and has very few abbreviations. There are no inter­vals between the words; but the ſenſe of a paſſage is ſometimes terminated by a point, and ſometimes by a vacant ſpace. Here ariſes a ſuſpicion that the copyiſt did not underſtand Greek, becauſe theſe marks are ſometimes found even in the middle of a word, for inſtance Levit. v. 4. ανομος for αν ομοση, and Numb. xiii. 29. μω Υσης.

This manuſcript was preſented to Charles I. in 1628, by Cyrillus Lucaris patriarch of Conſtantinople. Cyrillus himſelf has given the following account: “We know ſo much of this manuſcript of the holy writings of the Old and New Teſtament, that Thecla an Egyptian lady of diſtinction (nobilis ſaemina Ægyptia) wrote it with her own hand 1500 years ago @@(A). She lived ſoon after the council of Nicæa. Her name was formerly at the end of the book; but when Chriſtianity was ſubverted in Egypt by the errors of Mahomet, the books of the Chriſtians ſuffered the same fate, and the name of The­cla was expunged. But oral tradition of no very an­cient date (memoria et traditio recens) has preſerved the remembrance of it.”

But the reader will ſee that this account is merely traditional. Dr Semler very properly obſerves, that there is no more reaſon to rely on a tradition reſpecting the tranſcriber of an ancient manuſcript, than on a tra­dition which relates to an ancient relic. The argu­ments which have been urged by Wetſtein, Semler, Oudin, and Woide, to fix the date of this manuſcript, are ſo many, that it would be tedious to repeat them. But, after all, its antiquity cannot be determined with certainty, though it appears from the formation of the letters, which reſemble thoſe of the fourth and fifth centuries, and the want of accents, that it was not writ­ten ſo late as the tenth century. In this century it was placed by Oudin, while Grabe and Schulze have referred it to the fourth, which is the very utmoſt pe­riod that can be allowed, becauſe it contains the epiſtles of Athanaſius. Wetſtein, with more probability, has choſen a mean between theſe two extremes, and referred it to the fifth century: but we are not juſtified in draw­ing this inference from the formation of the letters alone, for it is well known that the ſame mode of form­ing the letters was retained longer in ſome countries and in ſome monaſteries than in others.

We are now in poſſeſſion of a perfect impreſſion of this manuſcript, which is accompanied with ſo complete and ſo critical a collection of various readings, as is hardly to be expected from the edition of any other manuſcript. Dr Woide publiſhed it in 1786, with types caſt for that purpoſe, line for line, without in­tervals between the words, as in the manuſcript itſelf. The copy is ſo perfect a reſemblance of the original, that it may ſupply its place. Its title is Novum Testamentum. Graecum e codice MS. Alexandrino qui Londini in Bibliotheca Muſei Britannici aſſervatur deſcriptum It is a very ſplendid folio; and the preface of the learned edi­tor contains an accurate deſcription of the manuſcript, with an exact liſt of all its various readings, that takes up no leſs than 89 pages; and each reading is accom­panied with a remark, in which is given an account of what his predeceſſors Juninus, Walton, Fell, Mill, Grabe, and Wetſtein, had performed or neglected.

The Vatican manuſcript contained originally the whole Greek Bible, including both the Old and New Teſtament; and in this reſpect, as well as in regard to its antiquity, it reſembles none ſo much as the Codex Alexandrinus, but no two manuſcripts are more diſſimilar in their readings, in the New Teſtament as well as in the Old. After the Goſpels, which are placed in the uſual order, come the Acts of the Apoſtles, which are immediately followed by the ſeven catholic epiſtles. This muſt be particularly noted, becauſe ſome have con­tended that the ſecond Epiſtle of St Peter, with the ſecond and third of St John, were wanting. Profeſſof Hwiid, in a letter dated Rome, April 12. 1781, aſſured Michaelis that he had ſeen them with his own eyes, that the ſecond Epiſtle of St Peter is placed folio 1434, the ſecond of St John fol. 1442, the third folio 1443: then follow the Epiſtles of St Paul, but not in the uſual order; for the Epiſtle to the Hebrews is pla­ced immediately after thoſe to the Theſſalonians: and it is not improbable, that in the more ancient manu­ſcript, from which the Codex Vaticanus was copied, this Epiſtle was even placed before that to the Epheſians, and immediately after the Epiſtle to the Galatians @@(B): for the Epiſtles of St Paul are divided into 93 ſections by figures written in the margin with red ink; but the Epiſtle to the Galatians ends with 59, and that to the Epheſians begins with 70; the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, on the contrary, begins with 60, and ends with 69. With the words αμωμον τα δεϲ, Heb. ix. 14. the manuſcript ceaſes, the remaining leaves being loſt. There is wanting, therefore, not only the latter part of this Epiſtle, but the Epiſtles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, with the Revelation of St John: but this laſt book, as well as the latter part of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, has been ſupplied by a modern hand in the 15th century. In many places the faded letters have been alſo retouched by a modern, but careful hand; and when the perſon who made theſe amendments, who appears to have been a man of learning, found a read­ing in his own manuſcript which differed from that of the Codex Vaticanus, he has noted it in the margin,

@@@(A) He wrote this in the year 1628. According to this account, then, the manuſcript muſt have been writ­ten in 328; a date to which ſo many weighty objections may be made, that its moſt ſtrenuous advocates will hardly undertake to defend it. But this error has furniſhed Oudin with an opportunity of producing many arguments againſt the antiquity of the Codex Alexandrinus, which ſeem to imply, that Grabe and others, who have referred it to the fourth century, ſuppoſe it to have been written in the above-mentioned year. Now it is probable, that the inference which has been deduced from the account of Cyrillus is more than he himſelf intended to expreſs, as he relates that Thecla lived after the council of Nicæa.

@@@(B) Probably becauſe the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, as well as the Epiſtle to the Galatians, relates to the abo­lition of the Moſaic law.