

communication between them, should be able to plan and to erect a structure in which there should be no jarring combinations, no defect of symmetry or proportion, is, we venture to assert, an utter impossibility. And yet, we hesitate not to advance this claim on behalf of the Bible. From Moses, the earliest of the sacred writers, to John, the latest, a period of nearly sixteen hundred years elapsed. During that interval, the Jewish nation had undergone many changes. During that time, from being the slaves of the Egyptians, the God of their fathers, "with a strong hand and an outstretched arm," had delivered them in triumph from the power of their oppressors. He led them in all their wanderings through the wilderness. He cast out the heathen before them, and established them in that good land which He swore unto their fathers to give them. He raised them to the height of warlike renown under David, and of tranquil prosperity under Solomon. And afterwards, to punish them for their disobedience and ingratitude, He caused them to be carried captive into Babylon, and their land to be usurped by the stranger. Yet again He restored them to their former abode, and a season of prosperity followed. Their temple was again erected, though not in all its pristine splendour; the walls of Jerusalem were repaired; and the Almighty once more cherished and protected His chosen people. Yet again iniquity spread over the land like a flood, and the wrath of God was kindled against its inhabitants. Rome, then in her full career of conquest, cast her ambitious eye over the land of Palestine; and the Jews, all powerful when Jehovah was on their side, now that He had forsaken them, were as stubble before the consuming fire. The land of promise was annexed as a Province to the Roman empire, and the sceptre finally departed from Judah. Then came the Shiloh, according to ancient prophecy, and gospel ages began to run. Yet, "when He came to His own, His own received Him not." The chief Priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, rose up against Him and procured His condemnation, and He was suspended upon the cross, and left there to die, unlamented, except by a few humble individuals, who had acknowledged His divine authority, and followed him as their Master. Yet, though consigned to the grave, He continued not there long. He arose triumphant from the dead, cheering the hearts and re-animating the desponding hopes of His disciples. And they went forth in His name, and, in obedience to His commands, preached the gospel to every creature, wherever they came.

Now, during the whole of this period, the sacred volume was still receiving additions: and my object in this brief summary of sacred history which I have given, is just to show you the exceedingly varied circumstances in which it was composed. Moses, while he herded sheep in the Midian desert, and during the intervals of the tedious wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness; Samuel, while he judged the people, before they asked a king to rule over them; David and Solomon, while they sat upon the throne, and formed their plans of war and peace; Daniel, while an exile in a foreign land; the prophets, at one time the favourites of a court, at another the outcasts of society, and forced to make their lowly dwelling in the wilderness; the New Testament writers, who numbered amongst them the publican and the pharisee, the unlettered fisherman and the learned physician, while laboriously teaching in the crowded city, or wandering from place to place; Paul, while a prisoner at Rome, and John, when banished to the desolate Island of Patmos,—each contributed his share to furnish that record of Divine Truth which we now possess, as we have every reason to believe, perfect and complete, unmingled and uncorrupted. That persons so various, in such different circumstances, and so remote from one another in point of time, should all have agreed in doctrine and sentiment, so that there should be no inconsistency or contradiction; that, by hands so varied, a structure consisting of so many parts should have been reared, and yet that there should be in it nothing deficient, nothing superfluous,—is to be accounted for only by admitting that one Spirit inspired them all—that the Sacred