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1818

THE
NOVA-SCOTIA

AND

**NEW-BRUNSWICK
MAGAZINE;**

*The HISTORICAL, LITERARY, THEO-
LOGICAL, and MISCELLANEOUS
REPOSITORY.*

Vol. I.

FEBRUARY 1st, 1806.

No. 1.

Conditions :—

I. This work is to consist of four departments.

First--Will exhibit a brief compend of Universal History; from crea-
tion to the present time.

Second--Proofs of the being and perfections of God, from a brief sur-
vey of the Heavens and the Earth.

Third--An elucidation and defence of the divine authority, and capi-
tal articles of Revelation.

Fourth--Miscellaneous communications; biography, criticism, anec-
dote, curious objects of nature and art, remarkable occurrences in the natural,
political, and religious world, &c.

II. The work is to be published in Monthly Num-
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beautiful new type; price One Shilling, payable on delivery.

III. Every purchaser of the first Number is to be
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volume.

IV. Any person that subscribes, or procures subscri-
bers for ten copies, is to receive an additional copy *gratis*.

V. A title-page and an index to the first volume,
will be delivered along with the twelfth number.

N. B. In order to allow time for spreading this Ma-
gazine in the different parts of the two provinces, the publication of the se-
cond number will be delayed till April; and afterwards it will be published
monthly without interruption. The Editor's original intention was to publish
this work in monthly numbers, each consisting of forty-eight pages; but a
scarcity of printing paper obliges him to begin it on a smaller scale.



COMPEND

OF

UNIVERSAL HISTORY.

*THE MOSAIC HISTORY OF CREATION,
REVIEWED.*

OBVIOUS are the advantages of history, civil and ecclesiastical. It introduces us to the illustrious personages who flourished, and the great events which were accomplished, in the world and the church, in those remote ages of antiquity, with the occurrences which we must, otherwise, have been totally unacquainted. To review, in a summary manner, the history of providence, from the commencement of time to the age in which we live; including the long period of five thousand and eight hundred years, must be an employ, at once, instructive and entertaining.

The works of the Almighty, in the contemplation of which, the wise and devout part of mankind, of every age and of every country, have found equal profit and pleasure, may be comprehended under two grand divisions; the works of *creation*, and the works of *providence*.

To pave the way for a re-capitulation of the principal events of providence, we shall, in a cursory manner, review the Mosaic history of creation. The books of Moses are, confessedly, the most ancient writings now extant. His history of creation is, indeed, concise; but it is not less comprehensive.

A

Concerning

Concerning the origin of the universe various, discordant, contradictory theories have been advanced. The opinion, that it had no beginning, which has been held by certain Pagan philosophers, militates against the principles of sound philosophy no less than the doctrines of revelation. Even among those, who reject, as antisciptural and irrational; the supposition of the eternity of it, there is no small diversity of opinion. Of its great antiquity, ideas, manifestly fabulous, have been entertained; especially by the Chinese; the Chaldeans and the Egyptians. On this subject, christian writers, as well as pagan, have formed a variety of speculations. Were we, for a moment, to put revelation out of the question, and, in our inquiries concerning the antiquity of the world, proceed entirely on rational principles, we would find reason to conclude, that it is not of so great antiquity, as many philosophers and several divines have imagined. Let us recollect the general traditions of the most ancient nations; the concurring testimonies of the earliest philosophers and poets; the total deficiency of history prior to the Mosaic; the manifold absurdities and contradictions of those few accounts which pretend to great antiquity; the continued discoveries of new countries; the late invention of many useful arts and sciences, &c. Do not these considerations render it, in a high degree, probable, though not infallibly certain, that the world is not of a very great duration? But, without revelation, all speculations on this subject, are precarious and unsatisfactory. In the books of Moses, and the subsequent sacred writings, and in them alone, is an authentic, consistent, satisfactory account of the origin of all things to be found. That God, at the time, and in the manner, related by Moses, created the heavens and the earth, ever has been an article of the creed of both Jews and Christians.

The chronology of the world, which our best writers have almost universally adopted, is that of the celebrated Archbishop Usher. This computation, conformably

to the Hebrew text, places the creation four thousand and four years before the Christian æra.

Why, it has been queried, did not the Almighty create the world at a period much earlier? Presumptuous question! Shall mortal man arraign his omnipotent maker at his bar? Ever ought we to recollect, that He does not act according to the extent of his power; but in conformity to the wise determinations of his sovereign and resistless will. Who can, in any instance, say unto Him, *what doest thou?* Unnecessary is the question, At what season of the year was the world created; whether in spring or autumn? Suffice it to say, the fruits of the earth seem to have been originally produced in a state of full maturity. Nor is it unworthy of notice, that the civil year of the Jews commenced in autumn. I do not speak of the sacred year instituted at their egress from Egypt, which, in succeeding ages, regulated their religious festivals; but of their civil year, according to which they computed time prior to that period.

With regard to the Mosaic account of creation, there are, especially, two questions, which have occupied the attention of learned writers; and on which they have been divided in their opinions. The one is,—whether does Moses, in his history of creation, intend the *original production*, or only the *renovation* of the world, which, after existing for ages, to us, unknown, had now fallen into a state of disorder and decay? The other is—In what extent is the Mosaic account of creation to be interpreted,—whether of our earth only, with its environs; or of the solar system, comprehending the sun its centre, and the several opaque bodies, planets and comets, which revolve about that grand luminary; or of all worlds, visible and invisible, known and unknown? A discussion of these questions I am not now to attempt. The brevity of my plan forbids it. It may suffice for me to say, that, as we have no infallibly certain information concerning the origin of the universe, but what we derive from the sacred vo-

lume, of any world or worlds, existing prior to the Mosaic creation, it has said nothing. All such worlds seem to have been, to the inspired writers, totally unknown. Of the speculations and hypotheses of capricious scepticism, there is no end. Innumerable are the instances, in which mankind have discovered a greater desire to know what the Most High has wisely concealed from them, than to improve what he has been graciously pleased to reveal to them.

Under the appellations of the *heavens* and the *earth*, of which the Mosaic creation consists, are comprehended all worlds and all creatures.

The term *creation* seems to have, in the Mosaic history, two acceptations; a primary and a secondary. According to the former, it denotes the production of a world or worlds out of nothing. According to the latter, it signifies the formation of creatures, of various species, out of pre-existent matter. The great mass, which the Almighty produced on the first, underwent, on the five subsequent days, various modifications; and from it were formed the numerous and diversified material beings, with which the upper and lower worlds were replenished. These creatures, of various kinds, inhabitants of the earth, of the water, and of the air, the omnipotent, without doubt, could have produced in a moment. But, for wise purposes, he chose to perform the work, not in a moment, an hour, or a day; but six days. A bare repetition of the fanciful opinion, that by six days the sacred historian intends six thousand years, is a sufficient refutation of it.

In the Mosaic account of creation, there is no express mention of angels. But they, doubtless, are included in that brief recapitulation of the works of the preceding six days, Gen. 11. 1. *Thus were the heavens and the earth finished; and all the host of them.* That they were the first, or among the first, as they, doubtless, are the best, of the works of the great creator, is, in the highest degree, probable. Accordingly they are, in the sequel of the sacred volume, introduced as spectators,

spectators of the subsequent parts of the work. Thus the Almighty accosts Job—*Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding, who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Where-upon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner-stone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the angelical sons of God shouted for joy?*

What a stupendous work is creatio! Truly it is a work worthy of God. With what facility does he accomplish it! He said, *Let there be light; and there was light.* With the Almighty, to say is to command; and to command is to accomplish. He speaks, and he acts, in a manner worthy of himself.—In what a beautiful order does he proceed in creation! In it, how conspicuous is gradation! From the lowest, it advances to the highest order of created beings. From dead matter it rises to vegetative; from vegetative to sensitive, from sensitive to rational life. Here are no chasms; all the parts are admirably connected to make up one universal whole. Here is one chain of beings from the lowest up to the highest; from the insect to the archangel. Nor does the scale of creation advance by leaps; but only by gentle steps. One rises, in a gradual manner, above another; dead matter, unorganized earth, minerals, vegetables, insects, reptiles, fishes, birds, beasts, men, angels. In all the works of Deity, there is a visible gradation; a glorious progression, from a less to a more perfect state. In the three-fold œconomy of creation, providence, and grace, the observation of the wisest of men is verified, *the end of a thing is better than the beginning thereof.* Having made a variety of species of inferior beings, and, in every respect, fitted the world for his reception and accommodation, God formed that superior being, who, as vice-gerent of his great creator, was to have dominion over all the inferior creatures in this lower world.

The creation of man, as the last and best of the
works

works of the Almighty in our sublunary world, is introduced with peculiar solemnity. On this important occasion the Almighty speaks thus—*Let us make man in our likeness, after our image.* Was the Deity at a loss? Was he undetermined, whether, or in what manner, he should proceed? No, from an earliest eternity the plan was formed; and he, who formed, with equal facility, executed it. Is there not here a plain intimation of the superiority of man to all the other creatures below? That the phraseology, *let us make man*, alludes to the royal stile among men, is an opinion highly improbable: The mode of speaking in the plural number, among the potentates of the earth, seems to have been totally unknown in the times of Moses. Still more improbable is the opinion of some Jewish interpreters, who imagine, that, on this important occasion, the Almighty consulted with certain beings of the angelical kind, whom he was pleased to employ as co-adjutors, or, at least, as instruments, in the formation of man. Does not the scripture, every where, represent creation as the special prerogative, the peculiar work of the Deity? But may not the plural expression be intended to intimate the concurrence and co-agency of the sacred three, in the formation of man as, under his maker, lord of this lower world?

In the introductory account of creation, Gen. 1. i, it has been observed, the noun, that denotes the great agent in this work, is plural, and the verb, that expresses his agency in it, is singular. The Godhead is one and undivided; the persons are three, and, though not divided, distinguished one from another.

Of man alone, to the exclusion of all other creatures on earth, it is affirmed, that he was formed in the likeness and after the image of his maker. By this image of God, certain interpreters have understood that idea in the divine mind, in conformity to which man was created.

(To be Continued.)

PROOFS.

PROOFS

OF THE

*Being and perfections of Deity, from a brief survey of the
Heavens and the Earth.*

SKETCH OF ASTRONOMY. :

OUR all-gracious maker, in condensation to the weakness of our faculties, the brevity of our lives, and our many avocations, has comprised the knowledge, which is necessary to our improvement and happiness, in this imperfect and mortal state, within narrow boundaries. That path of life, which the greater part of christians are appointed to tread, allows but little opportunity for philosophical researches. But a sketch of christian philosophy, calculated to elevate the mind to high and honourable thoughts of God, must, to christians, even in the lowest circles of life, be acceptable and useful. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.* To this declaration of the devout psalmist agree the words of an apostolical writer, of the new testament.—*The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head.* Can any thing be more becoming rational creatures, than to investigate the works of Deity, in order to excite in themselves that superlative respect, and those devout affections, which constitute the essence of that praise, which is their reasonable and religious service? Are we disposed to employ ourselves in this improving and delightful exercise? The means and the motives are both at hand. His works present themselves to men of every clime, and of every condition, the savage as well as the sage, in a wonderful, an instructive, a pleasing variety. How admirable the plan; and how inimitable the execution!

The history of the origin of the noble science of astronomy, and of its progress in early times, is involved in no small obscurity, and has occasioned a great variety of speculations and conjectures; the canvassing of which could not afford either much information or amusement. The antiquity, as well as the utility of it, the Deity has been understood to intimate, when, concerning the heavenly luminaries, he spake thus: *Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.* Adam, in his state of innocence, we are informed by the Jewish Rabbins, had an extensive knowledge of astronomy. The inhabitants of the Antediluvian world, particularly Seth and his posterity, Josephus tells us, were acquainted with this science. The longevity of the patriarchs afforded them singular advantages and opportunities for making astronomical observations. At the dispersion occasioned by the confusion of languages, at the building of the Tower of Babel, Noah, we are told, retired with the children, who were born to him after the flood, into the north-eastern parts of Asia, and introduced the knowledge of astronomy into those countries. In this manner writers account for the early cultivation of the sciences in China, Siam, Japan, the dominions of the great Mogul, and other parts of the east. In the western world, as well as the eastern, among the Americans, as well as the Asiatics, particularly the natives of Mexico, writers have found sufficient proofs of an acquaintance with astronomy. But, there are especially two countries, which, in ancient times, were distinguished and famous for the cultivation of this sublime science; Chaldea and Egypt. Both these countries, it has been observed, were exceedingly proper for making astronomical observations, on account of the purity and serenity of their air. The temple of Belus, which was of an extraordinary height, it is said, was used as an astronomical observatory; and the lofty pyramids of Egypt, whatever may have been the original design of them, might answer the same purpose. For a proof
of

of the early study of astronomy among the Chaldeans, it has been observed, Alexander the Great, when he entered Babylon, found, upon inquiry, astronomical observations, some of which had been made about two thousand years before. This noble study, the patriarch Abraham, who was a native of Chaldea, is supposed to have, in an eminent manner, promoted. The knowledge collected from the traditional history of creation, the contemplation of the heavens and the earth, the experience of preceding generations, and the various gradual discoveries of the attributes and purposes of the Deity, which had been, by the long-lived patriarchs, transmitted from age to age; he, no doubt, was solicitous to diffuse among his co-temporaries. In the contemplation and study of the works of creation and Providence, the devout part of mankind, of every age and country, have found equal profit and pleasure. Does it not seem to have been the constant practice of the patriarch Isaac, at every approach of night, and re-appearance of the heavenly luminaries, to retire to the field for contemplation? *Isaac, says the sacred historian, went out to meditate in the field at the eventide.* Was it not a view of the starry heavens that suggested to the devout Jewish monarch, the following pious ejaculations; *When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, can I forbear to exclaim, Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou visitest him?* Celebrating the wonders of creation, the sweet psalmist of Israel elsewhere sings thus—*To him who alone doeth great wonders—to him that by wisdom made the heavens—to him that made great lights; the sun to rule by day; the moon and stars to rule by night.*

From Chaldea or Egypt, or, perhaps, both, the study of astronomy passed into Phenicia, and from Phenicia to Greece. The period at which this science was first cultivated among the Greeks, cannot be ascertained. Intimations of it, however, occur in the writings of Hesiod and Homer, who flourished almost nine hundred

years before the Christian æra. It was greatly improved by Thales, the Milesian, whose reputation for astronomical knowledge was raised to the highest pitch, by foretelling an eclipse, the arrival of which was attended with memorable circumstances. Especially was the astronomy of the Greeks improved and enriched by the discoveries of Pythagoras. This celebrated astronomer and mathematician, is believed to have been born in the island of Samos, and to have flourished about five hundred years before Christ. In search of knowledge, he, it is said, travelled into Egypt, then celebrated for the study of the sciences, where he became acquainted with geography, and the true solar system, and made himself master of the several branches of learning, for which that country was so famous among the nations of antiquity. Incited by an insatiable thirst for knowledge, he, we are told, afterwards visited Persia, Chaldea, and other parts of Asia, as far as India, where he conversed with the Gymnosophists, and, from them, acquired the knowledge of the philosophy and literature of the east. This great philosopher taught that the earth was of a spherical or round figure; that the moon reflected the rays of the sun; and that the comets are wandering stars, disappearing in the superior part of their orbits, and becoming visible only in the lower. He is said also to have exhibited the oblique course of the sun in the ecliptic; and to have first taught that the planet Venus is both the evening and the morning star. But, rational and philosophical, as the theory of Pythagoras was, it was universally reprobated, and speedily consigned to a state of oblivion.

Concerning the structure of the universe, the ancients, in general, entertained the most erroneous ideas. The Ptolemaic system almost universally prevailed. That the earth is an extended plain, surrounded by the ocean; that the sun, the moon, and the stars, are small luminous bodies, at no great distance from the earth, and created solely for the purpose of illuminating

ing it, was, for many ages, and among many nations, a prevailing opinion. Though, how to ascertain on what foundation the earth rested, or how to account for the velocity with which the heavenly luminaries seemed to move round it, they knew not. For a long series of ages, Europe continued in ignorance of astronomy, as well as of the other sciences. The revival of astronomical studies, some have dated from the times of the Emperor Frederick, who, in the thirteenth century; caused the astronomical treatise of Ptolemy, to be translated into Latin. Is it not a strong intimation of the utility of philosophy, and its subservience to the advancement of religion, that the revival of the former, and the reformation of the latter, happened almost at one time? Important, indeed, is the superstructure, which our modern philosophers have raised upon that noble foundation, which the great Bacon, upwards of two hundred years ago, began to lay. The honour of restoring and establishing the true solar system, belongs, in a peculiar manner, to Copernicus, a native of Thorn, born in the year 1472. All the books written by philosophers and astronomers, which could be found, he collected and perused; and all the various hypotheses they had invented for the solution of the celestial phenomena, he examined. The result was a firm persuasion; that the only true system was the Pythagorean; which makes the sun to be the centre, and the earth to move, not only round the sun, but also round its own axis. After twenty years spent in contemplating the phenomena of the heavens, in making mathematical calculations, in examining the observations of the ancients, and in making new ones of his own, he fully established that system of the universe, which now goes by his name, and is universally received by scientific men of all nations. Greatly has the science of astronomy been improved by the invention and use of telescopes. This improvement is attributed to Galileo, a famous mathematician and astronomer, the son of a Florentine nobleman, born in the year 1564.

Though it does not appear, that he originally invented, he, doubtless, improved the invention of telescopes; and applied them to astronomical purposes! Especially has modern astronomy been improved, enriched, and confirmed by the discoveries and experiments of that prodigy of mathematical knowledge, the incomparable Sir Isaac Newton.

Modern discoveries, in the sublime science of astronomy, have opened prospects, which, at once, astonish and delight, to a degree which words are unable to express. The most obvious distribution of those heavenly bodies, which we commonly call stars, is into two classes; permanent and planetary; fixed and wandering. The former are usually, by way of eminence, called stars; the latter planets. The stars, on account of their apparent unequal magnitudes, are divided into six classes; called stars of the first; stars of the second; stars of the third; stars of the fourth; stars of the fifth; and stars of the sixth magnitude. Of the stars some are visible to the naked eye; others are discovered only by the assistance of glasses, called telescopes. The latter have, on this account, been called telescopical stars. An ordinary telescope is said to discover, in several parts of the heavens, ten times as many stars as can be seen by the naked eye. The apparent unequal magnitudes of the stars, are, probably, owing to their unequal distances. To a person at the nearest star, our sun would, probably, appear no larger than that star does to us.

At such immense distances are the stars from us, that, it is supposed, a ball shot from a loaded cannon, and flying with undiminished velocity, would travel several hundred thousand years before it could reach the nearest of them.

(To be Continued.)

THEOLOGY.

Evidences in favour of Christianity.

THAT, in the Augustan age, there flourished, in Judæa, an extraordinary person, called Jesus Christ, is a fact better authenticated, than that there lived such men as Cyrus, Alexander, or Julius Cæsar. There are more historical monuments to attest his existence and character, and infinitely more numerous and incontestible vestiges in the present day, to prove that there was such a person as Christ, than that there lived in past ages, such potent monarchs or illustrious conquerors. Is it certain that Christianity now exists in the world? No less certain is it that Jesus Christ once lived in it.

Many of the public monuments, which the renowned heroes of antiquity left behind them, have long since perished. Their magnificent palaces, their temples, their mausoleums, their opulent cities, are no more. Few are the remaining visible traces of the battles they fought, the empires they established, the laws they enacted, and the universal devastation they once spread around them. The kingdoms they conquered have, by the universal instability of human condition, undergone many revolutions, have gained and lost their liberty, and experienced all those reverses to which terrestrial glory is subjected. The curious traveller explores large regions in search of standing records of the greatness of former princes; traverses immense countries, once the seat of science and liberty, now the abode of barbarism and slavery; once swarming with inhabitants, now a dreary, inhospitable solitude; he searches, but in vain, for cities, and temples, and palaces, in the very situation where they once stood. Babylon is now fallen! Persepolis and Ecbatana are no more! Long have travellers disputed, without ascertaining, the site of ancient Nineveh, *that exceeding*

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ing great city of three days journey. Few are the remaining signatures, in Asia Minor or in Judea, of Alexander's victorious arms. Few are the standing memorials in Gaul or in Britain, to evince that there was such a person as Julius Cæsar, who subdued the one, and invaded the other.

But that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, who lived, died and rose again, and founded a spiritual empire of religion, is an important fact, which the visible state of almost all Europe, and a considerable part of America, not to speak of other countries, sufficiently evinces. The customs and usages of every nation necessarily imply a cause, to which they owe their existence, and suppose a date from which they commence. Religious institutions so extensively received, and religious solemnities so extensively celebrated, lead the inquiring mind through past ages to the period at which they began, to the person who established them, and the source from which they originally flow. Do we see numbers of great and populous kingdoms, however they differ in other things, agreed in baptising their offspring in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; in commemorating their divine Redeemer by the sacred memorials of bread and wine; in appropriating the first day of the week stately to his solemn worship? How shall we account for institutions so extensively received and practised? Were they instituted in the present age? Did they commence in the times of our immediate ancestors? No, we can trace the sacred stream to its source. We can recur to times in which no such usages were known; times in which the Christian institution had not commenced; in which Judaism and Paganism overspread *the whole* inhabited world. Do the present state of the Jews, their tenets, their ceremonial observances, their peculiar customs, their dispersion into all the nations of the world, yet remaining a distinct, separate body, through all the various changes
and

revolutions, which affect kingdoms and communities, furnish an incontestible proof, that there existed such a person as Moses, the famous Jewish law-giver? And does not the evidence, that arises from the visible state of the christian world, irrefragably prove, that there lived and died in Judea, that extraordinary person, whom we call Jesus Christ; who was born in the reign of Augustus Cæsar, and suffered under Pontius Pilate; and by whom christianity was introduced, and established in the world?

THE COMPLETION OF PROPHECY

Exemplified in the destruction of Jerusalem, a striking proof of the truth of Revelation.

OF all the various proofs, by which the truth of revelation has been evinced, that which arises from the exact fulfilment of prophecy, is, perhaps, the most obvious and convincing. Numerous are the instances, in which this observation might be exemplified. Events the most improbable, which no human sagacity could foresee or foretell, have been, in the most circumstantial manner, foretold; and the predictions literally fulfilled. The signal exemplification of this truth, to which I shall, at present, confine myself, occurs in the history of the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem; which terminated in the total and final dispersion of the Jewish nation.

At an early period was this dreadful catastrophe foretold. Upwards of fifteen hundred years before it happened, Moses, in the most striking manner, predicted it. Between his prophetic description in the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, and the historical relation of Flavius Josephus, who was an eyewitness of it, there is such a surprising agreement, in all the material circumstances, that no man, friend of christianity or foe, can candidly compare the one with

the other, without astonishment. To this early intimation from Moses, the predictions of the subsequent prophets agree. To transcribe all those predictions the brevity of our plan forbids. A specimen may suffice. *The Lord, says the Hebrew lawgiver, shall bring a nation against thee from far, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand. The people of the prince that shall come, says Daniel, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.* Could any degree of human sagacity or political wisdom foresee, at so early a period, the tragical scene, which these prophets, in such an explicit manner, foretel? Must they not have been inspired by that omniscient spirit to whom all events, past, present, and to come, are equally known? In a manner still more full and circumstantial does our Lord, in the days of his personal ministry, predict the speedy approach of this unparal- leled catastrophe. The fearful prodigies and signs, which were to precede it; the unexampled and unequalled sufferings, which the unhappy Jews were to undergo; the dreadful concomitants and consequences of the total destruction of the city; and the short time in which all these things were to be accomplished, he foretels, in a manner that has the appearance of a history of a past, rather than a prophecy of a future event. Thus he speaks, *there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. The days shall come upon thee, O Jerusalem! when thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and shall not leave thee one stone upon another. And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights; and great signs shall there be from heaven. There shall be great tribulation, such as never happened from the beginning of the world, to this time. They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down, of the Gentiles. This generation*

generation shall not pass away, till all these things be fulfilled. Tremendous predictions! But the event was not less tremendous than the prediction. A complication of calamities this, which never has been, and, probably, never will be equalled in the history of mankind. 'Could human wisdom foresee these extraordinary occurrences? Was there, in the days of our Lord's humiliation, any probability of such an event? not the smallest. Universal peace prevailed.

Numerous preternatural and alarming signs preceded this tremendous catastrophe. In the days of Claudius Cæsar, a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem, there happened, in Judea, a prodigious tempest, most vehement winds and rain, terrible lightning and thunder; accompanied with fearful tremblings and roarings of the earth. Previous to the invasion of Judea, a star, in the form of a sword, hung over the city a whole year. In the dead of the night, at the time of the feast of tabernacles, a light similar to that of the meridian sun, shone, for half an hour, on the temple and places adjacent. The great eastern gate of the temple; which was of solid brass, and of such bulk and weight, that twenty men were scarcely sufficient to shut it, though it was fastened with strong bolts, suddenly opened of its own accord. The priests watching in the temple, at the feast of Pentecost, heard a voice, as of a great multitude, crying, *Let us go hence.* Even before the sun went down, there appeared armies in battle array, and encountering in the air; with weapons glittering, and chariots which seemed to compass the whole country, and invest the great cities; especially Jerusalem. For no less than seven years and a half, a countryman, named Jesus, ran up and down the streets of Jerusalem, especially at the solemn festivals, crying, in the most doleful accents, *wo to Jerusalem! wo to the city! wo to the temple! wo to the people!* And, though cruelly punished, nothing could restrain him from crying; till at last, as he was uttering these words, *wo to myself also,* he was instantly struck

struck dead by a stone from a sling. Were those extraordinary appearances insignificant or unmeaning? Far from it. They were, as our Lord had foretold, only the beginning of sorrow; omens and forerunners of calamities and miseries unexampled in the annals of the world.

The Roman army, under Vespasian, having entered Judea from the north-east, desolated city and country. In the seventieth year of the christian æra, on the Lord's day, this great army first encamped before Jerusalem. On the first arrival of it, the christians, crediting the predictions and following the directions of their divine master, fled from Jerusalem, and hid themselves in the mountainous parts of the country. But the Jews, judicially and awfully infatuated, instead of submitting to Vespasian, who is said to have been a merciful general, madly resisted; nay, bent on their own destruction, they, in many instances, encountered and massacred one another. At Jerusalem, especially, was the scene tragical and bloody beyond description. Its inhabitants, as an additional proof of their infatuation, were divided into factions and parties. These, though they occasionally united to make furious, but unsuccessful attacks on the Romans, often murdered one another. Nay, shocking to relate, they even massacred one another in sport; pretending to try the sharpness of their swords. The multitude of unburied bodies, corrupting the air, produced a fearful pestilence. Along with sword and pestilence, famine prevailed to such a degree, that they fed on one another. Ladies, otherwise delicate, broiled their sucking infants and ate them.

The first breach, it has been observed, was made, in the lower city, on the Lord's day. On that day the temple was burnt; on that day also, the upper city, otherwise called the citadel, was taken and burnt.

After an obstinate defence, for six months, the city was taken, and immense numbers of its inhabitants put to the sword. A Roman commander, that the words
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of our Lord might be literally fulfilled, ordered the foundations of the temple to be ploughed up. To such a degree was Titus, notwithstanding his usual clemency, provoked by the obstinacy of the Jews, that he is said to have crucified them before the walls of the city as long as he had wood for erecting crosses. The destruction of Jerusalem happened at the time of one of the three annual Jewish festivals; when, it is computed, there might be almost three millions of souls in the city. No less than eleven hundred thousand are said to have perished in it, by sword, famine and pestilence. Between two and three hundred thousand were cut off in other places. Almost one hundred thousand were taken prisoners, and sent into Egypt and Syria, to be sold for slaves, exposed for shows, or devoured by wild beasts. Almost incredible are the cruelties and massacres, which that devoted people suffered in succeeding times. In a dreadful war, about sixty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, occasioned by an imposter pretending to be the Messiah, six hundred thousand Jews are said to have been slain; besides what perished by famine and pestilence. The very rivers, it is said, overflowed with human blood, and the sea, into which they ran, was, for some miles, marked with it.

Such were the unparalleled calamities and miseries, which our Lord foresaw and foretold to befall the unhappy Jews; and which, in exact conformity to his prediction, different historians have recorded.

Is not the coincidence, in every material circumstance, between his predictions of this unexpected and improbable event, and the historical account, which Josephus a Jew, and also Tacitus and Suetonius Romans, all avowed enemies to christianity, have given of it—truly striking? Could the three evangelical histories, which contain the predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, be compiled and published after the event was accomplished? It is impossible. The evangelical writers, who record these predictions, far from com-

piling and publishing their histories after the destruction of Jerusalem, appear to have died before that event happened. Is it not truly remarkable, that the three of the four evangelists, who foretold this dreadful calamity, died before it was accomplished ; and the fourth, the only one who survived, predicted nothing concerning it ?

Is it not also very remarkable, that the first encampment of the Roman army before Jerusalem ; the first breach in the lower city ; the burning of the temple ; and the taking and burning of the citadel, should all happen on the Lord's day ? Was this recurrence of the Lord's day, on four such memorable occasions, the effect of accident or chance ? No. It was, replies an ingenious writer, among all times and seasons determined by omniscience from the foundation of the world. Does it not carry in it a strong intimation, that, though this dreadful calamity befel the Jews, on account of a long series of complicated and aggravated crimes, that which, in an especial manner, procured and hastened it, was a recent enormous deed, the crucifixion of the Lord of glory ; to perpetuate the memory of whose triumphant resurrection, this day was instituted, and will continue to be observed in the christian church, to the end of the world ? Our Lord, prior to his death had said, *this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.* In this, as well as all other respects, the prophecy was literally accomplished. The destruction of both city and temple of Jerusalem, the total overthrow of the nation and the church of the Jews, happened in less than forty years after the prophecy was delivered. Many of that generation, therefore, must have been eye-witnesses of its awful completion, and sharers in the horrors and miseries which accompanied it.

The proof of the inspiration of the scriptures and truth of revelation, arising from the exact fulfilment of prophecy, I shall continue occasionally in the subsequent numbers.

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To the Public.

SOLICITOUS for the spread of useful knowledge the editor has, for some time, employed his moments of reflection, in concerting the plan of a new periodical work, the first number of which, as a specimen, he now offers to the public. To distinguished refinement in sentiment or composition, to new discoveries or extraordinary improvements,—he does not pretend. In justice to himself, however, he is constrained to say, his publication will furnish a more comprehensive view of history, of science, and of religion, than any one book, with which he is acquainted. He had, in early life, a regular academical education, and has published several pieces, which have had a favourable reception from the public. He writes, especially, for the instruction and improvement of that numerous class of readers, whose situation does not permit them either to expend much money in purchasing, or to employ much time in reading a variety of books. His ultimate aim is to elucidate and defend the great doctrines and duties of revealed religion. His principles, political or religious, he is not either afraid or ashamed to avow or defend. His religious sentiments will be found conformable to the confession and catechisms of the church of Scotland, the doctrinal articles of the church of England, and the creeds of the other reformed churches. In attachment to the British constitution, and that best of sovereigns, in whose dominions he had the happiness to be born, and hopes to die, he does not yield to any of his fellow-subjects. He has ample recommendations in his power; but is determined to leave his work to speak for itself. It consists mostly of his own compilations; and he solicits no higher degree of patronage than, upon a candid perusal, it shall be found to merit.