

genuineness of the sacred writings is of a kind which increases as the study of history, geography, and kindred branches of knowledge is successfully cultivated, "for it is constantly happening," as is remarked by a writer on this subject, "that things hardest to be understood are receiving a complete elucidation, and every obscurity elucidated is an objection removed, and every objection removed affords one of the best, because most unsuspecting testimonies to the truth and authority of any writing." Thus, to give an illustration or two of the manner in which this proof grows, it was long a matter of wonder that Paul when brought before the Chief Council of the Jews should say, as he is reported in the book of the Acts to have done, that he "wist not that Ananias was the high priest" at the very moment when Ananias sat before him in his judicial capacity, and probably also in his peculiar sacred vestments. About the middle of last century, however, it was proved by the ingenuity and researches of an eminent German critic and divine, John David Michaelis, that at the time referred to in the book of the Acts, Ananias had been but a very short time in possession of the power, and that he had even then no just claim to the office of High Priest. It was at once seen that Paul's statement harmonized with the facts of history, and that there was in reality no difficulty in the supposition that he was ignorant of Ananias being the High Priest, or in the supposition that the peculiar form of expression which he used, was employed by him in order to reprove the pride and ambition of the judge. Again, it was long felt to be a difficulty that in Acts xiii. 7, Sergius Paulus is called the "pro-consul" instead of the "prætor" of the province. The translators of the authorized English Bible seem to have felt the difficulty, and they have evaded it by using the general word "deputy," just as the general word "ruler" has been used in several of the earlier English translations, though Wickliffe has given "pro-consul" in his version. The difficulty has, however, since the publication of the English Bible been completely removed, and that by a very curious circumstance, namely, by the discovery of a medal, on which the title of pro-consul is given to the governor of Cyprus about the same period as is referred to in the book of the Acts. An objection is thus turned into an argument; the forts of the opponents of Divine truth are occupied, and their weapons are wielded by its friends—Goliath has his head cut off with his own sword—the Egyptians are spoiled—our enemies are found liars unto us, and we tread on their high places.

But we remark again, that a portion also of the external evidence by which the Divine authority of the Scriptures is established, derives strength from the difficulties which are to be found in the Bible. We refer to the evidence of prophecy. The argument from prophecy for the Divinity of the Scriptures may be stated thus: Here are certain statements made at a particular time respecting events which were to happen long after. The events are of such a character as precludes the supposition that they could be anticipated by calculation or saga-