

THE  
BIBLICAL REPERTORY, AND THEOLOGICAL  
REVIEW.

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REVIEW ON THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF  
THE SECOND ADVENT.

*The Second Advent; or, the Glorious Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ. Being an attempt to elucidate, in Chronological Order, the Prophecies both of the Old and New Testament which relate to that Event. By the Rev. John Fry, B.A. Rector of Desford, in Leicestershire. London, 2 vols, 8vo, 1822.*

[The conductors of the Biblical Repertory and Theological Review do not desire to make the work the vehicle exclusively of their own opinions, but are desirous of extending to their correspondents the liberty of advocating their own sentiments, reserving to themselves the right of deciding how far the opinions advanced can, with propriety, through their instrumentality, be presented to the public. They are, therefore, not to be considered as adopting the views presented by the author of the article on the Second Advent. As the subject, however, is one of interest, and has long been a matter of public discussion in England, it is probable our readers will be glad to see an exhibition of the

## Notices of New Publications.

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*The Evidences of Christianity, stated in a popular and practical manner, in a Course of Lectures on the Authenticity, Credibility, Divine Authority and Inspiration of the New Testament. Delivered in the Parish Church of St Mary, Islington. By Daniel Wilson, A.M. Vicar. Published by Crocker & Brewster, 47 Washington Street, Boston. J. Leavitt, 182 Broadway, New York. 1829. Pp. 348, 8vo.*

The author of these lectures is one of the most popular and evangelical preachers, belonging to the establishment, in the vicinity of London. Some years ago Mr Wilson's field of labour was in the central parts of the city of London; but he now has charge of one of the largest parishes in the suburbs: perhaps no other in the kingdom contains a greater number of souls. We are informed, in the author's preface, that at a late visitation of the bishop of London, above seven hundred young persons were presented in this parish for confirmation; and that these lectures were prepared for the instruction of those young persons, with relation to that transaction. We had heard much of the want of room for the worshippers in some of the populous parishes in and about London, and in other parts of the kingdom; but nothing that we have seen has given us so impressive a conviction of the real state of the case, as the simple fact, related by the author, that the church in which he ordinarily officiates is not sufficient to accommodate more than one twelfth part of the people in the parish; and that the whole number of souls within its limits is not less than thirty thousand. We are pleased to learn, however, that several new churches are now building for the accommodation of the people.

In these lectures, thirteen in number, the author does not profess to bring forward any new arguments in defence of divine revelation: this, indeed, would be next to impossible, after the subject has been discussed in almost every variety of form by men of the acutest intellect and most profound learning. It is natural to inquire, then, why multiply books on a subject which is already exhausted? To which it may be replied, that, in many cases, the arguments of a man known and esteemed will be read in a particular district, when other writings would not be so likely to be perused, or if perused, would not have the same weight as those coming from the pen of one in whom the people have confidence. This is a sufficient reason why any judicious man, capable of preparing discourses fit for publication, should consent to write for the benefit of those over whose minds he has acquired an influence; and this consideration will have double weight, if, as in the present case, the discourses have been heard with approbation and profit by a large number of people. Besides, every man who is possessed of an inquisitive and independent mind has a method of treating subjects, however familiar they may be, peculiar to himself; and almost every able writer on the evidences of christianity exhibits some part of the argument in a stronger light than any one who preceded him: and as writers have their peculiar style of thinking and reasoning, so there are classes of readers which will be suited by each writer. It often happens that an argument handled in one method produces no conviction, while the same, exhibited in another form and dress, gives full satisfaction. But the impartial reader of the lectures now under consideration will need no apology for their publication. If we mistake not, the mere perusal will convince all unprejudiced men, that the excellent author has performed a service to the cause of religion by the publication of this volume, which demands the gratitude of all the lovers of genuine christianity. It is our deliberate opinion, that the historical evidence of the authenticity of the books of the New Testament is here presented in a manner better adapted to convey instruction, and produce conviction in the minds of young persons, and other sensible people not liberally educated, than any thing which we have ever read. The great excellence of the style of Mr Wilson is, that it is every where transparent; and the points of light

are kept so distinct, that they can be easily contemplated by any attentive mind without confusion.

The first lecture is merely introductory, in which the duty of being able to give a reason for the hope which is in us, with meekness and fear, is stated; the importance of the subject is insisted on; and the propriety of commencing the investigation of the subject with prayer, is shown to be reasonable and proper even in a deist.

In the second lecture, the temper of mind in which the subject should be studied is clearly exhibited. The necessity of a meek and docile disposition is urged; also, the importance of seriousness and prayer, accompanied with a disposition to obey the will of God. The entire want of such a temper in unbelievers of every class, the literary, scientific, uninformed; the negligent, the low and profane, is evinced equally by all. How vain it is to expect to persuade those of the truth whose understandings are under the governing influence of earthly passions, is strongly set forth. This lecture closes with an address to unbelievers, to the young, and to believers.

The third lecture shows the necessity of a divine revelation, from the state of man in all ages. There is nothing remarkable here but the luminous perspicuity for which this writer is so much distinguished.

The fourth lecture treats of the authenticity of the New Testament; or rather paves the way for the consideration of the subject, by stating facts and establishing principles respecting the authenticity of books in general; and shows that the burden of proof in such cases lies upon them who call in question the authenticity of a book. But in regard to the christian scriptures, every circumstance which could lead to the least suspicion of forgery is absent. God has made ample provision for proving the authenticity of the books which contain his own word.

The fifth lecture contains an exhibition of the direct testimony in favour of the authenticity of the books of the New Testament; and is, in our opinion, the most important part of the work. We have been so well satisfied with the author's method of treating this fundamental point in the evidence, that if we had room, we should be tempted to transfer a large portion of this lecture to our pages; but it occurs to us that there is an American edition of the work, which

can now be had in any of our cities; and every one who feels an interest in the subject ought to read the whole volume.

The sixth lecture treats of the credibility of the gospel history, which is also an able discourse.

The seventh treats of miracles; their true nature, the certainty of the facts, the character of the witnesses, &c.

The eighth and ninth lectures exhibit the evidence of prophecy.

The tenth, the argument derived from the rapid and extensive propagation of the gospel.

The eleventh, the beneficial effects of christianity.

The twelfth treats of the inspiration of the scriptures.

The thirteenth continues the same subject, and concludes with a review of the whole argument.

On the subject of inspiration, upon which so many writers on the evidences of christianity have stumbled, Mr Wilson maintains a sound and wholesome doctrine; teaching that the sacred writers, in all cases, possessed such a degree of inspiration as was necessary to render them infallible in what they wrote. Less would have been insufficient to render the scriptures a safe foundation for our faith, in all that they inculcate; for what if their slips and errors should only affect matters of small importance, who shall tell us what those things are which belong to this class? But how easy was it for that Spirit which guided them in great matters to superintend their pens also in things of apparently small moment? For it is in revelation as in creation, some things appear unimportant which have very important relations and connexions. And if all the scriptures of the Old Testament were given by inspiration, as is expressly and repeatedly taught in the New, why should the opinion be entertained, that the latest inspirations of the Holy Spirit were less perfect; although we know, that under the new dispensations, his effusions were much more abundant than under the old? This is a point on which, if we begin to yield, there is no place afterward where we can obtain firm footing. The idea of a partial or imperfect inspiration is in itself so unreasonable, that he who adopts this opinion will for consistency soon reject the inspiration of the writers altogether. A controversy is sometimes raised respecting the words of scripture, whether they were all suggested by the Holy Ghost; and if so, how it is that we find every man writing in

his own peculiar style? Concerning this, we would merely observe, that if the plenary inspiration of the writers be granted, it involves such a superintendence of the Spirit over the language, as to prevent the use of unsuitable words and phrases; and as more than this was unnecessary, so the complete accomplishment of this object is consistent with each writer's retaining his own style and peculiar manner.

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*Memoirs of the Rev. John H. Livingston, D. D. S. T. P.  
Prepared in compliance with a request of the General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church in North America.  
By Alexander Gunn, D. D. Pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church at Bloomingdale, in the city of New York.—  
Rutgers Press, New York. 1829. Pp. 440, 8vo.*

We congratulate the religious public on the appearance of this volume. It is a memorial richly merited, and well adapted to do good. The truly venerable Dr Livingston had adorned the Dutch church, as one of her most distinguished and eminently useful ministers, for more than half a century; and for more than forty years was her most prominent professor of theology. It was to have been expected, therefore, that the reverend synod of that church would take a deep interest in his memory. She owed it to herself, as well as to him, to erect this monument to his uncommon worth.

Dr Gunn has executed the task assigned to him by the synod with a very commendable degree of industry, talent and success. He has taken occasion to introduce sketches of the history of the Dutch church in this country, which cannot fail of proving both instructive and interesting. And while Dr Livingston is the principal figure on his large canvass, he has included smaller likenesses, and occasional notices of so many individuals, that it will long and often be referred to for much useful information.

We learn from this volume that Dr Livingston was descended from a distinguished and honourable Scotch family; that his great great grandfather was the celebrated John Livingston, the eminently pious and successful minister of