factory, as its authenticity has never been quetioned. However abſurd opinions a man may entertain while he retains his underſtanding, his teſtimony to a matter of fact will ſtill be received in any court of juſtice.

A. D. 96, we are in poſſeſſion of an epiſtle written by Clement biſhop of Rome, whom ancient writers, without any doubt or ſcruple, assert to have been the Clement whom St Paul mentions Philippians iv. 3. “with Clement alſo, and other my fellow labourers, whole names are in the book of life.” This epiſtle is spoken of by the ancients as an epiſtle acknowledged by all; and, as Irenæus well repreſents its value, “writ­ten by Clement, who had ſeen the bleſſed apoſtles and converſed with them, who had the preaching of the apoſtles ſtill founding in his ears, and their traditions before his eyes.” It is addreſſed to the church of Co­rinth; and what alone may ſeem a deciſive proof of its authenticity, Dionyſius biſhop of Corinth, about the year 170, *i. e.* about 80 or 90 years after the epiſtle was written, bears witneſs, “that it had been uſually read in that church from ancient times.” This epiſtle affords, amongſt others, the following valuable paſſages: “Eſpecially remembering the words of the Lord Jeſus, which he ſpake, teaching gentleneſs and long ſuffering; for thus he laid @@(T), Be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven unto you; as you do, ſo ſhall it be done unto you; as you give, ſo ſhall it be given unto you; as ye judge, ſo ſhall ye be judged; as ye ſhew kindneſs, ſo ſhall kindneſs be ſhewn unto you; with what meaſure ye mete, with the ſame it ſhall be meaſured to you. By this command, and by theſe rules, let us eſtabliſh ourſelves, that we may always walk obediently to his holy words.”

Again, “Remember the words of the Lord Jeſus, for he ſaid, Wo to that man by whom offences come; it were better for him that he had not been born, than that he ſhould offend one of my elect; it were better for him that a millſtone ſhould be tied about his neck, and that he ſhould be drowned in the ſea, than that he ſhould offend one of my little ones @@(U).”

He aſcribes the firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians to Paul, and makes ſuch alluſions to the following books as is ſufficient to ſhew that he had ſeen and read them: Acts, Romans, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Epheſians, Philippians, Coloſſians, 1 Theſſalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, 1 Peter, 2 Peter.

It may be ſaid, as Clement has not mentioned the books by name from which we aſſert theſe alluſions or references are made, it is uncertain whether he refers to any books, or whether he received theſe expreſſions from the diſcourſes and converſation of the apoſtles. Mr Paley has given a very ſatisfactory anſwer to this objec­tion: 1ſt, That Clement, in the very ſame manner, name­ly, without any mark of reference, uſes a paffage now found in the epiſtle to the Romans @@\*; which paſſage, from the peculiarity of the words that compoſe it, and from their order, it is manifeſt that he muſt have taken

from the epiſtle. The ſame remark may be applied to ſome very Angular ſentiments in the epiſtle to the He­brews. Secondly, That there are many ſentences of St Paul’s firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians to be found in Clement’s epiſtle, without any ſign of quotation, which yet certainly arc quotations; becauſe it appears that Clement had St Paul’s epiſtle before him; for in one place he mentions it in terms too expreſs to leave us in any doubt. “Take into your hands the epiſtle of the bleſſed apoſtle Paul.” Thirdly, That this me­thod of adopting words of ſcripture, without reference or acknowledgment, was a method in general uſe amongſt the moſt ancient Chriſtian writers. Theſe analogies not only repel the objection, but caſt the preſumption on the other ſide; and afford a conſiderable degree of poſitive proof, that the words in queſtion have been borrowed from the places oſ ſcripture in which we now find them. But take it, if you will, the other way, that Clement had heard theſe words from the apoſtles or firſt teachers of Chriſtianity; with reſpect to the preciſe point of our argument, viz. that the ſcriptures contain what the apoſtles taught, this ſuppoſition may ſerve almoſt as well.

We have now traced the evidence to the times of the apoſtles; but we have not been anxious to draw it out to a great length, by introducing every thing. On the contrary, we have been careful to render it as concile as poſſible, that its force might be diſcerned at a glance. The evidence which has been ſtated is of two kinds. Till the time of Juſtin Martyr and Irenæus it conſiſts chiefly of alluſions, references, and expreſſions, borrow­ed from the books of the New Teſtament, without men­tioning them by name. After the time of Irenæus it became uſual to cite the ſacred books, and mention the authors from whom the citations were taken.

The firſt ſpecies of evidence will perhaps appear to ſome exceptionable; but it muſt be remembered that it was uſual among the ancient Chriſtians as well as Jews to adopt the expreſſions of Scripture without na­ming the authors. Why they did ſo it is not neceſſary to inquire. The only point of importance to be deter­mined is, whether thole references are a ſufficient proof of the exiſtence of the books to which they allude? This, we preſume, will not be denied; eſpecially in the preſent age, when it is ſo common to charge an author with plagiariſm if he happen to fall upon the ſame train of ideas, or expreſs himſelf in a ſimilar manner with au­thors who have written before him. We may farther affirm, that theſe tacit references afford a complete proof that thoſe ancient writers had no intention of impoſing a forgery upon the world. They prove the exiſtence of the Chriſtian religion and of the apoſtolical writings, without ſhowing any ſuſpicious earneſtneſs that men ſhould believe them. Had theſe books been forged, thoſe who wiſhed to paſs them upon the world would have been at more pains than the firſt Chriſtians were to prove their authenticity. They acted the part of

@@@@(T) “Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain mercy,” Matt. v. 7. “Forgive, and ye ſhall be forgiven; give, and it ſhall be given unto you,” Luke vi. 37, 38.“ Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judge­ment ye judge, ye ſhall be judged, and with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again,” Mat. vii. 2.

@@@[m]\* Chap. 1. 29.

@@@(U) Matt. xviii. 6. “ But whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millſtone were hanged about his neck, and that he were caſt into the ſea.” The latter part of the paſſage in Clement agrees more exactly with Luke xvii. 2. "It were better for him that a millſtone were hanged about his neck, and he caſt into the ſea, than that he ſhould offend one of theſe little ones.”