

cert, the Saviour learned in Egypt; or, in other words, "By Beelzebub, he casteth out devils." The Gentiles maintained that their gods wrought as stupendous miracles as did Jesus of Nazareth; and, consequently, the very argument which was brought to prove the divinity of Christ, would also prove the divinity of their gods. They were willing to regard Jesus as a God; for they believed that all the gods were equally powerful in their own dominions, and equally powerless beyond them; but they could not endure the *exclusiveness* of Christianity, and they tried to prove that their gods were quite as powerful, and as legitimate objects of worship as the Christian's God, for whom *exclusive* homage is demanded. Now, the Christians, lately emancipated from Jewish tradition or heathen superstition, did not believe that "an idol was nothing in the world," and though such an objection as that brought against Christianity has faded away before the light of the present age, yet believers hardly knew then how to reply to it. They, therefore, turned their attention almost exclusively to fulfilled prophecy, when proving that the scriptures are divinely inspired, and that Christ is the Son of God, and the only Saviour of sinners. Such objections are also of great importance to us, as they show that the miracles, as historical facts, could not be denied in the very next age to that in which they occurred; and consequently, at the present day, the greatest sceptic must admit that "God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, him he heareth."

3. Some kinds of evidence have greater impressiveness in one age than in another. Those who saw Christ's miracles—who saw the deaf hear, the blind see, and the dead rise from the grave—must have had a deeper impression of the Redeemer's power, than if they merely believed, on competent testimony, that these miracles were wrought. In the latter case the testimony of man comes between us and the operations of God, and so far it is unsatisfactory. But the argument from prophecy comes in to supply the defect, an argument which daily receives fresh illustrations of its validity, and has consequently been styled, a growing argument. Many of these predictions are very distant in point of time, and depend on such numerous, minute, and circumstantial circumstances, that they could not have been foreseen by the most penetrating sagacity. "Behold the former things are come to pass," says God, "and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them;" or, as it may be rendered, "before they germinate I will make you hear them." This strong and beautiful language clearly shows that the events predicted, were beyond the reach of human foresight; that they were announced before they had begun to germinate; while the seed was still in the earth, and before any outward indications of the plant could be perceived. Numerous illustrations might be given of this truth. Thus it was predicted that Christ should be sold for thirty pieces of silver—the goodly price at which he was prized. Now, had the Jews given Judas one piece more or less than the predicted sum, or had they paid him in gold instead of silver, the prophecy would have been falsified, and when it is recollected that there are other predictions as minute and circumstantial as the preceding, it must be evident that "holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

One of the most impressive illustrations of fulfilled prophecy, may be derived from the dispersion and wonderful preservation of the Jews, together with the present desolation of the land of Israel. The subject is too extensive to be discussed in a general article, and hence we shall only select a single illustration. The land of Israel was once distinguished for its fertility, and hence it is styled, "a land flowing with milk and honey;" "the glory of all lands." But Moses predicted that when Israel became disobedient to God, the land should lose its fertility, and that even the stranger from a far land should be astonished at the desolation. "The generation to come of your children shall rise up after you," says Moses, "and the stranger that shall come from a far land, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it, shall say, wherefore hath the Lord done this unto the land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger?"—Deut. xxix. 22, 24. Now, who is "the stranger that cometh from a far land," to whom reference is made? It is the infidel Volney, who, in his ruins of empires, without the slightest knowledge that he was fulfilling an ancient prediction, says, "I journeyed in the empire of the Ottomans, and traversed the provinces, which formerly were kingdoms of Egypt and Syria—I wandered over the country—I enumerated the kingdoms of

Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria. This Syria, said I to myself, now almost depopulated, then contained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages and hamlets. What are become of so many productions of the hand of man? What are become of those ages of abundance and of life? Great God! from whence proceed such melancholy revolutions? For what cause is the fortune of these countries so strikingly changed? Why are so many cities destroyed? Why is not that ancient population reproduced and perpetuated?" How striking is such a prediction! and how remarkably has it been fulfilled! And yet this is only an illustration of numerous other instances that might be given; showing that as raising the dead is a miracle of power, so prophecy is a miracle of knowledge.

These observations are intended to show, that while the evidences of Christianity do not compel assent, and thus prove destructive to man's moral nature, they are yet amply sufficient to satisfy any candid mind that Christianity is divine. It is admitted that difficulties do exist, and that there are mysteries which the human intellect cannot fathom. But, there are not greater difficulties to the admission that the Bible is the word of God, than that creation is the work of God. Both classes of difficulties arise from our ignorance; from truths half apprehended, partly known, and partly transcending the highest efforts of the human intellect. And as this is probably after all the efforts of learned optimists, the best possible world, so is Christianity, with all its supposed defects, the best system that could be desired for manifesting the glory of God in connection with the salvation of men. The Rev. Henry Rogers, in the Eclipse of Faith, describes one of his waking dreams, in imitation of Addison in the Spectator. It is designated the "Paradise of Fools." The spirits of the most distinguished sceptics are permitted to construct a perfect revelation, and are furnished with worlds on which to operate.—One perceiving the advantage infidelity derived from the apparent discrepancies of the New Testament, and from the varied testimony of evangelists, constructed a revelation without a single discrepancy from beginning to end. But this revelation was rejected, because it was conceived the various accounts had all been written by one highly inventive mind, and consequently there was only a single witness for the miracles which it contained. Another, in this community of shadows, tried to establish a revelation on the basis of miracles; but instead of trusting to one witness, he recorded the results by ten; and then the critics maintained that such uniformity proved that there had been collusion between the parties who had framed these revelations. A third sage, determined to work miracles so stupendous, "that the very echo of them, as it were, should reverberate through the hollow of future ages;" but, though he succeeded at the time, yet future ages treated them as fabulous on account of their very magnificence. Another miracle-monger wrought miracles constantly, and then men imagined that they formed part of the order of nature. He then changed his plan, and wrought single miracles of such a startling character, as he thought would produce conviction. "He set the sun spinning through the heavens at such a rate, or rather at such a jaunty pace, that no one knew when to expect either light or darkness; men now froze with cold and now melted with heat; the seasons seemed flying on a grand masquerade; the longest day and the shortest day, and no day at all, succeeded one another in rapid succession, and the whole universe seemed threatened with ruin and desolation." The result of all this disorder was, that men became Atheists, and affirmed that the universe was under the dominion of chance. Other theorists had no better success. The drift of all this reasoning is to show that the objections brought against the Bible, are frequently its highest excellencies, and that had revelation been constructed on such principles as infidels prescribe, it would have been wholly unsuitable to the intellectual and moral condition of man.

DEATH OF THE REV. WILLIAM JAY, OF BATH.

"Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?" Such is the solemn reflection to which we are brought, when we contemplate the death of the venerable and the good. There is something in the death of eminent saints, well fitted to awaken solemn thoughts in the breasts of the faithful who survive; and if ever the ungodly have wisdom enough to consider the event in its proper aspect, they also should find their interests most deeply affected. No longer