adding it to the other, which he found ready compoſed to his hand, he made it a complete hiſtory of the Jewiſh reſtoration.

This book 13 written in Chaldee from chap. iv. 8. to chap. vii. 27. As this part of the work chiefly con­tains letters, converſations, and decrees expreſſed in that language, the fidelity of the hiſtorian has probably in­duced him to take down the very words which were uſed. The people, too, had been accuſtomed to the Chaldee during the captivity, and probably underſtood it better than Hebrew; for it appears from Nehemiah’s account, chap. viii. 2, 8. that all could not underſtand the law.

The book of Nehemiah, as has been already obſerved, bears, in the Latin bibles, the title of the *ſecond book* of *Eſdras;* the ancient canons likewiſe give it the ſame name, becauſe, perhaps, it was conſidered as a ſequel to the book of Ezra. In the Hebrew bibles it has the name of *Nehemiah* prefixed to it; which name is retained in the Engliſh bible. But though that chief is by the writer of the ſecond book of Maccabees affirm­ed to have been the author of it, there cannot, we think, be a doubt but that either it was written at a later period, or had additions made to it after Nehemiah’s death.

With the book of Nehemiah the hiſtory of the Old Teſtament concludes. This is ſuppoſed to have taken place about A. M. 3574- A. C. 434. But Prideaux with more probablity has fixed it at A. M. 3595. See Nehemiah.

It is uncertain who was the author of the book of Eſther. *Clement* of Alexandria, and many commen­tators, have aſcribed it to Mordecai; and the book itſelf ſeems to favour this opinion; for we are told in chap. ix. 20. that “Mordecai wrote theſe things.” Others have ſuppoſed that Ezra was the author; but the more probable opinion of the Talmudiſts is, that the great ſynagogue (ſee Synagogue), to perpetuate the me­mory of the deliverance of the Jews from the conſpiracy of Hainan, and to account for the origin of the feaſt of Purim, ordered this book to be compoled, very likely of materials left by Mordecai, and afterwards approved and admitted it into the ſacred canon. The time when the events which it relates happened, is ſuppoſed by ſome to have been in the reign of Artaxerxes Longi­manus, and by others in that of Darius the ſon of Hyſtaſpes, called by the ſacred penman *Ahaſuerus.*

Concerning the author of the book of Job there are many different opinions. Some have ſuppoſed that Job himſelf wrote it in *Syriac* or *Arabic,* and that it was afterwards tranſlated by Moſes. Others have thought that El*ihu* wrote it; and by others it is aſcribed to Moſes, to Solomon, to Iſaiah, and to Ezra. To give even an abridgment of the arguments brought in ſupport of theſe various opinions would fill a volume, and at laſt leave the reader in his preſent uncertainty. He who has leiſure and inclination to weigh them may ſtudy the ſecond ſection of the ſixth book of Warburton’s Divine Legation of Moſes, together with the ſeveral works there referred to; but the queſtion at iſſue is of very little importance to us. The book of job, by whomſoever it was written, and whether it be a real hiſtory, or a dramatical poem founded on hiſtory, has been always eſteemed a portion of canonical ſcripture, and is one of the moſt ſublime compoſitions in the ſacred volume.

The book of Job appears to ſtand ſingle and unpa­ralleled in the ſacred volume. It ſeems to have little connection with the other writings of the Hebrews, and no relation whatever to the affairs of the Iſraelites. The ſcene is laid in Iduaea @@(H); the hiſtory of an in­habitant of that country is the baſis of the narrative;

@@@(h) “The information which the learned have endeavoured to collect from the writings and geography of the Greeks concerning the country and reſidence of Job and his friends, appears to me (lays Dr Lowth) ſo very inconcluſive, that I am inclined to take a quite different method for the ſolution of this queſtion, by applying ſolely to the Sacred Writings: the hints with which they have furniſhed me towards the illuſtration of this ſubject, I ſhall explain as briefly as poſſible.

“The land of *Uz,* or *Gnutz,* is evidently *Idumae,* as appears from Lam. iv. 21. *Uz* was the grandſon of Seir the Horite, Gen. xxxvi. 20, 21, 28. 1. Chron. i. 38, 42. Seir inhabited that mountainous tract which was called by his name antecedent to the time of Abraham; but his poſterity being expelled, it was occupied by the Idumaeans: Gen. xiv. 6. Deut. ii. 12. Two other men are mentioned of the name *Uz;* one the grandſon of Shem, the other the ſon of Nachυr, the brother of Abraham; but whether any diſtrict was called after their name is not clear. Idumæa is a part of Arabia Petræa, ſituated on the ſouthern extremity of the tribe of Judah: Numb, xxxiv. 3. Joſh. xv. 1, 21. The land of Uz therefore appears to have been between Egypt and Philiſtia, Jer. xxv. 20. where the order of the places ſeems to have been accurately obſerved in reviewing the different nations from Egypt to Babylon; and the ſame people ſeem again to be deſcribed in exactly the ſame ſituations, Jer. xlvi—1.

*“Children of the East,* or *Eastern people,* ſeems to have been the general appellation for that mingled race of peo­ple (as they are called, Jer. xxv. 20.) who inhabited between Egypt and the Euphrates, bordering upon judea from the ſouth to the call; the Idumaeans, the Amalekites, the Midianites, the Moabites, the Ammonites. See Judges vi. 3. and Iſa. xi. 14. Of theſe the Idumaeans and Amalekites certainly poſſeſſed the ſouthern parts. See Numb. xxxiv. 3, xiii. 29. 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, 10. This appears to be the true ſtate of the cale: The whole region be­tween Egypt and Euphrates was called the Eaſt, at firſt in reſpect to Egypt (where the learned Joſ. Mede thinks the Iſraelites acquired this mode ofſpeaking. Mede’s *Works,* p. 580.), and afterwards abſolutely and with­out any relation to ſituation or circumſtances. Abraham is ſaid to have ſent the ſons of his concubines, Hagar and Keturah, “eaſtward, to the country which is commonly called the Eaſt." Gen. xxv. 6. where the name of the region ſeems to have been derived from the ſame ſituation. Solomon is reported “to have excelled in wiſdom all the Eaſtern people, and all Egypt,” 1 Kings iv. 30.; that is, all the neighbouring people on that quarter: for