

From W. F. Johnson's "History of Cooper County Missouri" on pages 507-507 we find the following tidbit on the writings of the Reverend W. D. Mahan.

"Rev. W. D. Mahan was widely known as an author and writer of religious books. He published "Archaeological Writings of the Sanhedrini and Talmuds of the Jews," which were afterwards combined in the Archko Library. He based his deductions and decisions upon the results of extensive personal research and study in the ruins and libraries of Rome and Constantinople, gathering at first hand the information necessary from archaeological inscriptions and had the translations duly made by scholars so that he could incorporate the matter in his books. He wrote and published "Caesar's Court," [Caesar's Court: From Records Found in the Vatican in Rome and in Constantinople] in 1895. The Archko Library, which originally consisted of five volumes, was afterwards combined and published in its entirety by the Archko Book Company of Boonville. He wrote "History on Baptism" and other pamphlets. Rev. Mahan devoted the best years of his life to the production of "Acts Pilate," his first book."

The Archko Volume is available at 1Chapter.com where you may purchase the entire book or read the first chapter at <http://www.1chapter.com/1stchapter.cfm?TableName=Commentaries&BookID=43>. Following is a copy of that free first chapter:

CHAPTER I. HOW THESE RECORDS WERE DISCOVERED

Some time in the year 1856, while living in De Witt, Missouri, a gentleman by the name of H. C. Whydaman became snow-bound and stopped at my house several days. He was a native of Germany, and one of the most learned men I had ever met. I found him to be freely communicative. During his stay, he told me that he had spent five years in the city of Rome, and most of the time in the Vatican, where he saw a library containing five hundred and sixty thousand volumes. He told me that he had seen and read the records of Tiberius Caesar, and in what was called the Acta Pilati that is, the acts of Pilate-he had seen an account of the apprehension, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth; but said it did not add much to the commonly accepted teachings of Christianity. He told me he thought a transcript could be secured. After Mr. Whydaman's departure, I meditated upon what he had told me of those records, and thought that if a transcript could be obtained it would be very interesting, even if it did not add much to the present teachings of Christianity. So, after some months I set about tracing up Mr. Whydaman, as the following correspondence shows:

DeWitt, Carroll Co., Mo., Sept. 22, 1856.
MR. HENRY C. WHYDAMAN.

DEAR SIR: After you left my house last spring, I kept thinking of your telling me of reading the acts of Pilate in the Vatican, while at Rome. I want you, if you please, to get me a transcript of those records, if the cost will not be too much. Will you please open a correspondence with some of your old friends at Rome that you can rely upon, and ascertain if it can be obtained; and if so what will be the probable cost of getting it? I shall be much obliged, and will pay you for your trouble and expense.

Yours in tender regards,
W. D. MAHAN.

New York, Nov. 12, 1856.

MR. W. D. MAHAN.

DEAR SIR: Your letter as directed to H. C. Whydaman is received. I will inform you he has returned to Germany. Your letter has been forwarded.

Yours, etc.,

C. C. VANTBERGER.

March 2, 1857.

REV. W. D. MAHAN.

DEAR SIR: It is with the kindest regards I remembered your hospitality while with you in America. Be assured, anything I can do for you will afford me great pleasure. I have written to Father Freelinhusen, a monk of great learning, at Rome, who is the chief guardian of the Vatican. I have made the request in my own name, as I do not think they would be willing for such a document to go into the hands of the public. When he answers, I will write you again. I am, your most obedient servant,

H. C. WHYDAMAN.

Westphalia, Germany, Nov. 27, 1857.

REV. W. D. MAHAN.

DEAR SIR: Father Freelinhusen has answered my letter in regard to the transcript you want. He informs me that the writing is so fine, and being in the Latin language, as I told you, and the parchments so old and dirty, he will be obliged to use a glass to the most of it. He can only give it in the Latin, as he does not understand the English. He says he will do it for thirty-five dollars, which will be in American coin sixty-two dollars and forty-four cents. If you will forward the amount, I will have the document forwarded to my brother-in-law, C. C. Vantberger. He will translate it for a trifle. I am yours, in tender regards,

H. C. WHYDAMAN.

Chillicothe, Mo., Feb. 8, 1858.

MR. H. C. WHYDAMAN.

DEAR SIR: Thanks to you for your kindness, and be assured, if I succeed, I shall ever feel underobligations to you for your trouble. Enclosed find a check on the Foreign Exchange Bank of New York for sixty-two dollars and forty-four cents. Please have the work done, and urge Mr. Freelinhusen to have it a true copy of the original. Send it to Mr. Vantberger, and have him to translate it into English, and I will pay the charges. He has my address. Yours, as ever,

W. D. MAHAN.

Westphalia, Germany, June 14, 1858.

REV. W. D. MAHAN.

DEAR SIR: I acknowledge your draft of \$62.44. Will apply as you request.

I am, sir,

H. C. WHYDAMAN.

MR. H. C. WHYDAMAN.

DEAR SIR: I hereby forward to you the transcript as it is on record in the Vatican in Tiberius Caesar's Court by Pilate. I certify this to be a true copy, word for word, as it occurs there. Yours, etc.,
PETER FREELINHUSEN.

New York, April 26, 1859.

MR. W. D. MAHAN.

DEAR SIR: I am in possession of a document from H. C. Whydaman, with instructions to translate it into English. My charge is ten dollars.

I will expect an answer.

C.C. VANTBERGER.

With this correspondence I received the following document, and I must confess that, although it is not inspired, yet the words burned in my heart as the words of Christ in the hearts of his disciples, and I am satisfied from the spirit it breathes that it must be true. I am aware that though the Jews were in subjection to the Romans, yet they still held their ecclesiastical authority, and the Romans not only submitted to their decisions, but executed their decrees on their subjects. Knowing there was not such a piece of history to be found in all the world, and being deeply interested myself, as also hundreds of others to whom I have read it, I have concluded to give it to the public.

Upon getting hold of this report of Pilate, I commenced to investigate this subject, and after many years of trial and the expenditure of considerable money, I found that there were many of such records still preserved at the Vatican in Rome and at Constantinople, that had been carried there by the Emperor of Rome about the middle of the third century. I therefore procured the necessary assistance, and on September 21, 1883, I set sail for those foreign lands to make the investigation in person.

Believing that no event of such importance to the world as the death of Jesus of Nazareth could have transpired without some record being made of it by his enemies in their courts, legislations, and histories, I commenced investigating the subject. After many years of study, and after consulting various histories and corresponding with many scholars, I received the assistance of two learned men, Drs. McIntosh and Twyman, and went to the Vatican at Rome, and then to the Jewish Talmuds at Constantinople. As a result I have compiled this book, which will be found one of the most strange and interesting books ever read. It may appear fragmentary, but the reader must remember that it is the record of men made nearly two thousand years ago.

It was some time in March, 1856, that my mind was awakened on the subject of this book, almost incidentally, or it may be providentially, for He sometimes chooses the weakest things to confound the mighty. The reader is referred to the correspondence of H. C. Whydaman and myself, as found in this book. In God's providence sometimes very great effects are produced from very small causes. Mr. Whydaman told me he had spent five years in the Vatican at Rome, and in looking over the old manuscripts he came across the records of Pilate made to Caesar, and in those records he saw where a man named Jesus was arrested, tried, and executed; he read it carefully and re-read it, and went back and read it again.

This was the beginning of my investigation, and this book is the product of that investigation. I ask the reader to follow me patiently and see how I came to get hold of the matter contained in this book.

I wondered how it was that such historians as Philo, Tacitus, Quintilian, and Josephus had told us nothing or so little about Jesus of Nazareth. I asked all the wise men and scholars I met, and they did not know; I then wrote to many scholars in Europe, and they could not tell me. As I could find nothing very definite from the outside world, I began to have my doubts, but came to the conclusion that the question was of too much importance to allow my mind to be fixed without a thorough investigation. I went to our histories—Mosheim, Lardner, Stackhouse, and others. They gave me no satisfaction, and I thought to myself, Is it possible that the character of such men as the early Christians, and the wonderful excitement that they created in their day, could have been passed over and no records made of them? When I remembered, too, that the Roman provinces in that day were prolific with debaters, historians, and writers on all topics that were brought before them, and that the records of the courts in those days were more carefully preserved than they are now, and that even of the trial of Guiteau, who was not half as conspicuous to the people of these United States as Jesus was to the Jewish nations, there were hundreds of records made, I came to the conclusion that only Almighty God could establish a cause so universally as the Christian religion was established in the hearts of the people of this world, and sceptre them so completely as the sceptre of Jesus governs this world today, when they had comparatively little or no testimony from the outside world.

I consulted our histories in this country, and one said these records were burned in the Alexandrian Library. I knew the Babylonian Talmuds were in this library, or at least most of them were, but I also knew that the Talmuds of Jerusalem were not. I knew that when the Romans conquered the Jews and destroyed their Holy City, temple and all, all the sacred treasures were taken by the Romans and, I supposed, preserved.

Another historian says Gregory IX. burned all the sacred records. I found that this Roman bishop was a strong believer in Christ, as were all the Catholic Church. They follow not us, and we forbid them. Why should they burn these records? There is no Church more strongly in favor of Jesus Christ; he is their corner-stone, their foundation rock, their only hope. They have a different way to approach him. This does not destroy their Saviour; he remains the same, but they have different ways of using him as their Saviour.

Other historians said the Jews destroyed these records, although it is strange that the Jews should destroy all their sacred records at the time, to get rid of an impostor, as they believed him to be. It is more likely they would have preserved them to vindicate their actions in the future, provided they should be needed. The Jews were honest in all their dealings with Christ; they thought both he and John the Baptist were destroying their nation, and, as their nation and religion were one and the same, the course Jesus was pursuing jeopardized all their hopes, religious and political. This is seen clearly in the defence of Caiaphas, as set forth in this book (see his defence before the Sanhedrim in regard to his conduct with Jesus). Hence, much of the prejudice among Protestants against the Jews is groundless. There never was a people more honest and devoted to their country and their God than the Jews. Many Protestants in this country, and some preachers among them, think that the more they denounce the Jews and Catholics, the more they serve God. The Jews were wrong in rejecting Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and so are those who reject him now; but when a man reads this book he will come to the conclusion that the Jews had a better reason for rejecting Christ than

men have today, and would it be right to abuse all who refuse Christ as bad men? It is still more intolerable for the members of one denomination to abuse those of another because of not worshipping Christ as they do.

A difficulty I met in consulting scholars on this subject was the claim that the Roman monks had forged many manuscripts regarding Jesus Christ, in the Middle Ages. Now they may have forged some things to sustain their peculiar views and doctrines, something to sustain their Church; but there is nothing in this book to sustain Catholicism, and if every word of it was forgotten it would add nothing to that Church more than to any other Church. Then I remembered the Vatican library was one of the most extensive in the world; it has cost millions of dollars. How did those forgers know that I or any other man would come there and pay them a few dollars to get a transcript of those records? It certainly would be a very poor speculation.

Another objection was that the manuscripts had been searched for by scholars and could not be found. So I set myself to work, and after investigating all the authors in this country, and writing to many scholars in Europe, and getting books from libraries in the old country, thus sparing no pains or expense, I could not find or even hear of a man who had ever investigated this subject. I found that Dr. Tischendorf made some investigation in these ancient manuscripts, but he was looking for the manuscript of the Scriptures, and might have seen many such things as this book holds and never have noticed them, just from the simple fact that he was not looking for them. He was looking for something else. In the investigation of such subjects a man must have but one thing in his mind, and he must be posted beforehand to know how and where to look, for the field is too large to make his business general. I now challenge any scholar to show me the man who has made this his special business, and made the effort that I have on this particular subject. I am sure there is none. The next great difficulty that I encountered was this: Could such manuscripts exist so long? I found by investigating that Ptolemy, King of Alexandria, presented seventy books to Ezra, which he refused to place in the Holy Canon, and it came very near bringing on a bloody war. Again I found that Serenus Samnaticus, who was the teacher of M. Antonius Africanus, son of Gordianus the Great, when he died, left his library, consisting of sixty-two thousand volumes, to his student. This was in 236 e. D. I also remembered that the works of Homer were more than five hundred years older than Christ, and that we had the laws of Shammai, Abtalian, and the works of the Hillels all before us; and if Tischendorf, in the convent of St. Catherine, could find slips and pieces of the Septuagint that were declared at Leipsic to be of the fourth century, thought there might be a great deal more somewhere in the vast libraries in those old countries that have thousands of years the advantage of America. The literati could all tell how the manuscripts of the Church might be, and were, preserved; but the records of its enemies, even the records of courts and crowns they could not see into.

Now the reader must remember that there never was anything that created so much excitement in the land of Judea as the preaching of John the Baptist and Christ. This will be readily understood if we take into consideration the structure of the Jewish Commonwealth. The great Sanhedrim legislated for the souls and bodies of men; that is, their religion and their politics were one and the same thing. In the capitulation made with Augustus Caesar it was understood and agreed that the Jews were to pay a tax to the Romans, but the Romans were not to interfere with the Jewish religion. This took the executive power out of the hands of the Jews and put it into the hands of the Romans. This is the reason Jesus was sent to Pilate to be executed. The Romans had to carry out and execute the decisions of the Jewish courts on all Jewish questions. This is the reason Herod Antipas was tried by

the Roman Senate: he had executed John the Baptist without a trial. Then we see why the Jews and Romans worked together- on all questions of law; hence the great excitement of both nations. This is the reason why Pilate made his report to Caesar.

Now I say no event creating so much excitement could take place without more or less record being made of it; for if the Scripture is true-and I believe it is-there never was a man on earth who had no many followers in so short a time. Caiaphas says Jesus had been preaching three years, and he then had more followers than Abraham. This causes me to say again that if the New Testament records are true, then the historical items contained in this book must be true; and if these items, or items like them, be not true, then the items of the New Testament are not true; that is, no man dare to say these are the identical items, but items like these, and why not these? They came from the right place. The parchments and scrolls upon which they are written are such as were used in those days, but to say these are the same is to say what no man dare to say. The time has been too long and the distance to the place where the records are kept is too great for all men to make the examination for themselves, hence I ask all to consider this question fairly.

Let me invite the attention of the reader to the known histories in this country. Dr. Rashi, D.D., who wrote in Paris in the twelfth century, says in Vol. III., page 190, that in the formation of the ancient libraries there were men appointed called "baalie suphoths," which means "bookcompilers." The business of these men was to take the sheets of parchment of the various authors and pin their dates together, bind them in bundles and have them bound with clasps between cedar boards. This was a trade, and it required the best of scholars to do it. They were called baalie suphoths. We find that the works of Philo were compiled by Pseudonymaus Joseph Ben Gorion, A. n. 150. This Ben Gorion was a Jewish rabbi, a Pharisean doctor. Josephus was compiled by Ekaba, another Jewish doctor, at the close of the second century; and so with all the historians who lived near the Christian era. Josephus was published in book-form by Havercamp, in Amsterdam, in 1729. Now all he had to guide him was what Ben Gorion had said. So it was with Philo, which was put in book-form by Mangey, in London, in 1742; all he had was what Ekaba had pleased to compile of his works, and, as there was deadly hatred between the Jews and Christians at that time, it is most reasonable to believe that those compilers would leave everything out that would favor the Christians. It was to their own interest at that time to bury the very name of Christ in eternal oblivion; and this is the reason that all the historians who lived and wrote in those days are made to say so very little about Christ or his followers.

Now in looking over the histories we find comparatively nothing said about Jesus Christ. Such a thing could not be if the New Testament is true. No man could make me believe that such events occurred as are recorded in the Scriptures without accounts of them being made in the State records and by the public writers of that day. Although I have had this thrown in my face so often by infidels, I never saw the reason till I commenced this investigation; and if any man will take the pains to examine this question he will find that all the sophers, or scribes, were Pharisees; they were the doctors, lawyers, orators, poets, and statesmen of the times. The Hillel and Shammai schools made more scholars than all the world besides in the last days of the Jewish Commonwealth. Almost every nation under the sun patronized these schools.

Now, being satisfied that I was on the right track, the next thing was to find out what had become of the original manuscripts. Had Rothgad, Havercamp, and Mangey destroyed the manuscripts when

they were done with them? This I knew could not be, from the fact that these parchments were either in the hands of government or individual libraries, and they could not destroy them or take them away; and I knew if these manuscripts had been kept till 1754 they must be in existence yet. Only a few years ago there were one hundred and twenty-eight volumes of manuscripts presented to the British Museum, which were looked upon with interest, and, while I am writing this, there comes to my hand a dispatch from Vienna to the London Times. I will give it in full, as I think it will be beneficial to the reader. The dispatch is as follows:

"Ancient Manuscripts. The sifting and arrangement of the papyrus collection bought by Archduke Rainer have led to further interesting discoveries. Of the hieroglyphic, hieratic, demotic, and Coptic papyri, about twenty date from the pre-Christian period. Among these is one nearly three thousand years old, in the hieratic letter, containing the representation of a funeral, with a well-preserved sketch of the deceased, some hieroglyphic legends, and a demotic papyrus on the subject of mathematics. Much more numerous are the Coptic documents, about one thousand in all, mostly letters and legal documents of the period from the sixth to the tenth century of our era. There are some important papyri containing translations of the Bible in the central Egyptian dialect, of which there have hitherto been found but few specimens; and a leaf of parchment from an old octavo edition of the book of Ruth, in the Sahidi dialect. Among the Greek papyri is a hitherto unknown speech of Isocrates, one of the finest specimens of Alexandrian caligraphy. Another fragment has been found of the book of the Thucydides manuscript, previously mentioned. Portions, also, have been discovered of the Iliad, and a paraphrase of the Fourth Book. Then a metanvia has been found dating from the beginning of the fourth century, being thus one of the oldest Christian manuscripts. The collection contains many well-preserved documents in an almost continuous series of the Roman and Byzantine emperors, beginning with Trajan and ending with Heraclius.

"There are also documents in the Iranic and Semitic languages. The former are written on papyrus, parchment, and skins, and among them are two fragments which, it is believed, will furnish the key to the Pehlewi language. Among the Arab papyri twenty-five documents have been found with the original leaden seals attached. They begin with a fragment of the fifty-fourth year of the Hegira. Another is an official document of the nineteenth year of the Hegira, appointing a revenue collector. Perhaps the most valuable part of the collection is one hundred and fifty-five Arabian documents, on cotton paper, of the eighth century, which is about the time of the invention of this material by the Arabs, to the year 953. Many thousands of manuscripts have still to be deciphered."

In the early centuries there was a good deal of what is known as the "Apologetical Writings." I made it my business to examine these writings, and found them to be a defence of Christianity. The first of this form of writing was presented to the Emperor Adrian by Quadratus, in the year 126 A.D. A portion of this we find in Eusebius, page 93. There was another by Aristides, at about the same time. These two authors are found only in fragments, preserved by other historians, and their writings are mainly pleas for clemency for those who professed Christianity and were being persecuted. Justin Martyr also wrote twice on this subject once to the Roman Senate and once to Antonius. These were published in English by W. Reeves, in 1709, at Leipsic.

Tertullian wrote two volumes, and Vincentius wrote a commentary on them. These are found at Paris. They are very valuable works--perhaps the most valuable of the ancient writings--from the fact, recorded in them, that the Christians, in giving reasons for asking favors, refer to the records made by

the Jews and Jewish writers as well as the reports of the Roman officers who were the governors of Judea at that time; and of course their reference to these records demonstrates that the records were there.

In Tertullian, Vol. II., page 29, Vincentius says the Christians' argument was based on the doctrine of the Bible, showing that the God of the Christians could save, and referred the pagans to the many instances where he had interposed and saved, when none but a God like the Christians' God could save. For, said they, what can a God made of wood or brass do in time of danger? They had no power to put forth and exert themselves to save. Vincentius says the pagan would answer that these images were the representations of their gods; that these gods of wood and iron, had invisible spirits that exerted as much power as the God of the Christians. Vincentius says he did not see much difference in their doctrines when they got to understand each other.

I remember that, while on the ship, we had an Irish priest on board, and in conversation one day while asking him about many things in the Catholic Church I inquired why he had a crucifix hanging in his room. Said I, "You do not think there is any virtue in that image of brass?" "No," said he, "no more than there was in the serpent of brass that Moses made and placed on a pole. There was no healing virtues in that brass, but the bitten Israelite believed in the command, which belief or faith controlled his action and produced obedience; hence he was healed." And so, he said in this case, he no more believed there were any saving qualities in that image than I believe my mother's picture could be to me a mother.

Let the reader refer to the first centuries and mark what a disputation there was in the ancient church about pictures. May we not flow back into it? And as this subject of picture-worship created so much dissatisfaction in the first centuries it may do so again. While investigating this question I found that Arcadius, the eldest son of Theodosius the Great, succeeded his father to the throne in A.D. 395, and divided the Roman Empire into what was known in that day as the Eastern and Western Empires.

Arcadius chose the Eastern and fixed his seat of government at Constantinople, and made his brother Honoris Emperor of the Western, fixing his seat of government at Rome. It was not long until their jealousy was kindled, which resulted in hatred and terminated in a war which finally proved their overthrow. In reading the Ante-Nicene Fathers, published in Edinburgh in twenty-four octavo volumes, in Vol. XII., page 114, it is said that the beginning of this war was on account of Honoris wishing to have his young princes educated at Constantinople free of charge, giving as his reason that the great library there had once belonged to Rome. When his brother Arcadius refused he tried to get the library divided, and Arcadius refused this also. They then went to war, and while the two brothers were thus engaged Alaricus engaged the Western Empire and overthrew it. In hunting through this vast library of books I found what was called the Homilies of Clementine; Vol. XIII., page 194; there were the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts and Revelations, with all the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, including the laws of the High Priest, the laws of the Temple service, the Records of the Sanhedrim, giving the Jewish laws and customs for hundreds of years, with all the treaties and records of the courts.

Now my idea was that if these records were found in the library of the Vatican at Rome and in the Seraglio and Atmedan libraries at Constantinople and Alexandria, so these men could get them nearly three hundred years ago, why are they not there now? Dr. Isaac Wise, who is President of the

Hebrew School at Cincinnati, and, by the way, one of the best Hebrew scholars in America, in his History of the Commonwealth of Israel, frequently quotes from the Talmuds and Sanhedrim, giving reference to the various circumstances, and often gives the name of the scribe who did the writing; and so I find these records have always been in the hands of the Jewish rabbis, and you need not tell me these things have been only produced by the later Jewish nation, for we find quotations made at the time and by the men who lived in the days of Christ. Those quotations correspond with other history we have of the same events, and the only difference is that the Jewish rabbis put a different construction on those events from what the Christians do. This is the great difficulty, after all; like a celebrated lawyer, after reading this book, told his friend it convinced him of the truth of the facts in the Scriptures, but it did not convince him of its spiritual definition. This is the final point of importance, when the soul is lost or saved—that is, to take the facts of the Scriptures and yield to them as spiritual truth. Colens the First, who was an Epicurean philosopher, wrote a treatise against Christianity and was answered by Origen. This work is in eight volumes. It was published in Paris, by Vallart, in 1746. In this work the disputants appealed alternately to these writings, to the reports made by the Romans, and show clearly that the whole of the Jewish doctrines, records and all, were then in possession of the Romans.

Nero refused to believe in these things, which he might have done if he had taken the pains to look into those sacred treasures of learning that were on file in the Senate chamber; but Origen says Nero was only moved by ambition, with the love of destruction before his eyes. He never stopped to consider nor consult the opinions or wishes of others. Here, again, I found an unintentional reference to these things. Now the reader must remember that the records were there at that time, for no one disputed the fact; but in proving the unnecessary hostility of Nero, Origen makes mention of these other facts, showing the records to be in the city of Rome, how they came there, and what they taught; that is, a part of these records were brought from Jerusalem and were the writings of the Jews and the Romans who had been officers in the Jewish kingdom by Roman authority, and these were Roman officers, which made them a part of and responsible to the Roman government. Can any intelligent man believe that these men would have been allowed to transact the business of the Romans and no records be made of it in the archives of the government? Such a thing is most absurd. The reader will bear in mind that government among the Jews, Greeks, and Romans was much more strictly administered than in this country, and all such records as referred to the actions of the courts and the government officers had to be preserved. I now ask the attention of the reader to the investigation of the preservation of the sacred parchments from which come our Bible.

First, to the works of Benjamin Kennicott, D:D., entitled Vetus Testamentum, published in England in 1780. This is only a little more than one hundred years ago. We find that he got from the Codex of Hillel six hundred manuscripts. When did this Hillel live? The author of the Codex lived about one hundred years after the Christian era. Dr. Kennicott also got sixteen manuscripts from the Samaritan Pentateuch. Then I ask attention to John G. Rosenmuller, of 1736, at Leipsic, to his Librarium, five volumes, also his Scholia Testament, all from manuscript. Then to Brian Walton, D.D., born at Yorkshire in 1600, who published his polyglot Bible from manuscript (Hebrew). Because these are given to us by great men, and they suit our notions, they are never doubted; and it is too apt to be the case in our ad captandum, we are not likely to investigate as closely as we should. And, again, we are apt to be more inclined to investigate those things that are suited to our tastes and interests; but while certain things are interesting to us we should never forget that there are other things equally interesting to others; and while we may be interested only in the sacred histories that make for our

peace, and although the testimony of our enemies may not be very pleasant to hear, we should remember that the salvation of others may depend on such testimony.

We should not be opposed to any evidence that may give strength to any subject and thereby redound to good in a general way, specially if this evidence does not have a tendency to weaken our faith. It is so with this book; it cannot weaken the faith of the Christian who have believed without foreign testimony, but brings strong corroborative testimony to enable others who are less credulous than we to believe. Hence in the examination of the various versions of the Bible and of the manner in which they were dug up out of the old manuscripts, from the rubbish of the ancient world, difficulties are encountered, and others may not believe as readily as we do. Duranzo, a Greek historian, who wrote thirty-six volumes in Constantinople at the close of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century, in referring to the prosperity of the city and nation, says, in Vol. XIII., page 54, that Constantinople enjoyed educational advantages over all other cities, and that this was due, to some extent, to the fact that the Christians, under the instructions of their Emperor, had gathered and brought there literature from all parts of the world, and it was the great seat of learning of the world. On page 128 he refers to a war that was carried on about 'the great library that had been brought there by the Roman Emperor when he embraced Christianity. Again he says, that when Mohammed locked up the great library he excluded the learned and with them the wealth of the city. In Vol. XIV., page 17, in speaking of the battle of Tanze, he says it was fought over the sacred books that had been deposited there by the ancient Christians. From these indirect references I discovered there must be great deposits of sacred literature in these old libraries. These histories are in the Paris library for the inspection of anyone. Notwithstanding the art of printing has a tendency to do away with and supersede the written Scriptures, yet there are many valuable manuscripts in existence, some of which are of great value in the interpretation of the Scriptures.

First, the Hebrew manuscripts. These are either rolls designed for the use of synagogues, or square manuscripts, designed for private use. The former are all on parchment and written with the greatest care and accuracy. The others are written on vellum or paper. Dr. Kennicott says all that are now to be had were written between the tenth and fourteenth centuries. Of course these were written from the originals; how often they have been rewritten in fourteen hundred years we cannot say, but we know there are many opportunities for change. These manuscripts have been collated by Dr. Kennicott and De Rossi, and amount to 1135; but it is more than probable that as the Jewish rabbis did this work they may have left out many things that appeared to them contrary.

The next are the Greek. Of these manuscripts immense numbers still exist. Dr. Holmes has collected 135. Some of these are preserved from the fourth century. Of course, these are not the records that were made when the events they record took place.

Now, reader, our present Bible comes from these manuscripts. The first English Bible was published by J. Wickliffe in 1360, just ninety years before printing was invented. The first Bible printed in our language was by William Tindall, assisted by Miles Cloverdale, in 1526. When Tindall was executed for heresy by the Catholics, his works were continued by Cloverdale and John Rogers. This book was suppressed time and again, and reprinted by different parties until it went through twenty-two different editions. The last was that which proceeded from the Hampton Court conference in 1603. There were so many errors in the Bishop's Bible that King James's Bible was put on foot and printed in 1611.

Now suppose we consider the many Bibles published by different sects, nations, and individuals, and all coming from these Hebrew, Greek, and Latin manuscripts. The reader must know that the manuscripts have gone through many hands. This we know from the fact that we find Bible manuscripts still in existence, and from these we find Greek manuscripts, Samaritan manuscripts taken from the Hebrew, the Spanish manuscripts, the German manuscripts, the Italian manuscripts, and many others. The reader is referred to the Bodleian Library in the British Museum, and to the libraries at Leyden, Paris, and Rome. We also have some in America, at Philadelphia, in the libraries of the Quakers and in the library of the Antiquarian Society.

The manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible were compiled in the second century. But they never were translated till n. b. 607, by Bishop Adhelm, under the direction of King Alfred. There were a number of parts of these Hebrew manuscripts translated in the second century in the Arabic language. It was printed for the Propaganda at Rome, in 1671, in three volumes. The Armenian version was made in the fourth century of the Christian era by Miesrob and Isaac, and printed at Amsterdam by Uskin, an Armenian bishop, who was charged by his enemies with following the Vulgate. It was printed at Constantinople in 1705; at Venice in 1805. The Coptic New Testament was published by Wilkins at Oxford, 1716.

The Vulgate is an ancient manuscript, taken from the Hebrew and translated into the Latin in the second century; also one of the Greek and one of the Syriac. These are all of the same date. This Vulgate in the Latin was used in Africa. The Church at Rome was under Greek control at this time and rejected the Latin Vulgate, and used what was called at that time the *Vetus Latina*, or old Latin. This is the history of Tertullian, Vol. I., page 202.

In the fourth century Jerome tells us there was another translation of the Vulgate, under the instruction of St. Augustine, and St. Jerome recommends this in the highest terms. About the fifth century there was another translation made, which is called the Codex, in the Latin language. There was one at Alexandria, one in the Vatican, and one at Sinai. Parts of these are preserved in the British Museum. They were presented to King Charles by Cyril Lucar, who was patriarch at Constantinople and had been patriarch at Alexandria, and brought these books with him. The Codex of Sinai is in the Greek, and is the same that Dr. Tischendorf found and was declared by the scholars of Leipsic to have been written in the fourth century.

In the year 748 of the Roman Empire and 330 of the Christian era Constantine the Great removed his seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, and took with him all the records of the Christians to that city, as will be shown in a letter from him in this book in regard to having the Holy Scriptures in manuscript, and having fifty volumes bound and kept on deposit. When Mohammed took possession of Constantinople he had too much respect for these sacred scrolls to let them be destroyed, but had them all nicely cased and deposited in the St. Sophia Mosque. History informs us of the dreadful struggle that took place between the Greeks and Romans over the sacred parchments in the days of the Crusades; and it seems to us that Divine Providence has had something to do with the preservation of these sacred writings. These scrolls look more like rolls of narrow carpet wound round a windlass than anything else. But as I have described them elsewhere I will not attempt a further description here.

Another question arises in the mind of the reader, and that is: How was it possible for these writings to be preserved so long? I answer that there are many works much older than these in existence. Homer is 900 years older. Why not these? Another reason why these writings have not been brought before the world is that no man has searched for these chronicles as I have done. After getting hold of Acta Pilati as I did, accidentally, I made the investigation of these questions my special business for ten years--corresponding with many historians and scholars, sending for all the books that could instruct me on these great questions, engaging two expert scholars, Drs. McIntosh, of Scotland, and Twyman, of England, and going to the city of Rome, paying our way through the Vatican, and then to Constantinople, where we examined those ancient records, sparing neither time nor expense to acquire a knowledge of them. Then it may be asked again: May not I be deceived? May not these men have imposed upon me? To this I would say: That is impossible. Then it might be argued: Might not these writings have been manufactured to make money out of? If so, it was a poor business, for this is the first and only book ever produced from them. It certainly was a bad speculation on their part. But one says: Did not Gregory IX. burn twenty cartloads of these Talmuds? Who says so but a Jewish rabbi? If he did, they were the Talmuds of Babylon, and not those of Jerusalem? There is no body of Christians stronger adherents of Jesus Christ than the Roman Catholics. Why should they want to burn the Talmuds of Jerusalem, which were so full of the doctrines and historical events that are so near and dear to them? No man could go into the Vatican library without a guard over him, who watches him, closely, so that he cannot move a leaf or change a word or letter of anything that is there. If they will not consent to even the slightest change, it is not probable they would burn their works. Men from all over the world are there. Often when we crossed the Tiber, before it was fairly light, there were a thousand strangers between us and St. Peter's gate, waiting to be admitted at the opening of the gate that leads into the Vatican.

One more evidence to the reader: There are at least five hundred quotations made from the Sanhedrim and Talmuds of the Jews by men who have denied their existence. Now I call attention to history, and I will give the name and page, so that all can read for themselves. First: Rabbi Akiba, a reformed Jewish priest, Vol. I., page 22, quotes from Celsus, an enemy of the Church. He says there was a dreadful earthquake at the time Jesus was crucified, and that the mist that arose from it covered the earth for three hours. On page 28 he says that Jesus was the son of Mary; that he was the founder of the sect called Christians. On page 48 he says Jesus was crucified on the eve of the Passover. He gives extracts from the apostles, and never denies in a single instance, but admits their genuineness. He quotes the books, and makes extracts from the names they bear. He makes particular mention of his incarnation, of his being born of a virgin, of his being worshipped by the Magi; of his flight into Egypt; of the massacre of the infants of Bethlehem. On page 52 he speaks of his baptism by John and the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and of the voice that was heard out of heaven. He speaks of the miracles done by Jesus, and never doubts the facts in any instance, but attributes them to the art of necromancy he had learned in Egypt. But did the reader ever hear of a thaumaturgist producing a descent of the Holy Spirit or causing voices to be heard from the heavens? Such absurdities are not spoken of except when they are urged against the Christian religion.

Aretas, one of the kings of Arabia, who was a philosopher as well as a king, in speaking of the laws of nature (Vol. VII, page 14), says that Jesus of Judea was a philosopher above the laws of nature; that he controlled all the elements of nature with almighty power; that the winds, thunders, and lightnings obeyed him; and speaks of these facts as being so common that it would be folly to dispute them.

Justin says, in Vol. II, page 42, that the several Roman governors in their respective provinces made reports of the important events that occurred in their jurisdiction, and they were spread on the senatorial docket at Rome. We find in this same work, page 128, that he appealed to Antoninus and the Senate for clemency for the Christians, and after referring to their many virtues, and to Christ as their leader, added: "And that these things are so, I refer you to the records of the Senate made by Pontius Pilate and others in his day." The learned Tertullian, in his Apology for Christianity, about the year 200, after speaking of our Saviour's Crucifixion and Resurrection, and his appearance to the disciples, and ascension into heaven in the sight of the same disciples, who were ordained by him to spread the gospel over the world, thus proceeds: "Of all these things relating to Christ, Pilate himself, in his conscience already a Christian, sent an account to Tiberius, then Emperor." The same writer in the same apology thus relates the proceedings of Tiberius on receiving this information: "There was an ancient decree that no one should be received for a deity unless he was first approved by the Senate. Tiberius, in whose time the Christian name (or religion) had its rise, having received from Palestine, in Syria, an account of such things as confirmed the truth of his (Christ's) divinity, proposed to the Senate that he should be enrolled among the Roman gods, and gave his own prerogative vote in favor of the motion; but the Senate, without whose consent no deification could take place, rejected it because the Emperor himself had declined the same honor. Nevertheless, the Emperor persisted in his opinion, and threatened punishment to the accusers of the same court. I know that Pilate was a Roman officer, and his actions were watched closely and all his public acts had to be recorded upon the Roman docketts.

I do not see why these records should have been destroyed. I am convinced the Jews at that day were looking for a Redeemer, and when the great excitement was reported at Bethlehem it would be not unreasonable that the Jews should make an investigation of the matter; and, again, I know if the Scriptures are true Mary was subject to the death penalty unless she could satisfactorily prove her innocence. I was convinced the Jews must have looked into this matter, and that it would be found recorded somewhere. I knew that if there were such a man as they represented Jesus to be, he could not be tried in the high priest's court and condemned to death, and executed by the Roman authorities, unless there were some record made of it by both the Jews and Romans. Here we have the whole of these records, and why are they not true? They comport with the Bible; they are just the records we should expect from the Scriptures; they were made or dated at the right time; they came from the place where these records were made; they were written in the same language that was used at that time. Now, if all this is so, why are they not true? I offer this book to the public feeling assured it can do no harm to anyone or to any church, but that it will be read by thousands with great interest, and will convince the infidel of the truth of the Scriptures. As Dr. Miller observed: "This book never was needed until now, and it is like all God's providences, always brought out at the right time." Another minister wrote to say he "was more than delighted;" it was like calling up the dead; all the circumstances of Calvary were brought vividly before him, and when he read Caiaphas's second report he both wept and rejoiced. Such is the testimony of almost everyone who reads it.

In an extract from a private letter to the Brunswicker Dr. Rubin says:

"I saw, while in the Vatican at Rome last week, Dr. W. D. Mahan, of Boonville, Mo., Drs. McIntosh and Twyman, of Scotland, with a number of clerks, both readers and scribes, going through these old manuscripts and scrolls that have been lying there for hundreds, yea, thousands of years; they seem to be men of great age and learning, and well qualified for their business. They were going next week

to Constantinople to go through the records of the Sanhedrim and the ancient Talmuds of the Jews. Their object is to bring out a new book as a supplement to Acta Pilati. I am satisfied, from the character of the men and the nature of the book, it will prove to be one of the most interesting books ever presented to the Christian world, from the fact that all the works on archaeology have been written in such a style that but very few could read and understand them."

Constantinople, Turkey, October 16, 1883.

TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICA. DEAR FRIENDS: I take pleasure in addressing you this letter, as I feel assured I am doing a good work for my Father who is in heaven. Then, friends, permit me to say to you that I was introduced to my friend, W. D. Mahan, of Boonville, Mo. by my friends of Leipsic, Germany. I engaged to meet him in Paris, France, and when he showed me his plans and the subjects that he wanted, and showed me his notes of reference, the names of others, and books that he had been hunting for ten years, I became satisfied that if we could succeed he would bring out one of the best books ever offered to the Christian world except the Bible. We repaired to the Vatican at Rome, received permission to examine the greatest library in the world, and to my astonishment the first thing we called for was brought to hand in a short time. I mean Pilate's reports, which were more than satisfactory. The next were the Senate's records respecting the investigation of Herod Antipater's conduct at Bethlehem, and Herod Antipas on various charges (one of which was the execution of John the Baptist), the Hillel letters, and the Shammai laws. We then proceeded to Constantinople and went through the records of the Sanhedrim and Talmuds of the Jews that were carried there and preserved by Constantine in the year 337. Here we found Melker's letter (who was priest at Bethlehem at the time that Jesus of Nazareth was born) in respect to the prophecy concerning the birth of Jesus, which is very deep and profound. Next we came upon the report of Gamaliel, who was sent by the Sanhedrim to interrogate Joseph and Mary concerning the child Jesus, which will prove to be one of the most interesting subjects that was ever read by man. Then the next thing we found was the report of Caiaphas to the Sanhedrim. When read it will awaken the minds of men and give a very different view of this matter to what we have had.

After we had finished the report, Brother Mahan insisted that we should unwind the scroll further, and in doing so we found his second report, which caused us to weep like children, and we both thanked God that we continued the search. We also found many strange historical items, such as will be of great interest to the world at this time. And as Brother Mahan is going to publish his book in America, I can most heartily recommend it.

M. MCINTOSH.

Market Place, City of Rome, Italy.

DEAR WIFE: It seems long since I left home, but God is here as well as in America, and it is my chief delight to report you and the children to his throne of mercy daily. I was landed at Marseilles, France, after twelve days out from New York. We had a splendid trip, all but the first two days. We left New York in a gale, and I must confess I was very much alarmed; it seemed to me the water was much higher all around us than where the ship was: That made it more frightful, for it looked as if the ship sunk or was sinking for the first two days. She was sometimes on her end, then on her side, and then would seem to turn almost over; but every tilt she made I prayed St. Peter's prayer. I think I did more praying the first two days than I had done in two years. But the second day I began to cast up my accounts, not with my Maker, nor with my creditors, but with my stomach. I was awful sick.

Captain Stikes said the storm in starting out made it much worse on us than it would have been if the weather had been clear and calm, but the third day the sea began to calm, and so did my stomach. I was able to go out in the evening, but we were still going up hill; we had no further trouble all the way, but after three or four days it looked as if I would never get enough to eat. Our fare was poor, much more so than on the English line; so I was told by men that had travelled both lines. I shall return by another route. I met Dr. McIntosh at St. Elgin waiting for me. He is one of the nicest old men and one of the finest scholars I ever met. I feel ashamed in his presence, though he is so grand and noble he can hide my own defects from me better than I can myself. He was very much surprised when I showed him my notes of reference. He did not see how I could get hold of these things so far away. We found Dr. Twyman and his men at the Vatican, and we are working bravely. The very first thing the guard brought was Acta Pilati; the Doctor was delighted when he saw it. We have two guards; one brings the articles as we call for them; the other sits and watches to see that the books and parchments are not mutilated. Today was the day of the Pope's holy auditory. We were taken in by the guard, and I must confess I never had such feelings in all my life. The room is, I suppose, three hundred feet or more square; there must have been ten or twelve hundred in the congregation, all men, mostly priests and officers. The Pope is a venerable old man. I saw nothing different in his dress from any other priest; nothing gaudy about him. He sang the mass in the pure old Latin language; his voice was clear and sweet. After he was through quite a number of the priests came and knelt at his feet. He laid his hands gently on each of their heads and pronounced a blessing, but they did not kiss his great toe. I never saw as solemn a congregation in my life; in fact, it would be impossible for a man to be otherwise in that room. The dome of this room surpasses all the sights my eyes ever beheld; it contains hundreds of windows in the form of eyes with golden lids and lashes, all emitting rays of light of various colors. They seemed so natural I thought I could almost see them wink. They are to represent the all-seeing eye. These eyes are the light of the room. The scene of magnificence beggars description. There are too many things to be described. A man will have a higher appreciation of the Catholic Church, where he sees her enthroned in the hearts of this great church, and I shall ever have a different feeling toward them from what I have had. We have all the text-books we need, Buxtorf, Gesenius, Laportees, and others. We will get through in the Vatican in a few days. We will leave Dr. Twyman and three clerks here, as we find the Hillelite letters and Shemiate and Abtalian laws here in bookform. They will translate such parts of them as we want and send them to me; they will come in a roll. If they come before I get home, take special care of them. Dr. McIntosh and I, with one clerk, will go to Constantinople in a day or two. The Doctor has been there, and he thinks he will find all that I want in the St. Sophia Library. He says the twenty cartloads of Talmuds that history tells us were burned by Gregory IX. were the Talmuds of Babylon, but the Talmuds of Jerusalem are all safe, and so are the records of the Jerusalem Sanhedrim; that these documents were carried there by Constantine. If so, that is all I want. The Doctor thinks it will be one of the most important books ever brought before the public, except the Bible, as it would give the pros and cons of the outside world at that time. But I have so many things I would like to say and it is now after 1 o'clock A. w. As to home affairs, I am too far off to say anything more, besides I have all confidence in your judgment. I think now that I will be at home by the 10th or 15th of December, and I shall write no more unless something happens. May God bless you; farewell.

W. D. MAHAN.

Columbia, Mo., January 25, 1887.

This is to certify that I am well acquainted with the Rev. W. D. Mahan, of Boonville, Mo. I have known him well for a number of years, having spent several months at his house at different times. I was at

his house in Boonville, Mo., shortly after his return (as he then stated to me) from Rome and Constantinople. I gave him some assistance in recopying some of his manuscripts for his book. I saw, examined, and to some extent assisted in arranging the various subjects and chapters in his book. Judging from the handwriting of said manuscripts, there must have been two or more persons engaged in writing them, as there was a distinct difference in the handwriting. I was impressed at the time with the belief, from the writing and spelling, that the parties were of foreign birth and education. I have no interest in this matter, and make the above statement at the request and in justice to the Rev. W. D. Mahan, as an old and valued friend.

J. B. DOUGLASS.

Personally appeared before me, a notary public, within and for the county of Boone, and State of Missouri, General J. B. Douglass, to me well known, and made affidavit to the foregoing certificate. Witness my hand and notarial seal hereto affixed at Columbia, Mo., this 25th day of January A. D. 1887.

FRANK D. EVANS, Notary Public.

State of Missouri, County of Cooper, ss.
Be it known that on this, the 12th day of January, A. n. 1887, personally came before me, the undersigned, clerk of the Circuit Court of Cooper County, in the State of Missouri, John S. McFarland, well known to me to be a reputable citizen of the city of Boonville, Mo., who, being by me first duly sworn, on his oath says: I have been personally acquainted with Rev. W. D. Mahan for sixteen years or more, and have always found him to be honorable and trustworthy, and a very useful minister in the Church to which he belonged. To my knowledge he was for some time previous to 1883 engaged in preparing himself for a trip to Europe, and that in the fall of 1883 he took leave of his family and friends and started for the cities of Rome and Constantinople to investigate those old records that he said he had found was there on archaeology. After he had been gone some time his wife received a letter from him dated at Rome, Italy. I did not see the postmarks on the letter, but understood it was from Rome. After some months Mr. Mahan returned and brought quite a lot of manuscripts with him, some of which he read to me, and which were very interesting. These are as near the facts in the case as I can remember at this time.

JOHN S. MCFARLAND.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, on this the 12th day of January, 1887.
Witness my hand and official seal,
CHARLES A. HOUR,
Clerk of Circuit Court of Cooper County, Mo.
By H. A. HUTCHINSON.

State of Missouri, County of Cooper, ss.
Be it known that on this 12th day of January, A. D. 1887, personally came before me, the undersigned, clerk of the Circuit Court of Cooper County, in the State of Missouri, R. W. Whitlow and W. G. Pendleton, composing the firm of Whitlow & Pendleton, real estate and loan agents, of the city of Boonville, in said county, who, being by me first duly sworn, on their oaths say: We have known the Rev. W. D. Mahan, of Boonville, Mo., for a period of more than ten years. He came to our office in the fall of 1883 and told us he was going to Rome with a view to collect materials for a book which he intended to write, and that he had not sufficient money to defray the expenses of the trip; at his

request we loaned him two hundred dollars. Shortly afterward Mr. Mahan disappeared from Boonville, and it was a considerable while before we again met him here at Boonville, when he informed us he had made the trip to Rome, Italy, during the time of his disappearance. A letter purporting to have been written by the said Mahan to his wife from Rome, Italy, was published in a newspaper at Boonville, Mo. Soon after Mr. Mahan reappeared at Boonville he published and circulated his book. Of course we did not follow him to see him at Rome, but the foregoing are the facts within our knowledge.

R. E. WHITLOW,
W. G. PENDLETON,
Attorneys-at-Law.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, on this the 12th day of January, 1887.
CHARLES A. Hoes,
Clerk of Circuit Court, Cooper County, Mo.

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