

**SYNTAGMA OF THE EVIDENCES
OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.
BEING A VINDICATION OF THE
MANIFESTO OF THE HRISTIAN
EVIDENCE SOCIETY**

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Syntagma of the Evidences of the Christian Religion. Being a Vindication of the Manifesto of the Hristian Evidence Society by Robert Taylor

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ROBERT TAYLOR

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SYNTAGMA
OF THE
EVIDENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.
BEING
A VINDICATION
OF THE
MANIFESTO
OF
THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE SOCIETY,
AGAINST THE ASSAULTS OF
THE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION SOCIETY,
THROUGH THEIR DEPUTY,
J. P. S.

COMMONLY REPORTED TO BE DR. JOHN PYE SMITH, OF HOMERTON.

BY
THE REV. ROBERT TAYLOR, A. B. and M. R. C. S.
ORATOR OF THE AREOPAGUS.
PRISONER IN OAKHAM GAOL, FOR THE CONSCIENTIOUS MAINTENANCE
OF THE TRUTHS CONTAINED IN THAT MANIFESTO.

"Erroris convincite! nam interciperi scripta, et publicatam velle submergere
lectionem, non est Deum defendere, sed veritatis testificationem timere."
ARNOBIVS.

London:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1828.

REPRINTED BY WILLIAM DUGDALE, 16, HOLYWELL STREET,
STRAND.

THE
PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

Thou hast, in this Pamphlet, all the sufficient evidence, that can be adduced for any piece of history a thousand years old, or to prove an error of a thousand years standing, that such a *person* as Jesus Christ never existed; but that the earliest christians meant the words to be nothing more than a personification of the principle of reason, of goodness, or that principle, be it what it may, which may most benefit mankind in the passage through life.

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SYNTAGMA:
BEING
A VINDICATION OF THE MANIFESTO
OF THE
CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE SOCIETY.

Established, November 12, 1824.

BY THE REV. ROBERT TAYLOR.

MANIFESTO,

TO ALL PROTESTANTS AND MEMBERS OF PROTESTANT
CONGREGATIONS.

MEN AND BRETHREN,

You are hereby invited to attend the Discussions of the Evidences of the Christian Religion, which are held every Tuesday evening, in the Society's Arcopagus, 86, Cannon-street, City, to which all respectable persons, upon observance of the necessary regulations, are admissible; and where all competent persons, upon a previous notification of their intentions, are allowed to deliver their sentiments upon the topic of discussion.

This Society aims only to promote the love of Truth, the practice of Virtue, and the influence of Universal Benevolence, as opposed to foolish and contradictory systems of religious faith—derived from the ignorance of barbarous ages, and craftily imposed upon the many for the aggrandisement of the power and influence of a few, who, aware of the suspicious origination of their pretended Divine Revelation, have shown themselves afraid and ashamed to maintain the same, where they might be answered by learned and able men, and might have their accuracy established, or their errors corrected.

Our Reverend Orator, a regular and canonically ordained Clergyman of the Established Church, hath publicly challenged all Ministers and Preachers—and hereby repeats the challenge,—to come forward and show, if they can, the contrary of the FOUR GRAND PROPOSIT-

tions, which, in the Society's Manifesto, "To all Clergymen, Ministers, and Preachers of the Gospel," are declared to have been, as far as to us appeared, fully and unanswerably demonstrated.

The PROPOSITIONS are,

- I. *That the Scriptures of the New Testament were not written by the persons whose names they bear.*
- II. *That they did not appear in the times to which they refer.*
- III. *That the persons of whom they treat never existed.*
- IV. *That the events which they relate never happened.*—Of these Propositions,

The PROOFS are,

I. *That the Scriptures of the N. T. were not, &c.*—Because, it cannot be shown, by any evidence, that they were "written by the persons whose names they bear;" and because it can be shown, by evidence both *external* and *internal*, that they were written by other persons.—*By evidence external*, In the formal acts and edicts of Christian Emperors, Bishops, and Councils, issued from time to time, for the general alteration, or total renovation of these Scriptures, according to their own caprice (a). And in the admissions of the most learned Critics and Divines, as to the alterations which these Scriptures have, from time to time, undergone (b).—*By evidence internal*, In the immoral, vicious, and wicked tendency of many passages therein remaining, and

(a) Such were those of the Emperors Constantine and Theodosius, and this of the Emperor Anastasius. "When Messala was consul (that is, in the year of Christ 506) at Constantinople, by order of the Emperor Anastasius, the Holy Gospels, as being written by illiterate Evangelists, are censured and corrected."—*Victor Tununensis*, an African Bishop quoted by Lardner, vol. 3, p. 67. See also an account of a general alteration of these Scriptures, "to accommodate them to the faith of the orthodox," by Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, as recorded by Beausobre. *Histoire de Manichee*, vol. 1, p. 343.

(b) *Admissions of the most learned Critics*.—1st. "There were in the MSS. of the N. T. 130,000 various readings." Unitar. New Version, p. 22.—2nd. "The Manuscripts from which the received text was taken were stolen by the librarian and sold to a sky-rocket maker, in the year 1749." Herbert Marsh, Bishop of Peterborough, vol. 2, p. 441.—3rd. For the *most important passage* in the book of Revelation, there was no original Greek at all, but "Erasmus wrote it himself in Switzerland, in the year 1516." Bishop Marsh, vol. 1, p. 320.

by the insertion of others, whose only drift is to enhance the power of Kings and Priests (c).

II. *That they did not appear in the times to which they refer; is demonstrable.*—*By evidence external,* In the express admissions of Ecclesiastical Historians, of their utter inability to show *WHEN*, or *WHERE*, or *BY WHOM*, this collection of writings was first made (d). And in the admissions of the most learned critics, as to the infinitely suspicious origination of the present Received Text. (e).—*By evidence internal,* In innumerable texts therein contained, betraying a comparatively *modern* character, referring to circumstances which did not exist till later ages, and quoting *other* Scriptures which had previously formed the faith of the first Christian Churches, but which, without any assignable reason, or alleged authority, have since been rejected (f).

III. *That the persons of whom they treat never existed; Because* demoniaes, devils, ghosts, angels, hobgoblins, (g), persons who had once been dead who could walk on water, ride in the air, &c., such as Satan and Jesus Christ, are the persons of whom these Scriptures treat; and that such persons never existed is demonstrable.—1st. From the utter incongruity of such figments with the immutable laws of sound reason.—2ndly. From the total absence of all historical reference to their existence.—And 3rdly. From innumerable passages of these Scriptures themselves, which fully admit the merely visionary Hypostasis of their fabulous hero. (h).

(c) *Immoral, &c.*—See Romans, iii. 7.; Epist. John, ii. 10.; Heb. xii. 29; Heb. xiii. 17.; Romans, xiii.; 1 Peter, ii. 13; Luke, xiv. 26., &c.

(d) See Mosheim's Eccles. Hist.; Jones on the Canon, &c. *passim*.

(e) *Received Text, &c.*—"The Received Text rests on the authority of no more than twenty or thirty manuscripts, most of which are of little note." Unitar. Version, Introd. 10. "It was completed by the Elzevir edition of 1624." *Ib.* *Mark well!* the retaining therein and circulating, as the Word of God, with consent or connivance of all parties, several passages known and admitted by all to be Forgeries and Lies. 1 John, v. 7.; 1 Tim. iii. 16. Excellent morality this!!

(f) *Comparatively Modern, &c.*—See 2 Epist. John, 9.; 1 Tim. iii. 3. James, v. 14.; Matt. xviii. 17.; 1 Corinth. xv. 7. 32.; 1 Peter, iv. 6.

(g) *Hobgoblins.*—See Acts, xix. 15.

(h) *Visionary Hypostasis.*—See Luke ix. 29.; Mark ix. 2.; Luke, xxiv. 31.

IV. *That the events which they relate never happened*, is demonstrable (farther than as a consequence of the preceding proposition) from the fact that some, many, or all these events, had been previously related of the gods and goddesses of Greece and Rome, and more especially of the Indian idol, *Christna*, whose religion, with less alteration than time and translations have made in the Jewish Scriptures, may be traced in every dogma and every ceremony of the Evangelical Mythology.

MEM AND BRETHREN,

If these things can be *denied* or *disproved*, your Ministers and Preachers are earnestly called on to do so. Your Missionaries, who boast their readiness to carry their Gospel to the remotest shores of the earth, are again and again *entreated* to become its advocates before assemblies of intelligent and learned men, here, in their native land; where, upon due notice of their intentions, and upon the condition of allowing themselves to be respectfully questioned and learnedly replied to, they will be received with honour and heard with attention.

By the assembled Society,

ROBERT TAYLOR, A.B. and M.R.C.S.

Orator of the Areopagus, and Chaplain of the Society
of Universal Benevolence.

Areopagus of the Christian Evidence Society,
London, February, 1827.

1 John, v. 6, and innumerable other passages, in perfect accordance with the TRUE AND GENUINE GOSPELS of the most primitive Christians, which taught that he was ninety-eight miles tall, and twenty-four miles broad; that he was not crucified at all; that he was never born at all; that by faith only we are saved, &c., &c.; all equally indicative that Christianity had no evidence at all, but was a matter of mere conceit, fancy, or superstition, from first to last.