THE APOCRYPHA

OF THE

BOOK OF DANIEL:

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN VULGATE

WITH NOTES,

BY

LUKE HOWARD, F.R.S.
THE APOCRYPHA
OF THE
BOOK OF DANIEL;
CONTAINING
THE STORY OF SUSANNAH;
THE PRAYER OF AZARIAH,
WITH THE
HYMN OF THE THREE CHILDREN;
AND
THE HISTORY OF BEL AND THE DRAGON:
Translated from the Vulgate Latin;
WITH NOTES;
AND
A SHORT TREATISE ON THE MATTER CONTAINED IN THESE PIECES.

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THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

The Scripture Translations, here presented to the Public, comprise those parts of the Book of Daniel, which were, by the editors of the authorised version of the Bible, now (or lately) current in this country, separated from the text of that book, and placed in the Apocrypha. They will form, as far as I can judge at present, the last of a series of pieces of this kind, which I have been induced to publish, in order (if I might, in any degree, promote so good an end) to rescue from unjust contempt the character of these portions of Scripture. It may be, that in the ordering of Divine Providence, some abler hand will be found to do for the remainder of the Apocrypha, what has been thus effected for a part: and, surely, it is a labour at this season needful for some to engage in, were it only that they might check the infatuation with which the so-called Anti-apocryphal party are proceeding to fulfil their avowed purpose of destroying (what the Church, with religious care, has preserved through so many ages) an undoubted portion of the antient Scriptures of God's peculiar people.
What would ensue, should this spirit become universally prevalent, it is not difficult to divine. Already do these books begin to vanish from the Quarto Bibles, where the Reformers of the age of Cranmer placed them to be read for edification, in the Churches. The multitude, who were certainly intended to be instructed and warned by their contents, when this measure was decreed, have long been deprived of their use; at first, indeed, through mere considerations of economy on the part of the printers. But the body, which originally took cheap Bibles as it found them, in order to fulfil the truly Christian purpose of making the possession of the Scriptures universal, now thinks fit, authoritatively, to sanction and enforce the want. And, not content with this, a faction which has been rising in its bosom, and which threatens to be one of the most formidable that have yet afflicted the Church, publicly orders its dependents to burn all the copies of the Apocrypha in their possession; a proceeding, the ultimate end and tendency of which cannot be mistaken. Hunted thus, from the Church to the library, from the library to the closet, the Apocryphal Books of Scripture will soon cease to be found among us.
What would ensue, I again ask, with regard to Holy Scripture at large, should this faction obtain the ascendancy? There is enough of matter to begin upon for further persecution, in that which they profess to receive in its whole extent as the word of God; enough, which may be rejected on the very principles which (as they say) have decided their conduct towards the Apocrypha. And this part, being thus disposed of, there will be found more, which, with the aid of infidel cavilling, cooperating with a supercilious, over-straining, pharisaical judgment, on the part of sincere but mistaken believers, may be in no long time thus judged down, as unfit for the perusal of the many and not needed for the study of a few; until a considerable part of the Bible shall have been consigned (along with the books of the Index Expurgatorius of another party) to oblivion, if not to utter destruction.

Are we, then, grown so worldly, become so little in earnest in religion, that we cannot derive from even these Scriptures the benefit intended for us in their preservation to the churches, without being tickled to levity at their contents? To the pure, it is said, all things are pure: and it is a sign of real degeneracy (under whatever increase of shew, pro-
ession, and performance,) when men begin to discover blemishes of this sort, overlooking the real beauties of the composition, the sound instruction of the matter. As to the pretext of false doctrine, it has been in part met by a corrected rendering of the passages in which it was thought to be found; and in respect of the remainder, may be done away at once, by referring to parallel or analogous passages in many parts of (at least) the Scriptures of the Old Testament. With these books extinct, we should lose all light on the subject of Sacred History, for about three hundred years; from the time of Nehemiah to the conclusion of the story of the Maccabees. Will any one now undertake to prove them spurious; nay, to shew from direct evidence what part of them is to be rejected for want of authenticity? But that which is on record from antient time as history, must stand as matter of history, until, by the force of evidence, internal and external, it can be set aside.

Be not deceived, reader! God's word consists not in the words, and much less in the paper and ink, of the book we call the Bible. It is the matter, the substance, the meaning, the spirit, the power; of which the words are but the sign and symbol. Taken in its lowest
sense, it is whatsoever things were written aforetime for our instruction by holy men, who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Of these, Holy Scripture is a true record: a divine history of fact, and doctrine, and precept; but delivered in the words of man, fallible man! And, in common with all that pertains to our humanity here, it partakes of human imperfection. This record will fail (1 Cor. xiii. 8—10) when faith shall be consummated in sight, and hope in enjoyment; but the word of God abideth for ever! (1 Peter, i. 23—25.)

Charity never faileth; but how have we failed to maintain it, to love it, to follow after it! What wounds have not the controversies, the bitter differences on this very subject, already inflicted on the Churches? And shall we persist in forcing upon the consciences of our fellow christians the world over, as a condition of receiving from us the sacred volume, an accordance with our own fallible, not to say mistaken, judgment in this thing? Nay, my brethren, let us bear with each other; and suffer that every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, ere he be further urged to join in a proceeding of so new and dangerous a character. And let no one, who has even been
accustomed to hear the Apocrypha termed 'the accursed thing;' imagine, that by cutting down through the back of the volume, he can effect a separation between things which God did never place so far asunder. For, let it never be forgotten, there is not, in all Holy Scripture, a sentence on which the rejection of these writings can be fairly grounded. The whole work has originated, been carried on, and concluded (if unhappily it be concluded for the churches at large in this kingdom) by an authority merely human. If the Church of England have, indeed, given up this question, and it is to be made a condition of communion with her, that we reject these books, let me and mine be dissenters for ever! Forgive me, my fellow christians, this wrong; for, indeed, I seem to wrong you in supposing it for a moment; and suffer if in any thing I have exceeded in expression. I have nothing in view, the Lord knoweth, who sees my heart, but his glory, your preservation from fatal errors in the things that belong to his word, the Churches good, and my own peace of mind and salvation!

L. H.

London,
27th of Sixth Month, 1829.
THE STORY OF SUSANNA.

There dwelt a man in Babylon, whose name was Joachim: he took to wife Susanna, the daughter of Hilkiah, a woman of great beauty, and that feared God. For her parents, being just persons, had thoroughly instructed this their daughter in the law of God, as it was delivered by Moses. Joachim was very rich; and he had, by his house, a garden, which was a place of resort for the Jews; he being the most honourable person among them. In that year (a) were two of the elders appointed judges, (a) In which Joachim was chief of the people, or in which he took Susanna to wife. Daniel is said, in a Syriac version in the Polyglot Bible, to have been, at this time, twelve years of age. This version exhibits, however, the variations common to oral tales. Susanna is represented as a widow; and the elders are named Amid and Abid.—And here, reader! let me drop thee a word of caution: If thou be a sober person, well disposed towards religion and thy country, thou wilt read what follows in God's fear. It may serve to awaken in thee very serious reflections on the signs of the times, and the present state of morals and charity among us. But if thy heart be not in God's cause; if thou be a scoffer, a sensualist, lay down the book, for it may furnish thee with yet further occasion to speak evil of the truth; and may augment, in the sight of God thy judge, the materials of thy condemnation. To the pure (I repeat) all things are pure; (Tit. i. 15;) and to those, this simple pathetic story may afford matter both of instruction and warning. Of instruction, as
of the sort of men of whom the Lord spake, saying, that wickedness went forth from Babylon through the elders, who seemed as judges to rule the people. These frequented the house of Joachim; and to them came all who had causes to be tried.

At noon, when the people went to their homes, Susanna was accustomed to come forth and walk in the garden by her husband’s house. Here, those two elders saw her daily going in, and taking her walks, and they were inflamed with love towards her; insomuch that it quite overpowered them, and they ceased to have regard to Heaven above, neither called to remembrance the just judgments of God. Thus were they both smitten with the love of her, yet neither of them disclosed his passion to the other; for they were ashamed to acknowledge to themselves their desire to lie with her. But they watched carefully, every day, to get a sight of her, and saying one to the other, It is dinner time, let us go home: when they had gone forth, they still returned and came together again. Of which conduct, when they had mutually enquired the reason, they confessed their passion to each other; and agreed upon a time when they might find her alone. And, the weather being hot, she happened on that day, as at some other times, to go into the garden with her two maids, intending to use the bath: and

being one of the most antient records of a popular trial extant: of warning, as exhibiting an awful example of the summary conviction and punishment of the false witness and unjust judge.
there being no one about the place, beside these two elders, they hid themselves, and observed her. 'Bring (she said to her maids) oil and wash-balls, and shut to the garden door, that I may wash me;' who did as they were ordered, not knowing that the two elders had concealed themselves within the walls. But as soon as the maids were gone out, they rose up and ran to her, saying, The garden gate is shut, and no one will see us: we are inflamed with desire towards thee; wherefore consent thou to lie with us: for, if thou refuse this, we will bear witness against thee, and say that a young man was with thee, on whose account thou hadst sent the maids away. (b) Then Susanna sighed bitterly, and said, I am in a strait every way: for, if I do this thing it is my death; and if I do it not, I shall not escape your hands. But it is better for me to suffer the worst at men's hands, than to sin in the sight of God. So she cried with a loud voice; and the two elders cried out against her, while one of them ran to the gate and set it open. The servants heard the outcry in the garden, and rushed in, by a private door, to see what was the matter. They were, however, greatly ashamed when the two elders had told their story, for nothing of the kind had ever been reported of Susanna.

On the morrow, when the people came together to Joachim her husband, these two came also, full

(b) A device common to such characters; as may appear from other stories, and especially from that of Lucretia in Roman history.
of evil thoughts against Susanna, intending to put her to death. They said, therefore, to the assembly, Send for Susanna, the daughter of Hilkiah, the wife of Joachim. And immediately they sent for her. So she came, with her parents, her children, and all her relations; a delicate person and of great beauty. But these wicked men commanded that her veil should be taken off, (for she was veiled,) that even thus they might be filled with her beauty. Then her relations wept, together with all who knew her. And the two elders, standing up in the midst of the people, put their hands upon her head, while she, weeping, looked up to heaven. Then said the elders, We were walking in the garden by ourselves, when this woman came in with her two maids, and, shutting the door, sent away the maids from her. Then came to her a young man who lay hid there, and lay with her; and we who were in a corner of the garden, seeing this wickedness, ran to them, and found as we have said. Him we could not indeed catch; for he was too strong for us, and opening the door he escaped: but having apprehended her, we asked who that young man was, and she refused to tell us. This is that which we have to testify against her.

To these men the multitude gave credence, as being of the elders and judges of the people; and they condemned her to death. But Susanna lifted up her voice, and said, O, thou eternal God, who knowest all things before they come to pass, and from whom nothing is hid, thou knowest how false
that testimony is which they have borne against me! And now, behold! I am to die, though I have done none of those things which they have maliciously laid together against me. And the Lord heard her prayer: so that, when she was about to be led to execution, he stirred up the spirit of a youth, by name Daniel, who cried aloud, I am clear of the blood of this woman. Then the whole multitude, turning to Daniel, said to him, What is this speech that thou hast uttered? And he, standing in the midst of the people, replied, Are ye so foolish, ye sons of Israel, as that, without enquiry or deliberation, ye have condemned to death a daughter of Israel? The cause must be judged over again, for they have borne false witness against her.

Then the people returned with haste to the place of judgment: and the elders said to him, Come, and sit in the midst of us, and judge with us; since God hath given thee the honour due to the aged. But Daniel said, Separate these two, the one from the other, and put them far apart, that I may try them. When, therefore, they had been thus put apart, he called for one of them, and said to him, Thou who art grown old in iniquity, now are thy former sins come to light, which thou hast committed in unjust judgments; oppressing the innocent and acquitting the guilty: though the Lord hath said, Thou shalt not slay the innocent righteous person. Now, therefore, if thou didst see her, tell me under what tree thou sawest them together. He replied, Under the holm tree. Then said Daniel, Thou hast
fitly lied against thine own head; for, behold! the
angel of the Lord hath received the sentence already
at his hand, to cut thee in two\(^1\). And, sending him
forth, he commanded the other to come; to whom
he said, Thou seed of Canaan, and not of Judah,
the beauty of a woman hath deceived thee, and an
evil desire hath subverted thine heart. Thus have ye
dealt with the daughters of Israel, and they, through
fear, companied with you: but here is a daughter
of Judah, who could not abide your wickedness!
Tell me now, therefore, under what tree didst thou
find them in company together? He replied, Under
a lentisk. Then said Daniel to him, Thou also hast
lied opportunely against thy own life; for the angel
of God is waiting, with his sword drawn to cut
thee asunder: and he shall slay you both!

Then the whole assembly cried out with a loud
voice, blessing God, who delivereth them that put
their trust in him. And they rose up against the
two elders; for Daniel had convicted them, out of
their own mouths, of false witness: and they did unto
them as they had wickedly gone about to do to their
neighbour, (according to the law of Moses,) and
put them to death\(^1\). Thus was the innocent blood
delivered on that day. And Hilkiah, with his wife,
praised God for their daughter Susanna, as did also
Joachim, her husband, and all their kindred, for that
the evil thing was not found in her. And Daniel
became great in the eyes of the people, and a prince
from that day forward.

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\(^k\) Job, xxxi. 9—12. Judith, xiii. 16.
\(^1\) Deut. xix. 16—21.
THE SONG OF AZARIAH,

AND

HYMN OF THE THREE CHILDREN;

Which is found in the Syriac, Arabic, Greek, and Vulgate Latin Scripture, but not in the Hebrew.

So they walked in the midst of the flames, praising God and blessing the Lord. And Azariah, standing still, prayed; and, opening his mouth in the midst of the fire, said, Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers: thy name is to be praised and glorified for ever. For thou art righteous in all that thou hast done unto us: all thy works are true, and thy ways right, and just are all thy judgments. For thou hast done just judgment in all that thou hast brought upon us, and upon Jerusalem, the holy city, the abode of our fathers: for in truth and in judgment, because of our sins, thou hast brought all these things upon us. For we have sinned and wrought iniquity in drawing back from thee: yea, in all things we have been faulty before thee. Unto thy commandments have we not hearkened, nor observed them; nor have we done that thou didst bid us do, that it might be well with us. All things,
therefore, which thou hast brought upon us, whatsoever thou hast done unto us, thou hast done in true judgment; even in delivering us into the hands of our enemies, the worst and most unjust and faithless of men, and unto a king corrupt and unrighteous beyond all that are upon the earth.

And now, behold! we are dumb with confusion, and are become a reproach to thy servants, and to those that worship thee. Give us not up, we beseech thee for thy name's sake, for ever: abolish not thy covenant, nor take away thy mercy from us, for Abraham's sake, thy friend; for Isaac's thy servant, and Israel's thy holy one; to whom thou didst speak, promising that thou wouldst make their children as the stars of heaven, and as the sands on the sea shore, for multitude. Whereas now, O Lord, we are become the least of all nations, and are at this day humbled in the view of the whole earth for our sins. Nor have we, at this time, either prince, or prophet, or leader; or whole burnt offering, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense; or place of offering up our first fruits before thee, that we might thus find mercy. But we shall be accepted in humility of mind and in a contrite spirit. Let, then, our offering be this day acceptable in thy sight, as when it was made in the midst of whole burnt sacrifices of rams, and of bullocks, and thousands of lambs: for they shall not be confounded that put their trust in thee.

(a) How descriptive, alas! of the condition of the same people at this day.
Now that with all our heart we follow thee, and seek thy face, fearing thee, put us not to confusion, but deal with us in thy kindness, according to the multitude of thy mercies, and deliver us by thy marvellous working, O Lord, and give glory to thy name! And, in thine almightiness, confound all those that evilly entreat thy servants: let them be turned back, and their strength utterly broken, that they may know that thou art God, the glorious Lord of the whole earth. (b)

The king's officers, meanwhile, who had put them in, ceased not to supply the furnace with naphtha, and tow, and pitch, and brushwood, until the fire flamed up forty and nine cubits high above the furnace; (c) when it broke through, and burned those of the Chaldees that were within reach about the fire. But the angel of the Lord went down with Azariah and his companions into the furnace, and smote out the flame, making in the midst, as it were, a cool moist wind; so that the fire touched them not, nor in anywise injured or put them to inconvenience. (d)

(b) There is in this prayer much of the pathos of truth, and of the spirit of Holy Scripture, in which we may be sure that Azariah had been instructed.

(c) Which might easily be known, by comparison with some object of known height near.

(d) Psal. civ. 4. Which, but for the sense given to it in Heb. i. 7, might have been read, 'Who maketh the winds his angels, and flames of fire his messengers;' and would then have been in close agreement with the context. The wind was doubtless employed as an instrument in this providence: but we are not to forget, that when the king's eyes
Then did these three, as with one mouth, praise and bless and glorify God in the furnace, saying, Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers, who art to be praised and glorified and exalted over all, for ever. And blessed through all ages, and to be praised and exalted over all, is the holy name of thy glory. Blessed art thou in the holy temple of thy glory; ye, to be praised and glorified above all, for ever. Blessed art thou on the throne of thy kingdom; ye, to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Blessed art thou who beholdest the deeps, and sittest upon the cherubim; ye, to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Blessed art thou in the firmament of heaven; ye, to be praised and glorified for ever!

Bless the Lord, all ye his works: praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Bless the Lord, O ye angels of the Lord; praise and exalt him above all, for ever. O ye heavens, bless ye the Lord; praise and exalt him above all, for ever. O all ye powers, that are of the Lord, bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Sun and moon, bless ye the Lord: praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Ye stars of heaven, bless ye the Lord: praise and exalt him above all, for ever. O all ye rains and dews, bless ye the Lord: praise and exalt him above all, for ever.
Let every wind in heaven bless the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Let fire and heat bless the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Let winter and summer bless the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Let rime and mist bless the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Let frost and snow and ice bless the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Let night and day bless the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever.

Yea, light and darkness bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Ye clouds and thunders bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. O, earth, bless thou the Lord, and praise and exalt him over all, for ever. (e) Ye mountains and hills bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. All things that grow on the earth bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Ye fountains of waters bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Seas and rivers bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Bless the Lord, ye great whales, with all things that move in the waters, for he is to be praised and exalted above all, for ever. Let all the fowls of heaven bless the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever. Beasts and all cattle,

(e) Benedicito tota terra domino.—Lat. ex Syr. Psal. cxlviii.
bless ye the Lord, who is to be praised and exalted over all, for ever!

O, all ye children of men, bless ye the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Let Israel bless the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Bless the Lord, O ye priests of the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Bless the Lord, ye souls and spirits of the just, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever. Bless the Lord, ye that are humble and pure in heart; praise and exalt him above all, for ever!

And let us, Azariah, Ananias, and Mishael, bless the Lord, and praise and exalt him above all, for ever! For he hath plucked us out of hell, he hath saved us from the hand of death, he hath delivered us from the burning flame, taking us out of the midst of the fire!

Say unto the Lord, thou art good; thy mercy endureth for ever. All ye that fear the Lord, bless ye the God of gods, and praise him, and confess unto him, for his mercy endureth for ever!
THE STORY OF BEL AND THE DRAGON.

Then was Astyages the king laid in the sepulchres of his fathers, and Cyrus the Persian reigned in his stead. And Daniel was the king's guest, and was honoured above all his friends. Now there was an idol of the Babylonians called Bel, on which there was spent daily an offering of six and thirty bushels of fine flour, with forty sheep and six jars of wine. The king also worshipped it, going every day to bow before it: but Daniel worshipped his God. (a) And

(a) The following information from Prideaux may help the reader to understand this narrative, in which a considerable interval of time and some change of place being left unnoticed, it is necessarily obscure when compared with the rest of the history of Daniel. In the year 559 before Christ, (the same in which Evitmerodach, king of Babylon was slain,) died Astyages, king of Media, to whom succeeded Cyaxares II. his son, in the civil administration, and Cyrus (his grandson by his daughter Mandane) in the military. In the year 639, Belshazzar was slain, and Babylon taken by Cyrus; who doing it under the orders of Cyaxares his uncle, otherwise called Darius, it is said of the latter that he took the kingdom, to wit, of Babylon. See Dan. v. 30, 31. Babylon being taken, Cyrus went into Persia, and returning accompanied by Cyaxares, left the latter in Babylon: and under this prince the transactions which led to the casting of Daniel into the den of lions are thought to have happened. These may be considered as related partly in chap. vi. of Daniel, and partly in this story.
the king said unto him, Wherefore dost thou not worship Bel? To whom Daniel made answer, Because I do not worship idols made with men's hands, but the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth; who hath power over all flesh. But (said the king to him) dost thou not perceive that Bel is a living God? Seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh daily? But Daniel smiling replied, O king be not deceived: for this idol is but clay within and brass without, and eateth nothing*. Then the king was angry: and calling to him the priests of Bel, he said to them, Unless ye shall declare to me who it is that is fed at all this cost, ye shall die. But if ye will shew how it is that Bel eateth up these provisions, Daniel shall die; for he hath blasphemed against Bel. And Daniel said unto the king, Let it be according to thy word. (6) Now the priests of Bel were seventy persons, besides their women and children. And the king came, together with Daniel, into the temple of Bel; and the priests of Bel said, Behold, we will go forth out of the temple: but do thou, O king! put the meat on the table and mix the wine, and shut to the door, and seal it with thy own signet. And when thou comest in on the morrow, unless thou find that Bel hath eaten the whole, we will consent to die: otherwise, Daniel shall die, who hath lied against us.

(a) Wisdom, xiv. 11. Hab. ii. 18, 19. (b) Bel, or Belus, from Baal, [Lord] is supposed to have been the monarch Nimrod deified. His temple at Babylon was a prodigious pyramidal structure of a furlong square at the base; and is considered by Bochart as the same with the original tower of Babel. Prideaux, Part 1. Book 2.
Thus confident were they, for they had made beneath the table a private entrance, by which they came in continually, and ate up those provisions. When, therefore, they were gone out, and the king had set the meat before Bel, Daniel gave order to his attendants, and they brought ashes, which he sifted over the whole floor of the temple, in the king's presence. Then they two, going out, shut to the door, and sealing it with the king's signet, went away. But the priests according to their custom entered in by night, with their wives and children, and ate and drank all. (c)

By that time it was day the king had risen, and Daniel with him; and the king said, Daniel, are the seals unbroken? who replied, they are whole. And immediately as he opened the door, the king looked on the table, and cried with a loud voice, Great art thou O Bel! and in thee is no deceit at all. But Daniel, laughing, held back the king, that he might not go in, and said, Look at the pavement, and consider whose footsteps are these. Then said the king, I see the prints of the feet of men, women and children. (d) And the king was angry, and apprehended the priests with their wives and children; who shewed him the secret passages, by which they came in and consumed what was on the table. For which the king slew them; and delivered Bel into the power of

(c) Which they might do with wood ashes under their feet, without perceiving the state of the floor.

(d) Each distinguishable (no doubt) by the form of the shoe, as well as by the size.
Daniel, who threw down the image and the temple of Bel.

There was likewise in that place a great serpent, which the Babylonians worshipped. And the king said to Daniel, Behold, now thou canst not say that this is not a living God; therefore worship him. But Daniel said to the king, I worship the Lord my God, for he is the living God. But do thou, O king! give permission, and I will slay the serpent without club or sword. And the king said, I give thee leave. Then Daniel took pitch, and fat, and hair, and melted them together, and made it into lumps, and put them into the serpent's mouth: and the serpent burst asunder. And Daniel said, this is that you have been worshipping!

When the Babylonians heard this, they had great indignation, and gathered themselves together against the king, saying, The king is become a Jew! he hath destroyed Bel, he hath killed the dragon, and slain the priests. And coming to the king, they said, Deliver up Daniel to us, or we will make an end of thee, and of thy house. Then the king perceiving that they would make an assault upon him, and being urged by the necessity of the case, delivered up Daniel to the men of Babylon, who cast him into the den of lions, where he remained.

(e) Let the reader note, that the prophet did not consider himself at liberty to destroy even a noxious object of idolatry without the authority of the civil power.

(f) The army being occupied about this time under Cyrus in the conquest of Syria, it is possible that Cyaxares might be left at the mercy of a faction in Babylon.
six days. There were in the den seven lions, to which they gave daily two carcases and two sheep, which at that time were not given to them, in order that they might devour Daniel.

Now there was in Judea, a prophet named Habakkuk, who had boiled soup, and broken bread into it in a bowl, and was going into the field to carry it to his reapers. And the angel of the Lord said to Habakkuk, Carry the dinner which thou hast there to Daniel, who is in the lion's den in Babylon. But Habakkuk said, My Lord, I never saw Babylon, and I know not where the den is. Then the angel of the Lord, in the vehemence of his spirit, took him up by the hair of his head, and carried him to Babylon, and set him down over the den of lions. And Habakkuk cried aloud, saying, Daniel thou servant of God, take the dinner which God hath sent thee.

And Daniel said, Thou hast remembered me O my God! and hast not forsaken them that trust in thee!

(g) Would it not have been as easy, the infidel may ask with a sneer, to have supported Daniel to the end of his confinement without food, as thus to bring another prophet through the air with it? Doubtless it would have been as easy—seeing that God is Omnipotent: but it seems that it pleased the Omnipotent and Allwise God at once to refresh nature in his servant, and to confirm both his faith and that of his countryman, Habakkuk, by this miracle. Let the objector read the three short chapters of the book of this prophet, every line of which is precious, even as sublime description and most interesting sentiment, (to say nothing of its wonderful relation to time past, present, and to come,) and blush to have doubted that the God of Habakkuk should vouchsafe to associate him (for that one time at least) with an angel on an errand of mercy. Hab. i. 14. Dan. xii. 13.
So he arose and did eat: the angel, moreover, immediately set Habakkuk again in his own place.

On the seventh day came the king to mourn for Daniel: and drawing nigh to the den, he looked in, and behold! Daniel was sitting there in the midst of the lions. And the king cried with a loud voice, saying, Great art thou, O Lord God of Daniel! And he took him out of the den. Moreover, he turned into the den those who had been the cause of his condemnation, and they were devoured in a moment, in his presence. Then said the king, Let the inhabitants of the whole earth obey the God of Daniel, for he is a Saviour, a Deliverer; shewing signs and working wonders in heaven and on the earth, even he who hath delivered Daniel from the den of lions.
The history of Susanna, inserted in the *Apocrypha* of our Bibles, is said to be, 'set apart from the beginning of Daniel, because it is not in the Hebrew, as neither the story of Bel and the dragon.'

The circumstance here mentioned might be a sufficient reason why these two pieces of history were not included in the collection of the Hebrew Scriptures. They were not in the sacred language of the Jews; and this people were too proud of their treasury of divine truths, to admit into it what might seem to connect them with another nation. I have already given an opinion in my translation of the book of *Ecclesiasticus*, that 'if the Jews could have produced a perfect copy in Hebrew, when their Scriptures were embodied, they would not have scrupled to give that book a place with the rest.'

There are other reasons, which may be supposed also to have influenced the opinion of their leading men to a neglect of the story of *Susanna*. It relates things which happened during their captivity, and which in themselves were discreditable to the elders who then ruled. Some may even ob-
ject that it is probably a fiction, framed by some admirer of Daniel, in order to exalt the character of that prophet. But how will they set about proving this? At present it stands upon the footing of authentic history,—not the less such, surely, for being found together with its companion in the Greek tongue: into which it was very probable these tales would pass when they ceased to be stories, (properly so called,) that is, matter orally delivered from one Jew to another, for the same end for which such things are commonly circulated the world over—the entertainment of the mind, and the formation and advancement of national character in the hearers.

Jerome, in his prologue to Daniel, makes mention of objections to this piece, and to the other portions of Daniel found in the Apocrypha, which were urged in his presence by a learned Jew. The story of Susanna he derided, concluding that it had been got up by some Greek. The three young men in the furnace he thought very unlikely to have had leisure there to compose a hymn, in which all nature is called upon, in set verse, to praise God for their deliverance: not, however, taking time himself to reflect, that such a piece might very well be composed after the event, and of what had really passed, during it, under the Divine influence; and inserted (as that prayer is in the book of Jonah,) in its apparent place in the narrative. The judgment of Daniel, in the case of Susanna, and his detection of the priests of Bel in their frauds, appeared
to him to savour more of human sagacity than of the prophetic spirit; an opinion which, however, seems to admit the reality of the transactions. Yet with all this, and more, before him, Jerome does not pretend to decide for his reader, but contents himself with giving the precedence to what was of undoubted authenticity in the book before him; inserting these minor stories at the end. For, he observes, they are so universally known that an inexperienced reader would be apt to deem the work imperfect without them.

A further difficulty, which might be raised, on the subject of the introduction of the name of the prophet Habakkuk, will be as easily obviated as the foregoing. Habakkuk, it may be said, was not a cotemporary with Daniel, and the piece (for so do these hostile inferences commonly proceed) is therefore spurious. The time of the prophecy of the former is set down 626 B.C; whereas Daniel was not at Babylon as a youth, (or child, as he is termed in our version,) until about 606, twenty years afterwards; and it was about seventy years later still that he was cast into the den of lions.

On which, I may remark, in the first place, that if Habakkuk wrote this prophesy at the time stated, and in early life, (and it hath in its descriptions all the fire of youth,) he must have been about an hundred and ten years old at the time of Daniel's extremity. An age at which it was possible, certainly, that the miracle should be wrought through his means. But Prideaux, who places him along with
the prophet Zephaniah, in the reign of Jehoiakim, 609 B.C. confesses that 'neither the time in which he lived, nor the parents from whom he was descended, are anywhere named in Scripture:' but, it seems, 'he prophesying the coming of the Chaldeans, in the same manner as Jeremiah did, this gives reason to conjecture that he lived in the same time.' In these matters, where nothing is recorded, one hath the same right to shoot his bow as another. I shall, therefore, take the liberty to conjecture that Habakkuk might be left in the land of Judea a mere child, at the time of the carrying away of Daniel and others, his countrymen, to Babylon. This will leave the time from 606 to 588 B.C. for him to grow up, and utter that part of his recorded prophesies, which relates to the coming of the Chaldeans.

Of the prophesy of Habakkuk, I may further remark, that the people of Israel are not so much as named in it. The prophesy is addressed to some 'among the heathen;' and it is said of the Chaldeans, that they shall 'march through the breadth of the land, to possess dwelling-places, not theirs; that they 'shall scoff at kings, and princes shall be a scorn unto them;' that 'they shall deride every strong hold, for they shall heap dust and take it.' All which may relate to the whole proceedings of an expedition not confined to Judea, if we even admit this country to be comprehended in it. In what country was the prophet when he uttered his prediction? The subsequent denunci-
ations in Chapter 2nd, plainly relate to a heathen prince, an idolater, of inordinate ambition and covetousness, and of dissolute manners, whose overthrow (but not his death) is obscurely foretold in the 7th, 8th, 16th, and 17th verses. Was not this Nebuchadnezzar, and might not the prophet Habakkuk, as well as Daniel, be in captivity, or a traveller during part of his time? He says himself, elsewhere, 'I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.' If he saw this, he must at least have been in Arabia. He seems to have seen much of predatory expeditions, somewhere\(^b\).

There is one thing more in Jerome's prologue to the book of Daniel, which demands our close attention. He says, 'Danielem et Esdram—Hebraicis quidem literis sed Chaldeo sermonem conscriptos,' that the books of Daniel and Esdras, though in the Hebrew character, are, nevertheless, written in the Chaldee language; which being ill understood by the translator of these books into Greek, may have occasioned the faults which appear in them in the Septuagint. This observation, with regard to the book of Daniel, requires to be qualified. Prideaux says 'The book of Daniel is written in Chaldee, from the fourth verse of the 2nd chapter to the end of the 7th chapter,' that is, about half the book. The seventh chapter is prophetical; all the rest of the prophecies are in Hebrew; the historical parts, as already mentioned, in Chaldee.

The author may have written these parts in
Chaldee, in order that they might be read by the king and others, who did not so well understand the Hebrew; or he may have dictated them to a Chaldee scribe; or they may be the record of the transactions, composed by such an one under his direction: for it is observable, that in the first six chapters the prophet nowhere mentions himself, but appears always in the third person. Nay, the fourth chapter is, from the beginning to the end, a royal proclamation; in which (with the exception of that part in verse 28—33, of which he could not so properly speak in the first person) the king, Nebuchadnezzar himself, sets forth the signs and wonders that the High God had wrought toward him. In the second verse of chap. vii. we find words which plainly shew that this vision, with the interpretation, were dictated by the prophet to a scribe,—'Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night,' and so forth: the inference from all which is, that by the same rule by which the books of Esdras, at least, were excluded from the Hebrew canon of Scripture, ought these parts of Daniel to have been so, likewise. Accordingly, Jerome further advises us, 'non haberi Danielem apud Hebreos inter prophetas, sed inter eos qui Hagiographa conscripserunt,' that the Jews do not place Daniel with the prophets, but simply among the writers of Holy Scripture. And if we rightly consider the nature of the contents of the book of Daniel, we shall not be much surprised at this. Dr. Clarke says, it is probable he meets with this treatment
from them, because his prophesies are proofs too evident that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah: for he came at the very time that Daniel had said the prince Messiah should come.

Leaving the children of Israel (or the mixed nation or people scattered over the world, and claiming this important title) to judge as they may of this their own prophet, until it shall please the Infinite and most wise God, that the veil be taken off from their hearts in reading him (which day may God of his mercy hasten, by the effectual calling of all people in the gospel of his Son), let us, who believe in Christ, duly prize and endeavour rightly to study and use these precious Scriptures: the more earnestly, as they contain matter evidently suited to the present, and to quickly approaching times!

I shall now proceed to examine somewhat in detail the history of the Babylonian idolatry and ecclesiastical establishment in the time of Daniel; or, as it is commonly termed, and with very unfair contempt, the Story of Bel and the Dragon.

In the book of Jeremiah, we find in several places denunciations against this idolatry. As in chap. 50, thus, Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach (a) is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. And in chap. 51,

(a) Was this an idol bearing the name of the king, Evil-Merodach; or was that king named from his god? See Dan. iv. 6.
Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. (b) We would have healed Babylon, (c) but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. v. 7—9. Behold I am against thee, O destroying mountain, (d) saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make of thee a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord. v. 25, 26. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out. The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. v. 34, 35. And I

(b) Alluding to a magical practice of healing by sympathy, another person taking the medicine for the sick.

(c) By the publication in her of the doctrine of the one true God and his worship; a doctrine confirmed by most evident signs and wonders.

(d) Probably the high place of Bel, and his temple thereon.
will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall. v. 44. Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her. v. 47. Wherefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all her land the wounded shall groan. Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the Lord. A sound of a cry cometh from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans: because the Lord hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice: (e) (when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered,) because the spoiler is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, every one of their bows is broken: for the Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite. v. 52—56.

Let us examine these important passages in detail.—1. They who were to publish this prophecy among the nations' were to do it in the most open

(e) The 'great voice' (of the multitude in a city) may be very well thought to represent the force of prejudice or public opinion, operating in favour of existing abuses, and to the protection of their authors and of those that profit by them.
manner: they were even 'to set up a standard' the more to attract the attention of the people to their message.—2. They were to declare the thing as already accomplished; so certain was the fulfilment of the prophecy, and so near the time.—8. For what reason is Babylon said to be a golden cup in the Lord's hand, which made all the earth drunken; but because it pleased God that the surrounding heathen should fall under that particular delusion which prevailed in her, in respect of the worship of Bel and his dragon? Of which delusion they had, in common with this great city, the opportunity of being cured, by the testimony of the Jews to the true God, and the manifestation of the power of Jehovah in the transactions recorded in the book of Daniel. For it appears, by what is said in verse 44, that there was a great concourse out of the surrounding nations to this worship.—4. It is plain, that the support of this establishment was connected with very grievous oppression of the people; in which the poor captive Jews had their share. So that it is called the destroying mountain which destroyed all the earth; no doubt, by exaction and robbery, for the creation and support of the magnificence of this idolatry, in common with that of Nebuchadnezzar their sovereign lord.—5. The destruction of the images and of the worship is plainly stated to be decreed, because of these oppressive practices. 'Therefore,' verse 47,—'wherefore,' verse 52,—'I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon.' Accordingly, the prophet Isaiah thus
describes the event as already happening: 'Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy laden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity.' Isa. xlvi. 1, 2—6. It is declared, that though these idolaters should make resistance, though they 'should mount up to heaven [their mountain, with the temple on it] and fortify the height of the strength of Babylon, yet from the Lord himself should the spoilers come unto her.' And we may conclude, from the brief notice of these events in the story, that it was not without a considerable popular commotion in favour of the idolatrous priests (who had 'the great voice' with them for the time) and some consequent danger to the government, that the putting down of their establishment was at length effected.

Seventh and lastly; the most curious part of the matter is the extreme probability that the living symbol of the demon, who deceived the people in that age, and led them to an idolatrous worship of himself, supported (we may be sure) as well by magical practices as by force, was in reality an enormous Boa snake! There have been animals of this species of sufficient bulk to enable them to bear, at intervals, their part in a feast, such as is here described. (f)

(f) The following is chiefly taken, in substance, from Jacob Bryant's work on Ancient Mythology. The symbolical
pampered, in an enclosure of some kind, with live sheep, and balls of meal kneaded with water or

worship of the serpent was, in the first ages, very extensive; it was introduced into all the heathen mysteries, wherever celebrated. It began among the Chaldeans, who built a city called Ophis, upon the Tigris, and were greatly addicted to divination. From Chaldea it passed into Egypt, where kings and priests wore bonnets, having on them the figures of serpents. In Persia, and other parts of the East, they erected temples to the serpent tribe, and held festivals to their honour, esteeming them (or the demon, rather) 'the supreme of all Gods, presiding over the whole world.' It was very ancient among the Greeks: there was a legend of a serpent at Colchis, at Thebes, at Delphi, and many other places. They called Apollo himself Python, and in the orgies of Bacchus they carried serpents in their hands, and screamed Eo! Eo! The woman at En-dor, (1 Sam. xxviii. 7,) that had a familiar spirit, is called Oub, the name by which the Egyptians knew their serpent-god; and the damsel in Acts xvi. 16, is said to have been possessed with the spirit of Python (of the serpent, or corruption.) The name Oub, Opheis, Opis, or Ops, was variously written, according to the language, and applied to the serpent who was also called Can-eph, or Cneph, Thermuthis, and the Basilisk, or royal snake. It was the Egyptian emblem of the sun, also of time and eternity. Oph-el, in Chronicles and Nehemiah, signifies Pytho-sol, and combines the two: it is the Vulcan of the Egyptians, from Tubal Cain. The name of Apollo is well known to have been applied to the deity guiding the chariot of the sun. This demon, then, was the Lucifer, that 'son of the morning,' whose pride, presumption, and fall from heaven, are treated in the fourteenth of Isaiah, being viewed as the presiding spirit of the state of Babylon; also the Apollyon of the Revelations. 'I take Ab-adon [son of the morning?] to have been (says Bryant) the same Ophite god, with whose worship the world had been so long infected, that he is described as the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan. Hence I think that the learned Heinsius is very right in the opinion which he has given upon this passage, when he makes Abaddon the same as the serpent Pytho.
wine, is exceedingly probable, from the manner in which Daniel destroyed him. He was too large, and his scaly coat too hard, to be assailed with common weapons; but from the manner in which the prophet had seen him feast, he had no difficulty in devising the means of his destruction: he had only to give him an indigestible dinner!

Such a 'beast' as this, with the quadrupeds of prey, his companions (in the menagerie of Nebuchadnezzar) together with the occasional exhibition of the sufferings of human victims thrown to them alive, either as criminals under the laws, or for offences against the state, might well attract a concourse of wandering pilgrims from the surrounding countries; who would 'flow together,' as they do at this day to the idolatrous routs, around the car of Juggernaut and other idols, in our East Indian posses-


It was, then, God's people alone who knew this demon in his real character, and could tell from whence he had fallen: and we need not be surprised (though Bryant thought it extraordinary) that he should have persuaded the Babylonians, among other people of the East, to worship him under his proper emblem—the largest of the serpent tribe being taken, for magnificence's sake, to serve this purpose. Such were the miserable delusions of those nations to which God did not see meet to give the greater light of his revelation, as he did to his chosen people, the Israelites. Multitudes of their descendants remain yet in darkness, whom it is our bounden duty (in dependence on his aid) to instruct in the knowledge, and initiate into the practice, of the one true and saving faith; in which work may God bless every labourer.—Isa. xxxii. 20. Amen.
sions, seeking to end a miserable life in a crowd of infatuated devotees; or to return (as it might happen) with the reputation of holy men, made perfect by works of penance. It is said, that the lions to which Daniel was exposed, were fed daily with two carcases and two sheep. Can it be doubted that there was also, in the royal menagerie, a collection of other wild beasts, kept partly as objects of curiosity, partly as matter of royal magnificence, and for the purposes of the chace? The support of these would, in all probability, under such a government, devolve upon some favorite of the monarch; who would raise the necessary supplies of cattle and corn by requisitions upon the subject; and principally, of course, from the captives.

Well might the prophet Jeremiah, when he had learned the particulars of this oppression, imitating in his style, the description given him by some fugitive of the feeding of the great dragon, say, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out. The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall!

THE END.
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