and has generally left the text itself untouched, though in ſome few examples he has ventured to eraſe it.

It is certain, that this manuſcript is of very high an­tiquity, though it has been diſputed which of the two in this reſpect is entitled to the preference, the V*aticanus* or *Alexandrinus.* The editors of the Roman edi­tion of the Septuagint, in 1587, referred the date of the Vatican manuſcript to the fourth century, the pe­riod to which the advocates for its great rival refer the *Codex Alexandrinus.* More moderate, and perhaps more accurate, are the ſentiments of that great judge of an­tiquity Montfaucon, who, in his *Bibliotheca Bibliοthecarum,* p. 3. refers it to the fifth or ſixth century; and adds, that though he had ſeen other manuſcripts of equal antiquity, he had found none at the ſame time ſo complete.

The *Codex Vaticanus* has a great reſemblance to the manuſcripts noted by Wetſtein, C. D. L. 1. 13. 33. 69. 102. and to the Latin, Coptic, and Ethiopie verſions; but it is preferable to moſt of them, in being almoſt entirely free from thoſe undeniable interpolations and arbitrary corrections which are very frequently found in the above-mentioned manuſcripts, eſpecially in D. 1. and 69. It may be applied, therefore, as a mean not only of confirming their genuine readings, but of detecting and correcting thoſe that are ſpurious. It is written with great accuracy, and is evidently a faithful copy of the more ancient manuſcript from which it was tranſcribed. Peculiar readings, or ſuch as are found neither in other manuſcripts nor ancient verſions, are ſeldom diſcovered in the *Codex Vaticanus;* and of the few which have been actually found, the greateſt part are of little importance. But in proportion as the number of ſuch readings is ſmall, the number of thoſe is great; in ſupport of which few only, though ancient authorities, have been hitherto produced. But this manuſcript has not throughout the whole New Teſtament the ſame uniform text.

As we have now a beautiful printed edition of the Alexandrine manuſcript by Dr Woide, it is much to be wiſhed that we had alſo an exact impreſſion of the Vatican manuſcript. From the ſuperſtitious fears and intolerant ſpirit of the inquiſition at Rome, all acceſſs to this manuſcript was refuſed to the Abbé Spoletti, who preſented a memorial for that purpoſe. Unleſs the pope interpoſe his authority, we muſt therefore deſpair of having our wiſhes gratified; but from the liberality of ſentiment which the preſent pontiff has ſhown on ſeveral occaſions, we hope that the period is not far diſtant when the Vatican library will be open to the learned; and when the pope will think it his greateſt honour to encourage their reſearches.

The moſt valuable editions of the Greek New Teſtament are thoſe of Mill, Bengel, and Wetſtein.

The edition of Mill, which was only finiſhed 14 days before his death, occupied the attention of the au­thor for 30 years.

The collections of various readings which had been made before the time of Mill, the Veleſian, the Barberini, thoſe of Stephens, the London Polyglot, and Fell’s edition, with thoſe which the Biſhop had left in manu­ſcript, and whatever he was able to procure elſewhere, he brought together into one large collection. He made likewiſe very conſiderable additions to it. He

collated ſeveral original editions more accurately than had been done before: he procured extracts from Greek manuſcripts, which had never been collated; and of ſuch as had been before collated, but not with ſufficient attention, he obtained more complete extracts. It is ſaid that he has collected from manuſcripts, fathers, and verſions, not leſs than 30,000 various readings. This collection, notwithſtanding its many imperfections, and the ſuperiority of that of Wetſtein, is ſtill abſolutely neceſſary to every critic: for Wetſtein has omitted a great number of readings which are to be found in Mill, eſ­pecially thoſe which are either taken from the Vulgate, or confirm its readings. Mill was indeed too much at­tached to this verſion; yet he cannot be accuſed of par­tiality in producing its evidence, becauſe it is the duty of a critic to examine the witneſſes on both ſides of the queſtion: and Wetſtein, by too frequently neglect­ing the evidence in favour of the Vulgate, has rendered his collection leſs perfect than it would otherwiſe have- been. He likewiſe added, as far as he was able, read­ings from the ancient verſions; and is much to be com­mended for the great attention which he paid to the quotations of the fathers; the importance of which he had ſagacity enough to diſcern.

It cannot, however, be denied, that Mill’s Greek Teſtament has many imperfections, and ſome of real im­portance. His extracts from manuſcripts often are not only incomplete, but erroneous; and it is frequently neceſſary to correct his miſtakes from the edition of Wet­ſtein. His extracts from the oriental verſions are alſo imperfect, becauſe he was unacquainted with theſe lan­guages; and in ſelecting readings from the Syriac, the Arabic, and Ethiopie, he was obliged to have recourse to the Latin tranſlations, which are annexed to thoſe verſions in the London Polyglot.

The great diligence which Mill had ſhown in collec­ting ſo many various readings, alarmed the clergy as if the Chriſtian religion had been in danger of ſubverſion. It gave occaſion for a time to the triumphs of the deiſt, and expoſed the author to many attacks. But it is now univerſally known, that not a ſingle article of the Chriſtian religion would be altered though a deiſt were allowed to ſelect out of Mill’s 30,000 readings what­ever he ſhould think moſt inimical to the Chriſtian cauſe.

In 1734, Bengel abbot of Alpirſpach, in the duchy of Wurtemburg, publiſhed a new edition of the Greek Teſtament. The fears which Mill had excited began to ſubſide upon this new publication; for Bengel was univerſally eſteemed a man of piety. Bengel was not only diligent in the examination of various readings, but in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word conſcientious; for he conſidered it as an offence againſt the Deity, if, through his own fault, that is, through levity or careleſſneſs, he introduced a falſe reading into the ſacred text. His object was not merely to make a collection of readings, and leave the choice of them to the judge­ment of the reader, but to examine the evidence on both ſides, and draw the inference: yet he has not given his own opinion ſo frequently as Mill, whom he reſembled. in his reverence for the Latin verſion, and in the pre­ference which he gave to harſh and difficult readings, before thoſe which were ſmooth and flowing. It may be obſerved in general, that he was a man of profound