen, if any men  
 “ will with a tolerable degree of equity examine our conversions;  
 “ he may see, that we have among us more of such as were convert-  
 “ ed from no very bad life, than of such as were abandoned.”

Matt.  
 xxvii.  
 Mark xv.  
 Luke  
 John xix.

16. “ Celsus, says (s) Origen, omitting those things that shew the  
 “ divinity of Jesus, reproacheth him with those things that are writ-  
 “ ten of him in the Gospels, his derider's, the purple robe, the crown of  
 “ thorns, and the reed in his hand.” “ Whence (t) did you learn these  
 “ things, Celsus, but from the Gospels, says Origen, and tells him,  
 “ that (u) instead of ridiculing these things, he ought to admire the  
 “ veracity of those who wrote them, and the greatness of him, who  
 “ voluntarily suffered such things for the good of men, and bore all  
 “ with meekness and patience. For it is no where written, that he

“ be-

(r) Ημεῖς δὲ, εἰ τις κατανοῶσι ἡμῶν ἐυ-  
 γαιμότως τὸ ἀθροῖσμα, πλείονας ἔχομεν πα-  
 ρασῆσαι τὸς ἐκ ἀπὸ χαλεπῶ πάνυ βίαις ἢ περ τὸς  
 ἀπὸ ἐξωλεσάτων ἀμαρτημάτων ἐπιστρέψαντας.  
 L. 3. §. 65. p.

(s) L. 2. §. 34. p. 81.  
 (t) Πόθεν ἔν, ὡ κέλσε, ταῦτα μεμάθη:ας,  
 ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν εὐαγγελίων;  
 (u) Μᾶλλον ἔν θαύμαζε αὐτῶν τὸ φιλάλλ-  
 θες . . .

“ bemoaned himself, or that he said, or did any thing mean and ab-  
 “ ject, when he was condemned.”

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And just before Celsus had said: “ But (x) neither did he who con-  
 “ demned him suffer any thing like Pentheus, who ran mad, and was  
 “ torn to pieces.”

“ He does not consider, says Origen, that Jesus was not so much  
 “ condemned by Pilate, *who knew that for envie the Jews had deliver-*  
 “ *ed him*, as by the Jewish people: for which cause they have been  
 “ condemned by God, and have been dispersed and scattered over  
 “ the whole earth more than Pentheus. And why does he design-  
 “ edly omit what is recorded concerning the wife of Pilate, who sent  
 “ to him, *saying, Have nothing to do with that just man: for I have*  
 “ *suffered many things this day in a dream, because of him.*” Matt. xxvii.  
 19. So writes Origen. But Eusebius says, that (y) Pontius Pilate  
 met with many troubles, and at last made away with himself.

18. “ He (z) pretends, says Origen, that Christians argue misera-  
 “ bly, when they say, that the Son of God is the Word himself: and  
 “ he thinks, he makes good his charge, in that after we have affirm-  
 “ ed the Son of God to be the Word, we do not shew him to be a  
 “ pure and holy Word, but a miserable man, condemned, scourged,  
 “ and crucified.”

John.

Where, as I apprehend, Celsus referred to St. John's Gospel, in  
 which, at the begining, Jesus is spoken of as *the Word*, and at the end,  
 as indeed in all the Gospels, his crucifixion is related.

John.

19. By way of ridicule Celsus speaks “ of (a) the blood, which  
 flowed from the body of Jesus, when on the crosse.” Referring, as  
 Origen justly supposes to John xix. 34.

John.

20.

(x) L. 2. §. 34. p. 81.

(y) H. E. l. 2. cap. vii.

(z) L. 2. §. 31. p. 79.

(a) \*Εἰτά, φησιν ὁ Κέλσος. Τί καὶ ἀνασκο-  
 λοπιζομένοι τῷ σώματός ποῖος ἰχθῶρ.

\*Οἷος πέρ τε βέει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν,

Ἐκένος μὲν ἐν πάλῳ.

L. 2. §. 36. 81.

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John x. 20. The Jew, in Celsus, having referred to some Heathen stories, or rather fables, turns himself to Jesus. “But (b) you, what good or wonderfull thing, either in word or deed, did you perform? You shewed us nothing, though they called upon you in the temple to give some manifest sign, that you were the Son of God.”

John. Here is, I think, a reference to John x. 23. 24. *And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him: How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.* See also John ii. 18.

The four Gospels. 21. “After (c) this he adds, says Origen: To the sepulchre of Jesus there came two angels, as is said by some, or, as by others, one only. He had observed, I think, that Matthew and Mark mention one only, Luke and John two. But, says Origen, those things are not contrarie to each other. They are easily reconciled.” See Matt. xxviii. 2. Mark xvi. 5. Luke xxiv. 4. John xx. 12.

The four Gospels. Origen supposed, therefore, that Celsus had read all our four Gospels. Which, indeed, appears to me to be very probable from the collections, which we have made. And their genuinness is here acknowledged. These histories of Jesus were written by his own *disciples*, the Apostles and their companions, as we now say, and as has been said by all Christians in general from the beginning.

1 Cor. xv. 22. “But (d) Celsus, who has often derided a resurrection, which he did not understand, not contented with what he had already said, adds, that we expect a resurrection of the flesh from wood: perverting, as I suppose, what is figuratively said: *By wood* [or by a tree] *came death: and by a tree comes life.* *By Adam came death, but life by Christ.* Then playing upon the word, wood, he endeavours  
“vors

(b) L. 1. §. 67. p. 52.

(c) . . . ἔτι καὶ πρὸς τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τάφον ἰσθρηνται ἐληλυθέναι ὑπὸ τινων μὲν ἄγγελοι δύο, ὑπὸ τινων δὲ εἷς· οὐκ ὅμαι τῆρισας Ματ-

θαῖου μεν καὶ Μάρκου ἓνα ἰσορικήναι, Λυκάου δὲ καὶ Ἰωάννου δύο· ἄσπερ οὐκ ἦν ἐναντία. Lib. 5. §. 56. p. 268.

(d) L. 6. §. 36. p. 299.

“vors to expose it in two respects, and says, *that wood is honoured* A. D.  
 “*by us, either because our master was fastened to a crosse, or because* <sup>176.</sup>  
*he was a carpenter by trade.*” In answer to which Origen says: *Mark.*  
 “That Jesus himself is no where called a carpenter in any of the  
 “Gospels received by the church.”

Whence it came to pass, that Origen said this, is not certain: whether it be a slip of memorie, or whether the copies used by him had *carpenter's son*. For in all the Greek manuscripts in general Jesus is called a carpenter, in Mark vi. 3. as in our version.

I suppose, that this passage may afford good proof, that Celsus had *Mark.*  
 seen and read St. Mark's, as well as the other Gospels.

23. “Some (*e*) of them say: *Do not examine, but believe: and thy* 1 Cor.  
 “*faith shall save thee: and the wisdom of this world is evil, and folly*  
 “*good.*”

Afterwards Origen quotes from Celsus the same saying in this manner: “Wisdom (*f*) in life is evil, and folly good.” In another place Celsus says, that we say: *Wisdom (g) in men is foolishness with* 1 Cor.  
*God: whereas, says Origen, Paul says: The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.”*

Nor can it be questioned, that Celsus referred to St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. See 1 Cor. iii. 19. And compare 1 Cor. i. 19. . . . 31.

24. Here I may take a reflexion of Celsus upon the Christians, *A Reflexion upon the*  
 which is in these terms. “These (*b*) he says, are our institutions: *Christians*  
 “Let not any man of learning come hither, nor any wise man, nor  
 “any man of prudence: for these things, he says, are reckoned evil by  
 “us: but if any man be unlearned, if he is ignorant, if he is silly,  
 “let him come without fear. Thus acknowledging, that these are

O o 2

“ the

(*e*) . . . χρῆσθαι τῷ, μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον ἢ ἡ πίστις σε σώσει σε. Καὶ ἐπιτιμῶν αὐτὸς λέγειν. Κακὸν ἢ ἐν τῷ βίῳ σοφία, ἀγαθὸν δὲ ἢ μωρία. L. 1. §. 9. p. 8.

(*f*) L. 1. §. 13. p. 11.

(*g*) L. 6. §. 12. p. 283.

(*b*) L. 3. §. 44. p. 137.

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“ the men, who are acceptable to their God, and thereby manifest-  
ing, that they are neither willing, nor able to gain any but the  
“ foolish, the vulgar, the stupid, slaves, women and children.”

To which, beside many other things, Origen answers. “ Celsus  
“ (i) without reason chargeth us, as if we said: Let not any man of  
“ learning, any wise man, any discreet person come to us. Yea, let  
“ the learned, the wise, the discreet come, if he will. But let him  
“ also come, who is unlearned, and uninstructed and ignorant, and  
“ foolish. For such likewise the word undertakes to heal, (or pro-  
“ miseth to heal) if they are willing, and will prepare themselves for  
“ the divine acceptance.”

“ For it is false, that the foolish, the ignorant, the vulgar, and  
“ slaves, and women, and children, are the only persons, whom  
“ the teachers of the divine word are desirous to persuade. Such  
“ indeed the divine word calls, that it may improve them. But  
“ it calls also those who are of very different characters. For our  
“ Saviour Jesus Christ is *the Saviour of all men, especially of them*  
“ *that believe*, whether they are wise, or simple.” 1 Tim. iv. 10.

For certain, that is a misrepresentation of the Christian institution,  
wherein all who are willing, are called, and invited, to come, and  
learn, and partake of the blessings, appertaining to it, as appears from  
Mat. xi. 22. . . . 30. See also Rev. xxii. 17. And presently after-  
wards Origen says, “ there (k) is no harm in being learned. For  
learning leads to virtue.”

1 Cor.  
viii.

25. “ If (l) says Celsus, those idols are nothing, what harm can  
“ there be to partake in their feasts? If they are demons, then no  
“ doubt they are of God: and they are to be believed and honoured,  
“ according to the laws, and to be prayed to, that they may be pro-  
“ pitious to us.”

Origen,

(i) L. 3. §. 48. 49. p. 141.

(k) Το μὲν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ πεπαιδευῆσθαι οὐ κα-

κόν· ὁ δὲ γὰρ ἐπ' ἀρετὴν ἐστὶν ἢ παιδείασις.

Ib. §. 49.

(l) L. 8. §. 24. p. 393.



Origen, with good reason, supposeth, that Celsus here has an eye to 1. Cor. viii. 4. 10. 11. *As concerning therefore things offered to idols, we know, that an idol is nothing in the world.* And what follows.

26. “Notwithstanding (*m*) the many divisions and contentions, Gal. “which there are among them, says Celsus, you may hear them all “saying: *The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*” Which “are the very words of Gal. ii. 14.

27. “Some (*n*) of them, he says, will neither give, nor receive a reason of the things, which they believe.”

It is St. Peter’s advice 1. ep. ii. 15. *And be always ready to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.* Whether Celsus alluded to that place, we cannot say positively: though it is not improbable.

28. “After (*o*) these things, says Origen, he speaks to us in this manner: Surely, you will not say, that when he could not persuade those that were here, he went to hades, to persuade those “who are there?”

St. Peter says: 1. ep. iii. 19. 20. *By which also he went, and preached to the spirits in prison, which some time were disobedient,* and what follows. There seems to be a reference to this text. And Celsus was aware, they would say something like to what he says, *surely you will not say.* And his apprehension might be built upon this text. And in Origen’s next Section there follows a quotation from Celsus, which may confirm this supposition. But it would be too prolix to enlarge farther here.

29. Celsus chargeth the Christians with having gross apprehensions of

(*m*) Πάντων δὲ ὄντων ἀκρίση . . . λεγόντων ἢ λαμβάνου λόγου περὶ ἧν πιστεύουσι. L. 1. §. 9. p. 8.  
τὸ, Ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσάυρωται· καὶ γὰρ τῷ κόσμῳ.  
L. 5. §. 64. p. 273.

(*n*) Φησὶ δὲ τινὰς, μηδὲ βυλομένους διδόναι

(*o*) L. 2. §. 43. p. 85.

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of God: "He (*p*) says, we expect to see God with the eyes of the body, and to hear his voice with our ears, and to handle him with our "sensible hands."

St. John says, 1. ep. i. 1. *That which was from the beginning: which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life.* And iii. 2. *We shall see him, as he is.* Whether Celsus referred to either of those places, I cannot say positively.

*The Gospels, and several of the Epistles, by Christ's Disciples.*

30. I shall allege no more passages from Celsus concerning the books of the New Testament. Many more references to them will appear in the next section. In those already cited are plain references to the Gospels, and to several of St. Paul's epistles, if not also to the epistles of St. Peter and St. John. We are assured by Celsus, that there were histories of Jesus, *writ by his disciples*: and that these books were well known, and in high esteem with Christians. We have seen plain references to the Gospels of *Matthew, Luke and John*. And probably, he had read, and was acquainted with *Mark's* also. Nor is there so much as a pretense or insinuation, that the later Christians, of Celsus's age, had forged those histories to do honour to Jesus. He only says, that they had altered some things. But of that he produced no proof.

#### S E C T I O N IV.

*Passages of Celsus concerning Christian Facts, chiefly such, as are recorded in the New Testament.*

1. "IT is but a few years, says (*q*) Celsus, since He [Jesus] delivered this doctrine, who is now reckoned by the Christians to be the Son of God." Never

(*p*) . . . λέγων, προσδέχεσθαι ἡμᾶς ὀφθαλμοῖς σώματος Θεῶν ὄψεσθαι, καὶ ὡς τῆς φωνῆς

αὐτῶ ἀκούεσθαι, καὶ χερσὶν αἰσθηταῖς ἄλυσεν αὐτοῦ. L. 7. §. 34. p. 374.

(*q*) L. 1. §. 26. p. 21.

Never the worse for that. If Jesus had not been acknowledged to be the Son of God, soon after his coming, he ought never to have been so acknowledged. But he was esteemed to be so, when the evidences, which he produced, might be examined. As there were many in divers parts of the world, who soon owned his divine mission and character, notwithstanding many outward discouragements; there is reason to believe, that they had good evidences of it. Origen answers very well: "That Jesus had by his doctrine so affected many in different parts of the world, Greeks and Barbarians, wise and unwise, that they had contended for Christianity even unto death."

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2. In another place (*r*) Celsus calls Jesus "the first author of this sedition."

3. "After this (*s*) says Origen, he brings in his Jew, arguing against Jesus in this manner. First, that he pretended, he was born of a virgin. Then he reproacheth him with his birth in a Jewish village, and of a poor woman of that countrey, who (*t*) subsisted by the labour of her hands. And he says, she was put away by her husband, who was a carpenter by trade, he having found, that she was guilty of adulterie. Then he says, that having been turned out of doors by her husband, she wandred about in a shameful manner, till she had brought forth Jesus in an obscure place, and that he being in want, served in Egypt for a livelihood: and having there learned some charms, such as the Egyptians are fond of, he returned home. And then valuing himself upon those charms, [powers,] he set up himself for a God."

*The nativity of Jesus. Mat i. and ii. Luke i. and ii.*

4. Farther, Origen says, "that (*u*) this fictitious person of a Jew says, that the mother of Jesus, being great with child, was put away by the carpenter, who had espoused her, he having convicted  
" her

(*r*) ὡς πρὸς ἐν αὐτοῖς τῆς σάσεως ἀρχηγότης. L. 8. §. 14. p. 387.

(*s*) L. 1. §. 28. p. 22.

(*t*) καὶ ἀπὸ γυναικὸς ἐγκαταλείτου, καὶ περιχρῆστος, καὶ χερνήτιδος. *Ibid.*

(*u*) L. 1. §. 32. p. 25. *Of this Pantheas see again, l. 1. §. 69. p. 54.*

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“ her of adulterie with a soldier named Pantheras.” But Origen seems not to give us here the words of Celsus exactly. However, afterwards Celsus goes on. “ Was (*x*) the mother of Jesus hand-  
“ some, that God should be in love with her beauty ? It is unwor-  
“ thie of God, to suppose him to be taken with a corruptible body,  
“ or to be in love with a woman, whether she be of royal descent,  
“ or otherwise.”

5. In another place (*y*) Celsus says : “ But if God would send  
“ forth a spirit from himself, what need had he to breath him into  
“ the womb of a woman ? For, since he knew how to make men,  
“ he might have formed a body for this spirit, and not cast his own  
“ spirit into such filth.”

6. From all which we learn, that there did then obtain among Christians such an account of the miraculous conception of Jesus, as we now have in the Gospels : that he was born of a virgin, *by the power of the Highest* : that her husband was a *carpenter*, that Jesus was born in a village, or town of Judea, which was not then of any great extent, and also that he was in Egypt, and returned thence : and that there were some extraordinarie works related to be done by him afterwards : upon account of which he was in the highest veneration with many. See Matt. i. and ii. Luke i. and ii.

Origen (*z*) says very well, that the storie of Pantheras is a silly and improbable fiction, the forgerie of blind malice, to overthrow the credit of the miraculous conception of Jesus. And he appeals to Celsus, and all the Greeks and Barbarians in general, whether it was at all likely, that a person, whose great design was to deliver men from the corruptions of this world, and who had succeeded to a great degree, in converting men from their vices, should not have so much as a legitimate birth ? It was much more likely that it should be of an extraordinarie kind, such as that received by Christians.

However,

(*x*) L. 1. §. 39. p. 30.

(*y*) L. 6. §. 73. p. 325.

(*z*) L. 1. §. 32. 33. p. 25.

However, it was no hard matter for malicious enemies, such as the Jews were, to whom Celsus had applied for scandal, to frame a different account from that of the disciples. Concerning which I shall only say farther, that undoubtedly, at first, Marie only knew, that the child was conceived in her by a divine interposition, without the concurrence of a man. It is probable, that the account given by her is true, in that her husband was convinced of it, and fully satisfied about it, as appears from the Evangelists. Their account is supported by all the great works done by Jesus, and by his resurrection from the dead, and by the miracles of his Apostles, and by the wonderfull succeffe, and great effects of his doctrine in the world. This is said for the truth of the miraculous birth of the Lord Jesus.

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As to the fitnessse of it, I would observe, that there is no absurdity in the Evangelists account of this matter. And we may do Celsus the justice to own, that he does not deny the possibility of it.

7. "After these things, says (a) Origen, the Jew in Celsus, instead of the Magians, in the Gospels, says. It was given out by Jesus, that Chaldeans were moved at the time of his birth, to come, and worship him, as a God, when he was but a little child, and that (\* ) this was told to Herod the Tetrarch: who issued out an order

*Matt. ii.*

(a) . . . χαλδαίους ερησιν υπό τῶ Ἰησοῦ λέγεσθαι κινηθέντας ἐπὶ τῇ γενέσει αὐτοῦ. κ. λ. L. I. §. 58. p. 45.

(\* ) *And that this was told to Herod the Tetrarch.*] Καὶ Ἡρώδῃ τῷ τετράρχῃ τῶ το δεδηλωμέναι. I would here make two remarks upon Celsus mistaking King of all Judea, in whose time Jesus was born, for his Son, Herod the Tetrarch of Galilee. *First.* We see the great difficulty of any writer's taking upon himself the character of a more early age, than that in which he lives, without committing some

great mistakes. This instance may confirm the argument, so much insisted on for the *credibility* of the evangelical historie, in the *first part* of this work. Where the Evangelists freedom from all errors of this kind was largely shewn. *Secondly:* since so learned a man as Celsus, about the middle of the second centurie, has made such a blunder in historie, the Christian writers, of the same age, or later, ought not to be too severely treated for any mistakes of the like kind.

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“ order to have all killed, who had been born there about that time,  
“ intending to kill him with the rest, least if he should live to mature  
“ age, he should take the government.”

It cannot be questioned, but that here is a reference to the historie in the second chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. We are not to wonder, that Celsus, who was pleased to consider Jesus as an impostor, should say, that this, or some other things in the Gospels, were *given out*, or invented by Jesus himself, by whom therefore his disciples were deceived. But that is only said, not proved. For it is unreasonable to suppose, that the disciples should preach Jesus at the hazard of their lives, without any good evidences of his divine mission and character. There are many great things related of Jesus in the Gospels, which the disciples must have certainly known, whether they were true, or not. Moreover, it would have been in vain for Jesus, or his disciples, at that time, to tell a storie of *Chaldeans*, or *Wise men of the East*, coming to Jerusalem, to worship a new-born child, and of Herod's thereupon putting to death a great number of children in an adjacent village, unless it had been true, and matter of fact: especially, with so many circumstances, as are put into the narrative by St. Matthew.

*Matt. ii.* 8. “ Afterwards *(b)* the Jew in Celsus addresses Jesus, and says:  
“ What occasion had you, when an infant, to be carried into Egypt,  
“ least you should be killed? A God has no reason to be afraid of  
“ death. And now an angel comes from heaven to direct you and  
“ your relations, to flee into Egypt, least you should be taken up, and  
“ put to death: as if the great God, who had already sent two an-  
“ gels upon your account, could not have preserved you, his own Son,  
“ in safety at home.”

Here is another manifest reference to the historie in the second chapter of St. Matthew. But there is nothing solid in this objection of Celsus. Jesus being a man, born of a woman, he was exposed to  
dangers,

*(b)* L. 1. §. 66. p. 51.

dangers, as other men are. And it was more agreeable to divine wisdom and goodnesse, that Jesus should sometimes decline dangers, than that his enemies should be destroyed. See Matt. ii. 13. and compare ch. i.

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In another place Celsus has these words: "But (\* ) if he [Herod] was afraid, that when you was come of age, you should reign in his stead: why did you not reign, when you was of age? But so far from that, the Son of God wanders about, cringing like a necessitous beggar." Or, as some may choose it should be rendred: "Skulking from place to place, as if he was afraid of being taken up."

These expressions are very irreverent: But they contain another testimonie to the second chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel.

9. "But (c) that it may not be suspected, says Origen, that we pass by any chapters because we have no answer at hand: I have thought it best, according to my ability, to confute every thing proposed by him: not so much observing the natural order of things, but the order, which he has taken himself. Let us see therefore what he says, denying that the Holy Spirit was seen by our Saviour in the shape of a dove. It is the Jew, who still goes on, addressing himself to him, whom we own for our Lord. You say, that when you was washed by John, there lighted upon you the appearance of a bird. The Jew adds: What (d) credible witness has said, that he saw this? or who heard the voice from heaven, declaring you to be the Son of God, excepting yourself; and, if you are to be credited, one other of those, who have been punished like yourself."

*Our Saviour's  
Baptism.*

P p 2

This

( \* ) 'Εἰ δ' ὅπως μὴ σὺ ἀυξήθης ἀντ' ἐκείνου βασιλεύσης, τί ἐπειδὴ γε ἡυξήθης, ἢ βασιλεύεις, ἀλλ' ὁ τῷ Θεῷ παῖς ὑποτάξῃς ἀγενῶς ἀγέρεις, κρυπτάζων [αἰ. κρυπτάζων] ὑπὸ φόβου, καὶ περιφρονοῦμενος ἀνω κάτω. L. I. §. 61. p. 47.

(c) L. I. §. 41. p. 31.

(d) Τίς τῶτο εἶδεν ἀξιοχρεῶς μάρτυς τὸ φᾶσμα; ἢ τίς ἠκούσεν ἐξ ἑρανῶ φωνῆς εἰσπορεύσης σε εἰς τὸν Θεῶν, πλὴν ὅτι σὺ φῆς, καὶ τινὰ ἕνα ἐπάγγελον τῶν μετὰ σε κεκολασμένων. Ibid.

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This passage bears testimony to many things recorded in the Gospels: our Saviour's baptism by John: that John, as well as our Saviour, had suffered a violent death: that according to the disciples of Jesus, who had written his historie, when he was baptized, the Holy Ghost descended like a dove, and abode upon him, and there was a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God, or the Messiah. Celsus may have referred to several of the Gospels, but, as it seems, more particularly to John i. 32. 33. *And John bare record, saying: I saw the Spirit descending from heaven, like a dove, and it abode upon him.* And what follows.

John i.

Origen's answer to this is prolix. Toward the conclusion of which he says: " I (*e*) must add, that Celsus is mistaken, when he thinks, " that Jesus himself told these things, the opening of the heavens, " and the descent of the Spirit at Jordan, in the shape of a dove: for- " asmuch as in no text of Scripture is it related, that he said this. " Nor did this great author consider, how little this suited him, who " of the vision in the mount said to the disciples, *tell this vision to " no man, untill the Son of man be risen from the dead.* Matt. xvii. 9. " It is not likely, that he who said this, should tell the disciples " what had been seen and heard by John. And any may per- " ceive from his whole life, how he declined speaking of himself. " *If I bear witness of my-self,* says he, *my witness is not true.* John " v. 31. He chose to shew himself to be the Christ by his works, " rather than by words. So far was he from boasting."

The Num-  
ber of  
Christ's  
disciples.

10. " Celsus (*f*) says, that Jesus taking to himself ten or eleven " abjects, vile publicans and saylors, went about with them getting " his subsistence in a base and shamefull manner."

There is no doubt, that Celsus means the twelve disciples of Je-  
sus, by whom he was usually attended. But he so much disliked the  
the

(e) L. I. §. 48. p. 37.

(f) . . . δέκα ἔπεν, ἢ ἑνδεκά τινες ἕξαρ-  
τησάμενος τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἑαυτῷ ἐπιρρήτους ἀνθρώπους,  
τελώνας καὶ ναύτας πρὸς ποιηροτάτους, μετὰ τῷ-των τῆδε κακέισε αὐτὸν ἀποδεδρακέναι, ἀιχρῶς  
καὶ γλίχρως τροφᾶς συνάγοντα. L. I. §. 62.  
p. 47.



the truth of the Gospels, that he could not endure to put down the right number, though that be a point so indifferent. For the same reason, I suppose, he calls the disciples *sailors* or mariners, instead of fishermen. Celsus gives ill language, and vilifies the disciples. But it does not appear, that he produced any instances of their wickedness. Publicans and sailors, or fishermen, are oftentimes bad men. But they are not all so. The original employments of the disciples shew, that they were not men of much learning, or of great and wealthy families: but they might be very honest nevertheless. The more despicable they were, the more evidently does the success of the gospel, preached by them, appear to be owing to its truth, and importance, and the power of God attending it. That Celsus produced no proof, nor credible account, that the disciples were bad men, is apparent: because Origen conjectures, he might found this character upon what is said of them in (g) the epistle of St. Barnabas, or else upon what St. Peter says to Christ, Luke v. 8. *Depart from me, o Lord, for I am a sinfull man.* And though Jesus subsisted in a mean and humble manner, it was not *shamefull*. But it is great and shamefull perversness, to censure the life of Jesus, who, without external pomp and splendour, *went about doing good*, as it is justly said, Acts x. 38. And who was sometimes attended by thousands, whom he fed in desert places: who, would have been his constant followers, with many others, if he would but have exerted his power for procuring to himself and them such worldly advantages, as they saw he was well able to do.

11. "I must not omit, " that (b) in another place the Jew in " Celsus says, Jesus set out with ten profligate publicans and say-  
" ors."

12. "After this, says (i) Origen, Celsus well knowing, what great  
" works *Christ's Miracles.*

(g) *Vid. Barnab. Ep. cap. v.*

(b) "Ὅτι παρὸν δέκα νεύτας καὶ τελῶνας τὸς ἐξωλεσάτους μόνος ἔλε. κ. λ. L. 2. §. 46. p. 86.

(i) L. 1. §. 68. p. 53.

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“ works may be alleged to have been done by Jesus, pretends (*k*)  
 “ to grant, that the things related of him, are true, such as healing  
 “ diseases, raising the dead, feeding multitudes with a few loaves, of  
 “ which likewise large fragments were left, and whatever other things  
 “ the disciples, who, as he thinks, delighted in strange things, have  
 “ written. And then adds: *Well, then, let us grant that all these*  
 “ *things were done by you.* After which he instanceth in the tricks  
 “ of Egyptians, and other impostors. And then asketh this questi-  
 “ on: Because they do such things, must we therefore esteem them  
 “ to be God’s sons? or must we not rather say, that these are artifi-  
 “ ces of wicked and miserable men?”

Celsus here evidently refers to our Gospels, and allows the histo-  
 ries of our Lord, in which those miracles are recorded, to have been  
 written by *his disciples*. And he knew, that those works, were e-  
 steemed proofs, that he was the Son of God. Upon which Origen  
 observes. “ You (*l*) see, says he, that Celsus in a manner allowes,  
 “ there is such a thing as magick: though, possibly, he is the same,  
 “ who wrote several books against magick.” Origen speaks modest-  
 ly. But I think it very probable, that he is the same person. More-  
 over Origen here answers very well, “ that (*m*) whatever things were  
 “ performed by the jugglers, whom Celsus speaks of, were not done  
 “ for the reformation of mankind, nor to form in them the fear of  
 “ God, or other virtues. Which was the great design of the life of  
 “ Jesus: who did not perform great works to be wondred at: but  
 “ that the men of that and future times, might be induced by his  
 “ doctrine and example, to live well, and aim to please God in what-  
 “ ever they do.”

13.

(*k*) . . . προσποιείται συγχαρεῖν ἀληθῆ εἶναι,  
 ὅσα περὶ θεραπειῶν, ἢ ἀναστάσεως, ἢ περὶ ἄρ-  
 των ὀλίγων, θρεψάντων πολλὰς ἀναγέγραπται,  
 ἢ ὅσα ἄλλα οἶσται τερατευσάμενος τῆς μαθη-  
 τὰς ἰσορροπία, καὶ ἐπιφέρει αὐτοῖς: Φερε, πισέυ-  
 σωμεν ἔναι σοι ταῦτ' ἐργασμένα. *Ibid.*

(*l*) Ὁρᾷς ὡς διὰ τέτων οἰονεὶ παραδέχε-  
 ται μαγείαν εἶναι; οὐκ οἶδα εἰ ὁ αὐτὸς ὦν  
 τῶν γράφοντι κατὰ μαγείας βιβλία πλείονα.  
*Ibid.*

(*m*) *Ibid.*

13. "He (m) asks us, says Origen; *by what reasons are ye induced to think him the Son of God?* And he makes us answer: *because we know his death was undergone for the destruction of the parent of evil.*" And soon after: "Here (n) he makes us answer him, *that we therefore have thought him to be the Son of God, because he healed the lame, and the blind, and, as you say, raised the dead.*"

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To which Origen makes this glorious answer: "Undoubtedly, we do think him to be the Christ, and the Son of God, because he healed the lame, and the blind. And we are the more confirmed in this persuasion by what is written in the prophecies. *Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear, and the lame man shall leap as an hart.* Is. xxxv. 5. 6. But that he also raised the dead, and that this is not a fiction of those who wrote the Gospels, is evident hence: That if it had been a fiction, there would have been many recorded to be raised up, and such as had been a long time in their graves. But it not being a fiction, few have been recorded: for instance the daughter of the ruler of a synagogue: (of whom I do not know, why he said: *she is not dead, but sleepeth*: expressing something peculiar to her, not common to all dead persons:) and the only son of a widow, on whom he had compassion and raised him to life, after he had bid the bearer of the corpse to stop: and the third, Lazarus, who had been buried four days."

Witfius quoting the words of Celsus above cited, in a dissertation upon our Saviour's miracles, observes, "that (o) many learned men  
" have

(m) *L. 2. §. 47. p. 87.*

(n) . . . ὅτι διὰ τούτων ἐνομίσασαμεν αὐτὸν ἔσθαι υἱὸν Θεοῦ ἕκαστοι καὶ ἁπλῶς καὶ τυχαῶς ἐθεράπευσεν. Προσίθησι δὲ καὶ τὸ, ὅς ἐμεῖς φάτε ἀνίστην νεκροῦς. *Ibid. §. 48. p. 87.*

(o) Simile quid in Celso deprehendere visi sunt viri eruditissimi, ut qui confessus

fit, Jesum caecos et claudos curavisse. Sed ut verum fatear, dubitare licet, an non justo liberaliores hac in parte sint. Operae pretium me facturum esse arbitror, si ingenuitati litans, et ne juniores in fraudem inducantur, integrum Origenis contextum describam. *L. 2. contr. Cels. p.*

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“ have understood Celsus to allow, that Jesus had healed the blind, and the lame. But he says, he apprehends, that these words do not represent what Celsus allowed, but what Christians affirmed.”

It appears to me somewhat difficult to determine, whether Celsus believed those great works of our Lord, or not. But it is not easy to see, how he could disbelieve them. And he was at a loss how to account for them. And, as Origen observed: *You see, how in a manner he allows, that there is such a thing as magick.* I think, Celsus could not, or would not allow our Lord's great works to have been done by the power of God, because he would not admit the consequence, which was, that Jesus had a divine commission, and acted by authority from heaven. And rather than admit that just and necessary conclusion, he has recourse to shifts and evasions, which are absurd, and inconsistent. As Origen says, “ Celsus (*p*) not being able directly to deny the great works which Jesus is recorded to have done, aspereth them, and calls them juggling tricks.”

However, we learn from Celsus, that Christians did then believe Jesus to be the Son of God, because he had healed the lame, and the blind, and raised the dead: and because after this, he had voluntarily submitted to death for the destruction of sin, or of Satan and his works. And may we not now appeal to all mankind, if those Christians did not act very rationally, in believing Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, provided they had but good ground for the truth and reality of the great works ascribed to him? as they certainly had, and is well shewn by Origen in the passage before quoted.

14.

87. *Cantabr.* Quibus verbis contineri videtur, non quod Celsus dat, sed quod Christiani assument. Ceterum perinde nobis est, quid Celsus vel negaverit, vel fuerit falsus. *Diff. vi. §. xxiii. ap. Melitem.* p. 372. 373.

(*p*) Πολλάκις δ' ὁ Κέλσος ἤδη μὴ δυνάμενος ἀντιβλέπειν δις ἀναγέγραπται πεποιημένοι δυνάμειν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, διαβάλλει αὐτὸς ἐν γοητείας. *L. 2. §. 48. p. 87.*

14. Still it may be expected, that I should take some notice of the insinuation, which we met with some while \* ago, that Jesus, when he was in Egypt might learn some charms and magical powers, whereby he obtained an ability to perform some works, that should appear surprizing. To which it has been already well answered by learned Christian writers: “ How (*q*) should Jesus learn magick in Egypt, when he was yet an infant, and not much more than two years of age. And if he had learned that art in his childhood, how came it to pass, that he performed not any wonderfull works before he was thirty years of age? To which might be added, that it is beyond the power of magick to perform such works as were done by Jesus.”

This objection has been considered, and well answered by Grotius. I need only transcribe a part of what he says, referring my readers to the rest. “ That (*r*) Jesus was in Egypt, is known only from the writings of his disciples, who also say, that he returned thence, when he was still an infant. And if in the time of Christ and his Apostles, there had been in Egypt, or any where else, any magical art, by which the blind might be made to see, the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, and all kinds of maladies might be healed on a sudden, as they

\* See Vol. i. p. 194. and see here p. 287.  
(*q*) . . . opponimus Munsteri responsum . . . Et quomodo quaesit, potuisset puer, et infans duorum annorum discere magiam? Quod si in pueritia didicit artem illam, quare non fecit signa ante 30. vitae suae annum? Tunc enim coepit corascare miraculis. Sed nunquid mortui possunt vivificari per magicam virtutem, ut Jesus Christus fecit? Wagenf. Confutatio Toldos. Jeschu. p. 44.

(*r*) Nam fuisse Jesum unquam in Aegypto, non constat, nisi ex discipulorum

libris, qui addunt, infantem adhuc inde rediisse. . . . Tum vero, si Christi et ejus discipulorum tempore, usquam aut in Aegypto, aut alibi, exstitisset ars ulla magica, qua possent fieri, quae de Christo praedicantur, muti omnes subito sanari, claudis gressio, caecis visus dari, Imperatores, Tiberius [Tacit. ann. vi. 20.] Nero [Sueton. ejus vita. cap. 56.] atque alii, qui ad inquirenda talia nullis impendiis pepercerunt, haud dubie eam deprehendissent. Grot. De V. R. C. lib. 5. §. iii.

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“ they were by Jesus Christ; the Emperours, Tiberius and Nero,  
“ and others, who were very curious and inquisitive, would have  
“ spared no cost to obtain it.”

*Christ  
appre-  
hended,  
and desert-  
ed by his  
Disciples.*

15. “ The (s) Jew goes on: How should we take him for a  
“ God, who, as we have understood, performed none of those  
“ things which were promised: [*that is, as I apprehend, did not ac-  
“ complish the worldly deliverance, which the Jews expected.*] But  
“ when we had judged him guilty, and would bring him to punish-  
“ ment, though he shamefully hid himself, and fled away, yet was  
“ taken, being betrayed by those whom he called his disciples. But  
“ it became not a God to flee, nor to be taken, and executed. Lest  
“ of all did it become him to be deserted and betrayed by his compa-  
“ nions, who knew all his secrets, who followed him as their master,  
“ who esteemed him a Saviour, and the son and messenger of the Most  
“ High God.”

This passage assures us of many things, agreeable to the Gospels, which we now have, and from which Celsus manifestly takes his accounts, whilst he endeavors to form conclusions to the disadvantage of Jesus.

This passage, then, assures us, that the Jews disliked Jesus, because he did not answer their carnal expectations: that he met with unkindness from his disciples: by one of whom he was betrayed, and by the rest forsaken: that the Jews plotted against Jesus, and that he was taken, and put to death by them. But what Celsus insinuates, that Jesus absconded, is false. He was apprehended, and died voluntarily: though he had at some times retired for safety, *his hour not being yet come.* And the garden, in which he was apprehended, was a place, whither he often went with his disciples. We learn also, that the Christian accounts of that time were, (agreeable to our Gospels) that the disciples had conversed intimately with Jesus, and that they owned him for their master, and Saviour, and the son and messenger

messenger of the great God. We learn, finally, that the cross of Christ was matter of offense and scandal with many.

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16. " He (*t*) then finds fault with the disciples, as if it were their  
 " fiction, that he foresaw, and foretold the things, which befell him. *Christ*  
*foretold*  
*his own*  
*sufferings.*  
 " But that this is true, we can shew, whether Celsus will, or not.  
 " For we can allege many other things foretold by our Saviour, which  
 " happened to the Christians, his followers, in after times. Who  
 " can forbear to admire these words: *And ye shall be brought before*  
 " *Governours and Kings for my sake, for a testimonie to them and the*  
 " *Gentils?* Matt. x. 18. . . For if any men were to be brought before  
 " Governours and Kings for their doctrine, who should be more like-  
 " ly, than the Epicureans, who deny a Providence? . . . And who,  
 " that shall in his mind place himself near Jesus, must not wonder,  
 " when he hears him say: *And this Gospel shall be preached in the*  
 " *whole world, for a testimonie to them, and to the Gentils.* [Matt.  
 " xxiv. 14.] And yet it has been fulfilled. And the Gospel of Jesus  
 " Christ has been preached to all men under heaven, Greeks and  
 " Barbarians, wise and unwise. For the word preached with pow-  
 " er has subdued all mankind. Nor is there any sort of men, that  
 " has refused to accept of the doctrine of Jesus. And let the Jew  
 " in Celsus, who denyes that Jesus foresaw what would happen to  
 " himself, consider, how it should come to pass, that when Jerusa-  
 " lem was standing, and the Jewish worship was performed there  
 " in all it's splendour, Jesus should foretell all that would happen  
 " to it from the Romans. Nor can they say, that the disciples  
 " preached the doctrine of the Gospel by word of mouth only, and  
 " did not deliver to their disciples any written memoirs concerning  
 " Jesus. But in them it is written: *When ye shall see Jerusalem com-*  
 " *passed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.* Luke  
 " xxi. 20. There were then no armies near Jerusalem, to surround  
 " it, and besiege it. That first began to be done under Nero, and

Q q 2

" con-

(*t*) Εγκαλεῖ δὲ τοῖς μαθηταῖς, ὡς πλασαμένοις, κ. λ. L. 2. §. 13. p. 67.

A. D. 176. “ continued to Vespasian, whose son Titus levelled Jerusalem with  
“ the ground.”

17. “ But (*u*) Celsus says, that the disciples of Jesus, the thing  
“ being too manifest to be denied by them, have bethought them-  
“ selves to say, that he foreknew all these things.” . . . “ But (*x*)  
“ they are very weak in thinking to vindicate Jesus by writing these  
“ things of him. As if one should affirm a man to be righteous,  
“ and shew him to be wicked: say, he is a good man, and shew  
“ that he has committed murder: say, he is immortal, and shew him  
“ dead: [*This last is the point which he is arguing: the other instances*  
“ *are only for illustration.*] Prefacing, however, continually, that he  
“ foreknew all these things. For neither do you say, that he seem-  
“ ed to wicked men to suffer these things, when he did not suffer.  
“ But you openly and expressly say, that he did suffer.”

*Christ really suffered, and died.*

It is certain, then, that Jesus died. Otherwise his disciples would not have related it. And it is as certain, that he foretold both his death, and his resurrection. And it may deserve to be taken notice of, that the Christians of that time, with whom Celsus argued, did not say, that Jesus only seemed to die, or seemed to suffer: but, that he really suffered, and died. His attacks therefore were made upon the sounder part of the Christians, not upon *Docetes*, or any such like men.

18. “ What (*y*) god, or demon, or wise man, who foreknew  
“ that such things were to happen to him, would not have avoided  
“ them, if he could, and not fall under the evils he foresaw?”

We learn hence, that the *Disciples* account of Jesus was, that he foreknew his sufferings, and that he suffered, and died, as we now see in our Gospels. And we may observe, that whereas some while agoe Celsus pretended, the Disciples had been deceived by Jesus, now he makes them designing men, who had contrived to say, that Jesus *knew all these things*. And whereas just now he insinuat-  
ed,

(*u*) *L.* 2. §. 15. p. 69.

(*x*) *L.* 2. §. 16. p. 70.

(*y*) *L.* 2. §. 17. p. 71.



ed, that Jesus had fled, and absconded, but nevertheless was apprehended, here he endeavors to shew the absurdity of coming in the way of sufferings that had been foretold. So that, after all, the account in the Gospels, writ by the *Disciples*, was, as now, that Jesus had voluntarily submitted to the sufferings, which he had foreseen. In which there is no absurdity. Origen reminds Celsus of Socrates, and other wise men, who underwent sufferings, which they could have avoided.

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19. "The (z) Jew in Celsus still goes on, saying more foolish things. If he foretold, who should betray him, and who should deny him; how came it to pass, that they did not fear him as a God? so that the one should not dare to betray him, nor the other to deny him? But they betrayed him, and denied him: so little did they regard him."

*Jesus betrayed by Judas. And Peter denied him.*

Here are more references to some of the material facts and circumstances, attending the sufferings of Jesus, as recorded in our Gospels. And they are all easily accounted for. Judas, the traitor, was a wicked, covetous man: and acted against his light and conviction. Peter, who denied Jesus, was exceedingly shocked by our Lord's being apprehended, and was overcome by fear, so as to disown his relation to Jesus. However, Judas soon afterwards was so sensible of the greatness of his guilt, as to fall into despair. And Peter soon after bewailed his weakness with many tears.

So long, as these facts, which Celsus cavils at, are in the Gospels, they will be thought credible histories. They who put down such things, so disadvantageous to themselves, or their friends, and seemingly so dishonorable to Jesus himself, their lord and master, did not forge a story to aggrandise him, or themselves. But they wrote the truth impartially, without fear or favour. As is admirably shewn by Origen in this context.

20.

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20. "How (*a*) frivolous, and manifestly false is what Celsus says, that never any man betrayed another man, with whom he sat at table. And how much less would any man, who was so favored by a God, betray him?"

Origen treats this remark with indignation, and calls it a falshood: there being many instances of such things both among Greeks and Barbarians.

It seems to me, that Celsus here not only argues from the intimacie of Christ and the Disciples, but intends also to use some of the very expressions of the Evangelists. Luke xxii. 21. *But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.* And see John xiii. 26. and 28.

21. But Celsus has pushed this argument still farther. Which, perhaps, ought not to be omitted by me. "It (*b*) was God, says he, who foretold these things. Therefore there was a necessity that they should come to pass. God therefore compelled his own Disciples and Prophets, with whom he ate and drank, to be wicked and abominable, for whose welfare above all others he ought to have been concerned. Never did man betray another, with whom he sat at table. Here he who sits at table with God, betrays him. And, which is still worse, God himself lays snares for those who sit at table with him, making them impious traitors."

To which Origen answers. "Celsus thinks, that what has been foretold, comes to pass, because it has been foretold. To which we can by no means assent. For we do not say, that he who foretold something future, is the cause of it's coming to pass. But whatever is future will come to pass, though it was not foretold. And therefore he who has the gift of foreknowledge, foretells it."

22.

(*a*) . . . ὅτι ἄνθρωπος ὁ κοινωνήσας τραπέζης ἐκ αὐτῶ ἐπιβελύσειεν. Εἰ δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ αὐτῶ ἐπιβελύσειε πολλῶ πλέον ὁ Θεὸς συννεο-

χῶθεις ἐκ αὐτῶ ἐβίβλος ἐγένετο. L. 2, §. 21. p. 74. Vid. et §. 20.

(*b*) L. 2. §. 20. p. 72.

22. "If (c) he thought fit to undergo such things, and if in obedience to the Father he suffered death: it is apparent, that they could not be painful and grievous to him, he being a God, and consenting to them." "Why (d) then does he lament, and bewail, and pray, that the fear of destruction may be removed, saying to this purpose: *O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away.*" Matt. xxvi. 39.

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*Christ  
prays to  
the Fa-  
ther.*

Here Origen observes, that Jesus is not said in the Gospels to bewail. But we plainly see, that Celsus had our Gospels before him. And in them Jesus is represented suffering in obedience to the Father, himself willing, and consenting thereto. And yet he prayed, that *the cup might pass from him*. I need not stay to shew the consistence of these things.

23. "Why (e) did he not now at last, [*when condemned*] if not before, deliver himself from this ignominie, and do justice upon them, who reviled both him and his Father?" Referring to the reproaches cast upon Jesus, when hanging on the cross. Matt. xxvii. 39. . . . 45.

*Jesus was  
reviled.*

Origen says, that the same answer will serve here, which is given by all others, who hold a Divine Providence, in answer to the objection, taken from God's not presently punishing wicked men.

24. "Celsus (f) as Origen says, selecting some passages out of the Gospels, with a design to expose them, reproaches Jesus with *the gall and the vinegar, as if he was mighty eager to drink, and was not able patiently to endure thirst, which common people often bear contentedly.*"

*More cir-  
cumstances  
of our  
Lord's  
sufferings.*

Celsus here plainly refers to Matt. xxvii. 34. *They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall. And when he had tasted thereof, he would*

(c) L. 2. §. 23. p. 75.

(d) L. 2. §. 24. p. 75.

(e) L. 2. §. 75. p. 81.

(f) Μετὰ ταῦτα ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς εὐαγγελίου ἐκ-  
λαβὼν λέξεις. κ. λ. L. 2. §. 39. p. 82.

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would not drink. He also as manifestly refers to John xix. 28. . . 30. After this . . . that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus saith: I thirst. And when a sponge, filled with vinegar, was reached up to his mouth, it is said, he received the vinegar, and then said: It is finished. And bowing his head, he gave up the ghost. So that Celsus, in this short passage, referred to St. John's account of the vinegar, given to our Lord, at the conclusion of his crucifixion, as well as to the vinegar, and the gall, presented to him, when they were going to crucify him: But in neither, is there any just ground for reflexions upon Jesus. (g)

25. Celsus in a rude and abusive manner says: "What (b) difference can there be for a God to eat the flesh of lambs, and drink gall and vinegar, or to eat any other impurity?" It is likely that Celsus here refers to our Saviour's eating the paschal lamb with the disciples. Origen answers: "We (i) do not say, that God ate the flesh of lambs: but Jesus, being clothed with a body, might eat it."

26. "But (k) says Origen, what the Jew in Celsus affirms, is a downright lye: That he was put to death, and suffered, having convinced no man in his life-time, not so much as his disciples."

It is, however, very true, that few believed in Jesus then, in comparison of them who believed in him afterwards. Celsus pretends, that the disciples did not believe in Jesus, because they forsook him in the time of his last sufferings.

27.

(g) Concerning our Saviour's thirst upon the cross may be seen the *first sermon of the second volume of sermons upon various subjects.*

(b) Ἐπεὶ φησὶ; τί γὰρ ἄλλο ἢν θεῶ τὰ προβάτων σαρκὰς ἐσθίειν, καὶ χολὴν, ἢ ὄξος πί-

νειν, πλὴν σκατοραγέην. L. 7. §. 13. p. 340.

(i) Θεὸς δὲ καθ' ἡμᾶς προβάτων σαρκὰς ἐκ ἤσθιεν. "Ἴνα γὰρ καὶ δόξῃ, ὅτι ἤσθιεν ὡς σῶμα φανεῖν, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἤσθιεν. Ibid.

(k) L. 2. §. 35. p. 83.

27. " They (*l*) who conversed with him, when alive, and heard " his voice, and followed him as their master, when they saw him " under punishment, and dying, were so far from *dying with him*, " or for him, or being induced to despise sufferings, that they de- " nied, they were his disciples. But now adays you dye with " him."

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176.  
*Christian  
fortitude.  
2 Tim. 2.*

Celsus here refers to the timorousness of the disciples, and particularly to Peter's denying Christ. It is no great wonder, that they were all greatly shaken at the sight of the sufferings of Jesus: which at that time they could be hardly induced to think, should befall the Messiah. But they afterwards preached him boldly, with the hazard of all that is dear in this world. Which shews, that they had good evidence of his resurrection from the dead. Otherwise, they would never have resumed their courage. And as the disciples were afterwards undaunted in professing and preaching the name of Jesus: so the Christians in the time of Celsus were in the right to *dye with Christ*, or for him, rather than deny him.

Celsus seems to have had an eye to one or more texts of St. Paul's epistles: as 2. Tim. ii. 11. 12. *It is a faithfull saying. For if we die with him, we shall also live with him*: and what follows.

Celsus here bears testimonie to the fortitude of the Christians in his time. It is manifest from this passage, that many did then die for Christ, rather than deny him. And it is not a little strange, that a learned man, a man of extensive knowledge and understanding, should ridicule, and make a jest of the grievous and unrighteous sufferings of innocent men, and of their patience under them. But so it was. Such was the contempt, which was then the lot of the followers of Jesus. And Celsus having taken it into his head to enter into controverſie with them, and thenceforward considering them as enemies, made no scruple to ridicule men, who, according to his  
OWN

(*l*) L. 2. §. 45. p. 86.

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176.

own confession, were arrived at such exalted virtue, as (*m*) to despise sufferings, and endure death patiently, rather than speak and act against conviction.

*More  
Circum-  
stances of  
Christ's  
sufferings,  
and Proofs  
of his Re-  
surrection.*

28. Having mentioned several Greek stories, generally, if not universally, allowed to be fables and fictions, Celsus says: "But (*n*) let us consider, whether any one that has really died, ever rose again in the same body: unless you think, that the stories of others are indeed, as well as seem to be fables: whilst your fable is probable, and credible, because of his voice on the cross, when he expired, and the earthquake, and the darknesse: and because that when he was living, he could not defend himself, but after he was dead, he arose, and shewed the marks of his punishment, and how his hands had been pierced. But who saw all this? Why, a distracted woman, as you say, and one or two more of the same imposture, and some dreamers, who fancied they saw things, as they desired to have them: the same that has happened to innumerable people." See Matt. xxvii. 50. 51. John xx. 10. . . . 18.

The wonderfull things attending the death of Jesus, here taken notice of by Celsus, his loud voice, just (*o*) before he expired, Mat. xxvii. 50. Mark xv. 37. 39. Luke xxiii. 46: the earthquake, and the darknesse, are proofs, that Jesus was an extraordinarie person. And I think, that the shewing of the prints of the nails in his hands, and appearing again alive to a woman, and others, who knew him, were good proofs, that he was risen from the dead, and in the same body, that had lived, and died. There is no evidence, that they were dreamers, or governed by fanfie. They saw Jesus awake, and by day-light, distinctly, again and again, after he had been publicly crucified, and died. And his resurrection from the grave is an argu-  
ment,

(*m*) . . . ἔτε ὑπεραπέθανον αὐτῷ, ἐδὲ κό-  
λάσαν καταφρονεῖν ἐπέσθησαν . . . νῦν δὲ ὑ-  
μεῖς αὐτῷ συναποθνήσκετε. *Cels. ibid.*

(*n*) *L. 2. §. 55. p. 94.*

(*o*) τὴν ἐπὶ τῷ σκόλοπος αὐτῷ φωνὴν ὅτι ἀ-  
πέπνει. *Cels. ubi supr.*

ment, that he suffered voluntarily, and that he was not destitute of power, as Celsus insinuates, to help himself, in his life-time, if he had seen fit so to do.

Celsus says, Jesus shewed himself to one woman. But he shewed himself afterwards to several women, and to his disciples. Celsus knew this very well. But it was to his purpose, it seems, to use the singular, rather than the plural number. That Celsus was well acquainted with the Gospels, is apparent. He knows what seems to his advantage. And therefore he calls this woman, meaning Marie Magdalen, *a distracted woman*: referring to the seven demons that were in her. But it should be considered, that these demons had been cast out long agoe, and she was now very sober, when she saw Jesus, after his resurrection.

St. John ch. xx. 11. . . 18. gives the most particular account of Marie Magdalen's seeing our Lord, and conversing with him, after he was risen from the dead. Indeed St. Mark xvi. 9. 10. 11. says, *Jesus appeared first to Marie Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven demons.* But whether Celsus had here an eye to St. Mark's Gospel, I cannot determine. For he might refer only to St. John's account of our Lord's shewing himself to Marie, and apply to her the character of a distracted woman, from a remembrance of what he had read concerning her in St. Luke's Gospel. ch. viii. 1. 2.

Beside the texts already taken notice of, Celsus may be supposed to refer to Luke xxiv. 39. *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my-self.* And to our Lord's shewing himself to Thomas, as related, John xx. 24. . . 29.

29. " But (*p*) Celsus says: If he would make manifest his divine power, he should have shewn himself to them that derided him, and to him that condemned him, and indeed to all. For surely, he had no reason to fear any mortal now, after he had died, and, as you say, was a God."

R r 2

To

A. D.  
176.

To which I would answer. It would have been very mean in Jesus to shew himself to his judge, and to his deriders. It is unspeakably below the character of one, who had publicly wrought so many wonderfull works, as Jesus had done, and who after having been crucified, was really raised from the dead. It might likewise have been called insulting them. As for shewing himself to all, it is absurd and preposterous. Jesus shewed himself to the most proper persons, [*and to as many as was fit.*] by appearing to those who best knew him. To shew himself to such as did not well know him before, might have been reckoned officious, and impertinent, and vain boasting. Finally, the works wrought in his name afterwards, by those who attested his resurrection and exaltation, were better evidences of his being risen from the dead, than shewing himself to all the world would have been. They make out the most satisfactorie, and most durable testimonie to this important fact.

From the objections made by Celsus, we learn, however, that the historie, which we now have in our Gospels, is the same, which the Christians at that time had. Jesus, in our Gospels, does not shew himself to all, but to his disciples, and acquaintance, of whom there were once *five hundred* together, 1. Cor. xv. 6. probably, at a place in Galilee, where he was best known, and which he had before appointed. Matt. xxviii. 16. 17.

Moreover, all Celsus's attacks, in his argument against the Christians, are against our Gospels. Which manifests the great esteem they were in. If he confuted those books, he knew he overturned the faith founded on them.

30. He goes on. "When (q) he was neglected in the body, he " was continually preaching to all men. But when he should have " given full assurance to all men, he shews himself privatly to one " woman, and his associates."

He did once shew himself to one woman only, and to his disciples,  
when

(q) L. 2. §. 70. p. 104.



when met together privately. But that is not all, as Celsus would insinuate. For he also shewed himself to several women. Matt. xxviii. 1. . . 9. and to the disciples, and others with them, several times, openly. And, as before said, he appointed a place in Galilee, where they might see him. Matt. xxviii. 16. And it cannot be doubted, but that there were great numbers, who saw him there. From his appointing before hand a certain place for meeting his disciples and followers, it is manifest, that he was not shy of shewing himself to those who had known him in his life time.

31. "Again (*r*) he says: When he was punished, he was seen "by all: but when risen, by one. The contrarie to which ought "rather to have been."

Any one may perceive, that Celsus affects unfairly to diminish the number of those, who saw Jesus after he was risen. He here pretends, that Jesus appeared to *one* only: whereas before he owned, that he had appeared to his *associates*, or companions. I am glad, however, that Celsus owns, Jesus preached to all in his life-time, and that he died publicly before all the world. For there must have been some good reasons, to induce men to believe in a person, who was himself well known, and his doctrine well known, and who had been publicly crucified.

32. "If (*s*) he would be hid, why was there a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God? [Mat. xvii. 5.] And if "he would not be hid, why did he suffer? why did he dye?"

I imagine, that in this place Celsus refers to our Lord's transfiguration in the mount, and to what our Lord says, Mat. xvii. 9. *And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying: Tell the vision to no man, till the Son of man be risen again from the dead.* Some while ago (*s*) Celsus referred to the voice from heaven at Christ's baptism. Now he refers to the voice from heaven, when he was on the mount.

So

(*r*) L. 2. §. 70. p. 104.(*s*) L. 2. §. 72. p. 105.

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176.

So that there were divers testimonies given from heaven, in favour of Jesus, in the begining, and in the progresse of his ministrie. And in the end he died. I need not stay to shew the consistence of these things. Nor was he left without witnesse, during the time of his ignominious sufferings.

*Facts of  
the Gos-  
pels.*

33. We have now traced, even in Celsus, the historie of our Lord's nativity, baptism, preaching, miracles, death, and resurrection: all agreeable to our Evangelists.

It will be next incumbent upon us to observe what he says of Christian principles, and of the grounds and reasons, upon which they acted.

## S E C T I O N V.

*Passages of Celsus, concerning Christian Principles.**Christ's  
moral  
Doctrine.*

I. "LET (a) us now see, says Origen, how he affects to lessen " us with regard to our moral doctrine, saying, that (b) it " is only the same with that of other Philosophers, and contains in it " nothing weighty and new." He also says, " That (c) others, as " well as the Christians, had disallowed the divinity of Gods *made* " *with hands*, forasmuch as oftentimes they were formed by wick- " ed men."

*Acts.*

Whether there be here any reference to Acts xix. 26. I cannot say certainly. But it hence appears, that the Christian moral doctrine had nothing in it, to which any just exceptions could be made. Celsus indeed will not allow it to have any superior excellence above the doctrine of the Philosophers. But he does not deny it to be like

(a) *L. i. §. 4. 5. p. 6.*

(b) τῷ κοινῷ εἶναι καὶ πρὸς ἄλλους φιλοσόφους, ὡς οὐ σεμνύνει καὶ καινὸν μᾶθημα. §. 4.

(c) . . . λέγων, οὐτὸς διὰ τῆτο μὴ νομίζεν αὐτοὺς χειραποκίτες θεοῦ. §. 5.

like to their doctrine, and equal to that of the best sort of the Philosophers.

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2. "He (*t*) says, the same things are better taught by the Greeks, "and without the threatenings or promises of God, or his Son." "And that (*u*) Plato did not pretend to come from heaven, and declare such things."

Supposing, for the present, that the same things had been taught by others; they would not, and did not so effectually influence men, as when taught with authority from God, and with assurances of suitable recompenses.

It would have been more material, if Celsus could have shewn, where the Heathen Deities, or their priests with authority under them, had recommended sobriety and other virtues: adding likewise threatenings of miserie to the refractorie, and promises of happiness in a future state to such as feared the Gods, and practised righteousness and mercie to their neighbours. Augustin in his work of the City of God, observes, that (*x*) the Gods of the Pagans had never authorized the doctrine of virtuous living.

3. "Celsus (*y*) thinks, that we by worshiping one that was apprehended, and died, do much the same thing with the Getae, who worship Zamolxis, and the Cilicians, who worship Mopsus." "Again (*z*) he says of us, that we laugh at those, who worship Jupiter, because his tomb is shewn in Crete. Nevertheless we worship one that was buried."

Christian  
Respect  
for Jesus,

The

(*t*) φάσκων, βέλτιον αὐτὰ παρ' Ἑλλήνων εἰρησθαι. . . κ. λ. L. 6. §. 1. p. 275.

(*u*) L. 6. §. 10. p. 281.

(*x*) Sed demonstrarentur, vel commemorarentur loca, talibus aliquando conventiculis consecrata: non ubi ludi agerentur obscœnis vocibus et motibus histrionum . . . sed ubi populi audirent, quid Dii præciperent de cohibenda avaritia, ambitione fran-

genda, luxuria refrœnanda. . . Dicatur, in quibus locis hæc docentium Deorum solebant præcepta recitari, et a cultoribus eorum populis frequenter audiri. *De Civ. Dei. l. 2. cap. vi. Vid. et cap. xix. et xxii.*

(*y*) L. 3. §. 34. p. 131.

(*z*) L. 3. §. 43. p. 136.

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176.

The difference is manifest. The Cretans knew of no miracles done by Jupiter : whereas the Christians knew of many miracles done by Jesus in person, and by others in his name, after his resurrection.

Compare  
*Acts* i. 3.

A part of Origen's answer here is to this purpose. " All (*a*) this " we have been forced to say by way of answer to Celsus, who little " favorable to Jesus, believes it to be true, which is written of him, " that he died, and was buried : but esteems it a fiction only, that " he was raised from the dead : although his resurrection had been " foretold by the prophets, and there were *many proofs* of his being " alive again, after he had died."

*Mat.*  
*xxvii.* 34.

4. " But (*b*) the Christians, according to Celsus, making some ad- " ditions to the Jewish notions, say, that the Son of God has been " already sent, because of the sins of the Jews : and that the Jews " having punished Jesus, and (*c*) given him gall to drink, have " brought upon themselves the anger of God."

" Which, Origen says, is a plain case. And if it is not so, let any " man shew it. For Jerusalem was destroyed within two and forty " years after the crucifixion of Jesus. And ever since they have been " in subjection to others, without their own proper rites and wor- " ship. Which is one of those things, that manifest Jesus to have " had in him somewhat divine and sacred: forasmuch as upon his " account the Jews have suffered so many and so great calamities, " and for so long a time."

*1 Cor.* xv.  
51. . 54.  
*1 Thess.*  
*iv.* 13. .  
17.  
*The fu-*  
*ture Re-*  
*surrection.*

5. He argues against a resurrection in this manner. " But (*d*) that " is another absurdity of theirs, that when God shall throw a fire " on the world, and all other things shall be destroyed, they alone " shall remain : and that not only the living, but they also who " have been ever so long dead, shall come forth out of the earth, " in their own bodies. [or in the same flesh.] Which is no other, " than the hope of worms. For what soul of a man would desire a

pu-

(*a*) *Ibid.* §. 43. p. 137.

(*b*) *L.* 4. §. 22. p. 174.

(*c*) . . . ἢ χολὴν ποτίσαντες, ἐπὶ σφῆς αὐ-  
τοῦς ἐκ Θεῶν χόλον ἐπισπάσασαιτο. *Ib.*

(*d*) *L.* 4. §. 14. p. 240.

“ putrefied body? Nor is this doctrine of yours agreed to by all  
 “ Christians. For some among you reject it, as impure, and abo-  
 “ minable, and impossible. For how is it possible, that a body,  
 “ which has been entirely corrupted, should return to it's own na-  
 “ ture, and to it's own primitive constitution, which it has once lost?  
 “ When they are able to make no answer to this, they fly to that ab-  
 “ surd refuge, that all things are possible with God. But neither  
 “ can God do any thing that is shamefull. Nor will he do what is  
 “ contrarie to nature. Nor because you perversly desire any thing, is  
 “ God therefore able to do it, or is it to be supposed, that he will do  
 “ it? For God is not the author of extravagant desires, nor of any  
 “ unbecoming disorders, but of what is right and fit. God may  
 “ give everlasting life to the soul. But dead bodies, as Heraclitus  
 “ says, are more contemptible than dung. To make flesh, full of  
 “ filthinesses not fit to be named, eternal, is a thing so unreasonable,  
 “ that God neither can nor will do it. For he is himself the reason  
 “ of all things in nature. And therefore can no more do any thing  
 “ contrarie to reason, than contrarie to himself.”

I have transcribed this long passage, to shew at once the Heathen  
 sentiments and reasonings upon this point. But I do not intend a  
 labored confutation of them. Celsus affects to despise the body. But  
 I presume he goes upon an ill-grounded principle, that the human  
 soul may be as happie, or more happie, without the bodie, than  
 with it. And, as Origen observes, the bodie, at the resurreccion,  
 is to be changed for the better, and made fit for the soul in a state  
 of perfection. Which, I think, removes all those difficulties, in  
 the reunion of soul and body, which to Celsus appeared so formi-  
 dable. ††

What

†† Says Dr. Cudworth, *the true In-  
 tellectual System of the Universe*, B. i. ch.  
 v. p. 877. “ However, our Christian

“ faith assures us, that the souls of good  
 “ men shall at length be clothed with spi-  
 “ ritual and heavenly bodies, such as are,  
 “ in

A. D.  
176.  
1 Cor. xv.  
and  
1 Theff. iv.

What we are here to observe, is, that it hence appears, Christians then expected a change or resurrection of the living and the dead, at the end of the world, or the dissolution of the present state of things, according to what St. Paul writes. 1. Cor. xv. 51. . . 54. and 1. Theff. iv. 13. . . 17.

When Celsus says, that Christians were not all agreed about the doctrine of the resurrection; it may be doubtfull, whether he intends some of his own time, or whether he refers to 1. Cor. xv. 12. and the following context. *Now if Christ be preached, that he rose from the dead: how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?*

However that may be, none of my readers will omit to observe, that here is a reference to the above mentioned texts of the first epistle to the Corinthians, and the first to the Theffalonians.

6. It is, I suppose, with regard to the expectation of the resurrection of the body, that, as Origen says, Celsus (e) called the Christians *a sort of men that were very fond of the body*. And yet, in another place he says: “Is (f) it not exceeding absurd, that you should desire and hope for the resurrection of the same body, as if we had “nothing more excellent, nor more precious: and yet to expose it “to all manner of sufferings, as a thing of no value.”

This needs no answer. But it ought to be observed, that Celsus here again lets us know, that Christians were then in a suffering condition. And he bears testimonie to their steadiness and fortitude under the tortures, and all the variety of sufferings, which they met with. This ought to be taken notice of.

7. “But

“in Aristotle’s language, ἀνάλογα τῶ τῶν  
“ἀστρον στοιχείω, analogous to the element of  
“the stars. Which Christian resurrection  
“on therefore, to life and immortality, is  
“far from being, as Celsus reproached it,  
“σπουδαίων ἐλπίς, the meer hope of worms.”

(e) λέγει δ’ ἡμᾶς εἶναι καὶ φιλοσώματου γένους. L. 7. §. 39. p. 357.

(f) Ἐπὶ δὲ πᾶσι οὐκ ἄποσαι ὑμᾶν ταῦτα, τὸ μὲν σῶμα πρῶτον, καὶ ἐλπίζειν, ὅτι αὐτὸ τῶτο ἀναστήσεται, ὡς οὐδὲν ἡμῖν τότε κρείττον ἐστὶ τιμιώτερον· πάλιν δ’ αὐτὸ εἴπεται εἰς κοιλίας, ὡς ἄτιμον. L. 8. §. 49. p. 409.

7. " But (g) says Celsus, omitting many things, that might be alleged against what they say of their master, let us allow him to be truly an angel. Is he the first, and the only one, that has come? or have there been others before? If they should say, he only: they are easily convicted of falshood. For they say, that others have often come. . . . And in particular, that there came an angel to his sepulchre: some say, one: others, two, to tell the women, that he was risen. For the Son of God, it seems, could not open the sepulchre, but wanted another to remove the stone. And there came also an angel to the carpenter, about Marie's pregnancy: and another angel to direct them to take the child, and flee. And what need is there to reckon up particularly all that were sent to Moses, and others?"

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*Respect  
for Jesus.*

*Matt.*  
*xxviii 5.*  
*Mark*  
*xvi. 5.*  
*Luke*  
*xxiv. 4.*  
*John xx.*  
12.  
*Matt. i.*  
20.  
*Matt. ii.*  
13.

The design of this argument is to draw off Christians from their peculiar veneration for Jesus. He reminds them therefore, that there had been, even according to themselves, many other messengers from God, whom they might respect, as well as him.

From this passage we learn, that the main point with Christians was a faith in Jesus, whom they esteemed *their master*. Nor would they forsake him upon any account.

Beside the references to the conception of Jesus in the womb of his mother Marie, and his flight into Egypt, observed formerly, here are also references to many circumstances of our Saviour's resurrection, as related in the Gospels. There was a stone at the door of the sepulchre. An angel came, and rolled it away. Women came to the sepulchre, who saw there an angel: which also told them, that Jesus was risen. The resurrection of Jesus was recorded by more than one. For Celsus observes, that *some* said, there was one, *others*, two angels, who told the women, that Jesus was risen. So it is in our Gospels. For St. Matthew, xxviii. 5. Mark xvi. 5. mention but one angel. Luke xxiv. 4. and John, xx. 12. speak of two angels.

(g) *L. 5. §. 52. p. 265. 266.*

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But the angel did not remove the stone, as Celsus insinuates, because Jesus was not himself able to do it. But it was fit, that so great a person, as Jesus, should have the attendance and service of angels upon so great an occasion, as his resurrection from the grave.

*The Gospels well known.*

Finally, any one may now judge, whether Celsus was not well acquainted with our Gospels, and whether he has not given a very valuable testimonie to them.

8. I shall here take another passage, somewhat resembling that alleged just now.

*Christian Respect for Jesus.*

*Epietetus extolled.*

“ After (b) these things, says Origen, he bespeaks us in this manner. How much better were it for you, since you affect novelties, to attend to some other of those, who have died nobly, and to whom that fiction of deity might be better applied? For instance, if you did not like Hercules, nor Esculapius, nor others already consecrated, you had Orpheus, a man endowed with a holy spirit, as all allow, who likewise suffered a violent death. But, perhaps, he has been already taken by some others. Well, then, you might have thought of Anaxarchus, who when thrown into a mortar, and cruelly pounded in it, despised it all, saying: *Beat on, beat the case of Anaxarchus. For you do not beat him.* Which is, indeed, the saying of a divine spirit. But here you are prevented by some naturalists, who have already followed him. Still, had you not Epietetus, who, when his master bent forward his leg, with a smile, and unmoved, said: *You will break it.* And when he had broke it, said to him: *Did I not say, you would break it?* Did your God, when under punishment, say any thing like this? There is also the Sibyll, whom some of your people quote, whom you might as well, or better, have called the daughter of God. But instead of that; though you have inserted many impious things into her writings, you will have him to be God, who ended an infamous life with a miserable death. Had it not been better for you to take Jonas, who was in the whale’s belly, or Daniel, who was

“ delivered.

(b) L. 7. §. 53. p. 367.



“ delivered from the beasts, or some others more wonderfull than  
“ they ?”

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To each of these instances Origen makes proper (*i*) replies. I shall take only a part of what he says.

“ He also sends us to Epictetus, extolling his fine saying, when  
“ his leg was broke. Which yet is not to be compared with the  
“ wonderfull works and words of Jesus, though they are so despised  
“ by Celsus: forasmuch as his words are accompanied with such a  
“ divine power, as to convert not only many of the simple sort of peo-  
“ ple, but also many of the more understanding.” *Epictetus.*

“ Then after his catalogue of so many he says. Did your God,  
“ when under punishment, say any thing like this? To which we  
“ shall answer, that his silence under all the abuses and reproaches,  
“ which he met with, shewed more fortitude and patience, than any  
“ thing said by the Greeks under their sufferings: provided Celsus  
“ will but believe what has been written by men of the best credit:  
“ who after they had truly related his miracles, have also related his  
“ silence under his sufferings. And when derided, and dressed in a  
“ purple robe, with a crown of thorns upon his head, and a reed in  
“ his hand instead of a sceptre, was perfectly meek, saying nothing  
“ mean, nor any thing provoking, to those, who so many ways abused  
“ him.”

9. “ If (*k*) Celsus had alleged any kind of infamous actions in the  
“ life of Jesus, we would have done our best to answer to every thing  
“ that seemed to him to be so. As for the miserable death of Jesus,  
“ the same may be objected to Socrates, and Anaxarchus, just men-  
“ tioned, and many others. Was then the death of Jesus misera-  
“ ble, and theirs not? or was theirs not miserable, but that of Jesus  
“ miserable?” So writes Origen.

10. “ Again (*l*) Celsus argues: If you tell them, that it is not the  
“ Son of God, but he who is Father of all, whom men ought to  
“ worship,

(*i*) §. 54. 55. 56. p. 368. 369.

(*k*) *Ibid.* p. 369. *fin.*

(*l*) *L.* 8. §. 14 p. 337.

A. D. 176. “ worship, they will not be satisfied, unless you also worship him,  
 “ who is the author of their sedition : not that they exceed in the wor-  
 “ ship of God, but that they above measure worship this man.”

Celsus had said somewhat to the like purpose (*m*) a little before. In both which places Origen's answers may be seen.

11. “ Afterwards (*n*) says Origen, Celsus speaks to this purpose.  
 “ But if God at last, like Jupiter in the comedie, awaked out of a  
 “ long sleep, will deliver mankind from the evils under which they  
 “ labor: why did he send this spirit, whom you speak of, into one  
 “ corner only? He should have breathed in the like manner into  
 “ many bodies, and send persons all over the world. . . . And do you  
 “ not think it ridiculous, to maintain, as you do, that the Son of  
 “ God was sent to the Jews?”

This, then, was the Christian account, that Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, came among the Jewish people. Nor is there any absurdity in this. A messenger from the true God is fitly sent, where God is known and worshiped, as he was by the Jews. To them also this special messenger, the Messiah, had been promised. And among them by many wonderfull appearances God had preserved for many ages, the knowledge of himself, and the expectation of that great person. And though the Christ came in person to them only, by him others were commissioned, and fully furnished to teach all the world. Which was sufficient, and was the wisest ( \* ) method.

At the begining of this passage Celsus hints an objection to the Christian Religion, taken from the late appearance of Jesus in the world. The same objection appears (*o*) in some other places of his argument. But I need not transcribe them.

God never neglected mankind. He was constantly teaching them  
 in

(*m*) *L.* 8. §. 12. *p.* 385.

(*n*) *L.* 6. §. 78. *p.* 329.

( \* ) See the second volume of sermons upon various subjects. *p.* 132. . . 138.

(*o*) *Vid.* *l.* 4. §. 7. *p.* 165.

in the works of creation, and in the ordinarie methods of his providence. Extraordinarie messengers are a favour. Several such had been sent of-old, to the Jews, and before their time to the Patriarchs. At last he sent Jesus Christ. We have certain proofs of his mission, and great character. The seasonableness of his coming, and the wisdom of sending him at the time he came, ought not to be disputed. But the favour should be thankfully received, and carefully improved, after due examination, and observing the evidences of his mission. (††)

12. “The (*p*) Jew in Celsus, says Origen, blames the Christians for alleging the prophets, who had foretold the things concerning Jesus: whereas, he says, the prophecies may be applied to many others more probably than to Jesus.”

*Christ's  
Mission  
argued  
from the  
Prophets.*

We hence learn, that the writers of the New Testament, (to whom Celsus has an eye in most of his arguments,) and the Christians after them, did make use of the prophets in arguing for Jesus: though Celsus, or his Jew, would not allow their arguments to be valid.

13. Celsus, with great indignation says: “The (*q*) Pythian, the Dodonaean, the Clarian, the Branchidian, the Ammonian, oracles, and many others, by whose directions colonies have been successfully planted all over the world, must pass for nothing. But the obscure Jewish predictions, said or not said, the like to which are still practised in Phenicia and Palestine, are thought to be wonderful, and immutably certain.”

Certainly, the Christians had some benefit by this argument. Or Celsus would not have been so much provoked. It deserves our observation also, that those Heathens, and even the Epicureans, (for such

was

(††) Haec est igitur animae liberandae universalis via, id est, universis gentibus divina miseratione concessa . . . Nec debuit, nec debet ei dici: Quare modo, et quare tam sero? quoniam mittentis con-

filium non est humano ingenio penetrabile. *Aug. Au. Dei. l. x. cap. 32. n. 2.*

(*p*) *L. 7. §. 1. 2.*

(*q*) *L. 7. §. 3. p. 333.*

A. D. 176. was Celsus,) who had been wont to ridicule the most renowned oracles, were now willing to give them some repute. So hard pressed were they by the progress of Christianity, that they were willing to set up again, as real and valuable, such things, as they had before decried, as cheats and impostures.

14. We have now seen what Celsus says of Christian principles, and the grounds of them: as we had before seen what he says of their great facts. It may be worth the while likewise to observe some hints relating to the success of the Christian doctrine.

## SECTION VI.

### *Passages concerning the Progress of the Christian Religion.*

*Acts.* I. “**A**T (a) first, says Celsus, they were few in number, and “then they agreed: [or were of one mind.] But being “encreased, and spread abroad, they divide again and again, and “every one will have a party of his own. Which is what they “were disposed to of old.”

*Acts.* I cannot but think, that here Celsus has an eye to some things in the Acts of the Apostles, where the wonderfull unanimity of the first Christians is recorded, as Acts ii. 44. . . . 47. iv. 32. . . . 37. In his time there were many sects and divisions among them, he says. He adds: *Which is what they were disposed to of old*, or from the beginning, ἀρχῆθεν. Here he may refer to the early divisions in the church of Corinth. 1. Cor. i. 11. . . . 17. iii. 3. . . . 6. xi. 17. 18. and, perhaps, to some of St. Paul's exhortations to concord and harmonie. He may refer likewise to contentions about the method

*Acts.*

of

(a) Ἀρχόμενοι μὲν, ὀλίγοι τε ἦσαν, αὐτὸν τέρνονται, καὶ χιζονται, καὶ εἰσείας ἰδίαις ἐξ-  
καὶ ἐν ἐφρόνουν ἐς πλῆθος δὲ σπαρέντες, αὐτοῖς χεῖν ἕκαστοι θέλασι. κ. λ. L. 3. §. 10. p.

of receiving the Gentil converts, Acts xv. and other places. For it appears to me very probable, that he has here an eye to some things recorded in the New Testament. A. D.  
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However, he owns, that the Christians were now much encreased. And, with regard to the divisions, which there then were among them, it may be observed, that they were foretold by Christ's Apostles. But such things are not the fault of the Gospel itself, but of men. Nor is perfection to be attained or expected in this world. Origen says very well, there never was any thing usefull, and considerable, about which men have not differed. In medicine, in philosophie, among Jews, Greeks and Barbarians, there are different sects and opinions.

2. "Celsus, says (*b*) Origen, brings in his fictitious person of a Jew, bespeaking the Jewish believers in this manner: What ailed you, fellow-citizens, that ye left the law of your countrey, and seduced by him, to whom we spoke just now, you have deserted us, to go to another name, and another way of living?" Again, "When (*c*) we had taken, and punished him, who led you about like brute beasts, you have notwithstanding forsaken the law of your countrey. How can you begin upon our sacred books, and afterwards disregard them? when you have no other foundation, but our law?" *Jewish  
Converts.*

It was well known therefore, that there were Jews, who believed in Jesus, and that they fetched arguments for their belief from the Jewish Scriptures. And why might not those Jews who believed in Jesus, understand their books, as well as they who rejected him?

It is to be observed likewise, that after Jesus was crucified, or *punished*, as he expresseth it, there were Jews, who were persuaded to believe in Jesus, and to profess his religion. And I pray, how is that to be accounted for, but upon the supposition of some good proofs

(*b*) L. 2. §. 1. *fin.* p. 57.

(*c*) L. 2. §. 4. p. 59.

A. D. 176. proofs and evidences afforded of his great character after his crucifixion?

*The Acts.* It appears to be very probable, that, when Celsus wrote this, he had before him the book of the Acts of the Apostles. And there he might have seen sufficient grounds of a faith in Jesus, after he was put to death by the Jews.

*The Acts.* 3. “ He (*d*) says, that the Hebrews were originally Egyptians; and owed their rise to a sedition from the rest of that people. So some Jews in the time of Jesus made a sedition against the body of the Jewish nation, and followed Jesus.”

So that there was a good number of Jews, who believed in Jesus, and followed him, though the body of the people did not, as we readily allow. But it was not a *sedition*, as Celsus calls it. Here again, I cannot but think, that Celsus had an eye to the book of the Acts.

4. In order the better to judge of the progress of the Gospel, and the sincerity and steadiness of those who embraced it, it will be of use to observe what Celsus says of any difficulties and hardships, which they lay under, who professed these principles, and bore the name of Christians.

*Christians persecuted* 5. “ The (*e*) first head of accusation with Celsus against Christianity, says Origen at the beginning of his work, is, that Christians secretly hold assemblies together, contrarie to law.”

Origen supposeth him to refer particularly to their *agapae*, or love-feasts. I should think he might intend all their assemblies in general for divine worship.

6. “ Afterwards (*f*) says Origen, he speaks of the Christians per-  
“ forming

(*d*) *L.* 3. §. 7. *p.* 115. *Conf.* §. 5. 6. *p.* 114.

(*e*) Πρῶτον τῷ Κέλσῳ κεφάλαιόν ἐστι, βαλλόμενος διαβαλλῶν Χριστιανισμῶν, ὡς συνθήκας

κρύβδην πρὸς ἀλλήλους ποιούμενων Χριστιανῶν παρὰ τὰ νενομισμένα. *Orig. contr. Cels. L. I.*

§. 1. *Bened. p.* 4. *Cantab.*

(*f*) Μετὰ ταῦτα περὶ τῶ κρύφου τὰ ἀρέσκοντα

“ forming and teaching those things which are agreeable to their  
 “ sentiments privately: And that therein they did not act without  
 “ reason, for avoiding the punishment of death hanging over them.  
 “ And he compares their dangers to the dangers, which men have  
 “ been liable to on account of philosophie. And he instanceth par-  
 “ ticularly in the case of Socrates. He might have added Pythago-  
 “ ras, and other philosophers.”

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Does not this imply an acknowledgement, or at least a supposition, of the Christian innocence? Their dangers resembled those of the philosophers. But Socrates did not deserve the capital punishment, inflicted upon him. The like may be said of many other of the philosophers. They did not deserve banishment, or other like punishment. They recommended the principles of philosophie, or religion, in a peaceable manner, in the way of reason and argument.

7. We saw before (*g*) how Celsus ridiculed the Christians, saying: *but now you dye with him.* Afterwards, in another place, he thus insults them. “ Do (*b*) you not see, good Sir, how any man that  
 “ will, may not only blaspheme your demon, but drive him away  
 “ from the earth, and the sea: [or from every quarter of the world  
 “ under heaven:] and binding you, his sacred image, has you away,  
 “ and crucifies you? And your demon, or, as you say, the Son of  
 “ God, gives you no help.” And afterwards. “ If (*i*) any one  
 “ of you absconds, and hides himself, he is sought for, to be pu-  
 “ nished with death.”

But these sufferings of Christians are no objection against their faith, or the doctrine received by them. If the Christians were good men, and alleged weighty reasons for their belief, their sufferings

T t 2

are

τα ελευτοῖς ποιεῖν ἢ διδάσκειν εἰπών, ἢ ὅτι ἁμά-  
 την τῶτο ποῖσιν, ἅτε διαθήμενοι τὴν ἐπιρτημέ-  
 νην αὐτοῖς δίκην τῆ θανάτου ὁμοιοῖ τὸν κίνδυ-  
 νου κινδύνοισ τοῖς συμβεβηκόσιν ἐπὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ,  
 ὡς Σακράτει. κ. λ. L. I. §. 3. p. 5.

(*g*) See before. p. 305.

(*b*) L. 8. §. 39. p. 803.

(*i*) L. 8. §. 69. p. 424.

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are no reproach to them. The dishonour falls upon those, who oppose and abuse them. There might be good reasons for God's permitting the followers of Jesus to endure great trials for a while. The (*k*) truth of his religion is the more established by their patience and fortitude. And Celsus himself says, "That (*l*) he who has once embraced the truth, ought not to forsake it, nor pretend to forsake it, or deny it, through fear of sufferings from men." Inasmuch that, as Origen says, "he might be understood to be a strenuous defender of those who persevere even to death in their testimony to Christianity."

What has been just alleged may be sufficient to satisfy us, that the Christians had very bad treatment, and had few or no worldly inducements to follow Jesus, and profess his name. They had therefore some other reasons, of a different kind. They were overcome by the force of truth, and loved not their lives unto the death: as it is said of some, Rev. xii. 11. They obeyed our Lord's command, Rev. ii. 10. *Be thou faithful unto the death, in hope of receiving from him a crown of life.* At this very time, when Celsus wrote against them, they underwent a grievous persecution. But they were able to endure and withstand his sharp pointed pen, and also the sword of the magistrate.

8. We go on. "The (*m*) Jews therefore, says Celsus, being a distinct nation, and having the proper laws of their country, which they still carry about with them, together with a religion,  
" such

(*k*) Tunc enim Porphyrius erat in rebus humanis, quando ista liberandae animae universalis via, quae non est alia, quam Religio Christiana, oppugnari permittebatur ab idolorum, daemonumque cultoribus, regibusque terrenis, propter afferendum et consecrandum martyrum numerum, hoc est, testium veritatis, per quos ostenderetur, omnia corporalia mala pro fide pietatis, et commendatione veritatis

esse toleranda. *Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. x. cap. 32. n. 1.*

(*l*) Ἐοικε δὲ μετὰ δεινότητος συναγορεύειν πῶς τοῖς μαρτυροῦσι τῷ Χριστιανισμῷ μέχρι θανάτου, λέγων. Καὶ ἐν τῷτῷ λέγω, ὡς χρεὶ τὸν ἀγαθοῦ δόγματος περιεχόμενον, εἰ μέλλει δὲ αὐτὸ κινδυνεύειν παρ' ἀνθρώπων, ἀποσῆναι τῷ δόγματι, ἢ πλάσασθαι ὡς ἀφέσηκεν, ἢ ἕξασθαι γενέσθαι. *L. 1. §. 8. p. 8.*

(*m*) *L. 5. §. 25. p. 247.*



“ such as it is, however those of their countrey, act like other men :  
 “ forasmuch as all follow the institutions of their own countrey,  
 “ whatever they are. And that is reasonable enough, because diffe-  
 “ rent laws have been framed by different people. And it is fit, that  
 “ those things should be observed, which have been established by  
 “ public authority. Nor would it be just to abrogate those laws,  
 “ which have been enacted from the begining in every countrey.”  
 “ . . . “ But (*n*) if another appears, I should ask them, whence they  
 “ came, and what countrey-laws they have for their rule? They  
 “ will answer, None at all. For they descend from the same ori-  
 “ ginal: and they have received their master and leader from the  
 “ same countrey. And yet they have revolted from the Jews.

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Thus deplorable was the condition of the Christians at that time! so obnoxious were they to the resentment and displeasure of their neighbours, above and beyond all other men, without any just reason! The Jewish people were very troublesome subjects of the Roman Empire. The Christians were the most peaceable subjects upon the face of the earth. And yet they were looked upon, with a worse eye, than the Jews themselves: and were judged unworthie of the common rights and privileges, allowed to all other men! This was the disposition of Celsus himself toward them. It is not to be much wondered at, that many others were in the same way of thinking.

Celsus allegeth not, as a ground of this treatment of them, any crimes in action, or wicked principles in belief: but only a singularity of institution, not established by the laws of any countrey.

The reason of this particular enmity to the Christians, beyond the Jews, though they also were worshipers of the one God alone, and condemned all idolatrie, I suppose to have been this: Christianity made much greater progresse than Judaism, and threatened the utter ruin and overthrow of Gentilism.

**This**

(*n*) *L. 5. §. 33. p. 253.*

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This is a passage, which I would recommend to the consideration of those, who deny men the freedom of judging personally for themselves in things of religion: and found all right of professing religious principles upon the consent and authority of the magistrate, and civil laws and constitutions. Such may observe, how exactly they agree with Celsus, and they may easily discern, that if they had lived in his time, they must, according to their own principles, have sided with him against Christianity itself.

## S E C T I O N VII.

*Passages of Celsus, in which he chargeth the Christians with magical practises.*

WE saw before (\*) how Celsus says, that Jesus had learned the Egyptian arts, and valuing himself upon them, had set up himself for a God. And in some other places he has been ready to have recourse to magick, in order to account for the works said to have been done by our Saviour. Now I would observe what he says of Christians to the like purpose.

“ After (a) this, says Origen, I do not know for what reason Celsus says, that the Christians seem to be well skilled [or very mighty] in the names and invocations of certain demons.”

Origen supposeth, that Celsus there refers to those who exorcised, or expelled demons. But says, that in so doing Christians made use of no other name but that of Jesus, and the rehearsal of some parts of his historie.

“ Celsus (b) says, he had seen with some Presbyters of our religion,

(\*) See before, p. 287.

(a) Μετὰ ταῦτα οὐκ ἴδρα πόθεν κινόμενος ὁ Κέλσος, φησὶ, δαιμόνων τιῶν ὀνόμασι καὶ κατακηλήσοσι δοκεῖν ἰσχύειν χριστιανέες. κ. λ. L. 1. §. 6. p. 7.

(b) . . . ἐν οἷς ἔφησεν ἑαρακέναι παρά τισι πρεσβυτέροις τῆς ἡμετέρας δόξης βιβλία βάρβαρα, δαιμόνων ὀνόματα ἔχοντα, καὶ τερατείαις. κ. λ. L. 6. §. 40. p. 302.

“gion, books, in a barbarous language, containing the names of  
 “demons, and other charms. And he says, that those Presbyters  
 “of our religion professed nothing good, but every thing hurtfull to  
 “mankind.”

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This, as well as somewhat else said before, Origen says, is downright fiction. And he says, that all those stories are confuted by all who have conversed with Christians, who never heard of any such things practised by them.

However, this charge of magick against the Christians may be reckoned an argument, that there were some uncommon things done by them at this time: as is often affirmed by (c) Origen, as well as by other ecclesiastical writers: but not to the detriment of mankind, as Celsus insinuates, but for their benefit.

## SECTION VIII.

### *Of Christian Worship, and their Assemblies.*

**W**E have just now seen mention made of Christian Presbyters, the only place, so far as I remember, where Celsus has taken any notice of them. But though there were then persons of that denomination, who taught the Christian doctrine, and officiated in the worship of God; it does not appear, that Christians had at that time any temples, or sumptuous buildings for public worship. Celsus rather intimates, that they had none. “They (a) cannot, he says, “so much as endure the sight of temples, altars, statues.” However, he adds: “Nor do the Persians erect temples.” In another place Origen observes: Celsus (b) says, “we erect no statues, altars, or temples.”

And

(c) L. 1. §. 2. p. 5. L. 1. §. 46. p. 34. L. 3. §. 24. p. 124.

(a) . . . οὐκ ἀνεχονται νεώς ἱεῖνες, καὶ βαμῆς, καὶ ἀγάλματα. L. 7. §. 62. p. 373.

(b) . . . ἡμᾶς βαμῆς, καὶ ἀγάλματα, καὶ νεώς ἰδρῦσθαι φέουχεν. L. 8. §. 17. p. 389.

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And that Christians declined joyning with Heathen people in their public worship, Celsus bears witness. “ God (c) says he, is the  
 “ common Lord of all. He is good to all. He needeth not any  
 “ thing, and therefore is free from envie. What then should hin-  
 “ der the most devoted to him from partaking in the public festi-  
 “ vals?” And afterwards, says Origen, “ Celsus (d) endeavors to per-  
 “ suade us to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to joyn in the pub-  
 “ lic sacrifices of the solemn festivals, saying: If these idols are no-  
 “ thing, what harm can there be to partake in the public solemn-  
 “ ties! If they are demons, then for certain they are gods, in whom  
 “ we ought to trust: and sacrifices ought to be offered to them,  
 “ and they ought to be prayed to, that they may be propitious to  
 “ us.” To all which Origen makes a sufficient answer. But it  
 need not to be transcribed.

However, I am induced to take here a passage of Origen in the third book against Celsus. He is speaking of the great benefit of the Christian Religion. “ And (e) God, says he, who sent Jesus,  
 “ having defeated all the artifices of demons, has so ordered it, that  
 “ the gospel of Jesus should prevail every where for reforming man-  
 “ kind: and that there should be every where Churches governed  
 “ by different laws from the churches of superstitious, intemperate,  
 “ and unrighteous men. For such are the manners of most of those  
 “ who belong to the churches of the cities. But the churches of  
 “ God, instructed by Christ, compared with the churches of the  
 “ people among whom they live, are as *lights in the world*. And  
 “ who is there, who must not acknowledge, that the worst of those  
 “ who are in the Church, and are inferior to the rest, are better than  
 “ most of those who are in the churches of the people.”

*Matt. v.*  
14.  
*Phil. ii.*  
15.

“ For instance, the church of God at Athens is quiet, mild,  
 “ and well behaved, being desirous to approve itself to God who is  
 “ over

(c) L. 8. §. 21. p. 392.

(d) L. 8. §. 24. et 25. p. 393.

(e) L. 3. §. 29. 30. p. 128. 129.

“ over all. But the church of the Athenians is turbulent, and by  
 “ no means comparable to the church of God there. The same  
 “ you must also acknowledge of the church of God at Corinth, and  
 “ the church of the people of the Corinthians. As you must also  
 “ allow of the church of God at Alexandria, and the church of the  
 “ people of the Alexandrians. Every one who is candid, and dili-  
 “ gently attends to these things, with a mind open to conviction, will  
 “ admire him, who formed this design, and has accomplished it :  
 “ that there should be every where churches of God, dwelling to-  
 “ gether with the churches of the people in every city. And (f) if  
 “ you will observe the senate of the church of God and the senate in  
 “ every city, you will find some senators of the church worthie to go-  
 “ vern in the city of God, all over the world, if there were such a  
 “ thing. And on the other hand, you will find, that the senators of  
 “ the cities have nothing in their behaviour to render them worthie  
 “ of the distinction allotted to them. And if you should compare the  
 “ presidents of the churches of God with the presidents of the people  
 “ in the cities, you will find the senators and governours of the  
 “ churches, though some may be inferior to others, who are more  
 “ perfect, nevertheless you will find them to excell in virtue the se-  
 “ nators and governours of the cities.”

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## SECTION IX.

*Passages in Celsus concerning those called Heretics.*

**C**ELSUS was not unacquainted with those particular opinions called heresies, which arose early in the world under the Christian name.

I. I shall

(f) οὕτω δὲ καὶ βελὴν ἐκκλησίας Θεῶν βελὴν ἔτις ἐσιν ἐν τῷ παντὶ πόλεις τῷ Θεῷ, ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ καθ' ἑκάστην πόλιν συνεξετάζων, ἕρως ὅν πολιτεύεσθαι. *Ibid.* num. 30.  
 τινες μὲν τῆς ἐκκλησίας βελοτάει ἀξίοι ἐσιν,

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1. I shall transcribe at length a part of what Origen says upon this subject. “ Then (*a*) he says: Let not any man think me ignorant, that some of them will allow, that their God is the same with the God of the Jews: whilst others believe in another, and contrarie to him, and by whom, as they say, the Son of God was sent.”

Here, I think, Celsus must mean the *Marcionites*, though Origen does not expressly say so.

2. “ He (*b*) adds, that some are Sibyllists. Perhaps he had heard of some, who blamed those who accounted the Sibyl a prophetesse, and who therefore called them Sibyllists.”

3. Origen goes on. “ Then (*c*) heaping up the names of many among us, he says, *he knows of some, who are Simonians, who following Helena, or a master called Helenus, are called Helenians.* But, says Origen, Celsus does not know, that the *Simonians* do by no means confess Jesus to be the Son of God, but say, that Simon is the power of God. Many strange things are told us of that man, who thought, that if he could perform some wonders like to those which Jesus had done, he should be honoured in the like manner that Jesus was. But neither Celsus, nor Simon, were able to comprehend, how Jesus, as a good husbandman of the word of God, *ὡς καλὸς γεωργὸς λόγῳ Θεῷ*, was able to sow a great part of Greece, and a great part of the Barbarian world, and fill them with words, which convert the soul from every evil, and lead them to the Creator of all. Celsus was also acquainted with the *Marcellians*, so called from Marcellina, and the *Harpocratians*, who had their rise from Salome, and others from *Mariamne*, and others from *Martia*: though I, who have made it my business to acquaint myself with the different sects among us, as well as among the Philosophers, never met with any of these, *εἰδέποτε τέτοις ὠμιλήσαμεν.* “ Celsus

(*a*) L. 5. §. 61. p. 271.(*b*) *Ibid.*(*c*) L. 5. §. 62. p. 272.

“ Celsus has also made mention of the *Marcionites*, so called from “ Marcion.”

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4. “ And (*d*) then, that he may seem to be acquainted with others, beside those already named, he adds, after his accustomed manner: *and others form to themselves another master and demon, walking in the greatest darknesse, and practising more shamefull and impious things, than the associates of Antinous in Egypt.*”

5. In another place Origen observes, that (*e*) the *Simonians* never were persecuted: and says, he believes, there could not at that time be found thirty Simonians in the world.

Celsus also brings in the *Ophians*, or *Ophitae*, who, as (*f*) Origen says, were no more Christians than himself. He (*g*) likewise seems to refer to the *Valentinians*, and to (*b*) some other obscure people, whom Origen knew nothing of. And borrowing their sentiments, he forms an objection from them against all Christians in general.

However, the main dispute of Celsus is with our Gospels, and those Christians, that followed them, as is manifest from the whole of his work: so far as we can judge of it by those fragments that remain. And there are enough of them in Origen, to give us a just idea of it.

8. It is not at all surprizing, that Celsus should endeavor to make an advantage of the absurd opinions of those called heretics, for loading Christians in general, or Christianity itself with the reproach of them: or by setting them up against the more prevailing sentiments of the sounder part of the Christians, from which indeed proceeded all the fears and apprehensions of Heathen people.

## U u 2

## S E C T.

(*d*) *Ib.* §. 63. *p.* 272.

(*e*) *L.* 6. §. 11. *p.* 282. *Et Conf. L.*

*i.* §. 57. *p.* 44.

(*f*) *L.* 6. §. 28. *et* 30. *p.* 294. *Ec.*

(*g*) *L.* 6. §. 34. *Ec.* *p.* 298.

(*b*) Καὶ ἐν τοῦτοις δὴ πάλιν, οὐκ εἶδ' ἀπὸ ποίας αἱρέσεως ἀσημοτάτης ταῦτα λαβὼν, πάντες Χριστιανούς ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἐγκάλει, κ. λ. *L.* 8. §. 15. *p.* 388.

## S E C T I O N X.

*Passages in Celsus, containing Calumnies, or injurious Reflexions upon the Christians.*

**H**E objects after this manner. “ That (a) I say nothing more  
 “ severe, than truth obliges me to say, is manifest hence. When  
 “ others invite men to the mysteries, they invite men after this man-  
 “ ner : *Whoever has clean hands, and a good understanding. Or, who-*  
 “ *soever is pure from vice, whose soul is conscious of no evil, and lives*  
 “ *according to the law of righteousness, let him come hither. Now*  
 “ let us see, whom they invite. *Whoever, say they, is a sinner, who-*  
 “ *ever is ignorant, whoever is silly, and in a word, whoever is misera-*  
 “ *ble, these the kingdom of God receives. Whom do you mean by sin-*  
 “ *ners ? Do you not thereby intend thieves, house-breakers, poy-*  
 “ *soners, sacrilegious, and the like. And what else could men say,*  
 “ *who aim to form a society of the worst of men ?*” To which Ori-  
 gen answers : “ It is one thing to invite sick souls to come to be  
 “ healed, and another thing to call such as are cured to partake of  
 “ higher mysteries. We who know the difference of these two  
 “ things, first invite men to come and be healed, and we exhort  
 “ sinners to attend to those who teach men not to sin : and the igno-  
 “ rant and unwise we exhort to hearken to those who will teach  
 “ them wisdom : the weak, we exhort to aim at manly wisdom, and  
 “ the miserable we invite to accept of happiness, or, to speak more  
 “ properly, blessedness. And, when they whom we have admo-  
 “ nished, have made some progress, and have learned to live well,  
 “ then they are initiated by us. *For we speak wisdom among the per-*  
 “ *fect.*” 1. Cor. ii. 6.

2. That

(a) L. 3. §. 59. p. 147.



2. That the Christian doctrine gives no encouragement to wickedness, is apparent from the books of the New Testament, in which it is clearly taught. And that the general practise of Christians is here misrepresented, appears from Justin Martyr, who lived about the same time with Celsus, who, in his first apologie, giving an account of the Christian principles, and worship, says: "Whenever (b) any are persuaded of the truth of the things taught by us, and engage to the utmost of their power, to live accordingly, they are directed to pray, joyning therewith fasting, that they may obtain from God the forgiveness of their past sins, we also praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us to a place, where there is water, and they are regenerated in the same manner that we were." Nor were they admitted to the eucharist, till afterwards, as (c) he farther shews.

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3. So writes Justin. The discipline of the Church was much the same in the time of Origen. For some while before, in answer to another reflexion of Celsus, not very different from this, which we are now considering, he says: "But (d) what ground is there to compare us with those haranguers, and common strollers? Is there any resemblance between them and us? Who by readings, and by explications of those readings, excite men to piety toward the God of the universe, and to other virtues of like excellence: [καὶ τὰς συνθρόνους ταύτη ἀρετᾶς:] and who call men off from a neglect of religion, and from all things contrarie to right reason? Certainly the Philosophers would be well pleased to gather together such as are disposed to hear their discourses concerning what is good, and honest. Nor ought such to be compared with the common strollers before-mentioned. Nor is it reasonable to suppose, that Celsus would condemn those Philosophers, who from a principle of humanity endeavor to instruct and improve the ignorant vulgar."

"The

(b) *Ap. i. p. 93. Paris. §. 61. Bened.*

(c) *Ib. p. 97. §. 65 &c.*

(d) *L. 3. §. 50. 51. p. 142. 143.*

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“ The Christians are more carefull in distinguishing their hearers  
 “ than any other men. When the Philosophers speak in public, all  
 “ attend that will. The Christians carefully examine the tempers  
 “ and manners of those, who come to them. Nor are any received  
 “ by us, till they have given some evidences of a progresse in virtue.  
 “ If afterwards they fall into sin, especially any kind of intempe-  
 “ rance, they are excluded from the community. If afterwards  
 “ they repent, their recoverie is considered as a rising again from the  
 “ dead. But now they are received again not without more difficul-  
 “ ty than at the first. Nor can they ever be admitted into any of-  
 “ fice or dignity in the church of God.”

4. Moreover, as Dr. *Wall* observes in his Notes upon John viii. at the begining. “ It is no discredit, but an excellence in any reli-  
 “ gion, that it has rules of pardon for great sins, provided it lay  
 “ conditions, and strong injunctions of amending, and doing so no  
 “ more, such as here at ver. 11.” For certain, the gospel promiseth not any special advantages to men, who live in sin. Such as sin, it calls to repentance. Nor is there any pardon, nor salvation for sinners, unless they repent and practise real holinessse and virtue.

5. That charge of Celsus against Christianity, therefore, is altogether absurd and groundless: though it was afterwards renewed by the (*d*) Emperour Julian. And I hope it will be excused, that I have so particularly considered this objection, the first time it came in our way.

6. “ Celsus (*e*) quotes, or seems to quote, words of a Dialogue,  
 “ (if they are not his own invention) as writ by some Christian,  
 “ where mention is made of angels of light, and other angels, and  
 “ (*f*) their prince at the head, who is mentioned by a very opprobri-  
 “ ous

(*d*) *Julian. Caes. in fin. p. 336. edit. Spanh.*

(*e*) *L. 6. §. 27. 28. p. 293. 294.*

(*f*) τῶν μὲν τῶ φωτὸς, ἐτέρων δὲ τῶν ὀνομα-

ζομένων ἀρχοντικῶν κὶ λέγει τὸν ἀρχιαιτα τῶν ὀνομαζομένων ἀρχοντικῶν λέγεσθαι θεὸν κατηραμένον. *Ib. num. 27.*

ous name. Then, says Origen, laying hold of those words, he deservedly censures those who say such things. We also are very ready to joyn in censuring such, as call the God of the Jews accursed, if (g) indeed there are any such men. I mean the God that sends rain and thunder, the God of Moses, and author of the creation, described by him." "Here, adds Origen, Celsus seems to have intended somewhat very unfair against us, proceeding from ill will, unbecoming a Philosopher. He intended, that they who read his book, to whom we are unknown, should declare war against us, as men, who called the good creator of the world accursed. In which he resembleth the Jews, who at the first rise of the Christian doctrine, spread abroad calumnies against it: giving out, that they killed a child, and ate it, and that when the lights were put out, they practised promiscuous lewdness. Which calumnie, however absurd, was of old credited by many, who differ from us. And even now, there are some, who are so deceived by it, that for this reason they are so averse to all Christians, that they will have no discourse or communication with any of them. Somewhat of this kind Celsus seems to have aimed at, when he gave out, that the Christians call the creator of the world the accursed God: that men believing such things of us, might be disposed to do their utmost, to extirpate the Christians, as the most impious of all men."

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By all which we may perceive, that Celsus was filled with enmity against the Christians of his time, and did not spare them.

7. There is yet one place more, which I must take notice of, before I leave this article.

"After this he insinuates, that the worship paid to Antinous, one of the beloved favourites of Adrian, at Antinopolis in Egypt, differs not from the respect which we have for Jesus. Another in-

stance.

(g) ἐι δὴ τινὲς ἔσσι λέγοντες θεὸν κατηραμένον τὸν Ἰουδαίου. Νυκτ. 27.

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“ stance this of his hatred of us! But (*g*) what have we in com-  
 “ mon with men, whose manners are so vicious, as not to be ex-  
 “ empt from that effeminacie, which is contrarie to nature? What  
 “ comparifon can be made between them, and the venerable Jesus,  
 “ whom we follow, against whom though innumerable lies and  
 “ calumnies have been forged, none have dared to charge him with  
 “ any kind of intemperance whatever?”

## S E C T I O N XI.

*Remarks upon the Work of Celsus against the Chris-  
 tians, and upon Origen's Answer to it.*

C E L S U S says, “ he (*a*) knows all things.” Which Origen treats  
 as a very arrogant saying. But I think, the coherence shews,  
 that Celsus intended to say, he knew all things relating to the Chris-  
 tians. And perhaps he meant no more than that he was well qual-  
 ified for the work he had undertaken, of writing against them.  
 And Origen himself, (*b*) in some other places, where he takes no-  
 tice of this saying, leads us to understand it of his being well ac-  
 quainted with the Christian affairs.

Which, I apprehend, cannot be disallowed. For Celsus had read  
 the books of Moses, and perhaps all the other books of the Old  
 Testament. He had read, as it seems, all the books of the New  
 Testament. But when he had done that, he supposed, he needed  
 not to give himself much trouble about any of them, excepting the  
 historical books, and particularly the Gospels. He

(*g*) Τί γὰρ κοινὸν ἔχει ὁ γενόμενος ἐν τοῖς  
 Ἀδριανῶν παιδικαῖς βίαις, οὐδὲ τὸν ἀρρένα ἀπαθῆ  
 γυναικείας νόσου φυλάξαντος, πρὸς τὸν σεμνὸν  
 ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, οὐ μὴδὲ οἱ μυρία κατηγορήσαντες,  
 καὶ ψευδῆ ὅσα περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες, δεδύνηται  
 κατεπεῖν, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸ τυχόν ἀπολασίας καὶ  
 ἐπὶ ὀλίγον γευσάμενος. L. 3. §. 36. p. 132.

(*a*) Λεκτέον δὲ πρὸς τὰ, πάντα γὰρ εἶδα,

ἀλαζωνικάτα ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ ἀποτετολημμένον.  
 L. 1. §. 12. p. 11.

(*b*) ὁ παντ' εἰδέναι ἐπαγγελιάμενος Κέλ-  
 σος τὰ ἡμέτερα. L. 1. §. 40. p. 31. Ὅου  
 γὰρ ἤδει ὁ ἀληθῶς ἀλαζὼν Κέλσος, καὶ ἐπαγγ-  
 γελλόμενος εἰδέναι πάντα τὰ Χριστιανῶν. L.  
 2. §. 32. p. 80.

He had also made inquiries after those absurd people, called heretics, and looked into some of their writings.

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Beside all this, he had sent for some Jews to come to him, with whom he had a good deal of discourse. From them he learned their expectation of the Messiah, and their idea of him. By them he endeavored to inform himself, wherein lay the controversy between the Jewish people and the Christians. With their assistance he formed divers objections against the Christian doctrine. And from them, undoubtedly, he aimed to pick up all the scandal, which they could furnish him with against the Christians. And from them he received the infamous account of our Saviour's nativity, before taken notice of.

And it may be well supposed, that there were some reasons, which induced this learned Epicurean, to take so much pains to inform himself about the Christians, and then to write a large volume against them. Their principles were very different from his, and contrarie to all the established notions about the Heathen deities. And their principles had already gained great ground, and were still spreading more and more to the detriment of Epicurism, and all idolatrous schemes. Which could not but move his indignation. We see his resentments in the bitterness, with which he has treated the Christians, and Jesus himself, whom they followed as their Lord and master. I am unwilling to insinuate, that Celsus was allured into this service, and that he encouraged himself with hopes of success in his design, by the afflictive circumstances of the Christians at that time. But I must say, it was not very generous in him to attack and oppose them in the manner he did, when they were under persecution, and liable to capital punishments.

Celsus (c) expressly quotes the Dispute or Dialogue of *Papiscus* and

(c) ... φησὶ· διὰ δὴ καὶ Παπίσκου τινὸς καὶ μᾶλλον ἐλένης καὶ μίσεως Ἀξίου. L. 4. §. 52.  
Ἰεσοῦσός ἀντιλογίαν ἔγνων, ἐν γέλωτος, ἀλλὰ p. 199.

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and Jason, and speaks of it with great contempt, of which I took notice (d) formerly. It is a work, which may be allowed to be writ by a catholic Christian. Excepting that one book, I do not recollect, that Celsus has mentioned the name of any of our celebrated ancient Christians, or particularly referred to any of their writings: though there were several before, and about his time, who might have been mentioned: as *Clement of Rome*, *Ignatius Bp. of Antioch*, *Polycarp*, Bishop of Smyrna, *Quadratus*, *Aristides*, *Justin Martyr*, *Tatian*, not to speak of any others, divers of whom, were well versed in Greek literature. Which silence about them may be ascribed to a scornfull disdain, unwilling to do justice to the merit of a Christian. Nor do we perceive from Origen, that Celsus had nam'd any of the Evangelists.

And by the way, I would observe here, that we compute, the Dialogue of *Papiscus and Jason* to have been writ about the year of Christ 140. Celsus therefore could not publish his work against the Christians, till after that time.

At the conclusion of his eight books in answer to Celsus, Origen observes, that (e) Celsus promised another work, in which he would shew how men ought to live. This work Origen seems to suppose to have been likewise designed in opposition to Christianity. Origen did not know, whether Celsus had performed his promise. But he desires his friend *Ambrose* to send it to him, if he had met with it. And he engageth to examine it.

Origen's own work, as before shewn, has been greatly commended. Eusebius entering upon his answer to *Hierocles*, considers (f) it as a needless performance: forasmuch as a confutation of him may be seen in Origen's books against Celsus, who had already said every thing that could be said upon the subject.

I do

(d) See *Credib. P. 2. Vol. 2. ch. 28. §. iv. p. 654.*

(e) Ἰσθι μὲν τοι ἐπαγγελόμενον τὸν Κέλσον ἄλλο σίνταγμα μετὰ τοῦτο ποιήσεν, ἐν ᾧ δι-

δάξεν ἐπιγγέλειτο, ὅση βωτίου τῆς βυλαμέ-  
νης αὐτῷ κῆ δυναμένως πείθεσθαι. *L. 8. §. 76.*  
*p. 428.*

(f) *Contr. Hier. p. 511.*

I do not judge it proper for me to indulge my-self in any characters, that should be reckoned extravagant. Nevertheless I think I may say, that Origen's eight books against Celsus are an invaluable treasure. Every one is now able to judge of the importance of the fragments of the work of Celsus, preserved in it. Origen's answers to Celsus are also valuable. There are likewise many other things, of which good use may be made. Whence the curious may learn divers things hardly to be met with elsewhere. I suppose, I shall hereafter have opportunities for verifying this observation, by quotations out of it.

## S E C T I O N XII.

*The Recapitulation.*

**I**T is a large extract, which I have now made out of Origen's eight books against the work of Celsus, entitled *The True Word*. It is fit, that we should now recapitulate what we have seen in several articles.

And it is a great deal. All these things have we seen in Celsus distinctly and clearly. What greater advantage could we expect from the writings of an adversarie, who flourished, and wrote not long after the middle of the second centurie of the Christian epoch: and not much above 130 years after our Saviour's ascension?

In the passages alleged under the (\* \*) *second* section we have seen good proofs, that the Jewish people had expectations of that great person the Messiah.

In the passages, cited under the *third* section we have seen many plain references to the Gospels, and to several of St. Paul's Epistles, if not also to St. Peter's, and St. John's. We are assured by Celsus,

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that

(\* \*) *The first section* is not recapitulated here, as it contains only the historie of Celsus, and his work.

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that there were histories of Jesus, writ by *his Disciples*, meaning his apostles and their companions: and that those books were well known, and in high esteem with Christians.

We have seen in his fragments plain references to the Gospels of *St. Matthew*, *St. Luke*, and *St. John*. It appears also highly probable, or even certain, that he was not unacquainted with the Gospel according to *St. Mark*. But he has not expressly mentioned the books themselves, nor the names of the writers. Nor is there so much as an insinuation; that the later Christians, of Celsus's own time, or thereabout, had forged these histories, to do honour to Jesus. He only says, that they had altered some things. But of that he produced no proof. Nor did he allege any particular instances. He only says, in the place referred to, if Origen has taken the words of Celsus exactly, *that some of the believers had taken the liberty to alter the Gospel from the first writing*.

I presume, I have now particularly shewn, from numerous passages above alleged, the truth of *St. Chrysostom's* observation: "That Celsus bears witness to the antiquity of our writings."

And, as it was in those times a common method to quote authors in a loose manner: and as it is reasonable to believe, that Celsus was far from being scrupulously exact in his citations of Christian books, or in his allusions to them: it may be well reckoned somewhat extraordinarie, that we can discern in him so many evident traces of quotations from the books of the New Testament, or references to them.

In the *fourth* section are many passages of Celsus bearing testimony to the books of the New Testament, and the facts contained in them.

He lets us know, that Jesus was the author of the Christian institution, and that he had lived and taught not very long agoe. We learn from him also, that according to the accounts given by his Disciples, he was born of a Virgin, in a small village of Judea, supposed to have been descended from the Jewish Kings: that she was married



married to a carpenter : that for some while her husband was doubtful about her chastity : that Chaldeans, or other wise men from the East, came to Jerusalem, soon after his nativity, to do him homage, as King of the Jews, having been excited to that journey by the appearance of a starr : that Herod moved by jealousy put to death many young children, hoping to kill Jesus with them : that by direction of an angel, he was carried by his parents into Egypt, for the preservation of his life : where, as Celsus insinuates, Jesus learned the charms practised in that countrey. He calls Jesus the *Nazarean man*, or man of Nazareth, from the place where he was brought up, and chiefly resided, before his appearance in a public character. He takes notice of our Lord's baptism, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove, and of a voice from heaven declaring Jesus to be the beloved Son of God. In another place he speaks again of a like voice from heaven, which seems to be what happened, when our Lord was transfigured on the mount. He afterwards takes notice, that when Jesus appeared in a public character, as a teacher of religion, he went about, attended by ten or eleven disciples, publicans and sailors, or mariners, as he generally calls them. In the historie of Jesus, writ by his Disciples, he is said to have healed the lame, and the blind, and to have raised some dead persons to life. And though he is unwilling to allow, that these were real miracles, done by the power of God, he dares not to deny their truth, and is troubled to account for them, and was almost reduced to the necessity of allowing the power of magick, though he is supposed to have formerly writ against it. He has taken notice of our Lord's death on the crosse, and almost all the circumstances of his last sufferings : that he was betrayed by one of his disciples, and denied by another : that he was condemned by a judge, and prosecuted by the Jews. He mentions our Lord's deriders, and the reproaches he underwent, the crown of thorns, the purple robe, the reed in his hand. Nor has he omitted, the wine mingled with gall, when our Lord was going to be crucified, and the vinager, when he was

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near expiring on the crosse. He also takes notice of the darknesse during our Lord's crucifixion, and the earthquake, at the same time, or soon after it. And though he will not admit, that Jesus rose from the dead, he acknowledgeth the disciples to have related it, and that an angel descended, and removed the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and that he is said by them to have shewn himself to one woman, and then to others, and to his disciples. He also observes, that the Disciples have recorded, that Jesus foreknew and foretold the things that happened to himself, and which were to happen to them also, after he had left them. So that we have in Celsus, in a manner, the whole historie of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels. For we have traced in him the historie of our Lord's birth, life, preaching, miracles, death, and resurrection: all, as taken by him from the writings of Christ's own Disciples. In this section therefore we have seen many testimonies to the antiquity and genuinenesse of our Scriptures, additional to those alleged in the preceding section.

N. B.

In the *fifth* section we have observed the notice, which Celsus takes of some Christian principles, in particular, the general resurrection of the dead. As for the moral doctrine, he was not able to find any fault with it. But he says, the like things had been before taught by the Philosophers, and better expressed. He takes notice of the veneration, which the Christians had for Jesus, as their Master, and the Messiah, promised of old. But he says, the Jews were mistaken in expecting such a person at all: and the Christians were mistaken in thinking that he was actually come: though, as he allows, they argued from the ancient Jewish Prophets.

In the *sixth* section we have seen some passages bearing testimonie to the great progresse of the Christian Religion in the world, notwithstanding many difficulties and discouragements. Indeed, this whole work of Celsus is an evidence of the prevailing power of the Christian Religion. He has sufficiently acknowledged the great numbers of Jews and Gentils, who had been gained over to this belief.

And

And if it had not been still spreading, and prevailing, this learned and ingenious man would have saved himself the pains of this laborious argument to confute it. But how so many at that time should embrace this doctrine, under many worldly discouragements, without good reason, is a thing not easie to be accounted for.

Under this section, I suppose, may be observed some passages, containing references to the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

Under the *seventh* section we saw, how Celsus was disposed to charge the Christians with magical arts and practises. Upon which I need not enlarge here. It is sufficient to remind the reader of what is there alleged.

In the *eighth* section are some passages relating to Christian worship. It appears from what Celsus says, that they worshiped the one God, Creator of all things, and had a high veneration for Jesus Christ. Nor would they worship demons, or joyn in the public sacrifices and festivals of Heathen people. He likewise speaks of Christian Presbyters: though they had not then any altars, nor temples, nor other sumptuous buildings to meet in. He also reproacheth them with holding their religious assemblies privatly, and contrarie to law. Nor was it without reason, that they aimed at privacie. For, as he owns, they were then sought for to be put to death.

From the passages alleged under the *ninth* section, we learn, that Celsus was not unacquainted with the absurd opinious of some, who went under the Christian name. These he brings in, the more to reproach those, who were the most rational in their belief. All the attacks of Celsus are against the more sober part of the believers. Those others were sought for, in order to disparage and expose them, if possible.

Finally, it is well known, that in early times, soon after the rise of Christianity, the followers of Jesus were loaded with many calumnies.

They were said to kill infants, and eat them, and when the lights were put out, to practise promiscuous lewdness in their assemblies.

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I do not perceive Celsus to insist upon these. I (a) rather think, he did not. These calumnies were not yet extinct, nor obsolete. The Martyrs at Lyons and Vienne, in the reign of Mark Antonin (b) about the year 177: were reproached with them. And they were in vogue after that time. But to me it seems probable, that Celsus thought those charges to be absurd and incredible. And to mention them with any marks of countenance and approbation he supposed would be a prejudice to his argument. But though he has omitted them, he has brought in divers injurious reflexions upon them, and thereby shewn his good will to expose them to general and public resentment: as may be seen in the passages alleged from him under this section.

If therefore we now have any advantage from the work of Celsus, as we certainly have, and very considerable, it is altogether beside the intention of the author. So that we may here apply the words of Sampson's riddle, or aenigma: *Out of the eater, or devourer, came meat, and out of the strong, or the fierce, came sweetness.* Judge. xiv. 14.

### S E C T I O N XIII.

*Three Summaries of the fragments of the Work of Celsus, preserved in Origen, made by three several learned men.*

I. *A Summarie of the Work of Celsus, by the late Reverend Dr. Philip Doddridge.*

My late excellent friend, Dr. Doddridge, observed to me, that few learned men knew the importance of the remains of Celsus. He said:

(a) *Vid. L. 6. §. 40. p. 302.*

(b) *Vid. Euseb. H. E. L. 5. cap. iv. p.*

*156. D. and in this volume, p. 198. 199.*

*201.*

said: *An abridgement of the history of Christ may be found in Celsus.* And he entreated, that when I should come to this writer, *I would labor the point.* I think I have shewn a regard to his advice, as I have also followed my own judgement, and inclination.

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Since his decease, I have understood, that he had abridged the argument of the eight books of Origen against Celsus, and sent it to an honourable friend (a). A copie of it having been taken, I have procured it from the Reverend Mr. *Ashworth* of Daventry in Northamptonshire. I shall now transcribe it with references to the pages of Spencer's edition of Origen at Cambridge, in 1677.

“*Of the Proof of the genuinnesse of the New Testament, that may be derived from the Fragments of Celsus, as preserved by Origen.*”

“The Book of Celsus is unhappily lost. But there are large extracts made in Origen, and, as it seems, with such exactnesse, that it is difficult to find more considerable Remains of any ancient book, not now extant. The following collection is confined to the illustration of this thought: *What we may learn from him concerning the real existence of the New Testament, in his age, and the regard, in which it was held among Christians.*”

“Celsus is, no doubt, an evidence of great value, as he wrote so early. Origen observes, p. 3. that he had been dead long before his undertaking to answer his Book against Christianity, which he calls *the true word.* And it appears from another passage of Origen, that he lived in the days of *Adrian* and his successor. p. 8. So that his Book must have been writ in the second centurie. Which is farther confirmed by *Lucian's* dedicating to him one of his works, entitled, *Pseudomantis.* It may be also observed, that he speaks of Christ, as having taught and suffered very lately. p. 21. and 282.”

“As for the references to the Gospels, we do not find, that he quotes any of them, by the name of the authors. But he speaks of

(a) *Gilbert West, Esq; Author of Observations on the History and Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, published in the year 1747.*

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of *the Gospel*, meaning, no doubt, the historie of Christ, as being changed three or four times. p. 77. He seems to speak of several of the Evangelists, as agreeing to write of Christ's predictions. p. 89. and of things written by the Disciples of Christ. p. 67. All which seems to make it evident, that he had more than the book of St. Matthew in his hand. And though the greatest part of his references may be found there, yet there are also many of them in the other Gospels."

"He quotes from the Gospels such a variety of particulars, that the enumeration of them will almost prove an abridgement of the Evangelists History. Particularly, That Jesus, who, he says, was represented as the Word of God, p. 79. and who was the author of the Christian name. p. 21. and also called himself the Son of God, *ibid.* was a man of Nazareth. p. 343. That he was the reputed son of a Carpenter. p. 30. That his mother's pregnancy was at first suspected. *ibid.* but that it was pretended, that his body was formed in her womb by the Spirit of God. Or, as he elsewhere expresses it, produced by a divine operation. p. 30. And that to remove the carpenter's prejudice, an angel appeared to him, to inform him of this. p. 266. That when he was born, a Star appeared in the East to certain Magi, who came to adore him. p. 31. 45. The consequence of which was the slaughter of the infants by order of Herod, hoping thereby to destroy Jesus, and prevent his reign. p. 45. But that his parents were warned by an angel to fly into Egypt, to preserve his life, as if his Father could not have protected him at home. p. 51. and 266. and that he continued in Egypt for a while, where, he says, he had an opportunity of learning magick. p. 22."

"He farther represents it, as pretended in those books, that when Jesus was washed by John, the appearance of a dove descended upon him, and that a voice was heard from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God. p. 31. and 105. That he was vexed by a temptation, and the assaults of an evil spirit. 303.\* He calls Christ himself

\* The words of Celsus, to which Dr. Doddridge refers, are these: Ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ παῖς

himself a carpenter. p. 300. and insults his mean life, lurking from place to place. p. 47. gathering up ten or twelve poor men, publicans, and men that used the sea, of scandalous characters, and represents Christ as a beggar. p. 47. †† that he was sometimes hungry and thirsty. p. 55. speaks of his being rejected by many that heard him, and hints, though not very expressly, at an attempt to throw him down a precipice. p. 298."

"He grants, that he wrought miracles, and particularly, that he cured some sick people, raised some that were dead, and multiplied some loaves: but speaks of others doing the like. p. 53. He also expressly mentions his curing the lame and the blind: and his raising the dead is mentioned a second time. 87. He lampoons the expression, *thy faith hath saved thee*. p. 8."\*

"He hints at several things concerning the doctrine of Christ, and the manner of his preaching, taken especially from St. Matthew's account of his sermon on the mount, particularly, that he promised, that his followers should inherit the earth: that if any strike them on one cheek, they should turn the other. p. 343. and 370. that he declared, no man can serve two masters. p. 380. and would have his disciples learn from the birds of the air, and the lillies of the field, not to be excessively carefull about food and raiment. p. 343. He also refers to some other discourses of Christ, as his saying, that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to be saved. 286. and 288."

"He observes, that Jesus, however, was not generally attended

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παῖς ἄρα ἠττάται ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου καὶ κολαζόμενος ὑπ' αὐτῆ, διδάσκει καὶ ἡμᾶς τῶν ἐπὶ τῶν κολάσεων καταφρονεῖν. L. 6. p. 303. *Can- tab. num. 42. p. 663. Bened.*

†† *The passages of Celsus, to which Dr. Doddridge here refers, may be seen, transcribed above, at p. 291. 292.*

\* That is not exact, owing, perhaps, not to the author, but to the transcriber. The original is: *χρῆσθαι τῷ; Μὴ ἐξέταξες ἀλλὰ πίσεισόν. καὶ Ἡ πίσίς σου σώσει σε. And see here, at p. 283.*

A. D. 176. to, and that he denounced woes upon his hearers for their obstinate infidelity. p. 107."

"He also says, that his disciples in their writings pretend, that he foretold all things, which he was to suffer. p. 67. and his resurrection. p. 93. and likewise, that deceivers would come, and work miracles, and speaks of the author of these wicked works by the name of Satan. p. 89."

"He objects, that Jesus withdrew himself from those who sought to put him to death. p. 62. and yet afterwards did not avoid death, knowing it was to come. p. 70. He speaks of his eating the flesh of a lamb. p. 340. and that he foretold to his disciples, they would give him up to his enemies, thereby making them wicked, though they were the companions of his table. p. 72."

"That before his sufferings, he prayed in these words: *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away.* p. 75. That he was betrayed by his disciples, though robbers are faithfull to their leaders. p. 62. and 66. That none of his disciples dared to suffer for him. p. 86. and that he professed to undergo his sufferings in obedience to his Father. p. 75. and said, that *these things ought to happen.* p. 332."

"That he was denied by one, who knew him to be God. p. 71. to whom, as well as to the traitor, he had foretold, what he would do. p. 72."

"It is intimated, that he spoke of coming again with an heavenly host. p. 337."

"He speaks of Jesus, as ignominiously bound. p. 282. as scourged. p. 79. as crowned with thorns, with a reed in his hand, and arrayed in a scarlet robe, and as condemned. p. 81. as having gall given him to drink, when he was led away to punishment. p. 174. as shamefully treated in the sight of the whole world. p. 282. as distended on the crosse. p. 82. He derides him for not exerting his divinity to punish those outrages. p. 81. as taking no vengeance on his enemies. p. 404. as incapable to deliver himself, and not delivered by his Father  
ther



ther in his extremity. p. 41. and as greedily drinking gall and vinegar through impatience of thirst. p. 82. and 340."

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"He observes, it was pretended, that when Jesus expired upon the crosse, there was darknesse, and an earthquake. p. 94. that when he arose, he needed an angel to remove the stone of the sepulchre, though he was said to be the Son of God. p. 266. And according to some, *one*, according to others, *two* angels came to the sepulchre, to inform the women of his resurrection. p. 266. That after his resurrection, he did not appear to his enemies, p. 98. but first to a woman, whom he had dispossessed. p. 94. and 104. that he appeared to a few of his disciples, shewing them the marks of crucifixion, and appeared and disappeared on a sudden. p. 94. &c. and 104. And he says. We take these things from your own writings, to wound you with your own weapons. p. 106."

"Beside all these circumstances, produced from the Gospels, he speaks of Christ's pretending, that he should come again, to burn the wicked, and to receive the rest to eternal life with himself. p. 175. He refers to the Christian doctrine, of the fall of the angels, and their being reserved in bonds, under the earth. p. 266."

"It is observable, that (††) nothing is quoted by him from the Acts, in his whole book. Nor does he name St. Paul. But he quotes his epistles, particularly these words from the epistle to the Galatians. iv. 14. *The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* p. 273. which \*† Origen says, is all that he had taken from St. Paul. However, he has also these words of 1. Cor. iii. 29. *the wisdom of this world is foolishnesse with God.* p. 283. and *an idol is nothing.*

†† I think, that Celsus was acquainted with the book of the Acts. And I would entreat the reader to observe the passages quoted from him above, at p. 310. 312. 320.

\*† Origen's words are these. p. 273.  
f. τὸ γὰρ μόνον ἀπὸ τῆ Παύλου ἔσκει μεμνη-

μονεμένωι ὁ Κέλσος. But I suppose that Origen is not to be understood strictly, but rather in this manner: "That Celsus had seldom quoted Paul: and now took notice of that expression with a design to expose it, so far as he was able."

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*thing.* 1. Cor. viii. 4. p. 293. But it is observable, that in the first of these quotations Celsus reproacheth the Christians with their many divisions: and yet says, that however they differed, they agreed in using that expression. He seems also p. 242. expressly to refer to 1. Cor. xv. 51. 52. and 1. Theff. iv. 15. . . 17. when he says, that the Christians expected, that they only shall escape in the burning of the world, and that not only they who are alive when it happens, but those also who have been a long time dead.”

“ Upon the whole there are in Celsus about eighty quotations from the books of the New Testament, or references to them, of which Origen has taken notice. And whilst he argues from them sometimes in a very perverse and malicious manner, he still takes it for granted, as the foundation of his argument, that whatever absurdities could be fastened upon any words, or actions of Christ, recorded in the Evangelists, it would be a valid objection against Christianity: thereby in effect assuring us, not only that such a book did really exist, but that it was universally received by Christians in those times, as credible and divine. Who can forbear adoring the depth of divine wisdom, in laying such a firm foundation for our faith in the Gospel-Historie, in the writings of one, who was so inveterate an enemy to it, and so indefatigable in his attempts to overthrow it!”

“ To conclude. Celsus does not appear to have founded any single objection against Christianity upon any of the spurious Gospels, Acts, or Revelations: Which, considering his malice on the one hand, and the many foolish, and exceptionable things to be found in them, on the other, seems to be a good argument, that he never saw them. Else he had hardly candour enough to forbear pleading such arguments, as they might have afforded him: even though he had known that the Christians did not esteem them of equal authority with those, which he has so furiously, but at the same time so impotently assaulted.”

So far Dr. Doddridge.

I shall

I shall now take another summarie of the argument of Celsus, from Dr. John Leland of Dublin, in his *Answer to Christianity as old as the Creation*. Vol. ii. ch. v. p. 150. . . . 154. omitting for the most part the references to the pages.

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“Celsus, a most bitter enemy of Christianity, who lived in the second centurie, produces many passages out of the Gospels. He represents Jesus to have lived but a few years agoe. He mentions his being born of a virgin, the angels appearing to Joseph on occasion of Mary’s being with child, the star that appeared at his birth, the wise men that came to worship him, when an infant, and Herod’s massacring the children, Joseph’s fleeing with the child into Egypt by the admonition of an angel, the Holy Ghost’s descending on Jesus like a dove, when he was baptised by John, and the voice from heaven, declaring him to be *the Son of God*, his going about with his disciples, his healing the sick, and lame, and raising the dead, his foretelling his own sufferings, and resurrection, his being betrayed and forsaken by his own disciples, his suffering, both of his own accord, and in obedience to his heavenly Father, his grief and trouble, and his praying, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*, the ignominious treatment he met with, the robe that was put upon him, the crown of thorns, the reed put into his hand, his drinking vinager and gall, and his being scourged and crucified: His being seen after his resurrection by a fanatical woman, (as he calls her, meaning Mary Magdalen) and by his own companions and disciples, his shewing them his hands that were pierced, the marks of his punishment. He also mentions the angel’s being seen at his sepulchre, and that some said, it was one angel, others, that it was two: by which he hints at the seeming variation in the accounts given of it by the Evangelists.”

“It is true, he mentions all these things only with a design to ridicule and expose them. But they furnish us with an uncontested proof, that the Gospels were then extant. Accordingly, he expressly tells the Christians: *These things we have produced out of your own writings.*

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writings. p. 106. And he all along supposeth them to have been written by Christ's own disciples, that lived, and conversed with him: though he pretends, they feigned many things for the honour of their master. p. 69. 70. And he pretends, *that he could tell many other things relating to Jesus, beside those things that were written of him by his own disciples: but that he willingly passed them by.* p. 67. We may conclude from his own expressions, both that he was sensible, that these accounts were written by Christ's own disciples, (and indeed he never pretends to contest this :) and that he was not able to produce any contrarie accounts, to invalidate them, as he certainly would have done, if it had been in his power: since no man ever wrote with greater virulence against Christianity, than he. And indeed, how was it possible, for *ten or eleven publicans and boatmen*, as he calls Christ's disciples by way of contempt. p. 47. to have imposed such things on the world, if they had not been true, so as to persuade such vast multitudes to embrace a new and despised religion, contrarie to all their prejudices, and interests, and to believe in one that had been crucified?"

“ There are several other things, which shew, that Celsus was acquainted with the Gospels. He produces several of our Saviour's sayings, there recorded, as *that it is easer for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God: that to him, who smites us on one cheek, we must turn the other: that it is not possible to serve two masters: his precepts against thoughtfulness for to-morrow, by a comparison drawn from crows and lillies: his foretelling, that false prophets should arise, and work wonders: his saying, Woe unto you, . . . &c.* He mentions also some passages of the Apostle Paul, such as these: *The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. The wisdom of men is foolishnesse with God: an idol is nothing.*”

The use I would make of all this is, that it appears here with an uncontested evidence by the testimonie of one of the most malicious and virulent adversaries, the Christian Religion ever had, and who

was

was also a man of considerable parts and learning, that the writings of the Evangelists were extant in his time. Which was in the next centurie to that in which the Apostles lived: and that those accounts were written by Christ's own Disciples, and consequently that they were written in the very age, in which the facts there related, were done, and when therefore it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have convicted them of falshood, if they had not been true." So far, that learned author.

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*A third Summarie of the Argument of Celsus.*

Once more, Dr. Sherlock, or whoever is the ingenious author of *the Evidence of the Resurrection cleared up*, has these following observations, at p. 19. and 20.

"For Celsus lived at no great distance from the apostolic age, at a time, when all religions were tolerated, but the Christian: when no evidence was stifled, no books destroyed, but the Christian. And yet Celsus labored under the same want of evidence, as Woolston, and his auxiliaries, and had only the Gospels to search (as Origen more than once observes,) for evidence against the Gospel. A strong proof, that there never had been any books, of any credit in the world, that questioned the gospel-facts, when so spitefull, and so artfull an adversarie, as Celsus, made no use of them."

"Celsus admits the truth of Christ's miracles. The difference between him and Origen lyes in the manner of accounting for them: the one ascribing them to the power of God, the other to the power of magick. So that, if the Considerer will stand to the evidence of his own witnessse, the question will not be, Whether the miracles are true in fact, (for that is granted on both sides) but whether the truth of the miracles infers the divine authority of the performer. Now can it be supposed, that Celsus would have admitted the miracles of Christ, as real facts, had he not been compelled to it by the universal consent of all men in the age he lived?"

"The truth is, that the objections of Celsus are preserved, and  
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preserved in his own language. Origen's Answer is not a general reply to Celsus, but a minute examination of all his objections, even of those, which appeared to Origen most frivolous. For his friend Ambrosius, to whom he dedicates the work, desired him to omit nothing. In order to this examination, Origen states the objections of Celsus in his own words. And, that nothing might escape him, he takes them in the order, in which Celsus had placed them. Celsus, then, as it happens, is safe. And the Considerer needs not to lament over him any more."

The fragments of the work of Celsus are, undoubtedly, of great importance. I have endeavored to do justice to them, not only by my own large extracts, but likewise by these observations and summaries of three learned men: hoping, that thereby my defects may be supplied, and that some things may be better expressed by them, than they have been by me.



CHAP.

## C H A P. XIX.

## L U C I A N, of Samofata.

- I. *His Time, and Works.* II. *A Passage from Him concerning Peregrinus, in which is a copious testimony to the Christians of that time, with Remarks.* III. *His Account of Alexander, who set up an Oracle in Paphlagonia, with Remarks.* IV. *Passages from his True Historie.* V. *Extracts from the Dialogue, called Philopatris, ascribed to Him, with Remarks.*

I. **L**UCIAN (*a*) was a native of Samofata in Syria. According to Suidas (*b*) he flourished in the time of Trajan, and afterwards. But (*c*) that is placing him too early. It is more probable, that (*d*) he was born under Adrian. And he may

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be

(*a*) Vid. Fabric. Bib. Gr. l. 4. c. 16. T. 3. p. 485. Sc. et Lux. Evangel. p. 152. Tillem. L'Emp. M. Aurele art. 20.

(*b*) V. Δουλιανός.

(*c*) Voss. de Hist. Gr. l. 2. cap. 15. et Tillem. ubi supra.

(*d*) "I have taken some pains to adjust the age of Lucian. And from some notes

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be more properly said to have flourished in the reigns of Antonin the Pious, and M. Antonin the Philosopher: which last he survived, as appears from his *Pseudomantis*, where (*e*) he speaks of that Emperor, as already deified.

Some have supposed, that in the later part of his life Lucian was Governour of Egypt. On the other hand, divers learned men (*f*) have shewn, that he was only Register of Alexandria. However, he speaks of that post, (*g*) as both honorable and profitable, and a step to higher preferment, no less than the government of a province. Some have spoken of Lucian, as an apostate from Christianity. But (*b*) there is no sufficient reason to believe, that ever he was a Christian.

Lucian is placed by Cave (*i*) at the year 176. And I shall place him there likewise. Which is some while after writing his *Peregrinus*, and several years before publishing his *Pseudomantis*, another work to be quoted hereafter.

His Account of  
*Peregrinus*.

II. The work to be first quoted by me is a Letter to *Cronius*, concerning the Death of *Peregrinus*, called also *Proteus*: who publicly burnt himself in the sight of all Greece, soon after the Olympic games

of time, which are preserved in his works, I have fixed the 40. year of his age to the 164. year of Christ, the fourth of M. Antoninus: and consequently his birth to the 124. year of Christ, and the eighth of Adrian." *Moyle's Works*, Vol. 2. p. 363. *Diff. upon the age of the Philopatriis*.

(*e*) . . . ἕτε θεός, Μάρκος ἦδη τοῖς Μαρκουάνοισι καὶ Κηάδοις συνεπλέκτο. *Pseud.* p. 775. Vol. i.

(*f*) See *Moyle*, as before, Vol. i. p. 298. et *Valesii Annot. in Euseb. H. E. l. 7. cap. xi.* p. 147. et *Annot. in Marcellin. l. 28.*

cap. i. And *Tillemont*, as before quoted, calls him *Greffier du Prefet d'Egypte*.

(*g*) *Apol. pro mercede conduct.* T. i. p. 491. 492.

(*b*) *Luciani Samosatensis clarum inter sophistas nomen est. quem fidei Christianae fuisse desertorem, misereque perisse, quippe discerptum a canibus, e Suida nonnulli tradiderunt, sed sine suffragio eruditum.* *Tob. Eckhard Non Christian. Testimon. cap. vi. §. ix.* p. 158.

(*i*) *Hist. Lit. T. i.* p. 96.



games were over in the year of our Lord (k) 165. or as others say (l) in the year 169. Not long after which this historie of him was writ by Lucian.

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Peregrinus, according to Lucian's character of him, was a person, who rambled from place to place, and from one sect of philosophie to another. Having been guilty of parricide, and other crimes, as our author says, he was obliged, for a while, to leave his native countrey, and travel abroad. " At (m) which time, as Lucian says, he " learned the wonderfull doctrine of the Christians, by conversing " with their priests and scribes near Palestine. And in a short time " he shewed, they were but children to him. For he was Prophet, " High-priest, Ruler of a synagogue, uniting all offices in himself " alone. Some books he interpreted and explained, others he wrote. " And they spake of him, as a god, and took him for a lawgiver, and " honoured him with the title of master. †† They therefore still " worship that great man, who was crucified in Palestine; because " he introduced into the world this new religion. For this reason

" *Proteus*

(k) *Vid. Pagi ann. 165. n. 3. Basnag. ann. 165. iv. Cleric. ann. 165. vi.*

(l) *Fabric. Bib. Gr. T. 3. p. 500.*

(m) Ὅτεπερ καὶ τὴν θαυμαστὴν σοφίαν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἐξέμαθε, περὶ τὴν Παλαιστίνην τοῖς ἱερέυσιν, καὶ γραμματέουσιν αὐτῶν συγγερόμειος. Καὶ τί γὰρ, ἐν βραχέϊ παιδῆς αὐτὸς ἀπέφηνε, προφήτης, καὶ θιασάρχης, καὶ ξυναγωγεὺς, καὶ πάντα μόνος αὐτὸς ᾤ. Καὶ τῶν βιβλῶν τὰς μὴν ἐξῆρ γείτο, καὶ διεσάφει· πολλὰς δὲ αὐτὸς καὶ ξυνεγράφε· καὶ ὡς θεὸν αὐτὸν ἐκῆνοι ἐδιηγῶντο, καὶ νομοθέτη ἐχρῶντο, καὶ προσήτην ἐπέγραφον. Τὸν μέγαν ἔν ἐκείνῳ ἔτι σέβασιν ἄνθρωπον, τὴν ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ ἀνασκολοπισθέντα, ὅτι καινὴν ταύτην τελέτην εἰσήγαγεν εἰς βίον. *De Mor- te Peregrin. T. i. p. 565. Sc. edit. Graev. Amst. 1687.*

†† I have rendred that paragraph, as it stands in Lucian. But those titles seem

not to belong to Peregrinus. And it may be suspected, that somewhat is wanting hereabout. *Tanaquil Faber*, in his notes upon this place, conjectures, that there were here some expressions injurious to our Saviour, which a Christian copist, more pious than wise, left out. However, of that we cannot be certain. Perhaps, the place is genuine, and pure, as writ by Lucian. But then, here are inaccuracies, owing to ignorance and mistake, or to design and malice. The Christians did not speak of Peregrinus in those high terms. But Lucian, as it seems, magnifies the respect, which the Christians shewed to Peregrinus, the more to expose them to ridicule. See *Fabric. Lux Evangelii. p. 152.*

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“ *Proteus* was taken up, and put into prison: Which very thing was  
 “ of no small service to him afterwards, for giving reputation to his  
 “ impostures, and gratifying his vanity. The Christians were much  
 “ grieved for his imprisonment, and tried all ways to procure his liber-  
 “ ty. Not being able to effect that, they did him all sorts of kind  
 “ offices; and that not in a careless manner, but with the greatest  
 “ assiduity. For even betimes in the morning there would be at the  
 “ prison old women, some widows, and also little orphan children.  
 “ And some of the chief of their men by corrupting the keepers  
 “ would get into prison, and stay the whole night there with him.  
 “ There they had a good supper together, and their sacred discourses.  
 “ And this excellent *Peregrinus* (for so he was still called,) was  
 “ thought by them to be an extraordinarie person, no less than another  
 “ Socrates. Even from the cities of Asia some Christians came to  
 “ him by an order of the body, to relieve, encourage, and comfort  
 “ him. For it is incredible, what expedition they use, when any of  
 “ their friends are known to be in trouble. In a word, they spare  
 “ nothing upon such an occasion. And *Peregrinus*’s chain brought  
 “ him in a good sum of money from them. For these miserable  
 “ men have no doubt but they shall be immortal, and live for  
 “ ever. Therefore they contemn death, and many surrender them-  
 “ selves to sufferings. Moreover (*n*) their first lawgiver has taught  
 “ them, that they are all brethren, when once they have turned,  
 “ and renounced the gods of the Greeks, and worship that master of  
 “ theirs, who was crucified, and engage to live according to his  
 “ laws. They have also a sovereign contempt for all the things of  
 “ this world, and look upon them as common, and trust one an-  
 “ other with them without any particular security. For which rea-  
 “ son any subtle fellow by good management may impose upon this  
 “ simple people, and grow rich among them. But *Peregrinus* was  
 “ set at liberty by the Governour of Syria, who was a favourer  
 of

(*n*) Ἐπειτα δὲ ὁ νομοθέτης ὁ πρῶτος. κ. λ. P. 567.

“ of philosophie. Who perceiving his madnesse, and that he had  
 “ a mind to dye, in order to get a name, let him out, not judging  
 “ him so much as worthie of punishment.” “ Then, as our author  
 “ says, Peregrinus returned to his native place, *Parium*, in hopes  
 “ of recovering his father’s estate. But meeting with difficulties, he  
 “ made over to the Parians all the estate he might expect from his  
 “ father. Who then extolled him as the greatest of Philosophers,  
 “ a lover of his countrey, and another Diogenes, or Crates. “ He  
 “ then went abroad again, well supplied by the Christians with all  
 “ travelling charges, by whom also he was accompanied. And he  
 “ lived in great plenty. Thus it went with him for some while.  
 “ At (*o*) length they parted, having given them also some offense, by  
 “ eating, as I suppose, some things not allowed of by them.”

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I now make remarks upon this passage.

1. Peregrinus is mentioned by many authors. But I do not recollect any remaining writer, either Heathen or Christian, beside Lucian, who has said any thing of his Christianity.

His death is mentioned by (*p*) Tertullian, and (*q*) by Athenagoras, who likewise says he had a statue erected to him at *Parium*, his native place situated in Mysia, not far from Lampſacus, which was supposed to give out oracles.

Several Heathen authors mention him, and speak honorably of him. Aulus Gellius (*r*) saw him at Athens, and was acquainted with

(*o*) . . . ἄρθη γάρ τε, ὡς διμαί, ἐσθίων τῶν ἀπορρήτων αὐτοῖς. *P.* 570.

(*p*) Minus fecerunt philosophi, Heraclitus, qui se bubulo stercore oblitum exussit, item Empedocles, qui in ignes Aetnaei montis dissiluit: et Peregrinus, qui non olim se rogo immisit. *Tertull. ad Mart. cap. 4 p. 157.*

(*q*) Καὶ ὁ τῆ Πρωτέως (τῆτον δ' ἐκ ἀγνω-  
 εῖτε εἰς φαντα ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὸ πῦρ περὶ τὴν Ὀλυμ-  
 πῶν) ὁ μὲν καὶ οὗτος λέγεται χρηματίζεν.

*Athenag. p. 30. Par. §. 26. p. 304. Bened.*

(*r*) Philosophum nomine Peregrinum, cui postea cognomentum Proteus factum est, virum gravem, atque constantem vidimus, quum Athenis essemus, diversantem in quodam tugurio extra urbem. Quumque ad eum frequenter ventitarem, multa hercle dicere eum utiliter, et honeste audivimus. &c. *Noel. Att. l. 12. cap. xi. Vid. et l. 8. cap. 3.*

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with him. He calls him a famous Philosopher, commends him, and ascribes to him some good maxims. But he says nothing of his death. Probably *Peregrinus*, called also *Proteus*, was still living, when he wrote.

Ammianus Marcellinus (*r*) mentions his death, and calls him an illustrious Philosopher.

Philostratus (*s*) who also mentions his death, calls him a *Cynic*. And that he maintained that character, appears also from Lucian, who in the account of his death often (*t*) rallies him as a celebrated Cynic. And when Lucian ridiculed his vanity, he was (*u*) like to be torn to pieces by the Cynics, who also were spectators of that transaction.

Peregrinus (*x*) was an old man, when he threw himself into the flames in the year 165. or 169. I apprehend, that the time of his Christianity was the early part of his life : and that his imprisonment upon that account, must (*y*) have been in the time of Trajan, or Adrian at the latest. He was best known by the name of *Proteus*. But, as Lucian says, whilst he was with the Christians, he was called *Peregrinus*. And it is manifest from all the remaining writers, who mention him, that he sustained the character of a Philosopher, and a Cynic. It is probable therefore, that in the greatest, and the latest part of his life, he was a mere Heathen Philosopher. And it is

(*r*) Peregrinum illum imitatus Protea cognomine, philosophum clarum : qui cum mundo digredi statuisset, Olympiae quinquennali certamine, sub Graeciae conspectu totius, adscenso rogo, quem ipse construxit, flammis absumtus est. *Amm.* l. 29. cap. i.

(*s*) . . . καὶ τὰ πρὸς τὸν κύνα Πρωτέα λεχθέντα, ποτὲ ὑπ' αὐτῆς Αθήνησιν. *Phil. de Vit. Sophistar.* l. 2. n. i. §. 13. p. 563.

(*t*) Ἀλλ' ὅπῃταν Πρωτέος Κυνηκῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος ἀπάντων. . . .

Ἀλλ' ὅπῃταν Κυνηκὸς πολυάνομος ἐς φλόγα πολλὴν, κ. λ. *De Morte Peregr.* p. 579.

(*u*) Ἀλλ' ὀλίγε δέειν, ὑπὸ τῶν κυνηκῶν ἐγώ σοι διεισπιάσθην. *Ib.* p. 560.

(*x*) . . . ὅσοι ἐθαύμαζον τὴν ἀπόνοιαν τῆ γέροντος. *Ibid.* p. 560.

(*y*) See Tillem. *Persecution sous Trajan.* art. vii. *M. E. T.* 2. and *M. Aurele.* art. 29. *H. E. T.* 2.

is reasonable, that a man's denomination should be taken from that part of his life, which was best known. Lucian himself allows, that after having been some while among the Christians, he and they parted.

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2. Having observed all these things relating to the historie of Peregrinus, I proceed to some other remarks.

Here is an authentic testimonie to some of the main facts and principles of Christianity from a man of free sentiments, not long after the middle of the second centurie, who knew the world, and was well acquainted with mankind: That the founder of the Christian Religion was crucified in Palestine: That he was the great master of the Christians, and the first author of the principles received by them: That those men, called Christians, had peculiarly strong hopes of immortal life, and a great contempt for this world, and it's enjoyments: That they courageously endured many afflictions upon account of their principles, and sometimes surrendered themselves to sufferings. Honesty and probity prevailed so much among them, that they trusted each other without security. Their master had earnestly recommended to all his followers mutual love: by which also they were much distinguished. And their assiduity in relieving and comforting one another, when under affliction, was known to all men. Nor is it, I presume, any disparagement to them, that they were imposed upon by *Peregrinus*, who was admired by many others: and, perhaps, was not so bad a man, as Lucian insinuates.

Another thing may be observed, that from his manner of speaking it may be well argued, that Lucian did not know the reason, why *Peregrinus* and the Christians parted.

I think, it ought also to be observed, that Lucian, carrying on his drollerie, misrepresents and aggravates several things. It was before (z) hinted, that the Christians did not consider *Peregrinus* as a god.

There

(z) See before note (++) p. 357.

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There are divers other loose and inaccurate expressions. He says afterwards, that the Christians looked upon Peregrinus, as *another Socrates*. But that is a way of thinking ascribed to them without reason. Many of them might think charitably and honorably, of Socrates. But every Christian was superior to him. So likewise, when Lucian says, that *Peregrinus was Prophet, High-priest, and Ruler of a synagogue, uniting all offices in himself*, he speaks inaccurately: thus joyning together Judaism and Christianity. And as Lucian indulged himself in a loose and improper manner of speaking, I cannot but think it to be a groundless deduction, which some have made from these expressions, that Peregrinus had been constituted a Bishop among the Christians.

I proceed.

*His Account of Alexander*

III. Lucian's *Alexander, or Pseudomantis*, as before hinted, was not writ before the year 180. in the reign of Commodus: forasmuch as here he gives Mark Antonin the title of god, or *deified*. It is a (a) Letter to Celsus, the Epicurean Philosopher, containing the historie of an impostor, named *Alexander*, who in the time of the forementioned Antonin gave out oracles in Paphlagonia, and had vast success in his design: his Oracle having been in great repute for some while in that, and neighbouring countreys, and even at Rome itself.

“ But, says Lucian, when some, who had more wit than others,  
 “ awaking as out of a drunken fit, that had robbed them of all their  
 “ senses, made head against him, chiefly men of the Epicurean  
 “ sect, and the secret arts of his contrivance began to be discerned in  
 “ several places; he struck a kind of terrour among them, saying,  
 “ that (b) *Pontus was full of atheists and Christians, who had the as-*  
 “ *surance,*

(a) *Lucian. Vol. i. p. 746. &c.*

(b) . . . ἐκφέρει φέβητρόν τι ἐπ' αὐτὸς, λέγων, ἀθέων ἐμπεπλήσθαι, καὶ Χριστιανῶν τὸν

Πόντον· οἱ περὶ αὐτῶν τολμᾶσι τὰ κόκιστα βλασφημεῖν. κ. λ. *Ibid. p. 762. 763.*

“*surance to raise slanderous stories against him.* And he excited the  
 “*people not to spare them, but to drive them away with stones, if*  
 “*they would not lose the favour of the god.*” [Æsculapius.] . . .  
 “*He (c) also appointed rites of initiation, like those at Athens, and*  
 “*a holy feast of three days continuance. And on (d) the first day of*  
 “*the solemnity proclamation was made, as at Athens: If any athe-*  
 “*ist, or Christian, or Epicurean, be come hither, as a spie upon these*  
 “*mysteries, let him depart with all speed. And a happy initiation to*  
 “*those who believe in God.* Then they thrust the people away, he  
 “*going before, and saying: Away with the Christians.* Then the  
 “*multitude cried out again: Away with the Epicureans.*”

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It is honorable to the Christians, to be here mentioned with Epicureans, by a favorer of the Epicurean sentiments. It evidently appears hence, that the followers of Jesus were now well known in the world by the name of Christians: and that they were then numerous in Pontus, and Paphlagonia, and the neighbouring countreys: and finally, that they were formidable to cheats and impostors.

IV. I shall now cite a passage taken from the second book of what our author calls *True Historie*, but is indeed all fiction, as is acknowledged by himself at the beginning of the first book.

*Passages  
in his  
True Hi-  
storie.*

“*He and his companions having travelled a great way (e) came*  
 “*to the Island of the Blessed, where Rbadamanthus of Crete reign-*  
 “*ed. Soon after they came ashore, they were taken into custodie,*  
 “*and were bound with roses, there being no other chains in that*  
 “*countrey. Which (f) too fell off of themselves, when they were*

A a a 2

“ set

(c) *Ib.* p. 770.

(d) Καὶ ἐν μὲν τῇ πρώτῃ, παρορρησις ἦν ἄτ-  
 περ Ἀθήνησι, τοιοῦτη. Εἰ τις ἄθεος, ἢ Χρισ-  
 τιστιανός, ἢ Ἐπικυρίσιος, ἢ καὶ κατὰ σκοπὸν τῶν  
 ὀργῶν, φευγέτω. . . . Καὶ ὁ μὲν ἠγάθη λέ-  
 γων· Ἐξω Χριστιανός. Τὸ δὲ πᾶν ἄπαν  
 ἐπεφθέγγετο· Ἐξω Ἐπικυρίσιος. κ. λ. *Ibid.*  
 p. 770.

(e) Παρ' ἑν δὴ καθ' ὄδον ἀκηκάαμεν, ὡς ἢ  
 μὲν νῆσος ἐκ τῶν μακάρων προσαγορευομένων·  
 ἄρχαι δὲ ὁ Κρήης Ραδάμανθος. *Ver. Hist. l.*  
*2. T. i. p. 670.*

(f) *Ib.* p. 671. π.

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“ set at liberty. “ There (*f*) were then several causes to be tried  
 “ before the King of the countrey. Theirs was the fourth in order.  
 “ When their cause came on, they were asked, how they came to  
 “ be there, when they were yet living. When they had related their  
 “ voyage, they were ordered to withdraw. The Judge having con-  
 “ sulted with his assessors and counsellours, determined, that after  
 “ death they should be punished for their curiosity, and presumpti-  
 “ on. For the present they might converse with the heroes of the  
 “ countrey: but the term of their sojourning there might not exceed  
 “ seven months. Then they were conducted into the city, which  
 “ is all gold, surrounded by a wall of emerald. There are seven  
 “ gates made of the wood of cinnamon. The pavement of the ci-  
 “ ty, and the ground within the wall is ivory. The temples of all  
 “ the gods are built of the Beryl-stone. The altars in them are very  
 “ large, consisting of one stone only, which is the amethyst, upon  
 “ which they offer hecatombs. Round the city flows a river of the  
 “ finest oyl, the breadth of which is a hundred royal cubits, the  
 “ depth such as is most convenient for swimming in. Their baths  
 “ are large houses of glasse, kept warm with fires made of cinna-  
 “ mon. Instead of water they have warm dew in basins. Their  
 “ dresse is purple, made of the finest spiders webs. None grow old  
 “ here: but they remain as they were, when they arrived. They  
 “ (*g*) have no night, nor altogether bright day: but such light as  
 “ precedes the rising of the sun. Nor have they more than one sea-  
 “ son of the year. For it is always spring, and the west is the only  
 “ wind. The countrey abounds with all sorts of flowers and plants,  
 “ which are always flourishing. Their (*h*) vines bear twelve times  
 “ in the year, yielding fruit every month. Apples and pomgranates,  
 “ as

Rev. xx.  
10. . 27.Rev. xxii.  
2.

(*f*) . . . ἐντυγχάνομεν τοῖς φερούσι, καὶ περι-  
 πόλοις. Ὅτι δὲ δῆσαντες ἡμᾶς ῥοδίνους σιφάνο-  
 υς . . . ἀνήγον ἐῖς τὴν ἀρχοντα. *Ibid.*

(*g*) . . . ἢ μὴν ἑδὲ νῦξ παρ' αὐτοῖς γίγνε-  
 ται ἑδὲ ἡμέρα πάνυ λαμπρά. *P. 672.*

(*h*) Ἄι μὲν γὰρ ἀμαελοὶ δωδεκάφοροι εἰσιν,  
 καὶ κατὰ μῆνα ἕκαστου καρποφοροῦσι. *Ib.*



“ as they say, bear thirteen times in the year, yielding fruit twice in  
 “ the month, called by them *Minous*. Instead of corn the stalks  
 “ have ready-prepared loaves at their tops, like mushrooms. There  
 “ are in the city three-hundred and sixty five fountains of water, and  
 “ as many of honey, and five hundred fountains of oyle, but less:  
 “ seven rivers of milk, and eight of wine.”

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More follows, containing a description of the groves and fields round about the city. But I am not disposed to transcribe any more. They who please, may consider, whether here are any allusions to the xxi. and xxii. chapters of the book of the Revelations. Lucian's description of this island, and the chief city of it, falls so far short of St. John's description of his new Jerusalem, that some may think, he could not have so fine a model before him. However, let all judge, as they see fit.

V. With Lucian's works is joyned (*i*) a dialogue, called *Philopatris*. Bp. Bull (*k*) and some others (*l*) have been inclined to think it Lucian's, or however writ about his time, in the reign of Mark Antonin. Many others are persuaded, that it is not his, nor writ in that reign. But there is great diversity of opinion among these, concerning the true age of it.

*Extracts  
from the  
Philopa-  
tris.*

Mr. Moyle (*m*) thinks it was writ in the time of *Diocletian*, in the year of Christ, 302. and 23 years before the Council of Nice. Dodwell (*n*) varied in his opinion, and in the end placed it in the year of Christ 261. and the eighth of *Gallienus*. Others (*o*) have argued for the third of *Aurelian*, the year of Christ, 272. And Gesner (*p*)  
is

(*i*) *Tom. 2. p. 763. &c. Graev.*

(*k*) *Def. Fidei Nicen. sect. 2. cap. iv. p. 69. al. 73.*

(*l*) *Et Philopatris, si ejus sit, saltem scriptoris coaevi. Cav. H. L. p. 96. Vid. et Fabric. Bib. Gr. Tom. 3. p. 504. et Lux Evangelii. p. 153.*

(*m*) *See his Dissertation upon the age of the Philopatris. Lett. i. Vol. i. p. 292.*

(*n*) *See in the same Dissertation. p. 302. 314. 348. 349.*

(*o*) *Vid. Heuman. Poecile, sive Epistolae Miscellanae. Tom. i. p. 438. &c.*

(*p*) *J. M. Gesneri Diss. de aetate et auctore Philop. Ad calcem Tom. iii. Lucian. Opp. Amst 1743.*

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is of opinion, that it was writ in the time of the Emperour *Julian*, after the midle of the fourth centurie. None of these learned men think the *Philopatris* to be a work of *Lucian*.

I am not able to determine the time, when it was writ. Nor do I think it needfull to be much concerned about it. I do not think it to be *Lucian's*. The stile is very different from his, and vastly inferior to it. Some other reasons may offer by and by in our observations upon it. But, as the writer was a Heathen, and it is joynd with the other works of *Lucian*, I speak of it in this place.

Says Mr. Moyle: "It (*q*) is a dialogue between *Critias* and *Triephton*: the first a professed Heathen, the other an Epicurean, personating a Christian. The design of it is, partly to represent Christians, as a sect of men disaffected to government, and dangerous to civil society: partly to expose their opinions, as the Trinity, the creation of the world, with several other articles of our faith."

"*Triephton* meets *Critias*, who by his countenance appears greatly indisposed. And being asked the reason *Critias* tells him, he (*r*) had been where he had heard a strange discourse: and (*s*) that the things, which he had heard that day, from those execrable sophists, had most surprizingly affected him. Afterwards, he offers to swear by Jupiter, and Apollo, and other deities, which oaths *Triephton* rejects. By whom then shall I swear, says *Critias*. *Triephton* answers: "By (*t*) the most High God, great, immortal, celestial, Son of the Father, the Spirit proceeding from the Father, one out of three, and three out of one. These do you think to be Jupiter, him do you esteem to be God. *Crit.* You teach me numbers.

(*q*) *As before*, p. 285. 286.

(*r*) Ω τριεφθῶν, μέγαν τινα, κ' ἠπορημένον λόγον ἀκήκοα. *Philop. Lucian. T. 2. p. 764.*

(*s*) Ἄ γὰρ ἀκήκοα τήμερον παρὰ τῶν τρισκαταράτων ἐκείνων σοφιστῶν, μετὰ μὲν ἐξάγκωσέ με τὴν υἱοδύ. *P. 765.*

(*t*) Καὶ τίνα ἐπαμύσομαι γε. . . Τριεφθόνοντα Θεόν, μέγαν, ἀμβροτον, ἠρανώνα υἱὸν πατρὸς, πνεῦμα ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, ἓν ἐκ τριῶν, κ' ἐξ ἑνὸς τρία. Ταῦτα νομιζεζήνα, τὸν δ' ἠγῶ Θεόν. *P. 770. in.*

“ numbers. That is an arithmetical oath. . . . I do not know what  
 “ you mean. One three, three one. *Triepb.* Hold your peace. You  
 “ are not to measure the steps of flees. I will teach you what the  
 “ universe is, who was before all things, and what is the system of  
 “ the universe. For it is but the other day, that I was as ignorant,  
 “ as yourself. But (*t*) when the Galilean, half-bald, long nosed,  
 “ who travelled through the air to the third heaven, and there learn-  
 “ ed the most extraordinarie things, came to me, he renewed us by  
 “ water, he introduced us into the regions of the blessed, and re-  
 “ deemed us from the regions of the wicked. And if you will heark-  
 “ en to me, I will make you likewise a man indeed. . . Soon after this  
 “ *Triepbon* tells *Critias* of the creation, and other things in a ludi-  
 “ crous way. By a word, he dispelled the darknesse, as the slow-  
 “ tongued writer assures us, and founded the earth upon the waters.  
 “ He stretched out the heavens, formed the fixed stars, and ordered  
 “ the course of things, which you worship for Gods. The earth he  
 “ adorned with flowers. Man (*u*) he brought out of things that were  
 “ not. And he is in heaven, beholding the just and the unjust, and  
 “ writes in books the actions of all, and will accordingly render to  
 “ all in the day that he has appointed. After other things, *Critias*  
 “ says: Wherefore (*x*) *Triepbon*, I entreat you to say nothing more  
 “ of the fates: though with your master You should be taken up,  
 “ and admitted to unspeakable mysteries. Afterwards *Triepbon*  
 “ says: Do not you see, how innaccurate, and ambiguous and un-  
 “ certain, all the sayings of the poets are. Wherefore lay aside all  
 “ those things, that (*y*) you may be enrolled in the celestial books  
 “ of

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2. Cor.  
xii. 2.

Gen. i.  
and ii.

Rev. xx.  
Aets xviii.  
3<sup>1</sup>.

2. Cor.  
xii. 1. . .  
4<sup>1</sup>.

Rev. xv.  
12. 15<sup>2</sup>.

(*t*) Ἦνίκα δέ μοι Γαλιλαῖος ἐνέτυχεν, ἀνα-  
 φαλαντίας, ἐπίρρινος, ἐς τρίτου ἑρανὸν ἀεροβα-  
 τήσας, καὶ τὰ κάλλινα ἐκμεμαθηκώς, δι' ὕδα-  
 τος ἡμᾶς ἀνεκαίνισεν, ἐς τὰ μακάραν ἵχνια πα-  
 ρεισάδευσε. . . . κ. λ. P. 770.

(*u*) Ἀνθρώπων ἐκ μὴ ὄντων ἐς τὸ εἶναι πα-  
 ρήγαγεν. Καὶ ἔστιν ἐν ἑρανῷ, πλέτων δι-  
 καίως τε κἀδίκως, καὶ ἐν βίβλοις τὰς πράξεις ἀ-

πογραφόμενος. Αναποδώσει δὲ πᾶσιν, ἢν ἡ-  
 μέραν αὐτὸς ἀνετέλατο. P. 771.

(*x*) ὡσε, ὡ Τριεπῶν, διὰ τῆτο μηδὲν προσ-  
 θεῖναι περὶ τῶν μοιρῶν ἐπιλήσις, εἰ καὶ τάχα-  
 πεδάριστος ἐγεγόνεις μετὰ τῆ διδασκαλῆς, καὶ τὰ  
 ἀπορρήτα ἐμυθήσῃς. P. 772.

(*y*) . . . ὡς καὶ σὲ ἐν ταῖς ἐπεκρανίαις βίβλοις·  
 τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀπογράφοντα. P. 773.

A. D. 176. “ of the righteous. *Crit.* But tell me, *Triepbon*, are the affairs of  
 “ the Scythians also registered in heaven? *Triepb.* All. (z) For  
 “ Chrestus has been among the nations. [Or, as others understand  
 “ this place: Yes, (a), all, provided there is any good man among the  
 “ nations.] *Crit.* There must be a multitude, of scribes in heaven,  
 “ according to your account. *Triepb.* I (b) pray, forbear your jests,  
 “ and say nothing contemptuous of the dextrous God: but become  
 “ a catechumen, and be persuaded by me, if you have a mind to  
*Psal. civ.* “ live forever. Since he has stretched out the heavens like a curtain,  
 2. 3. “ and founded the earth upon water, and produced man out of no-  
 “ thing, what is there wonderfull in his registering the actions of all  
 “ men? Afterwards *Triepbon* desires *Critias* (c) to give him an ac-  
 “ count of what he had heard in the assemblie of the Christians, and  
 “ which had so discomposed him. *Critias* answers: By (d) the  
 “ Son out of the Father, it shall never be done. *Triepb.* Do, tell  
 “ me, receiving from the Spirit the power of speech. *Critias* at  
 “ length tells him, what a beggarly, sorrowfull companie of people  
 “ he had met with: insinuates their disaffection to the government,  
 “ and that they wished for bad news, and delighted in public cala-  
 “ mities. Some (e) of them spoke of their fasting ten whole days  
 “ without eating. . . and of spending whole nights in singing hymns.  
 “ *Triepbon* (f) then bids him to have done with those stories, and  
 “ begin with the prayer from the Father, adding at the end the  
 “ hymn

(z) Πάντα, εἰ τύχοι γε χρησὸς καὶ ἐν ἔθνε-  
 σι. *Ibid*

(a) Et omnes quidem, si modo bonum  
 aliquem esse inter gentes contingat. *Conf.*  
*J. M. Gesneri Diss. de auctore et aetate*  
*Philop. § 21. p. 717.*

(b) Ἐυσέμει, καὶ μηδὲν εἰπῆς φλαυῖρον Θεῷ  
 δεξιῷ. *P. 773.*

(c) Ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ τὸ θαυμάσιον ἐκείνο ἀκυσ-  
 μάτιον ᾄεισον. *P. 774.*

(d) Νῆ τὸν υἱὸν τὸν ἐκ πατρὸς, ἐ τὸ γει-  
 ῆσεται. *Τρι.* Λέγε παρὰ τῷ πνεύματος δύ-  
 ναμιν τῷ λόγῳ λαβῶν. *P. 774.*

(e) Ἐλεγεν γὰρ, ἡλίος δέκα ἄσιτοι δια-  
 μενῶμεν καὶ ἐπὶ πανύχνης ὑμνωδίας ἀγρυπ-  
 νῶντες ἀνερωττομεν τὰ τοιαῦτα. *P. 778.*

(f) Ὡς ἔασον τέτες, τὴν εὐχὴν ἀπὸ πατρὸς  
 ἀρξάμενος, καὶ τὴν πολυώνομον ᾄδην εἰς τέλος  
 ἐπιθές. *P. 779.*

“ hymn with many names. They conclude : But (f) let us find  
 “ out the unknown God at Athens, and stretching out our hands to  
 “ heaven, offer to him our praises and thanksgivings, that we are  
 “ worthie to live under so great an empire, and leave others to trifle  
 “ as they please.”

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 Acts xvii.  
 23.

It is now time to make remarks upon this dialogue.

Remarks  
 upon this  
 Dialogue.

1. There is a general observation, very obvious to be made here :  
 That (g) the writer of this dialogue appears much better acquaint-  
 ed with the affairs of the Christians, and their sacred Scriptures, than  
*Lucian*.

2. We may hence perceive, that the Christians and their princi-  
 ples were in old times ridiculed by their ancient adversaries. It is  
 therefore a mistake of those moderns, who have imagined, that the  
 old Heathens neglected this method of opposing Christianity. Nor is  
 this the only instance of the kind, which we have met with. *Lucian's*  
 writings before rehearsed in this chapter are another instance. And,  
 unquestionably some such writings have been lost, the Christians of  
 later times not thinking them fit, or worthie to be preserved.

3. We see, how poorly some men reasoned, who opposed Chri-  
 stianity, and still continued to be Heathens. They ridiculed the  
 most just and reasonable doctrines : such as *the creation of the world,*  
*a Divine Providence, or observance of the actions of men, in order to*  
*a future retribution.* Whilst they rejected the Christian revelation,  
 they rejected also, and endeavored to expose and weaken those prin-  
 ciples

(f) Ημῶς δὲ τὸν ἐν Αθήναις ἀγνωστὸν ἔρευ-  
 ρόντες, καὶ προσκυνήσαντες, χάρας ἐς ἑρανὴν ἐκ-  
 τέλλαντες, τότε εὐχαρισήσομεν, ὡς καταζω-  
 θέντες τοιαῦτα κρῆτους ἐπήλοισι γενέσθαι. P.  
 780.

cur Luciano non tribuatur, licet fateor in  
 aliis ejus scriptis non observari tantam  
 Christianismi peritiam: quo argumento  
 illum Luciano abjudicat Huetius. p. 61.  
 Dem. Evang. Fabric. Bib. Gr. Tom. 3.  
 p. 504.

(g) Mihi vero causa esse nulla videtur,

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principles of religion, which reason alone, if attended to, and improved, might have taught them with a good degree of evidence and certainty. And the like things may be found in old Heathen authors, who (*k*) have spoken of Jupiter's *registring things on his tablets, and consulting his parchments*, that all men, good and bad, may be recompensed in due time.

4. It is fit, that we should observe the notice, which is taken in this work of Christian writings, and principles, and practises.

Here are references to the book of *Genesis*, and the *Psalms*, and the *Acts of the Apostles*, and *St. Paul's Epistles*, and the *Revelation*, in which last is frequent mention made of *the book of life*, and writing mens names in it, and of books, in which the actions of good and bad are recorded. As Rev. iii. 5. xiii. 8. xvii. 8. xx. 12. 15. xxi. 27. xxii. 19. The phrase, *the book of life*, is also in Philip. iv. 3. And in Hebr. xii. 23. some are spoken of, as *written*, or enrolled, *in heaven*.

When *Triepkon* says, that *the Galilean, half-bald, . . who travelled through the air, to the third heaven, and there learned the most extraordinarie things, came to me, he renewed us with water*: there is certainly a reference to 2. Cor. xii. 1. . . 4. and, possibly, to Tit. iii. 5. and Eph. v. 3. or some other like text. But it cannot be thence inferred, that the writer of this book was a disciple of Paul, or was baptised by him, or was contemporarie with him. For, as Mr. Moyle (*l*) observes: "This writer speaks of Christians, throughout his dialogue, as αἰθέριοι, αἰθεροβατῆντες, δαιμόνιοι, αεροβατῆντες, &c. " that is, a companie of dreaming enthusiasts, who, like St. Paul, " pretended to a power of flying to heaven, when they pleased."

In

(*k*) Καὶ παροιμία. Ὁ Ζεὺς κατ᾿ ἄσθε χρόνιος εἰς τὰς διφθέρας· ἐπὶ τῶν ποτῶν ἀμειβομένων ὑπερ ὧν πράττεισι καλῶν ἢ κακῶν ὅτι οὐκ ἀπροκίητα φασὶ τὰ πάντα, ἀλλὰ τὸν Διὸς εἰς διφθέρας τινὰς ἀπογρᾶφασθαι, καὶ ποτὴ ἐσεξίε-

ται. Suidas. V. Ζεὺς. Ubi Annotator. Huc spectat illud Euripidis apud Stobaeum. &c.

(*l*) As before. p. 287. 288.

In this dialogue is also a reference to the *Lord's Prayer*, and, as often used by Christians: *Begin with the prayer from the Father*, says he, *adding at the end the hymn with many names*. That the Lord's prayer is here referred to, is (*m*) allowed by learned men. What is intended by the *hymn* at the end, is doubtfull. Some have argued, that thereby is meant the doxologie at the end of the Lord's prayer in Matt. vi. 13. But to me, as well as to some (*n*) others it seems more probable, that some other doxologie, more verbose and intricate, is here intended.

There seems to be an allusion to *the gift of tongues*, or some other gift of the Spirit, with which Christians were favored in the more early ages of the Church, in those words: *Do, tell me, receiving from the Spirit the power of speech*.

Here are also plain references to the Christian custom of initiating by baptism, and of preparing men for it by instruction, or *catechizing*. The author likewise ridicules the Christian fastings, and singing hymns in the night.

It might carry me too far to remark distinctly upon his ridicule of the doctrine of the Trinity, as represented by him, or as held by

B b b 2

the

(*m*) Per τὴν εὐχὴν ἀπὸ πατρὸς. p. 779. Orationem Dominicam Lucianus intelligit, ut recte notatum Rigaltio ad Tertulianum. Sed per πολυώνυμον ᾠδὴν superadditam non existimaverim notari clausulam, quia tuum est regnum, ut persuasum Jo. Gregorio. *Fabric. Bib. Gr. T. 3. p. 504. Conf. annot. in loc. Philop. T. 3. p. 616. ed. Amst. 1743.*

(*n*) "Nay we know, that in fact it had another doxologie sometimes added to it, as we learn from the Author of the *Books concerning the Sacraments*, among the works of Ambrose. [Lib. vi. ad fin.]

who having recited the Lord's Prayer, as it is in St. Matthew's Gospel, immediatly adds: "What follows? Hear what the Priest says: *Through our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom to thee, with whom to thee, is honour, praise, glorie, majesty, power, with the Holy Spirit, from the begining, now, and for ever. Amen.*" Of this sort of doxologie I suppose the Author of the *Philopatris* speaks. This kind of doxologie is much more agreeable to other passages in that dialogue, than the plain one in St. Matthew." *Hallett's Notes and Discourses, Vol. i. p. 144. 145.*

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the Christians at the time of this author. None of my readers can omit to take notice of this, which comes over so often. And I should think, that this may afford a good argument against the supposition, that this dialogue was writ by Lucian, or any other author about his time. For it does not appear, that in the reign of *Mark Antonin* there were any controversies among Christians upon this point. What is here said upon this subject, appears to be more suitable to the fourth centurie of the Christian epoch.



CHAP.



## C H A P. XX.

AELIUS ARISTIDES the Sophist,

A N D

DION CHRYSOSTOM.

- I. *Aristides, his Life, and Time, and Works.* II. *Select Passages from Him.* III. *Passages concerning the Christians, and illustrating the Books of the N. T.* IV. *His Character, and Importance.* V. *The Sophist, Dion Chrysoſtom: His Time, and Works, and a Passage concerning the Christians.*

- I. " **A**RISTIDES the Sophist, ſays (a) *Suidas*, a native of A. D. 176.  
 " *Adriani* a ſmall town in *Myſia*, now belonging to *Bithy-*  
 " *nia*, was diſciple of *Polemon* the Rhetorician of *Smyrna*, *His Time,*  
 " ſon of *Eudaimon*, a Philoſopher, and Prieſt of *Jupiter* in his own *and Works.*  
 " country.

(a) V. *Agisidms.*

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“ country. He also heard Herod at Athens, and Aristocles at Pergamus. He flourished in the time of the Emperour Antonin, and reached to the reign of Commodus. He published many Orations. The number of them is not exactly known.”

Philostratus confirms that account of Suidas, and farther says, “ That (b) from his childhood Aristides had an infirm state of health. Nevertheless he did not neglect labour. The people of Smyrna erected to him a brass statue, which they set up in their Forum. And when they called him the Founder of their city, it was no flatterie, but a just and true commendation. For when their city had been overthrown, and almost destroyed by earthquakes, he so pathetically represented their calamities in a letter to the Emperour, that he could not forbear weeping at some parts of it, and presently promised to restore it. And as I have been informed by Damian of Ephesus, Aristides had before that had some conversation with Mark in Ionia. That Emperour came to Smyrna, and was there three days, before Aristides came to pay his respects to him. The Emperour did not then know Aristides personally. He asked of some present, whether Aristides was in the company. They said, they had not seen him. Afterwards they brought him. The Emperour then said to him: How comes it to pass, that it is so long before I could see you? He answered, I was employed about a work. And the mind is not easily diverted from what it is engaged in. The Emperour pleased with his ingenuity, and his diligence, said, *And when shall I hear you? Appoint a time, says Aristides, and you shall hear me, to morrow, if you please. But I must desire, that my friends may be present, and that they may have leave to applaud, and clap their hands, with all their might.* The Emperour smiling told him, *that would depend upon himself.*”

I forbear to add the critical remarks upon Aristides's Orations, which follow in Philostratus.

There

(b) *De Vit. Sophist. l. 2. cap. ix.*

There are in Photius (c) large extracts out of several of them.

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Suidas says, that Aristides flourished in the time of the Emperour Antonin, probably meaning *the Pious*. Nevertheless, as he was also well acquainted with his successor, and is said to have reached to the time of Commodus, I place him at the year 176. in which, as it seems, he saw *Mark Antonin* at Smyrna. Though his constitution was infirm, it is supposed, that he did not dye, before he was 60 or 70 years of age. \* \* \*

II. It is allowed, that Aristides was very superstitious, a humble and devout worshiper of all the Gods, especially *Esculapius*, to whom, as he believed, he was much indebted for the usefull instructions, which that God gave him, in his dreams, concerning his health.

Select  
Passages.

I think it cannot be amiss to transcribe some passages containing a mixture of good sense and superstition, right sentiments, and absurd and foolish respect for all the deities, which were then in repute.

“ Jupiter (*d*) made all things. All things whatever are the works  
“ of Jupiter, rivers, and the earth, and the sea, and the heaven: and  
“ whatever things are between them, or are above, or under them:  
“ and gods, and men, and all living things, and all things obvious  
“ to our sight, or that can be perceived by our understanding. First  
“ of all he made himself. Nor was he brought up in the odorifer-  
“ ous caverns of Crete. Nor did Saturn ever intend to devour him:  
“ nor did he swallow a stone in his stead. Nor was Jupiter ever in  
“ any danger: nor will he ever be in danger. . . Nor is there any  
“ thing more ancient than Jupiter: as children cannot be older than  
“ their parents: nor things made than they who made them.

“ But

(c) *Cod.* 246. p. 1211. *C.* 247. p. 1235.  
*C.* 248. p. 1271.

\* \* \* They who desire to know more of *Aristides*, may consult *Fabric. Bib. Gr.* l. 4. cap. 30. §. iv. *Tam.* 4. p. 373. . . . 409.

*Basnag. Ann.* 176. n. v. *Dr. Chapman's Charge.* p. 91. *Tillemont. M. Aurele. art.* 31.

(d) *Hymnus in Jovem. Tom. i.* p. 2. ab. p. 5.

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“ But he is the first, and the most ancient, and the prince of all  
 “ things, and himself from himself. When he was made, cannot  
 “ be said: forasmuch as he has been from the beginning, and will  
 “ always be: His own father, and greater than to be made by any.  
 “ And as he brought forth Minerva out of his head, without need of  
 “ marriage: so he had before made himself, of himself, not need-  
 “ ing any to bring him into being. On the contrarie, all things  
 “ have had their beginning from him.” And what follows.

This is taken from a *Hymn to Jupiter*, and is the first oration in the first volume of his works. He speaks somewhat to the like purpose, near the end of the same oration. But I must not allow myself to take it at length.

In the conclusion of an oration to the honour of *Neptune*, which is the third in the same volume, he speaks to this purpose. “ These  
 “ (e) things are pleasant to see, and hear, and the painting of the  
 “ sea reduced to a calm, with the boy from under the sail smiling  
 “ upon Neptune. But there are other things, which ought never  
 “ to have been in pictures, which are impious, and horrible. And  
 “ I wonder, how it came to pass, that they who first saw them,  
 “ did not presently fly upon the makers, and tear them to pieces:  
 “ Nevertheless they are still to be seen in the temples. But it is not  
 “ my business to censure such things. Let us therefore offer up our  
 “ prayers to Neptune, and Amphitrite, and Leucothea, and Pale-  
 “ mon, and the Nereids, and all the marine Gods and Goddeses, to  
 “ give health and safety, both by land and by sea, to the great Em-  
 “ perour, and to all his familie, and to the whole nation of the  
 “ Greeks, and to grant all happiness to us all, suited to our con-  
 “ dition.”

Passages  
 concerning  
 the Chri-  
 stians.

III. But the passage, which I principally aim at, and for the sake of which Aristides is here brought in among other witnesses, is to this

(e) In *Neptunum Oratio*. T. i. p. 28. al. 50.

this purpose. He (*f*) is displeas'd with some Sophists, whom he compares, as I apprehend to Christians. " But (*g*) who can avoid  
 " being filled with indignation, that men of no worth should cen-  
 " sure Demosthenes, whom I look upon as a Mercurie come down  
 " from heaven to afford us an example of eloquence? What living  
 " man can bear this in people, who utter more solecisms than words?  
 " who contemn others, as much as they deserve to be contemned :  
 " who (*b*) extol virtue, but do not practise it. There is no need to men-  
 " tion their insatiable avarice, when they catch at every thing they  
 " can get : who ( \* ) call indigence by the name of communion, who  
 " call singularity philosophie, and poverty a contempt of riches.  
 " They make great pretensions to humanity, and yet never were be-  
 " neficial to any, and are injurious to them, who would do them a  
 " kindnesse. Who are scarcely civil to others : and yet for the sake  
 " of rich men they travel to the ends of the earth. And (*i*) when  
 " they have got them, they promise to teach them virtue . . . who  
 " shew more regard to porters at the door, than to their masters . . .  
 " These are they, who call impudence freedom, and to oppose o-  
 " thers is reckoned a laudable boldnesse . . . Moreover (*k*) they are  
 " arrived at a sort of wisdom, which consists in a pretense of neglect-  
 " ing

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(*f*) *Orat. Platonic. ii. Tom. 2. p. 307. Sc. al. p. 511. Sc.*

(*g*) 'Αλλ' ὅτι καὶ τῶν κομιδῆ τιμὲς ἐδεδόξαι ἀξίων. . . . *T. 2. p. 307. in al. p. 511.*

(*b*) Καὶ σεμνύουσι μὲν τὴν ἀρετὴν, ἀσκῶσι δὲ ἐν πᾶσι. . . . Ἀλλὰ μὴν τὴν γ' ἀπλησίαν καὶ πλεονεξίαν αὐτῶν. . . . εἰ τῷ μὲν ἀποσερῆν κίτωνεῖν ὄνομα τίθεται, τῷ δὲ ρηοεῖν φιλοσοφῆν, τῷ δ' ἀπορεῖν ὑπερορῆν χρημάτων. . . . *P. 307. 308. al. p. 511. 512.*

( \* ) Here, probably, Aristides refers to the provision made by Christians for the poor and necessitous among them.

And in ridiculing that custom he approacheth at least to some scripture-phrases. See Acts iv. 44. 45. and ii. 42. And Rom. xii. 13. *Distributing to the necessities of the saints. Ταῖς χρεῖαις τῶν ἁγίων κοινωμένοις. Communicating to the necessities of the saints.*

(*i*) Καὶ παραλαμβάντες ἄγους, καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν παραδάσαν ὑπιγυῶνται. *P. 308. al. p. 512.*

(*k*) εἰς τῶν ἥκουσι τῆς σοφίας, ἐς ἀργύριον μὲν οὐ πρῆττανται, ἀργυρίῳ δ' ὀξίως λαμβάνειν ἐπίσταιται. *P. 308. al. p. 513.*

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“ ing money, whilst they do not refuse to receive what is worth  
 “ money. They (\*) have invented a new sort of generosity, not (l)  
 “ to give largely, but †† to take little. . . . These men are neither  
 “ servile flatterers, nor free-men. For they deceive as flatterers,  
 “ and correct men, as their superiors, . . . joyning (m) together two  
 “ extreme and contrarie evils, meanness and confidence. In (n)  
 “ manners not unlike the impious people in Palestine. For they ac-  
 “ knowledge not the gods. They differ from the Greeks, and all  
 “ good men. Very dextrous in subverting houses, and disturbing  
 “ families, setting the members of them one against another, and  
 “ getting the management of their affairs into their own hands. Who  
 “ never said, or did any good thing: who never contributed any  
 “ thing

(\*) It is very likely, that Aristides here refers to the revenues of the Christian Clergie in ancient times, which depended upon the oblations made by the faithful of bread and wine, and fruits, and other necessaries. . . . nec molestiis et negotiis secularibus alligentur, sed in honore sportulantium fratrum, tanquam decimas ex fructibus accipientes, ab altari et sacrificiis non recedant, sed die ac nocte coelestibus rebus et spiritalibus serviant. *Cyprian. Ep. i. p. 3. Oxon.*

(l) Καινότατον δὲ μοι δοκῶσι μεγαλοφυχίαν ἀριζέσθαι, ἐκ ἐπιμεγάλῃ δόξουσιν, ἀλλ' ἐπιμεγρὰ λήφονται ἤδη. *P. 309. al. p. 514.*

†† . . . but to take little, that is, I think, to be contented with a little. Which is true magnanimity, to be as contented in a low station, as if they enjoyed affluence, and could dazzle mankind in a profuse way of living, and gratify them with expensive donatives.

(m) δύο τοῖς ἐχάτοις καὶ τοῖς ἐναντιατωτάτοις ἔνοχοι κακῶς οὐτε, ταπεινότητι καὶ ἀνθαδείᾳ. *P. 309.*

(n) Τοῖς ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ δυσσεβέσι παραπλήσιοι τὸς τρόπος· καὶ γὰρ ἐκείνοις τὰτ' ἐστὶ σύμβολον τῆς δυσσεβείας, ὅτι τὸς κρείττους ἐν νομίμοις, καὶ οὗτοι τὸν τρόπον τινὰ ἀφεῶσι τῶν ἐλλήνων, μάλλον δὲ καὶ πάντων τῶν κρείττωνων, . . . πάντων ἀχρηστότατοι· διαρῦσαι δ' οἰκίαν, καὶ ταράξαι καὶ συγκρῖσαι τὸς ἔθνη πρὸς ἀλλήλους, καὶ φῆσαι πάντ' αὐτοῖς διακίσειν, πάντων δεινότατοι· οὐ λόγου μὲν ἔγκρατον ἐδένα πάσαι· οὐθ' εὐρον οὐτ' ἐποίησαν, οὐ πανηγύρεις ἐκόσμησαν, οὐ θεῖς ἐτίμησαν, οὐ πόλεισι συνεβέβησαν, οὐ λυσιμῆνες παρεμυθέσαντο· οὐ σασιαζοντας διήλλαξαν, οὐ προύτρεψαν νέες, οὐκ ἄλλως ἐδένας, οὐ κόσμον τοῖς λόγοις προῦνοήσαντο· καταδύντες δὲ ἐπὶ τὸς χιραμῖς, ἐκὲ τὰ θαυμασὰ σοφίζονται. . . ὅσον γὰρ αὐτοὶ προκάψαι τῆς σοφίας, τοσούτ' ἀνταφαιρῶσι μέγала φρονοῦντες, ἔαν ῥητορικὴν εἰπωσι κακῶς, ὥσπερ οὐ καὶ τὸς δέλους τοῖς δεσποταῖς ὑπ' ὀδοντα πολλὰκις καταρομένους, καὶ μάλινα δὲ τοὺς μασιγίας αὐτῶν. *P. 309. 310. al. p. 514. 515.*

“ thing to the public festivals, nor have honoured the Gods, nor  
 “ have promoted the welfare of the cities, nor have comforted the  
 “ afflicted, nor have reconciled such as were at variance, nor have  
 “ instructed youth, nor any others, nor adorned language. But  
 “ dwelling in corners, they are wonderfully wise. . . As much as  
 “ they advance in wisdom on one hand, they lose on the other:  
 “ mightily pleasing themselves in disparaging the art of rhetorick:  
 “ as if slaves, and especially such as are often and deservedly beaten,  
 “ did not oftentimes secretly curse their masters.”

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By *the wicked men in Palestine* I suppose Aristides to intend Christians, who lived in Palestine, and whose religion had it's original in that countrey. He calls them *wicked*, or profane and *atheistical*, because they did not worship the established deities, the same, that were worshiped by the Greeks and Romans. *Masson* (o) here understands Jews living in Palestine, and squabbles with Tertullian, and other Christian writers, who say, that after Adrian's victorie, Jewish people were forbid to come into Judea. But *Carterius* understands Aristides, as I have done. And in his notes has illustrated this passage with good observations. Indeed we can here trace most of the common reflexions, which were then made upon the Christians, and are particularly taken notice of in our ancient Apologists. They were called *atheistical*. They were complained of (p) as *unprofitable*, they are represented as (q) *mean and obscure*, who nevertheless took great liberties in remarking upon the popular deities, and the worship paid to them. They had then no schools of Rhetorick, for instructing youth, or others, and sometimes spoke slightly of the ornaments of language. Such things offended our

C c c 2

Sophist.

(o) *De Aristidis Vita Collectanea Historica. Sect. vi. n. 8.*

(p) Sed alio quoque injuriarum titulo postulamus, et instructuosi in negotiis dicimur. *Tertull. Ap. cap. 42. p. 38.*

(q) . . homines inquam deploratae, illicitae, ac desparatae factionis, grassari in deos non ingemiscendum est? Latebrofa et lucifugax natio. . . *Minuc. Fel. cap. viii.*

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Sophist. And yet, before the end of the third centurie, there were among the Christians divers learned men and good writers: and some men of great eminence in our author's own time, or before it.

2. Beside the letter (*r*) sent to the Emperours *Mark*, and his son *Commodus*, imploring their favour for the city of *Smyrna*, after the earthquake, which is (*s*) computed to have happened in the year of Christ 177. *Aristides* published a (*t*) monodie, bewailing their unhappy circumstances, and after that he wrote an (*u*) oration, or epistle, in 178. congratulating the people of *Smyrna* upon their restoration. Here he celebrates not only the favour and liberality of the Emperours, but likewise the generous compassion of many others: "All (*x*) the cities of *Asia* considered their affliction, as their own, and sent them relief as to their parents or children. And when they entertained any of them who were destitute in their own houses, who of them did not think themselves gainers thereby? who did not think, that they received, rather than conferred a benefit? Many contributed money, and promised more, if it was needed. All the nations inhabiting *Asia* contended, who should exceed in regard to them. And in your city alone the falsehood of that old saying has been shewn, that the unhappy are forgotten even by their friends." Which occasioned *Mr. Tillemont* (*y*) to say: "Behold the change, which the Christian Religion had made in the world? For it cannot be doubted, that the Christians, who  
" were

(*r*) *Tom. i. p. 512. al. Tom. 2. p. 289.*

(*s*) *Vid. Basnag. ann. 177. num. ii.*

(*t*) *Tom. i. p. 260. al. p. 455.*

(*u*) Παλινοδία ἐπὶ Σμύρνης καὶ τῷ ταύτης ἀνοικισμῷ. *T. i. p. 263. al. p. 461.*

(*x*) . . . ὥσπερ γὰρ κοινῆ πτώματος τῆς Ἀσίας γεγεννημένοι, οὕτως τὰς γνώμας ἔιχετε. . . καὶ πάσας ἀφορμὰς παρασκευαζόντων, ὥσπερ γονεῦσιν ἢ πασιῖν αὐτῶν. . . Τίς γὰρ οὐχ' ἐρμαῖον ἑαυτῷ ἐποίησατο; τίς γὰρ οὐχ' ἐύρις-

κεσθαι μᾶλλον, ἢ τιθεσθαι ταύτην χάριν ᾤθη, δέξασθαι συνοίκους, τὸς τοσούτου πρωτεύσαντας; . . . Καὶ τί δεῖ ταῦτ' ἐν μέρει καταλέγειν; Πάντα γὰρ τὰ ἔθνη τὰ πληροῦθ' ἡμῖν τὴν Ἀσίαν, φιλοτιμίαν κοινῆ φιλοτομεῖται πρὸς τὴν πόλιν, τὰ κράτιστα τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀνίσαντα' ἐπὶ μόνης δὲ ταύτης τῆς πόλεως τὸ πάλαιον ῥήμα ἐξηλέγχθη ψεύδως ἔχον, τὸ κακῶς παραπάντων λήθην εἶναι παρὰ τοῖς εἰλοῖς. *Ib. p. 268.*

(*y*) *L'Emp. Marc. Aurele. art. κκiv.*



“ were numerous in those provinces, had a large share in these works  
 “ of charity, which are the proper effects of the faith and of the grace  
 “ of Jesus Christ, and that their ardour enflamed the Heathens to  
 “ shew the falshood of that ancient proverb, that all the world forgets  
 “ and neglects the unhappy. Which had been too much the case  
 “ hitherto.”

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So Mr. Tillemont. And his observation may be right, though Aristides does not mention the Christians. But his words, *all nations living in Asia*, lead us to think, there was a concurrence of several sorts of men in contributing to the relief of Smyrna under the great calamity that had befallen it.

3. I must add one passage more.

Describing one of his voyages: “ We (z) were going to *Cephalenia*,  
 “ and again we had a high sea, and a contrarie wind, and we were  
 “ tossed up and down, to the great detriment of my health, and be-  
 “ yond what my constitution could bear. Afterwards the like hap-  
 “ pened in the straits of Achaia, when truly the good mariners would  
 “ put out from *Patrae*, at the very time of the Equinox, against my  
 “ will, and very much to my prejudice under my indispositions. The  
 “ like things happened again in the *Egean* sea, through the obstina-  
 “ cie of the master of the ship and the mariners: when they would  
 “ sail, though the winds were contrarie, nor would they hearken to  
 “ me. So (a) we were carried about by the tempest over that whole  
 “ sea, for fourteen days and nights, and were oftentimes without  
 “ food, and at length with difficulty got to *Miletus*.”

Here is such an agreement with the historie of St. Paul's voyage, related in Acts xxvii. that some may be apt to think, he had read the book of the Acts. But I rather think, that Aristides had not read any of the books of the New Testament.

## IV.

(z) *Sacrorum Sermone ii. Tom. i. p. 306.*  
*al. p. 540.*

(a) *Τέτταρες πάλιν αὐται πρὸς ταῖς δέκα ἡμέρας καὶ νύκτες, χειμῶνος κύκλω διὰ παντὸς*

*τῶ περιλάγῃ φερόμενων, καὶ ταύταις ἀσπίταις οὐκ ἐλίγαι, καὶ μάλιστα Μιλήτω προσπνέχθημεν. P. 306. al. p. 540.*

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*His Character and Importance.*

IV. Dr. Chapman (*b*) has formed a plausible argument for the expedience of the continuance of spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers in the church, for upholding and propagating the Christian Religion, from the influence of the Philosophers and Sophists of this time, who were in great favour with the Roman Emperours, and received from them (*c*) handsome stipends for instructing youth, and had a great interest with the people in Greece, and at Alexandria, and in many cities in Asia.

Ælius Aristides, from whom some extracts have been now made, was a fine writer, and a good speaker. He is credulous, and superstitious, a true Heathen, and a servant of the Gods. But so far, as I have observed, he may be supposed a sober man, and serious. There are in his orations many fine sentences in favour of truth and virtue. If he says, he (*d*) had rather be a fine speaker, than be Darius the son of Hystaspes, he joyns with it a sober and virtuous life. And again, in another place, where he expresseth his superior value for learning, and eloquence above all things, he says, “Nor (*e*) can he “ be so stupid, as to despise glorie, if it comes to his share, and so far as “ it may flow from fine speaking, and a life of virtue suited to his “ discourses. For he did not desire to obtain it by any other “ means.”

A

(*b*) *A View of the Expedience and Credibility of Miraculous Powers among the primitive Christians after the Decease of the Apostles.* 1732.

(*c*) The stipends of the Philosophers and Sophists, at Athens and other places, by appointment of Vespasian at first, and then of Antonin the Pious, and Mark Antonin, he computes to have been ten thousand Attic drachms, or 320 £. per annum, of our money. See p. 59. . . . 61.

(*d*) Πλήν γε τίσετ' ἂν ἔποιμι . . . ὡς ἐγὼ

δεξαίμην ἂν δύνασθαι λέγειν μετὰ χρηστῆ βίῃ καὶ σώφρονος εἰς ὅσον θιον τε κάλλισα ἀνθρώπων μᾶλλον, ἢ μυριάκις Δαρείος ὁ Ὑστάσπε γενέσθαι. καὶ μικρὰ μοι πανθ' ὡς ἀληθῆς, πρὸς τετ' ἡδὴ γαίνεται. *Or. Platon. 2da. T. 2. p. 135. al. 224.*

(*e*) Ἀλλὰ μὴν ὑπὲρ γε τῆς δόξης ἕτω διανοήθην, ἀπαντῶσαν μὲν αὐτὴν δέχεσθαι καὶ εἰργεν, ἢ γὰρ ἂν παντόσασι βλάξ ἔμν τις. πραγματεύσθαι δὲ μηδὲν εἰς αὐτὴν ἔξω τῶν λόγων αὐτῶν, καὶ περὶ τῶν βίου ἠρθέτιτος συμφωνῶν τέτοις. *Or. contr. Proditores Mysterior. Tom. 2. p. 421. al. 724.*

A character of such eminence must have been an ornament to the popular religion, and its rites. And the charms of eloquence in his hymns to the gods, and in his other orations, cannot but have had powerfull attractions.

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V. I do not intend to make any distinct chapter of the Sophist *Dion*. But I shall give a general account of him. *Suidas (f)* says, he was the son of Pisicrates, born at Prusa, a Sophist, and a Philosopher, and called Chrysofom. Both he and Philostratus *(g)* say, that he was much favored by the Emperour Trajan, who took him up into his triumphal chariot, and told him, that he loved him, as well as himself. Eunapius *(h)* also says, he was of Bithynia, and was called Chrysofom. We still have remaining his eighty Orations, mentioned by *(i)* Photius, of which a particular account may be seen in *(k)* Fabricius. Photius *(l)* says, he flourished in the time of Trajan. To the like purpose *Suidas* and *Philostratus*. I therefore place him in the year 98. the first of that Emperour's reign: though he was also in favour with Nerva, as we know from *(m)* himself. Whether he be the same as *Cocceianus Dion*, mentioned by *Plinie (n)* in a Letter to Trajan, and in Trajan's *(o)* rescript, is not quite certain.

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*Dion  
Chrysof-  
tom.*

I shall take but one passage from him. For which I am indebted to *(o)* Dr. Chapman. But I shall quote it more at large, than he has done. In an oration to the Corinthians, he speaks with great vehemence. "Whom *(p)* have not these men abused, says he, who  
" abuse

*(f)* V. Δίων.

*(g)* *De Vit. Sophistar. l. i. cap. vii.*

*(h)* Καὶ Δίων ὁ ἐκ βιθυνίας, ὃν ἐπικάλουν χρυσοσομόν. *Eunap. De Vit. Sophist. in Pr. p. 11.*

*(i)* *Cod. 209. p. 530.*

*(k)* *Bib. Gr. T. 3. p. 305.*

*(l)* Ἡμαῖζε δὲ κατὰ τὶς χρόνους τῷ βασιλείῳ τραιανῷ, *Ut supr. p. 530.*

*(m)* *Or. 44. p. 512. Or. 45. p. 513.*

*(n)* *Lib. x. ep. 85.*

*(o)* *Ep. 86.*

*(o)* *As before, p. 63.*

*(p)* Τίνες γὰρ οὗτοι οὐ διαβεβλήκασιν οἱ πάντα διαβαλόντες; οὐ Σωκράτην; οὐ Πυθαγόραν; ἢ Πλάτωνα; οὐκ αὐτὸν τὸν Δία; καὶ τὸν Ποσειδῶν; καὶ τὸν Απόλλω, καὶ τὰς ἄλλους θεοὺς; Ἄσπονται δὲ καὶ τῶν θελεῖων θεῶν, ὧν εἶκος ἦν

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“ abuse every thing? Have they not abused Socrates and Pythagoras,  
 “ and Plato? Have they not abused Jupiter himself, and Neptune,  
 “ and Apollo, and the other gods? Nor have they spared the fe-  
 “ male gods, though, as one might reasonably think, they should have  
 “ more regard for them than the males. Hear then what they say  
 “ of Ceres, and Venus, and Aurora. Nor do they forbear Miner-  
 “ va, and Diana.”

Dr. Chapman makes no doubt, that by these men Dion meant the Christians, “ who, it seems, had talked contemptuously of the  
 “ Gods of the first rank.” I am also inclined to be of the same opi-  
 nion. And I think, that this passage of Dion, together with some  
 others, which we have seen, may satisfy us, that the Christians were  
 better known in those times, than some have imagined. And we  
 cannot help thinking therefore, that the silence of *Epietetus* about our  
 ancestors, or his disregard of them, was designed, and affected, as  
 was also intimated formerly. Indeed the words of St. Paul concern-  
 ing himself, and other Apostles, were often verified in other fol-  
 lowers of Jesus, after their times. *As deceivers, yet true: as un-*  
*known, yet well known . . . as poor, yet making many rich.* 2. Cor. vi.  
 8. . . 10. Again: *Always bearing about in the body the dying of the*  
*Lord Jesus: that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.*  
 2. Cor. iv. 10. and see also ver. 11.

ἦν ἐτι μᾶλλον, ἢ τῶν ἀρρένων ἐντρέπεσθαι.  
 Νῦν ἀκούετε γὰρ ἃ λέγουσι τὴν Δήμητρα, καὶ  
 τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, καὶ τὴν Εὔα. Ἀπέχονται δ' ἐδὲ

τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς, ἐδὲ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος. *Corinthi-*  
*ac. Or. 37. p. 463.*

## C H A P. XXI.

## G A L E N. N.

I. *His Time.* II. *Passages concerning Moses, and Christ, and the Christians.*

I. **C**LAUDIUS GALENUS (*a*) or GALEN, the celebrated Physician, according to Suidas, was a native of Pergamus, and flourished in the times of the Roman Emperours, Mark, Commodus, and Pertinax, and died in the seventieth year of his age. Philip Labbé in his *Life, or Elogium Chronologicum* of Galen, inserted by Fabricius (*b*) in the third tome of his *Bibliotheca Graeca*, computes, that (*c*) he was born in the 131. year of the Christian epoch, and in the 14. or 15. year of the Emperour

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180.*His Time.*

(*a*) *Suid.* V. Γαλλῆνος. *Photius. Cod.* 164. p. 349. *Tillem. L'Emp. Severe. art.* 31. *Moreri Dictionaire, et Supplement. Galien.*

(*b*) *Bib. Gr.* l. 4. cap. xvii. T. 3. p. 509. &c.

(*c*) Claudius Galenus, omnium Medicorum, post Hippocratem, facile Prin-

ceps: atque optimi Imperatoris judicio, γνήσιος ἰατρὸς καὶ μέγας φιλόσοφος, Niconis eruditissimi . . . filius, natus est Pergami in Asia, . . . anno reparatae per Christum salutis, circiter cxxxi. Hadriani Imperatoris xiv. vel xv. labente. *Labbe. Elog. Chronolog. Galeni. num. i. ap. Fabric. B. G. T.* 3. p. 510.

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perour Adrian: and (*d*) that he died in the seventh year of Severus, of Christ 200. when he was seventy years of age.

Some other learned men (*e*) have been inclined to protract his life to the year of our Lord 210. near the end of the reign of Severus.

I shall place him at the year of our Lord 180. and the last year of the Emperour Mark Antonin, to whom he was well known, and by whom he was esteemed: at which time he must have been about 50 years of age.

II. This great Author has mentioned Moses, Christ, and his followers.

1. He has twice mentioned our Saviour.

“ In one (*f*) place he blames *Achigenes* for not giving a demonstration, nor so much as a probable reason of some things advanced by him. So that, says he, we seem rather to be in a school of Moses, or Christ, where we must receive laws without any reason assigned, and that in a point, where demonstration ought not by any means to be omitted.”

Here is a just description of Christ's delivering his precepts without any long deduction of reasons and arguments. And he allows, that reasons were not there absolutely necessarie, or however, not so requisite, as in the points treated of by the author, whom he censures. I think, we may be hence disposed to think it probable, that *Galen* was not unacquainted with our Gospels.

2. In another place he says: “ It (*g*) is easier to convince the disciples,

(*d*) . . . eam opinor, ex omnibus de obitu Galeni probabiliorē videri sententiam, quae illum addicit anno Imperii Severi vii. Christi cc. vitae illius lxx. *Id. ib. num. xx. p. 527.*

(*e*) *Basnag. ann. 210. num. v. And see Tillmont, as referred to at note (a).*

(*f*) Κάλλιον γὰρ ἢν πολλῶ προσθεῖναι τινα, ἢ καὶ μὴ βέβαιαν ἀπόδειξιν, παραμυθίαν γὰρ ἰατρῶν.

νήν, τῶ λόγῳ, περὶ τῶν ἄκτω ποιότητων, ἵνα μή τις ἐυθὺς κατ' ἀρχάς, ὡς εἰς Μαῦσον καὶ Χριστοῦ διατριβὴν ἀφικόμενος νόμων ἀναποδείκτων ἀκούῃ, καὶ ταῦτα ἐν δὲ ἥκιστα χροί. *De Differentia Pulsuum. lib. 2. p. 22. Basil. 1538.*

(*g*) Θάττον γὰρ ἄντις τοῦς ἀπὸ Μοῦσου καὶ Χριστοῦ μεταδιδάξαι, ἢ τοῦς ταῖς ἀρίστοις προσετηκότας ἰατροῦς τε καὶ φιλοσόφους. *Id. ibid. lib. 3. p. 34.*

Ch. XXI. *Passages concerning Moses, Christ, and Christians.* 387

“ ciples of Moses, and Christ, than Physicians and Philosophers,  
“ who are addicted to particular sects.” A. D.  
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Here is an acknowledgement of the steadiness of Christians in the profession of their principles. Of which he may have seen many instances in the persecuting reign of *Antonin* the Philosopher.

3. There is a work, concerning *Nepbritick Disorders*, which is ascribed to Galen, in which (*b*) the author mentions the Christians, and ranks himself with them. But as it is not Galen's, I do not choose to take any thing from it.

4. And in his celebrated work, concerning *the Use of the Parts of the human body*, he has mentioned Moses. It will be sufficient, that I transcribe below the account (*i*) which Fabricius has given of the passages of that work, relating to Moses. Whence it may be argued, that Galen had read the Pentateuch, or at least the book of Genesis.

(*b*) Διάγνωσις τῶν ἐν νεφροῖς παθῶν ἢ θερα-  
πεία. Liber Galeno ascriptus. *Dignatio*  
*morborum in renibus, eorumque curatio.* . . .  
Christiani scriptoris est, forte Demetrii Pe-  
pagomeni ad Imperatorem, cujus Archia-  
trum σύνδελον suum vocat. &c. *Fabric.*  
*B. G. T.* 3. p. 531.

(*i*) *De Ufu Partium corporis humani.*]

Moyseu melius Epicuro scripsisse fatetur.  
xi. 14. Etsi persuadere sibi homo Ethni-  
cus non potuit, Deum facere posse quae-  
cunque velit, ex cinere equum et bovem,  
ex lapide hominem, e materia corrupti-  
bili animalia immortalia. xiv. 2. *Fabric.*  
*ib.* p. 549. 550.

## C H A P. XXII.

## Conclusion of the second Centurie.

- I. *Heathen sayings of the Christians.* II. *Anecdotes concerning divers Heathen Governours of provinces, who persecuted the Christians, or were favorable to them.* III. *Remarks concerning the number of ancient Heathen Writers, who have mentioned the Christians.*

A D. 200. *Heathen sayings of the Christians.* I. **I** Think it not amiss to put down in this place, at the end of the second centurie, some sayings, and observations, of Heathen people concerning Christians. Which may be of use to shew how far the Heathens were acquainted with them, their character, their principles, or their sufferings.

Tertullian, who flourished about the year of Christ 200. in his Apologie, observes to this purpose: "Such (a) are your prejudices, " says

(a) Quid? quod ita plerique clausis oculis in odium ejus impingunt, ut bonum alicui testimonium ferentes, admisceant nominis exprobatorem: Bonus vir Caius

Seius, tantum quod Christianus. Item alius: Ego miror Lucium sapientem virum repente factum Christianum. *Ap. cap. 3. p. 4.*



“ says he, that though you cannot but acknowledge the good character of a Christian, yet you will reproach him for his religion. “ *Truly*, says one, *Caius Seius is a good man, only he is a Christian.* “ Another will say: *I wonder, that Lucius, who is so wise a man, should on a sudden turn Christian.*

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II. I will also put down here some anecdotes concerning divers Heathen Governours of provinces, who had some concerns with Christians.

*Anecdotes concerning divers Governours of Provinces.*

1. In his book addressed to *Scapula*, the Proconsul of Africa, *Tertullian* expresseth himself in this manner. “ We (b) can set before you, says he, the deaths of several Governours of provinces, who at the end of their days were sensible, that they had done wrong in persecuting the Christians. *Vigellius Saturninus*, who first persecuted us in this countrey, lost his sight. *Claudius Herminianus*, in Cappadocia, being enraged, that his wife had embraced this opinion, treated the Christians with cruel severity. And when he alone in his palace was seized with a pestilential disease, and worms crawled out of his body yet alive, he said: *Let none know of this, lest the Christians should rejoyce.* Afterwards, being convinced of his error, in that he had by torments compelled some to renounce this doctrine, he died almost a Christian. *Caecilius Capella*, when he heard of the destruction of the city of Byzantium, “ cried

(b) *Possumus aequae et exitus quorundam praesidum tibi proponere, qui in fine vitae suae recordati sunt deliquisse, quod vexassent Christianos. Vigellius Saturninus, qui primus hic gladium in nos egit, lumina amisit. Claudius Herminianus in Cappadocia, cum indigne ferens uxorem suam ad hanc sectam transisse, Christianos crudeliter tractasset, solusque in Praetorio suo vastatus peste cum vivis vermibus e-*

*bullisset: Nemo sciat, aiebat, ne spe gaudeant Christiani. Postea cognito errore suo, quod tormentis quosdam a proposito suo excidere fecisset, pene Christianus decessit. Caecilius Capella in illo exitu Byzantino, Christiani gaudete, exclamavit. Sed et qui videntur sibi impune tulisse, venient in diem divini iudicii. Ad Scap. cap. 3. p. 86.*

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“cried out: *Christians, you have reason to rejoyce.* But, says Tertullian, they, who may think they have escaped, will be called “to an account in the day of judgement.”

Before I proceed any farther, I must make a few remarks by way of explication.

*Tertullus Scapula (c)* is supposed to have been Consul of Rome in the year 195. and Proconsul of Africa in 211. or thereabout. Therefore this work of Tertullian could not be writ before that time.

*Vigellius Saturninus (d)* is supposed to have been Proconsul of Africa in the year of Christ 200.

*Claudius Herminianus (e)* governed in Cappadocia in the reign of the Emperour Severus. But his exact time is not now known. Fr. Balduinus seems to allow, that *(f)* he is the same, whom Papinian in the Pandects has mentioned with respect.

The city of Byzantium had sided with Niger. After a long and obstinate siege, it was taken, and destroyed by the armie of Severus in the year 196. The Christians in that city had been persecuted in the time of Mark Antonin. Probably *(g)* *Caecilius Capella* had been then Governour of Thrace, in which Byzantium stood, and then persecuted the Christians there with great severity. When he heard of the lamentable fate of that city, he used the expressions mentioned by Tertullian: thinking, that the Christians would rejoyce at it, because many of their brethren had there endured very grievous sufferings. But Tillemont says, “That Christians were wont to weep  
“ with

(c) See Tillem. *L'Emp. Severe art. vii. Comp. Basnag. ann. 195. num. i.*

(d) Tillem. *Persecution, sous l'Emp. Severe. art. 3.*

(e) Tillem. *as before. art. 4.*

(f) Hunc esse illum Claudium Herminianum, cujus Papinianus in Pandectis mentionem facit, et quem clarissimum

appellat, nuper doctissimus Jurisconsultus admonuit. Certe temporibus Severi proconsulem eum fuisse, facile credo. Fr. Balduin. *Edicta Princ. Rom. de Christianis. p. 99.*

(g) Tillem. *L'Emp. Severe. art. 18. See likewise la Persecution sous L'Emp. Marc. Aurele. art. vi.*

“ with those that wept, and not to rejoice at the calamities of their  
 “ greatest enemies: though they might at the same time adore the  
 “ disposals of divine justice.”

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2. It follows in the next chapter of the same work of Tertullian.  
 “ And (*b*) how many Governours, and those both resolute and cru-  
 “ el, have declined these causes? as *Cincius Severus*, who at Thyf-  
 “ dri helped the Christians to an answer, that might clear them:  
 “ as *Vespronius Candidus*, who, when a Christian was brought before  
 “ him, called him a troublesome fellow, and bid him go, and ask par-  
 “ don of his fellow citizens: as *Asper*, who having slightly tortured  
 “ a Christian, and thereby overcome him, (so that he renounced  
 “ his profession,) did not compell him to sacrifice, but let him go,  
 “ openly declaring to those who sat upon the bench with him, that  
 “ he was sorry to be at all concerned in such a cause. *Pudens* like-  
 “ wise, when a Christian was brought before him, and he perceiv-  
 “ ed some unfair dealing in the libel, dismissed him, and tore the  
 “ libel to pieces, saying, *he would not receive an accusation, unless the*  
 “ *accuser was present, as the law directed.*”

We (*i*) have no particular accounts of these things elsewhere. But it is reasonable to believe, that all these magistrates were Governours of provinces in the persecution of Severus, or not long before, perhaps, in the time of the Emperour Mark Antonin.

Basnage (*k*) supposeth, that *Pudens*, here mentioned by Tertullian, is *Servilius Pudens*, who was Consul in the year 166.

ALL

(*b*) *Quanti autem praefides, et constan-  
 tiores et crudeliores, dissimulaverunt ab  
 hujusmodi causis? ut Cincius Severus,  
 qui Thyfdri ipse dedit remedium, quo-  
 modo responderent Christiani, ut dimitti  
 possent: Vespronius Candidus, qui Chri-  
 stianum quasi tumultuosum civibus suis fa-  
 tisfacere, dimisit: ut Asper, qui modice  
 vexatum hominem, et statim dejectum,  
 nec sacrificium compulit facere, ante pro-*

*fessus inter advocatos et assessores, dolere  
 se incidisse in hanc causam. Pudens eti-  
 am missum ad se Christianum, in elogio  
 concussione ejus intellecta, dimisit, scisso  
 eodem elogio, sine accusatore negans se  
 auditurum hominem, secundum manda-  
 tum. Ibid. cap. 4.*

(*i*) See Tillemont *la persecution de l'Eglise  
 sous L'Emp. Severe. art. vi.*

(*k*) *Vid. Basnag. ann. 166. num. i.*

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200.

All these things does Tertullian boldly mention in his addresse to *Scapula*, Proconsul of Africa. I think, it may be concluded, that they were known facts, and that the truth of them may be relied upon. Doubtless Tertullian speaks according to his own knowledge, or according to such informations, as he judged credible. For he would not presume to tell the Proconsul stories, which he had any suspicion might be confuted or contradicted. Indeed, most (*l*) of these men, just mentioned, had been Proconsuls in Africa, where Tertullian lived, in his own time, in the reign of Severus.

3. I should here have inserted the storie of *Arrius Antoninus*, Proconsul of Asia, who after having long exercised great cruelty toward the Christians of his province, when some of them came before his tribunal, expressing great resolution, told them: *If they had a mind to dye, there were halters and precipices enough.* But this has been taken notice of already in the chapter (*m*) of the younger Pliny.

The number of ancient Heathen Authors who have mentioned the Christians

III. I have been long ago admonished in a letter, *not to forget to make some observations concerning the silence of contemporarie Heathen authors concerning Christianity for several ages: or else mentioning all affairs relating to them in a slight and superficial manner.*

Surely, that difficulty is there too much magnified. However, I take this opportunity to say something to it.

Some subjects are more agreeable to authors, because they are more entertaining to the generality of readers. Eusebius well observes in the preface to the fifth book of his Ecclesiastical Historie, “That (*n*) most historians have employed their pens in recording wars and victories, and trophies erected over vanquished enemies, the valour of Generals, and the exploits of soldiers, besmeared with the bloud of innumerable slaughters for their countrey, their children, and their estates.”

Many

(*l*) See Tillem. *la persecution sous Severe.* art. vi. *Basnag. ann. 202. num. ii.*

(*m*) See before. p. 59. &c. in this volume.

(*n*) *H. E. l. v. in Pr. p. 154. A.*

Many writers of great worth, and many affairs of no small importance, have long lain in obscurity, or have been totally buried in oblivion.

It has been observed, that *Velleius Paterculus*, a man of a good familie, who flourished in the time of Tiberius, and wrote an abridgement of the Roman Historie, in two books, has been mentioned by no ancient writer, excepting (o) Priscian. “But (p) the moderns have done him more justice by publishing him frequently with notes and commentaries.”

*M. Annaeus Seneca*, father of L. A. Seneca the Philosopher, and author of divers works, has been (q) confounded with his son, and has been almost unknown, as a writer.

*Lucian*, a subject of the Roman Empire, who has writ so many things, and so many sorts of works, has taken little notice of Roman authors, or Roman affairs. He has a labored (r) Encomium of Demosthenes: but says nothing of Cicero: though a comparison between those two great orators would have been very proper, and has been made by Plutarch, and (s) Longinus.

*Maximus Tyrius*, a Platonic Philosopher, flourished in the time of Antonin the Pious, and several of his Dissertations were writ at Rome: Nevertheless, as (t) Davies, one of his editors, says, he appears little acquainted with Roman affairs. Nay, says he, I do not recollect, that he has made any reference to the Roman historie.

We

(o) *Pauca de Velleio ejusque scriptis praedicanda sunt: sed pauca, quia latet in turba illa scriptorum prisci aevi. Quis veterum eum nominat? praeter Priscianum, et si forte Tacitum. Lips. de Vita et Scriptis Velleii.*

(p) *Bibliographia Classica. Vol. 2. p. 189.*

(q) *Tributa illi quae hujus erant: et claritate nimia filii obscurus pater hodie, immo ignotus memoriam boni senis fugitivam (impune hoc dixerim) prius re-*  
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traham ego. *Andreas Schottus de Auctore, et declamandi ratione, sub fin.*

(r) *Tom. 2. p. 685. &c. Graev.*

(s) *Cap. 12. p. 92. Toll.*

(t) *Et sane, ne quid dissimulem, Graecia diutius quam Roma Maximum videtur cepisse: quod in unaquaque fere Dissertatione summam rerum Graecarum ostendat peritiam, cum res Romanas calluisse nullo indicio constet. Certe quoad memini, ad eorum historiam ne semel quidem respexit. Davis. Pr. p. 15.*

E e e

A. D.  
200.

We now know of *two sons* of the Emperour Mark Antonin, which (*u*) are not mentioned by any ancient historians.

Some writers are silent from reasons of policie. We are told, in the Historie of the Reformation of the Low Countreys, “that (*x*) Margaret, Governesse in that countrey, in the year 1525. sent orders to all the convents, enjoying them to forbid Preachers to mention Luther and his doctrine, and the opinions of ancient heretics.” “This order, says the abridger of the large work of Gerard Brandt, was very judicious. The best way of stopping the progress of heresies, is to seem to neglect them.”

From this principle of policie *Josephus* may have been silent about the Christians, and their affairs, in his writings, that he might bury them in oblivion.

*Epiſtetus*, and others, may have suppressed their own thoughts; and have been reserved in their Discourses: least they should excite inquisitiveness in their hearers, and occasion doubts about the popular deities, and the worship paid to them.

I might add, that it is not impossible, nor very improbable, that some writings of Heathen Authors have been lost, in which the Christians were mentioned. For very few writers in the Syriac language are come down to us.

After all, we have now seen a goodly catalogue of Heathen Writers, in the first and second centurie, men of great eminence for their wit and learning, their high stations, and their credit in the world; who have, in their way, bore testimonie to Jesus Christ, and the things concerning him, and to the Christians, his Disciples and followers, their Numbers, their Principles, their Manners, and their Fortitude:

(*u*) Plures ex Faustina liberos Marcus suscepit: filios scilicet *Commodum* cum fratre *Antonino* gemino, qui quadrimus elatus est. *Verum* Caesarem, quem mors stravit, anno clxx. Doctissimo debemus *Mabillonio*, duos adhuc Marci filios, quo-

rum nulla apud veteres historiae scriptores. extat memoria. &c. *Basnag. ann. 180. num. ii.*

(*x*) *Abridgement of Gerard Brandt's History of the Reformation. By Mr. La Roche. Vol. i. p. 29.*

Fortitude and Patience, under heavie sufferings, and a great variety of difficulties, and discouragements, which they met with for the profession of what they were persuaded to be the truth. And *Celsus*, who in this period wrote against the Christians, has bore a large testimonie to the Books of the New Testament, and to the Historie of our Saviour.

A. D.  
200.

And we can allege two Roman Emperours, *Adrian* (*y*) and *Titus Antonin* (*z*) who have been favorable to † us. And *Adrian* (*a*) in his letter to *Servian*, writ in the year 134. bears witness to the numbers and the influence of Christians in Egypt, at that time.

We must say the same of *Serenius Granianus* (*b*) Proconsul of Asia, who wrote so much in favour of the Christians to *Adrian*, and of his successor in the same province, *Minucius Fundanus*, to whom *Adrian's* Rescript was sent.

To them ought to be added some Governours of provinces, mentioned in this chapter from *Tertullian*.

All these great men had some acquaintance with the Christians, and saw through the thick mist of calumnies, with which the Christians were aspersed by the vulgar, and by many others. They perceived, that though the Christians had some religious sentiments peculiar to themselves, and did not joyn in the established rites, they were not disturbers of the public peace, nor were justly chargeable with any of those crimes, which are generally punished by civil magistrates: and, consequently, they were entitled to protection and favour.

(y) See before, p. 109. ... 120.

(z) See p. 154. ... 162. and p. 247. and 248.

† To those two Emperours above named, might be added *Tiberius*. See the second chapter of *Heathen Testimonies*,

Vol. i. p. 310. and *Nerva*, in the Supplement to the *Credibility*, Vol. i. p. 377. &c. and hereafter in the chapter of *Dion Cassius*.

(a) See p. 115. 116.

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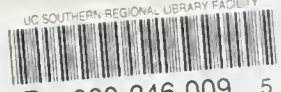
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