mention is made of the goſpels of St Matthew, St Mark, and St John, the Acts of the Apoſtles, and the epiſtle to the Galatians; and it clearly appears from the very objections of Porphyry, that the books to which he al­ludes were the ſame which we poſſeſs at preſent. Thus he objects to the repetition of a generation in St Mat­thew’s genealogy; to Matthew’s call; to the quota­tion of a text from lſaiah, which is found in a pſalm aſcribed to Aſaph; to thc calling of the lake of Tibe­rias a ſea; to the expreſſion in St Matthew, "the abo­mination of deſolation;” to the variation in Matthew and Mark upon the text “the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs,” Matthew citing it from Iſaias, Mark from the prophets; to John’s application of the term *Word;* to Chriſt’s change of intention about going up to the feaſt of tabernacles (John vii. 8.); to the judge­ment denounced by St Peter upon Ananias and Sapphira, which he calls an imprecation of death.

The inſtances here alleged ſerve in ſome meaſure to ſhow the nature of Porphyry’s objections, and prove that Porphyry had read the goſpels with that ſort of attention which a writer would employ who regarded them as the depoſitaries of the religion which he at­tacked. Beſide theſe ſpecifications, there exiſts in the writings of ancient Chriſtians general evidence, that the places of Scripture, upon which Porphyry had made re­marks, were very numerous.

The internal evidence to prove the authenticity of the New Teſtament conſiſts of two parts: The nature of the ſtyle, and the coincidence of the New Teſtament with the hiſtory of the times.

The ſtyle of the New Teſtament is ſingular, and differs very widely from the ſtyle of claſſical authors. It is full of Hebraiſms and Syriaſms; a circumſtance which pious ignorance has conſidered as a fault, and which, even ſo late as the preſent century, it has attempted to remove; not knowing that theſe very deviations from Grecian purity afford the ſtrongeſt preſumption in its favour; for they prove, *that the New Testment was written by men of Hebrew origin, and is therefore a pro­duction of the first century.* After the death of the firſt Jewiſh converts, few of the Jews turned preachers of the goſpel; the Chriſtians were generally ignorant of Hebrew, and conſequently could not write in the ſtyle of the New Teſtament. After the deſtruction of Jeruſalem and the diſperſion of the Jews, their lan­guage muſt have been blended with that of other na­tions, and their vernacular phraſeology almoſt entirely loſt. The language of the early fathers, though not always the pureſt claſſic Greek, has no reſemblance to that of the New Teſtament, not even excepting the works of the few who had a knowledge of the Hebrew; as Origen, Epiphanius, and Juſtin Martyr, who being a native of Paleſtine, might have written in a ſtyle ſimilar to that of the New Teſtament, had ſuch a ſtyle then prevailed. He that ſuſpects the New Teſtament to be the forgery of a more recent period, ought to produce ſome perſon who has employed a ſimilar diction; but thoſe who are converſant with eaſtern writings know well that a foreigner, who has not been enured to eaſt­

ern manners and modes of thinking from his infancy, can never imitate with ſucceſs the oriental ſtyle, much leſs forge a hiſtory or an epiſtle which contains a thouſand incidental alluſions, which nothing but truth could ſuggeſt. To imitate cloſely the ſtyle of the New Teſta­ment is even more difficult than to imitate that of any other oriental book; for there is not a ſingle author, even among the Jews themſelves, ſince the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, that has compoſed in a ſtyle in the leaſt degree like it @@(z).

But though the books of the New Teſtament bear ſo cloſe a reſemblance in idiom, there is a diverſity of ſtyle which ſhows them to be the work of different perſons. Whoever reads with attention the epiſtles of Paul, muſt be convinced that they were all written by the ſame author. An equal degree of ſimilarity is to be found between the goſpel and 1ſt epiſtle of John. The wri­tings of St John and St Paul exhibit marks of an ori­ginal genius which no imitation can ever attain. The character of Paul as a writer is drawn with great judge­ment by Michaelis: “His mind overflows with ſentiment, yet he never loſes fight of his principal object, but hurried on by the rapidity of thought, diſcloſes fre­quently in the middle a concluſion to be made only at the end. To a profound knowledge of the Old Teſtament he joins the acuteneſs oſ philoſophical wiſdom, which he diſplays in applying and expounding the ſacred writings; and his explanations are therefore ſometimes ſo new and unexpected, that ſuperficial obſervers might be tempted to ſuppoſe them erroneous. The fire of his genius, and his inattention to ſtyle, occaſion fre­quently a twofold obſcurity, he being often too conciſe to be underſtood except by thoſe to whom he immedi­ately wrote, and not ſeldom on the other hand ſo full of his ſubject, as to produce long and difficult parentheſes, and a repetition of the ſame word even in different lenſes. With a talent for irony and ſatire, he unites the moſt refined ſenſibility, and tempers the ſeverity of his cenſures by expreſſions of tenderneſs and affection; nor does he ever forget in the vehemence of his zeal the rules of modeſty and decorum. He is a writer, in ſhort, of ſo ſingular and wonderful a compoſition, that it would be difficult to find a rival. That truly ſenſible and ſagacious philoſopher Locke was of the ſame opinion, and contended that St Paul was without an equal.”

Poems have been forged and aſcribed to former ages with ſome ſucceſs. Philoſophical treatiſes might be in­vented which it would be difficult to detect; but there is not a ſingle inſtance on record where an attempt has been made to forge a hiſtory or a long epiſtle, where the fraud has not been either fully proved, or rendered ſo ſuſpicious that few are weak enough to believe it. Whoever attempts to forge a hiſtory or an epiſtle in the name of an ancient author, will be in great danger of contradicting the hiſtory or the manners of that age, eſpecially if he relate events which are not mentioned in general hiſtory, but ſuch as refer to a ſingle city, ſect, religion, or ſchool.

The difficulty of forging ſuch hiſtories as the goſpels,

@@@(z) The ſtyle of Clemens Romanus may perhaps be an exception. By many eminent critics it has been thought to like to that oſ the epiſtle to the Hebrews, as to give room for the opinion that Clement either was the author of that epiſtle, or was the perſon who tranſlated it from the Syro-Chaldaic language, in which it was originally compoſed.