miniſtry and aſter his crucifixion in thoſe things per­taining to the kingdom of God?

In anſwer to this, we may obſerve, that though it be difficult to prove that the identical words of the New Teſtament were dictated by the Holy Spirit, or the train of ideas infuſed into the minds of the ſacred writers, there is one ſpecies of inſpiration to which the New Teſtament has an undoubted claim. It is this, that the memories of the apoſtles were ſtrengthened and their underſtandings preferred from falling into eſſential errors. This we prove from theſe words of our Saviour, “and I will pray the Father, and he will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. He ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your rememberance whatſoever I have ſaid unto you @@\*.” This promiſe was ſurely not reſtrained to the day of Pentecoſt: it muſt have been a permanent gift enabling the apoſtles at all times to remember with accuracy the diſcourſes of our Saviour. When the apoſtles there­fore (Matthew and John) relate thoſe precepts of Chriſt which they themſelves had heard, they write indeed from memory, but under the protection of the ſpirit who ſecures them from the danger of miſtake: and we muſt of courſe conclude that their goſpels are inſpired.

Were we called upon more particularly to declare what parts of the New Teſtament we believe to be in­ſpired, we would anſwer, The doctrines, the precepts, and the propheſies, every thing eſſential to the Chriſtian religion. From theſe the idea of inſpiration is inſeparable. As to the events, the memory of the apoſtles was ſufficient to retain them. If this opinion be juſt, it would enable us to account for the diſcrepancies be­tween the ſacred writers, wſhich are chiefly confined to the relation of facts and events.

All the books of the New Teſtament were originally written in Greek, except the goſpel according to Mat­thew and the epiſtle to the Hebrews, which there is reaſon to believe were compoſed in the Syro-Chaldaic language, which in the New Teſtament is called Hebrew.

Various reaſons have been aſſigned why the greateſt part of the New Teſtament was written in Greek; but the true reaſon is this, It was the language beſt underſtood both by writers and readers. Had St Paul written to a community in the Roman province of Africa, he might have written perhaps in Latin; but epiſtles to the inhabitants of Corinth, Galatia, Epheſus, Philippi, and Theſſalonica, to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, from a native of Tarſus, could hardly be ex­pected in any other language than Greek. The ſame may be ſaid of the epiſtles of St Peter, which are ad­dreſſed to the Chriſtians of different countries, who had no other language in common than the Greek; and likewiſe of the epiſtles of St James, who wrote to Jews, that lived at a diſtance from Paleſtine, and were igno­rant of Hebrew. The native language of St Luke, as well as of Theophilus, to whom he addreſſed his goſpel, and Acts of the apoſtles, appears to have been Greek; and that St John wrote his goſpel in that language, and not in Hebrew, is by no means a matter of ſurprife, ſince he wrote at Epheſus.

@@With reſpect to the epiſtle to the Romans, it may be aſked indeed why St Paul did not write in Latin? Now, whoever propoſes this queſtion, muſt preſuppoſe that St Paul was maſter of the Latin language in ſuch a degree as to find no difficulty in writing it; a matter

which remains to be proved. It is very probable that St Paul was acquainted with the Latin; but between underſtanding a language, and being able to write it, there is a very material difference. As St Paul was a native of Tarſus, his native language was Greek; he had travelled during ſeveral years through countries in which no other language was ſpoken, and when he ad­dreſſed the Roman centurion at Jeruſalem, he ſpoke not Latin, but Greek. Is it extraordinary, then, that in writing to the inhabitants of Rome he ſhould have uſed a language which was there ſo generally underſtood? It has been long remarked, that Greek was at that time as well known in Rome as French in any court of modern Europe: that according to Juvenal even the female ſex made uſe of Greek as the language of familiarity and paſſion; and that in letters of friendſhip Greek words and phraſes were introduced with greater freedom than French expreſſions in German letters, as appears from Cicero’s epiſtles to Atticus, and from thoſe of Auguſtus preſerved in the works of Suetonius. To this muſt be added a material circumſtance, that a great part of the Roman Chriſtians conſiſted of native Jews, who were better acquainted with Greek than with Latin, as either they themſelves or their anceſtors had come from Greece, Alia Minor, or Egypt, in which Greek was the language of the coun­try. At leaſt they read the bible in that language, as no Latin tranſlation of the Old Teſtament at that time exiſted; and the Chriſtian church at that period conſiſting chiefly of Jews, the heathen converts in Rome were of courſe under the neceſſity of accuſtoming themſelves to the Greek language. In ſhort, St Paul in his epiſtle to the Romans made uſe of a language in which alone thoſe who were ignorant of Hebrew could read the bible. What has been here advanced reſpecting the epiſtle to the Romans is equally applicable to the Greek of St Mark, on the ſuppoſition that it was written at Rome.

To the above arguments may be added the example of Joſephus, who, as well as the Apoſtles, was by birth a Jew. He even lived in Rome, which is more than can be ſaid of St Paul and St Mark, who reſided there only a certain time: he was likewiſe younger than either; he came to Italy at an age which is highly ſuitable to the learning of a language, and previous to that period had ſpent ſeveral years in the Roman camp. The Jewiſh antiquities, the hiſtory of the Jewiſh war, and the account of his own life, he wrote undoubtedly with a view of their being read by the Romans; and yet he compoſed all theſe writings in Greek, He expreſſes his motive for writing his Greek account of the Jewiſh war in the following terms: “That having writ­ten in his native language (i. e. the Hebrew dialect at that time ſpoken) a hiſtory of the war, in order that Parthians, Babylonians, Arabians, Adiabenes, and the Jews beyond the Euphrates, might be informed of thoſe events, he was now reſolved to write for the Greeks and Romans, who had not been engaged in the cam­paigns, a more certain account than had hitherto been given.” The motives which induced Joſephus to write in Greek are fully as applicable to St Paul and St Mark.

@@Michaelis has thus characterized the ſtyle of the New Teſtament. “The New Teſtament (ſays he) was written in a language at that time common among the

@@@[m]\* John xiv. 16, 26.

@@@[mu] Michaelis, vol. i. chap. 4. sect. I. p. 101.

@@@[m] Michaelis, Vol i. chap. 4. sect. I. p. 135.