I. The community of goods, which had so agreeably amused the imagination of Plato, [128] and which subsisted in some degree among the austere sect of the Essenians, [129] was adopted for a short time in the primitive church. The fervor of the first proselytes prompted them to sell those worldly possessions, which they despised, to lay the price of them at the feet of the apostles, and to content themselves with receiving an equal share out of the general distribution. [130] The progress of the Christian religion relaxed, and gradually abolished, this generous institution, which, in hands less pure than those of the apostles, would too soon have been corrupted and abused by the returning selfishness of human nature; and the converts who embraced the new religion were permitted to retain the possession of their patrimony, to receive legacies and inheritances, and to increase their separate property by all the lawful means of trade and industry. Instead of an absolute sacrifice, a moderate proportion was accepted by the ministers of the gospel; and in their weekly or monthly assemblies, every believer, according to the exigency of the occasion, and the measure of his wealth and piety, presented his voluntary offering for the use of the common fund. [131] Nothing, however inconsiderable, was refused; but it was diligently inculcated; that, in the article of Tithes, the Mosaic law was still of divine obligation; and that since the Jews, under a less perfect discipline, had been commanded to pay a tenth part of all that they possessed, it would become the disciples of Christ to distinguish themselves by a superior degree of liberality, [132] and to acquire

some merit by resigning a superfluous treasure, which must so soon be annihilated with the world itself. [133] It is almost unnecessary to observe, that the revenue of each particular church, which was of so uncertain and fluctuating a nature, must have varied with the poverty or the opulence of the faithful, as they were dispersed in obscure villages, or collected in the great cities of the empire. In the time of the emperor Decius, it was the opinion of the magistrates, that the Christians of Rome were possessed of very considerable wealth; that vessels of gold and silver were used in their religious worship, and that many among their proselytes had sold their lands and houses to increase the public riches of the sect, at the expense, indeed, of their unfortunate children, who found themselves beggars, because their parents had been saints. [134] We should listen with distrust to the suspicions of strangers and enemies: on this occasion, however, they receive a very specious and probable color from the two following circumstances, the only ones that have reached our knowledge, which define any precise sums, or convey any distinct idea. Almost at the same period, the bishop of Carthage, from a society less opulent than that of Rome, collected a hundred thousand sesterces, (above eight hundred and fifty pounds sterling,) on a sudden call of charity to redeem the brethren of Numidia, who had been carried away captives by the barbarians of the desert. [135] About a hundred years before the reign of Decius, the Roman church had received, in a single donation, the sum of two hundred thousand sesterces from a stranger of Pontus, who proposed to fix his residence in the capital. [136] These oblations, for the most part, were made in money; nor was the society of Christians either

desirous or capable of acquiring, to any considerable degree, the encumbrance of landed property. It had been provided by several laws, which were enacted with the same design as our statutes of mortmain, that no real estates should be given or bequeathed to any corporate body, without either a special privilege or a particular dispensation from the emperor or from the senate; [137] who were seldom disposed to grant them in favor of a sect, at first the object of their contempt, and at last of their fears and jealousy. A transaction, however, is related under the reign of Alexander Severus, which discovers that the restraint was sometimes eluded or suspended, and that the Christians were permitted to claim and to possess lands within the limits of Rome itself. [138] The progress of Christianity, and the civil confusion of the empire, contributed to relax the severity of the laws; and before the close of the third century many considerable estates were bestowed on the opulent churches of Rome, Milan, Carthage, Antioch, Alexandria, and the other great cities of Italy and the provinces.

[Footnote 128: The community instituted by Plato is more perfect than that which Sir Thomas More had imagined for his Utopia. The community of women, and that of temporal goods, may be considered as inseparable parts of the same system.]

[Footnote 129: Joseph. Antiquitat. xviii. 2. Philo, de Vit. Contemplativ.]

[Footnote 130: See the Acts of the Apostles, c. 2, 4, 5, with Grotius's

Commentary. Mosheim, in a particular dissertation, attacks the common opinion with very inconclusive arguments. * Note: This is not the general judgment on Mosheim's learned dissertation. There is no trace in the latter part of the New Testament of this community of goods, and many distinct proofs of the contrary. All exhortations to almsgiving would have been unmeaning if property had been in common--M.]

[Footnote 131: Justin Martyr, Apolog. Major, c. 89. Tertullian, Apolog. c. 39.]

[Footnote 132: Irenaeus ad Haeres. l. iv. c. 27, 34. Origen in Num. Hom. ii Cyprian de Unitat. Eccles. Constitut. Apostol. l. ii. c. 34, 35, with the notes of Cotelerius. The Constitutions introduce this divine precept, by declaring that priests are as much above kings as the soul is above the body. Among the tithable articles, they enumerate corn, wine, oil, and wool. On this interesting subject, consult Prideaux's History of Tithes, and Fra Paolo delle Materie Beneficiarie; two writers of a very different character.]

[Footnote 133: The same opinion which prevailed about the year one thousand, was productive of the same effects. Most of the Donations express their motive, "appropinquante mundi fine." See Mosheim's General History of the Church, vol. i. p. 457.]

[Footnote 134: Tum summa cura est fratribus (Ut sermo testatur loquax.) Offerre, fundis venditis Sestertiorum millia. Addicta avorum praedia

Foedis sub auctionibus, Successor exheres gemit Sanctis egens Parentibus. Haec occuluntur abditis Ecclesiarum in angulis. Et summa pietas creditur Nudare dulces liberos.----Prudent. Hymn 2.
The subsequent conduct of the deacon Laurence only proves how proper a use was made of the wealth of the Roman church; it was undoubtedly very considerable; but Fra Paolo (c. 3) appears to exaggerate, when he supposes that the successors of Commodus were urged to persecute the Christians by their own avarice, or that of their Praetorian praefects.]

[Footnote 135: Cyprian, Epistol. 62.]

[Footnote 136: Tertullian de Praescriptione, c. 30.]

[Footnote 137: Diocletian gave a rescript, which is only a declaration of the old law; "Collegium, si nullo speciali privilegio subnixum sit, haereditatem capere non posse, dubium non est." Fra Paolo (c. 4) thinks that these regulations had been much neglected since the reign of Valerian.]

[Footnote 138: Hist. August. p. 131. The ground had been public; and was row disputed between the society of Christians and that of butchers.
Note *: Carponarii, rather victuallers.--M.]

The bishop was the natural steward of the church; the public stock was intrusted to his care without account or control; the presbyters were confined to their spiritual functions, and the more dependent order of

the deacons was solely employed in the management and distribution of the ecclesiastical revenue. [139] If we may give credit to the vehement declamations of Cyprian, there were too many among his African brethren, who, in the execution of their charge, violated every precept, not only of evangelical perfection, but even of moral virtue. By some of these unfaithful stewards the riches of the church were lavished in sensual pleasures; by others they were perverted to the purposes of private gain, of fraudulent purchases, and of rapacious usury. [140] But as long as the contributions of the Christian people were free and unconstrained, the abuse of their confidence could not be very frequent, and the general uses to which their liberality was applied reflected honor on the religious society. A decent portion was reserved for the maintenance of the bishop and his clergy; a sufficient sum was allotted for the expenses of the public worship, of which the feasts of love, the agapoe, as they were called, constituted a very pleasing part. The whole remainder was the sacred patrimony of the poor. According to the discretion of the bishop, it was distributed to support widows and orphans, the lame, the sick, and the aged of the community; to comfort strangers and pilgrims, and to alleviate the misfortunes of prisoners and captives, more especially when their sufferings had been occasioned by their firm attachment to the cause of religion. [141] A generous intercourse of charity united the most distant provinces, and the smaller congregations were cheerfully assisted by the alms of their more opulent brethren. [142] Such an institution, which paid less regard to the merit than to the distress of the object, very materially conduced to the progress of Christianity. The Pagans, who were actuated by a

sense of humanity, while they derided the doctrines, acknowledged the benevolence, of the new sect. [143] The prospect of immediate relief and of future protection allured into its hospitable bosom many of those unhappy persons whom the neglect of the world would have abandoned to the miseries of want, of sickness, and of old age. There is some reason likewise to believe that great numbers of infants, who, according to the inhuman practice of the times, had been exposed by their parents, were frequently rescued from death, baptized, educated, and maintained by the piety of the Christians, and at the expense of the public treasure. [144]

[Footnote 139: Constitut. Apostol. ii. 35.]

[Footnote 140: Cyprian de Lapsis, p. 89. Epistol. 65. The charge is confirmed by the 19th and 20th canon of the council of Illiberis.]

[Footnote 141: See the apologies of Justin, Tertullian, &c.]

[Footnote 142: The wealth and liberality of the Romans to their most distant brethren is gratefully celebrated by Dionysius of Corinth, ap. Euseb. l. iv. c. 23.]

[Footnote 143: See Lucian iu Peregrin. Julian (Epist. 49) seems mortified that the Christian charity maintains not only their own, but likewise the heathen poor.]

[Footnote 144: Such, at least, has been the laudable conduct of more

modern missionaries, under the same circumstances. Above three thousand new-born infants are annually exposed in the streets of Pekin. See Le Comte, Memoires sur la Chine, and the Recherches sur les Chinois et les Egyptians, tom. i. p. 61.]

II. It is the undoubted right of every society to exclude from its communion and benefits such among its members as reject or violate those regulations which have been established by general consent. In the exercise of this power, the censures of the Christian church were chiefly directed against scandalous sinners, and particularly those who were guilty of murder, of fraud, or of incontinence; against the authors or the followers of any heretical opinions which had been condemned by the judgment of the episcopal order; and against those unhappy persons, who, whether from choice or compulsion, had polluted themselves after their baptism by any act of idolatrous worship. The consequences of excommunication were of a temporal as well as a spiritual nature. The Christian against whom it was pronounced, was deprived of any part in the oblations of the faithful. The ties both of religious and of private friendship were dissolved: he found himself a profane object of abhorrence to the persons whom he the most esteemed, or by whom he had been the most tenderly beloved; and as far as an expulsion from a respectable society could imprint on his character a mark of disgrace, he was shunned or suspected by the generality of mankind. The situation of these unfortunate exiles was in itself very painful and melancholy; but, as it usually happens, their apprehensions far exceeded their

sufferings. The benefits of the Christian communion were those of eternal life; nor could they erase from their minds the awful opinion, that to those ecclesiastical governors by whom they were condemned, the Deity had committed the keys of Hell and of Paradise. The heretics, indeed, who might be supported by the consciousness of their intentions, and by the flattering hope that they alone had discovered the true path of salvation, endeavored to regain, in their separate assemblies, those comforts, temporal as well as spiritual, which they no longer derived from the great society of Christians. But almost all those who had reluctantly yielded to the power of vice or idolatry were sensible of their fallen condition, and anxiously desirous of being restored to the benefits of the Christian communion.

With regard to the treatment of these penitents, two opposite opinions, the one of justice, the other of mercy, divided the primitive church. The more rigid and inflexible casuists refused them forever, and without exception, the meanest place in the holy community, which they had disgraced or deserted; and leaving them to the remorse of a guilty conscience, indulged them only with a faint ray of hope that the contrition of their life and death might possibly be accepted by the Supreme Being. [145] A milder sentiment was embraced in practice as well as in theory, by the purest and most respectable of the Christian churches. [146] The gates of reconciliation and of heaven were seldom shut against the returning penitent; but a severe and solemn form of discipline was instituted, which, while it served to expiate his crime, might powerfully deter the spectators from the imitation of his example.

Humbled by a public confession, emaciated by fasting and clothed in sackcloth, the penitent lay prostrate at the door of the assembly, imploring with tears the pardon of his offences, and soliciting the prayers of the faithful. [147] If the fault was of a very heinous nature, whole years of penance were esteemed an inadequate satisfaction to the divine justice; and it was always by slow and painful gradations that the sinner, the heretic, or the apostate, was readmitted into the bosom of the church. A sentence of perpetual excommunication was, however, reserved for some crimes of an extraordinary magnitude, and particularly for the inexcusable relapses of those penitents who had already experienced and abused the clemency of their ecclesiastical superiors. According to the circumstances or the number of the guilty, the exercise of the Christian discipline was varied by the discretion of the bishops. The councils of Ancyra and Illiberis were held about the same time, the one in Galatia, the other in Spain; but their respective canons, which are still extant, seem to breathe a very different spirit. The Galatian, who after his baptism had repeatedly sacrificed to idols, might obtain his pardon by a penance of seven years; and if he had seduced others to imitate his example, only three years more were added to the term of his exile. But the unhappy Spaniard, who had committed the same offence, was deprived of the hope of reconciliation, even in the article of death; and his idolatry was placed at the head of a list of seventeen other crimes, against which a sentence no less terrible was pronounced. Among these we may distinguish the inexpiable guilt of calumniating a bishop, a presbyter, or even a deacon. [148]

[Footnote 145: The Montanists and the Novatians, who adhered to this opinion with the greatest rigor and obstinacy, found themselves at last in the number of excommunicated heretics. See the learned and copious Mosheim, Secul. ii. and iii.]

[Footnote 146: Dionysius ap. Euseb. iv. 23. Cyprian, de Lapsis.]

[Footnote 147: Cave's Primitive Christianity, part iii. c. 5. The admirers of antiquity regret the loss of this public penance.]

[Footnote 148: See in Dupin, Bibliotheque Ecclesiastique, tom. ii. p. 304--313, a short but rational exposition of the canons of those councils, which were assembled in the first moments of tranquillity, after the persecution of Diocletian. This persecution had been much less severely felt in Spain than in Galatia; a difference which may, in some measure account for the contrast of their regulations.]

The well-tempered mixture of liberality and rigor, the judicious dispensation of rewards and punishments, according to the maxims of policy as well as justice, constituted the human strength of the church. The Bishops, whose paternal care extended itself to the government of both worlds, were sensible of the importance of these prerogatives; and covering their ambition with the fair pretence of the love of order, they were jealous of any rival in the exercise of a discipline so necessary to prevent the desertion of those troops which had enlisted themselves under the banner of the cross, and whose numbers every day

became more considerable. From the imperious declamations of Cyprian, we should naturally conclude that the doctrines of excommunication and penance formed the most essential part of religion; and that it was much less dangerous for the disciples of Christ to neglect the observance of the moral duties, than to despise the censures and authority of their bishops. Sometimes we might imagine that we were listening to the voice of Moses, when he commanded the earth to open, and to swallow up, in consuming flames, the rebellious race which refused obedience to the priesthood of Aaron; and we should sometimes suppose that we hear a Roman consul asserting the majesty of the republic, and declaring his inflexible resolution to enforce the rigor of the laws. "If such irregularities are suffered with impunity," (it is thus that the bishop of Carthage chides the lenity of his colleague,) "if such irregularities are suffered, there is an end of Episcopal Vigor; [149] an end of the sublime and divine power of governing the Church, an end of Christianity itself." Cyprian had renounced those temporal honors, which it is probable he would never have obtained; but the acquisition of such absolute command over the consciences and understanding of a congregation, however obscure or despised by the world, is more truly grateful to the pride of the human heart, than the possession of the most despotic power, imposed by arms and conquest on a reluctant people.

[Footnote 1491]: Gibbon has been accused of injustice to the character of Cyprian, as exalting the "censures and authority of the church above the observance of the moral duties." Felicissimus had been condemned by a synod of bishops, (non tantum mea, sed plurimorum coepiscorum, sententia condemnatum,) on the charge not only of schism, but of embezzlement of

public money, the debauching of virgins, and frequent acts of adultery. His violent menaces had extorted his readmission into the church, against which Cyprian protests with much vehemence: ne pecuniae commissae sibi fraudator, ne stuprator virginum, ne matrimoniorum multorum depopulator et corruptor, ultra adhuc sponsam Christi incorruptam praesentiae suae dedecore, et impudica atque incesta contagione, violaret. See Chelsum's Remarks, p. 134. If these charges against Felicissimus were true, they were something more than "irregularities," A Roman censor would have been a fairer subject of comparison than a consul. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the charge of adultery deepens very rapidly as the controversy becomes more violent. It is first represented as a single act, recently detected, and which men of character were prepared to substantiate: adulterii etiam crimen accedit. quod patres nostri graves viri deprehendisse se nuntiaverunt, et probaturos se asseverarunt. Epist. xxxviii. The heretic has now darkened into a man of notorious and general profligacy. Nor can it be denied that of the whole long epistle, very far the larger and the more passionate part dwells on the breach of ecclesiastical unity rather than on the violation of Christian holiness.--M.]

[Footnote 149: Cyprian Epist. 69.]

[Footnote 1491: This supposition appears unfounded: the birth and the talents of Cyprian might make us presume the contrary. Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus, Carthaginensis, artis oratoriae professione clarus,

magnam sibi gloriam, opes, honores acquisivit, epularibus caenis et largis dapibus assuetus, pretiosa veste conspicuus, auro atque purpura fulgens, fascibus oblectatus et honoribus, stipatus clientium cuneis, frequentiore comitatu officii agminis honestatus, ut ipse de se loquitur in Epistola ad Donatum. See De Cave, Hist. Liter. b. i. p. 87.--G. Cave has rather embellished Cyprian's language.--M.]

In the course of this important, though perhaps tedious inquiry, I have attempted to display the secondary causes which so efficaciously assisted the truth of the Christian religion. If among these causes we have discovered any artificial ornaments, any accidental circumstances, or any mixture of error and passion, it cannot appear surprising that mankind should be the most sensibly affected by such motives as were suited to their imperfect nature. It was by the aid of these causes, exclusive zeal, the immediate expectation of another world, the claim of miracles, the practice of rigid virtue, and the constitution of the primitive church, that Christianity spread itself with so much success in the Roman empire. To the first of these the Christians were indebted for their invincible valor, which disdained to capitulate with the enemy whom they were resolved to vanquish. The three succeeding causes supplied their valor with the most formidable arms. The last of these causes united their courage, directed their arms, and gave their efforts that irresistible weight, which even a small band of well-trained and intrepid volunteers has so often possessed over an undisciplined multitude, ignorant of the subject, and careless of the event of the war. In the various religions of Polytheism, some wandering fanatics of

Egypt and Syria, who addressed themselves to the credulous superstition of the populace, were perhaps the only order of priests [150] that derived their whole support and credit from their sacerdotal profession, and were very deeply affected by a personal concern for the safety or prosperity of their tutelar deities. The ministers of Polytheism, both in Rome and in the provinces, were, for the most part, men of a noble birth, and of an affluent fortune, who received, as an honorable distinction, the care of a celebrated temple, or of a public sacrifice, exhibited, very frequently at their own expense, the sacred games, [151] and with cold indifference performed the ancient rites, according to the laws and fashion of their country. As they were engaged in the ordinary occupations of life, their zeal and devotion were seldom animated by a sense of interest, or by the habits of an ecclesiastical character. Confined to their respective temples and cities, they remained without any connection of discipline or government; and whilst they acknowledged the supreme jurisdiction of the senate, of the college of pontiffs, and of the emperor, those civil magistrates contented themselves with the easy task of maintaining in peace and dignity the general worship of mankind. We have already seen how various, how loose, and how uncertain were the religious sentiments of Polytheists. They were abandoned, almost without control, to the natural workings of a superstitious fancy. The accidental circumstances of their life and situation determined the object as well as the degree of their devotion; and as long as their adoration was successively prostituted to a thousand deities, it was scarcely possible that their hearts could be susceptible of a very sincere or lively passion for any of them.

[Footnote 150: The arts, the manners, and the vices of the priests of the Syrian goddess are very humorously described by Apuleius, in the eighth book of his Metamorphosis.]

[Footnote 151: The office of Asiarch was of this nature, and it is frequently mentioned in Aristides, the Inscriptions, &c. It was annual and elective. None but the vainest citizens could desire the honor; none but the most wealthy could support the expense. See, in the Patres Apostol. tom. ii. p. 200, with how much indifference Philip the Asiarch conducted himself in the martyrdom of Polycarp. There were likewise Bithyniarchs, Lyciarchs, &c.]

When Christianity appeared in the world, even these faint and imperfect impressions had lost much of their original power. Human reason, which by its unassisted strength is incapable of perceiving the mysteries of faith, had already obtained an easy triumph over the folly of Paganism; and when Tertullian or Lactantius employ their labors in exposing its falsehood and extravagance, they are obliged to transcribe the eloquence of Cicero or the wit of Lucian. The contagion of these sceptical writings had been diffused far beyond the number of their readers. The fashion of incredulity was communicated from the philosopher to the man of pleasure or business, from the noble to the plebeian, and from the master to the menial slave who waited at his table, and who eagerly listened to the freedom of his conversation. On public occasions the philosophic part of mankind affected to treat with respect and decency

the religious institutions of their country; but their secret contempt penetrated through the thin and awkward disguise; and even the people, when they discovered that their deities were rejected and derided by those whose rank or understanding they were accustomed to reverence, were filled with doubts and apprehensions concerning the truth of those doctrines, to which they had yielded the most implicit belief. The decline of ancient prejudice exposed a very numerous portion of human kind to the danger of a painful and comfortless situation. A state of scepticism and suspense may amuse a few inquisitive minds. But the practice of superstition is so congenial to the multitude, that if they are forcibly awakened, they still regret the loss of their pleasing vision. Their love of the marvellous and supernatural, their curiosity with regard to future events, and their strong propensity to extend their hopes and fears beyond the limits of the visible world, were the principal causes which favored the establishment of Polytheism. So urgent on the vulgar is the necessity of believing, that the fall of any system of mythology will most probably be succeeded by the introduction of some other mode of superstition. Some deities of a more recent and fashionable cast might soon have occupied the deserted temples of Jupiter and Apollo, if, in the decisive moment, the wisdom of Providence had not interposed a genuine revelation, fitted to inspire the most rational esteem and conviction, whilst, at the same time, it was adorned with all that could attract the curiosity, the wonder, and the veneration of the people. In their actual disposition, as many were almost disengaged from their artificial prejudices, but equally susceptible and desirous of a devout attachment; an object much less

deserving would have been sufficient to fill the vacant place in their hearts, and to gratify the uncertain eagerness of their passions. Those who are inclined to pursue this reflection, instead of viewing with astonishment the rapid progress of Christianity, will perhaps be surprised that its success was not still more rapid and still more universal. It has been observed, with truth as well as propriety, that the conquests of Rome prepared and facilitated those of Christianity. In the second chapter of this work we have attempted to explain in what manner the most civilized provinces of Europe, Asia, and Africa were united under the dominion of one sovereign, and gradually connected by the most intimate ties of laws, of manners, and of language. The Jews of Palestine, who had fondly expected a temporal deliverer, gave so cold a reception to the miracles of the divine prophet, that it was found unnecessary to publish, or at least to preserve, any Hebrew gospel. [152] The authentic histories of the actions of Christ were composed in the Greek language, at a considerable distance from Jerusalem, and after the Gentile converts were grown extremely numerous. [153] As soon as those histories were translated into the Latin tongue, they were perfectly intelligible to all the subjects of Rome, excepting only to the peasants of Syria and Egypt, for whose benefit particular versions were afterwards made. The public highways, which had been constructed for the use of the legions, opened an easy passage for the Christian missionaries from Damascus to Corinth, and from Italy to the extremity of Spain or Britain; nor did those spiritual conquerors encounter any of the obstacles which usually retard or prevent the introduction of a foreign religion into a distant country. There is the strongest reason

to believe, that before the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine, the faith of Christ had been preached in every province, and in all the great cities of the empire; but the foundation of the several congregations, the numbers of the faithful who composed them, and their proportion to the unbelieving multitude, are now buried in obscurity, or disguised by fiction and declamation. Such imperfect circumstances, however, as have reached our knowledge concerning the increase of the Christian name in Asia and Greece, in Egypt, in Italy, and in the West, we shall now proceed to relate, without neglecting the real or imaginary acquisitions which lay beyond the frontiers of the Roman empire.

[Footnote 152: The modern critics are not disposed to believe what the fathers almost unanimously assert, that St. Matthew composed a Hebrew gospel, of which only the Greek translation is extant. It seems, however, dangerous to reject their testimony. * Note: Strong reasons appear to confirm this testimony. Papias, contemporary of the Apostle St. John, says positively that Matthew had written the discourses of Jesus Christ in Hebrew, and that each interpreted them as he could. This Hebrew was the Syro-Chaldaic dialect, then in use at Jerusalem: Origen, Irenaeus, Eusebius, Jerome, Epiphanius, confirm this statement. Jesus Christ preached himself in Syro-Chaldaic, as is proved by many words which he used, and which the Evangelists have taken the pains to translate. St. Paul, addressing the Jews, used the same language: Acts xxi. 40, xxii. 2, xxvi. 14. The opinions of some critics prove nothing against such undeniable testimonies. Moreover, their principal objection is, that St. Matthew quotes the Old Testament according to the Greek

version of the LXX., which is inaccurate; for of ten quotations, found in his Gospel, seven are evidently taken from the Hebrew text; the threo others offer little that differ: moreover, the latter are not literal quotations. St. Jerome says positively, that, according to a copy which he had seen in the library of Caesarea, the quotations were made in Hebrew (in Catal.) More modern critics, among others Michaelis, do not entertain a doubt on the subject. The Greek version appears to have been made in the time of the apostles, as St. Jerome and St. Augustus affirm, perhaps by one of them.--G. ----Among modern critics, Dr. Hug has asserted the Greek original of St. Matthew, but the general opinion of the most learned biblical writer, supports the view of M. Guizot.--M.]

[Footnote 153: Under the reigns of Nero and Domitian, and in the cities of Alexandria, Antioch, Rome, and Ephesus. See Mill. Prolegomena ad Nov. Testament, and Dr. Lardner's fair and extensive collection, vol. xv. Note: This question has, it is well known, been most elaborately discussed since the time of Gibbon. The Preface to the Translation of Schleier Macher's Version of St. Luke contains a very able summary of the various theories.--M.]