

Evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, derived from the literal fulfilment of prophecy; particularly as illustrated by the history of the Jews, and by the discoveries of recent travellers / By Alexander Keith.

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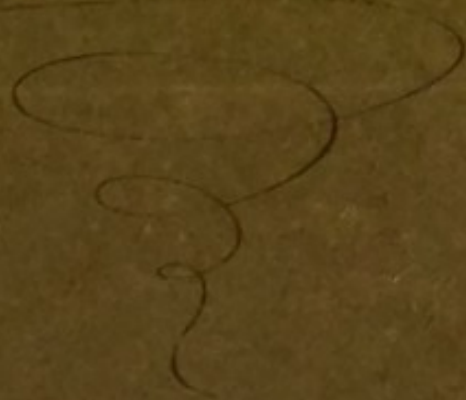
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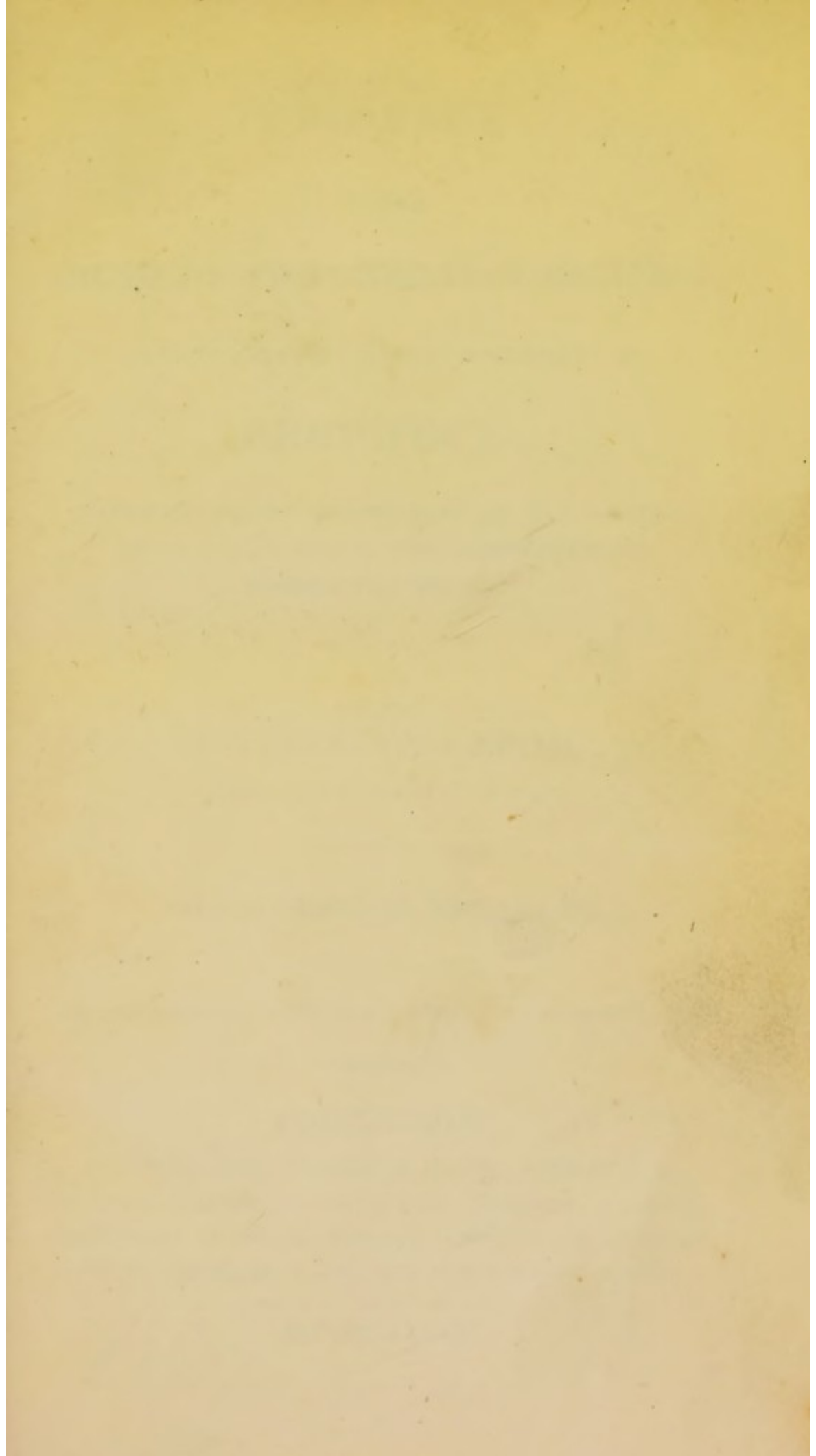
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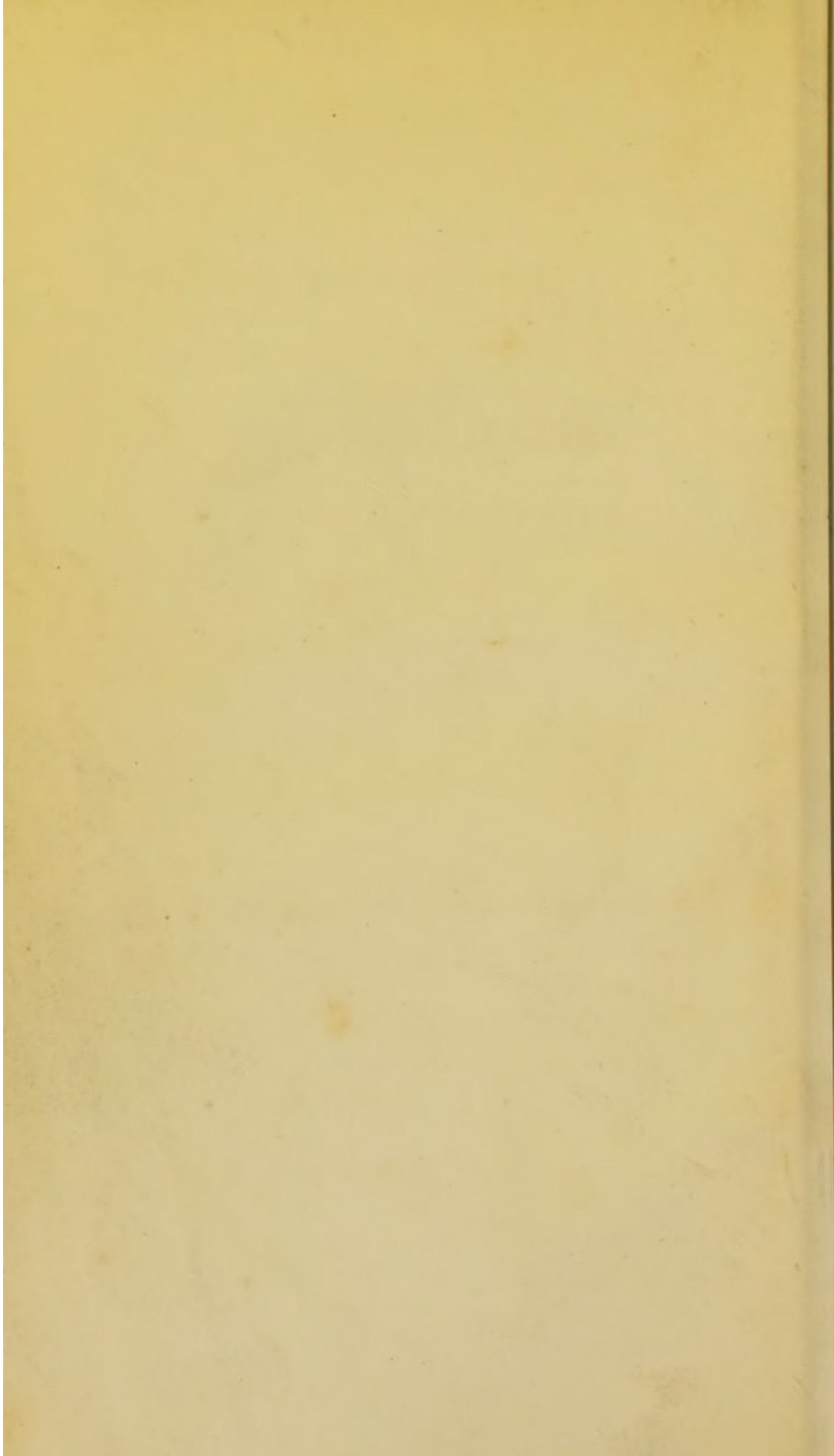
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EVIDENCE

OF THE

TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION,

DERIVED FROM THE LITERAL FULFILMENT OF

PROPHECY;

PARTICULARLY AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE HISTORY
OF THE JEWS, AND BY THE DISCOVERIES OF
RECENT TRAVELLERS.



BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER KEITH,

MINISTER OF THE PARISH OF ST. CYRUS.



THIRD EDITION, ENLARGED.



Opinionum commenta dies delet, Naturæ judicia confirmat.—Cic. de Nat. De.



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Edinburgh : Printed by A. Balfour & Co.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM ADAM,
LORD CHIEF COMMISSIONER, &c.

AS A SMALL MARK

OF THE

MOST SINCERE ESTEEM AND REGARD,

THE FOLLOWING

TREATISE

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

MUCH OBLIGED AND VERY FAITHFUL SERVANT,

ALEXANDER KEITH.

RICHARD HUGHES BARRETT WILLIAM ADAM

LORD CHIEF COMMISSIONER

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OF THE

PREFACE

TO FIRST EDITION.

THE following pages are presented to the public, in the hope that they may not be altogether unproductive of good. The idea of the propriety of such a publication was first suggested to the writer, in consequence of a conversation with a person who disbelieved the truth of Christianity, but whose mind seemed to be considerably affected even by a slight allusion to the argument from Prophecy. Having endeavoured in vain to obtain, for his perusal, any concise treatise on the Prophecies, considered exclusively as a matter of EVIDENCE—and having failed in soliciting others to undertake the work, who were far better qualified for the execution of it—the writer was induced to make the attempt, and to endeavour to bring the subject into view. He was urged and encouraged to the prosecution of it by his worthy and learned friend, the Rev. Mr. Brewster of

Craig, to whom, and to another esteemed friend, the Rev. Dr. Mitchell of Kemnay, by whose able critical remarks he has profited much, he owes, at least, this acknowledgment of his obligations.

Unbelievers are often most unreasonably averse to listen to any arguments, which establish the truth of Christianity, that may be urged by a clergyman; and it was therefore intended to have published this sketch anonymously. The advice of the Publishers, and of others, prevented this. Testimony, the most unexceptionable, has, however, been adduced to substantiate the facts which verify the different Prophecies; and that testimony cannot be invalidated, by whomsoever it may be produced.

In the following Essay the argument is brought within narrow limits. Those Prophecies are not included which were fulfilled previously to the era of the last of the Prophets, or of which the meaning is obscure, or the application doubtful. And the only question to be resolved is—Whether there be any clear predictions, literally accomplished, which, from their nature and their number, demonstrate that the Scriptures are the dictates of inspiration, or that the spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus?

PREFACE

TO SECOND EDITION.

IN the present edition the *title* has been partly altered, in order to convey a more distinct idea of the object of the treatise; and the fifth chapter, in particular, has been enlarged much beyond the original views of the Author. He has not only endeavoured to obtain a more complete account of the existing state of Judea and of the surrounding countries, from the published works of Travellers of authority, but he has derived much important information from the *Travels in Egypt, Syria, &c. by the Honourable Charles Leonard Irby, and James Mangles, Esq. F.R.S. Commanders in the Royal Navy*, which were printed for private distribution, with a copy of which, with full permission to make use of its contents, as well as with the copperplate of the *Ground Plan of the Ruins of Petra*, they kindly furnished him. General Straton also favoured him with

the perusal and use of his valuable Manuscript Travels, to which, in several instances, reference is made. A brief description of the Journey of Captains Irby and Mangles, in company with Mr. Bankes and Mr. Legh, is published in *Dr. Macmichael's Journey to Constantinople*.

The Researches of Travellers in Palestine have been so abundant, and the prophecies thereby verified are so numerous and distinct, that no labour is requisite for elucidating their truth, but to examine and compare the predictions and the events; and the literal prophecies need no other interpretation than the literal facts.

Though well aware that any one who seeks to illustrate the *external* evidence of the truth of Christianity may be said to stand only at the outer porch of the temple of Christian Faith, yet the writer of these pages humbly hopes that he may be permitted to point to a way, without a stumbling-block, by which some who may be merely the proselytes of the gate, or others who would pass altogether by, may be enabled to enter into that edifice of divine architecture, fitly framed together, which is filled with all the riches of mercy, with all the beauty of holiness, and with all the light of truth.

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EVIDENCE
OF
P R O P H E C Y.

INTRODUCTION.

No subject can be of greater importance, either to the unbeliever or to the Christian, than an investigation of the evidences of Christianity. The former, if his mind be not fettered by the strongest prejudice, and if he be actuated in the least by a spirit of free and fair inquiry, cannot disavow his obligation to examine its pretensions to a divine origin. He cannot rest secure in his unbelief, to the satisfaction of his own mind, without manifest danger of the most fatal error, till he has impartially weighed all the reasons that may be urged on its behalf. The proof of a negative is acknowledged and felt to be difficult; and it can never, in any case, be attained till all direct and positive evidence to the contrary be completely destroyed. And this, at least,

must be done before it can be proved that Christianity is not true. Without this careful and candid examination, all gratuitous assumptions and fanciful speculations, all hypothetical reasonings or analogical inferences, that seem to militate against the truth of religion, may be totally erroneous ; and though they may tend to excite a transient doubt, they cannot justify a settled unbelief. Being exclusively regarded, or being united to a misapprehension of the real nature of the Christian religion, the understanding may embrace them as convincing ; but such conviction is neither rational nor consistent—it is only a misapplication of the name of free-thinking. For, as Christianity appeals to reason, and submits its credentials—as it courts and commands the most prying scrutiny—that scrutiny the unbeliever is bound, upon his own principles, to engage in. If he be fearless of wavering in his unbelief, he will not shrink from the inquiry ; or, if truth be his object, he will not resist the only means of its attainment—that he may either disprove what he could only doubt of before, or yield to the conviction of positive evidence and undoubted truth. This unhesitating challenge religion gives ; and that man is neither a champion of infidelity, nor a lover of wisdom or of truth, who will disown or decline it.

To the believer such a subject is equally important and interesting. The apathy of nominal Christians, in the present day, is often contrasted with the zeal of those who first become obedient to the faith. The moral influence of the Christian religion is not what it has been, nor what it ought to be. The difference in

the character of its professors may be greatly attributed to a fainter impression and less confident assurance of its truth. Those early converts, who witnessed the miracles of our Lord and of his apostles, and heard their divine doctrine, and they who received the immediate tradition of those who both saw and heard them, and who could themselves compare the moral darkness, from which they had emerged, with the marvellous light of the Gospel, founded their faith upon evidence; possessed the firmest conviction of the truth; were distinguished by their virtues, as well as by their profession, according to the testimony even of their enemies: *cherished the consolations, and were inspired by the hopes, of religion; and lived and died, actuated by the hope of immortality and the certainty of a future state. The contrast, unhappily, needs no elucidation. The lives of professing Christians, in general, cease to add a confirmation to the truth of Christianity, when they have often been the plea of infidels against it. Yet religion and human nature are still the same as they were when men were first called Christians, and when the believers in Jesus dishonoured not his name. But they sought more than a passive and unexamining belief. They knew in whom they believed, they felt the power of every truth which they professed. And the same cause, in active operation, would be productive of the same effects. The same strong and unwavering faith, established on reason and conscious conviction, would be creative of the same peace and joy in believing, and

* Plinii Epist. 1. 10, ep. 97.

of all their accompanying fruits. And, as a mean of destroying the distinction, wherever it exists, between the profession and the reality of faith, it is ever the prescribed duty of all, who profess to believe in the Gospel, to search and to try—"to prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good;" and "to be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them."

To the sincere Christian it must ever be an object of the highest interest to search into the reason of his hope. The farther that he searches, the firmer will be his belief. Knowledge is the fruit of mental labour—the food and the feast of the mind. In the pursuit of knowledge, the greater the excellence of the subject of inquiry, the deeper ought to be the interest, the more ardent the investigation and the dearer to the mind the acquisition of the truth. And that knowledge, which immediately affects the soul, which tends to exalt the moral nature and enlarge the religious capacities of man, which pertains to eternity, which leads not merely to the contemplation of the works of the great Architect of the universe, but seeks also to discover an accredited revelation of his will and a way to his favour—and which rests not in its progress till it find assurance of faith or complete conviction, a witness without as well as a witness within, is surely "like unto a treasure which a man found hid in a field, and sold all that he had and bought it." And it is delightful to have every doubt removed by the positive proof of the truth of Christianity—to feel that conviction of its certainty, which infidelity can never impart to her votaries,

—and to receive that assurance of the faith, which is as superior in the hope which it communicates, as in the certainty on which it rests, to the cheerless and disquieting doubts of the unbelieving mind. Instead of being a mere prejudice of education, which may be easily shaken, belief, thus founded on reason, becomes fixed and immovable; and all the scoffings of the scorner, and speculations of the infidel, lie as lightly on the mind, or pass as imperceptibly over it, and make as little impression there, as the spray upon a rock.

In premising a few remarks, introductory to a Sketch of the Prophecies, little can be said on the general and comprehensive evidence of Christianity. The selection of a part implies no disparagement to the whole. Ample means for the confirmation of our faith are within our reach. Newton, Bacon, and Locke, whose names stand pre-eminent in human science, to which they opened a path not penetrated before, found proof sufficient for the complete satisfaction of *their* minds. The internal evidence could not be stronger than it is. There are manifold instances of undesigned coincidences in the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles, which give intrinsic proof that they are genuine and authentic. No better precepts, no stronger motives, than the Gospel contains, have ever been inculcated. No system of religion has ever existed in the world at all to be compared to it: and none can be conceived more completely adapted to the necessities and nature of a sinful being like man, endowed with the faculty of reason and with capacities of religion. And the miracles were of such a nature as excluded the idea of artifice or

delusion ;—they were wrought openly in the presence of multitudes—they testified the benevolence of a Saviour, as well as the power of the Son of God. The disciples of Christ could not be deceived respecting them ; for they were themselves endowed with the gift of tongues, and of prophesying, and with the power of working miracles ; they devoted their lives to the propagation of the Gospel, in opposition to every human interest, and amidst continued sufferings. The Christian religion was speedily propagated throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire, and even beyond its bounds. The written testimony remains of many who became converts to the truth, and martyrs to its cause ; and the most zealous and active enemies of our faith acknowledged the truth of the miracles, and attributed them to the agency of evil spirits. Yet all this accumulation of evidence is disregarded, and every testimony is rejected unheard, because ages have since intervened, and because it bears witness to works that are miraculous. Though these general objections against the truth of Christianity have been ably answered and exposed, yet they may fairly be adduced as confirmatory of the proof which results from the fulfilment of prophecy, and as binding infidels to its investigation. For it supplies that evidence which the enemies of religion, or those who are weak in the faith, would require, which applies to the present time, and which stands not in need of any testimony,—which is always attainable by the researches of the inquisitive, and often obvious to the notice of all,—and which past, present, and coming events alike unite in verifying ;—it affords

an increasing evidence, and receives additional attestations in each succeeding age.

But, while some subterfuge has been sought for evading the force of the internal evidence, and the conviction which a belief in the miracles would infallibly produce, and while every collateral proof is neglected, the prophecies also are set aside without investigation, as of too vague and indefinite a nature to be applied, with certainty, to the history either of past ages or of the present. A very faint view of the prophecies of the Old and New Testament will suffice to rectify this equally easy and erroneous conclusion. Although some of the prophecies, separately considered, may appear ambiguous and obscure; yet a general view of them all—of the harmony which prevails throughout the prophecies—and of their adaptation to the facts they predict, must strike the mind of the most careless inquirer with an apprehension that they are the dictates of Omniscience. But many of the prophecies are as explicit and direct as it is possible that they could have been; and, as history confirms their truth, so they sometimes tend to its illustration, of which our future inquiry will furnish us with examples. And if the prophetic part of Scripture which refers to the rise and fall of kingdoms, had been more explicit than it is, it would have appeared to encroach on the free agency of man—it would have been a communication of the foreknowledge of events which men would have grossly abused and perverted to other purposes rather than to the establishment of the truth; and, instead of being a stronger evidence of Christianity, it would have been considered as

the cause of the accomplishment of the events predicted, by the unity and combination it would have excited among Christians ; and thus have afforded to the unbeliever a more reasonable objection against the evidence of prophecy than any that can now be alleged. It is in cases wherein they could not be abused, or wherein the agents instrumental in their fulfilment were utterly ignorant of their existence, that the prophecies are as descriptive as history itself. But whenever the knowledge of future events would have proved prejudicial to the peace and happiness of the world, they are couched in allegory, which their accomplishment alone can expound,—and drawn with that degree of light and shade that the faithfulness of the picture may best be seen from the proper point of observation—the period of their completion. Prophecy must thus, in many instances, have that darkness which is impenetrable at first, as well as that light which shall be able to dispel every doubt at last ; and, as it cannot be an evidence of Christianity until the event demonstrate its own truth, it may remain obscure till history become its interpreter, and not be perfectly obvious till the fulfilment of the whole series with which it is connected. But the general and often sole objection against the evidence from the prophecies—that they are all vague and ambiguous—may best be answered and set aside by a simple exhibition of those numerous and distinct predictions which have been literally accomplished ; and therefore to this limited view of them the following pages shall chiefly be confined.

Little need be said on the nature of proof from pro-

phesy. That it is the effect of divine interposition cannot be disputed. It is equivalent to any miracle, and is of itself evidently miraculous. The foreknowledge of the actions of free and intelligent agents, is one of the most incomprehensible attributes of the Deity; and is exclusively a divine perfection. He knows the determination of the human will, though he hath left it free—the past, the present, and the future, are alike open to his view, and to his alone: and there can be no stronger proof of the interposition of the Most High, than that which prophecy affords. Of all the attributes of the God of the universe, his prescience has bewildered, and baffled the most, all the powers of human conception; and an evidence of the exercise of this perfection, in the revelation of what the infinite mind alone could make known, is the seal of God, which can never be counterfeited, affixed to the truth which it attests. Whether that evidence has been afforded, is a matter of investigation; but if it has unquestionably been given, the effect of superhuman agency is apparent, and the truth of what it was given to prove, does not admit of a doubt. If the prophecies of the Scriptures can be proved to be genuine—if they be of such a nature as no foresight of man could possibly have predicted—if the events foretold in them were described hundreds or even thousands of years before those events became parts of the history of man—and if the history itself correspond with the prediction, then the evidence which the prophecies impart, is a sign and a wonder to every age: No clearer testimony or greater assurance of the truth can be given, and if men do not believe Moses and the

prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one arose from the dead. Even if one were to rise from the dead, evidence of the fact must precede conviction ; and, if the mind be satisfied of the truth of prophecy, the result, in either case, is the same. The voice of Omnipotence alone could call the dead from the tomb—the voice of Omniscience alone could tell all that lay hid in dark futurity, which to man is as impenetrable as the mansions of the dead—and both are alike the voice of God.

Of the antiquity of the Scriptures there is the amplest proof. The books of the Old Testament were not, like other writings, detached and unconnected efforts of genius and research, or mere subjects of amusement or instruction. They were essential to the constitution of the Jewish state ;—the possession of them was a great cause of the peculiarities of that people ;—and they contain their moral and their civil law, and their history, as well as the prophecies, of which they were the records and the guardians. They were received by the Jews as of divine authority ; and as such they were published and preserved. They were proved to be ancient, eighteen hundred years ago.* Instead of being secluded from observation, they were translated into Greek above two hundred years before the Christian era ; and they were read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day. The most ancient part of them was received, as divinely inspired, and was preserved in their own language, by the Samaritans, who were at enmity

* Josephus, c. Apion.

with the Jews. They have ever been sacredly kept unaltered, in a more remarkable degree, and with more scrupulous care than any other compositions whatever.* And the antiquity and authenticity of them rest so little on Christian testimony alone, that it is from the records of our enemies that they are confirmed, and from which is derived the evidence of our faith. Even the very language in which the Old Testament Scriptures were originally written, had ceased to be spoken before the coming of Christ. No stronger evidence of their antiquity could be alleged, than what is indisputably true; and, if it were to be questioned, every other truth of ancient history must first be set aside.

That the prediction was prior to the event, many facts in the present state of the world abundantly testify; and many prophecies remain even yet to be fulfilled. But independently of external testimony, the prophecies themselves bear intrinsic marks of their antiquity, and of their truth. Predictions concerning the same event are sometimes delivered by a succession of prophets. Sometimes the same prophecy concerning any city or nation gradually meets its fulfilment during

* There are not wanting proofs of the most scrupulous care of the Hebrew text on the part of the Jews: they have counted the large and small sections, the verses, the words, and even the letters in some of the books. They have likewise reckoned which is the middle letter of the Pentateuch—which is the middle clause of each book—and how many times each letter of the alphabet occurs in all the Hebrew Scriptures. This, at least, shows that the Jews were religiously careful to preserve the literal sense of Scripture.”—*Allen's Mod. Judaism. Simon Crit. Hist.* 1, 26.

a long protracted period, where the truth of the prediction must be unfolded by degrees. They are, in general, so interwoven with the history of the Jews—so casually introduced in their application to the surrounding nations—so frequently concealed in their purport, even from the honoured but unconscious organs of their communication, and preserving throughout so entire a consistency—so different in the modes of their narration, and each part preserving its own particular character—so delivered without form or system—so shadowed under types and symbols—so complete when compared and combined—so apparently unconnected when disjointed, and revealed in such a variety of modes and expressions, that the very manner of their conveyance forbids the idea of artifice ; or if they were false, nothing could admit of more easy detection—if true, nothing could be more impossible to have been conceived by man. And they must either be a number of incoherent and detached pretensions to inspiration, that can bear no scrutiny, and that have no reference to futurity but what deceivers might have devised ; or else, as the only alternative, they give such a comprehensive, yet minute representation of future events—so various, yet so distinct—so distant, yet so true—that none but he who knoweth all things, could have revealed them to man, and none but those who have hardened their hearts and closed their eyes, can forbear from feeling and from perceiving them to be credentials of the truth, clear as light from heaven. To justify their pretensions to their cotemporaries, the prophets referred, on particular occasions, to some approaching circumstance

as a proof of their prophetic spirit, and as a symbol or representation of a more distant and important event. They could thus be distinguished in their own age from false prophets, if their predictions were then true, and they ventured to raise, from the succeeding ages of the world, that veil which no uninspired mortal could touch. They spoke of a deliverer of the human race—they described the desolation of cities and of nations, whose greatness was then unshaken, and whose splendour has ever since been unrivalled—and their predictions were of such a character that time would infallibly refute or realize them.

Religion deserves a candid examination, and it demands nothing more. The fulfilment of prophecy forms part of the evidence of Christianity. And are the prophecies false, or are they true? Is their fallacy exposed or their truth ratified by the event? And whether are they thus proved to be the delusions of impostors or the dictates of inspiration? To the solution of these questions a patient and impartial inquiry alone is requisite: reason alone is appealed to, and no other faith is here necessary but that which arises as the natural and spontaneous fruit of rational conviction. The man who withholds this inquiry, and who will not be impartially guided by its result, is not only reckless of his fate, but devoid of that of which he prides himself the most—even of all true liberality of sentiment: He is the bigot of infidelity, who will not believe the truth because it is the truth. It is incontestible, that, in a variety of ways, a marvellous change has taken place in the religious and political state of the world since

the prophecies were delivered. A system of religion, widely different from any that then existed, has emanated from the land of Judea, and has spread over the civilized world. Many remarkable circumstances attended its origin and its progress. The history of the life and character of its Founder, as it was written at the time, and acknowledged as authentic by those who believed on him, is so completely without a parallel, that it has often attracted the admiration, and excited the astonishment of infidels ;—and one of them even asks, if it be possible that the Sacred Personage, whose history the Scripture contains, should be himself a mere man ; and acknowledges that the fiction of such a character is more inconceivable than the reality.* He possessed no temporal power,—he inculcated every virtue,—his life was spotless and perfect as his doctrine,—he was put to death as a criminal. His religion was rapidly propagated,—his followers were persecuted, but their cause prevailed. The purity of his doctrine was maintained for a time, but it was afterwards corrupted. Yet Christianity has effected a great change. Since its establishment, the worship of heathen deities has ceased ;—all sacrifices have been abolished, even where human victims were immolated before ;—and slavery, which prevailed in every state, is now unknown in every Christian country throughout Europe ;—knowledge has been increased, and many nations have been civilized. The Christian religion has been extended over a great

* Rousseau's *Emilius*, vol. ii. p. 215, quoted in *Brewster's Testimonies*, p. 133.

part of the world, and it is still enlarging its boundary ; and the Jews, though it originated among them, yet continue to reject it. In regard to the political changes or revolutions of states, since the prophecies concerning them were delivered,—Jerusalem was destroyed and laid waste by the Romans—The land of Palestine, and the surrounding countries, are now thinly inhabited, and, in comparison of their former fertility, have been almost converted into deserts—The Jews have been scattered among the nations, and remain to this day a dispersed and yet a distinct people—Egypt, one of the first and most powerful of nations, has long ceased to be a kingdom—Nineveh is no more—Babylon is now a ruin—The Persian Empire succeeded to the Babylonian—The Grecian Empire succeeded to the Persian, and the Roman to the Grecian—The old Roman empire has been divided into several kingdoms—Rome itself became the seat of a government of a different nature from any other that ever existed in the world—The doctrine of the Gospel was transformed into a system of spiritual tyranny and of temporal power—The authority of the Pope was held supreme in Europe for many ages—The Saracens obtained a sudden and mighty power : overran great part of Asia and of Europe ; and many parts of Christendom suffered much from their incursions—The Arabs maintain their warlike character, and retain possession of their own land—The Africans are a humble race, and are still treated as slaves—Colonies have been spread from Europe to Asia, and are enlarging there—The Turkish empire attained to great power ; it continued

to rise for the space of several centuries, but it paused in its progress, has since decayed, and now evidently verges to its fall. These form some of the most prominent and remarkable facts of the history of the world from the ages of the prophecies to the present time: and if, to each and all of them, from the first to the last, an index is to be found in the prophecies, we may warrantably conclude that they could only have been revealed by the Ruler among the nations, and that they afford more than human testimony of the truth of Christianity.

In the following treatise an attempt is made to give a general and concise sketch of such of the prophecies as have been distinctly foretold and clearly fulfilled, and as may be deemed sufficient to illustrate the truth of Christianity. And, if one unbeliever be led the first step to a full and candid investigation of the truth,—if one doubting mind be convinced,—if one Christian be confirmed more strongly in his belief,—if one ray of the hope of better things to come, arise from hence, to enliven a single sorrowing heart,—if one atom be added to the mass of evidence, the author of this little work will neither have lost his reward, nor spent his labour in vain.

CHAPTER II.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN
RELIGION.

It is one of the remarkable peculiarities of the Jewish religion, that while it claimed superiority over every other, and was distinguished from them all, as alone inculcating the worship of the only living and true God, and while it was perfectly suited to the purpose for which it was designed, it acknowledged that it was itself only preparatory to a future, a better, and perfect revelation. It was professedly adapted and limited to one particular people;—it was confined, in many of its institutions, to the land of Judea;—its morality was incomplete;—it tolerated some practices that were neither virtuous nor pure;—its ritual observances were numerous, oppressive, and devoid of any inherent merit;* and being partial, imperfect, and temporary, and full of promises of better things to come, for which it was only the means of preparing the way, it was evidently intended to be the presage of another. It

* “Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their father’s idols, wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.” Ezekiel xx. 24, 25. Acts xv. 10.

was not even calculated of itself to fulfil the promise which it records as given unto Abraham, that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed ;—though its original institution was founded upon this promise, and although the accomplishment of it was the great end to be promoted, by the distinction and separation of his descendants from all the nations of the earth. But it was subservient to this end, though it could not directly accomplish it, for the coming of a Saviour was the great theme of prophecy, and the universal belief of the Jews. From the commencement to the conclusion of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, it is predicted or prefigured. They represent the first act of divine justice, which was exercised on the primogenitors of the human race, as mingled with divine mercy. Before their seclusion from paradise, a distant gleam of hope was seen to shine around them, in the promise of a suffering but triumphant deliverer. To Abraham the same promise was conveyed in a more definite form. Jacob spoke distinctly of the coming of a Saviour. Moses, the legislator and leader of the Hebrews, prophesied of another lawgiver that God was to raise up in a future age.* And while these early and general predictions occur in the historical part of Scripture, which sufficiently mark the purposed design of the Mosaic dispensation, the books that are avowedly prophetic are clearly descriptive, as a minuter search will attest, of the advent of a Saviour, and of every thing pertaining to the kingdom he was to establish. Many

* Deut. xviii. 15, 18.

things apparently contradictory and irreconcilable, are foretold as referring to a great Deliverer, whose dignity, whose character, and whose office were altogether peculiar, and in whom the fate of human nature is represented as involved. Many passages that can bear no other application clearly testify of him: Thy King cometh—thy salvation cometh—the Redeemer shall come to Zion—the Lord cometh—the Messenger of the Covenant he shall come—blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,*—are expressions that occur throughout the prophecies. These unequivocally speak of the coming of a Saviour. But were every other proof wanting, the prophecy of Daniel is sufficient incontrovertibly to establish the fact, which we affirm in the very words,—that the coming of *the Messiah* is foretold in the Old Testament. The same fact is confirmed by the belief of the Jews in every age. It is so deeply and indelibly impressed on their minds, that notwithstanding the dispersion of their race throughout the world, and the disappointment of their hopes for eighteen hundred years after the prescribed period of his coming, the expectation of the Messiah still forms a bond of union which no distance can dissolve, and which no earthly power can destroy.

As the Old Testament *does* contain prophecies of a Saviour that was to appear in the world, the only question to be resolved is, whether all that it testifies of him be fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ? On a

* Zech. ix. 9; Isa. lix. 20; Isa. lxii. 11; Mal. iii. 1; Isa. xxxv. 4; Psa. cxviii. 26; Dan. ix. 25, 26.

subject so interesting, so extensive, and important, which has been so amply discussed by many able divines, the reader is referred to the excellent treatise of Bishop Chandler, and to the works of Barrow and of Clarke. A summary view must be very imperfect and incomplete ; but it is here given, as it may serve, to the general reader, to exhibit the connexion between the Old and the New Testament, and as of itself it may be deemed conclusive of the argument in favour of Christianity.

A few of the leading features of the prophecies concerning Christ, and their fulfilment, shall be traced—as they mark the time of his appearance—the place of his birth—and the family out of which he was to arise—his life and character, his miracles, his sufferings, and his death—the nature of his doctrine—the design and the effect of his coming—and the extent of his kingdom.

The time of the Messiah's appearance in the world, as predicted in the Old Testament, is defined by a number of concurring circumstances, that fix it to the very date of the advent of Christ. The last blessing of Jacob to his sons, when he commanded them to gather themselves together that he might tell them what should befall them in the last days, contains this prediction concerning Judah : “ The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” * The date fixed by this pro-

* Gen. xlix. 10.

phesy for the coming of Shiloh, or the Saviour, was not to exceed the time that the descendants of Judah were to continue an united people—that a king should reign among them—that they should be governed by their own laws, and that their judges were to be from among their brethren. The prophecy of Malachi adds another standard for measuring the time: “Behold I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall come suddenly to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.”* No words can be more expressive of the coming of the promised Messiah; and they as clearly imply his appearance in the temple before it should be destroyed. But it may also be here remarked that Malachi was the last of the prophets: With his predictions the vision and the prophecy were sealed up, or the canon of the Old Testament was completed. Though many prophets immediately preceded him, after his time there was no prophet in Israel; but all the Jews, whether of ancient or modern times, look for a messenger, to prepare the way of the Lord, immediately before his coming. The long succession of prophets had drawn to a close; and the concluding words of the Old Testament, subjoined to an admonition to remember the law of Moses, import that the next prophet would be the harbinger of the Messiah. Another criterion of the time is thus imparted. In regard to the advent of the Messiah, before the destruction of the

* Mal. iii. 1.

second temple, the words of Haggai are remarkably explicit: "The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, and in this place will I give peace."* The contrast which the prophet had just drawn between the glory of Solomon's temple and that which had been erected in its stead, to which he declares it was, in comparison, as nothing,—the solemn manner of its introduction, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth;" the excellency of the latter house excelling that of gold and silver—the expression so characteristic of the Messiah, the "desire of all nations;" and the blessing of peace that was to accompany his coming:—all tend to denote that he alone is spoken of, who was the hope of Israel, and of whom all the prophets did testify, and that his presence would give to that temple a greater glory than that of the former. The Saviour was thus to appear, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, during the time of the continuance of the kingdom of Judah, previous to the demolition of the temple, and immediately subsequent to the next prophet. But the time is rendered yet more definite. In the prophecies of Daniel, the kingdom of the Messiah is not only foretold as commencing in the time of the fourth monarchy, or Roman empire; but the express number of years, that were to precede his coming, are plainly intimated: "Seventy weeks are determined up-

* Hag. ii. 7.

on thy people, and upon the holy city, to finish the transgression and make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the prince, shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks." * Computation by weeks of years was common among the Jews, and every seventh was the Sabbatical year; seventy weeks thus amounted to four hundred and ninety years. In these words the prophet marks the very time and uses the very name of Messiah, the prince; so entirely is all ambiguity done away.

The plainest inference may be drawn from these prophecies. All of them, while, in every respect, they presuppose the most perfect knowledge of futurity; while they were unquestionably delivered and publicly known for ages previous to the time to which they referred; while there is Jewish testimony of their application to the time of the Messiah,† which was delivered fifty years before Christ; and while they refer to different contingent and unconnected events, utterly undeterminable and inconceivable by all human sagacity;—accord in perfect unison to a single precise period where all their different lines terminate at once—the very fullness of time when Jesus appeared. A king then reigned over the Jews in their own land—they were governed

* Dan. ix. 24, 25.

† R. Nehumias quoted by Grotius *de Verit. V.*

by their own laws—and the council of their nation exercised its authority and power. Before that period, the other tribes were extinct or dispersed among the nations. Judah alone remained, and the last sceptre in Israel had not then departed from it. Every stone of the temple was then unmoved: it was the admiration of the Romans, and might have stood for ages. But, in a short space, all these concurring testimonies to the time of the advent of the Messiah, passed away. During the very year, the twelfth of his age, in which Christ first publicly appeared in the temple, Archelas the king was dethroned and banished—Coponius was appointed procurator—and the kingdom of Judea, the last remnant of the greatness of Israel, was debased into a part of the province of Syria.* The sceptre was smitten from the hands of the tribe of Judah—the crown fell from their heads—their glory departed—and, soon after the death of Christ, of their temple one stone was not left upon another—their commonwealth itself became as complete a ruin, and was broken in pieces—and they have ever since been scattered throughout the world, a name but not a nation. After the lapse of nearly four hundred years posterior to the time of Malachi, another prophet appeared who was the herald of the Messiah. And the testimony of Josephus confirms the account given in Scripture of John the Baptist.† Every mark that denoted the time of the coming of the Messiah, was erased soon after the crucifixion of Christ, and could never afterwards be renewed.—And, with respect to the

* Joseph, Ant. 17. c. 13.

† Ib. 18, 5.

prophecies of Daniel, it is remarkable, at this remote period, how little discrepancy of opinion has existed among the most learned men, as to the space from the time of the passing out of the edict to rebuild Jerusalem, after the Babylonish captivity, to the commencement of the Christian era, and the subsequent events foretold in the prophecy. Our design precludes detail: But the minute coincidence of the narrative of the New Testament and the history of the Jews, with the subdivisions of time which it enumerates, are additional attestations of its general accuracy as applicable to Christ. This coincidence is the more striking, as it is unnoticed by the relaters of the facts which establish it, and as it has been left, without the possibility of any adaptation of the events, to the discovery of modern chronologists. The following observations of Dr. Samuel Clarke, partly communicated to him, as he acknowledges, by Sir Isaac Newton, elucidate this prophecy so clearly that every reader will forgive their insertion:—"When the angel says to Daniel, *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, &c.*—Was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king, (when Ezra went up from Babylon unto Jerusalem with a commission to restore the government of the Jews,) to the death of Christ, (from *Ann. Nabon. 290*, to *Ann. Nabon. 780*,) should be precisely 490 (70 weeks of) years. When the angel tells Daniel, that in threescore and two weeks the street (of Jerusalem) should be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times, (but this, in troublous times, not like those that should be under Messiah the prince when he

should come to reign;)—Was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the 28th year of Artaxerxes, when the walls were finished, to the birth of Christ, (from *Ann. Nabon.* 311 to 745,) should be precisely 434 (62 weeks of) years. When Daniel farther says, And he shall confirm (or, nevertheless, he shall confirm) the covenant with many for one week—Was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the death of Christ (*Ann. Dom.* 33,) to the command given first to Peter to preach to Cornelius and the Gentiles, (*Ann. Dom.* 40,) should be exactly seven (one week of) years? When he still adds, *And in the midst of the week, (and in half a week,) he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate—* Was this written after the event? Or, can it with any reason, be ascribed to chance, that from Vespasian's march into Judea, in the spring *Ann. Dom.* 67, to the taking of Jerusalem by Titus in the autumn *Ann. Dom.* 70, should be half a septenary of years, or three years and a half?"*

That the time at which the promised Messiah was to appear is clearly defined in these prophecies; that the expectation of the coming of a great king or deliverer was then prevalent, not only among the Jews, but among all the eastern nations, in consequence of these prophecies; that it afterwards excited that people to revolt, and proved the cause of their greater destruction,—the impartial and unsuspected evidence of hea-

* Clarke's Works, fol. edit. vol. II. p. 721.

then authors is combined, with the reluctant and ample testimony of the Jews themselves, to attest.

Tacitus, Suetonius, Josephus, and Philo agree in testifying the antiquity of the prophecies, and their acknowledged reference to that period.* Even the Jews, to this day, own that the time when their Messiah ought to have appeared, according to their prophecies, is long since past, and they attribute the delay of his coming to the sinfulness of their nation. And thus, from the distinct prophecies themselves; from the testimony of profane historians; and from the concessions of the Jews, every requisite proof is afforded that Christ appeared when all the concurring circumstances of the time denoted the prophesied period of his advent.

The predictions contained in the Old Testament respecting both the family out of which the Messiah was to arise, and the place of his birth, are almost as circumstantial, and are equally applicable to Christ, as those which refer to the time of his appearance. He

* *Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum libris, contineri—eo ipso tempore fore—ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa, rerum potirentur. Quæ ambages Vespasianum et Titum predixerunt. Sed vulgus, (Judæorum,) more humanæ cupidinis, sibi tantum fatorum magnitudinem interpretari, ne adversis, quidem, ad vera mutabantur.—Tacit. An. V. 13. Percrebuerat Oriente toto constans opinio esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti, rerum potirentur. Id de imperio Romano, quantum postea eventu patuit, prædictum Judæi ad se habentes, rebellarunt.—Suet. in Vesp. l. 8. c. 4. Julius Maranathus, quoted by Suetonius lib. 2, 93—Joseph. de Bello VII. 31; Philo de Præm. et Pen. p. 923-4.*

was to be an Israelite, of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, and of the town of Bethlehem. The two former of these particulars are implied in the promise made to Abraham,—in the prediction of Moses,—in the prophetic benediction of Jacob to Judah,—and in the reason assigned for the superiority of that tribe, because out of it the chief ruler should arise. And the two last, that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David and a native of Bethlehem, are expressly affirmed. *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.** That this prophecy refers to the Deliverer of the human race, is evident from the whole of the succeeding chapter, which is descriptive of the kingdom of the Messiah, of the calling of the Gentiles, and of the restoration of Israel. The same fact is predicted in many passages of the prophecies:—“Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee.—I have made a covenant with my chosen. I have sworn to David my servant, thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.—Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the earth; and this is the name whereby he shall be called—the Lord our Righteousness.”† The place of the birth of the Messiah is thus clearly foretold:—“Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, in the land of Judah, though thou be

* Isaiah xi. 1. † 2 Sam. vii. 16. Psa. lxxxix. 3, 4. Jer. xxiii. 5.

little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth," or as the Hebrew word implies,* shall he be born—"that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting."† That all these predictions were fulfilled in Jesus Christ; that he was of that country, tribe, and family, of the house and lineage of David, and born in Bethlehem,—we have the fullest evidence in the testimony of all the evangelists; in two distinct accounts of the genealogies, (by natural and legal succession,) which, according to the custom of the Jews, were carefully preserved; in the acquiescence of the enemies of Christ to the truth of the fact, against which there is not a single surmise in history; and in the appeal made, by some of the earliest of the Christian writers, to the unquestionable testimony of the records of the census, taken at the very time of our Saviour's birth, by order of Cæsar.‡ Here, indeed, it is impossible not to be struck with the exact fulfilment of prophecies which are apparently contradictory and irreconcilable, and with the manner in which they were providentially accomplished. The spot of Christ's nativity was distant from the place of the abode of his parents, and the region in which he began his ministry was remote from the place of his birth; and another prophecy respecting him was in this manner verified: "In the land of Zebulun and Naphthali, by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in darkness have

* Gen. x. 14; xv. 4; xvii. 6. 2 Sam. vii. 12, &c.

† Mic. v. 2.

‡ Justin. Mar. ap. I. p. 55, ed. *Thirl.* Tert. in Mark iv. 19.

seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.* Thus, the time at which the predicted Messiah was to appear; the nation, the tribe, and the family from which he was to be descended; and the place of his birth—no populous city, but of itself an inconsiderable place—were all clearly foretold; and as clearly refer to Jesus Christ; and all meet their completion in him.

But the facts of his life, and the features of his character, are also drawn with a precision that cannot be misunderstood. The obscurity, the meanness, and poverty of his external condition are thus represented:—“He shall grow up before the Lord like a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.—Thus saith the Lord, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship.”† That such was the condition in which Christ appeared, the whole history of his life abundantly testifies. And the Jews, looking, in the pride of their hearts, for an earthly king, disregarded these prophecies concerning him, were deceived by their traditions, and found only a stone of stumbling, where, if they had searched their Scriptures aright, they would have discovered an evidence of the Messiah. “Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not this the son of Mary, said they, and they were offended at him.” His riding in humble triumph into Jerusalem;

* Isaiah ix. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 16.

† Isaiah liii. 2; xlix. 7.

his being betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, and scourged, and buffeted, and spit upon; the piercing of his hands and of his feet; the last offered draught of vinegar and gall; the parting of his raiment, and casting lots upon his vesture; the manner of his death and of his burial, and his rising again without seeing corruption,*—were all expressly predicted, and all these predictions were literally fulfilled. If all these prophecies admit of any application to the events of the life of any individual, it can only be to that of the author of Christianity. And what other religion can produce a single fact which was foretold of its founder?

Though the personal appearance or mortal condition of the Messiah was represented, by the Jewish prophets, such as to bespeak no grandeur, his personal character is described as of a higher order than that of the sons of men. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. He hath done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips. The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he

* Zech. ix. 9; xi. 12. Isa. l. 6. Psa. xxii. 16; lxix. 21; xxii. 18; Isa. liii. 9; Psa. xvi. 10.

not quench. Behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheek to them that plucked off the hair; I did not hide my face from shame and spitting. The Lord God hath opened mine ear that I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. The Lord will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." * How many virtues are thus represented in the prophecies, as characteristic of the Messiah; and how applicable are they all to Christ alone, and how clearly embodied in his character! His wisdom and knowledge—his speaking as never man spake—the general meekness of his manner and mildness of his conversation—his perfect candour and unsullied purity—his righteousness—his kindness and compassion—his genuine humility—his peaceable disposition—his unrepining patience—his invincible courage—his more than heroic resolution, and more than human forbearance—his unfaltering trust in God, and complete resignation to his will,—are all pourtrayed in the liveliest, the most affecting, and expressive terms; and among all who ever breathed the breath of life, they can be applied to Christ alone. †

* Isa. xi. 2, 5; xl. 11; l. 4, 6, 7; xlii. 2, 3; liii. 7, 8, 11. Zech. ix. 9.

† See Barrow on the Creed, p. 190.

Mahomet pretended to receive a divine warrant to sanction his past impurities and to license his future crimes. How different is the appeal of Jesus to earth and to heaven: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.—Search the Scriptures, for these are they which testify of me." They did testify of the coming of a Messiah, and of the superhuman excellence of his moral character. And if the life of Jesus was wonderful and unparalleled of itself, how miraculous does it appear, when all his actions develop the prophetic character of the promised Saviour? The internal and external evidence are here combined at once; and, while the life of Christ proved that he was a righteous person, it proved also, as testified of by the prophets, that he was the Son of God.

In describing the blessings of the reign of the Messiah, the prophet Isaiah foretold the greatness and the benignity of his miracles:—"The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing."* The history of Jesus shows how such acts of mercy formed the frequent exercise of his power: at his word, the blind received their sight—the lame walked—the deaf heard—and the dumb spake.†

The death of Christ was as unparalleled as his life; and the prophecies are as minutely descriptive of his sufferings as of his virtues. Not only did the paschal lamb, which was to be killed every year in all the fa-

* Isa. xxxv. 5.

† Matt. xi. 5.

milies of Israel—which was to be taken out of the flock, to be without blemish—to be eaten with bitter herbs—to have its blood sprinkled, and to be kept whole that not a bone of it should be broken—not only did the offering up of Isaac, and the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, by looking upon which the people were healed,—and many ritual observances of the Jews,—prefigure the manner of Christ's death, and the sacrifice which was to be made for sin;—but many express declarations abound in the prophecies, that Christ was indeed to suffer. Exclusive of the repeated descriptions * in the Psalms, of afflictions which apply literally to him, and are interwoven with allusions to the Messiah's kingdom, the prophet Daniel, † in limiting the time of his coming, directly affirms that the Messiah was to be cut off; and, in the same manifest allusion, Zechariah uses these emphatic words: “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.—I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him.” ‡

But Isaiah, who describes, with eloquence worthy of a prophet, the glories of the kingdom that was to come, characterizes, with the accuracy of a historian, the humiliation, the trials, and the agonies which were to precede the triumphs of the Redeemer of a world; and

* Psa. ii; xxii. 1, 6, 7, 16, 18; xxxv. 7, 11, 12; lxix. 20, 21; cix. 2, 3, 5, 25; cxviii. 22.

† Dan. ix. 26.

‡ Zech. xiii. 7; xii. 10.

the history of Christ forms, to the very letter, the commentary and the completion of his every prediction. In a single passage,*—the connexion of which is uninterrupted, its antiquity indisputable, and its application obvious,—the sufferings of the servant of God (who, under the same denomination, is previously described as he who was to be the Light of the Gentiles, the Salvation of God to the ends of the earth, and the Elect of God in whom his soul delighted,)† are so minutely foretold that no illustration is requisite to show that they testify of Jesus. Of the multitude of parallel passages in the New Testament, a few shall be selected and subjoined to the prophecy.

“ *He is despised and rejected of men ; He came unto his own, and his own received him not ; He had not where to lay his head ; they derided him.—A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ; Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus ; He mourned over Jerusalem ; He felt the ingratitude and the cruelty of men ; He bore the contradiction of sinners against himself—and these are expressions of sorrow which were peculiarly his own : ‘ Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; but for this end came I into the world.—My God ! my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ? We hid, as it were our faces from him ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.—All his disciples forsook him, and fled. Not this man, but Barabbas : now Barabbas was a robber. The soldiers mocked him, and bowed the knee before him in derision.’* The catalogue of his suf-

* Isa. lii. 13, &c. and chap. liii.

† Isa. xlii. 10 ; xlix. 6.

ferings is continued in the words of the prophecy—
“ We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted ; He was wounded, he was oppressed, he was afflicted ; He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter ; He was taken away by distress and by judgment.” And to this general description is united the detail of minuter incidents, which fixes the fact of their application to Jesus—*“ He was cut off out of the land of the living ; He was crucified in the flower of his age. They, (the people) made his grave with the wicked, but he was with the rich after his death ; Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, went and begged the body of Jesus, and laid it in his own new tomb. He was numbered with the transgressors ; He was crucified between two thieves. His visage was so marred, more than any man’s, and his form more than the sons of men,”*—without any direct allusion made to it, but in literal fulfilment of the prophecy—the bloody sweat, the traces of the crown of thorns—his having been spitted on, and smitten on the head—disfigured the face ;—while the scourge, the nails in his hands and in his feet, and the spear that pierced his side, marred the form of Jesus more than that of the sons of men.

That this circumstantial and continuous description of the Messiah’s sufferings might not admit of any ambiguity,—the dignity of his person—the incredulity of the Jews—the innocence of the sufferer—the cause of his sufferings—and his consequent exaltation,—are all particularly marked, and are equally applicable to the doctrine of the Gospel. *“ He shall be exalted and exalted, and be very high ; Who hath believed our re-*

port, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up as a tender plant," &c. The mean external condition of Christ is here assigned as the reason of the unbelief of the Jews, and it was the very reason which they themselves assigned. The prediction points out the procuring cause of his sufferings—"He hath borne our griefs, he hath carried our sorrows. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. His own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, and have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all; All flesh have sinned; ye were as sheep going astray, but ye are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth; Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin; God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin."

The whole of this prophecy thus refers to the Messiah. It describes both his debasement and his dignity—his rejection by the Jews—his humility, his affliction, and his agony—his magnanimity and his charity—how his words were disbelieved—how his state was lowly—how his sorrow was severe—how he opened not his mouth but to make intercession for the transgressors. In diametrical opposition to every dispensation of Providence which is registered in the records of

the Jews, it represents spotless innocence suffering by the appointment of Heaven,—death as the issue of perfect obedience,—his righteous servant as forsaken of God,—and one who was perfectly immaculate bearing the chastisement of many guilty—sprinkling many nations from their iniquity, by virtue of his sacrifice,—justifying many by his knowledge, and dividing a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul in death. This prophecy, therefore, simply as a prediction prior to the event, renders the very unbelief of the Jews an evidence against them, converts the scandal of the cross into an argument in favour of Christianity, and presents us with an epitome of the truth—a miniature of the Gospel in some of its most striking features. The simple exposition of it sufficed at once for the conversion of the eunuch of Ethiopia ; and, without the aid of an apostle, it can boast, in more modern times, of a nobler trophy of its truth—in a victory which it was mainly instrumental in obtaining and securing, over the strongly-rivettted prejudices and long-tried infidelity of a man of genius and of rank, who was one of the most abandoned, insidious, and successful of the advocates of impurity, and of the enemies of the Christian faith.*

Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, according to the scriptures ; and thus the apostle testifies—Those things which God had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

* Burnet's Life of the Earl of Rochester, p. 70, 71.

That the Jews still retain these prophecies, and are the means of preserving them, and communicating them throughout the world, while they bear so strongly against themselves, and testify so clearly of a Saviour that was first to suffer, and then to be exalted,—are facts as indubitable as they are unaccountable, and give a confirmation to the truth of Christianity, than which it is difficult to conceive any stronger. The prophecies, as we have seen, by a simple enumeration of a few of them, that testify of the sufferings of the Messiah, need no forced interpretation, but apply, in the plainest, simplest, and most literal manner, to the history of the sufferings and of the death of Christ. In the testimony of the Jews to the existence of these prophecies long prior to the Christian era; in their remaining unaltered to this hour; in the accounts given by the evangelists of the life and death of Christ; in the testimony of heathen authors; * and in the arguments of the first opposers of Christianity, from the mean condition of its author, and the manner of his death;—we have now greater evidence of the fulfilment of all these prophecies, than could have been conceived possible at so great a distance of time.

But the prophecies farther present us with the character of the Gospel as well as of its author, and with a description of the extent of his kingdom as well as of his sufferings. It was prophesied that the Messiah was to reveal the will of God to man, and establish a

* Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfectus erat.—*Tacit. An. XV. 44.*

new and perfect religion:—"I will raise them up a prophet, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.—Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.—There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse; he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity.—I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles to open the blind eyes.—Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, for a leader and a commander to the people. I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them; and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them; one king shall be king to them all, neither shall they defile themselves any more with idols.

They shall have one shepherd. They shall also walk in my judgments, and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant, and this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after these days: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they all shall know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more.”* A future and perfect revelation of the divine will is thus explicitly foretold. That these promised blessings were to extend beyond the confines of Judea, is expressly and frequently predicted:—“It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.”†

While many of the prophecies which are descriptive of the glories of the reign of the Messiah, refer to its universal extension, and to the final restoration of the Jews, they detail and define, at the same time, the nature and the blessings of the Gospel; and no better description or definition could now be given of the doctrine of Christ, and of the conditions which he hath proposed for the acceptance of man, than those very

* Deut. xviii. 18, 19. Isa. ix. 6, 7; xlii. 6; xi. 1, 6; lv. 3, 4. Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 25; xxxvii. 26. Jer. xxxi. 31, 33, 34.

† Isa. xlix. 6; lvi. 6, &c.

prophecies which were delivered many hundreds of years before he appeared in the world. The Gospel, as the name itself signifies, denotes glad tidings. Christ himself invited those who were weary and heavy laden to come unto him that they might find rest unto their souls. He was the messenger of peace. He came, as he professed, to offer a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and to reveal the will of God to man. He published the terms of our acceptance. His word is still that of reconciliation, his law that of love; and all the duty he has prescribed tends to qualify man for spiritual and eternal felicity, for this is the sum and the object of it all. What more could have been given, and what less could have been required? In similar terms do the prophecies of old describe the new law that was to be revealed, and the advent of the Saviour that was to come:—"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy king cometh unto thee. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation.—The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Having read these words out of the law, in the synagogue, Jesus said, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled." He was a teacher of righteousness and of peace, and in him alone it could have been fulfilled. The same character of joy, indicative of the kingdom of the Messiah, is also given by different prophets. He was to

“ finish transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity ; to sprinkle clean water upon the people of God, to sprinkle many nations, to save them from their uncleanness, and to open a fountain for sin and for uncleanness. Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him. I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more. The Messiah was to be anointed to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.”* And in the Gospel of peace these promised blessings are realized. We now see what many prophets and wise men did desire in vain to see. The Christian religion has indeed been sadly perverted and corrupted, and its corruptions are the subjects of prophecy. Bigotry has often tarnished and obscured all its benignity. Its lovely form has been shrouded in a mask of superstition, of tyranny, and of murder. But the religion of Jesus, pure from the lips of its Author, and the pen of his apostles, is calculated to diffuse universal happiness—tends effectually to promote the moral culture and the civilization of humanity—ameliorates the condition and perfects the nature of man. It is a doctrine of righteousness, a perfect rule of duty—It abolishes idolatry, and teaches all to worship God only—It is full of promises to all who obey it—It reveals the method of reconciliation for iniquity, and imparts the means to obtain it—It is good tidings to the meek—it binds up the

* Isa. lii. 7 ; lxi. 1 ; xlii. 1, 3. Jer. xxxi. 34. Dan. ix. 24.

broken-hearted, and presents to us the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, or the most perfect system of consolation, under all the evils of life, that can be conceived by man. For the confirmation of all these prophecies concerning it, we stand not in need of Jewish testimony, or that of the primitive Christians, or of any testimony whatever. It is a matter of experience and of fact. The doctrine of the Gospel is in complete accordance with the predictions respecting it. When we compare it with any impure, degrading, vicious, and cruel system of religion that existed in the world when these prophecies were delivered, its superiority must be apparent, and its unrivalled excellence must be acknowledged. Deities were then worshipped whose vices disgraced human nature; and even impiety could not institute a comparison between them and the God of Christians. Idolatry was universally prevalent, and men knew not a higher honour than the humiliation of bowing down in adoration to stocks and stones, and sometimes even to the beasts. Sacrifices were every where offered up, and human victims often bled, when the doctrine of reconciliation for iniquity was unknown. And we have only to look beyond the boundaries of Christianity,—to Ashantee, or to India, or to China,—to behold the most revolting of spectacles in the religious rites and practices of man. Regarding the superiority of the Christian religion only as a subject of prophecy, the assent can hardly be withheld, that the prophecies concerning its excellence, and the blessings which it imparts, have been amply verified by the peace-speaking Gospel of Jesus.

But, in ascertaining the accomplishment of ancient predictions, in evidence of the truth, the unbeliever is not solicited to relinquish one iota of his scepticism in any matter that can possibly admit of a reasonable doubt. For there are many prophecies of the truth of which every Christian is a witness, and to the fulfilment of which the testimony even of infidels must be borne. That the gospel emanated from Jerusalem—that it was rejected by a great proportion of the Jews—that it was opposed at first by human power—that idolatry has been overthrown before it—that kings have become subject to it and supported it—that it has already continued for many ages—and that it has been propagated throughout many countries, are facts clearly foretold and literally fulfilled:—“Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and he shall judge among the nations.* He shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.† The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.” In like manner, Christ frequently foretold the persecution that awaited his followers, and the final success of the Gospel, in defiance of all opposition.‡ “The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish;—from all your idols I will cleanse you;—I will cut off the name of idols out of the

* Isa. ii. 3, 4. Micah iv. 2. † Isa. viii. 14.

‡ Psa. ii. 2. Mat. x. 17; xvi. 18; xxiv. 14; xxviii. 19.

land, and they shall no more be remembered.*—To a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship. The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.† The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness;—a people that knew me not shall be called after my name. In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign to the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek. I will make an everlasting covenant with you. Behold thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that know not thee shall run after thee.” ‡

At the time the prophecies were delivered, there was not a vestige in the world of that spiritual kingdom and pure religion which they unequivocally represent as extending in succeeding ages, not only throughout the narrow bounds of the land of Judea, and those countries which alone the prophets knew, but over the Gentile nations also, even to the uttermost ends of the earth. None are now ignorant of the facts, that a system of religion which inculcates piety, and purity, and love,—which releases man from every burdensome rite, and every barbarous institution, and proffers the greatest of blessings,—arose from the land of Judea, from among a people who are the most selfish and worldly-minded of any nation upon earth;—that, though persecuted at first, and rejected by the Jews, it has spread

* Isa. ii. 17. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Zech. xiii. 2.

† Isa. xlix. 7—23; lii. 15; lx. 3. ‡ Isa. xi. 10; lv. 5.

throughout many nations, and extended to those who were far distant from the scene of its origin; and that it freely invites all to partake of its privileges, and makes no distinction between Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. A Latin poet, who lived at the commencement of the Christian era, speaks of the barbarous Britons as almost divided from the whole world; and yet, although far more distant from the land of Judea than from Rome, the law which hath come out from Jerusalem, hath taken, by its influence, the name of barbarous from Britain; and in our "distant isle of the Gentiles," are the prophecies fulfilled, that the kingdom of the Messiah, or knowledge of the Gospel, would extend to the uttermost part of the earth. And, in the present day, we can look from one distant isle of the Gentiles to another,—from the northern to the southern ocean, or from one extremity of the globe to another,—and behold the extinction of idolatry, and the abolition of every barbarous and cruel rite, by the humanizing influence of the Gospel. But it was at a time when no divine light dawned upon the world, save obscurely on the land of Judea alone; when all the surrounding nations, in respect to religious knowledge, were involved in thick darkness, gross superstition, and blind idolatry: when men made unto themselves gods of corruptible things; when those mortals were deified, after their death, who had been subject to the greatest vices, and who had been the oppressors of their fellow-men; when the most shocking rites were practised as acts of religion; when the most enlightened among the nations of the earth erected an altar to the "unknown God," and

set no limit to the number of their deities ; when one of the greatest of the heathen philosophers, and the best of their moralists, despairing of the clear discovery of the truth by human means, could merely express a wish for a divine revelation, as the only safe and certain guide ;* when slaves were far more numerous than free-men, even where liberty prevailed the most ; and when there was no earthly hope of redemption from temporal bondage or spiritual slavery ;—Even at such a time the voice of prophecy was uplifted in the land of Judea, and it spoke of a brighter day that was to dawn upon the world. It was indeed a light shining in a dark place. And from whence could that light have emanated but from heaven ? A Messiah was promised—a prince of peace was to appear—a stone was to be cut, without hands, that should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. And the spiritual reign of a Saviour is foretold in terms that define its duration and extent, as well as describe its nature :—“ I behold him but not now—I see him, but not nigh.—His name shall endure for ever,—his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him,—all nations shall call him blessed. He shall have dominion from sea to sea,—and from the river unto the ends of the earth.—Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Hea-then for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.—All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord—and all kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.†—I will give

* Plato in Phædone et in Alcibiade, II.

† Psa. lxxii. 8, 17 ; ii. 8 ; xxii. 27, 28.

thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth.—The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord had spoken it.*—The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations. He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.†—He will destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.‡—I am sought of them that asked not for me,—I am found of them that sought me not,—I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.§—It shall come to pass, in the last days, say both Isaiah and Micah in the same words, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills—and all nations shall flow unto it.||—In the place where it was said, Ye are not my people, it shall be said, Ye are the sons of the living God.¶—The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto Thee—the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto Thee.**—Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear—break forth into singing and cry aloud—for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife (more Gentiles than Jews.)††—Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations,—spare not, lengthen thy cords, for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and

* Isa. xl. 5. † Isa. lii. 10.; xlii. 4. ‡ Isa. xxv. 7.

§ Isa. lxxv. 1. || Isa. ii. 2. Micah iv. 1. ¶ Hos. i. 10.

** Isa. lx. 5.

†† Isa. liv. 1, 2, 4, 5.

on the left—and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles—for thy Maker is thy husband—the Lord of Hosts is his name—the Lord of the whole earth shall he be called—the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad—the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.”*

These prophecies all refer to the extent of the Messiah's kingdom; and clear and copious though they be, they form but a small number of the predictions of the same auspicious import;—and we have not merely to consider what part of them may yet remain to be fulfilled, but how much has already been accomplished, of which no surmise could have been formed, and of which all the wisdom of short-sighted mortals could not have warranted a thought. All of them were delivered many ages before the existence of that religion whose progress they minutely describe; and, when we compare the present state of any country where the gospel is professed in its purity, with its state at that period when the Sun of Righteousness began to arise upon it, we see light pervading the region of darkness, and ignorance and barbarism yielding to knowledge and moral cultivation. In opposition to all human probability, and to human wisdom and power, the Gospel of Jesus, propagated at first by a few fishermen of Galilee, has razed every heathen temple from its foundation—has overthrown before it every impure altar—has displaced, from every palace and every cottage which it has reached, the worship of every false god:—the whole civilized world acknowledges its authority—it has prevailed

* Isa. xxxv. 1.

from the first to the last in defiance of persecution—of opposition the most powerful and violent—of the direct attacks of avowed, and the insidious designs of disguised enemies:—and combating, as it ever has been combating, with all the evil passions of men that impel them to resist or to pervert it, the lapse of eighteen centuries confirms every ancient prediction, and verifies, to this hour, the declaration of its Author—“the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” How is it possible that it could have been conceived that such a religion would have been characterized in all its parts—would have been instituted—opposed—established—propagated throughout the world—embraced by so many nations—protected at last by princes and kings—and received as the rule of faith and the will of God? How could all these things, and many more respecting it, have been foretold, as they unquestionably were many centuries before the Author of Christianity appeared, if these prophecies be not an attestation from on high that every prediction and its completion is the work of God and not of man? What uninspired mortal could have described the nature, the effect, and the progress of the Christian religion, when none could have entertained an idea of its existence? For paganism consisted in external rites and cruel sacrifices, and in pretended mysteries. Its toleration, indeed, has been commended, and not undeservedly: For in religion it tolerated whatever was absurd and impious, in morals it tolerated all that was impure and almost all that was vicious. But the Jewish prophets, when the world was in darkness, and could supply no light to lead them to

such knowledge, predicted the rise of a religion which could boast of no *such* toleration, but which was to reveal the will and inculcate the worship of the one living and true God—which was to consist in moral obedience—to enjoin reformation of life and purity of heart—to abolish all sacrifice by revealing a better mean of reconciliation for iniquity—to be understood by all from the simplicity of its precepts—and to tolerate no manner of evil, a religion in every respect the reverse of paganism, and of which they could not have been furnished with any semblance upon earth. They saw nothing among the surrounding nations but the worship of a multiplicity of deities and of idols; if they had traversed the whole world they would have witnessed only the same spiritual degradation, and yet they predicted the final abolition and extinction both of polytheism and of idolatry. The Jewish dispensation was local, and Jews prophesied of a religion beginning from Jerusalem, which was to extend to the uttermost parts of the earth. So utterly unlikely and incredible were the prophecies either to have been foretold by human wisdom, or to have been fulfilled by human power; and, when both these wonders are united, they convey an assurance of the truth. As a matter of history, the progress of Christianity is at least astonishing, as the fulfilment of many prophecies, it is evidently miraculous.*

* Were it even to be conceded—as it never will in reason be,—that the causes assigned by Gibbon, for the rapid extension of Christianity were adequate and true, one difficulty, great as it is, would only be removed for the substitution of a greater. For what human ingenuity, though gifted with the utmost reach of

The prophesied success and extension of the Gospel is not less obvious in the New Testament than in the Old. A single instance may suffice:—"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." These are the words of a banished man, secluded in a small island from which he could not remove; a believer in a new religion everywhere spoken against and persecuted. They were uttered at a time when their truth could not possibly have been realized to the degree which it actually is at present, even if all human power had been combined for extending instead of extinguishing the Gospel. The diffusion of knowledge was then extremely difficult—the art of printing was then unknown—and many countries, which the Gospel has now reached, were then undiscovered. And,—multiplied as books now are, more than at any former period of the history of man—extensive as the range of commerce is, beyond what Tyre, or Carthage, or Rome could have ever boasted,—the dissemination of the Scriptures surpasses both the one and the other:—they have penetrated regions unknown to any work of human genius, and untouched even by the ardour of commercial speculation: and, with the prescription of more than seven-

discrimination, can ever attempt the solution of the question—how were all these occult causes, (for hidden they must then have been,) which the genius of Gibbon first discovered, foreseen, their combination known, and all their wonderful effects distinctly described for many centuries prior to their existence—or to the commencement of the period of their alleged operation?

teen centuries in its favour, the prophecy of the poor prisoner of Patmos is now exemplified, and thus proved to be more than a mortal vision, in the unexampled communication of the everlasting Gospel unto them that dwell on the earth, to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Christianity is professed over Europe and America. Christians are settled throughout every part of the earth. The Gospel is now translated into 150 languages and dialects, which are prevalent in countries from the one extremity of the world to the other: And what other book, since the creation, has ever been read or known in a tenth part of the number? Whatever may be the secondary causes by which these events have been accomplished, or whatever may be the opinion of men respecting them, the predictions which they amply verify must have originated by inspiration from Him who is the first Great Cause. What divine warrant, equal to this alone, can all the speculations of infidelity supply, or can any freethinker produce, for disbelieving the Gospel?

It is apparent, on a general view of the prophecies which refer to Christ and to the Christian religion, that they include predictions relative to many of the doctrines of the Gospel which are subjects of pure revelation, or which reason, of itself, could never have discovered; and these very doctrines, to which the self-sufficiency of human wisdom is often averse to yield assent, are thus to be numbered, in this respect, among the criterions of the truth of divine Revelation; for if these doctrines had not been contained in Scripture, the prophecies respecting them could not have been fulfilled.

And the more wonderful they appear, they were by so much the more unlikely or inconceivable to have been foretold by man, and to have been afterwards embodied in a system of religion.

It is also evident that there are many prophecies applicable to Jesus, to which no allusion is made in the history of his life. The minds of his disciples were long impressed with the prejudices, arising from the lowliness of his mortal state, which were prevalent among the Jews; and they viewed the prophecies through the mist of those traditions which had magnified the earthly power to which alone they looked, and obscured the divine nature of the expected reign of the Messiah. It was only after the resurrection of Christ, as the Scripture informs us, that their understandings were opened to know the prophecies. But while the accomplishment of many of these predictions is thus unnoticed in the New Testament, the fulfilment of each and all of them is written, as with a pen of iron, in the life and doctrine and death of Jesus;—and the undesigned, and unsuspecting proof, thus indirectly but amply given, is now stronger than if an appeal had been made to the prophecies in every instance;—and, freed from the prejudices of the Jews, we may now combine and compare all the antecedent prophecies respecting the Messiah with the narrative of the New Testament, and with the nature and history of Christianity; and, having seen how the former is a transcript of the latter, we may draw the legitimate conclusion—that the spirit of prophecy is indeed the testimony of Jesus.

And may it not, on a review of the whole, be war-

rantly asserted, that the time and the place of the birth of Christ—the tribe and the family from which he was descended, the manner of his life, his character, his miracles, his sufferings and his death, the nature of his doctrine ;—and the fate of his religion, that it was to proceed from Jerusalem, that the Jews would reject it, that it would be opposed and persecuted at first, that it would be extended to the Gentiles, that idolatry would give way before it, that kings would submit to its authority, and that it would be spread throughout many nations, even to the most distant parts of the earth—were all of them subjects of ancient prophecy?

Why, then, were so many prophecies delivered? Why, from the calling of Abraham to the present time, have the Jews been separated, as a peculiar people, from all the nations of the earth? Why, from the age of Moses to that of Malachi, during the space of 1000 years, did a succession of prophets arise, all testifying of a Saviour that was to come? Why was the book of prophecy sealed for nearly 400 years before the coming of Christ? Why is there still, to this day, undisputed if not miraculous evidence of the antiquity of all these prophecies, by their being sacredly preserved in every age, in the custody and guardianship of the enemies of Christianity? Why was such a multiplicity of facts predicted that are applicable to Christ and to him alone? Why, but that all this mighty preparation might usher in the Gospel of Righteousness; and that, like all the works of the Almighty, his word through Jesus Christ might never be left without a witness of his wisdom and his power. And if the prophecies which testify of

the Gospel and of its Author, display, from the slight glance which has here been given of them, any traces of the finger of God, how strong must be the conviction which a full view of them imparts to the minds of those who diligently search the Scriptures, and see how clearly they testify of Christ?

CHAPTER III.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

THE commonwealth of Israel, from its establishment to its dissolution, subsisted for more than 1500 years. In delivering their law, Moses assumed more than the authority of a human legislator, and asserted that he was invested with a divine commission ; and in enjoining obedience to it, after having conducted them to the borders of Canaan, he promises many blessings to accompany their compliance with the law, and denounces grievous judgments that would overtake them for the breach of it. The history of the Jews, in each succeeding age, attests the truth of the last prophetic warning of the first of their rulers: but too lengthened a detail would be requisite for its elucidation. Happily, it contains predictions, applicable to more recent events, which admit not of any ambiguous interpretation, and refer to historical facts that admit no cavil. He who founded their government foretold, notwithstanding the intervention of so many ages, the manner of its over-

throw. While they were wandering in the wilderness, without a city and without a home, he threatened them with the destruction of their cities, and the devastation of their country. While they viewed, for the first time, the land of Palestine, and when, victorious and triumphant, they were about to possess it, he represented the scene of desolation that it would exhibit to their vanquished and enslaved posterity, on their last departure from it. Ere they themselves had entered it as enemies, he describes those enemies by whom their descendants were to be subjugated and dispossessed, though they were to arise from a very distant region, and although they did not appear till after a millenary and a half of years:—"The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far—from the end of the earth—as swift as the eagle flieth,—a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand—a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee; and they shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high fenced walls come down wherein thou trustest, throughout all thy land."*

Each particular of this prophecy, though it be only introductory to others, has met its full completion. The remote situation of the Romans—the rapidity of their march—the very emblem of their arms—their unknown

* Deut. xxviii. 49, &c.

language, and warlike appearance—the indiscriminate cruelty, and unsparing pillage which they exercised towards the persons and the property of the Jews, could scarcely have been represented in more descriptive terms. Vespasian, Adrian, and Julius Severus, removed with part of their armies from Britain to Palestine—the extreme points of the Roman world. The eagle was the standard of their armies—and the utmost activity and expedition were displayed in the reduction of Judea. They were a nation of fierce countenance—a race distinct from the effeminate Asiatic troops. At Gadara and Gamala—throughout many parts of the Roman Empire, and, in repeated instances, at Jerusalem itself—the slaughter of the Jews was indiscriminate, without distinction of age or sex. The inhabitants were enslaved and banished,—all their possessions confiscated—and the kingdom of Israel, humbled at first into a province of the Roman empire, became at last the private property of the Emperor. Throughout all the land of Judea every city was besieged and taken—and their high and fenced walls were razed from the foundation. But the prophet particularizes incidents the most shocking to humanity, which mark the utmost possible extremity of want and wretchedness—the last act to which famine could prompt despair—and the last subject of a prediction, that could have been uttered by man:—“ And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body—the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee—so that the man that is tender among you, and

very delicate, his eye shall be evil towards his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave—so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children, whom he shall eat, because he hath nothing left him in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter, and towards her young one, and towards her children, which she shall bear—for she shall eat them for want of all things, secretly, in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.”* Six hundred years posterior to this prediction, when Samaria, then the capital of Israel, was besieged by all the host of the king of Syria, the most loathsome substitute for food was of great price,—and an ass’s head was sold for 80 pieces of silver. † When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land. And Josephus relates the direful calamities of the Jews in their last siege, before they ceased to have a city. The famine was too powerful for all other passions,—for what was otherwise revered was in this case despised. Children snatched the food out of the very mouths of their fathers; and even mothers, overcoming the tenderest feelings of na-

* Deut. xxviii. 53, &c.

† 2 Kings vi. 4.

ture, took from their perishing infants the last morsels that could sustain their lives. In every house where there was the least shadow of food, a contest arose; and the nearest relatives struggled with each other for the miserable means of subsistence.* He adds a most revolting detail. While, in all these cases, the eye of man was thus evil towards his brother, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith their enemies distressed them,—the unparalleled inhuman compact between the two women of Samaria; the bitter lamentation of Jeremiah over the miseries of the siege which he witnessed, “The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children,—they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people;” and the harrowing recital, by Josephus, of the noble lady killing, with her own hands, and eating secretly, her own suckling, (the discovery of which struck even the whole suffering city with horror,) which are all recorded as facts, without the least allusion to the prediction;—too faithfully realize, to the very letter, the dread denunciations of the prophet. When any well-authenticated facts, of so singular and appalling a nature, were predicted for ages, they could not possibly have been revealed but by inspiration from that Omniscience which alone can foresee the termination of the iniquities of nations.

Moses, and the other prophets, foretold also that the Jews would be left few in number—that they would be slain before their enemies—that the pride of their power would be broken—that their cities would be laid

* Joseph. de Bello, l. 6, 3, § 4.

waste—that they would be destroyed and brought to nought—plucked from off the land—sold for slaves—and that none would buy them—that their high places were to be desolate—and their bones to be scattered around their altars—that Jerusalem was to be encamped round about—to be besieged with a mount—to have forts raised against it—to be ploughed over as a field, and to become heaps ;—that the end was to come upon it, and that the Lord would judge them according to their ways, and recompence them for all their abominations ;—the sword without and the pestilence and the famine within ;—“ he that is in the field shall die with the sword—and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him.”*

These predictions relative to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, which are recorded in the Pentateuch, and in the subsequent prophecies, accord with the minute prophetic narrative which Jesus gave of the same sad event. Any adequate delineation of it alone would far surpass the limits of this treatise. But the subject has been fully and frequently illustrated, and the prediction harmonizes so completely with the unimpeachable testimony of impartial historians, that it is merely necessary, for the elucidation of its truth, to compare the prophetic description with the historical facts.

Besides frequent allusions, in his discourses and pa-

* Lev. xxvi. 30, &c. Deut. xxviii. 62, &c. Isa. xxix. 3. Ezek. vi. 5. Micah iii. 12. Jer. xxvi. 18. Ezek. vii. 7—9—15.

rables, * the predictions of Christ, concerning Jerusalem, are recorded at length by three of the Evangelists. They are omitted by the Apostle John, in whose writings alone, from the age to which he lived, their insertion would have been suspicious. They were delivered to the disciples of Christ in answer to those direct questions which they put, in their surprise and alarm, at his declaration of the fate of the temple, “When shall these things be? When shall be the sign of them, and of the end of the world?” The reply embraces all the subjects of the query, and is equally circumstantial and distinct. The death of Christ happened 37 years previous to the destruction of Jerusalem. By the unanimous testimony of antiquity, the three Gospels were published, and at least two of the Evangelists were dead, several years before that event. Copies of the Gospels were disseminated so extensively and rapidly, that any deceit must have been instantaneously detected by the powerful, and numerous, and watchful enemies of the cross. And the evidence of the prior publicity of the Gospels was so strong, that it remained unchallenged by Julian, by Porphyry, or by Celsus. The authenticity of the prophecy thus rests on sure grounds, and the facts in which it received its accomplishment are incontestible. Josephus was one of the most distinguished generals in the commencement of the Jewish

* Matt. xxi. 18, 19—33; xxii. 1—7; xxv. 14—30. Mark xi. 12, 13—20, &c. Luke xiii. 6—9; xiv. 17—24; xx. 9—19; xxiii. 27—31.

war ; he was an eye-witness of the facts which he records ; he appeals to Vespasian and to Titus for the truth of his history : it received the singular attestation of the subscription of the latter to its accuracy ; it was published while the facts were recent and notorious ; and the extreme carefulness with which he avoids the mention of the name of Christ, in the history of the Jewish war, is not less remarkable than the great precision with which he describes the events that verify his predictions. Not a few of the transactions are also related by Tacitus, Philostratus, and Dion Cassius.

The different prophecies of Christ respecting Jerusalem may be condensed into a single view :

“ And Jesus went out and departed from the temple ; and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. * And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things ; verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying—Tell us when shall these things be ; and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world ? And Jesus answered, and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And the time draws near ; and ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars,—or commotions : these things must first come to pass, but the end is not yet.

* Matt. xxiv. Mark xiii. Luke xxi.

Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven. All these things are the beginning of sorrows. But, before all these things, shall they lay their hands upon you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And many shall be offended. Ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolk and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not a hair of your head perish. And many false prophets will arise and will deceive many; and, because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. And the gospel must first be published among all nations, and then shall the end come. When ye, therefore, shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, and the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place, and where it ought not, then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let him which is in the midst of it depart out. Let him which is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter therein to take any thing out of his house. Neither let him that is in the field turn back again for to take up his garment, for these are the days of vengeance. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; for there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon his people—and they shall fall by the edge of the sword,

and shall be led captive into all nations. There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time—no, nor ever shall be—and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled. This generation shall not pass away till all these things be done.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees—fill ye up the measure of your Fathers. Behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them ye will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city. All these things shall be done in this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

“When he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thy eyes.† For the days shall come upon thee, that thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation.”

* Matt. xxiii. 34.

† Luke xix. 41.

These prophecies from the Old Testament and from the New, repel the charge of ambiguity. They are equally copious and clear. History attests the truth of each and all of them; and a recapitulation of them forms an enumeration of the facts. *False Christs appeared.* Simon Magus boasted that he was some great one.—Dositheus, the Samaritan, pretended that he was the lawgiver prophesied of by Moses.—Theudas, promising the performance of a miracle, persuaded a great multitude to follow him to Jordan, and deceived many.* The country was filled with impostors and deceivers, who induced the people to follow them into the wilderness;—their credulity became the punishment of their previous scepticism, and, in one instance, the tumult was so great that the soldiers took 200 prisoners, and slew twice that number. *There were wars, and rumours of wars; nation rose against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.* The Jews resisted the erection of the statue of Caligula in the temple; and, such was the dread of Roman resentment, that the fields remained uncultivated.† At Cæsarea, the Jews and the Syrians contended for the mastery of the city. Twenty thousand of the former were put to death, and the rest were expelled. Every city in Syria was then divided into two armies, and multitudes were slaughtered. Alexandria and Damascus presented a similar scene of bloodshed. About fifty thousand of the Jews fell in the former, and ten thousand in the latter.‡ The Jewish na-

* Joseph. Ant. xx. 5, 1; Jos. xx. 7, 5.

† Joseph. *de Bell.* l. ii. 18, 1, 2.

‡ Joseph. *ib.* ii. c. 13; c. 18, 1, 2, 7, 8.

tion rebelled against the Romans ; Italy was convulsed with contentions for the empire ; and, as a proof of the troublous and warlike character of the period, within the brief space of two years, four emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius suffered death. *There were famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.* In the reign of Claudius Cæsar there were different famines. They continued to be severe for several years throughout the land of Judea. Pestilence succeeded them. In the same reign there were earthquakes at Rome, at Apamea, and at Crete. In that of Nero there was an earthquake in Campania, and another in which Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse, were overthrown, and others are recorded to have happened in various places, before the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.* “ The constitution of nature,” says the Jewish historian,† “ was confounded for the destruction of men, and one might easily conjecture that no common calamities were portended. *And there were fearful sights and signs from heaven.* Tacitus and Josephus agree in relating and in describing events so surprising and supernatural, that their narrative perfectly accords with the previous prediction.‡ And the fact cannot be disputed, that, whatever these

* Suet. *Vit. Clau.* 18. Tac. *Ann.* 1. 12, c. 43, 1. 14, c. 27. *Jos.* iv. 6. Tac. 1. xiv. 27 ; xii. 43, 58. † *Jos.* iv. 4.

‡ Evenerant prodigia, quæ neque hostiis, neque votis piare fas habet gens superstitioni obnoxia religionibus adversa. Visæ per cœlum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma, et subito nubium igne collucere templum. Expassæ repente delubri fores et audita major humana vox *excedere deos* ; simul ingens motus excedentium. Tacit. *Hist.* 1. 5, c. 13.

sights were, the minds of men were impressed with the idea that they were indeed signs from heaven : And even this could never have been foreseen by man. There is surely something at least unaccountable in their prediction and in their relation by historians, unprejudiced and unfriendly to the cause which their testimony supports. *The disciples of Jesus were persecuted, imprisoned, afflicted, and hated of all nations for his name's sake, and many of them were put to death. Peter, Simeon, and Jude were crucified.* Paul was beheaded ; Matthew, Thomas, James, Matthias, Mark, and Luke, were put to death in different countries, and in various manners. There was a war against the very name. They were accused of hatred to the human race. The prejudices and the interest of the supporters of paganism were everywhere against them ; and, in one memorable instance, Nero, to screen himself from the guilt of being the incendiary of his capital, accused the innocent but hated Christians of that atrocious deed, and inflicted upon them the most excruciating tortures.† He made their sufferings a spectacle and a sport to the Romans. To compensate for his disappointment in not trampling on the ashes of Rome, as well as to cloak his iniquity, the monster (for the man and the monarch were both laid aside,) gratified his savage lust of cruelty, by the substitution of one feast for another ; he selected the Christians for his victims, from the general odium under which they lay—and their very name*

* Cave's *Lives of the Ap.* Dupin.

† Tac. Ann. l. xv. c. 44.

became the warrant for that selection, and sufficed to sanction the infliction of unheard of barbarities. *Many shall be offended, and shall betray one another; and the love of many shall wax cold.* The Apostle of the Gentiles often complained of false brethren, that many turned away from him, and that he stood alone, forsaken by all, when he first appeared before Nero. And Tacitus testifies that very many were convicted, on the evidence of others who had previously been accused. *But the Gospel was published throughout the world, in defiance of all peril and prosecution.* In the age of the Apostles, epistles were addressed to Christians at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, Thessalonica, and in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. After Christ delivered this prophecy, he was in a little time forsaken by all his disciples, and put to death as a criminal. At their first assembly, they were a little flock, the number of the names together were about a hundred and twenty. And, unpromising as the prospect was, a few fishermen of Galilee, aided afterwards by a tent-maker of Tarsus, circumscribed not their labours, in the preaching of the Gospel, by the boundaries of the Roman empire! Could the reception, or the fate of Christ himself have warranted such a conclusion? Did ever any cause triumph by such means? or was ever any cause opposed like his? And could any thing be more unlikely to have been clearly foreseen, and positively affirmed? All these events preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, and then the end of that city was at hand. The signs of its approaching ruin are given as a warning to depart from it. *Jerusa-*

lem was encompassed with armies. The Roman armies, with their idolatrous ensigns, which were an abomination to the Jews, surrounded it—but, instead of being a signal for flight, this would naturally have implied the impossibility of escape, and the warning would have been in vain. Yet the words of Jesus did not deceive his disciples. Cestius Gallus, the Roman general, besieged Jerusalem; but, immediately after, contrary to all human probability, an interval was given for escape. He suddenly and causelessly retreated, though some of the chief men of the city had offered to open to him the gates. Josephus acknowledges that the utmost consternation prevailed among the besieged—and that the city would infallibly have been taken.* And he attributes it to the just vengeance of God, that the city and the sanctuary were not then taken, and the war terminated at once. He relates also, how many of the most illustrious inhabitants departed from the city, as from a sinking vessel; and how, upon the approach of Vespasian afterwards, multitudes fled from Jericho into the mountainous country. Thither, and to the city of Pella, fled all the disciples of Jesus, as credible historians assert. † And, amidst all the succeeding calamities, *not a hair of their heads did perish.*

There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time—no, nor ever shall be. There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. These are the days of vengeance. Such

* Joseph. l. 2. c. 19, 20.

† Epiphanius in Heres. Nazar. c. 7. Eusebii Ec. His. lib. iii. c. 5.

are some of the words of Jesus, relative to the destruction of Jerusalem; and all the previous prophecies regarding it were of the same sad import. The particulars of the siege are all related by Josephus, and form a detail of miseries that admit not of exaggeration; and which he repeatedly declares, in terms that entirely accord with the language of prophecy, are altogether unequalled in the history of the world.—No general description can give a just idea of calamities the most terrible that ever nation suffered. The Jews had assembled in their city from all the surrounding country, to keep the feast of unleavened bread. It was crowded with inhabitants when they were all imprisoned within its walls. The passover, which was commemorative of their first great deliverance, had collected them for their last signal destruction. Before any external enemy appeared, the fiercest dissensions prevailed—the blood of thousands was shed by their brethren; they destroyed and burned in their frenzy, their common provisions for the siege; they were destitute of any regular government, and divided into three factions. On the extirpation of one of these, each of the others contended for the mastery. The most ferocious and frantic,—the robbers or zealots, as they are indiscriminately called, prevailed at last. They entered the temple, under the pretence of offering sacrifices, and carried concealed weapons for the purpose of assassination. They slew the priests at the very altar; and their blood, instead of that of the victims for sacrifice, flowed around it. They afterwards rejected all terms of peace with the enemy: None were suffered to escape from the city—every house was entered—every article of subsist-

ence was pillaged—and the most wanton barbarities were committed. Nothing could restrain their fury: wherever there was the appearance or scent of food, the human bloodhounds tracked it out; and, though a general famine raged around; though they were ever trampling on the dead; and though the habitations for the living were converted into charnel-houses, nothing could intimidate, or appal, or satisfy, or shock them, till Mary, the daughter of Eleazer, a lady once rich and noble, displayed to them and offered them all her remaining food, the scent of which had attracted them in their search—the bitterest morsel that ever mother or mortal tasted—the remnant of her half-eaten suckling.—Sixty thousand Roman soldiers unremittingly besieged them; they encompassed Jerusalem with a wall, and hemmed them in on every side; they brought down their high and fenced walls to the ground; they slaughtered the slaughterers, they spared not the people; they burned the temple in defiance of the commands, the threats, and the resistance of their general. With it the last hope of all the Jews was extinguished. They raised at the sight, an universal but an expiring cry of sorrow and despair. Ten thousand were there slain, and six thousand victims were enveloped in its blaze. The whole city, full of the famished dying, and of the murdered dead, presented no picture but that of despair—no scene but of horror. The aqueducts and the city-sewers were crowded as the last refuge of the hopeless. Two thousand were found dead there, and many were dragged from thence and slain. The Roman soldiers put all indiscriminately to death, and ceased not till

they became faint and weary and overpowered with the work of destruction. But they only sheathed the sword to light the torch. They set fire to the city in various places. The flames spread everywhere, and were checked but for a moment by the red streamlets in every street. Jerusalem became heaps, and the Mountain of the House as the high places of the forest. Within the circuit of eight miles, in the space of five months—foes and famine, pillage and pestilence, within—a triple wall around, and besieged every moment from without—eleven hundred thousand human beings perished—though the tale of each of them was a tragedy. Was there ever so concentrated a mass of misery? Could any prophecy be more faithfully and awfully fulfilled? The prospect of his own crucifixion, when Jesus was on the way to Calvary, was not more clearly before him, and seemed to affect him less, than the fate of Jerusalem. How full of tenderness, and fraught with truth, was the sympathetic response of the condoling sufferer, to the wailings and lamentations of the women who followed him, when he turned unto them, and beheld the city, which some of them might yet see wrapt in flames and drenched in blood, and said: “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they will say—Blessed are the barren, and the womb that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” No impostor ever betrayed such feel-

ings as a man, nor predicted events so unlikely, astonishing, and true, as an attestation of a divine commission. Jesus revealed the very judgments of God; for such the instrument, by whom it was accomplished, interpreted the capture and destruction of Jerusalem, acknowledging that his own power would otherwise have been ineffectual. When eulogized for the victory, Titus disclaimed the praise, affirming, that he was only the instrument of executing the sentence of the divine justice. And their own historian asserts, in conformity with every declaration of Scripture upon the subject, that the iniquities of the Jews were as unparalleled as their punishment.

All these prophecies, of which we have been reviewing the accomplishment, were delivered in a time of perfect peace, when the Jews retained their own laws, and enjoyed the protection, as they were subject to the authority, of the Roman empire, then in the zenith of its power. The wonder excited in the minds of his disciples at the strength and stability of the temple, drew forth from Jesus the announcement of its speedy and utter ruin. He foretold the appearance of false Christs and pretended prophets; the wars and rumours of wars; the famines and pestilences and earthquakes and fearful sights that were to ensue; the persecution of his disciples; the apostacy of many; the propagation of the gospel; the sign that should warn his disciples to fly from approaching ruin; the encompassing and enclosing of Jerusalem; the grievous affliction of the tender sex; the unequalled miseries of all; the entire destruction of the city; the shortening of their

sufferings, that still some might be saved ; and that all this dread crowd of events, which might well have occupied the progress of ages, was to pass away within the limits of a single generation. None but He who discerns futurity could have foretold and described all these things ; and their complete and literal fulfilment shows them to be indubitably the revelation of God.

But the prophecies also mark minuter facts, if possible more unlikely to have happened. Jerusalem was to be ploughed over as a field ; to be laid even with the ground ; of the temple one stone was not to be left upon another ; the Jews were to be few in number ; to be led captive into all nations ; to be sold for slaves, and none would buy them. And each of these predictions was strictly verified. Titus commanded the whole city and temple to be razed from the foundation. The soldiers were not then disobedient to their general. Avarice combined with duty and with resentment : The altar, the temple, the walls, and the city, were overthrown from the base, in search of the treasures which the Jews, beset on every hand by plunderers, had concealed and buried during the siege. Three towers, and the remnant of a wall, alone stood ; the monument and memorial of Jerusalem ; and the city was afterwards ploughed over by Terentius Rufus. In the siege, and in the previous and subsequent destruction of the cities and villages of Judea, according to the specified enumeration of Josephus, about 1,300,000 suffered death ; ninety-seven thousand were led into captivity. They were sold for slaves, and were so despised and disesteemed, that many remained unpur-

chased. And their conquerors were so prodigal of their lives, that, in honour of the birth day of Domitian, 2500 of them were placed, in savage sport, to contend with wild beasts, and otherwise to be put to death.*

But the miseries of their race were not then at a close. There was a curse on the land, that hath scathed it; a judgment on the people that hath scattered them throughout the world. Many prophecies respecting them yet remain to be considered, and much of their history is yet untold. The prophecies are as clear as the facts are visible.

* Tacitus, who flourished about thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, speaks of the strength of the fortifications of that city, the immense riches and strength of the temple, the factions that raged during the siege, as well as of the prodigies that preceded its fall. And he particularly mentions the large army brought by Vespasian to subdue Judea, "a fact which shows the magnitude and importance of the expedition." Philostratus particularly relates that Titus declared, after the capture of Jerusalem, that he was not worthy of the crown of victory, as he had only lent his hand to the execution of a work, in which God was pleased to manifest his anger. Dion Cassius records the conquest of Judea by Titus and Vespasian, the obstinate and bloody resistance of the Jews during the siege, the destruction of the temple by fire. It is recorded by Maimonides, and in the Jewish Talmud, (as cited by Basnage and Lardner,) that Terentius Rufus, an officer in the Roman army, tore up, with a ploughshare, the foundations of the temple. The triumphal arch of Titus, commemorative of the destruction of Jerusalem, and with figures of Roman soldiers bearing on their shoulders the holy vessels of the temple, is in a perfect state of preservation.

CHAPTER IV.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE JEWS.

WHILE Moses, as a divine legislator, promised to the Israelites that their posterity, and happiness, and peace, would all keep pace with their obedience, he threatened them with a gradation of punishments, rising in proportion to their impenitence and iniquity ;—and neither in blessings nor in chastisements hath the Ruler among the Nations dealt in like manner with any people. But their wickedness, and consequent calamities, greatly preponderated, and are yet prolonged. The retrospect of the history of the Jews, since their dispersion, could not, at the present day, be drawn in truer terms, than in the unpropitious auguries of their prophet above 3200 years ago. In the most ancient of all records, we read the lively representation of the present condition of the most singular people upon earth. Moses professed to look through the glass of ages : The revolution of many centuries has brought the object immediately before us —we may scrutinize the features of futurity as they then appeared to his prophetic gaze,—and we may determine between the probabilities whether they were con

jectures of a mortal, who “ knows not what a day may bring forth,” or the revelation of that Being, “ in whose sight a thousand years are but as yesterday.”

“ I will scatter you among the heathens, and draw out a sword after you,—and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste ; and upon them that are left of you I will send a faintness into their hearts, in the land of their enemies ; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them—and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword—and they shall fall when none pursueth—and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies—and ye shall perish among the heathen ;—and the land of your enemies shall eat you up—and they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies’ lands ; and also, in the iniquities of their fathers, shall they pine away with them,—and yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly. * And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen whither the Lord will lead you. † The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies—thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them—and shall be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. ‡ The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart,—and thou shalt grope at noon-day as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in

* Lev. xxvi. 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 44.

† Deut. iv. 27.

‡ Deut. xxviii. 25, 28, 29, 32, 33, 34, 37-45, 46.

thy ways, and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee. Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given to another people. There shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land and all thy labour shall a nation, which thou knowest not, eat up, and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway—so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. The Lord shall bring thee unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known,—and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all the nations whether the Lord shall lead thee.—Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things, therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger and in thirst—and in nakedness, and in want of all things—and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.—And the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plague of thy seed, even great plagues and of long continuance.* All these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever,—and it shall come to pass, that, as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you—so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy and to bring you to nought, and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it, and the Lord will scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth

* Deut. xxviii. 47, 48, 59.

even unto the other—and among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest ; but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind—and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even ! and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.”*

The writings of all the succeeding prophets abound with similar predictions. “ I will cause them to be removed into all nations of the earth. I will cast them out into a land that they know not, where I will show them no favour. I will feed them with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.† I will scatter them also among the heathen—whom neither they nor their fathers have known. I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach, a proverb, a taunt, and a curse in all places whither I shall drive them ; and I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.‡ I will bereave them of children. I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, even among all the nations whither I have driven them.§ I will execute judg-

* Deut. xxviii. 63-67.

† Jer. ix. 16.

‡ Jer. xxiv. 9, 10 ; xv. 7.

§ Jer. xxix. 18.

ment in thee—and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.* I will scatter them among the nations, among the heathens, and disperse them in the countries.† They shall cast the silver in the streets and their gold shall be removed—their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord,—they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels, because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity.‡ I will sift the house of Israel among the nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. Death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the Lord of hosts. They shall be wanderers among the nations.§ Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and convert and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? and he answered, until the cities be wasted, without inhabitants, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,—and the Lord have removed men far away—and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. || Though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them,—and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good. But he that scattereth Israel will gather him and keep him.¶ And, fear not, thou, my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel; for behold I

* Ezek. v. 10.

† Ezek. xii. 15.

‡ Ezek. vii. 19.

§ Amos ix. 9. Jer. viii. 3. Hos. ix. 17.

|| Isa. vi. 10, 11, 12. ¶ Jer. xxxi. 10.

will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity. I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not utterly cut thee off, or leave thee wholly unpunished.* The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness, in the latter days." †

All these predictions respecting the Jews are delivered with the clearness of history and the confidence of truth. They represent the manner,—the extent—the nature—and the continuance of their dispersion,—their persecutions—their blindness—their sufferings—their feebleness—their fearfulness—their pusillanimity,—their ceaseless wanderings—their hardened impenitence—their insatiable avarice,—and the grievous oppression—the continued spoliation—the marked distinction—the universal mockery—the unextinguishable existence, and unlimited diffusion of their race. *They were to be plucked from off their own land—smitten before their enemies—consumed from off their own land, and left few in number.* The Romans destroyed their cities and ravaged their country, and the inhabitants who escaped from the famine, the pestilence, the sword, and the captivity, were forcibly expelled from Judea, and fled as houseless wanderers into all the surrounding re-

* Jer. xlvi. 27, 28.

† Hos. iii. 4, 5.

gions. But they clung, for a time, around the land which their fathers had possessed for so many ages, and on which they looked as an inheritance allotted by heaven to their race; and they would not relinquish their claim to the possession of it by any single overthrow, however great. Unparalleled as were the miseries which they had suffered, in the slaughter of their kindred, the loss of their property and their homes, the annihilation of their power, the destruction of their capital city, and in the devastation of their country by Titus—yet the fugitive and exiled Jews soon resorted again to their native soil; and sixty years had scarcely elapsed, when, deceived by an impostor, allured by the hope of a triumphant Messiah, and excited to revolt by intolerable oppression, they strove, by a vigorous and united but frantic effort, to reconquer Judea—to cast off the power of the Romans, which had everywhere crushed them, and to rescue themselves and their country from ruin. A war,—which their enthusiasm and desperation alike protracted for two years, and in which, exclusive of a vast number that perished by famine, and sickness, and fire, five hundred and eighty thousand Jews are said to have been slain,—terminated in their entire discomfiture and final banishment. They were so beset on every side, and cut down in detached portions by the Roman soldiers, that, in the words of a heathen historian, very few of them escaped. Fifty of their strongholds were razed from the ground, and their cities sacked and consumed by fire; Judea was laid waste and left as a desert.* Though a simi-

* Dion. lib. lxix.

lar fate never befel any other people without proving the extirpation of their race or the last of their miseries, that awful prediction, in its reference to the Jews, met its full completion—which yet they survived to await, in every country when exiles from their own, an accumulation of almost unceasing calamities, protracted throughout many succeeding ages. *The cities shall be wasted without inhabitant. Every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein. They were rooted out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation.* * A public edict of the Emperor Adrian rendered it a capital crime for a Jew † to set a foot in Jerusalem: and prohibited them from entering into any part of the land of Judea. Heathens, Christians, and Mahometans have alternately possessed it: It has been the prey of the Saracens;—the descendants of Ishmael have often overrun it: The children of Israel have alone been denied the possession of it, though thither they ever wish to return—and though it forms the only spot on earth where the ordinances of their religion can be observed. And, amidst all the revolutions of states, and the extinction of many nations, in so long a period, the Jews alone have not only ever been aliens in the land of their fathers; but whenever any of them have been permitted, at any period since the time of their dispersion, to sojourn there, they have experienced even more contumelious treatment than elsewhere. Benjamin of Tudela, who travelled in the twelfth century through great part of Europe and of Asia, found the Jews every

* Isaiah vi. 11. Jer. iv. 29. Deut. xxix. 28.

† Tert. Ap. c. 21, Basnage's *Continuation of Josephus*, b. vi. § 1.

where oppressed, *particularly in the Holy Land*. And to this day, (while the Jews who reside in Palestine, or who resort thither in old age, that their bones may not be laid in a foreign land, are alike ill treated and abused by Greeks, Armenians, and Europeans,*) the haughty deportment of the despotic Turkish soldier, and the abject state of the poor and helpless Jews are painted to the life by the prophet. *The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high, and thou shalt come down very low.* †

But the extent is still more remarkable than the manner of their dispersion. Many prophecies describe it, and foretold, thousands of years ago, what we now behold. *They have been scattered among the nations,—among the heathen,—among the people, even from one end of the earth unto the other : They have been removed into all the kingdoms of the earth ; the whole remnant of them hath been scattered into all the winds ; they have been dispersed throughout all countries, and sifted among the nations like as corn is sifted in a sieve, and yet not the least grain has fallen upon the earth—* though dispersed throughout all nations they have remained distinct from them all. And there is not a country on the face of the earth where the Jews are unknown. They are found alike in Europe, Asia, America, and Africa. They are citizens of the world, without a country. Neither mountains, nor rivers, nor deserts, nor oceans,—which are the boundaries of other nations,—have terminated their wanderings. They

* General Straton's MSS. Travels. † Deut. xxviii. 43.

abound in Poland, in Holland, in Russia, and in Turkey. In Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and Britain, they are more thinly scattered. In Persia, China, and India—on the east and on the west of the Ganges,—they are *few in number among the heathen*. They have trode the snows of Siberia, and the sands of the burning desert;—and the European traveller hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach,—even in the very interior of Africa, south of Timbuctoo.* From Moscow to Lisbon—from Japan to Britain—from Borneo to Archangel—from Hindostan to Honduras, no inhabitant of any nation upon earth would be known in all the intervening regions but a Jew alone.

But the history of the Jews throughout the whole world, and in every age since their dispersion, verifies the most minute predictions concerning them,—and to a recital of facts too well authenticated to admit of dispute, or too notorious for contradiction, may be added a description of them all in the very terms of the prophecy. In the words of Basnage, the elaborate historian of the Jews—“Kings have often employed the severity of their edicts, and the hands of the executioner, to destroy them—the seditious multitude has performed massacres and executions infinitely more tragical than the princes. Both kings and people, heathens, Christians, and Mahometans, who are opposite in so many things, have united in the design of ruining this nation, and have not been able to effect it. The Bush of Moses, surrounded with flames, has always

* Lyon's *Travels in Africa*, p. 146.

burnt without consuming. The Jews have been driven from all places of the world, which has only served to disperse them in all parts of the universe. They have, from age to age, run through misery and persecution, and torrents of their own blood." * Their banishment from Judea was only the prelude to their expulsion from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom. Their dispersion over the globe is an irrefragable evidence of this, and many records remain that amply corroborate the fact. Not only did the first and second centuries of the Christian era see them twice rooted out of their own land, but each succeeding century has teemed with new calamities to that once chosen but now long rejected race. Scarcely had the third century commenced when the Emperor Severus proved himself entitled to the name by a rigid and bloody persecution of the Jews. The subsequent history of their sufferings is a continued tale of horror. Revolt is natural to the oppressed; and their frequent seditions were productive of renewed privations and distresses. Emperors, kings, and califfs all united in subjecting them to the same "iron yoke." Constantine, after having suppressed a revolt which they raised, and having commanded their ears to be cut off, dispersed them as fugitives and vagabonds into different countries, whither they carried, in terror to their kindred, the mark of their suffering and infamy. In the fifth century they were expelled from Alexandria, which had long been one of their safest places of resort. Justinian, from whose principles of

* Basnage, b. vi. c. 1.

legislation a wiser and more humane policy ought to have emanated, yielded to none of his predecessors in hostility and severity against them. He abolished their synagogues—prohibited them even from entering into caves for the exercise of their worship—rendered their testimony inadmissible, and deprived them of the natural right of bequeathing their property; and when such oppressive enactments led to insurrectionary movements among the Jews, their property was confiscated, many of them were beheaded, and so bloody an execution of them prevailed, that, as is expressly related, “all the Jews of that country trembled;” * *a trembling heart was given them.* In the reign of the tyrant Phocas, a general sedition broke out among the Jews in Syria. They and their enemies fought with equal desperation. They obtained the mastery in Antioch; but a momentary victory only led to a deeper humiliation, and to the infliction of more aggravated cruelties than before. They were soon subdued and taken captive; many of them were maimed, others executed, and all the survivors were banished from the city. Gregory the Great afforded them a temporary respite from oppression, which only rendered their spoliation more complete, and their suffering more acute under the cruel persecutions of Heraclius. That emperor, unable to satiate his hatred against them by inflicting a variety of punishments on those who resided within his own dominions, and by finally expelling them from the empire, exerted so effectually against

* Basnage’s Hist. b. vi. c. 21, § 9.

them his influence in other countries, that they suffered under a general and simultaneous persecution from Asia to the farthest extremities of Europe.* In Spain, conversion, imprisonment, or banishment, were their only alternatives. In France, a similar fate awaited them. They fled from country to country, seeking in vain any rest for the sole of their foot. Even the wide extended plains of Asia afforded them no resting place, but have often been spotted with their blood, as well as the hills and vallies of Europe. Mahomet, whose imposture has been the law and the faith of such countless millions, has, from the precepts of the Koran, infused into the minds of his followers a spirit of rancour and enmity towards the despised and misbelieving Jews. He set an early example of persecution against them, which the Mahometans have not yet ceased to imitate. In the third year of the Hegira he besieged the castles, which they possessed in the Hegiasa, compelled those who had fled to them for refuge and defence to an unconditional surrender, banished them the country, and parted their property among his musulmen. He dissipated a second time their re-combined strength, massacred many of them, and imposed upon the remnant a permanent tribute.—The church of Rome ever ranked and treated them as heretics. The canons of different Councils pronounced excommunication against those who should favour or uphold the Jews against Christians—enjoined all Christians neither to eat nor to hold any commerce with them—

* Basnage's Hist. b. vi. c. 21, § 17.

prohibited them from bearing public offices or having Christian slaves—appointed them to be distinguished by a mark—decreed that their children should be taken from them, and brought up in monasteries ; and, what is equally descriptive of the low estimation in which they were held, and of the miseries to which they were subjected, there was often a necessity, even for those who otherwise oppressed them, to ordain that it was not lawful to take the life of a Jew without any cause.* Hallam's account of the Jews, during the middle ages, is short, but significant. " They were everywhere the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of a general massacre. A time of festivity to others was often the season of mockery and persecution to them. It was the custom at Thoulouse to smite them on the face every Easter. At Beziers they were attacked with stones from Palm Sunday to Easter, an anniversary of insult and cruelty generally productive of bloodshed, and to which the populace were regularly instigated by a sermon from the bishop.† It was the policy of the kings of France to employ them as a sponge to suck their subjects' money, which they might afterwards express with less odium than direct taxation would incur. It is almost incredible to what a length extortion of money from the Jews was carried. A series of alternate persecution and tolerance was borne by this extraordinary people with an invincible perseverance, and a talent of accumulating riches which kept pace with the exactions

* Dupin's *Ecc. Hist.* Canons of different councils.

† Hallam, v. i, 2, 33, c. ii. p. 2.

of their plunderers. Philip Augustus released all Christians in his dominions from their debts to the Jews, reserving a fifth part to himself. He afterwards expelled the whole nation from France." St. Louis twice banished, and twice recalled them; and Charles VI. finally expelled them from France. From that country, according to Mezeray, they were seven times banished. They were expelled from Spain; and, by the lowest computation, 170,000 families departed from that kingdom.* "At Verdun, Treves, Mentz, Spires, Worms, many thousands of them were pillaged and massacred. A remnant was saved by a feigned and transient conversion; but the greater part of them barricadoed their houses, and precipitated themselves, their families, and their wealth, into the rivers or the flames. These massacres and depredations on the Jews, were renewed at each crusade."† In England, also, they suffered great cruelty and oppression at the same period. During the crusades, the whole nation united in the persecution of them. In a single instance, at York, 1500 Jews, including women and children, were refused all quarter—could not purchase their lives at any price—and, frantic with despair, perished by a mutual slaughter. Each master was the murderer of his family, when death became their only deliverance. The scene of the castle of Massada, which was their last fortress in Palestine, and where nearly 1000 perished in a similar manner,‡

* Basnage, b. vii. c. 21. † Gibbon's *Hist.* v. vi. p. 17.

‡ Basnage, b. vii. c. 10, § 20; Rapin's *Hist. of England*, vol. iii. p. 97; Joseph. b. vii. ch. 8.

was renewed in the castle of York. So despised and hated were they, that the barons when contending with Henry III. to ingratiate themselves with the populace, ordered 700 Jews to be slaughtered at once, their houses to be plundered, and their synagogues to be burned. Richard, John,* and Henry III. often extorted money

* The persecutions to which the Jews were subjected, at that period, are described with strict truth, in the historical romance of *Ivanhoe*. They are characterized as “a race, which, during these dark ages, was alike detested by the credulous and prejudiced vulgar, and persecuted by the greedy and rapacious nobility”—(v. i. p. 83)—“Except perhaps the flying fish, there was no race existing on the earth, in the air, or the waters, who were the object of such an unremitting, general, and relentless persecution as the Jews of this period. Upon the slightest and most unreasonable pretences, as well as upon accusations the most absurd and groundless, their persons and property were exposed to every turn of popular fury; for Norman, Saxon, Dane and Briton, however adverse the races were to each other, contended which should look with greatest detestation, upon a people whom it was accounted a point of religion to hate, to revile, to despise, to plunder and to persecute. The kings of the Norman race, and the independent nobles, who followed their example in all acts of tyranny, maintained against this devoted people a persecution of a more regular, calculated, and self-interested kind. It is a well-known story of King John, that he confined a wealthy Jew in one of the royal castles, and daily caused one of his teeth to be torn out, until, when the jaw of the unhappy Israelite was half disfurnished, he consented to pay a large sum, which it was the tyrant’s object to extort from him. The little ready money that was in the country was chiefly in the possession of this persecuted people, and the nobility hesitated not to follow the example of their sovereign, in wringing it from them

from them ; and the last, by the most unscrupulous and unsparing measures, usually defrayed his extraordinary expenses with their spoils, and impoverished some of the richest among them. His extortions at last became so enormous, and his oppressions so grievous, that in the words of the historian, he reduced the miserable wretches to desire leave to depart the kingdom ;* but even self-banishment was denied them. Edward I. completed their misery, seized on all their property, and banished them the kingdom. Above 15,000 Jews were rendered destitute of any residence, were despoiled to the utmost, and reduced to ruin. Nearly four centuries elapsed before the return to Britain of this abused race.

Some remarkable circumstances attest, without a prolonged detail of their miseries, that they have been a people everywhere peculiarly oppressed. The first unequivocal attempt at legislation in France was an ordinance against the Jews. And towards them alone

by every species of oppression, and even personal torture." (p. 120, 121.) The fictitious history of Isaac of York is delineated in a manner equally descriptive of the facts, and confirmatory of the prophecies respecting the Jewish people ; and there exists not the history of any individual of any other nation, whether drawn from fancy or from fact, which combines so many of the prophetic characteristics of the fate of a Jew, as that which has thus been delineated, by a master's hand, as a representation of their condition, at a period above twenty-six centuries posterior to the prediction, and in a country two thousand miles remote from the place where it was first uttered, and from the only land ever possessed by the Jews.

* Rapin's *Hist. of Eng.* b. viii. vol. iii. p. 405.

one of the noblest charters of liberty on earth—Magna Charta, the Briton's boast—legalized an act of injustice.* For many ages after their dispersion, they found no resting place in Europe, Africa, or Asia, but penetrated in search of one to the extremities of the world. In Mahometan countries they have ever been subject to persecution, contempt, and every abuse. They are, in general, confined to one particular quarter of every city (as they formerly were to Old Jewry in London); they are restricted to a peculiar dress; and in many places shut up at stated hours. In Hamadan, as in all parts of Persia, “they are an abject race, and support themselves by driving a peddling trade;—they live in a state of great misery—pay a monthly tax to the government—and are not permitted to cultivate the ground, or to have landed possessions.”† They cannot appear in public, much less perform their religious ceremonies, without being treated with scorn and contempt.‡ The revenues of the prince of Bohara are derived from a tribute paid by 500 families of Jews, who are assessed according to the means of each. In Zante they exist in miserable indigence, and are exposed to considerable oppression.§ At Tripoli, when any criminal is condemned to death, the first Jew who happens to be at hand is compelled to become the executioner,—a degradation to the children of Israel to which no Moor is ever subjected. || In Egypt they are despised

* Articles XII, XIII. † Morier's *Travels*, p. 379.

‡ Sir J. Malcolm's *Hist. of Persia*, vol. ii. p. 425.

§ Hughe's *Travels*, vol. i. p. 150. || Lyon's *Travels*, p. 16.

and persecuted incessantly.* In Arabia they are treated with more contempt than in Turkey.† The remark is common to the most recent travellers, both in Asia and Africa, ‡ that the Jews themselves are astonished, and the natives indignant, at any act of kindness, or even of justice, that is performed towards any of this “despised nation” and persecuted people. In Southey’s Letters from Spain and Portugal, this remarkable testimony is borne respecting them: “Till within the last fifty years the burning of a Jew formed the highest delight of the Portuguese; they thronged to behold this triumph of the faith, and the very women shouted with transport as they saw the agonized martyr writhe at the stake. Neither sex nor age could save this persecuted race, and Antonio Joseph de Silvia, the best of their dramatic writers, was burned alive because he was a Jew.”—Few years have elapsed since there was a severe persecution against them in Prussia and in Germany, and in several of the smaller states of the latter country they are not permitted to sell any goods even in the common markets. The Pope has lately re-enacted some severe edicts against them, and ukases have recently been issued in quick succession § restraining the Jews from all traffic throughout the interior government of Russia. They are absolutely prohibited, (on pain of immediate banishment,)

* Denon’s *Travels in Egypt*, v. i. p. 213.

† Niebhur’s *Travels*, vol. i. p. 408. ‡ Morier’s *Travels in Persia*, p. 266. Lyon’s *Travels in Africa*, p. 32.

§ 15th November 1797. 25th February 1823. 8th June 1826. (August or November) 1827.

from "offering any article to sale,"* whether in public or private, either by themselves or by others. They are not allowed to reside, even for a limited period, in any of the cities of Russia, without an express permission from government, which is granted only in cases where their services are necessary, or directly beneficial to the state. A refusal to depart when they become obnoxious to so rigid a law, subjects them to be treated as vagrants; and none are suffered to protect or to shelter them. Though the observance of such edicts must, in numerous instances, leave them destitute of any means of support, yet their breach or neglect exposes them to oppression under the sanction of law, and to every privation and insult without remedy or appeal. And though they may thus become the greatest objects of pity, all laws of humanity are reversed, by imperial decrees, towards them. For those who harbour Jews that are condemned to banishment for having done what all others may innocently do, are, as the last Russian ukase respecting them bears, "amenable to the laws as the abettors of vagrants,†

* Ukase, quoted from "the World," London newspaper of date 31st October 1827. Ib. Article VIII.

† *Note.* While the prophecies describe the past and existing miseries of the Jews, they refer with no less precision to the time yet to come, when the children of Israel shall have returned to the loved land of their fathers, and their rebuke shall have ceased from off the face of the earth, and when they shall prize their blessings the more highly, as contrasted with the former sufferings of their race. And the Word of God, confirmed as its prophetic truth is by the workings of

and, as in numberless instances besides, *no man shall save them.*"

These facts, though they form but a brief and most imperfect record, and therefore but a very faint image of all their sufferings, show that the Jews *have been removed into all kingdoms for their hurt—that a sword has been drawn after them—that they have found no rest for the sole of their foot—that they have not been able to stand before their enemies ;—there has been no might in their hands—their very avarice has proved their misery—they have been spoiled evermore—they have*

the wrath of man, and by the policy of earthly monarchs, will doubtless triumph over the highest mandates of mortals, and receive new illustrations of its truth, when these shall have passed away. And the eleventh article of the Ukase, now in force, merits, in reference to a special prediction, particular notice, and may here be subjoined, together with its corresponding text, premising merely that it is to a specific district of dismembered Poland that the Rabbis are sent away. "Rabbins, or other religious functionaries, are to be sent away by the police officer, immediately on the discovery that they are such." "Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." Isaiah xxx. 20.

Lord Byron's brief and emphatic description of the Jews is equally characteristic of the fact, and illustrative of the predictions.

Tribes of the *wandering foot*, and *weary breast*,

When shall ye flee away, and be at rest.

"They shall find no rest for the sole of their foot.—I will send a faintness into thier hearts,—a trembling heart and sorrow of mind."

been oppressed and crushed alway—they have been mad for the sight of their eyes that they did see, as the tragical scenes at Massada, and York, and many others, testify—they have often been left in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and in want of all things;—a trembling heart and sorrow of mind have been their portion;—they have often had none assurance of their life,—their plagues have been wonderful and great, and of long continuance,—and that they have been for a sign and for a wonder during many generations.

But the predictions rest not even here. It was distinctly prophesied that the Jews would reject the Gospel;—that, from the meanness of his mortal appearance, and the hardness of their hearts, they would not believe in a suffering Messiah—*that they would be smitten with blindness and astonishment of heart—that they would continue long, having their ears deaf, their eyes closed, and their hearts hardened—and that they would grope at noon-day as the blind gropeth in darkness.** And the great body of the Jewish nation has continued long to reject Christianity. They retain the prophecies, but discover not their light, having obscured them by their traditions. Many of their received opinions are so absurd and impious, their rites are so unmeaning and frivolous, their ceremonies are so minute, frivolous and contemptible,—that the account of them would surpass credibility, were it not a transcript of their customs and of their manners, and drawn from their own

* Deut. xxviii. 29.

authorities.* No words can more strikingly or justly represent the contrast between their irrational tenets—their degraded religion—their superstitious observances, and the dictates of enlightened reason, and of the Gospel which they vilify, than the emphatic description,—“They grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness.” And, if any other instances be wanting of the prediction of events infinitely exceeding human foresight, the dispositions of all nations respecting them are revealed as explicitly as their own. That the Jews have been a proverb, an astonishment, a by-word, a taunt, and a hissing among all nations,—though one of the most wonderful of facts, unparalleled in the whole history of mankind, and as inconceivable in its prediction as miraculous in its accomplishment,—is a truth that stands not in need of any illustration or proof—and of which witnesses could be found in every country under heaven. Many prophecies concerning the Jews, of more propitious import, that yet remain to be accomplished, are reserved for testimonies to future generations, *if not to the present*. But it is worthy of remark, as prophesied concerning them, that they have not been utterly destroyed, though a full end has been made of their enemies,—that the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Romans—though some of the mightiest monarchies that ever existed,—have not a single representative on earth; while the Jews, oppressed and vanquished—banished and enslaved—and spoiled evermore, have survived them all—

* See *Allen's Modern Judaism*. *Brewster's Ency. Art. Jews*.

and to this hour overspread the world. Of all the nations around Judea, the Persians alone, who restored them from their Babylonish captivity, yet remain a kingdom.

The Scriptures also declare that the covenant with Abraham,—that God would give the land of Canaan to his seed for an everlasting possession,—would never be broken; but that the children of Israel shall be taken from among the heathen,—gathered on every side, and brought into their own land, to dwell for ever where their fathers dwelt. Three thousand seven hundred years have elapsed since the promise was given to Abraham: And is it less than a miracle, that, if this promise had been made to the descendants of any but of Abraham alone, it could not now possibly have been realized, as there exists not on earth the known and acknowledged posterity of any other individual, or almost of any nation, contemporary with him?

That the people of a single state, (which was of very limited extent and power in comparison of some of the monarchies which surrounded it,) should first have been rooted up out of their own land in anger, wrath, and great indignation, the like of which was never experienced by the mightiest among the ancient empires which all fell imperceptibly away at a lighter stroke,—and that afterwards, although scattered among all nations, and finding no ease among them all, they should have withstood eighteen centuries of almost unremitted persecution, and that after so many generations have elapsed, they should still retain their distinctive form, or, as it may be called, their individuality of character,

is assuredly the most marvellous event that is recorded in the history of nations; and if it be not acknowledged as a "sign," it is in reality as well as in appearance "a wonder," the most inexplicable within the province of the philosophy of history. But that, after the endurance of such manifold woes, such perpetual spoliation, and so many ages of unmitigated suffering, during which their life was to hang in doubt within them, they should still be, as actually they are, the possessors of great wealth; and that this fact should so strictly accord with the prophecy, which describes them on their final restoration to Judea, as taking their silver and their gold with them;* and also that, though captives or fugitives "few in number," and the miserable remnant of an extinguished kingdom at the time they were "scattered abroad,"—they should be to this hour a numerous people,—and that this should have been expressly implied in the prophetic declaration descriptive of their condition on their restoration to Judea, after all their wanderings,—that the land shall be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants,—and that place shall not be found for them,† are facts which as clearly show, to those who consider them at all, the operation of an overruling providence, as the revelation of such an inscrutable destiny is the manifest dictate of inspiration.

Such are the *prophecies*, and such are the *facts* respecting the Jews;—and from premises like these the feeblest logician may draw a moral demonstration. If

* Isa. lx. 9.

† Isa. xlix. 19. Zech. x. 10.

they had been utterly destroyed—if they had mingled among the nations,—if, in the space of nearly eighteen centuries after their dispersion, they had become extinct as a people, even if they had been secluded in a single region, and had remained united—if their history had been analogous to that of any nation upon the earth, an attempt might, with some plausibility or reason, have been made, to show cause why the prediction of their fate, however true to the fact, ought not in such a case to be sustained as evidence of the truth of inspiration. Or if the past history and present state of the Jews were not of a nature so singular and peculiar, as to bear out to the very letter the truth of the prophecies concerning them, with what triumph would the infidel have produced those very prophecies, as fatal to the idea of the inspiration of the Scriptures? And when the Jews have been scattered throughout the whole earth—when they have remained everywhere a distinct race—when they have been despoiled evermore, and yet never destroyed—when the most wonderful and amazing facts, such as never occurred among any people—form the ordinary narrative of their history, and fulfil literally the prophecies concerning them,—may not the believer challenge his adversary to the production of such credentials of the faith that is in *him*? They present an unbroken chain of evidence, each link a prophecy and a fact, extending throughout a multitude of generations, and not yet terminated. Though the events, various and singular as they are, have been brought about by the instrumentality of human means, and the agency of secondary causes, yet they are equal-

ly prophetic and miraculous; for the means were as impossible to be foreseen as the end—and the causes were as inscrutable as the event; and they have been, and still in numberless instances are, accomplished by the instrumentality of the enemies of Christianity. Whoever seeks a miracle, may here behold a sign and a wonder, than which there cannot be a greater. And the Christian may bid defiance to all the assaults of his enemies from this stronghold of Christianity, impenetrable and impregnable on every side.

These prophecies concerning the Jews are as clear as a narrative of the events. They are ancient as the oldest records in existence; and it has never been denied that they were all delivered before the accomplishment of one of them. They were so unimaginable by human wisdom, that the whole compass of nature has never exhibited a parallel to the events. And the facts are visible, and present, and applicable even to a hair's breadth. Could Moses, as an uninspired mortal, have described the history, the fate, the dispersion, the treatment, the dispositions of the Israelites to the present day, or for 3200 years, seeing that he was astonished and amazed, on his descent from Sinai, at the change in their sentiments, and in their conduct, in the space of forty days? Could various persons have testified, in different ages, of the self-same and of similar facts, as wonderful as they have proved to be true? Could they have divulged so many secrets of futurity, when, of necessity, they were utterly ignorant of them all? The probabilities were infinite against them. For the mind of man often fluctuates in uncertainty over the nearest

events, and the most probable results ; but, in regard to remote ages, when thousands of years shall have elapsed—and to facts respecting them, contrary to all previous knowledge, experience, analogy, or conception,—it feels that they are dark as death to mortal ken. And, viewing only the dispersion of the Jews, and some of its attendant circumstances—how their city was laid desolate—their temple, which formed the constant place of their resort before, levelled with the ground, and ploughed over like a field—their country ravaged, and themselves murdered in mass—falling before the sword, the famine, and the pestilence—how a remnant was left, but despoiled, persecuted, enslaved, and led into captivity—driven from their own land, not to a mountainous retreat, where they might subsist with safety, but dispersed among all nations, and left to the mercy of a world that everywhere hated and oppressed them—shattered in pieces like the wreck of a vessel in a mighty storm—scattered over the earth, like fragments on the waters—and, instead of disappearing, or mingling with the nations, remaining a perfectly distinct people, in every kingdom the same, retaining similar habits, and customs, and creed, and manners, in every part of the globe, though without ephod, teraphim, or sacrifice—meeting everywhere the same insult, and mockery, and oppression—finding no resting-place without an enemy soon to dispossess them—multiplying amidst all their miseries—surviving their enemies—beholding, unchanged, the extinction of many nations, and the convulsions of all—robbed of their silver and of their gold, though cleaving to the love of

them still, as the stumbling-block of their iniquity—often bereaved of their very children—disjoined and disorganized, but uniform and unaltered—ever bruised, but never broken—weak, fearful, sorrowful, and afflicted—often driven to madness at the spectacle of their own misery—taken up in the lips of talkers—the taunt and hissing and infamy of all people, and continuing ever, what they are to this day, the sole proverb common to the whole world;—how did every fact, from its very nature, defy all conjecture, and how could mortal man, overlooking a hundred successive generations, have foretold any one of these wonders that are now conspicuous in these latter times? Who but the Father of Spirits, possessed of perfect prescience, even of the knowledge of the will and of the actions of free, intelligent, and moral agents, could have revealed their unbounded and yet unceasing wanderings—unveiled all their destiny—and unmasked the minds of the Jews, and of their enemies, in every age and in every clime? The creation of a world might as well be the work of chance as the revelation of these things. It is a visible display of the power and of the prescience of God—an accumulation of many miracles. And, although it forms but a part of a small portion of the Christian evidence, it lays not only a stone of stumbling,—such as infidels would try to cast in a Christian's path,—but it fixes an insurmountable barrier at the very threshold of infidelity, immovable by all human device, and impervious to every attack.

CHAPTER V.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE LAND OF JUDEA AND
CIRCUMJACENT COUNTRIES.

THE writings of the Jewish prophets not only described the fate of that people for many generations, subsequent to the latest period to which the most unyielding scepticism can pretend to affix the date of these predictions, but, while the cities were teeming with inhabitants, and the land flowing with abundance, for centuries before Judea ceased to count its millions, they foretold the long reign of desolation—"the desolations of many generations,"* that would ensue. The land is a witness as well as the people. Its aspect in the present day, and for many a past age, is the precise likeness delineated by the pencil of prophecy, when every feature that could admit of change was the reverse of what it now is: And it is necessary only to compare the predictions themselves with that proof of their fulfilment, which, were all other testimony to be excluded, heathens and infidels supply.

* Isaiah lxi. 4.

The calamities of the Jews were to arise progressively with their iniquities. They were to be punished, again and again, "yet seven times, for their sins."* And in the greatest of the denunciations which were to fill up the measure of their punishments, the long continued desolation of their country is ranked among the worst and latest of their woes; and the prophecies respecting it, which admit of a literal interpretation, and which have been literally fulfilled, are abundantly clear and expressive: "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths while she lieth desolate without them.† So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it;—Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto the land, what meaneth the heat of this great anger? The anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book.‡ Many days and years shall ye be troubled; for the vintage

* Levit. xxvi. 18, 21, 24.

† Levit. xxxi. 31, 35, 43.

‡ Deut. xxix. 22, 24, 27.

shall fail, the gathering shall not come. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city: Because the places shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks.* The high ways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth. The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down; Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.† Behold the Lord maketh the earth‡ (the land) empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth (land) mourneth and fadeth away; it is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the

* Isaiah xxxii. 10, 12, 14.

† The twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah contains a continuous prophetic description (exactly analogous to other predictions) of the desolation of Judea during the time that the "inhabitants thereof" were to be "scattered abroad;" and it is only necessary, in order to prevent any appearance of ambiguity, to remark, that the *very same word* in the original, which, in the English translation, is here rendered *earth*,—is in subsequent verses of the same chapter also translated *land*,—evidently implying the land of Israel, the inhabitants of which were to be "scattered abroad,"—and so obviously is this the meaning of the word, that the chapter is properly entitled "the deplorable judgments of God upon the land." ‡ Isaiah xxxii. 8, 9.

laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the land, and they that dwell therein are desolate, and few men left. The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up that no man may come in. There is a crying for wine in the streets, all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.* Your country is desolate. The defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness; there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down and consume the branches thereof.† Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled. I beheld, and lo the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord; for thus hath the Lord said, the whole land shall be desolate, yet will I not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn, because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.‡ Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains of Israel, and to the hills, and to the rivers, and to the

* Isaiah xxiv. 12, 13.

† Ibid. xxvii. 10.

‡ Jeremiah iv. 20, 26—28.

vallies; behold I even I will bring a sword upon you, I will destroy your high places. In all your dwelling-places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, and your altars shall be laid waste and made desolate. I will stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land more desolate than the wilderness towards Diblath, in all their habitations.* Many pastors (or rulers) have destroyed my vineyard, and they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. The sword of the Lord shall devour from the one end of the land to the other end of the land; they have sown wheat but shall reap thorns; they have put themselves to pain but shall not profit; they shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the Lord.† I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and their holy places shall be defiled. Say unto the people of the land, thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel, they shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein.‡ Every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished.”

The devastation of Judea is so astonishing, and its poverty as a country so remarkable, that, forgetful of the prophecies respecting it, and in the rashness of their

* Ezek. vi. 2, 3, 6, 14.

† Jer. xii. 10—13. Ezek. vii. 24, 25, 26. ‡ Ezek. xii. 19.

zeal, infidels once attempted to draw an argument from thence against the truth of Christianity, by denying the possibility of the existence of so numerous a population as can accord with scriptural history, and by representing it as a region singularly unproductive and irreclaimable.* But though they have, in some instances,

* Voltaire, without adducing any authority whatever in support of his assertion, and without expressly declaring that, in lieu of such evidence, he was gifted with any intuitive knowledge of the historical and geographical fact; speaks of the ancient state of Palestine with derision, describes it as one of the worst countries of Asia; likens it to Switzerland, and says that it can only be esteemed fertile when compared with the desert. (*La Palestine n'était que ce qu'elle est aujourd'hui, un des plus mauvais pays de l'Asie. Cette petite province, &c. Oeuvres de Voltaire. Ed. A. Gotha, Tom. XVII. p. 107.*) Without citing, on the other hand, the ample evidence of Josephus and of Jerome, both of whom were inhabitants of Judea, and more adequate judges of the fact, the following testimony to the great fertility of that country, not being chargeable with the partiality which might be attached to the opinion either of a Christian or of a Jew, may be given in answer to the groundless assertion of Voltaire—testimony which ought to have been better known and appreciated even by that high priest of modern infidelity, if the sacrifice of truth on the altar of wit, had not been too common an act of his devotion to that chief god of his idolatry. *Corpora hominum salubria et ferentia laborem; rari imbres, uber solum, fruges nostrum ad morem; præterque eas balsamum et palmæ. Magna pars Judææ vicis dispergitur, habent et oppida. Hierosolyma genti caput. Illic immensæ opulentiaæ templum, et primis munimentis urbs—Taciti Hist. Lib. V. c. 6, 8. Ultima Syriarum est Palestina, per intervalla magna protenta, cultis abundans terris et nitidis, et civitates habens quasdam egregias, nullam sibi cedentem sed sibi vicissim velut*

at least, voluntarily abandoned this indefensible assumption, they have left to the believer the fruits of their concession ; they have given the most unsuspecting testimony to the confirmation of the prophecies, and have served to establish the cause which they sought to ruin. The evidence of ancient authors—the fertility of the soil wherever a single spot can be cultivated—the remains of vegetable mould piled, by artificial means, upon the sides of the mountains, which may have clothed them with a richer and more frequent harvest than the most fertile vale ; and the multitude of the ruins of cities that now cover the extensive but uncultivated and desert plains, bear witness that there was a numerous and condensed population in a country flowing with food ; and that, if any history recorded its greatness, or any prophecies revealed its desolation, they have both been amply verified.

The acknowledgments of Volney, and the description which he gives from personal observation, are sufficient to confute entirely the gratuitous assumptions and insidious sarcasms of Voltaire ; and wonderful as it may appear, copious extracts may be drawn from that writer, whose unwitting or unwilling testimony is as powerful an attestation of the completion of many prophecies, when he relates facts of which he was an eye-witness, as his untried theories, his ideal perfectibility of human nature, if released from the restraints of religion, and his per-

ad perpendiculum æmulas. *Ammiani Marcell.* Lib. xiv. cap. 8, § 11. Ed. Lips. 1808. Nec sane viris, opibus, armis quicquam copiosius Syria. *Flori Hist.* lib. ii. cap. 8, § 4. Syria in hortis operosissima est. Inde quoque est proverbium Græcis. Multa Syrorum olera. *Plinii Hist. Nat.* lib. xx. cap. 5.

verted views both of the nature and effects of Christianity have proved greatly instrumental in subverting the faith of many, who, unguarded by any positive evidence, gave heed to such seductive doctrines. There needs not to be any better witness of facts confirmatory of the prophecies, and in so far conclusive against all his speculations, than Volney himself. Of the natural fertility of the country, and of its abounding population in ancient times, he gives the most decisive evidence. " Syria unites different climates under the same sky, and collects within a small compass pleasures and productions which nature has elsewhere dispersed at great distances of time and places. To this advantage, which perpetuates enjoyments by their succession, it adds another, that of multiplying them by the variety of its productions." " With its numerous advantages of climate and soil, it is not astonishing that Syria should always have been esteemed a most delicious country, and that the Greeks and Romans ranked it among the most beautiful of their provinces, and even thought it not inferior to Egypt."* After having assigned several just and sufficient reasons to account for the large population of Judea in ancient times, in contradiction to those who were sceptical of the fact, he adds—" Admitting only what is conformable to experience and nature, there is nothing to contradict the great population of high antiquity. Without appealing to the positive testimony of history, there are innumerable monuments

* Volney's Travels in Egypt and Syria. Eng. Trans. London, 1787, v. i. pp. 316, 321.

which depose in favour of the fact. Such are the prodigious quantity of ruins dispersed over the plains, and even in the mountains, at this day deserted. On the remote parts of Carmel are found wild vines and olive trees, which must have been conveyed thither by the hand of man ; and in the Lebanon of the Druses and Maronites, the rocks, now abandoned to fir trees and brambles, present us in a thousand places with terraces, which prove that they were anciently better cultivated, and consequently much more populous than in our days.*

“ Syria,” says Gibbon, “ one of the countries that have been improved by the most early cultivation, is not unworthy of the preference. The heat of the climate is tempered by the vicinity of the sea and mountains, by the plenty of wood and water ; and the produce of a fertile soil affords the subsistence and encourages the propagation of men and animals. From the age of David to that of Heraclius the country was overspread with ancient and flourishing cities ; the inhabitants were numerous and wealthy.” Such evidence has merely been selected as the most unsuspecting, though that of many others might also be adduced. The country in the *immediate* vicinity of Jerusalem is indeed rocky, as Strabo represents it, and apparently sterile, and is now in general perfectly barren ; but “ even the sides of the most barren mountains in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem had been rendered fertile, by being divided into terraces like steps rising

* Volney's Travels in Egypt and Syria. Eng. Trans. London, 1787, v. xi.

one above another, where soil has been accumulated with astonishing labour."* In any part of Judea, Dr. Clark adds, the effects of a beneficial change of government are soon witnessed, in the conversion of desolated plains into fertile fields. "Under a wise and beneficent government the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvest, the salubrity of its air, its limpid springs, its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains, its hills and vales, all these, added to the serenity of the climate, prove this to be indeed a field which the Lord hath blessed."† But the facts of the former fertility as well as of the present desolation of Judea are established beyond contradiction; and in attempting in this respect to invalidate the truth of sacred history, infidels have either been driven, or have reluctantly retired from the defenceless ground which they themselves had once assumed, and have given room whereon to rest an argument against their want of faith as well as of veracity. For, in conclusion of this matter, it surely may, without any infringement of truth or of justice, be remarked, that the extent of the present and long fixed desolation, the very allegation on which they would discredit the scriptural narrative of the ancient glory of Judea, being itself a clearly predicted truth, then the greater the difficulty of reconciling the knowledge of what it was to

* Clark's Travels, v. ii. p. 520. General Straton describes these terraces as resembling the *gradini* of a theatre, and particularly marked them as vestiges of ancient "luxuriance."

† Ibid. 521.

the fact of what it is, and the greater the difficulty of believing the possibility of so "astonishing" a contrast, the more wonderful are the prophecies which revealed it all, the more completely are they accredited as a voice from heaven, and the argument of the infidel leads the more directly to proof against himself. Such is "the positive testimony of history," and such the subsisting proofs of the former grandeur and fertility of Palestine, that we are now left, without a cavil, to the calm investigation of the change in that country from one extreme to another, and of the consonance of that change with the dictates of prophecy.

Under any regular and permanent government, a region so favoured by climate, so diversified in surface, so rich in soil, and which had been so luxuriant for ages, would naturally have resumed its opulence and power; and its permanent desolation, alike contradictory to every suggestion of experience and of reason, must have been altogether inconceivable by man. But *the land was to be overthrown by strangers, to be trodden under foot; mischief was to come upon mischief, and destruction upon destruction, and the land was to be desolate.* The Chaldeans devastated Judea, and led the inhabitants into temporary captivity. The kings of Syria and Egypt, by their extortions and oppression, impoverished the country. The Romans held it long in subjection to their iron yoke. And the Persians contended for the possession of it. But in succeeding ages still greater destroyers than any of the former appeared upon the scene to perfect the work of devastation. "In the year 622 (636) the Arabian tribes, collected

under the banners of Mahomet, seized, or rather laid it waste. Since that period, torn to pieces by the civil wars of the Fatimites and the Omniades; wrested from the califs by their rebellious governors; taken from them by the Turkmen soldiery; invaded by the European crusaders; retaken by the Mamelouks of Egypt, and ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars—it has at length fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks.* *It has been overthrown by strangers,—trodden under foot,—destruction has come upon destruction.*

The cities were to be laid waste. By the concurring testimony of all travellers, Judea may now be called a field of ruins. Columns, the memorials of ancient magnificence, now covered with rubbish, and buried under ruins, may be found in all Syria.† From Mount Tabor is beheld an immensity of plains, interspersed with hamlets, fortresses, and heaps of ruins. The buildings on that mountain were destroyed and laid waste by the Sultan of Egypt in 1290, and the accumulated vestiges of successive forts and ruins are now mingled in one common and extensive desolation.‡ Of the celebrated cities Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gadara, Tarichea, and Chorazin, nothing remains but shapeless ruins.§ Some vestige of Emmaus may still be seen. Cana is a very paltry village. The ruins of Tekoa present only the foundations of some considerable buildings.|| The city

* Volney's Travels, v. i. p. 357.

† Mariti's Travels, v. ii. p. 141.

‡ Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, p. 107. Mariti's Travels, v. ii. p. 177.

§ *Ib.* Clark's Travels, v. ii. p. 401. Wilson's Travels, p. 227.

|| Macmichael's Journey to Constantinople, p. 196.

of Naim is now a hamlet. The ruins of the ancient Sapphura announce the previous existence of a large city; and its name is still preserved in the appellation of a miserable village called Sefhoury. Loudd, the ancient Lydda and Diospolis, appears like a place lately ravaged by fire and sword, and is one continued heap of rubbish and ruins.* Ramla, the ancient Arimatea, is in almost as ruinous a state. Nothing but rubbish is to be found within its boundaries. In the adjacent country there are found at every step dry wells, cisterns fallen in, and vast vaulted reservoirs, which prove that in ancient times this town must have been upwards of a league and a half in circumference.† Cæsarea can no longer excite the envy of a conqueror, and has long been abandoned to silent desolation.‡ The city of Tiberias is now almost abandoned, and its subsistence precarious; of the town that bordered on its lake there are no traces left.|| Zabulon, once the rival of Tyre and Sidon, is a heap of ruins. A few shapeless stones unworthy the attention of the traveller, mark the site of the Saffre.§ The ruins of Jericho, covering no less than a square mile, are surrounded with complete desolation; and there is not a tree of any description, either of palm or balsam, and scarcely any verdure or bushes to be seen about the site of this abandoned city.¶

* Volney's *Travels*, v. ii. p. 332-334.

† Ibid. v. ii. p. 338.

‡ Captain Light's *Travels*, p. 204. Buckingham's *Travels*, p. 126.

|| Captain Light's *Travels*, p. 204.

§ Mariti's *Travels*, v. ii. p. 158—169.

¶ Buckingham's *Travels*, p. 300.

The ruins of Sarepta, and of several large cities in its vicinity are now "mere rubbish," and are only distinguishable as the sites of towns by heaps of dilapidated stones and fragments of columns.* But at Djerash (supposed to be the ruins of Gerasa) are the magnificent remains of a splendid city. The form of streets, once lined with a double row of columns, and covered with pavement still nearly entire, in which are the marks of the chariot wheels, and on each side of which is an elevated path-way—two theatres, and two grand temples, built of marble, and others of inferior note—baths—bridges—a cemetery, with many sarcophagi, which surrounded the city—a triumphal arch—a large cistern—a picturesque tomb, fronted with columns, and an aqueduct, overgrown with wood—and upwards of two hundred and thirty columns still standing amidst deserted ruins without a city to adorn—all combine in presenting to the view of the traveller, in the estimation of those who were successively eye-witnesses of them both, "a much finer mass of ruins" than even that of the boasted Palmyra. †—But how marvellously

* Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 199.

† Irby and Mangles' Travels, pp. 317, 318.

The ruins of Djerash were first discovered by Seetzen in 1806. They have since been visited by Sheikh Ibrahim, (Burckhardt) Sir William Chatterton, Mr. Bankes, The Hon. Captain Irby, Captain Mangles, Mr. Legh, Mr. Leslie and Mr. Buckingham. Both Burckhardt and Mr. Buckingham have also given a description of them. Many of the edifices were built long after the period of the prediction; yet they are not excluded from the sentence of desolation.

are the predictions of their desolation verified, when in general nothing but ruined ruins form the most distinguished remnants of the cities of Israel ; and when the multitude of its towns are almost all left, with many a vestige to testify of their number, but without a mark to tell their name.

And your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies land ; even then shall the land rest and enjoy her sabbaths, &c. A single reference to the Mosaic law respecting the sabbatical year renders the full purport of this prediction perfectly intelligible and obvious. “ But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard.” And the land of Judea hath even thus enjoyed its sabbaths so long as it hath lain desolate. In that country, where every spot was cultivated like a garden by its patrimonial possessor, where every little hill rejoiced in its abundance—where every steep acclivity was terraced by the labour of man, and where the very rocks were covered thick with mould, and rendered fertile ; even in that selfsame land, with a climate the same,* and with a soil unchanged, save only by neglect, a dire contrast is now and has for a lengthened period of time been displayed by fields untilled and unsown, and by waste and desolated plains. Never since the expatriated descendants of Abraham were driven from its borders, has the land of Canaan been so “ plenteous in goods,”

* See Brewster's Philosophical Journal, No. XVI. p. 227.

or so abundant in population as once it was ; never, as it did for ages unto them, has it vindicated to any other people a right to its possession or its own title of the land of promise—it has rested from century to century ; and while that marked, and stricken, and scattered race, who possess the recorded promise of the God of Israel, as their charter to its final and everlasting possession still “ *be in the land of their enemies, so long their land lieth desolate.*” There may thus almost be said to be the semblance of a sympathetic feeling between this bereaved country and banished people, as if the land of Israel felt the miseries of its absent children, awaited their return, and responded to the undying love they bear it by the refusal to yield to other possessors the rich harvest of those fruits, with which, in the days of their allegiance to the Most High, it abundantly blessed *them*. And striking and peculiar without the shadow of even a semblance upon earth, as is this accordance between the fate of Judea and of the Jews, it assimilates as closely, and, may we not add, as miraculously, to those predictions respecting both, which Moses uttered and recorded ere the tribes of Israel had ever set a foot in Canaan. *The land shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her rest while she lieth desolate without them.*

To the desolate state of Judea, every traveller bears witness. The prophetic malediction was addressed to the mountains and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, and the beauty of them all have been blighted. Where the inhabitants once dwelt in peace, each under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, the tyranny

of the Turks, and the perpetual incursions of the Arabs, the last of a long list of oppressors, have spread one wide field of almost unmingled desolation. The plain of Esdraelon, naturally most fertile, its soil consisting of 'fine rich black mould,' level like a lake, except where mount Ephraim rises in its centre, bounded by mount Hermon, Carmel, and mount Tabor,* and so extensive as to cover about three hundred square miles, is a solitude'† 'almost entirely deserted; the country is a complete desert.'‡ Even the vale of Sharon is a waste. In the valley of Canaan, 'formerly a beautiful, delicious, and fertile valley, there is not a mark or vestige of cultivation.§ The country is continually overrun with rebel tribes; the Arabs pasture their cattle upon the spontaneous produce of the rich plains with which it abounds.|| Every ancient land-mark is removed. Law there is none. Lives and property are alike unprotected. The vallies are untilled, the mountains have lost their verdure, the rivers flow through a desert and cheerless land. All the beauty of Tabor, that man could disfigure is defaced; immense ruins on the top of it, are now the only remains of a once magnificent city: and Carmel is the habitation of wild beasts.** "The art of cultivation," says Volney, "is in the most deplorable state, and the countryman must sow with the musket in his hand; and no more is sown than is necessary for subsis-

* General Straton's MS. Travels. † Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 497. Maundrel's Travels, p. 95. ‡ Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria*, p. 334, 342. § General Straton's M.S. || Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 484, 491. ** Mariti, vol. ii. 140.

tence." * In describing his journey through Galilee, Dr. Clarke remarks, that the earth was covered with such a variety of thistles, that a complete collection of them would be a valuable acquisition to botany. † Six new species of that plant, so significant of wildness, were discovered by himself in a scanty selection. 'From Kane-Leban to Beer, amidst the ruins of cities, the country, as far as the eye of the traveller can reach, presents nothing to his view but naked rocks, mountains and precipices, at the sight of which pilgrims are astonished, balked in their expectations, and almost startled in their faith.' ‡ 'From the centre of the neighbouring elevations (around Jerusalem) is seen a wild, rugged, and mountainous desert; no herds depasturing on the summit, no forests clothing the acclivities, no water flowing through the vallies; but one rude scene of savage melancholy waste, in the midst of which the ancient glory of Judea bows her head in widowed desolation.' § It is needless to multiply quotations to prove the desolation of a country which the Turks have possessed, and which the Arabs have plundered for ages. Enough has been said to prove that *the land mourns, and is laid waste, and has become as a desolate wilderness.*

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars. A thorny shrub, (Merar) and others of a similar kind abound throughout the desolated plains and hills of Palestine. Some of the latter are so closely

* Volney's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 413.

† *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 451. ‡ Maundrell's *Travels*, p. 168.

§ Jolliffe's *Letters from Palestine*, vol. i. p. 104.

beset, in many places, with thorns, that they can be ascended only with great difficulty; and 'the whole district of Tiberias is covered with a thorny shrub.'*

Your highways shall be desolate.† The highways lie waste; the way-faring man ceaseth. So great must have been the intercourse, in ancient times, between the populous and numerous cities of Judea, and so much must that intercourse have been increased by the frequent and regular journeyings, from every quarter, of multitudes going up to Jerusalem to worship, in observance of the rites, and in obedience to the precepts of their law, that scarcely any country ever possessed such means of crowded highways, or any similar reason for abounding so much in wayfaring men. In the days of Isaiah, who uttered the latest of these predictions, 'the land was full of horses, neither was there any end of their chariots.'‡ And there not only subsist to this day in the land of Judea, numerous remains of paved ways formed by the Romans at a much later period, and 'others evidently *not* Roman;'§ but among the precious literary remains of antiquity which have come down to our times, three Roman itineraries are to be numbered, that can here be confidently appealed to. From these, and from the testimony of Arrian and Diodorus Siculus, as well as of Josephus and Eusebius, it appears, as Reland has clearly shown, that in Palestine, long after it came under the power of the Romans, and after it was greatly debased from its ancient glory, there were forty-two different high-

* Burckhardt's *Travels*, p. 333.

† Levit. xxvi. 22. ‡ Isa. xxxiii. 8. § General Straton's MS.

ways, (*viæ publicæ*) all being distinctly specified, which intersected it in various directions ; and the number of miles exceeded eight hundred and eighty.* Yet the prophecy is literally true. “ In the interior part of the country, there are neither great roads, nor canals, nor even bridges over the greatest part of the rivers and torrents, however necessary they may be in winter. Between town and town there are neither posts nor public conveyances. Nobody travels alone, from the insecurity of the roads. One must wait for several travellers who are going to the same place, or take advantage of the passage of some great man, who assumes the office of protector, but is more frequently the oppressor of the caravan. These precautions are, above all, necessary in the countries exposed to the Arabs, such as Palestine, and the whole frontier of the desert. The roads in mountains are extremely bad ; and the inhabitants are so far from levelling them, that they endeavour to make them more rugged, in order, as they say, to cure the Turks of their desire to introduce their cavalry. It is remarkable, that there is not a waggon nor a cart in all Syria.”† “ There are,” continues Volney, “ no inns any where. The lodgings in the kans (or places of reception for travellers) are cells, where you find nothing but bare walls, dust, and sometimes scorpions. The keeper of the kan gives the traveller the key and the mat, and he provides himself the rest. He must therefore carry with him his bed, his kitchen utensils, and

* *Relandi Palestina ex monumentis veteribus illustrata*, Tom i. lib. ii. cap. 3, 4, 5. p. 405, 425.

† Volney's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 417, 419.

even his provisions ; for frequently not even bread is to be found in the villages." * " There are no carriages in the country," says another traveller, " under any denomination." " Among the hills of Palestine,"† according to a third witness, " the road is impassable ; and the traveller finds himself among a set of infamous and ignorant thieves, who would cut his throat for a farthing, and rob him of his money for the mere pleasure of doing it."‡ In a country where there is a total want of wheel carriages of every description, *the highways*, however excellent, and numerous they once might have been, must *lie waste*, and where such dangers have to be encountered at every step, and such privations at every stage, it is not now to be wondered that the *wayfaring man ceaseth*. But let the disciples of Volney tell by what dictates of human wisdom the whole of his description of these existing facts was summed up, in a brief sentence, by Moses and Isaiah ; by the former, thirty-three, and, by the latter, twenty-five centuries past.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel, shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein. " In the great cities" (in Syria, none of which are in the Holy Land) " the people have much of that dissipated and *careless* air which they usually have with us, because there, as well as here," says Volney, alluding to France, " inured to

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 420.

† Wilson's Travels, p. 100.

‡ Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 225.

suffering from habit, and devoid of reflection from ignorance, they enjoy a kind of security. Having nothing to lose, they are in no dread of being plundered. The merchant, *on the contrary*, lives in a state of perpetual alarm, under the double apprehension of acquiring no more, and losing what he possesses. He trembles lest he should attract the attention of rapacious authority, which would consider an air of satisfaction as a proof of opulence and the signal for extortion. The *same dread* prevails throughout the villages, where *every peasant is afraid* of exciting the envy of his equals, and the avarice of the Aga and his soldiers. In such a country, where the subject is perpetually watched by a despoiling government, he must assume a serious countenance for the same reason that he wears ragged clothes ;”* or, as the description might appropriately have been concluded, in the very words of the prophet, because of the violence of them that dwell therein.

They shall be ashamed of your revenues. “ From the state of the contributions of each Pachalic, it appears that the annual sum paid by Syria into the Kasna, or treasury of the Sultan, amounts to 2342 purses, *viz.*

For Aleppo, 800 purses.

Tripoli, 750

Damascus, 45

Acre, 750

Palestine, —

—————
2345 purses :

* Volney's *Travels*, v. ii. p. 477, 478.

Which are equal to 2,931,250 livres, or £122,135 sterling." After the specification of some identical sources of revenue, it is added, "we cannot be far from the truth, if we compute the total of the Sultan's revenue from Syria to be 7,500,000 livres," (£312,500 sterling,)* or less than the third part of one million sterling. This is the whole amount that a government which has reached the acme of despotism, and which accounts pillage a right, and all property its own, can extort from impoverished Syria. But insignificant as this sum is, as the revenue of those extensive territories, which included in ancient times several opulent and powerful states, the greater part must be deducted from it, before estimating the pitiful pittance, which under the name of revenue, its oppressive masters can now drain from the land of Israel. A single glance at the preceding statement, affords the obvious means of distinguishing the comparative desolation and poverty of the different provinces of Syria. And the least unproductive of these in revenue,—the pachalics of Aleppo and Tripoli, and a considerable portion of what now forms the pachalic of Acre, were not included within the boundaries of ancient Judea. Palestine,—containing the ancient territory of Philistia and part of Judea,—was then gifted in whole, by the Sultan, to two individuals. The very extensive pachalic of Damascus, so unproductive of revenue, includes Jerusalem and a great proportion of ancient Judea, so that of it, even with

* Volney's *Travels*, v. ii. p. 360.

greater propriety than of the rest, it may be said,—*they shall be ashamed of your revenues.*

The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof. These expressive words denote the great depravity of those who were to inhabit the land of Judea during the time of its desolation, and while its ancient inhabitants were to be “scattered abroad.” And although the ignorance of those who dwell therein may be pitied, their degeneracy will not be denied. The ferocity of the Turks, the predatory habits of the Arabs, the abject state of the few poor Jews who are suffered to dwell in the land of their fathers, the base superstitions of the different Christian sects,—the frequent contentions that subsist among such a mingled and diversified people, and the gross ignorance and great depravity that prevail throughout the whole, have all sadly changed and stained the moral aspect of that country, which, from sacred remembrances, is denominated the Holy Land,—have converted that region, where alone in all the world, and during many ages, the only living and true God was worshipped,—and where alone a pattern of perfect virtue was ever exhibited to human view, or in the human form—into one of the most degraded countries of the globe, and in appropriate terms may well be said to have *defiled the land.* And it has been defiled throughout many an age. The Father of mercies afflicteth not willingly, nor grieves the children of men. Sin is ever the precursor of the actual judgments of heaven. The blood of Jesus, according to their prayer, and the full measure of their iniquity, according to their doings, were upon the Jews and upon their children.

Before they were extirpated from that land which their iniquities had defiled,—it was drenched with the blood of more than a million of their race. Judea afterwards had a partial and temporary respite from desolation, when Christian churches were established there. But in that land, the nursery of Christianity, the seeds of its corruption, or perversion, began soon to appear. The moral power of religion decayed, the worship of images prevailed, and the nominal disciples of a pure faith “broke the everlasting covenant.”* The doctrine of Mahomet—the Koran or the sword,—was the scourge and the cure of idolatry: but all the native impurities of the Mahometan creed succeeded to a grossly corrupted form of Christianity. Since that period, hordes of Saracens, Egyptians, Fatimites, Tartars, Mamelukes, Turks, (a combination of names of unmatched barbarism, at least in modern times,) have, for the space of twelve hundred years, *defiled the land* of the children of Israel with iniquity and with blood. And in very truth the prophecy savours not in the least of hyperbole,—*the worst of the heathen shall possess their houses —And the holy places shall be defiled.* Omar, on the first conquest of Jerusalem by the Mahometans, erected a mosque on the site of the temple of Solomon: and, jealous as the God of Israel is that his glory be not given to another, the unseemly and violent and bloody contentions among Christian sects around the very sepulchre of the author of the faith which they dishonour—bear not a feebler testimony, in the present day,

* Isaiah xxiv. 5.

than the preceding fact bore, at so remote a period, to the truth of this prediction. The frenzied zeal of crusading Christians could not expel the heathen from Judea, though Europe then poured like a torrent upon Asia. But the defilement of the land, no less than that of the holy places, is not yet cleansed away. And Judea is still defiled to this hour not only by oppressive rulers, but by an unprincipled and a lawless people. "The barbarism of Syria," says Volney, "is complete." "I have often reflected," says Burckhardt, in describing the dishonest conduct of a Greek priest in the Hauran, (but in words that admit of too general an application,) "that, if the English penal laws were suddenly promulgated in this country, there is scarcely any man in business, or who has money dealings with others, who would not be liable to transportation before the end of the first six months."* *The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant.—Therefore hath the curse devoured the land, and*

They that dwell therein are desolate. "The government of the Turks in Syria is a pure military despotism, that is, the bulk of the inhabitants are subject to the caprices of a faction of armed men, who dispose of every thing according to their interest and fancy." "In each government the pasha is an absolute despot. In the villages, the inhabitants, limited to the mere necessities of life, have no arts but those without which they

* Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 89.

cannot subsist." "There is no safety without the towns, nor security within their precincts ;"* and

Few men left. While their character is thus depraved, and their condition miserable, their number is also small indeed, as the inhabitants of so extensive and fertile a region. After estimating the number of inhabitants in Syria, in general, Volney remarks—"So feeble a population in so excellent a country, may well excite our *astonishment* ; but this will be increased, if we compare the present number of inhabitants with that of ancient times. We are informed by the philosophical geographer, Strabo, that the territories of Yanmia and Yoppa, in Palestine alone, were formerly so populous as to bring forty thousand armed men into the field. At present they could scarcely furnish three thousand. From the accounts we have of Judea, in the time of Titus, which are to be esteemed tolerably accurate, that country must have contained four millions of inhabitants. If we go still farther back into antiquity, we shall find the same populousness among the Philistines, the Phœnicians, and in the kingdoms of Samaria and Damascus."† Though the ancient population of the land of Israel be estimated at the lowest computation, and the existing population be rated at the highest, yet that country does not now contain a tenth part of the number of inhabitants, which it plentifully supported exclusively from their industry and from the rich resources of its own

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 370, 376, 380.

† Volney's Travels, vol. ii p. 366..

luxuriant soil, for many successive centuries ; and how could it possibly have been imagined that this identical land would ever yield so scanty a subsistence to the desolate dwellers therein, and that there would be so few men left ?

The mirth of the tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. Instrumental music was common among the Jews. The tabret and the harp, the cymbal, the psaltry, and the viol, and other instruments of music, are often mentioned as in familiar use among the Israelites, and regularly formed a great part of the service of the temple. At the period when the prediction was delivered, the harp, the viol, and the tabret, and pipe, and wine, were in their feasts ; and even though the Jews have long ceased to be a nation, the use of these instruments has not wholly ceased from among them. But in the once happy land of Judea, the voice of mirthful music is at rest. In a general description of the state of the arts and sciences in Syria (including the whole of the Holy Land), Volney remarks, that adepts in music are very rarely to be met with. “ They have no music but vocal, for they neither know nor esteem *instrumental* ; and they are in the right, for such instruments as they have, not excepting their flutes, are detestable.”* *The mirth of the harp ceaseth, the joy of the tabret ceaseth.*

But this is not the sole instance in which the me-

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 439.

lancholy features of that desolate country seem to be transferred to the minds of its inhabitants. And the plaintive language of the prophet (the significancy of which might well have admitted of some slight modification, if one jot or tittle could pass away till all be fulfilled) is true to the very letter, when set side by side, unaided by one syllable of comment, with the words of a bold and avowed unbeliever.

All the merry-hearted do sigh ; they shall not drink wine with a song ; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone. Their shouting shall be no shouting “ Their performance,” (singing) “ is accompanied with sighs and gestures. They may be said to excel most in the *melancholy* strain. To behold an Arab with his head inclined, his hand applied to his ear, his eyebrows knit, his eyes languishing ; to hear his plaintive tones, his *sighs* and sobs, it is almost impossible to refrain from tears.”* If any farther illustration of the prediction be requisite, the same ill-fated narrator of facts exhibits anew the visions of the prophet. From his description (chap. xl.) of the manners and character of the inhabitants of Syria, it is obvious that melancholy is a predominating feature. “ Instead of that open and cheerful countenance, which we either naturally possess or assume, their behaviour is serious, austere, and melancholy. They rarely laugh ; and the gaiety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium. When they speak it is with deliberation, without ges-

* Volney's Travels, pp. 439, 440.

ture, and without passion ; they listen without interrupting you ; they are silent for whole days together ; and by no means pique themselves on supporting conversation. Continually seated, they pass whole days musing, with their legs crossed, their pipes in their mouths, and almost without changing their attitude. The orientals, in general, have a grave and phlegmatic exterior ; a stayed and almost listless deportment ; and a serious, nay even sad and melancholy countenance." * Having thus explicitly stated the fact, Volney, by many arguments, equally judicious and just, most successfully combats the idea that the climate and soil are the radical causes of so striking a phenomenon : and, after assigning a multiplicity of facts from ancient history, which completely disprove the efficacy of such causes, he instances that of the Jews, " who, limited to a little state, never ceased to struggle for a thousand years against the most powerful empires.† If the men of these nations were inert," he adds, " what is activity ? If they were active, where then is the influence of climate ? Why, in the same countries, where so much energy was displayed in former times, do we at present find such profound indolence ?" And having thus relieved the advocate for the inspiration of the Scriptures from the necessity of proving that the contrast in the manners and character of the present and of the ancient inhabitants of Syria is (even now, when the change has become matter of history and observation, and when the circumstances

* Volney's Travels, pp. 461, 476.

† Ibid. 464.

respecting it are known,) incapable of solution from any natural causes, such as by some conceivable possibility might have been foreseen, he proceeds to point out those real, efficacious, and efficient causes, viz. the mode of government and the state of religion and of the laws,—the nature of which no human sagacity could possibly have descried, and which came not into existence or operation in the manner in which they have so long continued, for many ages subsequent to the period when their full and permanent effect was laid open to the full view of the prophets of Israel. The fact, thus clearly predicted and proved, is not only astonishing as referrible to the inhabitants of Judea, and as exhibiting a contrast, than which nothing, of a similar kind, can be more complete ; but it is so very contradictory to the habits of men and customs of nations, that it is totally inexplicable, how, by any human means, such a fact, even singly, could ever have been foretold. From the congregated groupes of savages, cheered by their simple instruments of music, exulting in their war songs, and revelling in their mirth, to the more elegant assemblages of polished society, listening with delight to the triumphs of music : from the huts of the wilderness to the courts of Asia and of Europe, and from the wilds of America, the jungles of India, and even the deserts of Central Africa, to the meadows of England, the plains of France, or the valleys of Italy ; the experience of mankind in every clime,—except partially where the blasting influence of the crescent is felt,—proclaims as untrue to nature the predicted fact, which actually has been permanently characteristic of the in-

habitants of the once happy land of Israel. The fact perhaps would have been but slowly credited ; and the synonymous terms of the ample description, and of the repeated prophecies, might have been reckoned the fiction of a biassed judgment, had a Christian, instead of Volney, been the witness.

The more closely that the author of the *Ruins of Empires* traces the causes in which the desolation of these regions, and the calamities of the inhabitants originate, he supplies more abundant data for a demonstration that the prophecies respecting them cannot but be divine. " One of the chief sources," continues Volney, " of gaiety with us is the social intercourse of the table, and the use of wine. The orientals (Syrians) are almost strangers to this double enjoyment. Good cheer would infallibly expose them to extortion, and wine to a corporal punishment, from the zeal of the police in enforcing the precepts of the Koran. It is with great reluctance the Mahometans tolerate the Christians the use of a liquor they envy them."* To this statement may be subjoined the more direct but equally unapplied testimony of recent travellers. " The wines of Jerusalem," says Mr. Jolliffe, " are most execrable. In a country where every species of vinous liquor is strictly prohibited by the concurrent authorities of law and gospel, a single fountain may be considered of infinitely greater value than many wine-presses."† Mr. Wilson relates that " the wine drank in Jerusalem is proba-

* Volney's Travels, v. ii. p. 480.

† Jolliffe's Letters from Palestine, v. i. p. 184.

bly the very worst to be met with in any country.”* While the intolerance and despotism of the Turks, and the rapacity and wildness of the Arabs, have blighted the produce of Judea, and render abortive all the influence of climate, and all the fertility of that land of vines, the unnatural prohibition of the use of wine, and the rigour with which that prohibition is enforced, have peculiarly operated against the cultivation of the vine, and turned the treading of the wine press into an odious and unprofitable task. Yet, in a country where the vine grows spontaneously, and which was celebrated for the excellence of its wines,† nothing less than the operation of causes unnatural and extreme as these, could have verified the language of prophecy. But in this instance, as truly as in every other, a recapitulation of the prophecies is the best summary of the facts. And, by only changing the future into the present and the past, after an interval of two thousand five hundred years, no eye-witness, writing on the spot, could delineate a more accurate representation of the existing state of Judea, than in the very words of Isaiah, in which, as in those of other prophets, the various and desultory observations of travellers are concentrated into a description equally perspicuous and true.

“ Many days and years shall ye be troubled, for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for

* Wilson's Travels, p. 130.

† Reland. Palest. p. 381, 792.

the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars: yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city. Because the palaces shall be forsaken—the multitude of the city shall be left—the forts and towers shall be for dens—a joy of wild asses—a pasture of flocks.* The highways lie waste—the wayfaring man ceaseth—the earth mourneth and languisheth. Lebanon is ashamed, and hewn down, or withered away—Sharon is like a wilderness—and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.† The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly despoiled. The earth mourneth and fadeth away—it is defiled under the inhabitants thereof. Because they have transgressed the laws, therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate, and few men left: the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth—the noise of them that rejoice endeth—the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song—strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it—the city of confusion is broken down—all joy is darkened—the mirth of the land is gone.” ‡

To this picture of common and general devastation, that no distinguishing feature might be left untouched or untraced by his pencil, the prophet adds:—“When thus it shall be in the midst of the land, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done. The glory of Jacob shall wax thin: and it shall be, as when the harvestman gathereth the corn and reapeth the ears with his

* Isa. xxxii. 10—14. † Isa. xxxiii. 8, 9. ‡ Isa. xxiv. 3, &c.

arm—yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof.”* These words imply, as is otherwise declared without a metaphor, that a small remnant would be left—that, though Judea should become poor like a field that has been reaped, or like a vine stripped of its fruits, its desolation would not be so complete but that some vestige of its former abundance would be still visible, like the few grains that are left by the reaper when the harvest is past, or the little remaining fruit that hangs on the uppermost branch, or on a neglected bough, after the full crop has been gathered, and the vine and the olive have been shaken. And is there yet a gleaning left of all the glory of Israel? There is; and there could not be any simile more natural or more expressive of the fact. Napolose (the ancient Sichein) is luxuriantly embosomed in the most delightful and fragrant bowers, half concealed by rich gardens and by stately trees, collected into groves all around the beautiful valley in which it stands.†—The garden of Geddin, situated on the borders of Mount Sharon, and protected by its chief, extends several miles in a spacious valley, abounding with excellent fruits, such as olives, almonds, peaches, apricots and figs. A number of streams, that fall from the mountains, traverse it, and water the cotton plants that thrive well in this fertile soil.‡—The scenery in the plain of Zabulon is, to the full, as delightful as in

* Isa. xvii. 5, 6.

† Clarke, v. ii. 506.

‡ Mariti's Travels, ii. 151.

the rich vales upon the south of the Crimea ;—it reminds the traveller of the finest parts of Kent and Surrey.* The soil, although stony, is exceedingly rich, but now entirely neglected. But the delightful vale of Zabulon appears everywhere covered with spontaneous vegetation, flourishing in the wildest exuberance. Even along the mountains of Gilead, the land, possessing extraordinary riches, abounds with the most beautiful prospects, is clothed with rich forests, varied with verdant slopes ; and extensive plains, of a fine red soil, are now covered with thistles as the best proof of its fertility.† The valley of St. John's, in the vicinity of Jerusalem, is crowned to the top with olives and vines, while the lower part of the valley bears the milder fig and almond.‡ Whenever any spot is fixed on as the residence, and seized as the property, either of a Turkish Aga, or of an Arab Sheikh, it enjoys his protection, is made to administer to his wants, or to his luxury, and the exuberance and beauty of the land of Canaan soon reappear. But such spots are, in the words of an eye-witness, only “mere sprinklings” in the midst of extensive desolation. And how could it ever have been foreseen, that the same cause, viz. the residence of despotic spoliators, was to operate in so strange a manner, as to spread a wide wasting desolation over the face of the country, and to be, at the same time, the very means of preserving the thin gleanings of its ancient glory ; or that a few berries on the outmost bough

* Clarke, ii. 400.

† Buckingham's Travels, p. 322.

‡ General Straton's MS. Travels.

would be saved by the same hand that was to shake the olive!

Among such a multiplicity of prophecies, where the prediction and the fulfilment of each is a miracle, it is almost impossible to select any as more amazing than the rest: But that concerning Samaria is not the least remarkable. That city was, for a long period, the capital of the ten tribes of Israel. Herod the Great enlarged and adorned it, and, in honour of Augustus Cæsar, gave it the name of Sebaste. There are many ancient medals which were struck there.* It was the seat of a bishopric, as the subscriptions of some of its bishops to the acts of ancient Councils attest. Its history is thus brought down to a period unquestionably far remote from the time of the prediction; and the narrative of a traveller, which alludes not to the prophecy, and which has even been unnoticed by commentators, shows its complete fulfilment. Besides other passages which speak of its extinction as a city, the word of the Lord which Micah saw concerning Samaria, is—"I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley: and I will discover the foundations thereof." And this great city is now wholly converted into gardens; and all the tokens that remain to testify that there has ever been such a place, are only on the north side—a large square piazza, encompassed with pillars,—and on the east, some poor remains of a great church. Such was the first notice

* Calmet's Dict. Relandi Palest. p. 981.

of that ancient capital given by Maundrell in 1696, and it is confirmed by Mr. Buckingham in 1816. The relative distance, local position, and unaltered name of Sebaste, leave no doubt as to the identity of its site; and he adds, its local features are equally seen in the threat of Micah.*

But the predicted fate of Jerusalem has been more conspicuously displayed and more fully illustrated than that of the capital of the ten tribes of Israel. It formed the theme of prophecy from the death-bed of Jacob—and, as the seat of the government of the children of Judah, the sceptre departed not from it till the Messiah appeared, on the expiration of 1700 years after the death of the Patriarch, and till the period of its desolation, prophesied of by Daniel, had arrived. A destiny, diametrically opposite to the former, then awaited it, even for a longer duration; and, ere its greatness was gone, even at the very time when it was crowded with Jews, from all quarters, resorting to the feast, and when it was inhabited by a numerous population dwelling in security and peace, its doom was denounced—that it was to be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the time of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. The time of the Gentiles is not yet fulfilled, and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles. The Jews have

* Buckingham's Trav. p. 511, 512. It has also been described in similar terms by other travellers. The stones are poured down into the valley, the foundations discovered, and there is now only to be seen 'the hill where once stood Samaria.' Napolose has been mistaken by one traveller for the ancient Samaria.

often attempted to recover it: No distance of space or of time can separate it from their affections—they perform their devotions with their faces towards it, as if it were the object of their worship as well as of their love; and, although their desire to return be so strong, indelible, and innate, that every Jew, in every generation, counts himself an exile—yet they have never been able to rebuild their temple, nor to recover Jerusalem from the hands of the Gentiles. But greater power than that of a proscribed and exiled race has been added to their own, in attempting to frustrate the counsel that professed to be of God. Julian, the emperor of the Romans, not only permitted but invited the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem and their temple; and promised to re-establish them in their paternal city. By that single act, more than by all his writings, he might have destroyed the credibility of the Gospel, and restored his beloved but deserted paganism. The zeal of the Jews was equal to his own—and the work was begun by laying again the foundations of the temple. In the space of three days, Titus had formerly encompassed that city with a wall when it was crowded with his enemies; and, instead of being obstructed, that great work, when it was confirmatory of an express prediction of Jesus, was completed with an astonishing celerity;—and what could hinder the emperor of Rome from building a temple at Jerusalem, when every Jew was zealous for the work? Nothing appeared against it but a single sentence uttered, some centuries before, by one who had been crucified. If that word had been of man, would all the power of the monarch of the world

have been thwarted in opposing it? And why did not Julian, with all his inveterate enmity and laborious opposition to Christianity, execute a work so easy and desirable? A heathen historian relates—that fearful balls of fire, bursting from the earth, sometimes burned the workmen, rendered the place inaccessible, and caused them to desist from the undertaking.* The same narrative is attested by others. Chrysostom, who was a living witness, appealed to the existing state of the foundations, and to the universal testimony which was given of the fact. And an eminent modern traveller, who visited, and who minutely examined the spot, testifies that “there seems every reason for believing, that, in the reticulated remains still visible on the site of the temple, is seen a standing memorial of Julian’s

* Imperii sui memoriam magnitudine operum gestiens propagare, ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolymam templum, quod, post multa et interneciva certamina obsidente Vespasiano, posteaque Tito, ægre est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus cogitabat immodicis; negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiochensi, qui olim Britannias curaverat pro præfectis. Cum itaque rei eidem instaret Alypius, juvaretque provinciæ rector, metuendi globi flammæ, prope fundamenta, crebris assaultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exustis aliquoties operantibus inaccessum; hocque modo, elemento destinatius repellente, cessavit inceptum—Ammian Marcell. lib. xxiii. cap. 1. § 2, 3. Rufini Hist. Eccles. lib. 1. c. 37. Socrat. lib. iii. c. 17. Theodorit. l. iii. c. 17. Sozomin l. v. c. 21. Cassiod. Hist. Tripart. l. vi. c. 43. Nicephor. Callis. lib. x. 32. Greg. Naziaz. in Julian. Orat. 2. Chrysos. de lan. Bab. Mart. et contra Judeos, iii p. 491. Lind.—Vide Am. Mar. tom. iii. p. 2.

discomfiture.”* While destitute of this additional confirmation of its truth, the historical evidence was too strong even for the scepticism of Gibbon altogether to gainsay ; and brought him to the acknowledgment that such authority must astonish an incredulous mind. Even independent of the miraculous interposition, the fulfilment is the same. The attempt was made avowedly, and it was abandoned without any apparent cause. Why, or how, matters not. It was never accomplished—and the prophecy stands fulfilled. But, even if the attempt of Julian had never been made, the truth of the prophecy itself is unassailable. The Jews have never been reinstated in Judea. Jerusalem has ever been trodden down of the Gentiles. The edict of Adrian was renewed by the successors of Julian—and no Jews could approach unto Jerusalem but by bribery or by stealth. It was a spot unlawful for them to touch. In the crusades, all the power of Europe was employed to rescue Jerusalem from the heathens, but equally in vain. It has been trodden down for nearly eighteen centuries by its successive masters—by Romans, Grecians, Persians, Saracens, Mamelukes, Turks, Christians—and again by the worst of rulers, the Arabs and the Turks. And could any thing be more improbable to have happened, or more impossible to have been foreseen by man, than that any people should be banished from their own capital and country, and remain expelled and expatriated for nearly 1800 years? Did the same fate ever befall any nation, though no prophecy existed respecting it? Is there any doctrine in Scripture so

* Clarke's Travels, vol. ii. note 1, at the end of the volume.

hard to be believed as was this single fact at the period of its prediction? And, even with the example of the Jews before us, is it likely, or is it credible, or who can foretel—that the present inhabitants of any country upon earth shall be banished into all nations—retain their distinctive character—meet with an unparalleled fate—continue a people—without a government and without a country—and remain for an indefinite period, exceeding 1700 years, till the fulfilment of a prescribed event over which they can have no control? Must not the knowledge of such truths be derived from that Prescience alone which scans alike the will and the ways of mortals, the actions of future nations, and the history of the latest generations?

But the prophecies are not confined to the land of Judea, they are equally unlimited in their range over space as over time. After a lapse of many ages, the countries around Judea are now beginning to be known. And each succeeding traveller, in the communication of new discoveries concerning them, is gradually unfolding the very description which the prophets gave of their poverty and desolation, at the time of their great prosperity and luxuriance. The countries of the Ammonites—of the Moabites—of the Edomites, or inhabitants of Idumea, and of the Philistines, all bordered with Judea, and each is the theme of prophecy. The relative positions of them all are distinctly defined in Scripture, and have been clearly ascertained.* And

* *Relandi Palestina Illustrata*; D'Anville's Map: Maps in Volney's, Burckhardt's, and Buckingham's Travels; Well's Scripture Geography; Gibbon's History; Shaw's Travels, &c.

the territories of the ancient enemies of the Jews, long overrun by the enemies of Christianity, present many a proof of the inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures, and of the truth of the Christian religion.

AMMON.

The country anciently peopled by the Ammonites is situated to the east of Palestine, and is now possessed partly by the Arabs and by the Turks. It is naturally one of the most fertile provinces of Syria, and it was for many ages one of the most populous. The Ammonites often invaded the land of Israel, and at one period united with the Moabites, they retained possession of a great part of it, and grievously oppressed the Israelites for the space of eighteen years. Jephthah repulsed them and took twenty of their cities; but they continued afterwards to harass the borders of Israel—and their capital was besieged by the forces of David, and their country rendered tributary. They regained and long maintained their independence, till Jotham the king of Judah subdued them, and exacted from them an annual tribute of a hundred talents, and thirty thousand quarters of wheat and barley; yet they soon contested again with their ancient enemies, and exulted in the miseries that befell them, when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem and carried its inhabitants into captivity. In after times, though successively oppressed by

the Chaldeans, (when some of the earliest prophecies respecting it were fulfilled) and by the Egyptians and Syrians, Ammon was a highly productive and populous country, when the Romans became masters of all the provinces of Syria; and several of the ten allied cities, which gave name to the celebrated Decapolis, were included within its boundaries. Even "when first invaded by the Saracens, this country" (including Moab) "was enriched by the various benefits of trade, was covered with a line of forts, and possessed some strong and populous cities."* Volney bears witness, that "in the immense plains of the Hauran, ruins are continually to be met with, and that what is said of its actual fertility perfectly corresponds with the idea given of it in the Hebrew writings."† The fact of its natural fertility is corroborated by every traveller who has visited it. And "it is evident," says Burckhardt, "that the whole country must have been extremely well cultivated, in order to have afforded subsistence to the inhabitants of so many towns,"‡ as are now visible only in their ruins. While the fruitfulness of the land of Ammon, and the high degree of prosperity and power in which it subsisted, long prior and

* Gibbon's *History*, vol. v. p. 240, c. 51.

† Volney's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 299.

‡ Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria*, p. 357.

Having frequent occasion in the subsequent pages to refer to the authority of the celebrated and lamented traveller, J. Lewis Burckhardt, the following ample testimonies to his talents, perseverance, and veracity, will show with what perfect confi-

long subsequent to the date of the predictions, are thus indisputably established by historical evidence and by existing proofs, the researches of recent travellers (who were actuated by the mere desire of exploring these regions and obtaining geographical information,) have made known its present aspect ; and testimony the most

dence his statements may be relied on, especially as the subject of the fulfilment of prophecy, being never once alluded to in all his writings, seems to have been wholly foreign to his view.—

“ He was a traveller of no ordinary description, a gentleman by birth, and a scholar by education ; he added, to the ordinary acquirements of a traveller, accomplishments which fitted him for any society. His descriptions of the countries through which he passed, his narrative of incidents, his transactions with the natives, are all placed before us with equal clearness and simplicity.—In every page they will find that ardour of research,—that patience of investigation,—that passionate pursuit after truth for which he was eminently distinguished.”—*Quarterly Review*, Vol. XXII. p. 437. “ He appears from his books and letters to have been a modest, laborious, learned and sensible man ; exempt from prejudice, *unattached to systems* ; detailing what he saw plainly and correctly, and of very prudent and discreet conduct.”—*Edinburgh Review*, No. LXVII. p. 109. The following extract from General Straton’s manuscript Travels was written at Cairo, and is the more valuable, as containing the result of personal knowledge and observation.—“ Burckhardt speaks Arabic perfectly, has adopted the costume, and goes to the religious places of worship, has been at Mecca ; in short, follows in every thing the Turkish manners and customs, and he is not to be distinguished from a Musselman. With what advantage must he travel ! He is by birth a Swiss, but, having been educated in England, speaks our language perfectly.”

clear, unexceptionable, and conclusive, has been borne to the state of dire desolation to which it is, and has long been, reduced.

It was prophesied concerning AMMON—"Son of man set thy face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them. I will make Rabbah of the Ammonites a stable for camels and a couching place for flocks. Behold I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and deliver thee for a spoil to the heathen; I will cut thee off from the people, and cause thee to perish out of the countries; I will destroy thee. The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. Rabbah (the chief city) of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap. Ammon shall be a perpetual desolation."*

Ammon was to be delivered to be a spoil to the heathen—to be destroyed, and to be a perpetual desolation. "All this country, formerly so populous and flourishing, is now changed into a vast desert."† Ruins are seen in every direction. The country is divided between the Turks and the Arabs, but chiefly possessed by the latter. The extortions of the one, and the depredations of the other, keep it in *perpetual desolation*, and make it *a spoil to the heathen*. "The far greater part of the country is uninhabited, being abandoned to the wandering Arabs, and the towns and villages are in a state of total ruin."‡ "At every step are to be

* Ezek. xxv. 2, 5, 7, 10; xxi. 32. Jerem. xlix. 2. Zeph. ii. 9.

† Seetzen's Travels, p. 31.

‡ Ib. p. 37.

found the vestiges of ancient cities, the remains of many temples, public edifices, and Greek churches." * The cities are desolate. "Many of the ruins present no objects of any interest. They consist of a few walls of dwelling-houses, heaps of stones, the foundations of some public edifices, and a few cisterns filled up; there is nothing entire, but it appears that the mode of building was very solid, all the remains being formed of large stones.—In the vicinity of Ammon there is a fertile plain interspersed with low hills, which for the greater part are covered with ruins." †

While the country is thus despoiled and desolate, there are valleys and tracts throughout it, which "are covered with a fine coat of verdant pasture, and are places of resort to the Bedouins, where they pasture their camels and their sheep." ‡ "The whole way we traversed," says Seetzen, "we saw villages in ruins, and met numbers of Arabs with their *camels*," &c. Mr. Buckingham describes a building among the ruins of Ammon, "the masonry of which was evidently constructed of materials gathered from the ruins of other and older buildings on the spot. On entering it at the south end," he adds, "we came to an open square court, with arched recesses on each side, the sides nearly facing the cardinal points. The recesses in the northern and southern wall were originally open passages, and had arched door-ways facing each other,—but the first of these

* Burckhardt's Travels in Nubia, Introd. p. 37, 38, 44.

† Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 355, 357, 364.

‡ Buckingham's Travels in Palestine, &c. p. 329.

was found wholly closed up, and the last was partially filled up, leaving only a narrow passage, just sufficient for the entrance of one man and of the goats, which the Arab keepers drive in here occasionally for shelter during the night." He relates that he lay down among "flocks of sheep and goats," close beside the ruins of Ammon;—and particularly remarks that, "during the night, he was almost entirely prevented from sleeping by the bleating of flocks."* So literally true is it, although Seetzen, and Burckhardt, and Buckingham, who relate the facts, make no reference or allusion whatever to any of the prophecies, and travelled for a different object than the elucidation of the Scriptures,—that *the chief city of the Ammonites is a stable for camels, and a couching-place for flocks.*

The Ammonites shall not be remembered among the nations. While the Jews, who were long their hereditary enemies, continue as distinct a people as ever, though dispersed among all nations, no trace of the Ammonites remains—none are now designated by their name, nor do any claim descent from them. They did exist, however, long after the time when the eventual annihilation of their race was foretold, for they retained their name, and continued a great multitude until the second century of the Christian era.† *Yet they are cut off from the people. Ammon has perished out of the countries; it is destroyed.* No people is attached to its soil—none regard it as their country and adopt its

* Buckingham's Travels among the Arab Tribes, under the title of *Ruins of Ammon*, p. 72, 73, &c.

† Justin Martyr, p. 392. Ed. Third.

name : *And the Ammonites are not remembered among the nations.*

Rabbah—(Rabbath Ammon, the chief city of Ammon,) *shall be a desolate heap.* Situated, as it was, on each side of the borders of a plentiful stream—encircled by a fruitful region—strong by nature and fortified by art, nothing could have justified the suspicion, or warranted the conjecture in the mind of an uninspired mortal, that the royal city of Ammon, whatever disasters might possibly befall it in the fate of war or change of masters, would ever undergo so total a transmutation as to become a desolate heap. But although, in addition to such tokens of its continuance as a city, more than a thousand years had given uninterrupted experience of its stability ere the prophets of Israel denounced its fate—yet a period of equal length has now marked it out,—as it exists to this day,—a desolate heap ; a perpetual or permanent desolation. Its ancient name is still preserved by the Arabs, and its site is now “ covered with the ruins of private buildings—nothing of them remaining except the foundations and some of the door-posts. The buildings, exposed to the atmosphere, are all in decay,”* so that they may be said literally to form a desolate heap. The public edifices, which once strengthened or adorned the city, after a long resistance to decay, are now also desolate ; and the remains of the most entire among them, subjected as they are to the abuse and spoliation of the wild Arabs, can be adapted to no better object than *a stable*

* Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 359.

for camels. Yet these broken walls and ruined palaces, which attest the ancient splendour of Ammon, can now be made subservient, by means of a single act of reflection, or simple process of reason, to a far nobler purpose than the most magnificent edifices on earth can be, when they are contemplated as monuments on which the historic and prophetic truth of Scripture is blended in one bright inscription. A minute detail of them may not therefore be uninteresting.

Seetzen, (whose indefatigable ardour led him, in defiance of danger, the first to explore the countries which lie east of the Jordan, and east and south of the Dead Sea, or the territories of Ammon, Moab, and Edom,) justly characterizes Ammon as once the residence of many kings—an ancient town which flourished long before the Greeks and Romans, and even before the Hebrews ;”* and he briefly enumerates those remains of ancient greatness and splendour, which are most distinguishable amidst its ruins. “ Although this town has been destroyed and deserted for many ages, I still found there some remarkable ruins, which attest its ancient splendour. Such as, 1st, a square building, very highly ornamented, which has been perhaps a mausoleum. 2dly, the ruins of a large palace. 3dly, A magnificent amphitheatre of immense size, and well preserved, with a peristyle of Corinthian pillars without pedestals. 4th, A temple with a great number of

* A brief account of the countries adjoining the Lake of Tiberias, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, by M. Seetzen, Conseiller d’Ambassade de S. M. l’Empereur de Russia, p. 35, 36.

columns. 5th, The ruins of a large church, perhaps the see of a bishop in the time of the Greek Emperors. 6th, The remains of a temple, with columns set in a circular form, and which are of an extraordinary size. 7th, The remains of the ancient wall, with many other edifices."* Burckhardt, who afterwards visited the spot, describes it with greater minuteness. He gives a plan of the ruins ; and particularly noted the ruins of many temples, of a spacious church, a curved wall, a high arched bridge, the banks and bed of the river still partially paved ; a large theatre, with successive tiers of apartments excavated in the rocky side of a hill ; Corinthian columns, fifteen feet high ; the castle, a very extensive building, the walls of which are thick, and denote a remote antiquity ; many cisterns and vaults ; and a plain covered with the decayed ruins of private buildings ; †—monuments of ancient splendour standing amidst a *desolate heap*.

MOAB.

The prophecies concerning Moab are more numerous and not less remarkable. Those of them which met their completion in ancient times, and which related to particular events in the history of the Moabites, and to the result of their conflicts with the Jews or any of the neighbouring states, however necessary they may have been at the time for strengthening the faith or

* Seetzen's Travels, p. 35, 36.

† Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 358, &c.

supporting the courage of the children of Israel, need not now be adduced in evidence of inspiration ; for there are abundant predictions which refer so clearly to decisive and unquestionable facts, that there is scarcely a single feature peculiar to the land of Moab, as it now exists, which was not marked by the prophets in their delineation of the low estate to which, from the height of its wickedness and haughtiness, it was finally to be brought down.

“ Against Moab thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Woe unto Nebo ! for it is spoiled ; Kiriathaim is confounded and taken ; Misgab is confounded and dismayed. There shall be no more praise of Moab.— And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape ; the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the Lord hath spoken. Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away : for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.—Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees ; and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him wanderers that shall cause him to wander.—How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod !—Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon, come down from thy glory and sit in thirst ; for the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds. Moab is confounded, for it is broken down. Moab is spoiled. And judgment is come upon the plain country ; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath, and upon

Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Bethdiblathaim; upon Kiriathaim, Bethgamul, Bethmeon, and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab far and near. The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the Lord. O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell in the rock; and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. We have heard of the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.—And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab. I have caused wine to fail from the wine-presses. None shall tread with shouting; their shouting shall be no shouting. From the city of Heshbon even unto Elealeh; and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim; the waters also of Nimrim shall be desolate. I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no pleasure. They shall cry, how is it broken down! And Moab shall be destroyed from being a people, because he hath magnified himself against the Lord. The cities of Aroer are forsaken; they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Moab shall be a perpetual desolation.**

The land of Moab lay to the east and south-east of Judea, and bordered on the east, north-east, and partly on the south of the Dead Sea. Its early history is nearly analogous to that of Ammon; and the soil, though perhaps more diversified, is, in many places

* Jerem. xlviii. 1, 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 18,—28, 29—42.

Isaiah xvii. 2. Zeph. ii. 9.

where the desert and plains of salt have not encroached on its borders, of equal fertility. There are manifest and abundant vestiges of its ancient greatness. "The whole of the plains are covered with the sites of towns, on every eminence or spot convenient for the construction of one. And as the land is capable of rich cultivation, there can be no doubt that the country now so deserted, once presented a continued picture of plenty and fertility."* The form of fields is still visible; and there are the remains of Roman highways, which in some places are completely paved, and on which there are milestones of the times of Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, and Severus, with the number of the miles legible upon them. Wherever any spot is cultivated the corn is luxuriant; and the riches of the soil cannot perhaps be more clearly illustrated than by the fact, that one grain of Heshbon wheat exceeds in dimensions two of the ordinary sort, and more than double the number of grains grow on the stalk. The frequency, and almost, in many instances, the close vicinity of the sites of the ancient towns, "prove that the population of the country was formerly proportioned to its natural fertility."† Such evidence may surely suffice to prove, that the country was well cultivated and peopled at a period so long posterior to the date of the predictions, that no cause less than supernatural, could have existed at the time when they were delivered, which could have authorized the assertion, with the least pro-

* Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 370.

† Ibid. p. 377, 378, 456, 460.

bability or apparent possibility of its truth, that Moab would ever have been reduced to that state of great and permanent desolation in which it has continued for so many ages, and which vindicates and ratifies to this hour the truth of the Scriptural prophecies.

The cities of Moab were to be desolate without any to dwell therein; no city was to escape. Moab was to flee away. And the cities of Moab have all disappeared. Their place, together with the adjoining part of Idumea, is characterised, in the map of Volney's Travels, by the *ruins of towns*. His information respecting these ruins was derived from some of the wandering Arabs; and its accuracy has been fully corroborated by the testimony of different European travellers of high respectability and undoubted veracity, who have since visited this devastated region. The whole country abounds with ruins. And Burckhardt, who encountered many difficulties in so desolate and dangerous a land, thus records the brief history of a few of them: "The ruins of Eleale, Heshbon, Meon, Medaba, Dibon, Aroer, still subsist to illustrate the history of the Beni Israel."* And it might with equal truth have been added, that they still subsist to confirm the inspiration of the Jewish Scriptures, or to prove that the Seers of Israel were the prophets of God, for the desolation of each of these very cities was the theme of a prediction. Every thing worthy of observation respecting them has been detailed, not only in Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, but also by Seetzen, and, more recently, by Captains Irby and Mangles, who, along with Mr. Bankes and

* Burckhardt's Travels in Nubia, Introduction, p. 38.

Mr. Legh, visited this deserted district. The predicted judgment has fallen with such truth upon these cities, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab far and near, and they are so utterly *broken down*, that even the prying curiosity of such indefatigable travellers could discover, among a multiplicity of ruins, only a few remains so entire as to be worthy of particular notice. The subjoined description is drawn from their united testimony.—Among the ruins of El Aal (Eleale) are a number of large cisterns, fragments of buildings, and foundations of houses.* At Heshban (Heshbon) are the ruins of a large ancient town, together with the remains of a temple, and some edifices. A few broken shafts of columns are still standing; and there are a number of deep wells cut in the rock.† The ruins of *Medaba* are about two miles in circumference. There are many remains of the walls of private houses constructed with blocks of silex, but not a single edifice is standing. The chief object of interest is an immense tank, or cistern of hewn stones, “which, as there is no stream at Medaba,” Burckhardt remarks, “might still be of use to the Bedouins, were the surrounding ground cleared of the rubbish to allow the water to flow into it; *but such an undertaking is far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs.*” There is also the foundation of a temple built with large stones, and apparently of great antiquity, with two columns near it.‡ The ruins of *Diban* (Dibon) situated in the midst of a

* Burck. Travels in Syria, p. 365. † Ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 366. Seetzen's Travels, p. 37. Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 471.

fine plain, are of considerable extent, but present nothing of interest.* The neighbouring hot wells, and the similarity of the name, identify the ruins of Myoun with *Meon*, or Beth Meon of Scripture.† Of this ancient city, as well as of Araayr (Aroer) nothing is now remarkable but what is common to them with all the cities of Moab—their entire desolation. The extent of the ruins of *Rabba* (Rabbath Moab,) formerly the residence of the kings of Moab, sufficiently proves its ancient importance, though no other object can be particularized among the ruins, except the remains of a palace or temple, some of the walls of which are still standing; a gate belonging to another building; and an insulated altar. There are many remains of private buildings, but none entire. There being no springs on the spot, the town had two birkets, the largest of which is cut entirely out of the rocky ground, together with many cisterns.‡

Mount *Nebo* was completely barren when Burckhardt passed over it, and the site of the ancient city had not been ascertained.§ *Nebo is spoiled.*

While the ruins of all these cities still retain their ancient names, and are the most conspicuous amidst the wide scene of general desolation, and while each of them was, in like manner, particularized in the visions

* Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 462. Seetzen's Travels, p. 38.

† Burckhardt's Travels, p. 365. Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 464.

‡ Seetzen's Travels, p. 39. Burckhardt's Travels, p. 377.

§ Burckhardt's Travels, p. 370.

of the prophet, they yet formed but a small number of the cities of Moab; and the rest are also, in similar verification of the prophecies, *desolate without any to dwell therein*. None of the ancient cities of Moab now exist as tenanted by men. Kerek, which neither bears any resemblance in name to any of the cities of Moab which are mentioned as existing in the time of the Israelites, or possesses any monuments which denote a very remote antiquity, is the only nominal town in the whole country, and in the words of Seetzen, who visited it “in its present ruined state it can only be called a hamlet:” “and the houses have only one floor.”* But the most populous and fertile province in Europe (especially any situated in the interior of a country like Moab) is not covered so thickly with towns as Moab is plentiful in ruins, deserted and desolate though now it be. Burckhardt enumerates about fifty ruined sites within its boundaries, many of them extensive. In general they are a *broken down* and undistinguishable mass of ruins; and many of them have not been closely inspected. But in some instances there are the remains of temples, sepulchral monuments, the ruins of edifices constructed of very large stones, in one of which buildings “some of the stones are twenty feet in length, and so broad, that one constitutes the thickness of the wall;” traces of hanging gardens; entire columns lying on the ground, as large as three feet in diameter, and fragments of smaller columns; and many cisterns cut out of the rock.—When the towns of Moab existed in their prime, and were at

* Burckhardt's Travels, p. 338. Seetzen's Travels, p. 39.

ease,—when arrogancy, and haughtiness, and pride prevailed amongst them—the desolation, and total desertion and abandonment of them all, must have utterly surpassed all human conception. And that such numerous cities—which subsisted for many ages—which were diversified in their sites, some of them being built on eminences, and naturally strong; others on plains, and surrounded by the richest soil; some situated in vallies by the side of a plentiful stream; and others where art supplied the deficiencies of nature, and where immense cisterns were excavated out of the rock—and which exhibit in their ruins many monuments of ancient prosperity, and many remains easily convertible into present utility—should have all fled away—all met the same indiscriminate fate—and be all *desolate without any to dwell therein*, notwithstanding all these ancient assurances of their permanent durability, and their existing facilities and inducements for being the habitations of men—is a matter of just wonder in the present day,—and had any other people been the possessors of Moab, the fact would either have been totally impossible, or unaccountable. Trying as this test of the truth of prophecy is—*that is the word of God, and not of erring man, which can so well and so triumphantly abide it. They shall cry of Moab, how is it broken down!*

The valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed. Moab has often been a field of contest between the Arabs and the Turks: and although the former have retained possession of it, both have mutually reduced it to desolation. The different tribes of

Arabs who traverse it, not only bear a permanent and habitual hostility to Christians and to Turks, but one tribe is often at variance and at war with another ; and the regular cultivation of the soil, or the improvement of those natural advantages of which the country is so full, is a matter either never thought of, or that cannot be realized. Property is there the creature of power and not of law ; and possession forms no security when plunder is the preferable right. Hence the extensive plains, where they are not partially covered with wood, present a barren aspect, which is only relieved at intervals by a few clusters of wild fig-trees, that show how the richest gifts of nature degenerate when unaided by the industry of man. And instead of the profusion which the plains must have exhibited in every quarter, nothing but “ patches of the best soil in the territory are now cultivated by the Arabs ;” and these only “ whenever they have the prospect of being able to secure the harvest against the incursions of enemies.”* The Arab herds now roam at freedom over the vallies and the plains ; and “ the many vestiges of field enclosures”† form not any obstruction ; they wander undisturbed around the tents of their masters, over the face of the country ; and while *the valley is perished, and the plain destroyed, the cities also of Aroer are forsaken ; they are for flocks which lie down, and none make them afraid.*

The strong contrast between the ancient and the actual state of Moab is exemplified in the condition of the inhabitants as well as of the land ; and the coin-

* Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 369. † Ibid. p. 365.

cidence between the prediction and the fact is as striking in the one case as in the other.

The days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him (Moab) wanderers that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels. The Bedouin (wandering) Arabs are now the chief and almost the only inhabitants of a country once studded with cities. Traversing the country, and fixing their tents for a short time in one place, and then decamping to another, depasturing every part successively, and despoiling the whole land of its natural produce, they *are wanderers who have come up against it, and who keep it in a state of perpetual desolation.* They lead a wandering life; and the only regularity they know or practise, is to act upon a systematic scheme of spoliation. They prevent any from forming a fixed settlement who are inclined to attempt it; for although the fruitfulness of the soil would abundantly repay the labour of settlers, and render migration wholly unnecessary, even if the population were increased more than tenfold; yet the Bedouins forcibly deprive them of the means of subsistence, compel them to search for it elsewhere, and, in the words of the prediction, literally *cause them to wander.* “ It may be remarked generally of the Bedouins,” says Burckhardt, in describing their extortions in this very country, “ that wherever they are the masters of the cultivators, the latter are soon reduced to beggary by their unceasing demands.”*

O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities and dwell

* Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 381.

in the rock, and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. In a general description of the condition of the inhabitants of that extensive desert which now occupies the place of these ancient flourishing states, Volney, in plain but unmeant illustration of this prediction, remarks, that "the wretched peasants live in perpetual dread of losing the fruit of their labours: and no sooner have they gathered in their harvest, than they hasten to secrete it in private places, and retire among the rocks which border on the Dead Sea."* Towards the opposite extremity of the land of Moab, and at a little distance from its borders, Seetzen relates, that "there are many families living in caverns;" and he actually designates them "the inhabitants of the rocks."† And at the distance of a few miles from the ruined site of Heshbon, "there are many artificial caves in a large range of perpendicular cliffs—in some of which are chambers and small sleeping apartments."‡ While the cities are desolate, without any to dwell therein, the rocks are tenanted. But whether flocks lie down in the former without any to make them afraid, or whether men are to be found dwelling in the latter, and are like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth—the wonderful transition, in either case, and the close accordance, in both, of the fact to the prediction, assuredly mark it in characters that may be visible to the purblind mind, as the word of that God before whom the

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 344.

† Seetzen's Travels, p. 26. See Monthly Review, vol. lxxi. p. 405.

‡ Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 473.

darkness of futurity is as light, and without whom a sparrow cannot fall unto the ground.*

And although chargeable with the impropriety of being somewhat out of place, it may not be now altogether improper to remark, that, demonstrative as all these clear predictions and coincident facts are of the inspiration of the Scriptures, it cannot but be gratifying to every lover of his kind, when he contemplates

* Another prediction respecting the dwellers in Moab ought not perhaps to be passed over in silence, although the terms in which it is expressed are not so clear and unambiguous as those to which the observations in the text are confined; and although it may have met its primary fulfilment in a much earlier age. Yet it is so intelligible that the fact, to which it bears an unstrained application, may be left as its sole and adequate exposition; and the continued truth of the prophecy greatly strengthens, instead of weakening, the evidence of its inspiration. And how is Moab broken down and spoiled, when, in lieu of the arrogancy and exceeding pride and haughtiness of its ancient inhabitants, the following description is characteristic of the wanderers who now possess it. "In the valley of *Wale*," which is situated in the immediate vicinity of the river *Arnon*, into which the *Wale* flows, *Burckhardt* observed "a large party of Arabs *Sherarat* encamped—Bedouins of the Arabian desert, who resort hither in summer for pasturage." Being oppressed and hemmed in by other Arab tribes, "they *wander about in misery*, have very few horses, and are not able to feed any flocks of sheep or goats."—"Their tents are very miserable; both men and women go almost naked, the former being only covered round the waist, and the women wearing nothing but a loose shirt hanging in rags about them." *Moab shall be a derision. As the wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the ford of ARNON.* *Burckhardt's Travels*, p. 370, 371. *Isa. xvi. 2.*

that desolation caused by many sins and fraught with many miseries, which the wickedness of man has wrought, and which the prescience of God revealed, to know that all these prophecies, while they mingle the voice of wailing with that of denunciation, are the word of that God, who, although he suffers not iniquity to pass unpunished, overrules evil for good, and makes the wrath of man to praise him, and who in the midst of judgment can remember mercy. And reasoning merely from the "uniform experience" (to borrow a term, and draw an argument from Hume) of the truth of the prophecies already fulfilled, the unprejudiced mind will at once perceive the full force of the proof derived from experience,* and acknowledge that it would be a rejection of the authority of reason as well as of revelation to mistrust the truth of that prophetic affirmation of resuscitating and redeeming import, respecting Ammon and Moab, which is the last of the series, and which alone now awaits futurity to stamp it with the brilliant and crowning seal of its testimony. I will bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the Lord.† I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.‡ The remnant of my people shall possess them.¶ They shall

* "Being determined by custom to transfer the past to the future, in all our inferences; where the past has been entirely regular and uniform, we expect the event with the greatest assurance, and leave no room for any contrary supposition." Hume's *Essays of Probability*, vol. ii. p. 61. Edin. 1800.

† Jerem. xlviii. 47.

‡ Ib. xlix. 6.

¶ Zeph. ii. 9.

build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.*

IDUMEA.

BUT a heavier and irreversible doom was denounced against the land of Edom or Idumea; and the testimony of an infidel was the first to show how it has been realized: That testimony, as forming an exposition of itself, may, in a primary view of them, be subjoined to the prophecies, and must have its due influence on every unbiassed mind. There are numerous prophecies respecting Idumea, that bear a literal interpretation, however hyperbolic they may appear. “ (My sword shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment.)—From generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be a habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island,

* Isa. lxi. 4; lviii. 11. Ezek. xxxvi. 33, 36.

and the satyr (or hairy creature) shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vultures also be gathered every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.* “Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Is wisdom no more in Teman? Is counsel perished from the prudent? I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him the time that I will visit him. If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleaning grapes? If thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself.—Behold they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished? Thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it. I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah (the strong or fortified city) shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. Lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men.

* Isaiah xxxiv. 5, 10—17.

Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: Though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle. I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.”* “ Thus saith the Lord God, I will stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it, and I will make it desolate from Teman.” “ The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophecy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate.”† Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out, and him that returneth.‡ I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return.|| When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate. Thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it; and they shall know that I am the Lord.§ Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.¶ “ For three transgressions of Edom, and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof.”** “ Thus saith

* Jerem. xlix. 7—10, 12—18. † Ezek. xxxv. 1, 2, 3, 4.

‡ Ib. 7. || Ib. 9. § Ib. 14, 15. ¶ Joel iii. 19.

** Amos i. 11.

the Lord concerning Edom, I have made thee small among the heathen, thou art greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high. Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the Mount of Esau. The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions, but there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau.* I laid the mountains of Esau and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith we are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of Hosts, they shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them the border of wickedness."† Is there any country once inhabited and opulent, so utterly desolate? There is, and that land is Idumea. The territory of the descendants of Esau affords as miraculous a demonstration of the inspiration of the Scriptures, as the fate of the children of Israel.

Idumea was situated to the south of Judea and of Moab; it bordered on the east with Arabia Petræa, under which name it was included in the latter part of its history, and it extended southward to the eastern Gulf of the Red Sea. A single extract from the Travels of Volney will be found to be equally illustrative of the prophecy and of the fact. "This country *has not been visited by any traveller*, but it well merits such an attention; for from the report of the Arabs of Bakir, and the inhabitants of Gaza, who frequently go to

* Obad. v. 2, 3, 8, 17, 18.

† Malachi i. 3, 4.

Maan and Karak, on the road of the pilgrims, there are, to the south-east of the lake Asphaltites (Dead Sea,) *within three days' journey*, upwards of thirty ruined towns *absolutely deserted*. Several of them have large edifices, with columns that may have belonged to the ancient temples, or at least to Greek churches. The Arabs sometimes make use of them to fold their cattle in; but in general avoid them on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm. We cannot be surprised at these traces of ancient population, when we recollect that this was the country of the Nabatheans, the most powerful of the Arabs, and of the *Idumeans* who, at the *time of the destruction of Jerusalem*, were almost as numerous as the Jews, as appears from Josephus, who informs us, that on the first rumour of the march of Titus against Jerusalem, thirty thousand Idumeans instantly assembled, and threw themselves into that city for its defence. It appears, that besides the advantages of being under a tolerably good government, these districts enjoyed a considerable share of the commerce of Arabia and India, which increased their industry and population. We know that as far back as the time of Solomon, the cities of Asti-oum Gaber (Esion Gaber), and Ailah (Eloth) were highly frequented marts. These towns were situated on the adjacent Gulf of the Red Sea, where we still find the latter yet retaining its name, and perhaps the former in that of El Akaba, or the end (of the sea.) These two places are in the hands of the Bedouins, who, being destitute of a navy and commerce, do not inhabit them. But the pilgrims report that there is at

El Akaba a wretched fort. The Idumeans, from whom the Jews only took their ports at intervals, must have found in them a great source of wealth and population.

It even appears that the Idumeans rivalled the Tyrians, who also possessed a town, the name of which is unknown, on the coast of Hedjaz, in the desert of Tih, and the city of Faran, and without doubt, El-Tor, which served it by way of port. From this place the caravans might reach Palestine and Judea" (through Idumea) "in eight or ten days. This route, which is longer than that from Suez to Cairo, is infinitely shorter than that from Aleppo to Bassorah." * Evidence, which must have been undesigned, which cannot be suspected of partiality, and which no illustration can strengthen, and no ingenuity pervert, is thus borne to the truth of the most wonderful prophecies. That the Idumeans were a populous and powerful nation long posterior to the delivery of the prophecies; that they possessed a tolerably good government (even in the estimation of Volney)—that Idumea contained many cities—that these cities are now absolutely deserted, and that their ruins swarm with enormous scorpions—that it was a commercial nation, and possessed highly frequented marts—that it forms a shorter route than an ordinary one to India, and yet that it had not been visited by any traveller, are facts all recorded, or proved to a wish, by this able but unconscious commentator.

A greater contrast cannot be imagined than the an-

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 344, 5, 6.

cient and present state of Idumea. It was a kingdom previous to Israel, having been governed first by dukes or princes, afterwards by eight successive kings, and again by dukes, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.* Its fertility and early cultivation are implied not only in the blessing of Esau, whose dwelling was to be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; but also in the condition proposed by Moses to the Edomites, when he solicited a passage for the Israelites through their borders, "that they would not pass through the fields nor through the vineyards;" and also in the great wealth, especially in the multitude of flocks and herds, recorded as possessed by an individual inhabitant of that country, at a period, in all probability, even more remote.† The Idumeans were, without doubt, both an opulent and a powerful people. They often contended with the Israelites, and entered into league with their other enemies against them. In the reign of David they were indeed subdued and greatly oppressed, and many of them even dispersed throughout the neighbouring countries, particularly Phœnicia and Egypt. But during the decline of the kingdom of Judah, and for many years previous to its extinction, they encroached upon the territories of the Jews, and extended their dominion over the south-western part of Judea. Though no excellence whatever be now attached to its name, which exists only in past history, Idumea, including perhaps

* Genesis xxxvi. 31, &c.

† Genesis xxvii. 39. Numbers xx. 17. Job xlii. 12.

Judea, was then not without the praise of the first of Roman poets.

Primus Idumeas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.

Virg. Georg. lib. iii. l. 12.

And of Lucan (Phars. lib. iii.)

Arbustis palmarum dives Idume.

But Idumea, as a kingdom, can lay claim to a higher renown than either the abundance of its flocks, or the excellence of its palm trees. The celebrated city of Petra, (so named by the Greeks, and so worthy of the name, on account both of its rocky vicinity and its numerous dwellings excavated from the rocks,) was situated within the patrimonial territory of the Edomites. There is distinct and positive evidence that it was a city of Edom,* and the metropolis of the Nabatheans,† whom Strabo expressly identifies with the Idumeans—possessors of the same country, and subject to the same

* Petra being afterwards more particularly noticed, some quotations from ancient authors respecting it may here be subjoined.

Πέτρα πόλις ἐν γῆ Ἐδὼμ της Ἀραβίας.

Eusebii Onomast.

Petra, civitas Arabiæ in terra Edom.—*Hieron.*

Vide Relandi Palestina, tom. i. p. 70.

† Μητροπολις δε των Ναβαθαίων εστιν ἡ Πέτρα καλουµενη.

Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 779. Ed. Paris. 1620.

laws.* At a period subsequent to the commencement of the Christian era, there always reigned at Petra, according to the same geographer, a king of the royal lineage, with whom a prince was associated in the government.† It was a place of great strength in the time of the Romans. Pompey marched against it, but desisted from the attack: and Trajan afterwards besieged it. It was a metropolitan see, to which several bishoprics were attached in the time of the Greek Emperors; and Idumea was included in the third Palestine—*Palestina tertia sive salutaris*. But the ancient state of Idumea cannot in the present day be so clearly ascertained from the few brief records respecting it which can be gleaned from history, whether sacred or profane, as by the wonderful and imperishable remains of its capital city, and by “the traces of many towns and villages,” which indisputably show that “it must once have been thickly inhabited.”‡ It not only can admit of no dispute, that the country and cities of Idumea subsisted in a very different state from that absolute desolation in which, long prior to the period of its reality, it was represented in the prophetic vision; but there are prophecies regarding it, that have yet a prospective view, and which refer to the time when “the children of Israel shall possess their possessions,” or to “the year of recompenses for the controversy of

* Ναβαταῖοι δὲ εἰσὶν οἱ Ἰδουμαῖοι.

Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 760. Ed. Paris, 1620.

† *Ib.* p. 779.

‡ Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria*, p. 436.

Zion." But, dangerous as it is to explore the land of Idumea, and difficult to ascertain those existing facts and precise circumstances, which form the strongest features of its desolate aspect, (and that ought to be the subject of scientific, as well as of religious inquiry) enough has been discovered to show that the sentence against it, though fulfilled by the agency of nature and of man, is precisely such as was first recorded in the annals of inspiration.

There is a prediction which, being peculiarly remarkable as applicable to Idumea, and bearing reference to a circumstance explanatory of the difficulty of access to any knowledge respecting it, is entitled, in the first instance, to notice. *None shall pass through it for ever and ever. I will cut off from Mount Seir him that passeth out and him that returneth.** The ancient greatness of Idumea must, in no small degree, have resulted from its commerce. Bordering with Arabia on the east, and Egypt on the south-west, and forming from north to south the most direct and most commodious channel of communication between Jerusalem and her dependencies on the Red Sea, as well as between Syria and India, (through the continuous vallies of El Ghor, and El Araba, which terminated on the one extremity, at the borders of Judea, and on the other at Elath and Esiongaber on the Elanitic gulf of the Red Sea,) Idumea may be said to have formed the emporium of the commerce of the east. A Roman road passed directly through Idumea, from Jerusalem

* Isaiah xxxiv. 10. Ezek. xxxv. 7.

to Akaba, and another from Akaba to Moab;* and when these roads were made, at a time long posterior to the date of the predictions, the conception could not have been formed, or held credible by man—that the period would ever arrive when none would pass through it. This prediction is yet more surprising, when viewed in conjunction with another, which implies that travellers would *pass by* Idumea,—every one that goeth by shall be astonished. And the Hadj routes (routes of the Pilgrims) from Damascus and from Cairo to Mecca, the one on the east, and the other towards the south of Idumea, along the whole of its extent, go by it, or touch partially on its borders, without passing through it. The truth of the prophecy (though hemmed in thus by apparent impossibilities and contradictions, and with extreme probabilities of its fallacy, in every view that could have been visible to man) may yet be tried.

The words of the prediction might well be understood as merely implying that Idumea would cease to be a thoroughfare for the commerce of the nations which adjoined it, and that its “highly frequented marts” would be forsaken as centres of intercourse and traffic; and easy would have been the task of demonstrating its truth in this limited sense, which scepticism itself ought not to be unwilling to authorise. But the fact to which it refers, forbids that the prophecy should be limited to a general interpretation, and demands that it be literally understood and applied. The fact itself being of a negative nature, requires a more minute investigation

* Map in Burckhardt's Travels.

and detail than any matter of observation or discovery, that is proveable at once by a simple description. And instead of merely citing authorities in affirmation of it, evidence, as remarkable as the prediction, and at once the most undesigned and conclusive, shall be largely adduced to establish its truth.

The remark of Volney, who passed at a distance to the *west* of Idumea, and who received his information from the Arabs in that quarter, "that it had not been visited by any traveller," will not be unobserved by the attentive reader. Soon after Burckhardt had entered, on the *north-east*, the territories of the Edomites, the boundary of which he distinctly marks, he says, that "he was without protection in the midst of a desert, where no traveller had ever before been seen.* It was then, "that for the first time, he had ever felt fear during his travels in the desert, and his route thither was the most dangerous he had ever travelled." † Mr. Joliffe, who visited the northern shore of the Dead Sea, in alluding to the country south of its opposite extremity, describes it as "one of the wildest and most dangerous divisions of Arabia," and says that any research in that quarter was impracticable. ‡ Sir Frederick Henniker, in his Notes dated from Mount Sinai, on the *south* of Idumea unconsciously concentrates striking evidence in verification of the prediction, while he states a fact that would seem, at first sight, to militate against it. "Seetzen, on a vessel of paper pasted

* Burckhardt's Syria, p. 421.

† *Ib.* p. 400.

‡ Letters from Palestine, v. i. p. 129.

against the wall, notifies his having penetrated the country in a direct line between the Dead Sea and Mount Sinai," (through Idumea) "*a route never before accomplished.*"* This was the more interesting to me, as I had previously determined to attempt the same, it being the *shortest* way to Jerusalem. The Cavaliere Frediani, whom I met in Egypt, would have persuaded me that it was impracticable, and that he, having had the same intention himself, after having been detained in hope five weeks, was compelled to relinquish his design. While I was yet ruminating over this scrap of paper, the Superior paid me a morning visit; he also said it was *impossible*; but at length promised to search for guides. I had already endeavoured to persuade those who had accompanied me from Tor, but they also talked of dangers, and declined."† Guides were found, who, after resisting for a while his entreaties and bribes, agreed to conduct him by the desired route; but, unable to overcome their fears, deceived him, and led him towards the Mediterranean coast, through the desert to Gaza.

There yet remains a detail of the complication of difficulties, which, in another direction still, the nearest to Judea and apparently the most accessible, the traveller has to encounter in reaching that desolate region, which once formed the kingdom of Idumea, difficulties that it may safely be said are scarcely to be

* The words upon the paper itself are, *entre la ville d'Hebron et entre le Mont Sinai, par un chemin jusqu'à ce tems là inconnu.* Burck. Syr. p. 553.

† Sir Frederick Henniker's Travels, p. 223, 224.

met with in any other part of Asia, or even in any other quarter of the world, where no natural obstructions intervene. "To give an idea," say Captains Irby and Mangles, "of the difficulties which the Turkish government supposed there would be for an Englishman to go to Kerek and Wady Mousa, it is necessary to say, that when Mr. Bankes applied at Constantinople to have these places inserted in his firman, they returned for answer, "that they knew of none such within the Grand Seignior's dominions ;"* but as he and Mr. Frere, the British Minister, pressed the affair very much, they at length referred him to the Pasha of Damascus, who (equally averse to have any thing to do with the business) passed him on to the Governor of Jerusalem."† The Governor of Jerusalem, "having tried all he could to dissuade them from the undertaking," referred them in like manner to the Governor of Jaffa, who not only "evaded the affair altogether," but endeavoured to put a stop to their journey. Though frustrated in every attempt to obtain any protection or assistance from the public authorities, and also warned of the danger that awaited them from "Arabs of a most savage and treacherous race," these adventurous travellers, intent on visiting the ruins of Petra, having provided themselves with horses and arms, and Arab dresses, and being eleven in number, including servants and two guides, "determined to proceed to try their fortune with the Sheikh of Hebron." He at first

* Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 336.

† Ibid. 337.

expressed compliance with their wishes, but being soon "alarmed at his own determination," refused them the least aid or protection. Repeated offers of money to guides met a decided refusal; and they procured no means of facilitating their journey.* The peculiar difficulty not only of *passing through* Idumea, (which they never attempted) but even of entering within its borders, and the greater hazard of travelling thither, than in any other direction, are still farther illustrated by the acquiescence of an Arab tribe afterwards to accompany and protect them to Kerek, at a reasonable rate, and by their positive refusal, upon any terms or stipulation whatever, to conduct them to a spot that lay within the boundaries of Edom. "We offered five hundred piasters if they would conduct us to Wady Mousa, but nothing could induce them to consent. They said they would not go if we would give them five thousand piasters," (forty times the sum for which they had agreed to accompany them to Kerek, although the distance was not nearly double) "observing that money was of no use to a man if he lost his life." † Having afterwards obtained the protection of an intrepid Arab chief, with his followers, and having advanced to the Borders of Edom, their farther progress was suddenly opposed in the most threatening and determined manner. And in the whole course of their travels, which extended to about three thousand miles, in

* Macmichael's Journey to Constantinople in 1818. Append. p. 199.

† Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 349.

Thrace, Asia Minor, Cyprus, the Desert, Egypt, and in Syria in different longitudinal and lateral directions from one extremity to the other, they found no where such a barrier to their progress, except in a previous abortive attempt to reach Petra from another quarter; and though they were never better prepared for encountering it, they never elsewhere experienced so formidable an opposition. The Sheikh of Wady Mousa and his people swore that they would not suffer them to go forward, and “that they should neither drink of their water, *nor pass into their territory.*” The Arab chief who had espoused their cause, also took an oath, “by the faith of a true Mussulman,” that they should drink of the water of Wady Mousa, and go whithersoever he pleased to carry them. “Thus,” it is remarked, “were both the rival chiefs oppositely pledged in their resolutions respecting us.”

Several days were passed in entreaties, artifices, and mutual menaces, which were all equally unavailing. The determination and perseverance of the one party of Arabs was equalled by the resistance and obstinacy of the other. Both were constantly acquiring an accession of strength and actively preparing for combat. The travellers, thus finding all the dangers and difficulties of which they had been forewarned fully realized, “could not but compare their case to that of the Israelites under Moses, *when Edom refused to give them a passage through his country,*”* “they offered even to abandon their object rather than proceed to extremities,”

* Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 392.

and endanger the lives of many others, as well as their own ; and they were told that they were fortunate in the protection of the chief who accompanied them, otherwise they never would have returned. The hostile Arabs, who defied them and their protectors to approach, having abandoned their camps, and having concentrated their forces, and possessed themselves of the passes and heights, sent messengers with a renewal of oaths and protestations *against entering their territory* ; announced that they were fully prepared to maintain their purpose—that war “ was positively determined on as the only alternative of the travellers not being permitted to see what they desired ;”* and “ their Sheikh vowed that if they *passed through* his lands, they should be shot like so many dogs.”† Abou Raschid, the firm and fearless chief, who had pledged his honour and his oath in guarantee for the advance of the travellers, and whose obstinate resolution nothing could exceed, his arguments, artifices, and falsehoods having all failed, despatched messengers to the camps under his influence, rejected alike all compromise with the opposing Arabs, and all remonstrances on the part of his adherents and dependants, (who thought that the travellers were doomed to destruction by their rashness) and resolved to achieve by force what he had sworn to accomplish. “ The camp assumed a very warlike appearance ; the spears stuck in the sand : the saddled horses before the tents, with the arms hanging up within, altogether had an imposing effect.” The travellers, however, were

* Ib. p. 392. † Macmichael's *Journey to Constantinople*, p. 218.

at last permitted to proceed in peace : but a brief space was allowed them for inspecting the ruins, and they could plainly distinguish the opposing party of Arabs, in great numbers, watching them from the heights. Abou Raschid was then dismayed, " he was never at his ease, and constantly urged them to depart." Nothing could obtain an extension of the time allotted them, and they returned, leaving much unexplored, and even unable by any means or possibility to penetrate a little farther, in order to visit a large temple which they could clearly discern. Through Idumea they did not pass.

Thus Volney, Burckhardt, Jolliffe, Henniker, and Captains Irby and Mangles not only give their personal testimony to the truth of the fact which corroborates the prediction, but also adduce a variety of circumstances, which all conspire in giving superfluity of proof that Idumea, which was long resorted to from every quarter, is so beset on every side with dangers to the traveller, that *none pass through it*. Even the Arabs of the neighbouring regions, whose home is the desert, and whose occupation is wandering, are afraid to enter it, or to conduct any within its borders. Yet amidst all this manifold testimony to its truth, there is not, in any single instance, the most distant allusion to the prediction; and the evidence is as unsuspecting and undesigned, as it is copious and complete.*

* Not even the cases of two individuals, Seetzen and Burckhardt, can be stated as at all opposed to the literal interpretation of the prophecies. Seetzen did indeed pass through Idumea,

Edom shall be a desolation. From generation to generation it shall lie waste, &c. Judea, Ammon, and Moab, exhibit so abundantly the remains and the means of an exuberant fertility, that the wonder arises in the reflecting mind, how the barbarity of man could have so effectually counteracted for so "many generations," the prodigality of nature. But such is Edom's desolation, that the first sentiment of *astonishment* on the contemplation of it is, how a wide extended region, now diversified by the strongest features of desert wildness, could ever have been adorned with cities, or tenanted for ages, by a powerful and opulent people. Its present aspect would belie its ancient history, were not that history corroborated by "the many vestiges of former cultivation,"* by the remains of walls and paved roads, and by the ruins of cities still existing in this ruined country.

The total cessation of its commerce—the artificial
and Burckhardt traversed a considerable part of it. But the former met his death not long after the completion of his journey through Idumea; the latter never recovered from the effects of the hardships and privations which he suffered there, and without even commencing the exclusive design which he had in view, (*viz.* to explore the interior of Africa) to which all his journeyings in Asia were merely intended as preparatory, he died at Cairo. Neither of them lived to return to Europe. *I will cut off from Mount Scir him that passeth out, and him that returneth.* Strabo mentions that there was a direct road from Petra to Jericho, of three or four days journey. Captains Irby and Mangles were eighteen days in reaching it from Jerusalem.

* Burckhardt's Travels.

irrigation of its vallies wholly neglected—the destruction of all the cities, and the continued spoliation of the country by the Arabs, while aught remained that they could destroy—the permanent exposure, for ages, of the soil unsheltered by its ancient groves, and unprotected by any covering from the scorching rays of the sun—the unobstructed encroachments of the desert, and of the drifted sands from *the borders of the Red Sea*, the consequent absorption of the water of the springs and streamlets during summer, are causes which have all combined their baneful operation in rendering Edom *most desolate, the desolation of desolations*. Volney's account is sufficiently descriptive of the desolation which now reigns over Idumea; and the information which Seetzen derived at Jerusalem respecting it is of similar import.* He was told that “at the distance of two days journey and a half from Hebron, he would find considerable ruins of the ancient city of Abde, and that for all the rest of the journey he would see *no place of habitation*; he would meet only with a few tribes of wandering Arabs.” From the borders of Edom, Captains Irby and Mangles beheld a boundless extent of desert view, which they had hardly ever seen equalled for singularity and grandeur. And the following extract descriptive of what Burckhardt actually witnessed in the different parts of Edom, cannot be more graphically abbreviated than in the words of the Prophet. Of its eastern boundary, and of the adjoining part of Arabia Petraea, strictly so called, Burckhardt writes—

* Seetzen's Travels, p. 46.

“ It might, with truth, be called Petræa, not only on account of its rocky mountains, but also of the elevated plain already described,* which is so much covered with stones, especially flints, that it may with great propriety be called a stony desert, although susceptible of culture ; in many places it is overgrown with wild herbs, and must once have been thickly inhabited ; for the traces of many towns and villages are met with on both sides of the Hadj road, between Maan and Aka-ba, as well as between Maan and the plains of the Haouran, in which direction are also many springs. At present all this country is a desert, and Maan, (Teman)† is the only inhabited place in it. *I will stretch out my hand against thee, O Mount Seir, and will make thee most desolate. I will stretch out my hand upon Edom, and will make it desolate from Teman.*”‡

In the interior of Idumea, where the ruins of some of its ancient cities are still visible, and in the extensive valley which reaches from the Red to the Dead Sea,—the appearance of which must now be totally and sadly changed from what it was—“ the whole plain presented to the view an expanse of shifting sands, whose surface was broken by innumerable undulations and low hills. The same appears to have been brought from *the shores of the Red Sea* by the southern winds ; and the Arabs told me that the vallies continue to present the same appearance beyond the latitude of

* Shera (Seir) the territory of the Edomites, pp. 410, 435.

† See Map prefixed to Burckhardt's Travels.

‡ Ibid. p. 436.

Wady Mousa. In some parts of the valley the sand is very deep, and there is not the slightest appearance of a road, or of any work of human art. A few trees grow among the sand hills, but the depth of sand precludes all vegetation of herbage."* *If grape gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleaning grapes, if thieves by night they will destroy till they have enough; but I have made Esau bare. Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.* "On ascending the western plain, on a higher level than that of Araba, we had before us an immense expanse of dreary country, entirely covered with black flints, with here and there some hilly chain rising from the plain."† *I will stretch out upon Idumea the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness.*

Of the remains of ancient cities still exposed to view, in different places throughout Idumea, Burckhardt describes "the ruins of a large town of which nothing remains but broken walls and heaps of stones, the ruins of several villages in its vicinity;‡ the ruins of an ancient city consisting of large heaps of hewn blocks of silicious stone; the extensive ruins of Gherandel, Arindela, an ancient town of Palestina Tertia."§ The following ruined places are situated in *Djebal Shera* (Mount Seir) to the S. and S. W. of Wady Mousa, Kalaab, Djirba, Basta, Eyl, Ferdakh, Anyk, Bir el Beytar, Shemakh and Syk. Of the towns laid down in

* Burckhardt's Travels, p. 442.

† Ib. p. 444.

‡ Ib. p. 418.

§ Ib. p. 441.

D'Anville's maps, Thoana excepted, no *traces* remain.*
I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate,
O Mount Seir, I will make thee perpetual desolations ;
and thy cities shall not return.

While the cities of Idumea, in general, are thus most desolate ; and while the ruins themselves are as indiscriminate as they are undefined in the prediction, (there being nothing discoverable, as there was nothing foretold, but their excessive desolation, and that they shall not return,) there is one striking exception to this promiscuous desolation, which is alike singled out by the inspired prophet and by the scientific traveller.

Burckhardt gives a description of no ordinary interest, of the site of an ancient city which he visited, the ruins of which not only attest its ancient splendour, but they "are entitled to rank among the most curious remains of ancient art." Though the city be desolate, the monuments of its opulence and power are durable. These are—a channel on each side of the river for conveying the water to the city—numerous tombs—above two hundred and fifty sepulchres, or excavations—many mausoleums, one, in particular, of colossal dimensions, in perfect preservation, and a work of immense labour, containing a chamber sixteen paces square, and above twenty-five feet in height, with a colonnade in front thirty-five feet high, crowned with a pediment highly ornamented, &c. ; two large truncated pyramids, and a theatre with all its benches, capable of containing about three thousand spectators, *ALL cut out of the*

* Burckhardt's Travels, p. 443, 444.

rock. In some places these sepulchres are excavated one over the other, and the side of the mountain is so perpendicular, that *it seems impossible to approach the uppermost*, no path whatever being visible. “The ground is covered with heaps of hewn stones, foundations of buildings, fragments of columns, and vestiges of paved streets, all clearly indicating that a large city once existed here. On the left bank of the river is a rising ground, extending westwards for nearly three quarters of a mile, entirely covered with similar remains. On the right bank, where the ground is more elevated, ruins of the same description are to be seen. There are also the remains of a palace and of several temples. In the eastern *cliff* there are upwards of fifty separate sepulchres close to each other.” * These are not the symbols of a feeble race, nor of a people that were to perish utterly. But a judgment was denounced against the strong-holds of Edom. The prophetic threatening has not proved an empty boast, and it could not have been the word of an uninspired mortal. *I will make thee small among the heathen: thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord; also Edom shall be a desolation.*

These descriptions given by the prophet and by the observer are so analogous, and the precise locality of

* Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 422—432.

the scene, from its peculiar and characteristic features, so identified—and yet the application of the prophecy to the fact so remote from the thoughts or view of Burckhardt as to be altogether overlooked—that his single delineation of the ruins of the chief (and assuredly the strongest and best fortified) city of Edom was deemed, in the first edition of this treatise, and in the terms of the preceding paragraph, an illustration of the prophecy, alike adequate and legitimate. And though deprecating any allusion whatever of a personal nature, and earnest only for the elucidation of the truth, the author yet trusts that he may here be permitted to disclaim the credit of having been the first to assign to the prediction its wonderful and appropriate fulfilment; and it is with no slight gratification that he is now enabled to adduce higher evidence than any opinion of his own, and to state, that the self same prophecy has been applied by others—with the Bible in their hands, and with the very scene before them—to the self-same spot. Yet it may be added, that this coincident application of the prophecy, without any collusion, and without the possibility at the time of any interchange of sentiment, affords, at least, a strong presumptive evidence of the accuracy of the application, and of the truth of the prophecy, and it may well lead to some reflection in the mind of any reader, if scepticism has not barred every avenue against conviction.

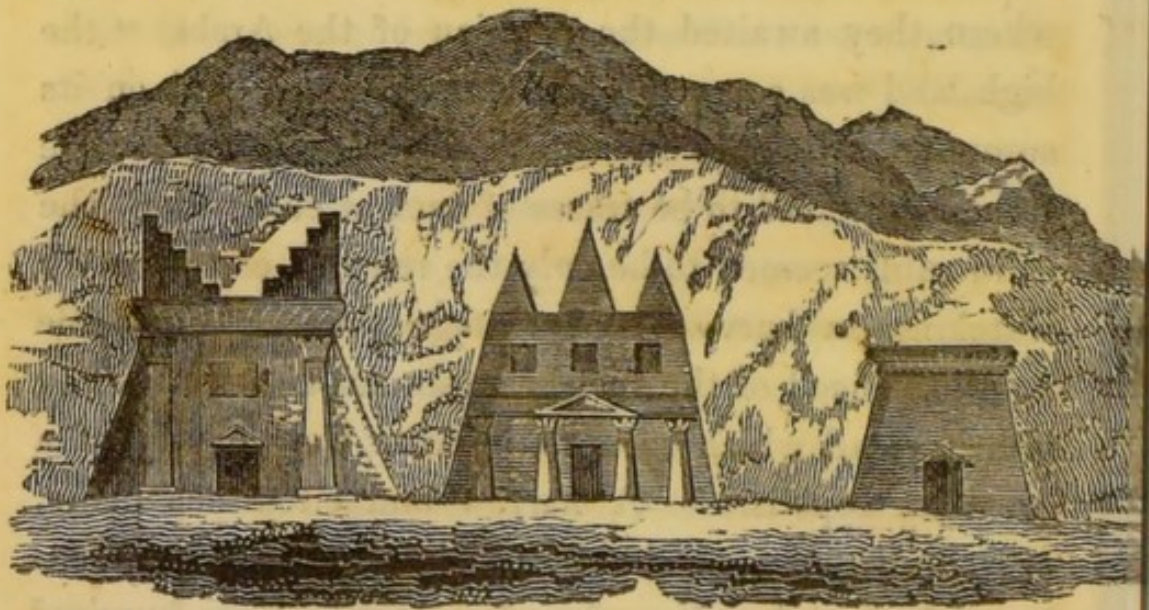
On entering the pass which conducts to the theatre of Petra, Captains Irby and Mangles remark:—“The ruins of the city here burst on the view, in their full grandeur, shut in on the opposite side by barren craggy

precipices, from which numerous ravines and vallies branch out in all directions; the sides of the mountains, covered with an endless variety of excavated tombs and private dwellings, (*O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, &c.*—Jer. xlix. 16.) presented altogether the most singular scene we ever beheld."

Captains Irby and Mangles, having, together with Mr. Bankes and Mr. Legh, spent two days in diligently examining them, give a more particular detail of the ruins of Petra than Burckhardt's account supplied; and the more full the description, the more precise and wonderful does the prophecy appear. Near the spot where they awaited the decision of the Arabs, "the high land was covered, upon both its sides, and on its summits, with lines and solid masses of dry wall. The former appeared to be traces of ancient cultivation, the solid ruins seemed to be only the remains of towers for watching in harvest and vintage time. The whole neighbourhood of the spot bears similar traces of former industry, all which seem to indicate the vicinity of a great metropolis." * A narrow and circuitous defile, surrounded on each side by precipitous or perpendicular rocks, varying from four hundred to seven hundred feet in altitude, and forming for two miles "a sort of subterranean passage," opens on the east the way to the ruins of Petra. The rocks, or rather hills, then diverge on either side, and leave an oblong space, where once stood the metropolis of Edom, deceived by its terribleness, where now lies a waste of ruins, encircled

* Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 402.

on every side, save on the north-east alone, by stupendous cliffs, which still show how the pride and labour of art, tried there to vie with the sublimity of nature. Along the borders of these cliffs, detached masses of rock, numerous and lofty, have been wrought into sepulchres, the interior of which is excavated into chambers, while the exterior has been cut from the live rock into the forms of towers, with pilasters, and successive bands of frieze and entablature, wings, recesses, figures of animals, and columns.* The subjoined cut may convey an idea of some of these singular excavations :



Yet, numerous as these are, they form but a part of "the vast necropolis of Petra." "Tombs present themselves not only in every avenue to the city, and upon every precipice that surrounds it, but even intermixed almost promiscuously with its public and domestic edifices ; the natural features of the defile grew more and more imposing at every step, and

* Captains Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 407.

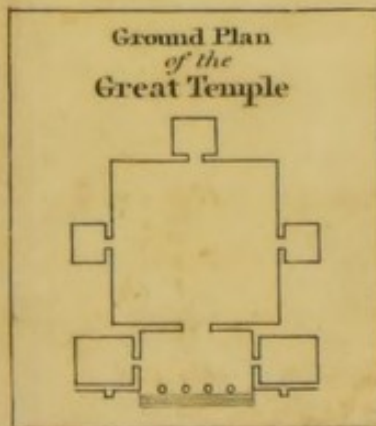
The first part of the paper is a list of names and dates, possibly a ledger or a record book. The entries are arranged in columns, with names on the left and dates on the right. The handwriting is very faint and difficult to read.

The second part of the paper is a large, faint drawing or sketch. It appears to be a map or a diagram of a landscape, with various lines and shapes that could represent terrain, buildings, or other features. The drawing is also very faint and lacks detail.



SKETCH
OF THE
GROUND PLAN
OF
PETRA.

*From the appearance of some
of the Heights, it would seem
that they had served as Posts
of Retreat, in cases of Attack.*



Great Temple

B

High Cliffs

Theatre

Terrace

High perpendicular
Cliffs

Arch

High Cliffs
Tombs

Entrance
Tombs

High Cliffs

*ly accessible
cut in the
unexplored.
et high, very
practicable
ds. Near to
was first*

*2 miles long,
feet high
al Vase is
N.W.*

*Stream runs
& precipitous
hand corner
ascended
climbing.
fig-trees &c.
mains of the*

*d to lead to
we examined
g out of them.*

the excavations and sculpture more frequent on both sides, till it presented at last a continued street of tombs." The base of the cliffs wrought out in all the symmetry and regularity of art, with colonnades, and pedestals, and ranges of corridors adhering to the perpendicular surface; flights of steps chiseled out of the rock; grottos in great numbers, "which are certainly not sepulchral;" some excavated residences of large dimensions; (in one of which is a single chamber, sixty feet in length, and of a breadth proportioned) many other dwellings of inferior note, particularly abundant in one defile leading to the city, the steep sides of which contain a sort of excavated suburb, accessible by flights of steps; niches, sometimes thirty feet in excavated height, with altars for votive offerings, or with pyramids, columns or obelisks; a bridge across a chasm now apparently inaccessible; some small pyramids hewn out of the rock on the summit of the heights; horizontal grooves, for the conveyance of water, cut in the face of the rock, and even across the architectural fronts of some of the excavations; and in short, "the rocks hollowed out into innumerable chambers of different dimensions, whose entrances are variously, richly, and often fantastically decorated with every imaginable order of architecture"*—all united not only form one of the most singular scenes that the eye of man ever looked upon, or the imagination painted—a group of wonders perhaps unparalleled in their kind—but also give indubitable proof, both that in the land of Edom

* Macmichael's Journey, p. 228, 229.

there was a city where human ingenuity, and energy, and power, must have been exerted for many ages, and to so great a degree as to have well entitled it to be noted for its strength or *terribleness*, and that the description given of it by the prophets of Israel was as strictly literal as the prediction respecting it is true. “The barren state of the country, together with the desolate condition of the city, without a single human being living near it, seem” in the words of those who were spectators of the scene, “strongly to verify the judgment denounced against it.”* *O thou who dwellest in the clefts of the rock, &c.—also Edom shall be a desolation, &c.*

Of all the ruins of Petra, the mausoleums and sepulchres are among the most remarkable, and they give the clearest indication of ancient and long continued royalty, and of courtly grandeur. Their immense number corroborates the accounts given of their successive kings and princes, by Moses and Strabo; though a period of eighteen hundred years intervened between the dates of their respective records concerning them. The structure of the sepulchres also shows that many of them are of a more recent date. “Great,” says Burckhardt, “must have been the opulence of a city which could dedicate such monuments to the memory of its rulers.” But the long line of the kings, and of the nobles of Idumea has for ages been cut off; they are without any representative now, without any memorial

* Irby and Mangles’ Travels, p. 439. Burckhardt’s Travels, p. 425.

but the multitude and the magnificence of their unvisited sepulchres. *They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom,* (or rather, they shall call, or summon, the nobles thereof,) *but there shall be no kingdom there, and all her princes shall be nothing.*

Amidst the mausoleums and sepulchres, the remains of temples or palaces, and the multiplicity of tombs, which all form, as it were, the grave of Idumea, where its ancient splendour is interred, there are edifices, the Roman and Grecian architecture of which decides that they were *built* long posterior to the era of the prophets. *They shall build, but I will throw down ; and*

They shall be called the border of wickedness. Though Burckhardt travelled as an Arab, associated with them, submitted to all their privations, and was so completely master of their language and of their manners, as to escape detection, he was yet reduced to that state, within the boundaries of Edom, which can alone secure tranquillity to the traveller in the desert ; “ he had nothing with him that could attract the notice, or excite the cupidity of the Bedouins, and was even stripped of some rags that covered his wounded ancles.” The Arabs in that quarter, he observes, “ have the reputation of being very daring thieves.” In like manner, a Moteslim, who had been twenty years in office, pledged himself to Captains Irby and Mangles, and the travellers who accompanied them, (in presence of the Governor of Jerusalem) that the Arabs of Wady Mousa are “ a most savage and treacherous race,” and added that they would make use of their Franks’ blood for a medicine. That this character of wickedness and

cruelty was not misapplied, they had too ample proof, not only in the dangers with which they were threatened, but by the fact which they learned on the spot, that upwards of thirty pilgrims from Barbary had been murdered at Petra the preceding year, by the men of Wady Mousa.* Even the Arabs of the surrounding deserts, as already stated, dread to approach it; and towards the borders of Edom on the south, "the Arabs about Akaba," as described by Pococke, and as experienced by Burckhardt, "are a very bad people, and notorious robbers, and are at war with all others."† Such evidence, all undesignedly given, clearly shows that in truth Edom is called *the border of wickedness*.

Thorns shall come in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof. In lieu of any direct and explicit statement in corroboration of the literal fulfilment of this prediction, it may be worthy of observation, that the camels of the Bedouins feed upon the thorny branches of the Talh (gum arabic) tree, of which they are extremely fond; that the large thorns of these trees are a great annoyance to them, and to their cattle; and that they are so abundant in different parts of Idumea, that each Bedouin carries in his girdle a pair of small pincers to extract the thorns from his feet.‡

I will make thee small among the nations; thou art

* Irby and Mangles' Travels, p. 417. Macmichael's Journey, p. 202, 234.

† Pococke's *Description of the East*, vol. i. p. 136.

‡ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 441, 442, 446.

greatly despised. Though the border of wickedness, and the retreat of a horde of thieves, who are distinguished as peculiarly savage even among the wild Arabs, and thus an object of dread, as well as of astonishment to those who pass thereby, yet contrasted with what it was, or reckoned among the nations, Edom is small indeed. Within almost all its boundary, it may be said that none *abide*, or have any fixed or permanent residence ; and instead of the superb structures, the works of various ages, which long adorned its cities, the huts of the Arabs, where even huts they have, are mere mud hovels of "mean and ragged appearance," which, in general, are deserted on the least alarm. But, miserable habitations as these are, they scarcely seem to exist any where throughout Edom, but on a single point on its borders ; and wherever the Arabs otherwise wander in search of spots for pasturage to their cattle, (found in hollows, or near to springs after the winter rains) tents are their only covering. Those which pertain to the more powerful tribes, are sometimes both numerous and large ; yet, though they form at least but a frail dwelling, many of them are "very low and small." Near to the ruins of Petra, Burckhardt passed an encampment of Bedouin tents, most of which were "the smallest he had ever seen, about four feet high, and ten in length ;" and towards the south-west border of Edom, he met with a few wanderers who had no tents with them, and whose only shelter, from the burning rays of the sun, and the *heavy dews of night*, was the scanty branches of the Talh trees. The subsistence of the

Bedouins is often as precarious as their habitations are mean ; the flocks they tend, or which they pillage from more fertile regions, are their only possessions, and in that land where commerce long concentrated its wealth, and through which the treasures of Ophir passed, the picking of gum arabic from thorny branches is now the poor occupation, the only semblance of industry, practised by the wild and wandering tenants of a desert. Edom is *small among the nations* ; and how *greatly is it despised*, when the public authorities at Constantinople deny any knowledge of it, or of the ruins of its capital, which once defied the power of Rome—when the city of Petra is thus forgotten and unknown among the representatives of the villagers of Byzantium !

Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord, Is wisdom no more in Teman ? Is understanding perished from the prudent ? Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the Mount of Esau ? Fallen and despised as now it is, Edom, did not the prescription of many ages abrogate its right, might lay claim to the title of having been the first seat of learning, as well as the centre of commerce. Sir Isaac Newton, who was no mean master in chronology, and no incompetent judge to give a decision in regard to the rise and first progress of literature, considers Edom as the nursery of the arts and sciences, and adduces evidence to that effect from profane as well as from sacred history. “ The Egyptians,” he remarks, “ *having learned the skill of the Edomites*, began now to observe the position of the stars, and the length of the solar year, for enabling them to know the position of the

stars at any time, and to sail by them at all times, without sight of the shore, and this gave a beginning to astronomy and navigation.”* “It seems that letters, and astronomy, and the trade of carpenters, were invented by the merchants of the Red Sea, and that they were propagated from Arabia Petraea, into Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, Asia Minor, and Europe.”† While the philosopher may thus think of Edom with respect, neither the admirer of genius, the man of feeling, nor the child of devotion will, even to this day, seek from any land a richer treasure of plaintive poetry, of impassioned eloquence, and of fervid piety, than Edom has bequeathed to the world in the book of Job. It exhibits to us, in language the most pathetic and sublime, all that a man could feel, in the outward pangs of his body and the inner writhings of his mind, of the frailties of his frame, and of the dissolution of his earthly comforts and endearments; all that mortal can discern, by meditating on the ways, and contemplating the works of God, of the omniscience and omnipotence of the Most High, and of the inscrutable dispensations of his providence; all *that* knowledge which could first tell, in written word, of Arcturus, and Orion, and Pleiades; and all that devotedness of soul, and immortality of hope, which—with patience that faltered not even when the heart was bruised, and almost broken, and the body covered over with distress—could say “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”

* Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms, p. 208.

† Ibid. p. 212.

But if the question now be asked, *is understanding perished out of Edom?* the answer, like every response to the prophetic word, may be briefly given: it is. The minds of the Bedouins are as uncultivated as the deserts they traverse. Practical wisdom is, in general, the first that man learns, and the last that he retains. And the simple but significant fact, already alluded to, that the clearing away of a little rubbish, merely “to allow the water to flow” into an ancient cistern, in order to render it useful to themselves, “is an undertaking far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs,” shows that *understanding is indeed perished from among them*. They view the indestructible works of former ages, not only with wonder, but with superstitious regard, and consider them as the work of genii. They look upon a European traveller as a magician, and believe that having seen any spot where they imagine that treasures are deposited, “he can afterwards command the guardian of the treasure to set the whole before him.”* In Teman, which yet maintains a precarious existence, the inhabitants possess the desire without the means of knowledge. The Koran is their only study, and contains the sum of their wisdom.—And, although he was but a “miserable comforter,” and was overmastered in argument by a kinsman stricken with affliction, yet no *Temanite* can now discourse with either the wisdom or the pathos of *Eliphaz* of old. *Wisdom is no more in Teman, and understanding has perished out of the Mount of Esau.*

* Burckhardt's Travels, p. 429.

While there is thus subsisting evidence and proof that the ancient inhabitants of Edom were renowned for wisdom, as well as for power, and while desolation has spread so widely over it, that it can scarcely be said to be inhabited by man; there still are tenants who hold possession of it, to whom it is abandoned by man, and to whom it was decreed by a voice more than mortal. And insignificant and minute as it may possibly appear to those who reject the light of revelation, or to the unreflecting mind, (that will use no measuring line of truth, which stretches beyond that which inches out its own shallow thoughts, and wherewith, rejecting all other aid, it tries, by the superficial touch of ridicule alone, to sound the unfathomable depths of infinite wisdom) the following scripture, mingled with other words already verified as the voice of inspiration, and voluntarily involving its title to credibility in the appended appeal to fact, and challenge to investigation, may, in conjunction with kindred proofs, yet tell to man, if hearing he will hear, and yet show him, if seeing he will see, the verity of the divine word, and the infallibility of the divine judgments; and, not without the aid of the rightful and unbiassed exercise of reason, give understanding to the sceptic, that he may be converted, and that he may be healed by him whose word is ever truth.

“ But the cormorant, and the bittern shall possess it (Idumea); the owl also, and the raven shall dwell in it. It shall be a habitation for dragons, and a court for owls: the wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr (the hairy or rough creature) shall cry to his fellow; the screech

owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest ; there shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow ; there shall the vultures also be gathered every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read ; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate ; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line : they shall possess it for ever ; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.”* I laid the mountains of Esau, and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.†

Such is the precision of the prophecies, so remote are they from all ambiguity of meaning, and so distinct are the events which they detail, that it is almost unnecessary to remark, that the different animals here enumerated were not all in the same manner, or to the same degree to be possessors of Edom. Some of them were to rest, to meet, to be gathered there ; the owl and the raven were to dwell in it, and it was to be a habitation for dragons ; while of the cormorant and bittern, it is emphatically said, that they were to possess it. And is it not somewhat beyond a mere fortuitous coincidence, imperfect as the information is respecting Edom, that in “seeking out” proof concerning these animals, and whether none of them do fail, that the most decisive evidence should, in the first instance, be unconsciously communicated from the boundaries of

* Isa. xxxiv. 11, 13—17.

† Mal. 1, 3.

Edom, of the one which is first noted in the prediction, and which was to possess the land? It will at once be conceded, that in whatever country any particular animal is unknown, no proper translation of its name can there be given; and that for the purpose of designating or identifying it, reference must be had to the original name, and to the natural history of the country in which it is known. And, without any ambiguity or perplexity arising from the translation of the word, or any need of tracing it through any other languages to ascertain its import, the identical word of the original, with scarcely the slightest variation (and that only the want of the final vowel in the Hebrew word; vowels in that language being often supplied in the enunciation, or by points) is, from the affinity of the Hebrew and Arabic, used on the very spot by the Arabs, to denote the very bird, which may literally be said to possess the land. While in the last inhabited village of Moab, and close upon the borders of Edom, Burckhardt noted the animals which frequented the neighbouring territory, in which he distinctly specifies Shera, the land of the Edomites; and he relates that the bird katta* is "met with in immense numbers. They fly in such large flocks, that the Arab boys often kill two or three of them at a time, merely by throwing a stick among them." If any objector be here inclined to say, that it is not to be wondered at, that any parti-

* קאט kat, a species of partridge. It is sometimes written, in the original, kata. Onkel קתא, vide Simonis Lexicon, p. 1393.

cular bird should be found in any given country, that it might continue to remain for a term of ages, and that such a surmise would not exceed the natural probabilities of the case, the fact may be freely admitted as applicable, perhaps, to most countries of the globe. But who ever, elsewhere, saw any wild bird in any country, in flocks so immensely numerous, that two or three of them could be killed by the single throw of a stick from the hand of a boy ; and that this could be stated, not as a forcible, and perhaps false, illustration to denote their number, nor as a wonderful chance, or unusual incident, but as a fact of frequent occurrence ? Who ever, elsewhere, heard of such a fact, not as happening merely on a sea rock, the resort of myriads of birds, or their temporary resting place, when exhausted in their flight, but in an extensive country, their permanent abode ? Or if among the manifold discoveries of travellers in modern times, it were really related that such occupants of a country are to be found, or that a corresponding fact exists in any other region of the earth which was once tenanted by man, who can also “ find ” in the records of a high antiquity, the prediction that declared it ? Of what country now inhabited could the same fact be now with certainty foretold ; and where is the seer who can discern the vision, fix on the spot over the world’s surface, and select, from the whole winged tribe, the name of the first in order, and the greatest in number of the future and chief possessors of the land ?

Of the bittern (kephud) as a joint possessor, with the katta, of Idumea, evidence has not been given, or

ascertained;—but numerous as the facts have been which modern discoveries have consigned over to the service of revelation, that word of truth which fears no investigation can appeal to other facts, unknown to history and still undiscovered—but registered in prophecy, and there long since revealed.

The owl also, and the raven (or crow) shall dwell in it.—The owl and raven do dwell in it. Captain Mangles relates that while he and his fellow travellers were examining the ruins, and contemplating the sublime scenery of Petra,—“the screaming of the eagles, hawks and *owls*, who were soaring above their heads in considerable numbers, seemingly annoyed at any one approaching their lonely habitation, added much to the singularity of the scene.” “The fields of Tafyle,” situated in the immediate vicinity of Edom, are, according to the observation of Burckhardt, “frequented by an immense number of crows.” “I expected,” says Seetzen, (alluding to his purposed tour through Idumea, and to the information he had received from the Arabs,) “to make several discoveries in mineralogy, as well as in the animals and vegetables of the country, on the manna of the desert, the *ravens*,”* &c.

It shall be a habitation for dragons (serpents.) I laid his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.—The evidence, though derived from testimony and not from personal observation, of two travellers of so contrary characters and views as Shaw and Volney is so accordant and apposite, that it may well be sustained

* Seetzen's Travels, p. 46.

in lieu of more direct proof. The former represents the land of Edom, and the wilderness of which it now forms part, as abounding with a variety of lizards and vipers, which are very dangerous and troublesome.* And the narrative given by Volney, already quoted, is equally decisive as to the fact. The Arabs, in general, avoid the ruins of the cities of Idumea, “on account of *the enormous scorpions with which they swarm.*” Its cities thus deserted by man, and abandoned to their undisturbed and hereditary possession, Edom may justly be called *the inheritance of dragons.*

The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, (or of the borders of the sea.) Instead of these words of the English version, Parkhurst renders the former the *ravenous birds haunting the wilderness.* This interpretation was given long before the fact to which it refers was made known. But it has now been ascertained, (and without any allusion, on the other hand, to the prediction,) that eagles,† hawks, and ravens, all ravenous birds, are common in Edom, and *do not fail* to illustrate the prediction as thus translated. But when animals from *different* regions are said to *meet*; the prophecy thus implying that some of them at least did not properly pertain to the country, would seem to require some farther verification. And of all the wonderful circumstances attached to the history, or pertaining to the fate of Edom, there is one which is not to be ranked among

* Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. p. 105, 338.

† Burekhardt's Travels, p. 405.

the least in singularity, that bears no remote application to the prefixed prophecy, and that ought not, perhaps, to pass here unnoted. It is recorded in an ancient chronicle, that the Emperor Decius caused fierce lions and lionesses to be transported from (the deserts of) Africa to the borders of Palestine and Arabia, in order that, propagating there, they might act as an annoyance and a barrier to the barbarous Saracens:* Between Arabia and Palestine lies the doomed and execrated land of Edom. And may it not thus be added that a cause, so unnatural and unforeseen, would greatly tend to the destruction of the flocks, and to the desolation of all the adjoining territory,—and seem to be as if the king of the forest was to take possession of it for his subjects? And may it not be even literally said *that the wild beasts of the desert meet there with the wild beasts of the borders of the sea?*

The satyr shall dwell there.—The satyr is entirely a fabulous animal. The word (soir) literally means *a rough hairy one*; and, like a synonymous word in both the Greek and Latin languages which has the same signification, has been translated both by lexicographers and commentators, *the goat*.† Parkhurst says, that, in

* 'Ο αὐτός Δέκιος βασιλεὺς ἤγαγεν ἀπο τῆς Αἰθιοπικῆς λιοντάς φοβεράς καὶ λεαίνας καὶ ἀπέλυσεν εἰς τὸ λιμιτὸν ἀνατολῆς ἀπὸ Ἀραβίας καὶ Παλαιστίνης ἕως τῆς Κιρκισίᾳ Κασσῶν πρὸς τὸ πρῆσαι γενεῖαν διὰ τῆς βαρβαρῶν Σαρακηνῶν. *Chronicon Alexandrinum, ad ann. c. 253. Relan. Palest. p. 97.*

† “So the Greek τραγός, a he-goat, is from τραχύς rough, on account of the roughness of his hair, and the Latin hircus, a he-goat from hirtus rough.” Parkhurst’s Lexicon.

this sense, he would understand this very passage: and Lowth distinctly asserts, without assigning to it any other meaning, that “the word originally signifies *goat*.”* Such respectable and well-known authorities have been cited, because their decision must have rested on criticism alone, as it was impossible that their minds could have been biassed by any knowledge of the fact in reference to Edom. It was their province, and that of others, to illustrate its meaning,—it was Burckhardt’s, however unconsciously, to bear, from ocular observation, witness to its truth. “In all the Wadys south of the Modjel and El Ahsa,” (pointing to Edom,) “large herds of mountain goats are met with. They pasture in flocks of forty and fifty together.”—*They dwell there.*

But the evidence respecting all the animals specified in the prophecy, as the future possessors of Edom, is not yet complete, and is difficult to be ascertained. And, in words that seem to indicate this very difficulty, it is still reserved for future travellers,—perhaps some unconscious Volney,—to disclose the facts; and for future inquirers, whether Christian or infidel, to seek out of the book of the Lord and read: and to “find that no one of these do fail.” Yet, recent as the disclosure of any information respecting them has been; and offered, as it now for the first time is, for the con-

* Lowth assigns the reason why the word is translated *satyr*,—it was supposed, that evil spirits of old time appeared in the shape of goats, as the learned Bochart hath proved. Isaiah xiii. 21.

† Burckhardt’s Travels in Syria.

sideration of every candid mind, the positive terms and singleness of object of the prophecies themselves, and the undesigned and decisive evidence, are surely enough to show how greatly these several specific predictions and their respective facts exceed all possibility of their being the word or the work of man; and how clearly there may be discovered in them all, if sight itself be conviction, the credentials of inspiration, and the operation of His hands,—to whose prescience futurity is open,—to whose power all nature is subservient,—and “whose mouth it hath commanded, and whose spirit it hath gathered them.”

Noted as Edom was for its terribleness, and possessed of a capital city, from which even a feeble people could not easily have been dislodged, there scarcely could have been a question, even among its enemies, to what *people* that country would eventually belong. And it never could have been thought of by any natives of another land, as the Jewish prophets were, nor by any uninspired mortal whatever, that a kingdom, which had previously subsisted so long, (and in which princes ceased not to reign, commerce to flourish, and “a people of great opulence” to dwell for more than six hundred years thereafter,) would be finally extinct, that all its cities would be for ever desolate, and, though it could have boasted, more than any other land, of indestructible habitations for men, that their *habitations* would be *desolate*; and that certain *wild animals*, mentioned by name, would, in different manners and degrees, possess the country from generation to generation.

There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau. Edom shall be cut off for ever. The aliens of Judah ever look with wistful eyes to the land of their fathers ; but no Edomite is now to be found to dispute the right of any animal to the possession of it, or to banish the owls from the temples and palaces of Edom. But the House of Esau did remain, and existed in great power, till after the commencement of the Christian era, a period far too remote from the date of the prediction for their subsequent history to have been foreseen by man. The Idumeans were soon after mingled with the Nabatheans. And in the third century, their language was disused, and their very name, as designating any people, had utterly perished ;* and their country itself having become an outcast from Syria, among whose kingdoms it had long been numbered, was united to Arabia Petræa. Though the descendants of the twin-born Esau and Jacob have met a diametrically opposite fate, the fact is no less marvellous and undisputed, than the prediction, in each case, is alike obvious and true. While the posterity of Jacob have been “ dispersed in every country under heaven,” and are “ scattered among all nations,” and have ever remained distinct from them all, and while it is also declared that “ a full end will never be made of them ;” the Edomites, though they existed as a nation for more than seventeen hundred years, *have, as a period of nearly equal duration has proved, been cut off for ever :* and

* Origen. lib. iii. in Job.

while Jews are in every land, *there is not any remaining* on any spot of earth, *of the House of Esau.*

Idumea, in aid of a neighbouring state, did send forth, on a sudden, an army of thirty thousand armed men,—successive kings and princes reigned in Petra,—and magnificent palaces and temples, whose empty chambers and naked walls of wonderful architecture still strike the traveller with amazement, were constructed there, at a period unquestionably far remote from the time when it was given to the prophets of Israel to tell, that the House of Esau was to be cut off for ever, that there would be no kingdom there, and that wild animals would possess Edom for a heritage. And so despised is Edom, and the memory of its greatness lost, that there is no record of antiquity that can so clearly show us what once it was, in the days of its power, as we can now read, in the page of prophecy its existing desolation. But in that place where kings kept their court, and where nobles assembled, where manifest proofs of ancient opulence are concentrated, where princely habitations, retaining their external grandeur, but bereft of all their splendour, still look as if “fresh from the chisel,”—even there no man dwells, it is given by lot to birds, and beasts, and reptiles; it is a “court for owls,” and scarcely are they ever frayed from their “lonely habitation” by the tread of a solitary traveller from a far distant land, among deserted dwellings and desolated ruins.

Hidden as the history and state of Edom has been for ages, every recent disclosure, being an echo of the prophecies, amply corroborates the truth, that the word

of the Lord does not return unto him void, but ever fulfils the purpose for which he hath sent it. But the whole of its work is not yet wrought in Edom, which has farther testimony in store: and while the evidence is not yet complete, so neither is the time of the final judgments on the land yet fully come. Judea, Ammon, and Moab, according to the word of prophecy, shall revive from their desolation, and the wild animals who have conjoined their depredations with those of barbarous men in perpetuating the desolation of these countries, shall find a refuge and undisturbed possession in Edom, when, the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion being past, it shall be divided unto them by line, when they shall possess it for ever, and from generation to generation shall dwell therein. But without looking into futurity, a retrospect may here warrant, before leaving the subject, a concluding clause.

That man is a bold *believer*, and must with whatever reluctance forego the name of *sceptic*, who possesses such redundant credulity as to think, that all the predictions respecting Edom, and all others recorded in Scripture, and realized by facts, were the mere haphazard results of fortuitous conjectures. And he who thus, without reflecting how incongruous it is to "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," can deliberately, and with an unruffled mind, place such an opinion among the articles of his faith, may indeed be pitied by those who know in whom they have believed, but, if he forfeit not thereby all right of ever appealing to reason, must at least renounce all title to stigmatize, in others, even the most preposterous belief. Or if such, after

all, must needs be his philosophical creed, and his rational conviction ! what can hinder him from believing also that other chance words—such as truly marked the fate of Edom, but more numerous and clear, and which, were he to “ seek out and read,” he would find in the self-same “ book of the Lord,”—may also prove equally true to the spirit, if not to the letter, against all the enemies of the Gospel, whether hypocrites or unbelievers ? May not his belief in the latter instance be strengthened by the experience that many averments of Scripture, in respect to times then future, and to facts then unknown, have already proved true ? And may he not here find some analogy, at least, on which to rest his faith, whereas the conviction, which, in the former case, he so readily cherishes, is totally destitute of any semblance whatever to warrant the possibility of its truth ? Or is this indeed the sum of his boasted wisdom, to hold to the conviction of the fallacy of all the coming judgments denounced in Scripture till “ experience,” personal though it should be, prove them to be as true as the past, and a compulsory and unchangeable but unredeeming faith be grafted on despair ? Or, if less proof can possibly suffice, let him timely read and examine, and disprove also, all the credentials of revelation, before he account the believer credulous, or the unbeliever wise ; or else let him abandon the thought that the unrepentant iniquity and wilful perversity of man, and an evil heart of unbelief (all proof derided, all offered mercy rejected, all meetness for an inheritance among them that are sanctified unattained, and all warning lost,) shall not finally forbid that

Edom stand alone—the seared and blasted monument of the judgments of heaven.

PHILISTIA.

THE land of the Philistines bordered on the west and south-west of Judea, and lies on the south-east point of the Mediterranean sea. The country to the north of Gaza is very fertile, and long after the Christian era, it possessed a very numerous population, and strongly fortified cities. No human probability could possibly have existed, in the time of the prophets, or at a much more recent date, of its eventual desolation. But it has belied, for many ages, every promise which the fertility of its soil, and the excellence both of its climate and situation, gave, for many preceding centuries, of its permanency as a rich and well cultivated region. And the voice of prophecy, which was not silent respecting it, proclaimed the fate that awaited it, in terms as contradictory, at the time, to every natural suggestion, as they are descriptive of what Philistia now actually is.

“ I will stretch out my hand upon the Philistines, and destroy the remnant of the sea-coasts.”* “ Baldness is come upon Gaza ; Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley.”† “ Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof. I will send a fire

* Ezek. xxv. 16.

† Jerem. xlvii. 5.

upon the wall of Gaza which shall devour the palaces thereof. And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon ; and I will turn my hand against Ekron ; and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God.”*
 “ For Ashkelon shall be a desolation ; it shall be cut off with the remnant of the valley ; and Ekron shall be rooted up.—O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy you, that there shall be no inhabitant ; and the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.”† “ The king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.”‡

The land of the Philistines was to be destroyed. It partakes of the general desolation common to it with Judea and other neighbouring states. While ruins are to be found in all Syria, they are particularly abundant along the sea coast, which formed, on the south, the realm of the Philistines. But its aspect presents some existing peculiarities, which travellers fail not to particularise, and which, in reference both to the state of the country, and the fate of its different cities, the prophets failed not to discriminate as justly, as if their description had been drawn both with all the accuracy which ocular observation, and all the certainty which authenticated history could give. And the authority, so often quoted, may here be again appealed to. Volney, (though, like one who in ancient times was instrumental to the fulfilment of a special prediction, ‘he meant not so, neither did his heart think so ;’) from the man-

* Amos. i. 6, 7, 8.

† Zeph. ii. 5, 6.

‡ Zech. ix. 5.

ner in which he generalizes his observations, and marks the peculiar features of the different districts of Syria, with greater acuteness and perspicuity than any other traveller whatever, is the ever ready purveyor of evidence in all the cases which came within the range of his topographical description of the wide field of prophecy—while, at the same time, from his known, open, and zealous hostility to the Christian cause, his testimony is alike decisive and unquestionable:—and the vindication of the truth of all the following predictions may safely be committed to this redoubted champion of infidelity.

The sea-coasts shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks. The remnant of the Philistines shall perish. Baldness is come upon Gaza; it shall be forsaken. The king shall perish from Gaza. I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod. Ashkelon shall be a desolation; it shall be cut off with the remnant of the valley; it shall not be inhabited. “In the plain between Ramla and Gaza,” (the very plain of the Philistines along the *sea-coast*) “we met with a number of villages badly built, of dried mud, and which, like the inhabitants, exhibit every mark of poverty and wretchedness. The houses, on a nearer view, are only so many huts (cottages) sometimes detached, at others ranged in the form of cells, around a *court-yard*, enclosed by a mud wall. In winter, they and their cattle may be said to live together, the part of the *dwelling* allotted to themselves being only raised two feet above that in which they lodge their beasts—

(*dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.*) Except the environs of these villages, all the rest of the country is a *desert*, and abandoned to the Bedouin Arabs, who feed their flocks on it.* *The remnant shall perish ; the land of the Philistines shall be destroyed, that there shall be no inhabitant, and the sea-coasts shall be dwellings, and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks.*

“ The ruins of white marble sometimes found at Gaza, prove that it was formerly the abode of luxury and opulence. It has shared in the general destruction, and, notwithstanding its proud title of the capital of Palestine, it is now no more than a defenceless village,” (*baldness has come upon it*) “ peopled by, at most, only two thousand inhabitants.” *It is forsaken and bereaved of its king.* “ The sea-cost, by which it was formerly washed, is every day removing farther from the *deserted ruins* of Ashkelon.” *It shall be a desolation. Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.* “ Amidst the various successive ruins, those of Ezdoud, (Ashdod) so powerful under the Philistines, are now remarkable for their scorpions.”† *The inhabitants shall be cut off from Ashdod.*

Although the Christian traveller must yield the palm to Volney, ‡ as the topographer of prophecy, and,

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 335, 336.

† *Ib.* p. 338.

‡ Had Volney been a believer ; had he “ sought out of the book of the Lord and read ;” and had he applied all the facts which he knew, in illustration of the prophecies, how completely

although supplementary evidence be not requisite, yet a place is here willingly given to the following just observations.

“ Ashkelon was one of the proudest satrapies of the lords of the Philistines; now there is not an inhabitant within its walls; and the prophecy of Zechariah is fulfilled. The king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. When the prophecy was uttered, both cities were in an equally flourishing condition; and nothing but the prescience of heaven could pronounce on which of the two, and in what manner the vial of its wrath should be poured out. Gaza is truly without a king. The lofty towers of Ashkelon lie scattered on the ground, and the ruins within its walls do not shelter a human being. How is the wrath of man made to praise his Creator! Hath he not said, and shall he not do it? The oracle was delivered by the mouth of the prophet more than five hundred years before the Christian era, and we behold its accomplishment eighteen hundred years after that event.” *

would he have proved their inspiration? But it is well for the cause of truth that such a witness was himself an unbeliever; for his evidence, in many an instance, comes so very close to the predictions, that his testimony, in the relation of positive facts, would have been utterly discredited, and held as purposely adapted to the very words of prophecy, by those who otherwise lent a greedy ear to his utterance of some of the wildest fancies, and most gross untruths, that ever emanated from the mind of man, or ever entered into a deceitful heart. He who so artfully could pervert the truth, falls the victim of facts stated by himself.

* Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 204.

Cogent and just as this reasoning is, the facts stated by Volney give wider scope for an irresistible argument. The fate of one city is not only distinguished from that of another; but the varied aspect of the country itself, the dwellings and cottages for shepherds in one part, and that very region named, the rest of the land destroyed and uninhabited, a desert, and abandoned to the flocks of the wandering Arabs; Gaza, bereaved of a king, a defenceless village, destitute of all its fortifications; Ashkelon, a desolation, and without an inhabitant; the inhabitants also cut off from Ashdod, as reptiles tenanted it instead of men,—form in each instance a specific prediction, and a recorded fact, and present such a view of the existing state of Philistia, as renders it difficult to determine, from the strictest accordance that prevails between both, whether the inspired penman, or the defamer of Scripture give the more vivid description. Nor is there any obscurity whatever, in any one of the circumstances, or in any part of the proof. The coincidence is too glaring, even for wilful blindness not to discern; and to all, the least versed in general history, the priority of the predictions to the events is equally obvious. And such was the natural fertility of the country, and such was the strength and celebrity of the cities, that no conjecture, possessing the least shadow of plausibility, can be formed in what manner any of these events could possibly have been thought of, even for many centuries after “the vision and prophecy” were sealed. After that period, Gaza defied the power of Alexander the Great, and withstood for two months a hard pressed

siege. The army, with which he soon afterwards overthrew the Persian empire, having there, as well as at Tyre, been checked or delayed in the first flush of conquest, and he himself having been twice wounded in desperate attempts to storm the city, the proud and enraged king of Macedon, with all the cruelty of a brutish heart, and boasting of himself as a second Achilles, dragged at his chariot wheels the intrepid General, who had defended it, twice around the walls of Gaza.* Ashkelon was no less celebrated for the excellence of its wines, than for the strength of its fortifications.† And of Ashdod, it is related by an eminent ancient historian, not only that it was a great city, but that it withstood the longest siege recorded in history, (it may almost be said, either of prior, or of later date) having been besieged for the space of twenty-nine years by Psymmaticus, king of Egypt.‡ Strabo, after the commencement of the Christian era, classes its citizens among the chief inhabitants of Syria. Each of these cities, Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ashdod, was the see of a bishop from the days of Constantine to the invasion of the Saracens. And, as a decisive proof of their existence as cities long subsequent to the delivery of the predictions, it may farther be remarked, that different coins of each of these very cities are extant, and are copied and described in several accounts of ancient coins.§ The once princely magnificence of Gaza is still attested

* Quinti Curtii Lib. iv. cap. 26. † Relandi Palest. 341, 586.

‡ Herodot. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 157.

§ Relandi Palest. p. 595, 609, 797.

by the "ruins of white marble;" and the house of the present Aga is composed of fragments of ancient columns, cornices, &c. and in the court-yard, and immured in the wall, are shafts and capitals of granite columns.*

In short, *cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks*, partially scattered along the *sea-coast*, are now truly the best substitutes for populous cities, that the once powerful realm of Philistia can produce; and the *remnant* of that land, which gave titles and grandeur to the lords of the Philistines, *is destroyed*. *Gaza*, the chief of its satrapies, "the abode of luxury and opulence" now *bereaved of its king, and bald* of all its fortifications, is the defenceless residence of a subsidiary ruler of a devastated province; and, in kindred degradation, ornaments of its once splendid edifices are now bedded in a wall that forms an enclosure for beasts. A handful of men could now take unobstructed possession of that place, where a strong city opposed the entrance, and defied, for a time, the power of the conqueror of the world. The walls, the dwellings, and the people of *Ashkelon* have all perished; and though its name was, in the time of the crusades, shouted in triumph throughout every land in Europe, it is now literally *without an inhabitant*. And *Ashdod*, which withstood a siege treble the duration of that of Troy; and, thus, outrivalled far the boast of Alexander at Gaza, has, in verification of "the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword," been *cut off*, and has fallen before it to nothing.

* General Straton's MS.

There is yet another city which was noted by the prophets, the very want of any information respecting which, and the absence of its name from several modern maps of Palestine, while the sites of other ruined cities are marked, are really the best confirmation of the truth of the prophecy that could possibly be given. *Ekron shall be rooted up.* It is rooted up. It was one of the chief cities of the Philistines; but, though Gaza still subsists, and while Ashkelon and Ashdod retain their names in their ruins, the very name of Ekron is amissing.*

The wonderful contrast in each particular, whether in respect to the land, or to the cities of the Philistines, is the exact counterpart of the literal prediction; and, having the testimony of Volney to all the facts, and also indisputable evidence of the great priority of the predictions to the events, what more complete or clearer proof could there be, that each and all of them emanated from the prescience of heaven?

The remaining boundary of Judea was the mountains

* In the map prefixed to Dr. Shaw's Travels, Akron is indeed marked; but it is placed close upon the sea-coast, whereas Ekron was situated in the interior, and was at least ten miles distant. Shaw did not visit the spot. Dr. Richardson passed some ruins near to Ashdod, and conjectures that they were *probably Ekron*. But neither does the site of them correspond with that of Ekron, which, according to Eusebius, lay between Ashdod and Jamnia, towards the *east*, or inland. Vide Relan. Pal. 77. Any diversity of opinion respecting its site is not the least conclusive proof that it is *rooted up*.

of LEBANON on the north. Lebanon was celebrated for the extent of its forests, and particularly for the size and excellency of its cedars.* It abounded also with the pine, the cypress, and the vine, &c. But, describing what it now is, Volney says, "Towards Lebanon the mountains are lofty, but they are covered, in many places, with as much earth as fits them for cultivation by industry and labour. There, amid the crags of the rocks may be seen the no very magnificent remains of the boasted cedars."† The words of the prophets of Israel answer the sarcasm, and convert it into a testimony of the truth:—"Lebanon is ashamed, and hewn

* Relandi Palest. p. 320, 379.

† Volney remarks, in a note, that there are but four or five of these trees which deserve notice; and in a note, it may be added, from the words of Isaiah,—*the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them*, c. x. 19. Could not the infidel write a brief note, or state a minute fact, without illustrating a prophecy? Maundrell, who visited Lebanon in the end of the seventeenth century, and to whose accuracy in other matters, all subsequent travellers who refer to him bear witness, describes some of the cedars near the top of the mountain as "very old, and of a prodigious bulk, and others younger of a smaller size." Of the former he could reckon up only sixteen. He measured the largest and found it above twelve yards in girth. Such trees, however few in number, show that the *cedars of Lebanon* had once been no vain boast. But after the lapse of more than a century, not a single tree of such dimensions is now to be seen. Of those which now remain, as visited by Captains Irby and Mangles, there are about fifty in whole, on a single small eminence, from which spot the cedars are the only trees to be seen in Lebanon, p. 209.

down. The high ones of stature shall be hewn down ; Lebanon shall fall mightily.* “ Upon the mountains, and in all the vallies, his branches are fallen ; to the end that none of all the trees by the water exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs.”† “ Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. The cedar is fallen ; the forest of the vintage is come down.”‡

Such are the prophecies which explicitly and avowedly referred to the land of Judea, and to the surrounding states. And such are the facts drawn from the narratives of travellers, and given, in general, in their own words, which substantiate their truth ; though without any illusion, but in a few solitary instances, to the predictions which they amply verify. The most unsuspected evidence has been selected ; and the far greater part is so fully corroborated, and illustrated by other testimony, as to bid defiance to scepticism. The prophecies, and the proofs of their fulfilment, are so numerous, that it is impossible to concentrate them in a single view, without the exclusion of many ; and they are, upon a simple comparison, so obvious and striking, that any attempt at their farther elucidation must hazard the obscuring of their clearness, and the enfeebling of their force. There is no ambiguity in the prophecies themselves, for they can bear no other interpretation but what is descriptive of the actual events.

* Isa. xxxiii. 9 ; x. 33, 44.

† Ezek. xxxi. 12, 14.

‡ Zech. xi. 1, 2.

There can be no question of their genuineness or antiquity, for the countries whose future history they unveiled contained several millions of inhabitants, and numerous flourishing cities, at a period, centuries subsequent to the delivery, the translation, and publication of the prophecies, and when the regular and public perusal of their Scriptures was the law and the practice of the Israelites; and they have only gradually been reduced to their existing state of long-propheesied desolation. There could not possibly have been any human means of the foresight of facts, so many and so marvellous; for every natural appearance contradicted, and every historical fact condemned the supposition; and, nothing but continued oppression and a succession of worse than Gothic desolators,—no government on earth but the Turkish,—no spoliators but the Arabs,—could have converted such natural fertility into such utter and permanent desolation. Could it have been foreseen, that, after the lapse of some hundred years, no interval of prosperity, or peaceful security would occur throughout many ensuing generations, to revive its deadened energies, or to rescue from uninterrupted desolation one of the richest, and one of the most salubrious regions of the world, which the greater part of these territories naturally is? Could the present aspect of any country, with every alterable feature changed, and with every altered feature marked, have been delineated by different uninspired mortals, in various ages, from 2200 to 3300 years past? And there could not, so far as all researches have hitherto reached, be a more triumphant demonstration, from existing facts, of the

truth of manifold prophecies. In reference to the complete *historical* truth of the predictions respecting the successive kings of Syria and Egypt, Bishop Newton emphatically remarks, (as Sir Isaac Newton's observations had previously proved) that there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs to be found in any author of these times ; that the prophecy is really more perfect than any single history, and that no one historian hath related so many circumstances as the prophet has foretold ; so that " it was necessary to have recourse to several authors for the better explaining and illustrating the great variety of particulars contained in the prophecy." The same remark, in the same words, may, more obviously and with equal truth, be now applied to the *geographical*, as well as to the historical proof of the truth of prophecy. Judea, which, before the age of the prophets, had, from the uniformity and peculiarity of its government and laws, remained unvaried in a manner, and to a degree unusual among nations, has since undergone many convulsions, and has for many generations been unceasingly subjected to reiterated spoliation. And now, after the lapse of more than twenty centuries, travellers see what prophets foretold. Each prediction is fulfilled in all its particulars, so far as the facts have (and in almost every case they have) been made known. But while the recent discoveries of many travellers have disclosed the state of these countries, each of their accounts presents only an imperfect delineation ; and a variety of these must be combined before they bring fully into view all those diversified, discriminating, and characteristic features of

the extensive scene, which were vividly depicted of old, in all their minute lines, and varied shades, by the pencil of prophecy, and which set before us, as it were, the history, the land, and the people of Palestine.

Judea trodden down by successive desolators,—remaining uncultivated from generation to generation,—the general devastation of the country,—the mouldering ruins of its many cities,—the cheerless solitude of its once happy plains,—the wild produce of its luxuriant mountains,—the land covered with thorns,—the highways waste and untrodden,—its ancient possessors scattered abroad,—the inhabitants thereof depraved in character, few in number, eating their bread with carefulness, or in constant dread of the spoiler or oppressor,—the insecurity of property,—the uselessness of labour,—the poverty of their revenues,—the land emptied and despoiled,—instrumental music ceased from among them,—the mirth of the land gone,—the use of wine prohibited in a land of vines,—and the wine itself bitter unto them that drink it;—some very partial exceptions from universal desolation, some rescued remnants, like the gleanings of a field, and emblems of the departed glory of Judea; the devastation of the land of Ammon, the extinction of the Ammonites—the destruction of all their cities,—their country a spoil to the heathen,—and a perpetual desolation;—the desolation of Moab,—its cities without any to dwell therein, and no city escaped,—the valley perished,—the plain destroyed,—the wanderers that have come up against it,—and that cause its inhabitants to wander,—the manner of the spoliation of the dwellers in Moab, their danger and insecurity in

the plain country, and flying to the rocks for a refuge and a home—while flocks lie down among the ruins of the cities—none there to make them afraid—and the despoiled and impoverished condition of some of its wretched wanderers ; Idumea untrdden and unvisited by travellers,—the scene of an unparalleled and irrecoverable desolation,—its cities utterly abandoned and destroyed,—of the greater part of them no traces left—a desolate wilderness, over which the line of confusion is stretched out,—the country bare,—no kingdom there,—its princes and nobles nothing, and empty sepulchres their only memorials,—thistles and thorns in its palaces,—a border of wickedness—and yet greatly despised,—wisdom perished from Teman,—and understanding out of the mount of Esau,—abandoned to birds and beasts and reptiles, specified by name,—its ancient possessors cut off for ever—and no one remaining of the house of Esau ;—the destruction of the cities of the Philistines,—cottages for shepherds and folds for flocks, along the sea-coasts,—the remnant of the plain destroyed and unoccupied by any fixed inhabitants ; Lebanon ashamed, its cedars, few and diminutive, now a mockery instead of a praise ; and, finally, the different fate of many cities particularly defined,—the long subjection of Jerusalem to the Gentiles,—the buildings of Samaria cast down into the valley, its foundations discovered, and vineyards in its stead, all so clearly marked, both in the prophecy and on the spot, that they serve to fix its site,—Rabbah-Ammon, the capital of the Ammonites, now a pasture for camels, and a couching place for flocks,—the chief city of Edom brought down,—a

court for owls—and no man dwelling in it,—the forsaken Gaza bereaved of a monarch, bald of all its fortifications, or defenceless,—Ashkelon, desolate, without an inhabitant,—and Ekron rooted up: These are all ancient prophecies, and these are all present facts, which form of themselves a phalanx of evidence which all the shafts of infidelity can never pierce.

Though the countries included in these predictions comprehend a field of prophecy extending over upwards of 120,000 square miles, the existing state of every part of which bears witness of their truth; yet the prophets, as inspired by the God of nations, foretold the fate of mightier monarchies, of more extensive regions, and of more powerful cities: and there is not a people, nor a country, nor a capital, which was then known to the Israelites, whose future history they did not clearly reveal. And, instead of adducing arguments from the preceding very abundant materials, or drawing those facts, already adduced, to their legitimate conclusion, they may be left in their native strength, like the unhewn adamant; and we may pass to other proofs which also show that the temple of Christian faith rests upon a rock that cannot be shaken.

The prophecies concerning Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, are equally explicit as those which relate to the land of Judea. But they are so copious that a view of all their particulars, in the most abbreviated form that could do any justice to their truth, would lead to a long detail; and they have been so fully illustrated in the learned works of Prideaux and Bishop Newton, that this is the more unnecessary. But to a

brief summary or abstract of the principal facts, shall be added the discoveries of recent travellers, which greatly tend to the elucidation of the prophecies.

CHAPTER VI.

NINEVEH.

To a brief record of the creation, of the antediluvian world, and of the dispersion and the different settlements of mankind after the deluge, the Scriptures of the Old Testament add a full and particular history of the Hebrews for the space of fifteen hundred years, from the days of Abraham to the era of the last of the prophets. While the historical part of Scripture thus traces, from its origin, the history of the world, the prophecies give a prospective view which reaches to its end. And it is remarkable that profane history, emerging from fable, becomes clear and authentic about the very period when sacred history terminates, and when the fulfilment of those prophecies commences, which refer to other nations besides the Jews.

Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was, for a long time, an extensive and populous city. Its walls are said, by heathen historians, to have been a hundred feet in height, sixty miles in compass, and to have been defended by fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred

feet high. Although it formed the subject of some of the earliest of the prophecies, and was the very first which met its predicted fate; yet a heathen historian, in describing its capture and destruction, repeatedly refers to an ancient prediction respecting it. Diodorus Siculus relates, that the king of Assyria, after the complete discomfiture of his army, confided in an old prophecy, that Nineveh would not be taken unless the river should become the enemy of the city;* that, after an ineffectual siege of two years, the river, swollen with long continued and tempestuous torrents, inundated part of the city, and threw down the wall for the space of twenty furlongs; and that the king, deeming the prediction accomplished, despaired of his safety, and erected an immense funeral pile, on which he heaped his wealth, and with which, himself, his household, and palace were consumed.† The book of Nahum was avowedly prophetic of the destruction of Nineveh; and it is there foretold “that the gates of the river shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved.” “Nineveh of old, like a pool of water—with an overflowing flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof.”‡ The historian describes the facts by which the other predictions of the prophet were as literally fulfilled. He relates that the king of Assyria, elated with his former victories, and ignorant of the revolt of the Bactrians, had abandoned himself to scan-

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. tom. ii. p. 82, 83. Ed. Wessel. 1793.

† Ib. p. 84.

‡ Nahum ii. 6; i. 8.

dalous inaction ; had appointed a time of festivity, and supplied his soldiers with abundance of wine ; and that the general of the enemy, apprised, by deserters, of their negligence and drunkenness, attacked the Assyrian army while the whole of them were fearlessly giving way to indulgence, destroyed great part of them, and drove the rest into the city.* The words of the prophet were hereby verified : “ While they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble full dry.”†—The prophet promised much spoil to the enemy : “ Take the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold ; for there is no end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture.”‡ And the historian affirms, that many talents of gold and silver, preserved from the fire, were carried to Ecbatana.§ According to Nahum, the city was not only to be destroyed by an overflowing flood, but the fire also was to devour it ;|| and, as Diodorus relates, partly by water, partly by fire, it was destroyed.

—The utter and perpetual destruction and desolation of Nineveh were foretold :—“ The Lord will make an utter end of the place thereof. Affliction shall not rise up the second time. She is empty, void, and waste.—The Lord will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria, and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. How is she become a

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 81, 84.

† Nahum i. 10 ; iii. ii.

‡ Nahum ii. 9.

§ Diod. p. 87.

|| Nahum iii. 15.

desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in !”* In the second century, Lucian, a native of a city on the banks of the Euphrates, testified that Nineveh was utterly perished—that there was no vestige of it remaining—and that none could tell where once it was situated. This testimony of Lucian, and the lapse of many ages, during which the place was not known where it stood, render it at least somewhat doubtful whether the remains of an ancient city, opposite to Mosul, which have been described as such by travellers, be indeed those of ancient Nineveh. It is, perhaps, probable that they are the remains of the city which succeeded Nineveh, or of a Persian city of the same name, which was built on the banks of the Tigris by the Persians subsequently to the year 230 of the Christian era, and demolished by the Saracens in 632.† In contrasting the then existing great and increasing population, and the accumulating wealth of the proud inhabitants of the mighty Nineveh, with the utter ruin that awaited it,—the word of God (before whom all the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers,) by Nahum, was—“ Make thyself many as the canker-worm, make thyself many as the locusts. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven : The canker-worm spoileth, and flieth away. Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers which camp in the hedges in the cold day : but when the sun riseth, they flee away ; and their place is not known where

* Nahum i. 8, 9 ; ii. 10 ; iii. 17, 18, 19. Zeph. ii. 13, 14, 15.

† *Marshami Can. Chron.* sec. xviii. p. 600. ed. Franeq. 1696.

they are," or were. Whether these words imply that even the site of Nineveh would in future ages be uncertain or unknown; or, as they rather seem to intimate, that every vestige of the palaces of its monarchs, of the greatness of its nobles, and of the wealth of its numerous merchants, would wholly disappear; the truth of the prediction cannot be invalidated under either interpretation. The avowed ignorance respecting Nineveh, and the oblivion which passed over it, for many an age, conjoined with the meagreness of evidence to identify it still, prove that the place was long unknown where it stood, and that even now, it can scarcely with certainty be determined. And if the only spot that bears its name, or that can be said to be the place where it was, be indeed the site of one of the most extensive of cities on which the sun ever shone, and which continued for many centuries to be the capital of Assyria—the "principal mounds," few in number, which "show neither bricks, stones, nor other materials of building, but are in many places overgrown with grass, and resemble the mounds left by intrenchments and fortifications of ancient Roman camps," and "the *appearances* of other mounds and ruins less marked" than even these, extending for ten miles, and widely spread, and seeming to be "the wreck of former buildings,"* show that Nineveh is left without one monument of royalty, without any token whatever of its splendour or wealth; that their place is not known where they

* Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, v. ii. p. 49, 51, 62.

were; and that it is indeed a desolation—"empty, void, and waste," its very ruins perished, and less than the wreck of what it was. "Such an *utter ruin*," in every view, "has been made of it; and such is the truth of the divine predictions."

BABYLON.

IF ever there was a city that seemed to bid defiance to any predictions of its fall, that city was Babylon. It was, for a long time, the most famous city in the whole world.* Its walls above 300 feet in height, 87 in breadth, and, by the lowest computation, 48 miles in compass, appeared rather like the bulwarks of nature than the workmanship of man. The Temple of Belus, half a mile in circumference and a furlong in height—the hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls—the embankments which restrained the Euphrates—the hundred brazen gates—and the adjoining artificial lake, which extended thirty miles on every side—all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single spot.† Yet, while in the plenitude of its power, and, according to the most accurate chronologers, 160 years before the commencement of its decay, the voice of prophecy pronounced the doom of the mighty and unconquered Babylon. A succession of ages brought it gradually to the dust; and the gradation of its fall is marked till it

* Plinii Hist. Nat. lib. vi. cap. 26. † Herod. lib. 1. c. 178.
Diodor. Sic. lib. ii. p. 26. Prideaux Connec. i. 99.

sink at last into utter desolation. At a time when nothing but magnificence was around Babylon the great, fallen Babylon was delineated exactly as every traveller now describes its ruins.

The enemies who were to besiege it—the cowardice of the Babylonians—and the manner in which the city was taken—were all foretold and described by the prophets as the facts are related by ancient historians:—“Go up, O Elam, (or Persia,) besiege, O Media. The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for his device is against Babylon to destroy it. Set up a standard in the land; blow the trumpet among the nations; prepare the nations against her.”* And it was the Medes and Persians, united under the command of Cyrus, (who was called by name for the execution of the work,) that did come up against Babylon, and did besiege it; and he incorporated, with his own army, the forces of other nations which he had previously vanquished. † “The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight. They have remained in their holds, their might hath failed, they became as women.” And this was the complaint and accusation of their enemies, who in vain attempted to provoke them to the contest. Cyrus challenged the Babylonian monarch to single combat. And, failing to bring them by any means to the field, his only hope of success, at first, arose from preventing the escape of the besieged, that they might be starved into a more speedy surren-

* Isa. xxi. 2. Jer. li. 11, 27, 30.
lib. vii. p. 399, edit. Hutch.

† Xenoph. Cyrop.

der on account of the greatness of the number of those who would not come forth to fight. He encompassed the city with a deep trench. But the Babylonians, possessed of provisions for twenty years, and of many fertile fields, derided him from their impregnable walls, within which they remained inclosed.* Yet the city was taken by means of an unexampled device, in literal verification of the prophecy:—"A drought is upon her waters and they shall be dried up. I will dry up her sea and make her springs dry.—That saith to the deep be dry; I will dry up thy rivers."† The Euphrates was a river a quarter of a mile in breadth, and twelve feet deep, and was considered as a barrier strong as the walls of Babylon. But Cyrus diverted the course of the river into the lake, the trenches, and the canals, and entered the city with his army, through its dried channel, on the night of an annual festival, during the very time of the revelry and intoxication of the inhabitants, who were so reckless of their danger that the gates leading from the city to the river were not shut. The gates of the palace itself were opened, that the cause of the tumult without might be discovered—the enemy entered—an indiscriminate slaughter ensued—and the king and his nobles were put to death.‡ Many prophecies were thus fulfilled at once:—"I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware. Thou art found and also caught. One post shall run to meet another, and

* Xen. p. 402, 404. † Isa. xlv. 27. Jer. l. 38. Jer. li. 36.

‡ Xen. p. 404—408. Herod. lib. i. c. 191.

one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped. In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep. And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her captains and her rulers, and her mighty men, and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus: I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut." * The scriptures do not relate the manner in which Babylon was taken, nor do they ever allude to the exact fulfilment of the prophecy. But there is, in every particular, a strict coincidence between the predictions of the prophets and the historical narratives both of Herodotus and Xenophon. †

But all the greatness of Babylon did not depart in a day. And each step in the progress of its decline was the accomplishment of a prophecy. Conquered, for the first time, it was reduced from an imperial to a tributary city. ‡ *Come down and sit in the dust, O daughter of Babylon: sit on the ground, there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans.* § The Babylonians afterwards rebelled against Darius, and the walls were reduced to 75 feet, and all the gates destroyed. || *The wall of Babylon shall fall.* ¶ Xerxes, after his ignominious retreat from Greece, rifled the temples and

* Isaiah xlv. 1. † Isaiah lived above 250 years before Herodotus, and nearly 350 before Xenophon.

‡ Herod. lib. i. c. 191.

§ Isaiah xlvii. 1.

|| Herod. lib. iii. c. 150.

¶ Jer. l. 44.

destroyed the temples of Babylon.* *Babylon is fallen : all the graven images of her gods shall be broken unto the ground ; her idols are confounded. I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up ; I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon.*†—Alexander the Great attempted to restore it to its former glory, and designed to make it the metropolis of an universal empire. But, while the building of the temple of Belus, and the reparation of the embankments of the Euphrates were actually carrying on, the conqueror of the world died, at the commencement of this his last undertaking, in the height of his power, and in the flower of his age.‡ *Take balm for her pain, if so be that she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.*§ The neighbouring city of Seleucia afterwards drained it of great part of its population,|| and at a later period, or about 130 years before the birth of Christ, Humerus, a Parthian governor, who was noted as excelling all tyrants in cruelty, exercised great severities on the Babylonians, and having burned the forum and some of the temples, and destroyed the fairest parts of the city, reduced many of the inhabitants to slavery on the slightest pretexts, and caused them, together with all their households, to be sent into Me-

* Herod. lib. i. c. 183. Arrian. de Expeditione Alex. lib. vii. c. 17, cited by Bishop Newton. † Jer. li. 44, 47, 52.

‡ Arrian. lib. vii. c. 17. Strabo, lib. xvi. § Jer. li. 8, 9.

|| Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. iv. c. 26.

dia.* *They shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.*†

Such is the progressive and predicted decline of Babylon the Great till it ceased to be a city. About the beginning of the Christian era a small portion of it was inhabited, and the far greater part was cultivated.‡ It diminished as Seleucia increased, and the latter became the greater city. In the second century nothing but the walls remained. The name and the remnant were cut off from Babylon. It became a great desert; and, in the fourth century, its walls, repaired for that purpose, formed an enclosure for wild beasts, and Babylon was converted into a field for the chase—a hunting-place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs. There is a blank, during the interval of many ages, in the history of its mutilated remains and of its mouldering decay. It remained long in the possession of the Saracens; and abundant evidence has since been given, that every feature of its prophesied desolation is now distinctly visible—for the most ancient historians bore not a clearer testimony to facts confirmatory of the prophecies relative to its first siege and capture by Cyrus, than the latest travellers bear to the fulfilment of those which refer to its final and permanent ruin. The identity of its site has been completely established.|| And the truth of every general and of every particular prediction is now so clearly demonstrated, that a simple

* Diod. Siculi fragmentum, apud Valesium. Vide Vitrin. Com. in Iesaiam, cap. 13, pp. 420, 421. † Jer. 1. 3.

‡ Diod. Sic. v. ii. p. 35. || Rennel's Geography of Herodotus, p. 349. Keppel's Narrative, p. 171.

exhibition of the facts precludes the possibility of any cavil, and supersedes the necessity of any reasoning on the subject.

The surrounding barrenness and desolation, and the universal desolation of the city itself—heaps of ruins, partly covered with morasses and pools of water, and rendered inaccessible—partly a wilderness—a dry land and a desert—the abode of wild beasts—untenanted and shunned by man,—and its broad walls utterly broken—such unlikely substitutes of unrivalled magnificence were delineated twenty-five centuries ago precisely as they are now seen and described.

“ Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, and the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their folds there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there: and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the desert shall cry in the desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant places. I will cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, and son and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction. It shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord, it shall never be inhabited; it shall be wholly desolate; every one that goeth by it shall be astonished. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him

that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! The wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, and the owl shall dwell therein. And it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. No man shall abide there, neither shall son of man dwell therein. Cast her up as heaps and destroy her utterly—let none of her be left. Thou shalt be desolate for ever. And the land shall tremble and sorrow; for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. Babylon shall become heaps—a dwelling place for dragons; an astonishment and a hissing. The sea is come up upon Babylon—she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. A land where no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.”*

The district of Babylonia, an immense level plain, once the fruitful vale of Shinar, the most distinguished region, for fertility and riches, of the whole east,† is now “an uncultivated, melancholy waste.” “The abundance of the country is gone as clean away as if the besom of destruction had swept it from north to south.” A few scattered hamlets appeared in the desert, like

* Isa. xiii. 19, &c.; xiv. 22. Jer. l. 13, 23, 39, &c. Jer. li. 13, 26, &c.

† *Agrum totius Orientis fertilissimum.*—Plin. *Hist. Nat.* lib. vi.c. 26.

spots upon the ocean, and even these have lately disappeared. The number of canals by which it is traversed, now dry and neglected, and the quantity of heaps of earth, covered with fragments of brick and broken tiles, which are seen in every direction, are indisputable traces of ancient population. Within the precincts of Babylon, also, on all sides, appears a vast barren tract—a solitary waste without a vestige of ancient luxuriance. All is withered and gone.* *The land is desolate ; the sower and reaper are cut off.*†

Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, is now the greatest of ruins. Immense tumuli of temples, palaces, and human habitations, of every description, buried in shapeless heaps, are everywhere seen, and form long and varied lines of ruins, which, in some places, rather resemble natural hills than mounds, which cover the remains of great and splendid edifices. These buildings, which were the labour of slaves and the pride of kings, are now misshapen heaps of rubbish. One of the most conspicuous of all the mounds is called Moujelibéé, or the overturned.‡ *It is wholly desolate—cast up as heaps overthrown and utterly destroyed.*

“ From the summit” of the ruins of the tower of Babel, or temple of Belus, two hundred and thirty-five feet high, “ we had a distinct view,” says Major Kep-

* Sir Robert Ker Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 285. Rich's *Memoirs of the Ruins of Babylon*. Kinnier's *Memoirs of Persia*, p. 279. † Jer. li. 2 ; l. 16.

‡ Porter's Travels, p. 294. Rich's *Sec. Mem.* p. 19.

pel, " of the vast heaps which constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon ; a more complete picture of desolation could not well be imagined. The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited. It was impossible to behold this scene and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present : that she should never be inhabited ; that " the Arabian should not pitch his tent there ;" that she should " become heaps ;" that her cities should be " a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness."

" Pieces of marble, stones, and broken bricks, lie scattered over the ruin" of Babel. " The most curious of the fragments are several misshapen masses of brick work, quite black, except in a few places where regular layers of kiln-burnt bricks are discernible : these have certainly been subjected to some fierce heat, as they are completely molten—a strong presumption that fire was used in the destruction of the Tower, which, in parts, resembles what the scriptures prophesied it should become, " a burnt mountain." These solid vitrified masses, " immense fragments," are also particularly mentioned by Sir R. K. Porter and Mr. Rich, and also by Mr. Buckingham, who relates that " the fallen masses bear evident proof of the operation of fire having been continued on them, as well after they were broken down as before, since every part of their surface has been so equally exposed to it that many of them have acquired a rounded form, and in none can

the place of separation from its adjoining one be traced by any appearance of superior freshness, or any exemption from the influence of the destroying flame."* The insertion of the corresponding predictions is merely a transcript of those which an eye witness has applied to the fact. "In the denunciation respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it. To this Jeremiah evidently alludes when he says, that it should be 'as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,' on which cities it is said 'the Lord rained brimstone and fire.' Again, 'I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him;' and, in another place, 'Her high gates shall be burned with fire, and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.'"+

The traces of the western embankment of the Euphrates—unlike the opposite bank, but without any apparent cause or assignable reason for the difference—are now no longer discernible. The river overflows unrestrained. The very ruins have been swept away, and all around is low and marshy. *The sea is come upon Babylon—she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof—no man dwelleth there, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.* And the plain on which Babylon stood is, in many places, converted into morasses, and the deep excavations into "*pools of water,*" by the annual overflowing of the Euphrates. The ruins are

* Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, v. ii. p. 375. Rich's Memoirs. Porter's Travels, vol. ii. p. 324, 328.

† Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 195. Isa. l. 32; li. 58.

then inundated so as to render many parts of them inaccessible, and large deposits of the water are left stagnant in the intervening hollows—literally verifying the threat denounced against it : *I will make thee a possession for the bittern, and pools of water.*—While the elevated sun-burnt ruins, and the multitude of mounds on an arid plain, equally prove that it is *a wilderness, a dry land and a desert.**

From the fourteenth century to the present time, succeeding travellers attest that the ruins of Babylon have been unfrequented, from the superstitious dread of evil spirits, and from the natural terror at the wild beasts who inhabit them. Rauwolf relates, that, in the sixteenth century, the tower of Babylon was so full of venomous creatures, which lodge in the holes made by them in the rubbish, that, except in two months during winter, no one durst approach nearer to it than within half a league. The evidence of others has been also often quoted. And the most credible and circumstantial testimony, more lately given, may now be adduced.—There are many dens of wild beasts in various parts : in most of the cavities are numbers of bats and owls : porcupines also abound. Those souterrains (caverns) over which the chambers of majesty may have been spread, are now the refuge of jackalls and other savage animals. The mouths of their entrance

* Porter's Travels, v. ii. p. 380, 390. Rich's Mem. p. 13. Narrative of a Journey from India to England, by the Hon. Major Keppel, v. i. p. 125, 2d edit. Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, v. ii. p. 296, 365.

are strewed with the bones of sheep and goats ; and the loathsome smell that issues from most of them is sufficient warning not to proceed into the den. The king of the forest now ranges over the site of that Babylon which Nebuchadnezzar built for his own glory. And the temple of Belus, the greatest work of man, is now become like unto a natural den of lions. It is also the unmolested retreat of jackals, hyenas, and other noxious animals.*—Other causes still conspire to render it an object of dread. “ All the inhabitants of the country assert that it is extremely dangerous to approach this mound after night-fall, on account of the multitude of spirits by which it is haunted.” *It shall never be inhabited, nor dwell in from generation to generation. Neither shall the Arab pitch tent there ; neither shall the shepherds make their folds there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and the houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and owls shall dwell there. The wild beasts of the desert shall cry in the desolate houses ; it shall be no more inhabited for ever, &c.*

Major Keppel relates, that he and the party who accompanied him, “ in common with other travellers, had totally failed in discovering any trace of the city walls.” And he adds ; “ The divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah, that ‘ the broad walls

* Rich, p. 30. Porter's Travels, v. ii. p. 342, 387, 390. Kin-
nier's Mem. p. 279. Keppel's Narrative, vol. i. p. 180, 196.

of Babylon shall be utterly broken.' " * A chapter, sixty pages in length, of Mr. Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, is entitled, " Search after the Walls of Babylon." He discovered on the eastern boundary of the ruins, on the summit of a large ruinous heap, " a mass of solid wall, about thirty feet in length, by twelve or fifteen in thickness, yet evidently once of much greater dimensions each way, the work being in its present state *broken* and *incomplete in every part* ;" and this heap of rubbish and of ruins he conjectured, from many plausible reasons, to be a part—the only part that can be discovered—of the walls of Babylon,—so *utterly* are they *broken*.

How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder ! How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations ! The following interesting description has lately been given from the spot. After speaking of the ruined embankments, divided and subdivided again and again, like a sort of tangled net-work, over the apparently interminable ground—of large and wide-spreading morasses—of ancient foundations—and of chains of undulating heaps—Sir Robert Kerr Porter emphatically adds :—“ The whole view was particularly solemn. The majestic stream of the Euphrates, wandering in solitude, like a pilgrim monarch through the silent ruins of his devastated kingdom, still appeared a noble river under all the disadvantages of its desert-tracked course. Its banks were hoary with reeds ; and the grey osier willows were yet there, on which the captives of Israel

* Keppel's Narrative, v. i. p. 175. Jer. li. 58.

hung up their harps, and, while Jerusalem was not, refused to be comforted. But how is the rest of the scene changed since then! At that time those broken hills were palaces—those long undulating mounds, streets—this vast solitude filled with the busy subjects of the proud daughter of the east.—Now wasted with misery, her *habitations are not to be found*—and, for herself, *the worm is spread over her.*” *

Has not every purpose of the Lord been performed against Babylon? And, having so clear illustrations of the facts before us, is not the time arrived when the appeal, subjoined by their omniscient Author to these very prophecies, may now at last be heard by all, with profound reverence:—“Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? and there is no God beside me. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done—saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” Is it possible that there can be any attestation of the truth of prophecy, if it be not witnessed here? Is there any spot on earth which has undergone a more complete transformation? “The records of the human race,” it has been said with truth, “do not present a contrast more striking than that between the primeval magnificence of Babylon and its long desolation.”† Its ruins have of late been carefully and scrupulously examined by different natives of Britain, of unimpeach-

* Sir R. K. Porter’s Travels, v. ii. p. 297.

† *Edinburgh Review*, No. 1. p. 439.

ed veracity, and the result of every research is a more striking demonstration of the literal accomplishment of every prediction. How few spots are there on earth of which we have so clear and faithful a picture, as prophecy gave of fallen Babylon at a time when no spot on earth resembled it less than its present desolate solitary site. Or could any prophecies respecting any single place have been more precise, or wonderful, or numerous, or true,—or more gradually accomplished throughout many generations? And when they look at what Babylon was, and what it is, and perceive the minute realization of them all—may not nations learn wisdom—may not tyrants tremble—and may not sceptics think?

TYRE.

TYRE was the most celebrated city of Phœnicia, and the ancient emporium of the world. Its colonies were numerous and extensive. “It was the theatre of an immense commerce and navigation—the nursery of arts and science, and the city of perhaps the most industrious and active people ever known.”* The kingdom of Carthage, the rival of Rome, was one of the colonies of Tyre. While this mart of nations was in the height of its opulence and power, and at least 125 years before the destruction of old Tyre, Isaiah pronounced its irrevocable fall. Tyre on the island succeeded to the

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 210. Steph. *Dic.* p. 2039. Mars. *Can. Ch.* p. 304, &c.

more ancient city on the continent ; and,—being inhabited by the same people, retaining the same name, being removed but a little space; and, perhaps, occupying in part the same ground,—the fate of both is included in the prophecy. The pride and the wickedness of the Tyrians—their exultation over the calamities of the Israelites—and their cruelty in selling them to slavery, are assigned as the reasons of the judgments that would overtake them, or as the causes of the revelation of the destiny of their city. And the whole fate of Tyre was foretold.

Bishop Newton shows, at length, how the following prophecies were all exactly fulfilled, as well as clearly foretold, *viz.* that Tyre was to be taken and destroyed by the Chaldeans, who were, at the time of the delivery of the prophecy, an inconsiderable people, and particularly by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon ;—that the inhabitants should fly over the Mediterranean into the islands and countries adjoining, and even then should not find a quiet settlement ;—that the city should be restored after seventy years, and return to her gain and merchandise ;—that the people should in time forsake their idolatry, and become converts to the true religion and worship of God ;—and finally, that the city should be totally destroyed, and become a place only for fishers to spread their nets upon.

But, instead of reviewing the whole of these, a few of the most striking predictions which were accomplished after the era of the last of the Old Testament prophets, and the fulfilment of which rests on the most unexceptionable testimony, shall be selected.

One of the most singular events in history was the manner in which the siege of Tyre was conducted by Alexander the Great. Irritated that a single city should alone oppose his victorious march, enraged at the murder of some of his soldiers, and fearful for his fame,—even his army's despairing of success could not deter him from the siege. And Tyre was taken in a manner, the success of which was more wonderful than the design was daring; for it was surrounded by a wall 150 feet in height, and situated on an island half a mile distant from the shore. A mound was formed from the continent to the island; and the ruins of old Tyre,* 240 years after its demolition, afforded ready materials for the purpose. Such was the work, that the attempt at first defeated the power of an Alexander. The enemy consumed and the storm destroyed it. But its remains, buried beneath the water, formed a barrier which rendered successful his renewed efforts. A vast mass of additional matter was requisite. The soil and the very rubbish were gathered and heaped. And the mighty conqueror, who afterwards failed in raising again any of the ruins of Babylon, cast those of Tyre into the sea, and took her very *dust* † from off her. He left not the remnant of a ruin—and the site of ancient Tyre is now unknown.‡ Who was it then who taught the pro-

* *Magna vis saxorum ad manum erat, Tyro vetere præbente. Quint. Cur. lib. iv. cap. 9.*

† *Humus aggerebatur, ib. cap. 11. Arrian. de Ex. Al. lib. ii. c. 21—24. Quint. Cur. lib. iv. c. 7—19.*

‡ *Volney's Travels, vol. ii. Poccocke's Descrip. of the East, b. i. c. 20. Buckingham's Travels, p. 46.*

phets to say of Tyre?—"They shall lay thy stones, and thy timber, and thy dust, in the midst of the water.—I will also scrape her dust from her. I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more. Thou shalt be sought for, yet thou shalt never be found again.*

After the capture of Tyre, the conqueror ordered it to be set on fire. Fifteen thousand of the Tyrians escaped in ships. And, exclusive of multitudes that were cruelly slain, thirty thousand were sold into slavery. Each of these facts had been announced for centuries:—"Behold, the Lord will cast her out—he will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured with fire.—I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee—I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth. Pass ye over to Tarshish—pass over to Chittim. The isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.—Thou shalt die the death of them that art slain in the midst of the sea. The children of Israel also, and the children of Judah, have ye sold. I will return the recompense upon your own head."

But it was also prophesied of the greatest commercial city of the world, whose merchants were princes,—whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth:—"I will make thee like the top of a rock. Thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon."† The same prediction is repeated with an assurance of its truth:—"I will make her like the top of a rock;—it shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it."

* Ezek. xxiv. 4, 12, 21.

† Ib. xxvi. 14, 45.

Tyre, though deprived of its former inhabitants soon revived as a city, and greatly regained its commerce. It was populous and flourishing at the beginning of the Christian era. It contained many disciples of Jesus, in the days of the Apostles. An elegant temple and many churches were afterwards built there. It was the see of the first archbishop under the patriarch of Jerusalem. Her merchandise and her hire, according to the prophecy, were holiness to the Lord. In the seventh century, Tyre was taken by the Saracens. In the twelfth by the Crusaders—at which period it was a great commercial city. The Mamelukes succeeded as its masters; and it has now remained for three hundred years in the possession of the Turks. But it was not excluded from among the multitude of cities and of countries whose ruin and devastation, as accomplished by the cruelties and ravages of Turkish barbarity and despotism, were foretold nearly two thousand years before the existence of that nation of plunderers. And although it has more lately, by a brief respite from the greatest oppression, risen somewhat from its ruins, the last of the predictions respecting it has been literally fulfilled, according to the testimony of many witnesses. But that of Maundrell, Shaw, Volney, and Bruce, may suffice:—

“ You find here no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times. You see nothing here but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing, who seem to be preserved in this place by divine providence, as a visible argument

how God hath fulfilled his word concerning Tyre.* The port of Tyre, small as it is at present, is choked up to that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of those fishermen who now and then visit this once renowned emporium, and dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins, can with great difficulty only be admitted." † And even Volney, after quoting the description of the greatness of Tyre, and the general description of the destruction of the city, and the annihilation of its commerce, acknowledges that "the vicissitudes of time, or rather the barbarism of the Greeks of the Lower Empire and the Mahometans have accomplished this prediction.—Instead of that ancient commerce, so active and so extensive, Sour, (Tyre) reduced to a miserable village, has no other trade than the exportation of a few sacks of corn and raw cotton; nor any merchant but a single Greek factor, in the service of the French of Saide, who scarcely makes sufficient profit to maintain his family." But though he overlooks the fulfilment of minuter prophecies, he relates facts more valuable than any opinion, and more corroborative of their truth:—"The whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a *trifling fishery*. The houses they occupy are no longer, as in the time of Strabo, edifices of three or four stories high—but wretched huts, ready to crumble into ruins." ‡ Bruce

* Maundrell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 82.

† Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. p. 31.

‡ Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 212.

describes Tyre as “ a rock whereon fishers dry their nets.”

It matters not by what means these prophecies have been verified ; for the means were as inscrutable, and as impossible to have been foreseen by man, as the event. The fact is beyond a doubt that they have been literally fulfilled—and therefore the PROPHECIES ARE TRUE. They may be overlooked—but no ingenuity can pervert them. No facts could have been more unlikely or striking—and no predictions respecting them could have been more clear.

EGYPT.

EGYPT was one of the most ancient and one of the mightiest of kingdoms, and the researches of the traveller are still directed to explore the unparalleled memorials of its power. No nation, whether of ancient or of modern times, hath ever erected such great and durable monuments. While the vestiges of other ancient monarchies can hardly be found amidst the mouldered ruins of their cities, those artificial mountains, visible at the distance of thirty miles, the pyramids of Egypt, without a record of their date, have withstood, unimpaired, all the ravages of time. The dynasty of Egypt takes precedence, in antiquity, of every other. No country ever produced so long a catalogue of kings. The learning of the Egyptians was proverbial. The number of their cities, and the population of their country, as recorded by ancient historians, almost surpass

credibility. Nature and art united in rendering it a most fertile region. It was called the granary of the world. It was divided into several kingdoms, and their power often extended over many of the surrounding countries.* Yet the knowledge of all its greatness and glory deterred not the Jewish prophets from declaring, that Egypt would become a base kingdom, and never exalt itself any more among the nations. And the *literal* fulfilment of every prophecy affords as clear a demonstration as can possibly be given, that each and all of them are the dictates of inspiration.

Egypt was the theme of many prophecies, which were fulfilled in ancient times: and it bears to the present day, as it has borne throughout many ages, every mark with which prophecy had stamped its destiny:—

“ They shall be a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of kingdoms. Neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations: for I will diminish them that they shall no more rule over the nations. The pride of her power shall come down. And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted. I will make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be desolate of that whereof it was full. I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked. I will make the land waste and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt— The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.” †

* Marshami *Can. Chron.* pp. 239, 420.

† Ezek. xxx. 6, 7, 12, 13; xxxii. 15. Zech. x. 11.

Egypt became entirely subject to the Persians about 350 years previous to the Christian era. It was afterwards subdued by the Macedonians, and was governed by the Ptolemies for the space of 294 years ; until, about thirty years before Christ, it became a province of the Roman Empire. It continued long in subjection to the Romans—tributary first to Rome, and afterwards to Constantinople. It was transferred, A. D. 641, to the dominion of the Saracens. In 1250 the Mamelukes deposed their rulers, and usurped the command of Egypt. A mode of government, the most singular and surprising that ever existed on earth, was established and maintained. Each successive ruler was raised to supreme authority, from being a stranger and a slave. No son of the former ruler—no native of Egypt succeeded to the sovereignty ; but a chief was chosen from among a new race of imported slaves. When Egypt became tributary to the Turks in 1517, the Mamelukes retained much of their power, and every Pasha was an oppressor and a stranger. During all these ages, every attempt to emancipate the country, or to create a prince of the land of Egypt has proved abortive, and has often been fatal to the aspirant. Though the facts relative to Egypt form too prominent a feature in the history of the world to admit of contradiction or doubt, yet the description of the fate of that country, and of the form of its government, shall be left to the testimony of those whose authority no infidel will question, and whom no man can accuse of adapting their descriptions to the predictions of the event. Gibbon and Volney are our witnesses of the facts :—

“Such is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. The Mamelukes, purchased as slaves, and introduced as soldiers, soon usurped the power and elected a leader. If their first establishment was a singular event, their continuance is not less extraordinary. They are replaced by slaves brought from their original country. The system of oppression is methodical. Every thing the traveller sees or hears, reminds him he is in the country of slavery and tyranny.”* “A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above 500 years. The most illustrious sultans of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties, were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four and twenty Beys or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants.”† These are the words of Volney and of Gibbon: and what did the ancient prophets foretel? “*I will lay the land waste and all that is therein by the hands of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it.—And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt.—The sceptre*

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 74, 103, 110, 198.

† Gibbon's History, vol. vi. p. 109, 110. Dublin ed. 1789.

of Egypt shall depart away." The prophecy adds:—
 " *They shall be a base kingdom—it shall be the basest of kingdoms.*" After the lapse of 2400 years from the date of this prophecy a scoffer at religion, but an eye-witness of the facts, thus describes the self-same spot:—
 " In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, nor landholders. A universal air of misery, manifest in all the traveller meets, points out to him the rapacity of oppression and the distrust attendant upon slavery. The profound ignorance of the inhabitants equally prevents them from perceiving the causes of their evils, or applying the necessary remedies. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge. Nothing is talked of but intestine troubles, the public misery, pecuniary extortions, bastinadoes, and murders. Justice herself puts to death without formality."* Other travellers describe the most execrable vices as common, and represent the moral character of the people as corrupted to the core. As a token of the desolation of the country, mud-walled cottages are now the only habitations where the ruins of temples and palaces abound. Egypt is surrounded by the dominions of the Turks and of the Arabs; and the prophecy is literally true which marked it in the midst of desolation:—"*They shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.*" The systematic oppression, extortion, and plunder, which

* Volney's Travels, v. i. 190, 198.

have so long prevailed, and the price paid for his authority and power by every Turkish Pasha, have rendered the country desolate of that whereof it was full, and still show both how *it has been wasted by the hands of strangers*, and how *it has been sold into the hand of the wicked*. There is also another prediction, which is twice repeated: “ I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them throughout the countries.”* And is it not worthy of remark, that the only people besides the Jews, who have been scattered among the nations and dispersed throughout the countries, and the only people to whom these prophecies can be applied—are traced by their own traditions to Egypt—retain to this day almost the very name (a corruption of the name) of Egyptians—and have still the peculiar character of baseness—the prophetic characteristic of themselves and of their country, universally attached to them ?†

* Ezek. xxx. 23, 26.

† The supposition that the Gypsies emigrated from Hindostan to Europe, is not inconsistent with their being aborigines of Egypt. They might have first wandered towards the east, and, on their expulsion from India, may have been driven into Europe—in which they first appeared about the beginning of the 14th century. They might have retained their original name for ages in Asia as they have done in Europe. But, independent of this, which would only show how they have been *dispersed throughout the countries*, there was evidently an early connexion between Egypt and the countries of the east, of which a remarkable instance was afforded by the Hindoo seapoys who came into Egypt, by the Red Sea, to assist the British army; and who, “ when they were introduced to the ruined temples on the Nile,

Can any words be more free from ambiguity, or could any events be more wonderful in their nature, or more unlikely or impossible to have been foreseen by man, than these prophecies concerning Egypt? The long line of its kings commenced with the first ages of the world, and, while it was yet unbroken, its final termination was revealed. The very attempt once made by infidels, to show, from the recorded number of its monarchs and the duration of their reigns, that Egypt was a kingdom previous to the Mosaic era of the deluge, places the wonderful nature of these predictions respecting it, in the most striking view. And the previous experience of two thousand years, during which period Egypt had never been without a prince of its own, seemed to preclude the possibility of those predicted events which the experience of the last two thousand years has amply verified. Though it had often tyrannized over Judea and the neighbouring nations, the Jewish prophets foretold that its own sceptre would depart away; and that that country of kings (for the number of its contemporary as well as successive monarchs may warrant the appellation) would never have a prince of its own; and that it would be laid waste by the hands of strangers. They foretold that it

and beheld the figures of the Egyptian deities, immediately worshipped them."—*Captain Light's Travels, Pref. p. 14.* The facts, as stated above, that they are traced by their own traditions to Egypt, &c. and that laws were enacted against them, expressly under the name of *Egyptians*, in different countries of Europe, are incontrovertible; and the coincidence of these facts with the words of the prediction is, to say the least, remarkable.

would be a base kingdom—the basest of kingdoms—that it would be desolate itself and surrounded by desolation—and that it would never exalt itself any more among the nations. They described its ignominious subjection and unparalleled baseness, notwithstanding that its past and present degeneracy bears not a more remote resemblance to the former greatness and pride of its power, than the frailty of its mud-walled fabrics now bears to the stability of its imperishable pyramids. Such prophecies, accomplished in such a manner, prove, without a comment, that they must be the revelation of the Omniscient Ruler of the Universe.*

On a review of the prophecies relative to Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, may we not, by the plainest induction from indisputable facts, conclude that the fate of these cities and countries, as well as of the land of Judea and the adjoining territories, demonstrates

* Egypt has, indeed, lately risen, under its present spirited but despotic Pasha, to a degree of political importance and power unknown to it for many past centuries. Yet this fact, instead of militating against the truth of prophecy, may, possibly at no distant period, serve to illustrate another prediction, which implies that, however base and degraded it might continue to be throughout many generations, it would, notwithstanding, have strength sufficient to be looked to for aid or protection, even at the time of the restoration of the Jews to Judea, who will seek “to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trust in the shadow of Egypt.” Other prophecies respecting it await their fulfilment. Yet, whatever its present apparent strength may be, it is still but “the shadow of Egypt.” Isa. xxx. 2; xxxi. 1.

the truth of all the prophecies respecting them? And that these prophecies, ratified by the events, give the most powerful of testimonies to the truth of the Christian religion? The desolation was the work of man, and was effected by the enemies of Christianity; and would have been the same as it is, though not a single prophecy had been uttered. It is the prediction of these facts, in all their particulars, infinitely surpassing human foresight, which is the word of God alone. And the *ruin of these empires*, while it substantiates the truth of every iota of these predictions, is thus a miraculous confirmation and proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. By what fatality is it, then, that infidels should have chosen for the display of their power, this very field, where, without conjuring, as they have done, a lying spirit from the ruins, they might have read the fulfilment of the prophecies on every spot?— Instead of disproving the truth of every religion, the greater these ruins are, the more strongly do they authenticate the scriptural prophecies; and it is not, at least, on this strong hold of the faith that the standard of infidelity can be erected. Every fact related by Volney is a witness against all his speculation—and out of his own mouth is he condemned. Can any purposed deception be more glaring or great, than to overlook all these prophecies, and to raise an argument against the truth of Christianity from the very facts by which they have been fulfilled? Or can any evidence of divine inspiration be more convincing and clear, than to view, in conjunction, all these marvellous predictions and their perfect completion?

CHAPTER VII.

THE ARABS.

THE history of the Arabs, so opposite, in many respects, to that of the Jews, but as singular as theirs, was concisely and clearly foretold. It was prophesied concerning Ishmael:—"He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand will be against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. I will make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly; and I will make him a great nation."* The fate of Ishmael is here identified with that of his descendants; and the same character is common to them both. The historical evidence of the fact, the universal tradition, and constant boast of the Arabs themselves, their language, and the preservation for many ages of an original rite, derived from him, as their primogenitor,—confirm the truth of their descent from Ishmael. The fulfilment of the prediction is obvious. Even Gibbon, while he attempts, from the exceptions which he specifies, to evade the force of the fact that the Arabs have maintained a perpetual independence, acknowledges that these exceptions are temporary and local; that the body of the nation has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies; and

* Genesis xvi. 12; xvii. 20.

that "the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia."* But even the exceptions which he specifies, though they were justly stated, and though not coupled with such admissions as invalidate them, would not detract from the truth of the prophecy. The independence of the Arabs was proverbial in ancient as well as in modern times; and the present existence, as a free and independent nation, of a people who derive their descent from so high antiquity, demonstrates that they have never been wholly subdued, as all the nations around them have unquestionably been; and that they have ever dwelt in the presence of their brethren. They not only subsist unconquered to this day, but the prophesied and primitive wildness of their race, and their hostility to all, remain unsubdued and unaltered. "They are a wild people; their hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against them." In the words of Gibbon, which strikingly assimilate with those of the prophecy, they are "armed against mankind." Plundering is their profession. Their alliance is never courted, and can never be obtained; and all that the Turks or Persians, or any of their neighbours, can stipulate for from them, is a partial and purchased forbearance. Even the British, who have established a residence in almost every country, have entered the territories of the descendants of Ishmael to accomplish only the premeditated destruction of a fort, and to retire. It cannot be alleged, with truth, that their pe-

* Gib. Hist. vol. v. p. 144.

culiar character and manner, and its uninterrupted permanency, is the necessary result of the nature of their country. They have continued wild or uncivilized, and have retained their habits of hostility towards all the rest of the human race, though they possessed, for 300 years, countries the most opposite in their nature from the mountains of Arabia. The greatest part of the temperate zone was included within the limits of the Arabian conquests;* and their empire extended from India to the Atlantic, and embraced a wider range of territory than ever was possessed by the Romans, those boasted masters of the world. The period of their conquest and dominion was sufficient, under such circumstances, to have changed the manners of any people; but, whether in the land of Shinar or in the valleys of Spain, on the banks of the Tigris or the Tagus, in Araby the Blessed, or Araby the Barren, the posterity of Ishmael have ever maintained their prophetic character: They have remained, under every change of condition, a wild people; their hand has still been against every man, and every man's hand against them.

The natural reflection of a recent traveller, on examining the peculiarities of an Arab tribe, of which he was an eye-witness, may suffice, without any art of controversy, for the illustration of this prophecy:—"On the smallest computation, such must have been the manners of those people for more than three thousand years: Thus in all things verifying the prediction given of Ishmael at his birth, that he, in his posterity,

* Gib. vol. v. 226, 317.

should be a wild man, and always continue to be so, though they shall dwell for ever in the presence of their brethren. And that an acute and active people, surrounded for ages by polished and luxurious nations, should, from their earliest to their latest times, be still found a wild people, dwelling in the presence of all their brethren, (as we may call these nations,) unsubdued and unchangeable, is, indeed a standing miracle—one of those mysterious facts which establish the truth of prophecy." *

SLAVERY OF THE AFRICANS—EUROPEAN COLONIES
IN ASIA.

Not only do the different countries and cities, which form the subjects of prophecy, exhibit to this day their predicted fate, but there is also a prophecy recorded as delivered in an age coeval with the deluge, when the members of a single family included the whole of the human race—the fulfilment of which is conspicuous even at the present time. And while the fate of the Jews and of the Arabs, throughout many ages, has confirmed, in every instance in which the period of their prediction is already past, the prophecies relative to the descendants of Isaac and of Ishmael—existing facts, which are prominent features in the history of the world, are equally corroborative of the predictions respecting the sons of Noah. The unnatural conduct of Ham, and the dutiful and respectful behaviour of Shem

* Sir Robert K. Porter's Travels, p. 304.

and Japhet towards their aged father, gave rise to the prediction of the future fate of their posterity without being at all assigned as the cause of that fate. But whatever was the occasion on which it was delivered, the truth of the prophecy must be tried by its completion:—"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."*

The historical part of Scripture, by its describing so particularly the respective settlements of the descendants of Noah, "after their generations, in their nations," affords, to this day, the means of trying the truth of the prediction, and of ascertaining whether the prophetic character, as given by the patriarch of the post-diluvian world, be still applicable to the inhabitants of the different regions of the earth which were peopled by the posterity of Shem, of Ham, and of Japhet. The *Isles of the Gentiles*,† or the countries beyond the Mediterranean, to which they passed by sea, *viz.* those of Europe, were divided by the sons of Japhet. The descendants of Ham inhabited Africa and the south-western part of Asia.‡ *The families of the Canaanites were spread abroad. The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon.* || The city of Tyre was called the daughter of Sidon; and Carthage, the most celebrated city of Africa, was peopled from Tyre. And the dwellings of

* Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27. † Ib. x. 5. ‡ Ib. || Ib. x. 6, 18, 19.

the Sons of Shem were *unto the east*, * or Asia. The particular allotment, or portion of each, “after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations,” † is distinctly specified. And although the different nations, descended from any one of the sons of Noah, have intermingled with each other, and undergone many revolutions, yet the three great divisions of the world have remained distinct, as separately peopled and possessed by the posterity of each of the sons of Noah. On this subject the earliest commentators are agreed before the existence of those facts which give to the prophecy its fullest illustration. The facts themselves by which the prediction is verified, are so notorious and so applicable, that the most brief and simple statement may suffice. Before the propagation of Christianity, which first spoke peace to earth, taught a law of universal love, and called all men brethren; slavery everywhere prevailed, and the greater part of the human race, throughout all the world, were born to slavery, and unredeemed for life. Man can now boast of a nobler birthright. But, though long banished from almost all Europe, slavery still lingers in Africa. That country is distinguished above every other as the land of slavery. Slaves at home, and transported for slavery, the poor Africans, the descendants of Ham, are the servants of servants, or slaves to others. Yet so unlikely was this fact to have been foreseen by man, that, for centuries after the close of the Old Testament history, the inhabitants of Africa disputed with the Romans the

* Gen. x. 30,

† Ib. 31, 32.—See *Mede*, Dic. L. p. 277, &c.

empire of the world. But Hannibal, who was once almost master of Rome and of Europe, was forced to yield to, and to own the fate of Carthage.*

“God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.” Some of the ablest interpreters of prophecy, of a former age, conceived that this prediction was fulfilled, not only by the conquests which the Macedonians and the Romans obtained over many of the countries of Asia, but that the promise or blessing of enlargement to Japhet was also verified in a metaphorical sense, by the extension of the knowledge of true religion to the nations of Europe. But it stands not now in need of any questionable interpretation, having received a literal accomplishment. What is at present the relative situation or connexion of the inhabitants of Europe and of Asia, the descendants of Japhet and of Shem? May not the former be said literally to dwell in the tents of the latter? Or what simile, drawn from the simplicity of primeval ages, could be more strikingly graphic of the numerous and extensive European colonies in Asia? And how much have the posterity of Japhet been enlarged within the regions of the posterity of Shem? In how many of their ancient cities do they dwell? How many settlements have they established?—while there is not a single spot in Europe the colony or the property of any of the nations whom the Scriptures represent as descended from Shem, or who inhabit any part of that quarter of the world which they possessed. And may it not be said, in reference to our own island, and to the immense extent of the

* *Liv.* l. 27.

British Asiatic dominions, that the natives *of the Isles of the Gentiles dwell in the tents of the East?* From whence, then, could such a prophecy have emanated, but from inspiration by Him whose presence and whose prescience are alike unlimited by space or by time.

CHURCH OF ROME.

It is not the purpose of this treatise to enter upon the subject of the more obscure prophecies. But the application of the following may be obvious without any illustration.

“The day of Christ,” saith the Apostle Paul, *“shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God:—whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. The Spirit speaketh expressly, that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils (demons, souls of men departed,) speaking lies in hypocrisy—forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats.** The apostle John also prophesies of a *wild beast* or tyrannical power, *to whom was given great authority and a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. And he opened his mouth in blasphem-*

* Thess. ii. 3, &c. 1 Tim. ii. 1, &c.

*mies against God; and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations—and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him. And the ten kings, (or kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was divided,) have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. The person in whose hands the reins or principal direction of the exercise of this power is lodged, is characterized as drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; by her sorceries are all nations deceived, and in her hand is found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that are slain upon the earth. And she herself is that great city (Rome) which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”**

“ If, in the days of St. Paul and St. John, there was any footstep of such a power as this in the world; or, if there ever *had been* any such power in the world; or if there was then any appearance of probability that could make it enter into the heart of man to imagine that there ever *could be* any such kind of power in the world, much less in the temple or church of God; and if there be not now such a power actually and conspicuously exercised in the world; and *if* any picture of this power, drawn *after the event*, can now describe it more plainly and exactly, than it was *originally* described in the words of the prophecy: Then may it, with some degree of plausibleness, be suggested, that the prophecies are nothing more than enthusiastic imaginations.”—*Clarke's Works*, v. ii. p. 726.

* Rev. xiii. xviii.

CHAPTER VIII.

DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF THE THINGS NOTED IN THE
SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH.

THERE is a connected series of predictions, emphatically denominated the Things noted in the Scripture of Truth, which forms a commentary upon some of the more obscure prophecies—which gives a condensed but precise account of the history of many kings—which marks the propagation, the persecution, the establishment, and the corruptions of Christianity,—and which, while it commences with the reign of Cyrus, who delivered the Jews from their first captivity, describes, with the utmost precision, the rise, extent, and fall of that power which was to possess Judea in the latter times, previous to their final restoration. The prophecy is both local and chronological. It is descriptive of the government of the same identical region, and of the chief facts which relate to it, for many successive ages, and also of the spiritual tyranny which reigned for so long a period over Christendom. The events follow in succession, in the exact order of the prediction. They are not shadowed under types or figures, but foretold, in general, with the plainness of a narrative, and with the precision of facts. And Daniel relates them, not as delivered by him to others, but as

declared in a vision to himself by an angel. These claims upon attention, might well command it, even although the prophecy referred not, as it does, to a subject peculiarly interesting at the present critical period of the history of the world.

To enumerate all the particulars would be to transcribe all the words of the prophecy ;—but they afford too conclusive an evidence to be passed over in silence. The observations of Sir Isaac Newton on this prophecy, contain a circumstantial detail of the historical events and of their application to the prediction.* A succinct and general view may be here given. The prophecy includes the whole of the eleventh chapter of Daniel :—

“ And now I will show thee the truth. Behold there shall stand up three kings in Persia ; (Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspes,) and the fourth (Xerxes) shall be far richer than they all ; and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king (Alexander the Great,) shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven ; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled : for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those.” †

Soon after the death of Alexander the Great, his

* Sir Is. Newton's *Observations on the Prophecies*, c. xi.

† Dan. xi. 2, 3, 4.

kingdom was divided towards the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity: four of his Captains, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Lysimachus, and Cassander, reigned over Egypt, Syria, Thrace and Greece. The kingdoms of Egypt and of Syria became afterwards the most powerful: They subsisted as independent monarchies for a longer period than the other two; and, as they were more immediately connected with the land of Judea, which was often reduced to their dominion, they form the subject of the succeeding predictions. * Bishop Newton gives even a more copious illustration of the historical facts, which verify the whole of this prophecy, than that which had previously been given by his illustrious predecessor of the same name—who has rendered that name immortal. He quotes or refers to authorities in every instance: and his dissertation on that part of the prophecy, which relates to the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, is wound up in these emphatic words: “ It may be proper to stop here, and reflect a little how particular and circumstantial this prophecy is concerning the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, from the death of Alexander to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is not so complete and regular a series of their kings—there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs to be found in any author of these times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history. No one historian hath related so many circumstances, and in such exact order of time, as the

* Dan, v. 5, 30.

prophet hath foretold them ; so that it was necessary to have recourse to several authors, Greek and Roman, Jewish and Christian ; and to collect here something from one and to collect there something from another, for the better explaining and illustrating the great variety of particulars contained in this prophecy." So close is the coincidence between the prophetic and the real history of the kings of Egypt and of Syria, that Porphyry, one of the earliest opponents of Christianity, laboured to prove its extreme accuracy, and alleged, from thence, that the events must have preceded the prediction. The same argument is equally necessary, at the present hour, to disprove the subsequent parts of the same prophecy—though none can urge it now. The last of those facts to which it refers, the accomplishment of which is already past, are unfolded with equal precision and truth as the first—and the fulfilment of the whole is yet incomplete. The more clearly that the event corresponds to the prediction, instead of being an evidence against the truth, the more conclusive is the demonstration that it is the word of Him who hath the times and the seasons in his own power.

The subject of the prophecy is represented in these words:—" I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days ; for the vision is for many days."* And that which is noted in the Scripture of Truth terminates not with the reign of Antiochus. At that very time the Romans extended their

* Dan. x. 14.

conquest towards the East. Macedonia, the seat of the empire of Alexander the Great, became a province of the Roman empire. And the prophecy, faithfully tracing the transition of power, ceases to prolong the history of the kings of Egypt and of Syria—and becomes immediately descriptive of the progress of the Roman arms. The very term (*shall stand up,*) which previously marked the commencement of the Persian and of the Macedonian power, is here repeated, and denotes the commencement of a third era or a new power. The word, in the original, is the same in each. And *arms* (an epithet sufficiently characteristic of the extensive military power of the Romans,) *shall stand up, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.** All these things deeply affecting the Jewish state, the Romans did—and they finally rendered the country of Judea “desolate of its old inhabitants.” The propagation of Christianity—the succeeding important event—is thus represented:—*The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many.* The persecutions which they suffered are as significantly described:—*Yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil many days. Now, when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help, and many shall cleave to them with flatteries. †*—And such was Constantine’s

* Dan. xi. 31.

† Ib. ver. 32, 33, 34, 35.

conversion and the effect which it produced. No other government but that of the Romans *stood up*—but the mode of that government was changed. After the days of Constantine, Christianity became gradually more and more corrupted. Previous to that period, there had existed no system of dominion analogous to that which afterwards prevailed. The greatest oppressors had never extended their pretensions beyond human power, nor usurped a spiritual tyranny. But, in contradiction to every other, the next succeeding form of government, unparalleled in its nature, in the annals of despotism or of delusion, is thus characterized by the prophet:—*And the king* (the ruling power, signifying any government, state or potentate,)* *shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every God, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished.*† This description is suited to the history of the Eastern or Western Churches—to the government under the Grecian emperors at Constantinople, or of the Popes at Rome. The extent of the Roman empire might justify its application to the latter; but the connexion of the prophecy, as referable to local events, tends to limit it to the former. In either case it is descriptive of that mode of government which prospered so long in the east and in the west,—and which consisted in the impious usurpation of spiritual authority—in the blasphemous assumption of those attributes which are exclusively

* See Bishop Newton on this Prophecy. † Dan. xi. 36, &c.

divine, and in exalting itself above the laws of God and man. But instead, perhaps, of being confined exclusively to either, it may have been intended to represent, as it does characterize, the spiritual tyranny, and the substitution of the commandments of men for the will of God, which oppressed Christendom for ages, and hid from men the word of God. The prevalence of superstition, the prohibition or discouragement of marriage, and the worship of saints, as characteristic of the same period and of the same power, are thus prophetically described:—“ *Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers nor the desire of women (or of wives—conjugal affection,) neither shall he regard any God.** But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces—MAHUZZIM—protectors or guardians, a term so applicable to the worship of saints and to the confidence which was reposed in them, that expressions exactly synonymous are often used by many ancient writers, in honour of them—of which Mede and Sir Isaac Newton have adduced a multiplicity of instances. Mahuzzim were the *tutelary saints* of the Greek and Romish churches. The subserviency, which long existed, of spiritual power to temporal aggrandizement, is also noted in the prophecy:—*and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.†* And that the principal teachers and propagators of the worship of *Mahuzzim*,—“ the bishops, priests and monks, and religious orders, have been honoured, and revered, and esteemed in former ages ;

* Dan. xi. 37, 38.

† Ib. v. 39.

that their authority and jurisdiction have extended over the purses and consciences of men; that they have been enriched with noble buildings and large endowments, and have had the choicest of the lands appropriated for church lands;—are points of such notoriety that they require no proof, and will admit of no denial.”*

Having thus described the Antichristian Power, which prospered so long and prevailed so widely, the prophecy next delineates, in less obscure terms, the manner in which that power was to be humbled and overthrown, and introduces a more particular definition of the rise, extent, and fall of that kingdom which was to oppress and supplant it in the latter days. *And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him.*† The Saracens extended their conquests over great part of Asia and of Europe: They penetrated the dominions of the Grecian empire, and partially subdued, though they could not entirely subvert it, nor obtain possession of Constantinople, the capital city. The prediction, however brief, significantly represents their warfare which was desultory, and their conquest which was incomplete. And Arabia is situated to the south of Palestine. The Turks, the next and the last invaders of the Grecian empire, were of Scythian extraction, and came from the North.‡ And, while a single expression identifies the Saracen invasion,—the irruption of the Turks, being of a more fatal cha-

* Bishop Newton.

† Dan. xi. 40.

‡ Gibb. Hist. vol. iv. 136—vol. v. 527.

racter and more permanent in its effects, is fully described. Every part of the description is most faithful to the facts. Their local situation, the impetuosity of their attack, the organization of their armies, and the success of their arms, form the first part of the prediction respecting them. *And the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.**

Although the Grecian empire withstood the predatory warfare of the Saracens, it gave way before the overwhelming forces of the Turks, whose progress was tracked with destruction, and whose coming was indeed like a whirlwind. Chariots and horsemen were to be the distinguishing marks of their armies, though armies in general, contain the greatest proportion of foot soldiers. And, in describing their first invasion of the Grecian territory, Gibbon relates, that “the myriads of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of six hundred miles from Tauris to Arzeroum, and the blood of one hundred and thirty thousand Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet.† The Turkish armies at first consisted so exclusively of horsemen, that the stoutest of the youths of the captive Christians were afterwards taken and trained as a band of infantry, and called janisaries (yengi cheri) or new soldiers.”‡ In apparent contradiction to the nature of their army, they were also to possess many ships. And Gibbon

* Dan. xi. 40. † Gibbon's Hist. vol. v. p. 538. c. 57.

‡ Ib. vi. p. 297, c. 64.

again relates, that "a fleet of two hundred ships was constructed by the hands of the captive Greeks."* But no direct evidence is necessary to prove that many ships must have been requisite for the capture of so many islands, and the destruction of the Venetian naval power, which was once the most celebrated in Europe. "The words *shall enter into the countries and overflow and pass over*, give us an exact idea of their *overflowing* the western parts of Asia, and then passing over into Europe."†

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown.‡ This expression, *the glorious land*, occurs in the previous part of this prophecy, (v. 16.) and, in both cases, it evidently means the land of Israel; and such the Syriac translation renders it. The Holy Land formed part of the first conquests of the Turks. *And many countries shall be overthrown.* The limits of the Turkish empire embraced the ancient kingdoms of Babylon, Macedon, Thrace, Epirus, Greece, &c. and the many countries over which they ruled. The whole of Syria was also included, with partial exceptions. These very exceptions are specified in the prophecy, though these territories partially intersect the Turkish dominions, and divide one portion of them from another, forming a singular contrast to the general continuity of kingdoms. And, while every particular prediction respecting these separate states has been fully verified, their escaping out of the hands of the Turks has been no less marvellously fulfilled. *But these shall escape out of his hand even Edom and Moab,*

* Gibbon's Hist. vol. v. p. 553.

† Bishop Newton.

‡ Dan. xi. 41.

|| lb.

and the chief of the children of Ammon.* Mede, Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton, in applying this prophecy to the Turkish empire, could only express, in general terms, that the Arabs possessed these countries, and exacted tribute from the Turks for permitting their caravans to pass through them. But recent travellers, among whom Volney has to be numbered, have unconsciously given the most satisfactory information, demonstrative of the truth of all the minutiae of the prediction. Volney described these countries in part—Burckhardt traversed them all—and they have since been visited by other travellers. Edom and Moab are in possession of the Bedouin (or wandering) Arabs. The Turks have often attempted, in vain, to subjugate them. The partial escape of Ammon from their dominion is not less discriminating than just. For, although that territory lies in the immediate vicinity of the Pachalic of Damascus, to which part of it is subjected,—though it be extremely fertile by nature,—though its situation and its soil have thus presented, for several centuries, the strongest temptation to Turkish rapacity—though they have often attempted to subdue it,—yet no fact could have been more explicitly detailed, or more incidentally communicated, than that the inhabitants of the greater part of that country, particularly what adjoins the ancient but now desolate city of Ammon, “live in a state of complete independence of the Turks.”†

* Daniel, xi. 41.

† Buckingham's Travels, p. 325, 329, 337. Burckhardt's Travels in Nubia, p. 44th of Memoir. Letter to Sir Joseph Banks. Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, p. 349, 355.

*He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries.** How significantly do these words represent the vast extent of the Turkish empire, which alone has stretched its dominion over many countries of Asia, of Europe, and of Africa? Ill-fated Egypt was not to escape from subjection to such a master. *And the land of Egypt shall not escape; but he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt.†* The Turks have drained Egypt of its wealth, of its gold, and of its silver, and of its precious things: and such power have they exercised over them, that the kingdom of the Pharaohs, the land where everlasting pyramids were built, despoiled to the utmost, is now one of the poorest, as it has long been the basest of kingdoms. *The Lybians and Ethiopians shall be at his steps.‡* These form the extremities of the Turkish empire, and were partially subject to its power. “After the conquest of Egypt, the terror of Selim’s victories,” says the historian, “spreading wide, the kings of Africa, bordering upon Cyrenai- ca, sent their ambassadors, with offers to become his tributaries. Other more remote nations also towards Ethiopia were easily induced to join in amity with the Turks.”§ Exclusive of Egypt, they still retain the

* Dan. xi. 42.

† Ib. 43.

‡ Dan. xi. 43. § Pauli Jovi Hist. quoted by Bishop Newton.

The same prediction, in which is thus noted a multitude of consecutive events that have occurred throughout many ages, marks the fall, as it traced the origin and the greatness, of the once mighty empire of Turkey. As the word of that God before whom all nations are as nothing, it comprehends, in a few

nominal power over other countries of Africa. Such is the prophetic description of the rise and extent of that power which was to possess Judea in the latter days;

sentences, the whole of its history : and what is still future to us, was present 2300 years ago to the spirit of prophecy. The period of the dissolution of the power of the Turks would seem, in mere mortal prospect, to be now approaching. They overflow no longer. The Porte retains but a feeble authority over various extensive provinces of Turkey. And its danger from without is apparent to the world. But while "untoward events," undesigned and unforeseen, appear at first to be hastening on its fate, they yet pass away without effect, and leave the issue as doubtful as before. The daily and contradictory conjectures which abound in the public papers throughout Europe—the necessity, which is felt by the rulers of nations, of watching events which they cannot control—and combinations, formed for the preservation of a general peace, leading, by their results, to new incentives to war—all tend alike to prove, that man knoweth not what a day or an hour may bring forth, and that human sagacity suffices not to show the certain termination even of a seemingly approaching crisis. But the counsel of the Lord it shall stand. His word declares the things that are not as though they were ; and before they spring up it tells us of them.

Great, in general, as is the hazard of failure, in seeking to be wise above what is written, by attempting prematurely to ascertain or define the *mode* of the accomplishment of any unfulfilled prediction, however clearly the event itself may have been foretold ; yet the signs of the times seem to warrant a conjecture that the destined means are now in readiness, and the destined events at hand, which shall precede the annihilation of the Ottoman empire.

The *St. Petersburg Gazette* has announced the definite conclusion of the treaty of peace with Persia. The indemnity to be

and it is a precise delineation of the rise and extent of the Turkish Empire to which Judea has been subject for centuries.

paid by the Schah amounts to 80,000,000 of rubles, or about L.18,000,000 sterling; and Russia obtains, besides the two provinces of Erivan and Nakitchevan, the main chain of Mount Ararat. These provinces border on the Turkish territories, and lie directly east of Constantinople. A powerful and victorious army is thus concentrated on its eastern frontier, and ready to penetrate into Turkey. And new facilities, such as could scarcely have been conjectured even a few months ago, are thus given to the Russians for the invasion of that country on the *East*, in a direct line to the Capital. Armies are also mustered on the North, along the banks of the Danube and the Pruth, equally ready, at a word, to march at once into the Turkish dominions. The eyes of Mussulmen are already turned to both these points of danger, threatening the extinction of their race: and the indications are now strong, that, though the time were undetermined, the places are already fixed;—and that, come whenever these may, tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble them. And if the time be at hand when thus it shall be, and if the general expectation, so recently entertained, after the first tidings of the battle of Navarino, that the infuriated Turks would wreak their merciless vengeance upon all professing Christians within their power, shall then be realized—the world may soon witness the convulsive struggles of the expiring despotism of the Porte; and many a sceptic, seeing, if they would see, the whole connected series of predictions which commence with the reign of Cyrus and stretch still into futurity, might own, at last, that it was not the voice of a mortal which revealed the history of so many successive ages, and which, when the Babylonian *empire* was scarcely at a close, thus described the downfall of the Ottoman.—But tidings out of the east and out of the

Every succeeding fact, from the time of Cyrus to the present age, gives as sure a confirmation as the voice of an angel could have done, that the things noted in this prophecy are those of the Scripture of truth. History interprets every part of it. There is not a fact misplaced—there is not a single chasm, throughout the whole, where the prophecy wants its appropriate event—there is not a word without its meaning. It brings a multiplicity of witnesses, if we will listen to their testimony, from a long succession of ages, each arising to testify to its truth. And it presents us, like every spot on earth which was the subject of scriptural prophecies, with ocular demonstration, that there is a God who ruleth among the nations; and that the Christian religion, the purest and the best on earth, has that God for its author.

CONCLUSION.

THE whole of the preceding brief and imperfect sketch forms little else than an enumeration of some of the more striking prophecies, and of facts which demonstrate their fulfilment; and a recapitulation of all

north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces (“or rather of his camps”) between the seas in the glorious holy mountain: yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. (Dan. xi. 44, 45.)

the particulars would be an unnecessary repetition. The numerous obscure prophecies which contain much and striking evidence, have hitherto been omitted, that the charge of ambiguity, too generally and indiscriminately attached to them all, might be proved to be unfounded. But, having seen in hundreds of instances, that prophecies which were plainly delivered, have been as clearly fulfilled, comprehending them all in a single argument, and leaving the decision to the enemies of Christianity, or to those who are weak in the faith, and appealing to their reason without bespeaking their favour,—may it not, in the first instance, be asked if it be an easy task which is assigned them, to disprove even this part of the POSITIVE EVIDENCE to the truth of the religion of Jesus? If they have ever staggered at the promises or threatenings of the Scriptures because of unbelief—discrediting all *revelation* from on high—can they not here discern supernatural evidence in confirmation of supernatural truths? May not *sight* lead them to *faith*? Must they not concede that the Christian has some reason for the hope that is in him? And may they not, at the very least, be led from thence to the calm and unprejudiced investigation, not only of the other prophecies, but of all the evidence which Christianity presents?

It cannot be alleged, with truth, that the prophecies which have been selected are ambiguous; that they bear the character of those auguries which issued from the cloud that always overhung the temple of Apollo, or of those pretended inspirations which emanated from the cave of Hera. It cannot be denied that they were

all foretold hundreds or thousands of years before the events, which even at the present day demonstrate their fulfilment, though every other oracle has ceased for ages to appeal to a single fact. And the historical and geographical facts, which were so clearly foretold, are, in general, of so wonderful a nature, that the language of prophecy, though expressive of literal truths, seems at first sight to be hyperbolic; and the prophecies of Isaiah in particular have been charged with being "full of extravagant metaphor;" * the more extravagant the

* Were it not for the impiety with which they are conjoined, the remarks of Paine on the prophecies would, to those who have studied these at all, be sufficiently amusing. He characterizes the book of Isaiah as "one continued bombastical rant, full of extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." The predictions respecting Babylon, Moab, &c. are forsooth compared "to the story of the Knight of the Burning Mountain, the story of Cinderilla," and such like. Isaiah in short, "was a lying prophet and impostor." And "what can we say," he asks, "of these prophets, but that they were all impostors and liars?" Such words are not merely harmless; they may be also useful, as they show, that while every possible corroboration from history, fact, reason, and even the unconscious testimony of infidels themselves is given to the truth of the prophecies; nothing can be alleged on the other hand but what in the sight of all men manifestly is "bombastical rant, and extravagant metaphor, without application, and destitute of meaning." And since both speak not the truth, who is the liar? Isaiah the prophet or Paine the infidel? And "what can we say" of this staunch assertor of rights, but that *his* right to the title is undisputed, and that these very words of his, were others wanting, must in every "age of reason" rivet to his unblest memory the foul aspersions he so falsely applied? Argument in such a case

metaphor, or the more remarkable the predicted fact, the farther are the prophecies removed from all possibility of their having been the words of human invention.

The following comprehensive and luminous statement of the argument, extracted from a review of the former edition of this treatise, is here so apposite, that no apology need be offered for inserting it at length.

“ This geographical argument (viz. the fulfilment of those prophecies which describe the future fate of particular nations, and the future aspect of their countries) has always appeared to us one of the most impregnable strongholds of Christian prophecy; or rather one of the most resistless and wide-ranging instruments of aggressive evidence. There is no obscurity in the language of the prophet. There is no variety of opinion with regard to the object in his view. There is no denying of the change which he predicts. There is no challenging of the witnesses who prove the facts of the case. The former glory of these regions and kingdoms is recorded by ancient heathen historians, who knew nothing of the fall foretold. Their present state is described by recent and often infidel travellers, who knew often as little of the predictions which they were verifying by their narratives. It is not a particular event which has passed away, or a particular character who

would be an idle waste of words. But while it would be an act of mere prodigality and folly to cast pearls before swine, the filth which they have snorted out may well be cast into their own kennel again, that they and their kind may partake of what pertains to them.

has perished, for whose era we must search in the wide page of history, and of whose description we may find so many resemblances as to become perplexed in our application. The places and the people are named by the prophet, and the state in which they now exist is matter of actual observation. The fulfilment of the prediction is thus inscribed as upon a public monument, which every man who visits the countries in question may behold with his own eyes; and is expressed in a language so universally intelligible, that every man may be said to read it in his own tongue. To these scenes of Scripture prophecy we may point with triumph as to ocular demonstration; and say to the sceptical inquirer in the words of the evangelist, "Come and see." The multitude of travellers who have recently visited the Holy Land and the adjacent regions, have furnished ample and authentic materials for the construction of so irrefragable an argument. Many of these travellers have discovered no intention of advocating by their statements the cause of revealed truth; and some of them have been obviously influenced by hostility to its claims. Yet, in spite of these prejudices, and altogether unconsciously on their part, they have recorded the most express confirmation of the Scripture prophecies, frequently employing in their descriptions the very language of inspiration, and bringing into view (though evidently without design) those features of the scene which form the precise picture painted in the visions of the prophet."

Willingly might the Christian here rest his assurance "in the faith once delivered to the saints," and leave

to the unbeliever his hopeless creed. But the reasonings of one class of infidels must be combined with the researches of another to give full force to the *Evidence of Prophecy*: and they jointly supply both the clearest facts and the strongest arguments, and have made ready the means, which need only be applied, for bringing the controversy with them, in its various bearings, and in their own words, to a short issue.

The metaphysical speculations of Hume,* and the

* It may not here be amiss to allude to that kind and courteous admonition to Christian writers so meekly given, and with wisdom rivalling its modesty, by this great master of *ideal* philosophy, in which, in order perhaps to bring their arguments to cope the better with his own, he prescribes to them, as best suited to their cause, the total rejection of reason! After quoting a passage from Lord Bacon's works, which has a very different application, he adds—*This method of reasoning* (about monsters, magic, and alchemy, &c.) *may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies of the Christian religion,* (of whom, by the bye, Lord Bacon was one, and Sir Isaac Newton another) *who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure.* (*Hume's Essays*, § 10. v. ii. p. 136, 7. Ed. Edin. 1800.) If these words may not justly be retorted against the "unbeliever's creed," excluding the epithet of holy; or if Mr. David Hume was better acquainted with the principles of the Christian Religion than the Author of it, who appealed to the *reason* of men, and asked them why they did not of themselves judge that which was right, and than the apostles Peter and Paul, who enjoin Christians to try all things, and to hold fast to that which is good, and to be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a *reason* of the hope that is in them; ther.

mathematical demonstrations of La Place, which have been directed against the credibility of the miracles, rest entirely on the "*Theory of Probability*." Assuming its logical and legitimate application to the testimony of any supernatural evidence of a divine revelation, it is argued that the *improbabilities* of the

the writer of this treatise having only the hard alternative of being either "a dangerous friend or a disguised enemy of the Christian religion," would, with whatever reluctance, prefer the former, and has to lament the evil he has done, and the "sure method" he has taken "of exposing it." And although he may hope that Christians in their charity will forgive him, he must yet leave to unbelievers the comfort and the joy of the triumph, which, in the exercise of that reason which they have monopolized, these pages must necessarily give them. Or if, on the other hand, in somewhat stricter accordance with the truths of Scripture, the author of the *Essay on Human Nature* supplies, by the prefixed words, as clear practical proof, in his "*Academical Philosophy*," or Scepticism in Theory, that it is one of the characteristics of the *heart of man* to be *deceitful above all things*, as mere worldly wisdom and infidelity in practice too frequently demonstrate that it is also *desperately wicked*; and if Scripture prophecy can "endure the trial of reason," and its evidence be rejected,—then the disciples of Hume, the traducers of the Christian religion—as not founded on reason, holding to "human nature" as of itself it is, and deriding the idea of its proffered ransom from the guilt, and rescue from the power of sin, have need, without exhausting their reason in abstract speculations, to look to their own harder alternative, and (if both be not possibly conjoined) to choose between the incomparable deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart within,—evils greater far than all that the Christian can ever fear for himself from all the sneers of the sophist, or the railings of the ungodly.

occurrence of miracles, being contradictory to uniform experience, are so extreme as to destroy entirely the validity of *any* testimony to their truth which has been transmitted through so many ages. "And upon the whole, we may conclude," says Hume, "that the Christian religion, even at this day, cannot be believed by any reasonable person without a miracle." What then is the evidence, that, even at this day, there are subsisting miracles which must command the belief of every person to the truth of the Christian religion, who is not so utterly unreasonable, and his mind so steeled against conviction, as not to be persuaded even by miraculous demonstration? And in what better or less exceptionable "method" can this evidence be meted out than according to the very "measure of probability" in use with unbelievers; and by means of which they profess to have discovered the deficiency of testimony to the truth of ancient miracles?

Archimedes demanded only a spot whereon to stand that he might move the world. If the most reasonable concession from the infidel be not as impossible to be obtained as the demand of Archimedes; and if he will admit either the truth of his own principles, or the force of mathematical proof, or if his prejudices be not immovable as a world, the existing and obvious fulfilment of a multiplicity of prophecies might well excite his attention, and convince him of the truth.

The *doctrine of chances*, or calculation of probabilities, has been reduced into a science, and is now in various ways of great practical use and securely acted upon in the affairs of life. But it is altogether impos-

sible that short-sighted man could select, from the infinite multitude of the possible contingencies of distant ages, any one of such particular facts as abound in the prophecies ; and it is manifest, that upon the principle of probabilities, the chance would be incalculable against the success of the attempt, even in a single instance. Each accomplished prediction is a miracle. But the advocate for Christianity may safely concede much, and reduce his data to the lowest terms. And if the unbeliever reckon not his own cause utterly hopeless, and “ by no means fitted to endure the trial of reason,” he must grant that there was as great a probability that *each* prediction would *not* as that it *would* have been fulfilled ; or that the probabilities were *equal* for and against the occurrence of *each* predicted event. The Christian may fearlessly descend to meet him even on this very lowly ground. And, without enumerating all the particulars included in the volume of prophecy respecting the life and character and death of Christ—the nature and extent of Christianity, &c.—the destruction of Jerusalem—the fate of the Jews in every age and nation—the existing state of Judea, of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, the Arabs, &c., the Church of Rome, and the prophetic history of one region of the earth for 2300 years ;—may it not be assumed (though fewer would suffice, and though incontestible evidence has been adduced to prove more than double the number) that a *hundred* different particulars have been foretold and fulfilled. What, then, even upon these data, is the *chance*, on a *calculation* of probabilities, that all of them would have proved true,—the

chance diminishing one-half for every number, (or what, in other words, is the hundred power of two to unity?*) Such is the desperate hazard to which the unbeliever would trust, that even from these premises, it is *mathematically demonstrable* that the number of chances is far greater against him than the number of drops in the ocean, although the whole world were one globe of water. Let the chance at least be counted before it be confided in. But who would risk a single mite against the utmost possible gain, at the stake on which believers here recklessly put to certain peril the interests of eternity?

But each prediction recorded in Scripture, being a *miracle of knowledge*, is equal to any miracle of power, and could have emanated only from the Deity. "All prophecies are real miracles, and as such only, can be admitted as proof of any revelation."† They may even

* Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités. Par. M. Le Comte Laplace. Emerson on Chances, prop. 3. Hutton's edit. of Ozanam's Mathemat. Recr. v. i.

† Hume's Essays, vol. ii. p. 137. This statement of Hume's, combined with the manifest truth of prophecy, shows how all his theory against the truth of miracles may easily be overthrown by an admission of his own. Prophecy being true, and uniformly true, and all prophecies being real miracles, miracles are *not* contrary to universal, or even, in a restricted sense, to uniform experience. They "are rendered probable by so many analogies," (Ib. p. 134.) that on sufficient testimony they become proveable, even upon Hume's own principles, especially when the inspiration of those very Scriptures, which record the disputed miracles, is verified by other miracles, the truth of which is established and experienced. And thus the boldest dogmas

be said to be peculiarly adapted, in the present age of extended knowledge and enlightened inquiry, for being "the testimony of Jesus;" and they cannot justly be viewed as of inferior importance or authority to any miracles whatever.

Though the founder of a new religion, or the messenger of a divine revelation, and his immediate followers, who had to promulgate his doctrine, would give clear and unequivocal proof, by working miracles, that their commission was from on high; yet, the relation between any miraculous event, in after ages, and a religion previously established might not be so apparent. Or, even if it were, yet any single and transient act of superhuman power, being confined to a particular region, and cognizable only by a limited number, the testimony of these witnesses would be regarded only as secondary evidence, and could not, at least in a Christian land, be substantiated by proof so complete as that which was sealed by the blood of martyrs. And even if perpetual manifestations of miraculous power (however much men in apparent vindication of their unbelief may unreasonably ask such proof,) were submitted to the inspection and experience of each individual in every age, they would only seem to distort the order and frame of nature, and by thus disturbing the regularity and uniformity of her operations, would, from their very frequency, cease to be regarded as superna-

of scepticism may not only be braved but reversed; and *it is more wonderful that the testimony, sealed in blood and rendered credible by miracles equally great, should be false, than that the miracles should be true.*

tural ; and, influenced by the same sceptical thoughts, those who now demand a sign would then be the first to discredit it. And true to reason and to nature it is, that those who will not believe Moses and the prophets would not be persuaded though one rose from the dead. For the prophecies bear a direct reference to religion that is easily comprehended, and that cannot be misapplied. They have a natural and obvious meaning that may be known and read of all men. " Thus saith the Lord" is their prefix ; this is the fact, is their proof. Instead of being weakened by the greatness of their number, the more they are multiplied, or the more frequently that facts formerly unknown, or events yet future spring up in their verification, their evidence is redoubled, and they are ever permanent and existing witnesses that the word is of God. And, farther, the testimony which, in every passing age, confirms their truth cannot be cavilled at ; it is not " diluted by transmission through many ages ;" it is borne, not to events in themselves miraculous, but to natural facts, whether historical or geographical, which have been proved by conclusive evidence, and which in numerous instances still subsist to stand the test of any inquiry. And even many of the facts, (such as the whole history of the expatriated Jews) are witnessed by all, and need no testimony whatever to declare them. And the records of the prophecies, preserved throughout every age by the enemies of Christianity are in every hand. If, then, no evidence less exceptionable, more conclusive, or more clearly miraculous could be given, the disciples of Hume, in resigning an " academic" for a Christian

faith, have only to apply aright the words of their master—"a wise man proportions his belief to the evidence;"* and they may thus find—what he in vain thought that he had discovered—an "everlasting check" against "delusion."†

It was the boast of Bolingbroke, in summing up his "Philosophical" labours, that "he had pushed inquiry as far as the true means of inquiry are open, that is, as far as phenomena could guide him." Christian philosophy asks no more. It lays open the "means of inquiry," and presents, in the fulfilment of many prophecies, "phenomena" more wonderful than external nature ever exhibited, and demands only integrity of purpose, and that "inquiry be pushed unto the uttermost," that candour and reason may thus guide the impartial inquirer, by the light of positive evidence and miraculous proof, to the conviction and acknowledgment of the inspiration of the Scriptures.

The argument drawn by Volney from "The Ruin of Empires," is completely controverted by facts stated by himself, which, instead of militating against religion, directly establish the truth of prophecy;—and the unsubstantial fabric which he raised needs no other hand but his own to lay it in the dust.

But ridicule alone has often supplanted reason, and has been held as a test of the truth, and directed especially against the prophecies. And may not an evidence of their inspiration be found even in this last retreat of infidelity? The ruins of the moral world are as obvious in the sight of Omniscience as the ruins of

* Hume's Essay on Miracles, v. ii. p. 117.

† Ib. p. 116.

the natural—of cities or of kingdoms; and his word can foretel the one as well as the other. And if those who scoff at religion can perceive no evidence from any historical facts, or any external objects, they might look within, and they would find engraven on their own hearts, in characters sufficiently legible, a confirmation of the prophecies. And if they substitute railing for reason, and think to mar religion with their mockery, to all others they stand convicted, the living witnesses of the truth. “There shall come, in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming?” “There shall be mockers in the last time.”*

* 2 Peter iii. 3. Jude v. 18.

The Christian religion has thus to rank among its enemies many *false teachers* who were to arise, and, who, as characterized in scripture, *speak evil of the things that they understand not—who despise government—who are presumptuous and self-willed, who speak great swelling words of vanity to allure others, promising them liberty while they themselves are the children of corruption, and foaming out their own shame.* 2 Peter chap. i. verse 1, 10, 12, 18.—Blasphemy, obscenity, and unmeaning abuse, are the weapons of their warfare: they seek to debase religion into a conformity with their gross and grovelling imaginations, speaking of things that they know not, they utter great swelling words of vanity, as if by a mere glance of their jaundiced mental vision they could compass at once the whole of religious truth. But their arguments are as weak as their principles are base. And so manifestly does religion disclaim them, that for subverting their false assumptions it is only necessary, in general, to make the contradiction as flat as the assertion is positive. As an example, it may be remarked, that in a list of aphorisms which lately issued from the London mart of infidelity, the most specious of the whole was thus expressed—“All other religions are false, and

But if unbelievers lay just claim to wisdom, and make a fair appeal to reason, then, rather than place their security in abstract speculations and tamper thus with the immortal hopes of their fellow-men, rather than trust in ridicule as the test of religious truth, and call an assumed and yet unpaid license to blaspheme by the name of liberty—does it not behove them to look first to the positive evidence and miraculous proof of revelation, to detect its fallacy or own its power, and to quit their frail entrenchments, if indeed they find that the standard of Christian faith may, in despite of all their efforts, be fixed upon the proudest towers of infidelity? Let them, in the words of the Prophet, bring forth their witnesses that they may be justified, or let them hear, and say, it is truth.

But, in conclusion, it may in reason be asked, if there be not something repugnant to the principles of Christianity in the mind of that man, who will not hear Moses and the prophets, and who is slow of heart to believe all that they have spoken, though they afforded the means of detection in every prediction which they uttered, if their prophecies had been false—though they appealed to a vast variety of events, which dis-
therefore the Christian religion is false also," or as the *argument* may be more logically stated—all other religions are false, and therefore the Christian religion is true. Yet who can look but with sorrow for the fate, as well as with disgust and derision at the efforts of such pitiful cavillers carping at the truth of the Christian religion—like unto fowl and small fry (the less dignified the more befitting is the simile) nibbling at some weeds that have been cast by human hands upon a rock, and pressing with all their little strength to move it.

tant ages would bring into existence—though history has answered, and ocular demonstration has confirmed that appeal, our enemies themselves being witnesses—and although there *never was* any other truth that could be tried by such a test? Might he not be convinced of a doctrine less moral, or not quite according to godliness, by evidence less miraculous? Is there no reason to fear that the light of evidence, though sufficient to dispel the cloud upon the understanding, is yet unable to penetrate “the veil upon the heart.” Scepticism, at best, is not a subject for boasting. It is easy to exclude the noon-tide light by closing the eyes; and it is easy to resist the clearest truth by hardening the heart against it. And while, on the other hand, there are minds (and Newton’s was among the number) which are differently affected by the Evidence of Prophecy, and which cannot be callous, when touched by the concentrated rays of such light from heaven, whence can this great dissimilarity of sentiment arise from the same identical and abundant proof? And into what else *can* the want of conviction be resolved than into the scriptural solution of the difficulty—an evil heart of unbelief? “They will not come unto the light because the light would make them free.”

But while the unbeliever rejects the means of conviction, and rests his hope on the assumed possibility that his tenets may be true—the positive evidence of Christianity convinces the unprejudiced inquirer, or rational and sincere believer, that it is impossible that his faith can be false. And when he searches out of the book of the Lord, and finds that none of them do fail, he looks on every accomplished prediction, even

though it be the effect of the wrath of man, as a witness of God—he knows in whom he believes—he sees the rise and fall of earthly potentates and the convulsions of kingdoms, testifying of HIM who ruleth among the nations and accrediting his word—he experiences the conviction that the most delightful of all truth, the hope which perisheth not, is confirmed by the strongest of all testimony, that heaven itself hath ratified the peace which it hath proclaimed—he rests assured that prophecy came not of old time by the will of man, but that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost—and, although he knows not the mode of the operations of the Spirit, he sees the demonstration of his power. And “taking heed thus unto the sure word of prophecy until the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart,” the true believer learns, from the things that are past, the certainty of the things that are to come hereafter—he rests not satisfied with a mere name that he liveth, while yet he might be dead—but, having obtained that “precious faith,” the germ of immortality, which springeth up unto eternal life, he experiences the power of the world to come, and unites the practice with the profession of religion—he copies the *zeal* of those who spend their strength for that which is in vain, and their labour for that which profiteth not, but he directs it to the attainment of an incorruptible inheritance—for he knows that his labour shall not be in vain while he yields obedience to that Word, which is the Charter of his Salvation, and which so unequivocally bears the seal and superscription of the King of kings.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

CURSORY REMARKS ON SOME OF THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL.

THE preceding pages are so far from exhausting the subject, or presenting a complete view of the evidence of prophecy, that they only occupy, for the greater part, a space which writers on prophecy have very sparingly touched. Prophecies fulfilled are the miracles of every age of the church. And while new evidence of the inspiration of the Scriptures can so abundantly be educed from geographical facts, discovered in the nineteenth century of the Christian æra, there are other predictions, of far more momentous import, which have only partially met their completion, and which the future fate of the world has yet more fully to unseal. Much has been written on the more obscure prophecies, which have already been fulfilled. And different writers have speculated freely on the *mode* in which the predicted events, according to their interpretation, are to be brought to pass. But “the times and the seasons the Father hath in his own power.” And, without entering into any minute exposition or detail, the following remarks may tend, in some measure, to show how the obscurity of the symbolical prophecies, which refer to events already past, is, in some instances at least greatly overrated—how the objections of infidels may be obviated, and their very arguments be still farther adduced in testimony of the truth of revelation, and how, notwithstanding the obscurity in which these prophecies are involved, it may be manifestly discerned in them, that He who ruleth among the nations has revealed his word to mor-

tals, and that each vision depicted there is the glance of omniscience through the history of man.

The question respecting the more obscure prophecies which the Christian has to argue with the unbeliever is not—whether the same events might not have been foretold in a more distinct and definite manner, for the predictions themselves are declared to be sealed, or to remain obscure, till the time of the end, or the period of their completion; and as they refer to the political state of the world, or to the successive governments that were to arise, there are obvious reasons for this purposed obscurity, which apply not to the numerous literal predictions. But the question *is*, whether, such as they are, and viewed in connection with other prophecies, they bear not a closer and less convertible similitude to the events of which they were avowedly predictive, than human sagacity could have discerned or invented.

Although the divine mind be perfect in wisdom, yet that wisdom is unsearchable, and the mode of communicating any superhuman knowledge must not only be regulated by the nature of the ultimate design of the special revelation, but be adapted also to the perception, capacities, and habits of thought of the human recipients. In the symbolical predictions of Daniel both these ends are perfectly attained. The first, as so expressed, required that the prophecy should be sealed for many days, which was therefore conveyed in a figurative manner. And the symbols themselves are such as were adopted in the practice, and familiar to the understanding of men, and, when viewed in conjunction with the explanation given by the prophet, they are, after the event, abundantly significant. It is obvious from history, as well as from ancient coins, that different kingdoms were signified or marked by different emblematical representations. And, notwithstanding the diffusion of knowledge, the same practice is continued to the present day. Instead, therefore, of their being singular or unintelligible, the very method of representing kingdoms is used in their prophetic similitudes, which was then, and still is, common in the world, and which arose perhaps at first from necessity, and was sanctioned afterwards by use.

Not only is the emblematical representation given, but, the significancy of the emblems is also explained. And in relation to the same events, in the cases about to be noticed, two different images or figures are presented to view. An accordance in each particular being requisite to a just historical interpretation of the prophecy, there is thus no possibility of any strained accommodation of the events to the prediction, and that interpretation, which is just in every particular, must be strictly and exclusively applicable. And such interpretation having been given, instead of their being now chargeable with impenetrable obscurity, it is not perhaps in the power of human language to give a more unequivocal and less ambiguous symbolical representation, which designedly was to be understood only after the event of the rise of successive governments, than is given in the book of Daniel, by two different figures, accompanied by an explanation of each.

While the truth of the predictions of Daniel may be investigated in the present day, the undoubted certainty of his inspiration was accredited at the time in a manner at once easy to be understood, and impossible to be controverted, and altogether unparalleled in the annals of heathen oracles.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, at that time the most potent monarch in the world, had, in his conquests over the surrounding nations, subjected the Jews to his authority; and, among other tokens of obeisance which he demanded of the King of Judah, he required that certain princes of the children of Israel, high in character and skilful in wisdom, should be sent from Jerusalem, in order to be placed in his household, and to be numbered among the magicians and astrologers whom he was wont to consult, and who formed one of the appendages of his splendid court. Daniel was one of them. He and his friends of the house of Judah were soon "preferred far beyond all the wise men that were in all the realm." But in the court of a despot the highest subject is a slave. And it soon happened that their lives were in the greatest peril, from which no human prudence could have rescued them. It was the business of every courtier to minister to the will and pleasure of the king, otherwise their lives were in danger of being forfeited at once. And a cause of mental disquietude soon arose in

the breast of the king, which his magicians were commanded to remove. His mind had been disturbed by dreams, "his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him;" and he whose will would brook no control called his wise men, and commanded them to make known the dream and the interpretation thereof. This was a test which all their pretensions could not abide, and a difficulty which all their artifice could not elude. They asked the king "to make known to them the dream, and they would show him the interpretation." In the latter respect they might easily have practised on the credulity of the monarch, and put his mind at ease. "But the dream had gone from him; if recalled to his recollection he would at once recognise it; and those who pretended in other matters to be astrologers, and magicians, and sorcerers, and who could not then deceive him, were commanded to tell the dream itself, and then he should know that they could also show him the interpretation." Compliance with a demand so unreasonable was impossible for man; the attempt was utterly hopeless; and "they answered the king and said, there is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter; therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler that asketh such things at any magician, or astrologer or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth; and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh." These words were true; though they may have been inconsistent with the pretensions of the magicians when they were not so severely tried. But when the passions are inflamed, the spirit troubled, or pride wounded, reason and truth are alike disregarded; and, however unjustifiable or barbarous the deed, none could gainsay it, and the king being angry and very furious, and having previously told them that *there was but one decree for them*, commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. All the art of man was baffled; "lying and corrupt words" could be of no avail; something beyond deception, and that could not be impeached with it, was necessary here, and wholly unattainable by mortal. A fit occasion, combined as it afterwards proved to be with the revelation of the future fate of the world, was presented for the display of more than human wisdom. He alone, who knoweth the

thoughts and intents of the heart, and who is a discerner of the spirit, could communicate to the mind of man that knowledge which the king required. And the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, who had chosen the children of Israel for his peculiar people, that all the families of the earth might finally be blessed in the seed of Abraham, heard the prayers of Daniel, and of the other captive princes of Judah, when innocently condemned to die ; and he who turneth the hearts of men as the rivers of water, and who holds in his hands the thoughts of kings as well as of their subjects, was pleased to reveal the secret unto Daniel in a night vision. And it was to God that he expressed his gratitude, and ascribed all the praise.—“ Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever, for wisdom and might are his. And he changeth the times and the seasons. He removeth kings and setteth up kings : he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. He revealeth the deep and secret things. He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee ; for thou hast made known unto us the king’s matter.” And as Daniel thus offered up his praise and gratitude in secret prayer unto God, so he boasted not of himself before the king, nor attributed the knowledge of the secret to his own wisdom, but gave all the glory unto God, declaring that there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known WHAT SHALL BE IN THE LATTER DAYS.

Daniel told unto the king his dream—the visions of his head upon his bed—and the thoughts that had come into his mind, and that (till Daniel recalled them) had passed from his own remembrance.

It is impossible to conceive a more discriminating test of superhuman knowledge, or any means by which a stronger impression could have been made upon the mind of the king, or the most positive conviction that Daniel was indeed the Prophet of God, and that as he had told him the dream, he had shown also the true interpretation thereof. And as the reveal-

ing of the dream afforded this indubitable proof to Nebuchadnezzar, so the dream itself, and its interpretation, and the exact completion of this prediction, of events then future, gives to us in the present day proof as indubitable—that Daniel did make known the dream to Nebuchadnezzar—that the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure.

It is as easy for an impartial inquirer in the present day as it was for Nebuchadnezzar to judge of the truth of the words of Daniel. Every word of the Prophet would bring back to the mind of the king his own former thoughts, and every part of the prophecy still gives as striking demonstration that Daniel did indeed reveal what would come to pass thereafter, and what would be in the latter days. And although it was as utterly impossible for Nebuchadnezzar to know of those future events which Daniel foretold, as it was for the magicians to restore to him his own lost thoughts, yet nothing is now easier than to discern and to apply to each and every part of the prediction its successive and corresponding event. And it was not merely to satisfy the disquietude of Nebuchadnezzar's mind—it was not merely that the life of Daniel and of his fellows might be spared—that a condemned captive became thus an inspired prophet, but that the word of God might be ratified by supernatural evidence—that Christians in every age might know in whom they have believed—that the providence of God might finally be manifested over all, and that if the gospel be hid, it may be hid only to them that are lost, who seeing, see not, and who hearing will not understand.

The only requisite commentary on the prediction is a simple and succinct recapitulation of the events which they avowedly prefigured. The interpretation, which is alike prophetic with the symbolical image, declares, *that a kingdom inferior to the Babylonian was immediately to succeed it—that another kingdom of brass was then to arise, which was to bear rule over all the earth—that the fourth kingdom was to be strong as iron, to break in pieces, and subdue all things, or all other kingdoms.* The Persian empire was established on the subversion of the Babylonian, to the power or duration of which it did not attain. The Macedo-Grecian empire, under Alexander the Great, succeeded to the Persian. It is called a kingdom of brass, a metal

more justly emblematical of the Grecian than any other—as they were distinguished by their coats of brass, and denominated the brass-clothed Greeks.* This empire is described as having ruled over all the earth. It not only surpassed in the extent of its conquests and dominion, the Babylonian and the Persian, but was literally called an universal empire; and its founder is still known to fame, as one of the greatest of conquerors who ever lived. (These empires are more particularly described by Daniel in his subsequent prophecies.) The next empire which extended its power over these countries was the Roman. *It was strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all, and as iron that breaketh all these shall it break in pieces and bruise.* Iron was its appropriate emblem. It was an iron crown which its emperors wore (proverbially the iron crown of Italy)—and an iron yoke to which it subjected many nations. *It bruised all the residue of the former kingdoms, and brake them in pieces.* It is impossible, on a retrospect of their history, to give any representation, in so few words, more justly descriptive of the Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires. But the Roman empire itself was broken down—divided into different kingdoms—some of them powerful, and others comparatively weak. The sovereigns of these different kingdoms have been perpetually contracting matrimonial alliances with each other—but, notwithstanding this seeming bond of union, they have not united or adhered together. The knowledge of these historical truths, familiar to every reader, alone suffices for the elucidation of the prophecy. *And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes part of potter's clay, and part of iron; the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.*

To Nebuchadnezzar, who aspired only after human power and glory, the various empires that were in their order to succeed his own, and tyrannize over the world, were represent-

* Homeri Il. l. 47.

ed by a splendid image. But in the prophetic vision of the "Man of God" they appeared in other colours, and assumed a very different form. And under the appropriate symbol of wild beasts, varying in fierceness and cruelty, and distinguished by monstrous peculiarities, the successive empires of Babylon, Persia, Macedon or Greece, and Rome—the future promoters of idolatry and oppressors of man, were aptly characterized.

In the vision of the prophet, not only the number of the kingdoms, and the order of succession are the same, and also the different characteristic features accordant with those of the preceding symbolical representation, but to the brief outline given in the former, several additional circumstances are annexed, and, (in a manner totally at variance with any wild and extravagant fancies arising from mere pretended foreknowledge) the nearer that the vision approaches to "the latter times" it becomes the more copious and the more minutely defined.

The first kingdom, viz. the Babylonian, then existing, was represented by a lion that had eagles' wings. But although then worthy of such emblems, the wings wherewith it was lifted up were to be plucked. "It was to be humbled and subdued, and made to know its human state.*—a man's heart (instead of a lion's) was given it.—The second kingdom was the Persian; it was noted by historians for its brutal cruelty—and is prefigured by a bear. "*This beast raised itself upon one side,*" the Persians being under the Medes at the fall of Babylon, but presently rising up above them. *And it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it,* signifying the kingdoms of Sardis, Babylon, and Egypt, which were conquered by it, but did not belong to its proper body.† The third beast represents the kingdom that was to succeed the Persian, which was the empire of the Greeks, first established over the east by Alexander the Great. It consisted of various nations, far more diversified in their manners and customs than were the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, and was thus spotted like a leopard. The rapidity of its rise and conquests is aptly denoted by its four wings, while the four heads are significative of the exact number of kingdoms into which it was divided. The

* Sir Isaac Newton's *Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel*, p. 29. † *Ib.*

fourth empire was the Roman. It was dreadful and terrible, and strong, exceedingly, and diverse from all kingdoms. Such was the Roman empire, and such are the very words of the prophecy concerning the "fourth kingdom." The beast was terrible; it had great *iron* teeth, it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.—The Roman empire was larger, stronger, and more terrible, and of greater duration than any of the former; it was diverse from all kingdoms that were before it; and, on its fall, it was subdivided into a greater number of distinct kingdoms. Machiavel (for whose creed the church of Rome and infidelity can alone contend) who wotted not of the consequences of the historical fact, specifies by name the *ten* kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided. Some of these kingdoms at length fell and new ones arose. But, as Sir Isaac Newton remarks, they are still called the *ten kings* from their first number. And like the ten toes of the image, the fourth beast had *ten* horns, which the prophet interprets kingdoms, (v. 7. 24.) After these another power, diverse from the first, (v. 24.) and little at its commencement, was to arise which was to subdue three kings. *In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.* He was to *speake great words against* ("by the side of," or on an assumed equality with) *the Most High, to wear out the saints of the Most High; and to think to change times and laws, and they were to be given into his hands* for a long but yet limited period. The church of Rome rose to power, diverse from that of any other, after the dismemberment of the Roman Empire. The exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the state of Rome, were subjected to its temporal as well as spiritual authority,* and plucked up before it. *In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man.* By its eyes it was a Seer, *Επισκοπος*, a bishop in the literal sense of the word; and this church claims the universal bishoprick. With his mouth *he spake very great things; gave laws to kings and nations as an oracle, pretends to infallibility, and that his dictates are*

* Sir Isaac Newton's *Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel*, p. 73. Bishop Newton's *Dissert.* xiv.

binding on the whole world.”* His look was more stout than his fellows; the Pope, as head of the church, has not only ever claimed supremacy over every other bishop, but kings have often prostrated themselves before him and done the office of menials. And how closely does the character of wearing out the saints of the Most High besit the church of Rome? However much its character may now in reality or in appearance be altered, the time is not distant, when every *auto de fe* (act of Romish faith) brought the recusants of idolatry—the worshippers of the Most High, to the stake, and by every refinement in cruelty did it try to wear them out. *And he shall think to change times and laws; “ appointing fasts and feasts, canonizing saints, granting pardons and indulgences for sins, instituting new modes of worship, imposing new articles of faith, enjoining new rules of practice, and reversing at pleasure the laws both of God and men.”†*

The prophetic interpretation of another vision of Daniel now presents such a retrospective view of the history of the east, that scarcely the slightest comment is requisite to show its perfect adaptation to the events. *At the time of the end shall be the vision. I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation, for at the time appointed the end shall be. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the king of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the King of Grecia; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king (Alexander the Great.) Now, that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power (to which none of them ever attained.) And in the latter time of their kingdom, (at a distance of time, but prevailing over the same territory,) when the transgressors are come to the full, (Isa. xxiv. 5, 6.) a king of fierce countenance, (Mahomet, who proffered only submission or the sword,) and understanding dark sentences, (wherewith the Koran pre-eminently abounds) shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power, (he possessed no hereditary dominion, and arose from nothing.) And he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people, or the people of the holy ones (the*

* Sir Isaac Newton on *Daniel*, p. 75. † Bishop Newton, *Ib.*

Christians.) *And through his policy shall he cause craft to prosper in his hand, (by a faith accommodated to the passions of men.) And he shall magnify himself in his heart. ("There is no God but one, and Mahomet is his prophet.") And by peace shall he destroy many.* (Such is the intrinsic despotism and withering influence of Mahometan governments, that under their sway countries naturally the most fertile, and long exuberant in population and produce, have been depopulated and *destroyed* to a greater degree by *peace* than other countries have been by war. *He shall stand up against the prince of princes, magnifying himself even to the prince of the host, (calling himself a greater prophet than Christ.) It waxed exceeding great towards the south, and towards the east, and toward the pleasant land.* (Palestine, the very direction and progress, according to Gibbon, of the greatest and most permanent of the Mahometan conquests. *It cast down of the host and of the stars to the ground, (Christian Churches) and stamped upon them, and the place of the sanctuary (Jerusalem) was cast down. The vision was for many days.* Many days have passed, and all is accomplished but the last end of the "desolation, which has given the sanctuary to be trodden under foot."

Looking back then upon those successive empires which are the best known and have been the most influential on the fate of the world, and comparing the bare predictions and the prominent events, is there not visible a chain of prophecy, without a link distorted or broken, stretched by no human hand over the history of man from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the present hour, and on which the future fate of the world hangs suspended still? And without diverging to other matters, may not the primary question be here reverted to, whether, such as they are, these predictions bear not a closer and less convertible similitude to the events of which they were avowedly predictive than human sagacity could have discovered or invented? And may not a case be here put, which would try the reasoning powers of reckless mockers, and bring this question to the proof?

Were a despot now troubled at the thought, a thought which no tyrant could brook, that the Bible is the word of God, and

that he who is higher than the highest regarded him ; and were he to possess the power, and to congregate around him all the illuminati—the magicians and astrologers—of modern times, and to demand of them the cause why the image of Nebuchadnezzar and the visions of Daniel bear so striking a resemblance to those future kingdoms, and to the latter times of which they were avowedly symbolical ; and how by natural causes and human wisdom alone, the whole history of the Jews to the present hour was written and dated, at the very least, two thousand years ago ; and how all the countries, and all the people, and all the cities of whose destiny they spoke, should accredit, to every jot, and to a very tittle, the words of the seers of Israel, and present in their history and fate an exact counterpart of a professedly prophetic delineation ; and were they farther to be debarred from ridicule, and bound to reason, and told that “ they dared not prepare lying and corrupt words to speak before him,” and that “ there was but one decree for them,” if they did not make good their professed claim to such wisdom, show the *sure interpretation* of the matter, resolve all his doubts, and restore quietude to his troubled thoughts, such as words of truth like Daniel’s gave to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar : then verily, much do we fear, would the lives of the philosophes and savans of Europe be in no less jeopardy than were those of their prototypes, the wise men and soothsayers of Babylon. And their poor faith having no treasures in store to repay the life-blood of a single mortal ; no hope, though otherwise forfeited, sufficient to bribe one solitary martyr to the block, to what fitter terms than these (if their wisdom on such a trial should fail them) could their blanched and quivering lips, long used to mockery before, give utterance at last ?—“ There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king’s matter ; therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler that asketh such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth ; and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.”*

* Daniel ii. 10, 11.

The frequent perversion of the "truth as it is in Jesus," and the substitution in its stead of the "commandments of men;" the party animosities, and religious wars and persecutions, so contrary to the spirit of the gospel, that have so long prevailed; the gross impostures, absurd superstitions and impious rites which have often been forced into unnatural alliance with Christianity, and grafted by human hands into the heavenly stock; the domineering spirit of an unholy priesthood; the partial diffusion of the religion of Jesus during many ages; and the delusions of a manifest impostor triumphing over the Christian religion, even in the regions which gave it birth—have all proved stumbling-blocks in the way of many, or a rock of offence on which they have made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience. Yet all these are but the various combatings of the impure passions and the worldly mindedness of man against a holy and spiritual faith—the workings of a *predicted* "mystery of iniquity;" and not only does the purity of the gospel itself remain unaffected by them all, but its truth, as the inspired word of God, is the more fully established. Even here "God has not left himself without a witness;" and "we do well to give heed to the sure word of prophecy, which shineth as a light in a dark place."

But the church of Christ, though long militant "against spiritual wickedness in high places," shall, according to the scriptures, become even on earth finally triumphant. And it is not merely from the analogy of the truth of the past that the certainty of events yet future may be confided in; for there is not wanting, in the actual state of the world, subsisting evidence of the germinating fulfilment of prophecy. The rapid diffusion of knowledge; the numerous inventions and discoveries in physical science; and the immense accession they have given to the power of man; the facilities of communication and frequencies of intercourse that now prevail throughout the world; the nature of recent wars—contests for principles rather than for property; the abandonment in different states and kingdoms of the principles and the practice of unrestricted and unmitigated despotism, and the establishment of constitutional governments in its stead; the ready expression and powerful efficacy of public opinion, sobered down as it is to the desire of

substantial rather than theoretic liberty and of its expansion throughout the world, and awed by the remembrance of all the exhibited horrors of anarchy and atheism ; the manifold philanthropic and religious associations, so diversified in their objects, and active in their operation for alleviating the miseries, enlightening the ignorance, and ameliorating the moral condition of our species ; and, though last not least of all, the unexampled and astonishing dissemination of the Scriptures, and the avidity with which they are sought after in many a land ; all these unite in giving the same promise to mortal hope which the words of Scripture impart to religious faith, that the “ appointed time,” whatever convulsions may yet intervene, is approximating when despotism and superstition shall come to an end, and when brutal power, or governments fitly symbolized by wild beasts, shall cease to trample on the liberties of man. The powers of darkness are already shaken. He whose “ look was more stout than his fellows” has been greatly humbled. His dominion has in part been *taken away*, and it will be *consumed and destroyed until the end*.

No. II.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE FINAL RESTORATION OF THE JEWS, AND THEIR RETURN TO THE LAND OF JUDEA.

“ THE Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and will have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee unto the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it ; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.” (Deut. xxx. 3, 4, 5.) “ And it shall come to pass

that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the *outcasts* of Israel, and gather together the *dispersed* of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isa. xi. 11, 12, &c.) "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy one of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee, for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee." (Isa. lx. 9, 10, &c.) "And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations." (Isa. lxi. 4, &c.) "Thus saith the Lord, if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner; and the measuring line shall go over against it; and it shall not be plucked up nor thrown down any more for ever." (Jer. xxxi. 37, &c.) "But ye, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded, &c. For I will take you (O house of Israel) from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." (Ezek. xxxvi. 8, 10—24.) "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land." (Ib. xxxvii. 21, &c.) "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee; when I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy

sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as a sword of a mighty man," &c. (Zech. ix. 12, &c.) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall be no more pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (Amos ix. 13, 14, 15.) "I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee. I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men." (Micah ii. 12.)

These prophecies, exclusive of many others, need no comment. They declare, as clearly as language can, that the Jews shall return to Judea, and be at last permanently re-established in the land of their fathers. The uniform experience of the truth of every prediction respecting their past history may suffice to give assurance of the certainty of their predicted restoration. And, amidst many signs that *the times of the Gentiles* are drawing towards their *fulfilment*, many concurring circumstances seem also to be *preparing* the way of the children of Israel. Scattered as they have been for so many ages through the world, and maintaining still their distinctive character, their whole history forbids the thought that they will ever mingle among the nations, or cease to be, what they have ever been, a peculiar people. But while their history as a nation gave, for the space of many generations, unequivocal attestations of an overruling providence, sustaining the theocracy of the commonwealth of Israel; and while, during a period of still greater duration, they have been "a people scattered and peeled;" yet after the lapse of so many ages they are still reserved for illustrating the truth, the mercy, and the glory of the God of Israel; *at even tide it shall be light*. They now begin, centuries of persecution and spoliation having passed away, to participate, in cases too numerous to be specified, of benefits

arising from the altered spirit of the times. And possessed, as in an unexampled degree they are, of *silver and of gold*, and of large portions of the public funds of various kingdoms, they may be said, even now, in some manner, to *inherit the riches of the Gentiles*. And commanding, as in a great measure they do, the rate of exchange* throughout Europe, they are entitled, from the present influence of money on the security of governments and on the art and results of war, to high political consideration; and the time may not thus be remote when they shall be *raised up as an ensign among the nations*. Not naturalized to the isles of the Gentiles either by law or affection, nor bound to any soil by the possession of fixed property, which would be of no easy transference; but ever looking with undiminished love to the *land of their fathers*, even after an expatriation uninterrupted for nearly eighteen centuries, they are ready—whenever the time shall be fulfilled—to *fly thither like a cloud, and like doves to their windows*. But to what degree, and in what manner the present convulsions of the Turkish Empire, combined with the peculiar, and in many instances novel condition of the Jews throughout Europe and America, shall be the means of facilitating their eventual restoration to their own land (which is ravaged by Arabs, and yields but a scanty revenue to the Turks) no mortal can determine. It is enough for Christians to know, that two thousand of years, through nearly which period it has been dormant, can neither render extinct the title nor prescribe the heaven-chartered right of the seed of Abraham to the final and everlasting possession of the land of Canaan; that God *will remember the land and gather together* unto it his ancient people; and that his word concerning Zion, which he hath neither *forgotten nor forsaken*, is, *I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee, &c.* (Isa. xlix. 16, 17, &c.) “And that through all the changes which have happened in the kingdoms of the earth from the day of *Moses* to the *present time*, which is more than 3200 years; nothing should have happened to prevent the possi-

* The Jews were the inventors of Bills of Exchange.

BILITY of the *accomplishment* of these prophecies; but, on the contrary, that the state of the *Jewish and Christian nations* at this day, should be such as renders them easily *capable*, not only of a *figurative*, but even of a *literal completion* in every particular, if the will of God be so; this is a *miracle*, which hath nothing *parallel* to it in the phenomena of nature."

No. III.

EXTRACT FROM SIR ISAAC NEWTON'S OBSERVATIONS
ON THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL; CHAP. XII. P. 169.
OF THE PROPHECY OF THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH.

THE kingdoms represented by the second and third beasts, or the bear and leopard, are again described by Daniel, in his last prophecy, written in the third year of Cyrus over Babylon—the year in which he conquered Persia. For this prophecy is a commentary upon the vision of the ram and he-goat.

"Behold," saith he, "there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia, (*Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspes,*)—and the fourth (*Xerxes*) shall be far richer than they all; and, by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king, (*Alexander the Great,*) shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven, and not to his posterity, (but after their deaths,) nor according to his dominion which ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those."* Alexander the Great, having conquered all the Persian empire, and some parts of India, died at Babylon, a month before the summer solstice, in the year of Nabonnassar 425; and his captains gave the monarchy to his bastard brother, Philip Ari-

dæus, a man disturbed in his understanding ; and made Perdiccas administrator of the kingdom. Perdiccas, with their consent, made Meleager commander of the army—Seleucus, master of the horse—Craterus, treasurer of the kingdom—Antipater, governor of Macedon and Greece—Ptolemy, governor of Egypt—Antigonus, governor of Pamphylia, Lycia, Lycaonia, and Phrygia Major—Lysimachus, governor of Thrace—and other captains, governors of other provinces ; as many as had been so before in the days of Alexander the Great. The Babylonians began now to count by a new era, which they called the era of Philip, using the year of Nabonassar, and reckoning the 425th year of Nabonassar to be the first year of Philip. Roxana, the wife of Alexander, being left big with child, and, about three or four months after, brought to bed of a son—they called him Alexander—saluted him king, and joined him with Philip, whom they had before placed in the throne. Philip reigned three years under the administratorship of Perdiccas—two years more under the administratorship of Antipater,—and above a year more under that of Polyperchon :—in all six years and four months ; and then was slain, with his queen Eurydice, in September, by the command of Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great.

The Greeks being disgusted at the cruelties of Olympias, revolted to Cassander, the son and successor of Antipater. Cassander, affecting the dominion of Greece, slew Olympias ; and soon after shut up the young king Alexander, with his mother Roxana, in the castle of Amphipolis, under the charge of Glaucias, *an. Nabonass.* 432. The next year Ptolemy, Cassander, and Lysimachus, by means of Seleucus, formed a league against Antigonus : and, after certain wars, made peace with him, *an. Nabonass.* 438—upon these conditions :—that Cassander should command the forces of Europe till Alexander the son of Roxana came to age ; and that Lysimachus should govern Thrace ; Ptolemy, Egypt and Lybia ; and Antigonus all Asia. Seleucus had possessed himself of Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Susiana, and Media, the year before. About three years after Alexander's death, he was made governor of Babylon by Antipater ; then was expelled by Antigonus : but now he recovered, and enlarged his government over a great part of the East, which

gave occasion to a new era, called *æra Seleucidarum*. Not long after the peace made with Antigonus,—Diodorus saith the same Olympic year,—Cassander, seeing that Alexander, the son of Roxana, grew up, and that it was discoursed throughout Macedonia, that it was fit he should be set at liberty, and take upon him the government of his father's kingdom, commanded Glaucias, the governor of the castle, to kill Roxana, and the young king Alexander her son, and conceal their deaths. Then Polysperchon set up Hercules, the son of Alexander the Great by Barsine, to be king; and soon after, at the solicitation of Cassander, caused him to be slain. Soon after that, upon a great victory at sea, got by Demetrius the son of Antigonus, over Ptolemy, Antigonus took upon himself the title of king, and gave the same title to his son. This was *an. Nabonass. 441*. After his example, Seleucus, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Ptolemy, took upon themselves the title and dignity of kings, having abstained from this honour while there remained any of Alexander's race to inherit the crowns. Thus the monarchy of the Greeks, for want of an heir, was broken into several kingdoms—four of which, seated to the four winds of heaven, were very eminent. For Ptolemy reigned over Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia—Antigonus over Syria and the Lesser Asia—Lysimachus over Thrace—and Cassander over Macedon, Greece, and Epirus, as above.

Seleucus at this time reigned over the nations which were beyond the Euphrates, and belonged to the bodies of the two first beasts; but, after six years, he conquered Antigonus, and thereby became possessed of one of the four kingdoms. For Cassander, being afraid of the power of Antigonus, combined with Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus against him;—and while Lysimachus invaded the parts of Asia next the Hellespont, Ptolemy subdued Phœnicia and Cœlosyria, the sea-coasts of Asia.

Seleucus came down with a powerful army to Cappadocia, and, joining the confederate forces, fought Antigonus in Phrygia, and slew him, and seized his kingdom, *an. Nabonass. 447*. After which Seleucus built Antioch, Seleucia, Laodicea, Apamea, Berrhæa, Edessa, and other cities in Syria and

Asia; and in them granted the Jews equal privileges with the Greeks.

Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, retained but a small part of his father's dominions, and at length lost Cyprus to Ptolemy; but afterwards killing Alexander, the son and successor of Cassander, king of Macedon, he seized his kingdom, *an. Nabonass. 464.* Some time after, preparing a very great army to recover his father's dominions in Asia,—Seleucus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, and Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, combined against him; and Pyrrhus, invading Macedon, corrupted the army of Demetrius, put him to flight, seized his kingdom, and shared it with Lysimachus. After seven months, Lysimachus beating Pyrrhus, took Macedon from him, and held it five years and a half, uniting the kingdoms of Macedon and Thrace. Lysimachus, in his wars with Antigonus and Demetrius, had taken from them Caria, Lydia, and Phrygia; and had a treasury in Pergamus, a castle on the top of a conical hill in Phrygia, by the river Caicus, the custody of which he had committed to one Philetærus, who was at first faithful to him, but in the last year of his reign revolted. For Lysimachus having, at the instigation of his wife Arsinoe, slain first his own son Agathocles, and then several that lamented him,—the wife of Agathocles fled with her children and brothers, and some others of their friends, and solicited Seleucus to make war upon Lysimachus; whereupon Philetærus also, who grieved at the death of Agathocles, and was accused thereof by Arsinoe, took up arms and sided with Seleucus. On this occasion Seleucus and Lysimachus met and fought in Phrygia; and Lysimachus, being slain in the battle, lost his kingdom to Seleucus, *an. Nabonass. 465.* Thus, the empire of the Greeks, which at first broke into *four kingdoms*, became now reduced into *two* notable ones, henceforward called by Daniel the kings of the south and north. For Ptolemy now reigned over Egypt, Lybia, Ethiopia, Arabia, Phœnicia, Cœlosyria and Cyprus; and Seleucus, having united three of the four kingdoms, had a dominion scarcely inferior to that of the Persian empire, conquered by Alexander the Great. All which is thus represented by Daniel.* “*And*

* Chap. xi. v. 5.

the king of the south, (Ptolemy,) shall be strong ; and one of his princes, (Seleucus, one of Alexander's princes,) shall be strong above him, and have dominion ; his dominion shall be a great dominion."

After Seleucus had reigned seven months over Macedon, Greece, Thrace, Asia, Syria, Babylon, Media, and all the east as far as India—Ptolemy Ceraunus, the younger brother of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, slew him treacherously, and seized his dominions in Europe ; while Antiochus Soter, the son of Seleucus, succeeded his father in Asia, Syria, and most of the east ; and, after nineteen or twenty years, was succeeded by his son Antiochus Theos ; who, having a lasting war with Ptolemy Philadelphus, at length composed the same by marrying Berenice, the daughter of Philadelphus ; but after a reign of fifteen years, his first wife Laodice poisoned him, and set her son, Seleucus Callinicus, upon the throne. Callinicus, in the beginning of his reign, by the impulse of his mother Laodice, besieged Berenice, in Daphne, near Antioch, and slew her with her young son and many of her women. Hereupon Ptolemy Euergetes, the son and successor of Philadelphus, made war upon Callinicus ; took from him Phœnicia, Syria, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Susiana, and some other regions : and carried back into Egypt, 40,000 talents of silver, and 2,500 images of the gods, amongst which were the gods of Egypt, carried away by Cambyses. Antiochus Hierax at first assisted his brother Callinicus, but afterwards contended with him for Asia. In the mean time, Eumenes, governor of Pergamus, beat Antiochus, and took from them both all Asia, westward of Mount Taurus. This was in the fifth year of Callinicus, who, after an inglorious reign of twenty years, was succeeded by his son Seleucus Ceraunus ; and Euergetes, after four years more, *an. Nabonass. 527*, was succeeded by his son Ptolemy Philopater. All which is thus signified by Daniel :*—“ And in the end of years, they, (*the kings of the south and north,*) shall join themselves together ; for the king's daughter of the south, (*Berenice,*) shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement, but she shall not retain the power of the arm ; nei-

* Chap. xi. 6, 7, 8.

ther shall she stand, nor her seed, but she shall be delivered up, and he (*Callinicus,*) that brought her, and he whom she brought forth, and they that strengthened her in (*those*) times, (*or defended her in the siege of Daphne.*) But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his seat, (*her brother, Euergetes,*) who shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress, (*or fenced cities,*) of the king of the north, and act against them and prevail; and shall carry captives into Egypt, their gods with their princes, and precious vessels of silver and gold; and he shall continue some years after the king of the north."

Seleucus Ceraunus, inheriting the remains of his father's kingdom, and thinking to recover the rest, raised a great army against the governor of Pergamus, now king thereof, but died in the third year of his reign. His brother and successor, Antiochus Magnus, carrying on the war, took from the king of Pergamus almost all the Lesser Asia, recovering also the provinces of Media, Persia, and Babylonia, from the governors who had revolted; and, in the fifth year of his reign, invading Coelosyria, he, with little opposition, possessed himself of a good part thereof; and, the next year, returning to invade the rest of Coelosyria and Phœnicia, beat the army of Ptolemy Philopater near Berytus; he then invaded Palestine and the neighbouring parts of Arabia, and the third year returned with an army of 78,000; but Ptolemy, coming out of Egypt with an army of 75,000, fought and routed him at Raphia, near Gaza, between Palestine and Egypt, and recovered all Phœnicia and Coelosyria; *an. Nabonass. 532.* Being puffed up with this victory, and living in all manner of luxury, the Egyptians revolted, and, in the broils, sixty thousand Egyptian Jews were slain. All which is thus described by Daniel:—"But his sons (*Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus Magnus, the sons of Callinicus,*) shall be stirred up, and shall gather a great army, and he (*Antiochus Magnus*) shall come effectually and overflow, and pass through and return, and (*again the next year*) be stirred up (*marching even*) to his fortress (*the frontier towns of Egypt;*) and the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and come forth (*the third year,*) and fight with him, even the king of the north; and he (*the king of the north*) shall lead forth a great multitude, but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And the

multitude being taken away, his heart shall be lifted up, and he shall cast down many ten thousands; but he shall not be strengthened by it; for the king of the north shall return,"* &c.

About twelve years after the battle between Philopater and Antiochus, Philopater died, and left his kingdom to his young son, Ptolemy Epiphanes, a child of five years old. Thereupon Antiochus Magnus confederated with Philip king of Macedon, that they should each invade the dominions of Epiphanes which lay next to them. Hence arose a various war between Antiochus and Epiphanes, each of them seizing Phœnicia and Cœlo-syria by turn; whereby those countries were much afflicted by both parties. First Antiochus seized them; then one Scopas being sent with the army of Egypt, recovered them from Antiochus the next year, *an. Nabonass. 550*. Antiochus fought and routed Scopas near the fountains of Jordan, besieged him in Sidon, took the city, and recovered Syria and Phœnicia from Egypt, the Jews coming to him voluntarily. But, about three years after, preparing for a war against the Romans, he came to Raphia, on the borders of Egypt, made peace with Epiphanes, and gave him his daughter Cleopatra. Next autumn he passed the Hellespont, to invade the cities of Greece under the Roman protection; but was beaten by the Romans the summer following, and forced to return back with his army into Asia. Before the end of the year the fleet of Antiochus was beaten by the fleet of the Romans near Phocœa; and, at the same time, Epiphanes and Cleopatra sent an embassy to Rome to congratulate the Romans on their success against their father Antiochus, and to exhort them to prosecute the war against him into Asia. The Romans beat Antiochus again at sea near Ephesus, passed their army over the Hellespont, and obtained a great victory over him by land; took from him all Asia westward of Mount Taurus; gave it to the king of Pergamus, who assisted them in the war; and imposed a large tribute upon Antiochus. Thus the king of Pergamus, by the power of the Romans, recovered what Antiochus had taken from him; and Antiochus, retiring into the remainder of his kingdom, was slain two years after by the Persians, as he was

* Ver. 10, &c.

robbing the temple of Jupiter Belus in Elymais, to raise money for the Romans. All which is thus described by Daniel : “ For the king of the north (*Antiochus*) shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former ; and shall certainly come after certain years, with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south ; (*particularly the Macedonians*) also the robbers of thy people (*the Samaritans, &c.*) shall exalt themselves to establish the vision, but they shall fall. So the king of the north shall come and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities ; and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him : and he shall stand in the glorious land, which shall fail in his hand. He shall also set his face to go with the strength (*or army*) of all his kingdom, and make an agreement with him, (*at Raphia*) and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her ; but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him. After this he shall turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many ; but a prince for his own behalf (*the Romans*) shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease ; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. Then he shall turn his face towards the fort of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.”*

Seleucus Philopater succeeded his father Antiochus, *an. Nabonass.* 561, and reigned twelve years, but did nothing memorable, being sluggish and intent on raising money for the Romans, to whom he was tributary. He was slain by Heliodorus, whom he had sent to rob the temple of Jerusalem. Daniel thus describes his reign :—“ Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom, but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle.”†

A little before the death of Philopater, his son Demetrius was sent hostage to Rome, in the place of Antiochus Epiphanes, the brother of Philopater ; and Antiochus was at Athens in his way home from Rome when Philopater died ; whereupon

* Ver. 13—19.

† Ver. 20.

Heliodorus, the treasurer of the kingdom, stepped into the throne. But Antiochus so managed his affairs that the Romans kept Demetrius at Rome, and their ally the king of Pergamus expelled Heliodorus, and placed Antiochus on the throne, while Demetrius, the right heir, remained an hostage at Rome. Antiochus, being thus made king by the friendship of the king of Pergamus, reigned powerfully over Syria and the neighbouring nations; but carried himself much below his dignity, stealing privately out of his palace, rambling up and down the city in disguise with one or two of his companions, conversing and drinking with people of the lowest rank, foreigners and strangers; frequenting the meeting of dissolute persons to feast and revel; clothing himself like the Roman candidates and officers, acting their parts like a mimic; and, in public festivals, jesting and dancing with servants and light people; exposing himself by all manner of ridiculous gestures. This conduct made some take him for a madman, and call him Antiochus *Ἐπιμέγνης*. In the first year of his reign he deposed Onias the High Priest, and sold the high priesthood to Jason the younger brother of Onias; for Jason had promised to give him 440 talents of silver for that office, and 150 more for a licence to erect a place of exercise for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen; which licence was granted by the king, and put into execution by Jason. Then the king sending one Apollonius into Egypt, to the coronation of Ptolemy Philometer the young son of Philometer and Cleopatra, and knowing Philometer not to be well affected to his affairs in Phœnicia, provided for his own safety in those parts; and for that end came to Joppa and Jerusalem, where he was honourably received; from thence he went in like manner with his little army to the cities of Phœnicia to establish himself against Egypt, by courting the people and distributing extraordinary favours amongst them. All which is thus represented by Daniel:—"And in his (*Philometer's*) estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they (*the Syrians, who set up Heliodorus*) shall not give the honour of the kingdom. Yet he shall come in peaceably and obtain the kingdom by flatteries; (*made principally to the king of Pergamus*) and the arms (*which in favour of Heliodorus oppose him*) shall be overflowed with a flood from before him, and be

broken; yea also (*Onias the High Priest*) the prince of the covenant. And after the league made with him, (*the king of Egypt, by sending Apollonius to his coronation*) he shall work deceitfully (*against the king of Egypt,*) for he shall come up and become strong (*in Phœnicia*) with a small people. And he shall enter into the quiet and plentiful cities of the province (*of Phœnicia;*) and (*to ingratiate himself with the Jews of Phœnicia and Egypt, and with their friends*) he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers: he shall scatter among them the prey and the spoil, and the riches (*extracted from other places;*) and shall forecast his devices against the strong holds (*of Egypt*) even for a time."*

These things were done in the first years of his reign, *An. Nabonass. 573*; and thenceforward he forecast his devices against the strong holds of Egypt, until the sixth year. For three years after, that is the fourth year of his reign, Menelaus bought the high priesthood from Jason, but, not having the price, was sent for by the king; and the king, before he could hear the cause, went into Cilicia to appease a sedition there, and left Andronicus, his deputy, at Antioch. In the mean time, the brother of Menelaus, to make up the money, conveyed several vessels out of the Temple, selling some of them at Tyre, and sending others to Andronicus. When Menelaus was reproved for this by Onias, he caused Onias to be slain by Andronicus: for which fact, the king, at his return from Cilicia, caused Andronicus to be put to death.

Then Antiochus prepared his second expedition against Egypt; which he performed in the sixth year of his reign, *An. Nabonass. 578*; for, upon the death of Cleopatra, the governor of her son, the young king of Egypt, claimed Phœnicia and Cœlosyria from him, as her dowry; and, to recover these countries, raised a great army. Antiochus considering that his father had not quitted the possession of those countries, denied they were her dowry; and, with another great army, met and fought the Egyptians on the borders of Egypt, between Pelusium and the mountain Casius. He there beat them, and might have destroyed their whole army, but that he rode up

* V. 21—24.

and down, commanding the soldiers not to kill them, but to take them alive; by which humanity he gained Pelusium, and soon after all Egypt—entering it with a vast multitude of foot and chariots, elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy. Then, seizing the cities of Egypt, as a friend he marched to Memphis, laid the whole blame of the war upon Eulœus, the king's governor, entered into outward friendship with the young king, and took upon him to order the affairs of the kingdom. While Antiochus was thus employed, a report being spread in Phœnicia that he was dead, Jason, to recover the high-priesthood, assaulted Jerusalem with above a thousand men, and took the city. Hereupon the king, thinking Judea had revolted, came out of Egypt in a furious manner, retook the city, slew forty thousand of the people, made as many prisoners, and sold them to make money; went into the temple, spoiled it of its treasures, ornaments, utensils, and vessels of gold and silver, amounting to 1800 talents, and carried all away to Antioch. This was done in the year of Nabonassar 578, and is thus described by Daniel:—“And he shall stir up his powers and his courage against the king of the south, with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they, (*even Antiochus and his friends,*) shall forecast devices against him, *as is represented above*; yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall betray and destroy him, and his army shall be overthrown, and many shall fall down slain. And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief; and they, *being now friends,* shall speak lies at one table, *against the Jews and against the holy covenant,* but it shall not prosper: for yet the end, *in which the setting up of the abomination of the desolation is to prosper,* shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great riches, and his heart shall be against the holy covenant, and he shall act *against it, by spoiling the temple, and return to his native land.*”*

The Egyptians of Alexandria, seeing Philometer first educated in luxury by the eunuch Eulœus, and now in the hands of Antiochus, gave the kingdom to Euergetes, the younger

* V. 25, 28.

brother of Philometer ; whereupon Antiochus, pretending to restore Philometer, made war upon Eurygetes, beat him at sea, and besieged him and his sister Cleopatra in Alexandria ; while the besieged princes sent to Rome to implore the assistance of the senate. Antiochus, finding himself unable to take the city that year, returned from Syria, leaving Philometer at Memphis to govern Egypt in his absence. But Philometer made friendship with his brother that winter ; and Antiochus, returning next spring, *an. Nabonass. 580*, to besiege both the brothers in Alexandria, was met in the way by the Roman ambassadors, Popilius Læna, C. Decimius, and C. Hostilius. He offered them his hand to kiss ; but Popilius, delivering to him the tables wherein the message of the senate was written, bade him read those first. When he had read them, he replied he would consider with his friends what was fit to be done : but Popilius, drawing a circle about him, bade him answer before he went out of it. Antiochus, astonished at this blunt and unusual imperiousness, made answer he would do what the Romans demanded ; and then Popilius gave the king his hand to kiss, and he returned out of Egypt. The same year, *an. Nabonass. 580*, his captains, by his orders, spoiled and slaughtered the Jews, profaned the temple, set up the worship of the heathen gods in all Judea, and began to persecute and make war upon those who would not worship them : which actions are thus described by Daniel :—“ At the time appointed he shall come again towards the south, but the battle shall not be as the former. For the ships of Chittim shall come, *with an embassy from Rome against him*. Therefore he shall be grieved and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant. So shall he do ; he shall even return and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.”*

In the same year that Antiochus, by the command of the Romans, retired out of Egypt, and set up the worship of the Greeks in Judea, the Romans conquered the kingdom of Macedonia, the fundamental kingdom of the empire of the Greeks, and reduced it into a Roman province, and thereby began to put an end to Daniel's third beast. This is thus expressed by

* V. 29, 30.

Daniel :—“ *And after him, arms, that is, the Romans, shall stand up.* As *אחריו* signifies *after the king*, Dan. xi. 8, so *אחריו* may signify *after him*. Arms, are everywhere, in this prophecy of Daniel, put for the military power of a kingdom ; and they stand up when they conquer or grow powerful. Hitherto Daniel described the actions of the kings of the north and south ; but, upon the conquest of Macedon by the Romans, he left off describing the actions of the Greeks, and began to describe those of the Romans in Greece. They conquered Macedon, Illyricum, and Epirus, in the year of *Nabonassar* 580 ; 35 years after, by the last will and testament of Attalus, the last king of Pergamus, they inherited that rich and flourishing kingdom, that is, all Asia westward of Mount Taurus ; 69 years after, they conquered the kingdom of Syria, and reduced it to a Roman province ; and 34 years after, they did the like to Egypt. By all these steps, the Roman arms stood up over the Greeks ; and, after 95 years more, by making war upon the Jews, *they polluted the sanctuary of strength, and took away the daily sacrifice, and then placed the abomination of desolation.* * For this abomination was placed after the days of Christ, Matt. xxiv. 15. In the sixteenth year of the emperor Adrian, A. C. 132, they placed this abomination, by building a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, where the temple of God in Jerusalem had stood. Thereupon the Jews, under the conduct of Barchochab, rose up in arms against the Romans, and in the war had fifty cities demolished, 985 of their best towns destroyed, and 580,000 men slain by the sword : and in the end of the war, A. C. 137, were banished Judea, upon the pain of death ; and thenceforward the land remained desolate of its old inhabitants.

In the beginning of the Jewish war, in Nero's reign, the apostles fled out of Judea with their flocks,—some beyond Jordan to Pella and other places ; some into Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, and elsewhere. Peter and John came into Asia, and Peter went thence by Corinth to Rome ; but John staying in Asia, was banished by the Romans into Patmos, as the head of a party of the Jews, whose nation was at

* V. 31.

war with the Romans. By this dispersion of the Christian Jews, the Christian religion, which was already propagated westward as far as Rome, spread fast into all the Roman empire, and suffered many persecutions under it, till the days of Constantine the Great and his sons. All which is thus described by Daniel : —“ And such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall he, *who places the abomination*, cause to dissemble and worship *the heathen gods* ; but the people among them who do know their gods, shall be strong and act, and they that understand among the people shall instruct many ; yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, and by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now, when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help, viz. *in the reign of Constantine the Great ; and at that time, by reason of their prosperity*, many shall come over to them from among the heathen, and cleave to them with dissimulation. But those of understanding there shall still fall to try God’s people by them, and to purge them from the dissemblers, and to make them white even to the time of the end ; because it is yet for a time appointed.”*

Hitherto the Roman empire continued entire. But now, by the building of Constantinople, and endowing it with a senate, and other like privileges with Rome, and by the division of the Roman empire into the two empires of the Greek and Latin, headed by those two cities, a new scene of things commences, in which, “ a king, *the empire of the Greeks*, doth according to his will, and, *by setting his own laws above the laws of God*, exalts and magnifies himself above every God, and speaks marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the imagination be accomplished. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the *lawful* desire of women *in matrimony*, nor any god, but shall magnify himself above all. And in his seat he shall magnify MAHUZZIMS, *that is, strong guardians, the souls of the dead* ; even with a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour them, *in their temples*, with gold and silver, and with precious stones and valuable things.”† All which relates to the overspreading of the Greek empire with monks and nuns, who placed holiness in abstinence from mar-

* V. 32—35.

† V. 36—39.

riage, and the invocation of saints, and veneration of their relics, and such like superstitions, which these men introduced in the fourth and fifth centuries. “ And at the time of the end, the king of the south, (*or the empire of the Saracens,*) shall push at him; and the king of the north, (*or Empire of the Turks,*) shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries of the Greeks, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape out of his hands, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon; (*that is, those to whom the caravans pay tribute.*) He shall stretch forth his hands also upon the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape; but he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and Ethiopians shall be at his steps.”* All these nations compose the empire of the Turks, and therefore this empire is here to be understood by the king of the north. They compose also the body of the he-goat; and therefore the goat still reigns in his last horn, but not by his own power.

* V. 40—43.

FINIS.

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POSTSCRIPT NOTE.

So important and auspicious is the change which has occurred, from the Russian declaration of war, and the rapid advance of the Russian armies, since the note at Page 291-4, was transmitted to the printer, and so clearly does that change accord with the precise letter of the predictions there referred to, as applicable to the downfall of the Turkish empire, that a few additional suggestions, or hints, concerning "the things noted in the Scriptures of truth," may not be without some interest, and, if not rash and unwarrantable, may not, it is hoped, be without their use in leading some among the thousands and tens of thousands, who devote their minds to the news of the day, to behold even in them, if they will not elsewhere regard it, the clear and astounding proof that Scripture is given by inspiration of God.

That the uncertainty and the variety of speculation which recently existed respecting the probability of an immediate war between Russia and Turkey, and either of the warlike interference, or of the passive acquiescence of the other Powers of Europe, was not over-rated in the note referred to, the following remarks (written at the same time,) which formed the leading article of a highly respectable Journal, may serve sufficiently to show. "The intelligence from the East, continuing to be without certain authenticity, continues of course to be without interest. The process of manufacture seems to be this. If, by one mail, it is said that the Russians have passed, or are immediately to pass the Pruth, some doubt is interposed by the next arrivals, and the third probably bears nothing but peace. Then peace becomes rather dubious; anon the doubts are strengthened, and war at length becomes once more the order of the day," &c. *Edinburgh Weekly Journal, May 13, 1828.*

In contrasting the unerring fixedness and certainty of the word of God, wherever its meaning is definitively ascertained, with the conjectural and contradictory speculations then prevalent, and holding to the strictly literal signification of the words of Scripture,—the author ventured to assume that there were signs of the times which indicated "that the destined means were in readiness and the destined events at hand, which shall precede the destruction of the Ottoman empire." And how far the conjecture, then adopted, has since been realized, the following quotations may also determine.

"The first cannon," says the *Gazette de France*, as cited by

several English newspapers, "has been fired. Islamism is at once menaced in Europe and Asia: Events belong to a wisdom much more profound than that of man,"—Assuredly they do. And far more assuredly, if we mistake not greatly the application of this prophecy, it was a wisdom much more profound than that of man which defined these yet coming events, and others more distant still, two thousand three hundred years ago.

"Letters from St. Petersburg of the 24th of April say, that the preparations both in Bessarabia," (the North,) "and Georgia," (the East,) "for the approaching campaign, are more considerable than Russia ever made before, and that it never displayed such a force even in a war against France. It seems certain, that the Danube will be passed in several places, and that General Paskewitch will advance from Erzerum," (the East.) *Times*, May 21, 1828.

The words of the prophecy may here be repeated, as best presenting the whole subject to view.

"Tidings out of the East and out of the North shall trouble him; therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain: yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him." Dan. xi. 44, 45.

In perfect analogy with all the previous part of the chapter, which marks in regular chronological succession, *one hundred and sixty-six events*, which have happened throughout every intermediate period, from the days of Cyrus to the present hour, these two verses include several particulars of a very marked character, descriptive of the downfal of the last great power, which was to possess Judea previous to the restoration of the Jews. It is not the apparent connection between the prediction and the event, (close as that connection may now be,) which suggests the application of this prophecy to the Turks. It was applied exclusively to them above two hundred and twenty years ago by Brightman, and subsequently by Sir Isaac Newton, (as the preceding article of the Appendix, in respect to the high authority of the latter, expressly shows,) and also by Bishops Newton and Mant, by Poole, Scott, and other commentators. This application of the prophecy cannot, therefore, be deemed unwarrantable, nor as originating in the fancy of the moment; and it may be of some importance now,—when the signs of the times seem to be fast accumulating, and their rising brightness to be dispelling the mist of ages, and when

the time of the end seems thus to be come when the words were to be unsealed,—to try whether a humble and feeble attempt, excluding all vain imaginings, may not now be made, with some effect, to fix the meaning of the prophecy. And if this may be done, and *if the time of its accomplishment be indeed at hand*,—we may well lay human probabilities aside and look to the word of God alone. “At the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry,” or pass its appointed time.

The first prophetic mark of the downfall of the Turkish empire, as we would thus apply the prophecy, is the coming of tidings out of the East and the North. Bishop Newton conjectured that these would come from Persia and Russia; but, at the period when he wrote, (above 90 years since,) it was impossible to reconcile the inconsistency inherent in the supposition, that the former of these powers would be combined with the latter in effectuating the subversion of Islamism. The provinces of Persia, *directly east* of Constantinople, having been ceded to Russia, and on the almost immediate cession of these territories, a Russian army having “received orders to advance on Erzeroum,” and another having passed the Pruth and the Danube (the tidings from thence more speedily reaching Britain,) the fulfilment of this prophecy, even in its commencement, may well be said to be so plain, “that he who runneth may read.”

The second prophetic mark is, therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. Bishop Newton's explanation of these words may well remove the imputation that present probabilities suggested the interpretation. “Whatever be the motive and occasion, the Turk shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many. The original word which we translate, *utterly to make away many*, signifies to anathematize, to desecrate, to devote to utter perdition, so that it strongly implies that this war should be made upon a religious account,” (a religious war of extermination against the numerous Christian population subject to the power of the Porte?)

And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace, or rather of his camp, or royal pavilion or court, (vide Parkhurst's Lexicon,) between the seas in the glorious holy mountain. Bishop Newton refutes every previously attempted explanation of this passage, and states that it must denote some part of the Holy Land. But “some part” is not, perhaps, sufficiently specific, nor anala-

gous to the precision of prophecy; neither does the Holy Land bear the same signification as the holy *mountain*. As referrible to Judea, though Zion be often denominated the holy mountain, the words of the prediction can scarcely be applied either to it or to any other mountain which can be peculiarly characterized as "between two seas," or as specifically marked by any such exclusive relation to any sea, as fully to justify the literal application of such a prediction to the spot. And when it is said that pavilions are fixed, it is to be presumed that a precise spot is indicated.

But it is far easier to excite a doubt, in such an instance as the present, than to give an unexceptionable illustration of such an unfulfilled prediction. And the writer of these lines would merely propose to suggest that it is at least possible that within the limits of Romelia itself, the long sought for spot may at last be found. There is a celebrated mountain which, from its combining the different characteristics of magnificence and of beauty, may well lay a claim to the title of glorious or goodly,—which is situated on a peninsula stretching into the Egean sea, and almost entirely surrounded by the gulf of Cotessa on the one side, and the gulf of Monte Santo on the other,—and which, having lost its ancient name for centuries, is now uniformly named by Greeks, Franks, and Turks, in the vernacular language of each—"the holy mountain,"—viz. the ancient Mount Athos, now called Monte Santo or Agion Oros, the last term being the very words of the Septuagint version in this text. Many plausible reasons might easily be adduced in confirmation of the opinion that Monte Santo may be the spot designated in the prophecy. The event alone can determine. And in seeking to illustrate the meaning of the word of that God, whose ways are not as our ways, we refrain from all vain imaginations, which have served but too often to darken or to pervert it. It is from the coincidence of the name and situation of the mountain with that which is noted in the Scripture of truth, but which cannot yet, from any human foresight, be noted in a book by man, that this hint as to the possible application of the prophecy has been offered, in order to do away the presumed certainty,—that the place referred to *must* be in the Holy Land, and in the hope of exciting others to find, if there can be found, a more adequate solution of the difficulty.

