tests as are best fitted to try their genuineness, the result is such as to confirm our previous conclusion. 1. They display just such a diversity of talent, style, and character, as we should expect in works composed by different au­thors at different times. 2. They are written, with a few slight exceptions, in pure Hebrew, a language which we know to have been that of the Jews before the captivity, but the knowledge of which as a vernacular tongue was entirely lost very shortly afterwards. 3. Whilst they use the same language, there are certain grammatical and lin­guistic differences between the early and the later writers, indicative of such changes as all languages experience in the lapse of time, but less extensive than those found in others of the ancient tongues; which is exactly what might have been expected in the case of persons using, through a long interval, a language which, though exposed to causes of change, was, from the fixed and exclusive ha­bits of those speaking it, less liable to be affected in this way than the languages of more versatile and cosmopolitan nations. 4. The narratives occurring in these books are marked by that minute accuracy and circumstantiality of detail which a forger generally endeavours to avoid, but into which a true witness naturally falls, from having all these details present to his mind as integral parts of the occurrence which he attests, *as it presented itself to his senses.* 5. There is, amidst the greatest elevation of thought and sublimity of conception, a chastened simplicity of language, and, amidst the utmost variety of manner, style, and illustration, an essential unity of doctrine, which comports well with the claims of these books to be regarded as the sacred books of the Jews, and seems strongly incompatible with the sup­position that they are forgeries.

For these reasons, it is affirmed that, the books which we now possess are the same as those which were always possessed and held genuine by the Jews. We turn, *secondly,* to the New Testament, and inquire whether the same evi­dence of its genuineness can be furnished.

i. No person doubts the existence of the New Testa­ment books from the close of the *fourth* century of the Christian era downwards, because the fact is so notorious, that to deny it would be to discredit all historical testi­mony.

ii. As little can it be doubted that they were extant from the *commencement* of that century. Not only are they fre­quently quoted by writers who lived during that period, but we possess *ten* distinct catalogues of the New Testa­ment books, issued during this century, of which six are identical with our present canon (1), three omit only the book of Revelation (2), and one omits this book and the Epistle to the Hebrews (3), though both are mentioned in other parts of the author’s writings.

1. Those of the forty-four bishops at the Council of Carthage (a.d. 897), of Augustin (a.d. 394), of Jerome (a. d. 392), of Rufinus (a. u. 390), of Epiphanius (a.d. 370), and of Athanasius (a. d. 315).

2. Those of Gregory of Nazienzum (a. d*.* 375), of the bishops at the Council of Laodicea (a. d. 364), and of Cyrill of Jerusalem (a. d. 340).

3. That of Philaster or Philastrius, bishop of Brixia or Brescia (a. d.

380).

Lardner, Works, vol. iv. pp. 280-501, and vol. v. pp. 1-123.

iii. Their existence in the *third* century is placed equally beyond doubt, from the careful and explicit testimony of Eusebius, who wrote a. D. 315; from the references to them in the writings of the apologists Arnobius Afer and Lactantius (cir. a. D. 300) ; from the testimonies contained in fragments preserved from numerous writers in that cen­tury, especially Victorinus bishop of Pettau, in Germany, who refers to nearly every book in the New Testament ; from the commentaries upon them and quotations from them of Origen (a. D. 253) ; from the quotations of Cy­prian (a. D. 258) ; and from references to them in the re­

mains of a number of writers who lived during the first thirty years of the third century.

Lardner, Works, vol. ii. pp. 397—430.

iv. For their existence in the *second* century, we have abundant evidence, in the quotations from them and allu­sions to them in the writings of Tertullian (a. D. 200), Cle­ment of Alexandria, Athenagoras (a. D. 180), Irenæus (a. D. 170), Justin Martyr (a. D. 150), and Papias (a. D. 113), and in the Harmony of the Gospels by Tatian (a. D. 170).

v. Collateral with these testimonies of the orthodox fa­thers are those of the early heretics, Cerinthus, the Ebio­nites, the Basilidians, Marcion, and others, who, by de­nouncing the writings of the apostles, as containing error, thereby attest the existence and genuineness of these writ­ings ; and of the early opponents of Christianity, Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, who, by the notice they take of these books, show how much in their day their genuineness was matter of public notoriety.

vi. We have thus traced up the existence of these books to the close of the *first* century. To say nothing of the testimony in their favour of the apostolic fathers, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hennas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, who flourished during that century, and reached up to the days of the apostles, the supposition of a forgery at that time is clearly absurd. Whilst men were still alive whose fathers were the contemporaries of the evangelists and apostles, how could any one impose upon the community as the produc­tion of the latter what was only forged in their name ? or whilst the churches at Rome, Colossæ, Corinth, and other places, were still existing, who could have persuaded them to receive as Paul’s letters to them what they knew Paul had never sent to them ? or how can we conceive that an attempt so audacious would have been allowed to pass, with­out a single voice being raised in any quarter to denounce the imposture ?

vii. The conclusion thus gained by the consideration of external testimony is forcibly confirmed by the contents of the books themselves. The *language* in which they are written is exactly such as a Jew of the first century would naturally fall into in attempting to write Greek, and such as could hardly have been thought of or imitated by a later writer. The *style* of composition is such as a forger could not possibly have hit upon; it has so much of a prevailing simplicity and earnestness, and at the same time is so suit­ably diversified in the different books, that it bears every indication of having flowed from the pens of the simple- minded, unambitious, uneducated, and honest men to whom it is ascribed. The *sentiments* are such as we cannot sup­pose men of sufficiently depraved moral habits to act the part of forgers, to have conceived or inculcated. And above all, the *minute circumstantiality* of the narrative is such as, on the one hand, strikingly indicates the agency of an eye and ear witness in the composition of it, and on the other, affords too many tests of the author’s personal familiarity with what he narrates, to have been ventured on by a forger. The striking coincidence of one part of the volume with another may also be mentioned as a further evidence of its genuineness.

For these reasons it is concluded, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the genuine productions of those to whom they are ascribed. They are reasons which must satisfy every person familiar with such inquiries, that we possess in favour of the genuineness of these books a far larger and more unquestionable body of proof, than we have in favour of the genuineness of any of the ancient classics, and indeed of much even of comparatively modern litera­ture.

**See on the whole of this section, Horne’s Introduction, vol. i. pp. 35-99; Lardner's Credibility, Works, vols, i—v. 8vo, i. and ii. 4to; Faley’s Evidence of Christianity, and *Horoe Paulinoe ;* Michaelis’s**