the invention of printing. The moſt ancient of theſe are loſt, and there is no manuſcript now extant older than the ſixth century. Few contain the whole New Teſtament; ſome contain the four goſpels; ſome the Acts of the Apoſtles and Epiſtles; and others the book of Revelation. The greateſt number are thoſe which con­tain the firſt part; thoſe which have the ſecond, or the firſt and ſecond together, are likewiſe numerous; but thoſe of the third are extremely few. It muſt be added alſo, that in many manuſcripts thoſe epiſtles are omitted whoſe divine authority was formerly doubted.

There are many manuſcripts which have been examined only for a ſingle text, ſuch as 1 John v. 7. or at leaſt for a very ſmall number. Others have been exa­mined from the beginning to the end, but not com­pletely, and in reſpect of all the readings. A third claſs conſiſts of ſuch as either have been, or are ſaid to have been, completely and accurately collated. But this re­quires ſuch phlegmatic patience, that we can hardly ex­pect to find in critical catalogues all the various read­ings which have been only once collated. Wetſtein, in collating many manuſcripts anew, made diſcoveries which had entirely eſcaped the notice of his predeceſſors. The fourth claſs conſiſts of ſuch as have been com­pletely and accurately collated more than once; but here alſo we are in danger of being led into error.— When various readings are transferred from one critical edition to another, as from that of Gregory to Mill's edition, and from the latter to thoſe of Bengel and Wetſtein, the manuſcripts muſt ſometimes be falſely named, and various readings muſt frequently be omit­ted. And as Wetſtein has marked by ciphers manu­ſcripts that in former editions had been denoted by their initial letters, he could hardly avoid ſubſtituting, in ſome caſes, one figure inſtead of another. The fifth claſs, which is by far the moſt valuable, conſiſts of ſuch as have been printed word for word, and therefore form an original edition of the Greek Teſtament. We can boaſt but of a very few manuſcripts of this kind. Hearne printed at Oxford, in 1715, the Acts of the Apoſtles in Greek and Latin from the Codex Laudianus 3.; Knittel has annexed to his edition of Ulphilas, p. 53—118, a copy of two very ancient fragments preſerved in the library of Wolſembuttle; the one of the four Goſpels in general, the other of St Luke and St John. Woide printed in 1786 the Codex Alexandri­nus, a manuſcript of great antiquity, which ſhall af­terwards be more fully deſcribed; and the Univerſity of Cambridge has reſolved to publiſh, in a ſimilar manner, the Cod. Cant. I. or, as it is ſometimes called, the Codex Bezæ, the care of which is intruded to Dr Kipling, **a** publication which will be thankfully received by every friend to ſacred criticiſm. It was the intention of the Abbe Spoletti, a few years ago, to publiſh the whole of the celebrated Codex Vaticanus; which would likewiſe have been a moſt valuable acceſſion, ſince a more important manuſcript is hardly to be found in all Europe. He delivered for this purpoſe a memorial to the Pope; but the deſign was not put into execution, either becauſe the Pope refuſed his aſſent, or the Abbé abandoned it himſelf. See the Oriental Bible, vol. xxii. nc 333. and vol. xxiii. n⁰ 348.

“A very valuable library,” ſays Michaelis, “might be compoſed of the impreſſions of ancient manuſcripts, which, though too expenſive for **a** private perſon, ſhould be admitted into every univerſity collection, eſpecially the Alexandrine and Cambridge manuſcripts, to which

I would add, if it were now poſſible to procure it, Hearne’s edition of the Codex Laudianus 3. A plan of this fort could be executed only in England, by a private ſubſcription, where a zeal is frequently display­ed in literary undertakings that is unknown in other countries; and it were to be wiſhed that the project were begun before length of time has rendered the ma­nuſcripts illegible, and the attempt therefore fruitleſs. Ten thouſand pounds would go a great way toward the fulfilling of this requeſt, if the learned themſclves did not augment the difficulty of the undertaking, by adding their own critical remarks, and endeavouring thereby to recommend their publications, rather than by preſenting to the public a faithful copy of the original. Should poſterity be put in poſſeſſion of faithful impreſ­ſions of important manuſcripts, an acquiſition which would render the higheſt ſervice to ſacred criticiſm, all theſe editions of the New Teſtament ſhould be regulated on the ſame plan as Hearne’s edition of the Acts of the Apoſtles.” It muſt be highly flattering to the pa­triotic ſpirit of an Engliſhman to hear the encomiums which learned foreigners have ſo profuſely beſtowed on our liberality in ſupporting works of genius and learn­ing and public utility. The plan which Michaelis propoſes to us, in preference to all the other nations in Eu­rope, is noble and magnificent, and would certainly confer immortality on thoſe men who would give it their patronage and aſſiſtance.

There are many ancient manuſcripts, eſpecially in Italy, which have never been collated, but lie ſtill un­explored. Here is **a** field where much remains to be done. See Marſh’s Notes to Michaelis, vol ii. p. 643.

Michaelis has given a catalogue of ancient manu­ſcripts, amounting in number to 292, to which he has added a ſhort account of each. In this place we ſhall confine **our** obſervations to the moſt celebrated, the Alexandrian and Vatican manuſcripts, which we have chiefly extracted ſrom Michaelis.

The *Alexandrine manuſcript* conſiſts of four vo­lumes; the three firſt of which contain the Old Teſta­ment, the fourth the New Teſtament, together with the firſt Epiſtle of Clement to the Corinthians, and **a** fragment of the ſecond. In the New Teſtament, which alone is the object of our preſent inquiry, is wanting the beginning as far as Matthew xxv. 6.ο νυμφιος ηϐχεται, likewiſe from John vi. 50. to viii. 52. and from

**2** Cor. iv. 13. to xii. 7. It muſt likewiſe be obſerved, that the Pſalms are preceded by the epiſtle of Athanaſius to Marcellinus, and followed by a catalogue, con­taining thoſe which are to be uſed in prayer for each hour, both of the day and of the night; alſo by 14 hymns, partly apocryphal, partly biblical, the 11th of which is an hymn in praiſe of the Virgin Mary, entit­led ϖϐοσευχη μαϐιας της ϑεοτοχϖ; further, the *Hypotheses Euſebii* are annexed to the Pſalms, and his Canones to the Goſpels. It is true, that this has no immediate reference to the New Teſtament, but may have influ­ence in determining the antiquity of the manuſcript itself.

It has neither accents nor marks of aſpiration; it is written with capital, or, as they are called, *uncial letters,*