by Montſaucon. That they are found too in the *Codex Vaticanus,* though not frequently, is related by Birch in his *Prolegomena,* p. 14.

As the fact has not been generally known, that the ancients pointed their manuscripts, and as it is an im­portant and intereſting fact, we ſhall preſent our read­ers with the firſt ſix lines of St John’s Goſpel, as they are pointed in the Alexandrine manuſcript:

ΕΝΑΡΧΗΝΟΛΟΓΟΣΚΑΙΟΛΟΓΟΣΗΝ

ΠΡΟΣΤΟΝΘΝ ΚΑΙΘΣΗΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ·

ΟϓΤΟΣΗΝΕΝΑΡΧΗΠΡΟΣΤΟΝΘΝ

ΠΑΝϓΑΔΙΑϓΤΟϓΕΓΟ·ΚΑΙΧΩ

ΡΕΙΣΑϓΤΟϓΕΓΕΝΕΤΟΟϓΔΕΕΝ·

ΟΓΕΓΟΝΕΝΕΝΑϓΤΩΖΩΗΗΝ·

Whether any points for marking the ſenſe were uſed by the apoſtles, cannot be determined; but the points now in uſe have been invented ſince.

In the fourth century, Jerome began to add the com­ma and colon to the Latin verſion; and they were then inſerted in many more ancient manuſcripts. In the fifth century, Euthalius a deacon of Alexandria divided the New Teſtament into lines. This diviſion was re­gulated by the ſenſe, ſo that each line ended where ſome pauſe was to be made in ſpeaking. And when a copyiſt was diſpoſed to contract his ſpace, and therefore crowded the lines into each other, he then placed a point where Euthalius had terminated the line. In the eighth century, the ſtroke was invented which we call a comma. In the Latin manuſcripts, Jerome’s points were introduced by Paul Warnfried and Alcuin, at the command of Charlemagne. In the ninth cen­tury, the Greek note of interrogation(;) was firſt uſed. At the invention of printing the editors placed the points arbitrarily, probably without beſtowing the neceſſary attention; and Stephens, in particular, varied his points in every edition @@(d).

The meaning of many paſſages in the Scripture has been altered by falſe pointing. We ſhall produce one inſtance of this: Mat. v. 34. is commonly pointed in this manner, εγω δε λεγω υμιν, μη ομοσαι ολως· μητε εν τω ϱραχω*,* and conſequently tranſlated, “But I ſay unto you, ſwear not at all.” But if, inſtead of the colon placed after ολως we ſubſtitute a comma, the tranſlation will be, “But I ſay to you that you ought by no means to ſwear, either by heaven, for it is his throne, or by earth, for it is his footſtool.” The command of Chriſt therefore applies particularly to the abuſe of oaths among the Phariſees, who on every trivial occaſion ſwore by the heaven, the earth, the temple, the head, &c. but it implies no prohibition to take an oath in the name of the Deity on ſolemn and important occaſions.

The ancients divided the New Teſtament into two kinds of chapters, ſome longer and ſome ſhorter. This method appears to be more ancient than St Jerome, for be expunged a paſſage from the New Teſtament which makes an entire chapter. The longer kind of chap­ters were called *breves,* the ſhorter *capitula.* St Mat­

thew contained, according to Jerome, 68 breves; Mark contained 48; Luke 83; and John 18. All the evangeliſts together conſiſted of 217 breves and 1126 capi­tula. The inventor of our modern diviſion into chap­ters was Hugo de S. Caro, a French Dominican friar who lived in the 13th century.

The ancients had two kinds of verſes, one of which they called ςιχοι, and the other ρηματα. The r*emata* were lines which contained a certain number of letters, like our printed books, and therefore often broke off in the middle of a word. Joſephus’s 20 books of Antiqui­ties contained 60,000 of them, though in Ittiquis’s edition there are only 40,000 broken lines.

*Stichi* were lines meaſured by the ſenſe: according to an ancient written lift mentioned by Father Simin, there were in the New Teſtament 18,612 of theſe.

The verſes into which the New Teſtament is now divided are more modern, and an imitation of the di­viſion of the Old Teſtament. Robert Stephens, the firſt inventor, introduced them in his edition in the year 1551. He made this diviſion on a journey from Ly­ons to Paris; and, as his ſon Henry, tells us in the pre­face to the Concordance of the New Teſtament, he made it *inter equitandum.* This phraſe probably means, that when he was weary of riding, he amuſed himſelf with this work at his inn.

This invention of the learned printer was ſoon intro­duced into all the editions of the New Teſtament; and it muſt be confeſſed, that in conſulting and quoting the Scriptures, and in framing concordances for them, a ſubdiviſion into minute parts is of the greateſt utility. But all the purpoſes of utility could ſurely have been gain­ed, without adopting the haſty and indigeſted diviſion of Stephens, which often breaks the ſenſe in pieces, renders plain paſſages obſcure, and difficult paſſages un­intelligible. To the injudicious diviſion of Stephens we may aſcribe a great part of the difficulties which at­tend the interpretation of the New Teſtament, and a great many of thoſe abſurd opinions which have diſgraced the ages of the Reformation. For as ſeparate verſes appear to the eyes of the learned, and to the minds of the unlearned, as ſo many detached ſentences, they have been ſuppoſed to contain complete ſenſe, and they have accordingly been explained without any re­gard to the context, and often in direct oppoſition to it. Were any modern hiſtory or continued diſcourſe divided into fragments with as little regard to the ſenſe, we ſhould ſoon find, that as many oppoſite meanings could be forced upon them as have been forced upon the books of the New Teſtament. The diviſion into verſes has been ſtill more injurious to the Epiſtles than to the Goſpels, for there is a cloſe connection between the different parts of the Epiſtles, which the verſes en­tirely diſſolve. It is therefore to be wiſhed that this diviſion into verſes were laid aſide. The Scriptures ought to be divided into paragraphs, according to the ſenſe; and the figures ought to be thrown into the mar­gin. In this way, the figures will retain their utility

@@@(d) The reader will perceive that the account of the origin of points is different from that given under Punc­tuation. But the beſt authors differ upon this ſubject. We ſhall perhaps reconcile the difference, by ſuppoſing that points were invented at the time here mentioned, but were not in general uſe till the time mentioned under the article Punctuation.