*each* occasion. And these remarks being  
taken into account, I premise that all difficulty  
is removed from the synopsis above  
given: the only resulting inferences being,  
(a) *that the narratives are genuine truthful  
accounts of facts underlying them all:* and  
(b) *that they are, and must be, absolutely  
and entirely independent of one another.*

For (1) the four accounts of the FIRST  
denial are remarkably coincident. In *all  
four*, Peter was in the outer hall, where  
the fire was made (see on ver. 69): *a maid  
servant* (Mt. Mk. L.),—*the maid servant  
who kept the door* (John) taxed him (in  
*differing words in each*, the comparison  
of which is very instructive) with being a  
disciple of Jesus: in all four he denies,  
again in differing words. I should be disposed  
to think this first recognition to  
have been *but one*, and the variations to  
be owing to the independence of the report.  
(2) In the narratives of the SECOND  
denial of our first preliminary remark is well  
exemplified. The same maid (Mk. possibly:  
but not necessarily— perhaps, the  
*maiden* in the *vestibule* or *porch*) other  
*maid* (Mt.), *another* (*male*) *servant* (Luke),  
the *standers-by generally* (John), charged  
him: again, in differing words. It seems  
he had retreated from the fire as if going  
to depart altogether (see note, ver. 69),  
and so attracted the attention both of the  
group at the fire and of the porteress. It  
would appear to me that for some reason,  
John was not so precisely informed of  
the details of this as of the other denials.  
The “*going out*” (Mt. Mk.) is a super-  
added detail, of which the “*standing and  
warming himself*” (John) does not seem  
to be possessed. (3) On the THIRD occasion,  
*the standers-by recognize him as a  
Galilean* (*simply*, Mk. [txt.], Luke: *by  
his dialect*, Mt., an interesting additional  
particular),—and *a kinsman of Malchus*crowns the charge by *identifying* him in a  
way which might have proved most perilous,  
had not Peter immediately withdrawn.  
This third time again, his denials  
are differently reported:—but here, which  
is most interesting, we have in Matt.’s and  
Mark’s “*he began to curse and to swear*” a  
very plain intimation, that he spoke *not  
one sentence only*, but a *succession of  
vehement denials.*

It will be seen, that for fair comment on  
the fourfold testimony, we must not commit  
the mistake of requiring the recognitions,  
and the recognizers, in each case,  
to have been identical in the four. Had  
they been thus identical, in a case of this  
kind, the four accounts *must have sprung  
from a common source*, or have been  
*corrected to one another:* whereas their  
present varieties and coincidences are  
most valuable as indications of *truthful  
independence*. What I wish to impress  
on the minds of my readers is, that in narratives  
which have sprung from such truthful  
independent accounts, they must be  
prepared sometimes (as e.g. in the details  
of the day of the Resurrection) for discrepancies  
which, *at our distance, we cannot  
satisfactorily arrange:* now and then we  
may, as in *this* instance, be able to do  
so with something like verisimilitude :—in  
some cases, *not at all*. But whether we  
can thus arrange them or not, being thoroughly  
persuaded of the holy truthfulness  
of the Evangelists, and of the divine guidance  
under which they wrote, our faith is  
in no way shaken by such discrepancies.  
We value them rather, as testimonies to  
independence: and are sure, that if for one  
moment we could be put in *complete possession  
of all the details as they happened,*  
each account would find its justification,  
and the reasons of all the variations would  
appear. And this I firmly believe will one  
day be the case. (See the narrative of  
Peter’s denials ably treated in an article in  
the “Christian Observer” for Feb. 1853.)

**69.]** “An oriental house is usually  
built round a quadrangular interior court;  
into which there is a passage (sometimes  
arched) through the front part of the house,  
closed next the street by a heavy folding  
gate, with a small wicket for single persons,  
kept by a porter. In the text, the interior  
court, often paved or flagged, and open to  
the sky, is the ‘*hall*,’ where the attendants  
made a fire; and the passage beneath the  
front of the house from the street to  
this court, is the *pro-aulion* (*‘porch*,’  
Mark xiv. 68), or *pylon* (*‘porch*,’ ver.  
71). The place where Jesus stood before  
the High Priest may have been an  
open room or place of audience on the  
ground floor, in the rear or on one side of  
the court; such rooms open in front, being  
customary.” Robinson.

**70.] I know  
not what thou sayest** is an indirect form of  
denial, conveying in it absolute ignorance  
of the circumstances alluded to.

**73.] thy speech**—Wetstein gives many  
examples of various provincial dialects of  
Hebrew. The Galilæans could not pronounce  
properly the gutturals, and they  
used “*t*” for “*s*”.

**75.] out**—viz.  
from the *porch* where the second  
and third denial had taken place: the  
motive being, as Chrysostom gives it,  
“that he might not be convicted by his  
tears.”  
  
**CHAP. XXVII. 1, 2.]** JESUS IS LED