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LESLIE'S FOUR MARKS:

AN EXTRACT

FROM

THAT AUTHOR'S WORK,

ENTITLED,

"A SHORT & EASY METHOD WITH THE DEISTS."

ILLUSTRATED BY TWO DIAGRAMS.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Is. viii. 20.

LONDON:

G. MORRISH, 24, WARWICK LANE,
PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression, and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”—HEBREWS ii. 1-4.



PREFACE.

THE following paper,* as expressed in the title-page, is an extract from Leslie's work, named "A SHORT AND EASY METHOD WITH THE DEISTS," a copy of which I have had in my possession for many years, without ever having had my attention especially directed to it, or knowing much of its value. This I now regret, because in it I find an unanswerable argument to all that a Deist might urge against scripture, and so, perhaps, may have lost some opportunities of meeting the cavils of such. I now publish this extract (having ventured, here and there, to correct it in places where I thought it needed correction), with the hope of helping God's people in meeting the attacks of the enemy,

* This introduction is, to a great extent, borrowed, and even *copied*, from the Preface to the work as originally published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which (much to our regret, we must say) in the later editions has been omitted.

whether it be from *Satan*, seeking to inject infidel thoughts into their minds, or from *man*, casting contempt on God's word; and in so doing, I hesitate not to say that our author has supplied us with an argument quite sufficient for this—an argument so simple, and yet so profound, that no Deist could possibly meet it; treat it with scorn he might, but answer it he never could do. And as to the believer, he will rejoice in finding that the external proofs of revelation are not so abstruse and intricate as he may have imagined.

True it is, his style, we must reluctantly admit, is by no means without its defects; especially at the outset, before he fairly gets into his subject, it being, we think, both verbose and involved. This however is as nothing, when weighed in the balances, compared with the truth which he has so clearly defined and illustrated.

I now proceed, anticipating our author a little, to state what his argument is; it is this—that the truth of a matter of fact may be certainly known if it be attended with certain marks, such as no false fact can possibly have. **THESE MARKS**

ARE FOUR. It is required, *first*, that the fact be a *sensible fact*, such as men's outward senses can judge of.—*Secondly*, that it be *notorious*, performed publicly in the presence of witnesses.—*Thirdly*, that there be *memorials* kept up in memory of it.—*Fourthly*, that such monuments and actions *begin with the fact*.

Thus our author in substance begins, and then proceeds to show how these four marks all concur, both in the Old Testament and in the New, in reference to Moses also and to Christ. And so effectually has he succeeded, that Middleton, an infidel writer of that day, feeling how necessary it was to his purpose that he should rid himself of the argument, sought for some *false fact* to which the four marks might apply, *and this he did for twenty years, without any success*.

Then, as to the origin of the work, the reader will like to know what it was; it was this—the Duke of Leeds of that day, with whom Mr. Leslie was acquainted, observed to him, in the course of conversation, that, although he was a believer in the doctrine of Christ, he was not satisfied with the common method of proving it, that the argument was long and complicated,

so that some had neither leisure nor patience to follow it, and others were not able to comprehend it; that, as it was the nature of all truth to be plain and simple, if Christianity were a truth there must be some short way of showing it to be so, and he wished Mr. Leslie would turn his attention to the subject. Such a hint to such a man produced, in the space of three days, a rough draft of the "Short and Easy Method with the Deists," which he presented to the Duke, who, on looking it over, told him that he thought he was a Christian before, but that now he was sure of it; and so grateful to him did he feel for thus enlightening his mind as to the external evidences of the word, that he never afterwards met Mr. Leslie without asking his blessing. This interesting anecdote came from Captain Leslie, a son of the author, and we venture to say, that everyone who carefully and prayerfully studies his book, will agree with the Duke in feeling grateful to him for supplying him with arguments so simple and clear, and, at the same time, so pointed and cogent, on a subject which is often made so perplexing and difficult.

And now let me say a word in conclusion ; it is this—that in introducing my name at the foot of this Preface, which, as I already have shown, only in part is my own, in connection with a work with which I am in no way connected, saving that of esteeming it highly, my object is not notoriety. I do it with no wish to put myself forward, and only because I seek in this way to bring it under the especial notice of my friends and acquaintances, earnestly commending it to them, and both desiring and praying that it may prove as interesting and as useful to them as it has done to myself.

EDWARD DENNY.

May, 1874.



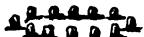
THE FOUR MARKS, MEETING IN THE HISTORIES OF MOSES AND JOSHUA.

THE EXODUS OF ISRAEL UNDER THE CONDUCT OF MOSES, followed by their forty years' wanderings in the wilderness, these being, both sensible facts, also notorious, performed publicly in the presence of witnesses. (First and second marks.)

THE LAW AND THE TESTIMONY.

THE LAW evidently means the record, the books of Moses especially; THE TESTIMONY, that to which the record bore witness, namely, the sacrifices, the priesthood, the passover, the sabbath, all that pertained to the Mosaic economy.

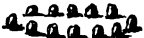
ISRAEL CROSSING THE JORDAN enters the promised land. (First and second marks.)



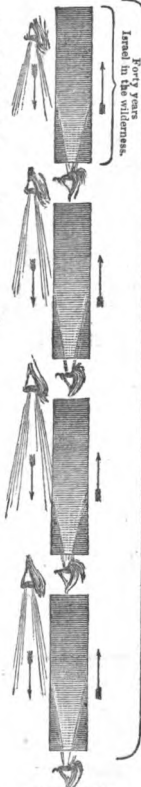
The twelve stones set up at Gilgal, as a memorial thereof. (Third and fourth marks.)



Twelve stones at Gilgal.

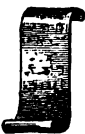


Twelve stones at Gilgal.



Public monuments and observances kept up in memory of Israel's redemption out of Egypt, beginning from the time when that to which it pointed occurred. (Third and fourth marks.)

The Pentateuch written by Moses.



THE BOOK OF THE LAW WRITTEN BY MOSES, placed in the ark, committed in after times to the king, and handed down from generation to generation. (Third and fourth marks.)

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA handed down, like the books of Moses, from generation to generation. (Third and fourth marks.)



DESCRIPTION
OF THE
FOREGOING DIAGRAM.

Israel, by means of the eyes *glancing backward*, is here represented as seeing from generation to generation, in the ordinances of the tabernacle, and in the twelve stones set up at Gilgal, two things—FIRST, the memorials of their deliverance through the Red Sea, out of Egypt, and of their forty years in the wilderness; SECONDLY, that of their crossing the Jordan, and entering the land under the conduct of Joshua.

Again, by means of the eyes *looking forward*, they are represented as discerning in the Levitical rites the shadows of heavenly things, CHRIST being foreshown in the priesthood, the sacrifices, the sabbath, and all the other observances, both of the tabernacle and the temple.

In these cases, then, THE FOUR MARKS make it wholly impossible that the Books of Moses could have been, according to the Deists, a fabrication or an imposture. What was it that the Lord said to those two whom He met on the way to Emmaus? “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought

not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke xxiv. 25-27.) What a wondrous word this must have been! How must it have shown the unity of purpose, the marvellous connection of one part with another that pervades the whole book of God, just what we here see, that the history of man, from beginning to end, is ONE GRAND EVENT, *and that all minor events, all subordinate histories, are but the links in a chain which no power can break, which is to last through eternity.*



LESLIE'S FOUR MARKS.

SIR,—In answer to your letter of the third instant, I much condole with you upon the unhappy circumstance of your being placed among such company, where, as you say, you continually hear the sacred Scriptures, and the histories therein contained, particularly those of Moses and of Christ, and all revealed religion, turned into ridicule by men who set up for sense and reason; and who say that there is no greater ground to believe in Christ than in Mahomet; that all these pretences to revelation are cheats, and ever have been, among Pagans, Jews, Mahometans, and Christians; that they are all alike impositions of cunning and designing men upon the credulity, at first, of simple and unthinking people, till, their numbers increasing, their delusions grew popular, and they came at last to be established by laws; and that then the force of education and custom gave a bias to the judgments of after ages, till such deceits came really to be believed, being received upon trust from the ages foregoing, without people examining into the original and bottom of them. This is what these modern men of sense (as they desire to be esteemed) say that they only do,

that they only have their judgments freed from the slavish authority of precedents and laws in matters of truth, which, they say, ought only to be decided by reason.

Now, sir, that which you desire from me is some short topic of reason, if such can be found, whereby, without running to authorities, and the intricate mazes of learning, which breed long disputes, and which these men of reason deny by wholesale ;—though they can give no reason for it, only supposing that authors have been imposed upon us, interpolated and corrupted, so that no stress can be laid upon them, though it cannot be shown wherein they are so corrupted ; which, in reason ought to lie upon them to prove who allege it ; otherwise it is not only a precarious, but a guilty plea ; and the more, that they refrain not from quoting books on their side, for whose authority there are no better, or not so good, grounds. However, you say, it makes your disputes endless, and they go away boasting that there is nothing, at least nothing certain, to be said on the Christian side. Therefore you are desirous to find some one topic of reason, which should demonstrate the truth of the Christian religion, and, at the same time, distinguish it from the impostures of Mahomet and of the whole Pagan world : that our Deists may be brought to this test, and be either obliged to renounce their reason, and the common reason of mankind, or to submit to the clear

proof, from reason, of the Christian religion; which must be such a proof as no imposture can pretend to, otherwise it cannot prove the Christian religion not to be an imposture. And, whether such a proof, one single proof, to avoid confusion, is not to be found out, you desire to know from me.

And you say that you cannot imagine but that there must be such a proof, because *every truth is in itself clear, and one*; and, therefore, that one reason for it, if it be the true reason, must be sufficient; and if sufficient, it is better than many; for multiplicity confounds, especially weak judgments.

Sir, you have imposed a hard task upon me: I wish I could perform it. For though every truth is one, yet our sight is so feeble, that we cannot always come to it directly, but by many inferences, and laying of things together.

But I think, that in the case before us, there is such a proof as you require, and I will set it down as briefly and as plainly as I can.

First, then, I suppose that the truth of the doctrine of Christ will be sufficiently evinced, if the matters of fact which are recorded of Him in the Gospels, be true; for His miracles, if true, do vouch the truth of what He delivered.

The same is to be said as to Moses. If he brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea in that miracu-

lous manner which is related in Exodus, and did such other wonderful things as are there told of him, it must necessarily follow that he was sent from God : these being the strongest proofs that we can desire, and which every Deist will confess he would acquiesce in, if he saw them with his eyes. Therefore the stress of this cause will depend upon the proof of these matters of fact.

And the method I will take is, FIRST, to lay down such rules, as to the truth of matters of fact in general, that where they all meet, such matters of fact cannot be false. And then, SECONDLY, to show that all these rules meet in the matters of fact of Moses and of Christ ; and that they do not meet in the matters of fact of Mahomet, of the heathen deities, nor can possibly meet in any imposture whatsoever.

The rules are these:—

- 1st. That the matter of fact be such as that men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may be judges of it.
- 2nd. That it may be done publicly in the face of the world.
- 3rd. That not only public monuments be kept up in memory of it, but some outward actions be performed.

4th. That such monuments, and such actions or observances, be instituted, and do commence from the time that the matter of fact was done.

THE FIRST TWO RULES make it impossible for any such matter of fact to be imposed upon men, at the time when it was said to be done, because every man's eyes and senses would contradict it. For example, suppose any man should pretend that yesterday he divided the Thames, in presence of all the people of London, and carried the whole city, men, women, and children, over to Southwark, on dry land, the waters standing like walls on both sides; I say, it is morally impossible that he could persuade the people of London that it was true, when every man, woman, and child, could contradict him, and say that this was a notorious falsehood; for that they had not seen the Thames so divided, nor had gone over on dry land. Therefore I take it for granted (and I suppose, with the allowance of all the Deists in the world) that no such imposition could be put upon men, at the time when such public matter of fact was said to be done.

Therefore it only remains that such matter of fact *might be invented some time after*, when the men of that generation, wherein the thing was said to be done, are

all past and gone: and the credulity of after ages might be imposed upon so as for people to believe that things were done in former ages which were not.

And for this THE LAST TWO RULES secure us as much as *the first two rules, in the former case*; for whenever such a matter of fact came to be invented, if not only monuments were said to remain of it, but likewise that public actions and observances were constantly used ever since the matter of fact was said to be done, the deceit must be detected by no such monuments appearing, and by the experience of every man, woman, and child, who must know that no such actions or observances were ever used by them. For example: suppose I should now invent a story of something done a thousand years ago, I might perhaps get some to believe it; but if I say, that not only such a thing was done, but that from that day to this, every man, at the age of twelve years, had a joint of his little finger cut off; and that every man in the nation did want a joint of such a finger; and that this institution was said to be *part of the matter of fact done so many years ago*, and vouched as a proof and confirmation of it, and as having descended without interruption, and been constantly practised, in memory of such matter of fact, all along from the time that such matter of fact was done: I say it is impossible that I should be believed in such a case, because every one

could contradict me as to the mark of cutting off a joint of the finger; *and that being part of my original matter of fact, must demonstrate the whole to be false.*

Let us now come to the second point, to show that the matters of fact of Moses and of Christ have all these rules or marks before mentioned; and that neither the matters of fact of Mahomet, nor what is reported of the heathen deities, have the like; and that no imposture can have them all.

As to Moses, I suppose it will be allowed me, that he could not have persuaded 600,000 men that he had brought them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, fed them forty years, without bread, by miraculous manna, and the other matters of fact recorded in his books, if they had not been true. Because every man's senses that were then alive must have contradicted it. And, therefore, he must have imposed upon all their senses, if he could have made them believe it, when it was false, and no such things done. So that here are the FIRST AND SECOND OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED FOUR MARKS.

For the same reason, it was equally impossible for him to have made them receive his FIVE BOOKS as truth, and not to have rejected them as a manifest imposture; which told of all these things as done before their eyes, if they had not been so done. See how positively he speaks to them in Deuteronomy xi. 2-7: "And know

ye this day ; for I speak not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the Lord your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched out arm, and his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land ; and what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots ; how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this day ; and what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place ; and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben ; how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel : but your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord which he did," &c.

From hence we must suppose, it is impossible that these books of Moses, if an imposture, could have been invented, and put upon the people who were then alive, when all these things were said to be done.

The utmost, therefore, that even a *supposition* can stretch to, is, that these books were written *in some age after Moses, and put out in his name.*

And to this I say, that, if it was so, it was impossible

that these books should have been received as the books of Moses, in that age wherein they may have been supposed to have been first invented. Why? *Because they speak of themselves as delivered by Moses, and kept IN THE ARK from his time.* As it is written: "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, who bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." (Deut. xxxi. 24-26.) And again, because there was a *copy of this book to be written by, and IN POSSESSION OF, THE KING*, whom the Lord in after times should choose for His people, as we read: "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel." (Deut. xvii. 18-20.)

Here you see that this book of the law speaks of itself, not only as a history or relation of what things were then done, but as the standing and municipal law and statutes of the nation of the Jews, binding the king as well as the people.

Now, in whatever age after Moses you will suppose this book to have been forged, it was impossible it could be received as truth ; because it was not then to be found, either *in the ark, or with the king, or anywhere else* : for when first invented, everybody must know that they had never heard of it before. And therefore they could not by any possibility believe it to be the book of their statutes, and the standing law of the land, which they had all along received, and by which they had been governed.

Could any man now, at this day, invent a book of statutes or acts of parliament for England, and make it pass upon the nation as the only book of statutes that ever they had known? As impossible was it for the books of Moses, if they were invented in any age after Moses, to have been received for what they declare themselves to be, namely, the statutes and municipal law of the nation of the Jews : and to have persuaded the Jews that they had owned and acknowledged these books all along from the days of Moses, to that day in which they were first invented ; *that is, that they had owned them before they had ever so much as heard of them.* Nay, more, the

whole nation must, in an instant, forget their former laws and government, if they could receive these books as being their former laws. *And they could not otherwise receive them, because they vouched themselves so to be.* Let me ask the Deists but one short question: Was there ever a book of sham laws, which were not the laws of the nation, palmed upon any people, since the world began? If not, with what face can they say this of the book of laws of the Jews? Why will they say that of them, which they confess to be impossible in any nation, or among any people?

But they must be yet more unreasonable. For the books of Moses have a further demonstration of their truth than even other law-books have; for they not only contain the laws, but give an historical account of their institution, and the practice of them from that time: as of the PASSOVER, in memory of the redemption from death of the first-born of Israel in Egypt (Exod. xii. 21-30): of all their first-born, both of man and beast, being, by a perpetual law, dedicated to God: and THE LEVITES TAKEN FOR ALL THE FIRST-BORN OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL (Num. viii. 17, 18); of AARON'S ROD, which budded, which was kept in the ark, in memory of the rebellion and wonderful destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and for the confirmation of the priesthood to the tribe of Levi (Num. xvi. xvii.); of the POT OF

MANNA, in memory of their having been fed with it forty years in the wilderness (Exod. xvi. 32-36); of the BRAZEN SERPENT, which was kept, and remained to the days of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4), in memory of that wonderful deliverance, by only looking upon it, from the biting of the fiery serpents. (Num. xxi. 9.)

And besides these remembrances of particular actions and occurrences, there were other solemn institutions in memory of their deliverance out of Egypt, in the general, which included all the particulars. As of the *sabbath* (Deut. v. 15); of *their daily sacrifices, and yearly expiation; their new moons, and several feasts and fasts*. So that there were yearly, monthly, weekly, daily remembrances and recognitions of these things.*

* THE TWELVE STONES SET UP AT GILGAL, on the banks of the Jordan, in the days of Joshua, the successor of Moses, were commemorative of Israel's crossing the river, and entering the land, in the same way that the passover and other Mosaic observances were memorials of their redemption and their wonderful exit from Egypt, as it is written, "And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, on the east border of Jericho; and those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as

And not only so, but the books of the same Moses tell us, that the **TRIBE OF LEVI** was chosen by God to serve in His tabernacle, that **HIS PRIESTS** belonged to this tribe, by whose hands, and none other, the sacrifices of the people were to be offered, and these solemn institutions to be celebrated. That it was death for any other to approach the altar. That their **HIGH-PRIEST** wore a glorious mitre, and magnificent robes of God's own contrivance, with the miraculous **URIM AND THUMMIM** in his breast-plate, whence the divine responses were given. (Exod. xxviii. 30 ; Num. xxvii. 21.) That, at his word the king and all the people were to go out and to come in. That these Levites were likewise the chief judges even in all civil

the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over ; that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty ; that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever." (Josh. iv. 19—24.)

Another parallel case is that of the deliverance of the Jews from their enemies, in the Book of Esther, and **THE TWO DAYS OF PURIM**, kept through all succeeding generations in commemoration thereof ; as it is written, " The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days, according to their writing, and according to their appointed time, every year : and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city ; and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed." (Esther ix. 27, 28.)

causes, and that it was death to resist their sentence. (Deut. xvii. 8-13.) Now, whenever it can be supposed that these books of Moses were forged, in some ages after Moses, it is impossible they could have been received as true, unless the forgers could have made the whole nation believe that they had received these books from their fathers, had been instructed in them when they were children, and had taught them to their children ; moreover, that they had all been circumcised, and did circumcise their children, in pursuance of what was commanded in these books : that they had observed the yearly passover, the weekly sabbath, the new moons, and all these several feasts, fasts, and ceremonies, commanded in these books : that they had never eaten any swine's flesh, or other meats prohibited in these books : that they had a magnificent tabernacle, with a visible priesthood to administer in it, which was confined to the tribe of Levi, over whom was placed a glorious High-Priest, clothed with great and mighty prerogatives ; whose death only could deliver those that fled to the cities of refuge (Num. xxxv. 25-28) ; and that these priests were their ordinary judges, even in civil matters. I say, was it possible to have persuaded a whole nation of men, that they had known and practised all these things, if they had not done so ? or, secondly, to have received a book for truth, which said that they had practised them,

and appealed to that practice? So that here are THE THIRD AND FOURTH OF THE MARKS ABOVE MENTIONED.

Thus, having spoken of the matters of fact of MOSES, and of the four marks in connection with them, I come now, in the next place, to show how these four marks appear in conjunction with that which is recorded of OUR BLESSED LORD IN THE GOSPELS, and my work herein will be the shorter, because all that is said before of Moses and his books is every way as applicable to Christ and His gospel. His works and miracles are there said to be done publicly in the face of the world, as He argued to His accusers: "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing." (John xviii. 20.) Then, in Acts ii. 41, it is said that "about three thousand" at one time; and in Acts iv. 4, "about five thousand" at another, were converted upon conviction of what they themselves had seen, what had been done publicly before their eyes, wherein it was impossible to have imposed upon them. Therefore here were THE TWO FIRST OF THE RULES BEFORE MENTIONED.

Then for the second two: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER *were instituted as perpetual memorials of these things*; and they were not instituted in after ages, but at

the very time when these things were said to be done ; and have been observed without interruption, in all ages wherever Christianity has been professed, from that time to this.*

* * * * *

And now, having before spoken of Mahomet and the heathen deities, we turn to say a word as to them, and to show that they all want some, if not all, of the afore-said four rules, whereby the certainty of matters of fact is demonstrated.

First, as to Mahomet. He pretended to no miracles, as he tells us in his Alcoran, c. 6, &c., and those which are commonly told of him pass among the Mahometans themselves but as legendary fables ; and, as such, are rejected by the wise and learned among them ; as the legends of their saints are by those who belong to the church of Rome. See Dr. Prideaux's "Life of Mahomet."

* As we do not agree with certain statements which our esteemed author has made at this point, we omit them. Had he, instead of speaking of the *professing church* as he has done, brought forward the existence of the *true church of God* in the world, in proof of Christ's mission ; had he said that the presence of every Christian on earth is an evidence that Christ has been here ; and that He now is in heaven, waiting, at the right hand of God, to take us home to Himself, we should have accepted this as the brightest and happiest possible proof that the heart could desire that the whole thing is true.

But, in the next place, those which are told of him do all want the FIRST TWO RULES before mentioned. For his pretended converse with the moon; his Mersa, or night-journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and thence to heaven, &c., were not performed before anybody. We have only his own word for them. The same is to be said (in the second place) of the fables of the heathen gods, of Mercury's stealing sheep, Jupiter's turning himself into a bull, and the like; besides the folly and unworthiness of such senseless pretended miracles. And, moreover, the wise among the heathen did reckon no otherwise of these but as fables, which had a mythology, or mystical meaning, in them, of which several of them have given us the rationale or explication. And it is plain enough that Ovid meant no other by all his Metamorphoses.

It is true the heathen deities had their priests: they had likewise feasts, games, and other public institutions in memory of them; but all these want the FOURTH MARK, namely, that such priesthood and institutions should commence from the time that such things as they commemorate were said to be done; otherwise they cannot secure after ages from the imposture, by detecting it at the time when first invented, as hath been argued before. But the Bacchanalia, and other heathen feasts, were instituted many ages after what was reported of these gods was said to be done, and therefore can

be no proof of them. And the priests of Bacchus, Apollo, &c., were not ordained by these supposed gods, but were appointed by others in after ages only in honour to them. And, therefore, these orders of priests are no evidence to the truth of the matters of fact which are reported of their gods.

Now, to apply what has been said. You may challenge all the Deists in the world to show any action that is fabulous which has all the four rules or marks before mentioned. No; it is impossible. And (to resume a little what we have before said,) the histories of the Exodus and the Gospel could never have been received, if they had not been true; because the institution of the priesthood of Levi, of the sabbath, the passover, of circumcision, under *the past dispensation*, of baptism and the Lord's supper, under *the present*, are there related, as descending all the way down from those times, without interruption. And it is fully as impossible to persuade men that they had been circumcised, had celebrated passovers, sabbaths, &c., had been baptized, and partaken of the Lord's supper, if they had done none of these things, as to make them believe that they had gone through seas upon dry land, seen the dead raised, &c. And without believing these it was impossible that either the law or the gospel could have been received.

And the truth of the matters of fact of Exodus and the gospel being no otherwise pressed upon men than as they have practised such public institutions, it is appealing to the senses of mankind for the truth of them ; and makes it impossible for any to have invented such stories in after ages, without a palpable detection of the cheat when first invented ; as impossible as to have imposed upon the senses of mankind at the time when such public matters of fact were said to be done.

I do not say that everything which apparently wants these four marks is false, but that **NOTHING CAN BE FALSE WHICH HAS THEM ALL.**

I have no manner of doubt that there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, that he fought at Pharsalia, was killed in the senate-house ; and many other matters of fact of ancient times, though we keep no public observances in memory of them.

But this shows that the matters of fact of **MOSES** and of **CHRIST** have come down to us *better guarded than any other matters of fact, how true soever.**

* In secular matters there are no such memorials as we find in the Bible. The proofs in this case are of a different character. History, ancient records, tombs, buildings, coins, customs, &c., are evidences that such and such persons have lived, that such and such events have occurred.

And this, we must not forget, equally applies to the facts re-

And yet our Deists, who would laugh at any man that should offer to deny Cæsar or Alexander, Homer or Virgil, their public works and actions, do, at the same time, value themselves as men of free, generous, and unbiassed judgments, for ridiculing the histories of Moses and Christ, that are infinitely better attested, and guarded with infallible marks which the others want.

Besides that, the importance of the subject would oblige all men to inquire more narrowly into the one than the other; for what consequence is it to me, or to anyone else, viewing ourselves as immortal responsible beings having to do with God and His truth, whether there was such a man as Cæsar, whether he beat, or was beaten, at Pharsalia, whether Homer or Virgil wrote such books, and whether what is related in the Iliad or Æneid be true or false? It is of no moment whatever in this view of the subject, to any man in the world. And, therefore, it is worth no man's while to inquire into it, either to oppose or justify the truth of these relations.

BUT OUR VERY SOULS AND BODIES, OUR HAPPINESS, corded in scripture as to mere secular facts. Christianity is so interwoven with the history of the world, that it is impossible for any one with the slightest pretension to candour to deny the existence of Christ, or the truth of His miracles.

BOTH IN THIS LIFE AND THE NEXT, BEING CONCERNED IN THE TRUTH OF WHAT IS RELATED IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, men are naturally more inquisitive to search into the truth of these, than of any other matters of fact, more disposed to examine and sift them narrowly, and find out the deceit, if any such can be found : *for it concerns them nearly, and is of the last importance to them.*

How unreasonable, then, is it to reject these matters of fact, so sifted, so examined, and so attested, as no other matters of fact in the world ever were ; and yet to think it most highly unreasonable, even to madness ; to deny other matters of fact which have not the thousandth part of their evidence, and are of no consequence at all to us, comparatively speaking, whether true or false.

There are several other topics from whence the truth of the Christian religion is evinced to all who will judge by reason, and give themselves leave to consider :—as the improbability that ten or twelve poor illiterate fishermen should form a design of converting the whole world to believe their delusions, and the impossibility of their effecting it, without force of arms, learning, oratory, or any one visible thing that could recommend them ! And to impose a doctrine quite opposite to the lusts and pleasures of men, and all worldly advantages or enjoyments ! And this in an age of so great learning and

sagacity as that wherein the gospel was first preached ! That these apostles should not only undergo all the scorn and contempt, but the severest persecutions and most cruel deaths that could be inflicted, in attestation to what themselves knew to be a mere deceit and forgery of their own contriving ! *Some have suffered for errors which they thought to be truth, but never any for what themselves knew to be lies.* And the apostles must know what they taught to be lies, if it was so, because they spoke of those things which, they said, they had both seen and heard, had looked upon, and handled with their hands. (Acts iv. 20 ; 1 John i. 1.)

Neither can it be said that they, perhaps, might have proposed some temporal advantages to themselves, but missed of them, and met with sufferings instead of them : for, if it had been so, it is more than probable that, when they saw their disappointment, they would have discovered their conspiracy ; especially when they might have not only saved their lives, but got great rewards for so doing.

But this is not all : for they tell us that their Master bid them expect nothing but sufferings in this world. This is the tenor of that gospel which they received from Him, and they told the same to all whom they were the means of converting. So that here there was no disappointment.

For all that were converted through them, were converted upon the certain expectation of suffering, and bidden to prepare for it. Christ commanded His disciples to take up their cross daily, and follow Him ; and told them that in the world they should have tribulation ; that whoever did not forsake father, mother, wife, children, lands, and their very lives, could not be His disciples.

Now, that this despised doctrine of the cross should prevail so universally against the allurements of flesh and blood, and all the blandishments of this world, against the rage and persecution of all the kings and powers of the earth, must show its original to be Divine, and its Protector Almighty.

We may add to all this the testimonies of the most bitter enemies and persecutors of Christianity, both Jews and Gentiles, to the truth of the matter of fact of Christ, such as Josephus and Tacitus ; of whom the first flourished about forty years after the death of Christ, and the other about seventy years after ; so that they were capable of examining into the truth, and wanted not prejudice and malice sufficient to have inclined them to deny the matter of fact itself of Christ ; but their confessing to it, as likewise Lucian, Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian the apostate, the Mahometans since, and all other enemies of Christianity, that have arisen in the

world, is an undeniable attestation to the truth of the matter of fact.

And now, in the next place, I turn to consider a common argument of the Deists, who, when they are not able to stand out against the evidence of fact, that such and such miracles have been done, then turn about and deny such things to be miracles, asserting that we can never be sure whether any wonderful thing that is shown to us be a true or false miracle.

And the great argument they go upon is this, that a miracle being that which exceeds the power of nature, we cannot know what exceeds it unless we knew the utmost extent of the power of nature ; and no man pretends to know that ; therefore, that no man can certainly know whether any event be miraculous : and, consequently, he may be cheated in his judgment betwixt true and false miracles.

To which I answer, that men may be so cheated, and there are many examples of it.

But that though we may not always know when we are cheated, yet we can certainly tell, in many cases, when we are not cheated.

For though we do not know the utmost extent of the power of nature, perhaps, in any one thing ; yet it does not follow that we know not the nature of anything in

some measure, and that certainly too. For example, though I do not know the utmost extent of the power of fire, yet I certainly know it is the nature of fire to burn; and that when proper fuel is administered to it, it is contrary to the nature of fire not to consume it. Therefore, if I see three men taken out of the street, in their common wearing apparel, and, without any preparation, cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, and that the flame was so fierce that it burnt up those men that threw them in, and yet that these who were thrown in should walk up and down in the bottom of the furnace, and I should see a fourth person with them of glorious appearance, like the Son of God; and that these men should come up again out of the furnace without any harm, or so much as the smell of fire upon themselves or their clothes; I could not be deceived in thinking there was a stop put to the nature of fire, as to these men; and that it had its effect upon the men whom it burned, at the same time.

Again: though I cannot tell how wonderful and sudden an increase of corn might be produced by the concurrence of many causes, as a warm climate, the fertility of the soil, &c., yet this I can certainly know, that there is not that natural force in the breath of two or three words spoken, to multiply one small loaf of bread so fast, in the breaking of it, as truly and really, not only in appearance and show to the eye, but in

very deed to satisfy the hunger of several thousand persons; and that the fragments should be much more than the bread was at first. So neither in a word spoken, to raise the dead, cure diseases, &c.

Therefore, though we know not the utmost extent of the power of nature; yet we can certainly know what is contrary to the nature of several such things as we do know.

And therefore, though we may be cheated, and imposed upon in many seeming miracles and wonders; yet there are some things wherein we may be certain.

And though it is true that we cannot see what was done before our time, yet, by the marks which I have laid down concerning the certainty of matters of fact done before our time, we may be as much assured of the truth of them as if we had lived in those days, and were ourselves eye-witnesses of the truth of that which we now know to be true, because we find it in scripture.*

Thus far I have quoted what Mr. Leslie has written

* Mr. Leslie, speaking of the supposed infallibility of the church of Rome, which, of course, he denies, goes on to say: "But there is an infallibility in the church, not personal in any one, or all Christians put together; for millions of fallibles can never make an infallible. *But the infallibility consists in the nature of the evidence, which, having all the four marks mentioned in the 'Short Method with the Deists,' cannot possibly be false.* As you and I

on this subject, to the edification and comfort of many, I trust, into whose hands this little work may fall.

And here I would add a thought of my own, which I confess has interested me much—it is this ; that the four marks, in proving the truth of the facts recorded in the Book of Exodus, do the same as to those related in Genesis. The argument is this: if Moses did what is imputed to him—if he led the children of Israel through the Red Sea and the wilderness, he had, there can be no question about it, a commission from heaven; he was, as our author has shown, emphatically a man of God, and also a prophet, *and not only so, but all that we have of his writings was inspired*; and in this way the history of man, as given in Genesis, of which he was the writer, is proved to be true, the great events from Adam down to his time, such as the creation, the fall of man, the flood, the building of Babel, the lives of the patriarchs, are incontestably verified. Again, all that he taught as to Christ, whether by types or through prophecy, is established as truth. The tabernacle

believe that there is such a city as Constantinople, that there was such a man as Henry the Eighth, as much as if we had seen them with our eyes; not from the credit of any historian or traveller, all of whom are fallible, but from the nature of the evidence, wherein it is impossible for men to have conspired, and carried it on, without contradiction, if it were false."

is shown by him to be the figure of Him who is the true tabernacle of God, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; while the sacrifices, according to Moses, represent the true sacrifice, the offering up of that Blessed One, whose blood cleanses the sinner, whose hope is in Him, from every defilement. Hence the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, bears in a wonderful way on the whole history of man, from the creation down to the end, and then onward still, into the far depths of eternity.

The Exodus, according to this, is, in truth, THE ONE GRAND CENTRAL EVENT ON WHICH THE WHOLE OF THE DIVINE HISTORY HINGES FROM BEGINNING TO END, as will be evident to those who have followed our author through the foregoing pages.

If I were asked—as I sometimes have been—for a proof that the Book of Genesis was written by Moses, I should point to Luke xxiv. 27, where it is written of Christ, in His interview with His two disciples going to Emmaus, that, “beginning AT MOSES AND ALL THE PROPHETS, he expounded unto them IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES the things concerning himself.” This is surely conclusive; Moses, in this wondrous discourse of the risen Messiah, *is given his place as the first of the prophets, at the head of God's book*, and hence, as the author of

Genesis, of which the Book of Exodus is but the continuation.

As to Mr. Leslie, how much do we, like the Duke of Leeds of past times, feel indebted to him—so much so, that we are ready to subscribe to what the author of the Preface to his book, as originally published, expressed, when he said that “*the world affords nothing so effectual on the Christian evidences*” as what he has brought out. Whether this be too much to say, seeing that this subject has been handled by so many gifted and competent writers, we do not undertake to determine. But the more we consider the way in which he has treated his subject, the more do we wonder at the simplicity with which he, *by means of the four marks*, of which he never loses sight for a moment, has enabled us at a glance to review the whole purpose of God, as presented in scripture, both in the Old Testament and in the New; so much so, that no sceptic who honestly faces the subject could answer him. Treat it with scorn he might, but meet him in argument he never could do. And so thought the writer of the Preface before-named, when he said, “The argument is so short and clear, that the meanest capacity may understand it; and so forcible, that no man has yet been found able to resist it.” When it was first published, some attempts were made, but they soon came to nothing. The argument, in brief, is this :

the Christian religion consists of *facts and doctrines*, each depending on each other; so that, if the facts are true, the doctrines must be true.

Thus, for example, THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS A FACT; OUR RESURRECTION IS A DOCTRINE. Admit the *fact*, and the *doctrine* cannot be denied. The ascension of Jesus Christ is another *fact*; His return to judge the world is a *doctrine*; if the fact be true, the doctrine must be so likewise. For, argues the apostle, if the doctrine be not true, the fact must be false: "*If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.*" (1 Cor. xv. 16.)

And now let me add a word in conclusion. Some Christians, I find, are impatient, if you venture to press on them the need of considering the external evidences of scripture, as though you meant to set aside that which is internal and spiritual. But there is surely no wisdom in this, because to what does the Spirit within us bear witness? Not merely that we are born of God, washed in the blood of the Lamb, sealed by the Spirit, but likewise to the facts of the Bible, to those very facts which the four marks unite in confirming. And let me say that no Christian is wise in supposing himself to be in any way independent of these, because, let the enemy only come in with his fiery darts, with his evil suggestions that the Bible is perhaps a fable, and he will be constrained to fall back, among other things, on these

very proofs, to reassure his wavering heart. If not, of what value to us are the ordinances of God under the past dispensation? what that of the ordinances of the Lord's supper and of baptism under the present?

Then, again, let him have to encounter a sceptic, and how happy is it for him to have a brief and simple argument of this kind at his command, by which he may answer him! It is not enough for him to declare that he possesses within him the evidence that he himself is redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and that he is assured of the truth of the Scriptures. In this there is little love, as regards his opponent. If he cares for his soul, he must of necessity wish for something more convincing than this—something whereby he may hope at least to silence his infidel reasonings, and lead him, it may be, to see what exists as a fixed truth in his own mind, and in the mind, we may assuredly add, of every Christian. True it is, he may not be able to *define it*, either to himself or to others, but there it is, the truth, the very truth, to which Mr. Leslie has given “a local habitation and a name;” so much so, that when tangibly presented to him he finds, as in the interesting case of the Duke of Leeds, that there is within him an echo, a response, to it all—that it is in reality that with which his heart has been already familiar.

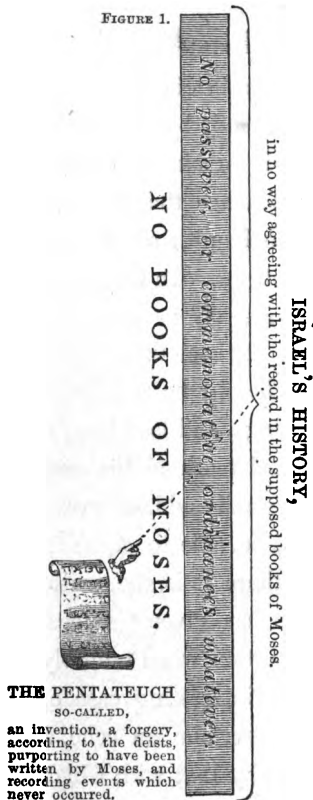
A COMPARISON

BETWEEN THE TRUE AND THE FALSE, BETWEEN THAT WHICH HAS,
AND THAT WHICH HAS NOT, THE FOUR MARKS.

No such individual as Moses—
No such event as the Exodus—

Moses, Israel's deliverer—
The exodus of Israel out of Egypt—

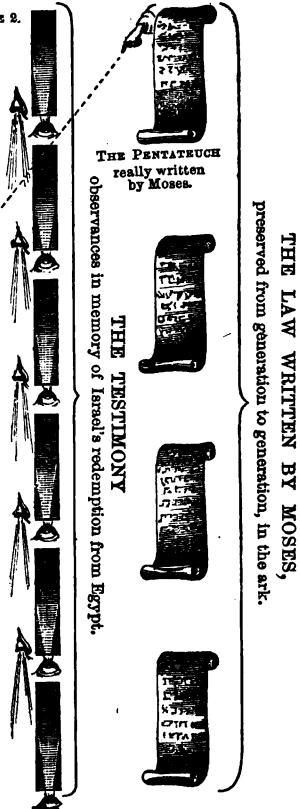
FIGURE 1.



FALSE.

Here the fourth and last mark being wanting, the others are of necessity also deficient.

FIGURE 2.



TRUE.

Here the four marks coming together, the whole is proved to be both true and consistent.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FOREGOING DIAGRAM.

Figure 1. The object of this is to illustrate what our author has said, namely, that if the PENTATEUCH, according to the Deists, be an INVENTION, A FORGERY, written and put forth in comparatively the later times of Israel's history, this does away altogether with the five books of Moses, written by him, as we know, during the forty years in the wilderness, the record of Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

According to this, there was *no such individual as Moses—no such event as the Exodus—no law—no memorials of God's ways with His people.*

The whole, in short, is A FABLE, and thus man is left in hopeless despair, without any light or revelation from God.

Figure 2 is the happy reverse of all this, showing these books to have been *no forgery at all, but really written by Moses*, every word of them proceeding out of the mouth of the Lord, the record of that

44 DESCRIPTION OF THE FOREGOING DIAGRAM.

which really happened, of the Exodus, of the Levitical ordinances in commemoration thereof, beginning, be it remembered, from the time of Israel's deliverance out of the hand of their oppressors. In the FIRST of these cases *no marks whatever are found*, showing it all to be false and untenable ; in the SECOND, *the four marks are apparent*, proving the whole to be true, and of God.



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