**here to their holy religion, as** a **religion proceeding from God, notwithſtanding the artifices of falſe teach­ers, whoſc character is at large deſcribed; or the per­fection of their bitter and inveterate enemies.”**

The firſt Epiſtle of John is aſcribed by the unanimous ſuffrage of the ancients to the beloved diſciple of our Lord. It is referred to by Polycarp, is quoted by Papias, by Irenæus, and was received as genuine by Clemens Alexandrinus, by Dionyſius of Alexandria, by Cyprian, by Origen, and Euſebius. There is ſuch a reſernblance between the ſtyle and ſentiments of this Epiſtle and thoſe of the goſpel according to John, as to afford the higheſt degree of internal evidence that they are the compoſition of the ſame author. In the ſtyle of this apoſtle there is a remarkable peculiarity, and eſpecially in this Epiſtle. His ſentences, conſidered ſeparately, are exceeding clear and intelligible; but when we ſearch for their connection, we frequently meet with greater difficulties than we do even in the Epiſtles of St Paul. The principal ſignature and characteriſtic of his manner is an artleſs and amiable ſimplicity, and a singular modeſty and candour, in conjunc­tion with a wonderful ſublimity of ſentiment. His con­ceptions are apparently delivered to us in the order in which they aroſe to his own mind, and are not the pro­duct of artificial reaſoning or laboured inveſtigation.

It is impoſſible to fix with any preciſion the *date* of this Epiſtle, nor can we determine to what perſons it was addreſſed.

The leading deſign of the apoſtle is to ſhow the inſufficiency of faith, and the external profeſſion of reli­gion, ſeparate from morality; to guard the Chriſtians to whom he writes againſt the deluſive arts of the cor­rupters of Chriſtianity, whom he calls Antichriſt; and to inculcate univerſal benevolence. His admonitions concerning the neceſſity of good morals, and the inef­ficacy of external profeſſions, are ſcattered over the Epiſtle, but are moſt frequent in the 1ſt, 2d, and 3d chapters. The enemies or corrupters of Chriſtianity, againſt whom he contends, ſeem to have denied that Jeſus was the Meſſiah, the Son of God (chap. ii. 22. V. 1.), and had actually come into the world in a human form, (chap. iv. 2, 3.) The earneſtneſs and frequency with which this apoſtle recommends the duty of bene­volence is remarkable. He makes it the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of the diſciples of Jeſus, the only ſure pledge of our love to God, and the only aſſurance of eternal life, (chap. iii. 14, 15.) Benevolence was his favourite theme, which he affectionately preſſed upon others, and conſtantly practiſed himſelf. It was conſpicuous in his conduct to his great Maſter, and in the reciprocal affection which it inſpired in his ſacred breaſt. He continued to recommend it in his laſt words. When his extreme age and infirmities had ſo waſted his ſtrength that he was incapable to exerciſe the duties of his of­fice, the venerable old man, anxious to exert in the ſervice of his Maſter the little ſtrength which ſtill remain­ed, cauſed himſelf to be carried to church, and, in the midſt of the congregation, he repeated theſe words,

"Little children, love one another.”

It has been obſerved by Dr Mill that the ſecond and third Epiſtles of John are ſo ſhort, and reſemble the firſt ſo much in ſentiment and ſtyle, that it is not worth while to contend about them. The ſecond Epiſtle conſiſts only of 13 verſes; and of theſe eight may be found in the 1ſt Epiſtle, in which the ſenſe or language is preciſely the ſame.

The ſecond Epiſtle is quoted by Irenaeus, and was received by Clemens Alexandrinus, Both were ad­mitted by Athanaſius, by Cyril of Jeruſalem, and by Jerome. The ſecond is addreſſed to a woman of diſtinction whoſe name is by ſome ſuppoſed to be *Cyria* (taking χυρια for a proper name), by others *Eclecta.* The third is inſcribed to Gaius, or Caius according to the Latin orthography, who, in the opinion of Lardner, was an eminent Chriſtian, that lived in ſome city of Alia not far from Epheſus, where St John chiefly reſided after his leaving Judea. The time of writing theſe two Epiſtles cannot be determined with any certainty. They are ſo ſhort that an analyſis of them is not neceſſary.

The Epiſtle of Jude is cited by no ancient Chriſtian writer extant before Clemens Alexandrinus about the year 194; but this author has tranſcribed eight or ten verſes in his Stromata and Pedagogue. It is quoted once by Tertullian about the year 200; by Origen frequently about 230. It was not however received by many of the ancient Chriſtians, on account of a ſuppo­ſed quotation from a book of Enoch. But it is not certain that Jude quotes any book. He only ſays that *Enoch prophesied, ſaying, The Lord Cometh with ten thοuſand of his faints.* Theſe might be words of a prophecy preſerved by tradition, and inſerted occaſionally in dif­ferent writings. Nor is there any evidence that there was ſuch a book as Enoch’s propheſies in the time of Jude, though a book of that name was extant in the ſecond and third centuries. As to the date of this Epiſtle nothing beyond conjecture can be produced.

The deſign of it is, by deſcribing the character of the falſe teachers, and the puniſhments to which they were liable, to caution Chriſtians againſt liſtening to their ſuggeſtions, and being thereby perverted from the faith and purity of the goſpel.

The Apocalypſe or Revelation has not always been unanimouſly received as the genuine production of the apoſtle John. Its authenticity is proved, however, by the teſtimony of many reſpectable authors of the firſt centuries. It is referred to by the martyrs of Lyons: it was admitted by Juſtin Martyr as the work of the apoſtle John. It is often quoted by Irenæus, by Theophilus biſhop of Antioch, by Clement of Alexandria, by Tertullian, by Origen, and by Cyprian of Carthage. It was alſo received by Heretics, by Novatus and his fol­lowers, by the Donatiſts, and by the Arians. For the firſt two centuries no part of the New Teſtament was more univerſally acknowledged, or mentioned with higher reſpect. But a diſpute having ariſen about the millen­nium, Caius with ſome others, about the year 212, to end the controverſy as ſpeedily and effectually as poſ­ſible, ventured to deny the authority of the book which had given occaſion to it.

The book of Revelation, as we learn from Rev. i. 9. was written in the iſle of Patmos. According to the general teſtimony of ancient authors, John was baniſhed into Patmos in the reign of Domitian, and reſtored by his ſucceſſor Nerva. But the book could not be publiſhed till after John’s releaſe, when he returned to Epheſus. As Domitian died in 96, and his perſecution