

**EVIDENCE OF THE TRUTH OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION; DERIVED FROM THE
LITERAL FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY;
PARTICULARLY AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE
HISTORY OF THE JEWS, AND BY THE
DISCOVERIES OF RECENT TRAVELLERS**

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Evidence of the truth of the Christian religion; derived from the literal fulfillment of prophecy; particularly as illustrated by the history of the Jews, and by the discoveries of recent travellers
by Alexander Keith

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ALEXANDER KEITH

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BY THE
REV. ALEXANDER KEITH,
MINISTER OF ST. CYRIL, KINCARDINESHIRE.

FROM THE SIXTH EDINBURGH EDITION.

Opinionum secretis diebus delat, Natura judicia confirmat.
Cic. De Nat. Deo.

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1839.

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1891

PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

THE following pages are presented to the public in the hope that they may not be altogether unproductive of good. The idea of the propriety of such a publication was first suggested to the writer in consequence of a conversation with a person who disbelieved the truth of Christianity, but whose mind seemed to be considerably affected even by a slight allusion to the argument from Prophecy. Having endeavoured in vain to obtain, for his perusal, any concise treatise on the Prophecies, considered exclusively as a matter of evidence,—and having failed in soliciting others to undertake the work, who were far better qualified for the execution of it,—the writer was induced to make the attempt, and to endeavour to bring the subject into view. He was urged and encouraged to the prosecution of it by his worthy and learned friend, the Rev. Mr. Brewster, of Craig, to whom, and to another esteemed friend, the Rev. Dr. Mitchell, of Kemnay, by whose able critical remarks he has profited much, he owes, at least, this acknowledgment of his obligations.

Unbelievers are often most unreasonably averse to listen to any arguments, which establish the truth of Christianity, that may be urged by a clergyman; and it was therefore intended to have published this sketch anonymously. The advice of the Publishers, and of

others, prevented this. Testimony the most unexceptionable has, however, been adduced to substantiate the facts which verify the different Prophecies; and that testimony cannot be invalidated, by whomsoever it may be produced.

In the following Essay the argument is brought within narrow limits. Those Prophecies are not included which were fulfilled previously to the era of the last of the Prophets, or of which the meaning is obscure, or the application doubtful. And the only question to be resolved is, Whether there be any clear predictions literally accomplished, which, from their nature and their number, demonstrate that the Scriptures are the dictates of inspiration, or that the spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

PREFACE

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

IN the present edition the *title* has been partly altered, in order to convey a more distinct idea of the object of the treatise; and the fifth chapter, in particular, has been enlarged much beyond the original views of the author. He has not only endeavoured to obtain a more complete account of the existing state of Judea and of the surrounding countries from the published works of travellers of authority, but he has derived much important information from the *Travels in Egypt, Syria, &c.*, by the Honourable Charles Leonard Irby and James Mangles, Esq., F.R.S., Commanders in the Royal Navy, which were printed for private distribution, with a copy of which, with full permission to make use of its contents, they kindly furnished him. General Straton also favoured him with the perusal and use of his valuable manuscript *Travels*, to which, in several instances, reference is made. A brief description of the Journey of Captains Irby and Mangles, in company with Mr. Bankes and Mr. Legh, is published in *Dr. Macmichael's Journey to Constantinople*.

The researches of travellers in Palestine have been so abundant, and the prophecies thereby verified are so numerous and distinct, that no labour is requisite for elucidating their truth but to examine and compare the predictions and the events; and the literal pro

phesies need no other interpretation than the literal facts.

Though well aware that any one who seeks to illustrate the *external* evidence of the truth of Christianity may be said to stand only at the outer porch of the temple of Christian Faith, yet the writer of these pages humbly hopes that he may be permitted to point to a way, without a stumbling-block, by which some who may be merely the proselytes of the gate, or others who would pass altogether by, may be enabled to enter into that edifice of Divine architecture, fitly framed together, which is filled with all the riches of mercy, with all the beauties of holiness, and with all the light of truth.

PREFACE

TO

THE FIFTH EDITION.

PROPHECY has been rightly called a "growing evidence." Of late years that evidence has greatly accumulated. And after the successive additions which have been made to this treatise, no one can be more conscious than the author how very far it yet comes short of fully exhibiting the evidence of prophecy.

It is not in times like the present that, on such a subject, the precept of Horace—*nonum prematur in annum*—can be regarded. Had it been complied with in the present instance, the following Essay would not yet have been before the public.—But the desire of any credit, as an author, yielded to the better hope, as a Christian, that the treatise, in however imperfect a form, might "not be altogether unproductive of good,"—and that hope has not been vain.

For facilitating and promoting the means of its usefulness to a degree which he ventured not even to hope, his grateful acknowledgments are due to the Right Hon. Lord Bexley; and never was a debt more freely paid than he tenders them. To the public notice which he took of the volume, his lordship afterward added a lively interest in the publication of an abridgment of it, the concluding chapter of which, on the Seven Churches of Asia, was written entirely at his suggestion. And, at his expense, the Abridgment has been stereotyped, and published in English and in

French, by the Religious Tract Society; and is now also in the course of publication, in the same manner, in German.—While it was in preparation, a tract on the prophecies concerning Ammon, Moab, and Philistia was drawn up by one of the secretaries of the Religious Tract Society, of which about twenty thousand copies have already been sold.

The additional matter in the present volume refers chiefly to Judea and Babyionia.