





A
D E F E N C E
O F
M Y U N C L E.



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Translated from the FRENCH of
M. de V O L T A I R E.



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A D V E R T I S E M E N T,

EITHER NECESSARY OR USELESS.

WHEN I took pen in hand to defend, *unguibus & nostro*, the memory of my dear uncle, against an anonymous libel entitled *A Supplement to the Philosophy of History*; I imagined my adversary was neither more nor less than a young dissolute abbé, who, to amuse himself, had entered into a discussion of his Diatribe of the whores of Babylon, the use of boys, incest, and bestiality. But when I got forward in my work with assiduity, and like a worthy nephew, I found that the anonymous libel was wrote by

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the Sieur Larcher, an ancient teacher of the *Belles Lettres* in the college of Mazarine. I therefore most humbly ask his pardon for having imagined him a young man; and I hope he will pardon me for having fulfilled my duty, in listening to the calls of blood, which assailed my heart, and the voice of truth, which commands me to *take pen in hand*.

The objects under consideration are of great importance: they are nothing less than the manners and laws from Pekin down to Rome, and even the adventures of mountains and the ocean. A furious fally upon bishop Warburton is here to be met with;
but

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but the judicious reader will pardon the ardour of my zeal, when he is informed that this bishop is a heretic.

I could have refuted all M. Larcher's errors ; but in that case I must have produced as large a volume as he has done. I shall not insist upon his impiety. It is very mournful for christian eyes to read in his work (p. 298), *that sacred writers may have been mistaken as well as others.* It is true, he adds, to palliate the poison, *with respect to what are not Dogmas.*

But, my friend, there is scarce any thing Dogmatic in the books of the Hebrews ; every thing there is either historical, legal, cantical,

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prophetic, or moral ordonnance. The books of Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Esdras, Macabees, are historical; the Leviticus and Deuteronomy are so many laws; the Psalms are cantics; the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. are prophetic; Wisdom, the Proverbs, the Ecclesiast, the Ecclesiasticus, are moral. Not a single Dogma is to be met with in all these. Even the Ten Commandments cannot be called Dogmas; they are laws. *A Dogma* is a proposition that must be believed. Jesus Christ is consubstantial with God: Mary is the mother of God: Christ has two natures and two wills in one person: The Eucharist is the body and blood of Jesus
fus

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fus Christ, under the appearance of a loaf that no longer exists: these are Dogmas. The Creed, which was made in the time of Jerome and Augustin, is a profession of Dogmas. There are scarce three of these Dogmas in the New Testament. God was pleased, that they should be extracted by the holy church from the shell in which they were inclosed.

See, then, thy blasphemy ! who hast dared to say, that the authors of the sacred books have been liable to error, in all that is not Dogmatic.

Thou doest, then, pretend, that the Holy Ghost, which dictated these

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these books, may have been mistaken, from the first verse of Genesis to the last of the Acts of the Apostles; and after such an impious supposition, thou hast the insolence to accuse the impiety of citizens, whom thou never didst come near, who will not admit thee among them, and who would never have been acquainted with thy existence, if thou hadst not reviled them.

May worthy men unite to impose silence upon those wretches, who, as soon as a good book appears, cry out against impiety, like bedlamites, who from their dark cells cast their ordure upon those who are the best dressed,

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from a secret instinct of jealousy, which still prevails in their delirium.

And you (*pufille grex*) who read this Defence of My Uncle, deign to begin by casting your eyes attentively over the table of contents, and select for your amusement such chapters as are the most to your taste.

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E X O R D I U M.

ONE of our first duties is to assist our father; the second is to aid our uncle. I am nephew to the late abbé Bazing, from whose name an ignorant editor has most barbarously purloined a g, which distinguishes it from the Bazins of Turinge, who furnished Childeric with queen Bazina*, whom he ran away with.

* You are sensible, dear reader, that Bazin was a Celtic name, and that the wife of Bazin must necessarily have been called Bazina; so it is written in history.

B

My

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My uncle was a profound theologian, almoner to the embassy which the emperor Charles VI. sent to Constantinople after the peace of Belgrade. He was perfectly acquainted with Arabic and Coptic. He travelled into Egypt and through all the East, and at length settled at Peterburg, in quality of a Chinese interpreter. My great attachment to truth will not allow me to dissemble, that, notwithstanding his piety, he was sometimes a little addicted to raillery. When M. Guignes made the Chinese descend from the Egyptians; when he supposed that the emperor of China *Yu* was visibly the king of Egypt *Menes*, by changing *nes* into *u*, and *me* into *y* (though *Menes* is not an Egyptian but a Greek name); my uncle then gave way to a little innocent raillery, which however should not have weakened the spirit of charity between two Chinese interpreters; for my uncle really

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really entertained a great esteem for M. Guignes.

The abbé Bazing was passionately fond of truth and his neighbour. He had wrote the Philosophy of History in one of his travels to the East : his great object was to judge from common sense of all the fables of antiquity ; fables, which for the most part were contradictory. Every thing that was not in nature, appeared to him absurd, except what related to faith. He respected St. Matthew as much as he laughed at Ctesias, and sometimes Herodotus ; he moreover had a great respect for the ladies, was a friend to good manners, and a zealous advocate for legislation. Such was the abbé Ambroise Bazing, miscalled, by the errors of typographers, *Bazin*.



C H A P. I.

Of Providence.

HIS ashes have just been troubled by a cruel writer, in a supposed *Supplement to the Philosophy of History*. He has thus entitled his scandalous satire, thinking that the title alone of a Supplement to my uncle's ideas, would secure him readers. But from the thirty-third page of his preface, his perverse design is discovered. He has accused the pious abbé Bazin with having said, that Providence sends famine and pestilence upon earth. What! miscreant, dar'st thou deny it? From whence then arise those scourges which we feel, and the chastisements with which we are punished? Tell me who is master of life and death? Tell me who gave David his choice of pestilence,

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pestilence, war, or famine? Did not God destroy 70,000 Jews in a quarter of an hour? and did he not hereby limit the false policy of Jesse, who fancied himself thoroughly acquainted with the population of his country? Did he not punish with sudden death 50,070 Bethsamites, who dared to look upon the ark? Did not the revolt of Coreus, Dathan, and Abiron, cost 14,700 Israelites their lives, besides 250 who were swallowed up with their chiefs? Did not the extirpating angel descend at the Eternal voice, and with the sword of death, as well to strike at the first-born of all Egypt, as to exterminate the army of Sannakerib? What do I say? Why, there is not a hair that drops from our heads, without the command of the Master of time and things. Providence operates every thing, before whom, whether terrified or benign, we should equally prostrate ourselves;—whether

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triumphant or conquered, happy or miserable, still our duty to Providence is the same. These were my uncle's sentiments ;—the sentiments of all wise men. Unhappy miscreant, who contradicts these great truths in his fatal preface !

CHAP.



C H A P. II.

An apology for the ladies of Babylon.

MY uncle's antagonist begins his strange book by saying,—*These are the reasons that induced me to take pen in hand.*

“Take pen in hand!” my friend; what an expression! My uncle, who had almost forgot his native tongue in his long travels, spoke better French than you.

I shall let you bewilder yourself in abuse about Khamos, Niniva, and Affur. You may deceive yourself as long as you please about the distance between Niniva and Babylon; this has nothing to do with the ladies, for whom my uncle had such profound respect, and whom you so barbarously insult.

You insist upon it, that in the time

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of

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of Herod, all the ladies in the immense city of Babylon came religiously to prostitute themselves to the first comer in the temple, and even for money : and you believe it, because it is related by Herodotus.

How distant was it to my uncle's thoughts, to impute such infamous practices to these ladies ! It would, indeed, be fine to see our princesses, our dutchesses, the chancellor's lady, the first president's wife, and all the ladies of Paris, repair to the church of Notre Dame, and there distribute their favours at a crown a-head to the first water-man, or hackney-coachman, who should have a taste for this august ceremony!

I know that the manners of the *Asiatics* differed from ours ; and this I know better than you, because I accompanied my uncle into *Asia*. But the difference is in this respect, that the eastern nations have always been more rigid than we are. The women in the *East* have

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always been shut up ; or, at least, they never went out without being veiled. The more lively the passions in those countries, the more have the women been constrained. Eunuchs were first thought of to guard them. Jealousy invented the art of mutilating men, to secure the fidelity of women and the innocence of girls. Eunuchs were already very common, at the time the Jews were united in a republic. We find that Samuel, being willing to preserve his authority, and divert the Jews from taking a king, told them that this king would have eunuchs in his service. Can it be credited that in Babylon, where the best police prevailed of any city in the East, men so jealous of their wives, should all send them to prostitute themselves in a temple to the vilest strangers ? that every husband and every father should thus stifle honour and jealousy ? that all the women and girls should trample upon that shame so natural to their

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their sex? That manufacturer of stories Herodotus might amuse the Greeks with this extravagant account; but no sensible man could believe it.

The calumniator of my uncle and the fair sex is desirous the thing should be true; and the greatest reason he gives is, that the Welch sometimes immolated men (probably captives) to their filthy god Teutates. But because Barbarians have sacrificed human blood; because the Jews immolated twelve thousand virgins to the Lord, out of thirty thousand they found in the camp of the Madianites, with sixty-one thousand asses; in fine, because in latter times we have immolated so many Jews in our *Autos de fê*, at Lisbon, Goa; and Madrid; does it follow, that all the handsome Babylonians lay with strange grooms in the cathedral of Babylon? According to the religion of Zoroaster, the women were not allowed to eat with strangers.

Would

Would he have allowed the women to lie with them ?

My uncle's antagonist, who seems to have his reasons for the establishment of this pretty custom in capital cities, calls the prophet Baruch to the succour of Herodotus, and he quotes the sixth chapter of the prophecy of this sublime Baruch. But he does not, perhaps, know that this sixth chapter is of all the book the most evidently apocryphal. It is a supposed letter from Jeremiah to the poor Jews who were led in chains to Babylon : St. Jerom speaks of it with the utmost contempt ; as for me, I despise nothing that is in the books of the Jews ; I know all the respect which is due to that admirable people, who will one day be converted, and be masters of the whole earth.

We find these expressions in this fictitious letter : *In Babylon we see women that have girdles of pack-thread (or ribbons) seated in the streets, and burning
olive*

olive kernels. Passengers chuse amongst them; and she who has been preferred, mocks her neglected companions whose girdles have not been untied.

I will acknowledge, that a fashion somewhat similar is introduced at Madrid, and in the quarter of the Palais Royal at Paris. It is much in vogue in the streets of London; and the *Hops* of Amsterdam are in great reputation.

A general history of brothels might be very curious. The learned have treated this subject only in detached parts. The brothels of Venice and Rome begin to degenerate a little, because all the fine arts are in their wane. They certainly were the finest invention of human sagacity, before Christopher Columbus made a voyage to the Antilles islands. The pox, which Providence had sequestered in those islands, has since overspread all Christendom; and those elegant brothels consecrated to the goddesses Astarte or Decerto, Milita Aphrodise

Aphrodise or Venus, have now lost all their splendor. I believe that my uncle's adversary frequents them still, as the fragments of ancient manners; but this is not a reason for his affirming, that the superb city of Babylon was nothing more than a large brothel; and that by the laws of the country, the women and daughters of the Satrapes were enjoined to wait for passengers in the streets. This is far worse than if we were to say, that the wives and daughters of the burgomasters of Amsterdam were compelled, by the Calvinist religion, to give themselves up in the *Hops* to the Dutch sailors returned from the East Indies. Thus it is that travellers daily mistake an abuse of the laws for the laws themselves; a barbarous custom of the lower class of people for a court fashion. I have often heard my uncle speak very edifyingly upon this subject: he said, that out of a thousand hundred weight
of

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of ancient stories and relations, one could not extract ten ounces of truth.

Observe, if you please, dear reader, the malice of the lecher who so clandestinely scandalizes the memory of my uncle; he adds to the sacred text of Baruch; he falsifies it to establish his brothel in the cathedral of Babylon itself. According to the sacred text of the Apocrypha, Baruch says, in the Vulgate, *Mulieres autem circumdatæ funibus in viis sedent*. Our sacrilegious adversary translates this: *Women with cords tied about them, are seated in the avenues of the temple*. The word *temple* is no where to be found in the text.

Can debauchery be carried to so great a pitch as to make the churches the seats of whoredom?—My uncle's adversary must be a very infamous man.

Had he been willing to justify fornication by great examples, he might have hit upon the famous right of prelibation, inlaying, *jambage*, and *cuisage*, which
the

the lords of some castles had arrogated to themselves in Christendom, in the beginning of the fine feudal government. Barons, bishops, and abbés, became legislators; and ordained, that in all marriages within the precincts of their castles, they should enjoy the first nuptial night. It is difficult to ascertain how far they carried their legislative power; whether they contented themselves with putting only one thigh into the bed of the bride, as when princesses are married by proxy, or whether they put in 'both thighs. But it is well attested, that this right of *cuisage* (thighage), which was at first a right of war, was afterwards sold to the vassals by secular and regular lords, who wisely suggested, that with the money arising from this sale, they could have handsomer girls.

But above all things, observe, dear reader, that a whimsical custom established

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ed on a frontier by some banditti, has nothing in common with the laws of great nations; that the right of *cuisage* was never approved of by our tribunals; and that none of the enemies of my uncle, however carnally inclined, can produce a Babylonian law which ordered all the court ladies to lie with passengers.

CHAP.

dowers : *It shall not be a crime, says he, to be divorced from your wives, provided you have never yet touched them, and you have not yet stipulated their dower ; and if you separate yourselves from them, before you have touched them, and after having settled their dower, you must be obliged to pay them a moiety of their dower, &c. unless the new husband refuses accepting of it.*

“ Kifrom hecbalat doromfet ernam
 “ rabola ifrom tamon erg bemin ouldeg
 “ ebori caramoufen, &c.”

There is not, perhaps, a more sagacious law ; they are abused sometimes among the Turks, as, indeed, every thing is abused. But it may be said in general, that the laws of the Arabs adopted by the Turks, their conquerors, are at least as sensible as the customs of our provinces, which are always contradictory to each other.

My uncle held the Turkish jurisprudence in great esteem. I easily perceiv-
 ed

ed in my voyage to Constantinople, that we are very little acquainted with those people, who are so near us. Our ignorant Monks are incessantly abusing them. They always call their religion *sensual*; yet there is none so mortifying to the senses. A religion that ordains six prayers a day, abstinence from wine, the most rigorous fasts; which forbids all games of chance; which commands each individual to give two and a half per cent. of his revenue to the poor; cannot certainly be a voluptuous religion, and does not flatter, as hath been often said, concupiscence and effeminacy. We imagine here, that every Bashaw has a seraglio of seven hundred wives, three hundred concubines, a certain number of handsome pages, and as many black eunuchs. These are fables worthy of us. We should commit to the flames every thing that has been hitherto said of the Mussulmen. We suppose that they are so many Sardanapalus's, because

they believe only in one god. A learned Turk of my acquaintance, called Nolmig, is now engaged in a history of his country; and it is progressively translated; whereby the public will soon be disabused with respect to all the errors propagated till now, about these faithful believers.

CHAR.



C H A P. IV.

Of the Romans.

HOW chaste was the abbé Bazin ! how modest his commendations ! He says in a passage of his book : *I would as soon believe Dion Cassius, who avers, that the grave senators of Rome proposed a decree, whereby Cæsar, who was fifty-seven years of age, should have the privilege of enjoying as many women as he would.* P. 98.

What is there so extraordinary in such a decree ? cries our brazen censor : he finds this very natural ; he intends even petitioning the parliament to be allowed the same privilege. I should like to know how old he is.—Heavens ! what a man !—Solomon, who had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines, is nothing, compared to him.



C H A P. V.

On Sodomy.

MY ever discreet, ever sagacious uncle, constantly persuaded that laws could never violate manners, thus expresses himself in the Philosophy of History: "I would no more believe Sextus Empiricus, who says that pederasty was ordained amongst the Persians. What a pity! How can we imagine that men would make a law, which, if executed, must have exterminated the human race? On the contrary, pederasty was expressly forbid in the book of Zend; and this we find in the abridgement of the Sadder, where it is said, (p. 9.) *that there is no greater sin.*"

Who would, dear reader, believe that the foe of my family is not contented
with

with having all the women lie with the first comers, but that he should artfully insinuate the love of boys? *The Jesuits*, says he, *have nothing to do with this*. My dear child, my uncle did not talk about the Jesuits. I know that he was at Paris, when the Reverend Father Marfi and the Reverend Father Freron were excommunicated the college of *Louis le Grand*, for their pranks; but this has nothing in common with Sextus Empiricus: this writer doubted of every thing; but no one doubts of the adventures of these Reverend Fathers.

Why thus unseasonably disturb their manes? you say, in your apology for the sin of Sodom. It is true, that Father Marfi is dead; but Father Freron is still alive. Nothing of him but his works are defunct; and when we say, that he is every day *dead drunk*, this is only by way of *catachresis*, or, if you will, by a kind of *metonymy*.

You are pleased to quote the disserta-

tion of the late Mr. Matthew Gefner, under the title of *Socrates sanctus pederastes*, *Socrates the holy pederast**. This, indeed, is intolerable; such a fate may befall you as the late M. Deschatain experienced. The abbé Desfontaines escaped it.

It is somewhat remarkable, that in the history of the human mind, so many *windy* writers should want caution. I have often endeavoured to trace the cause. It appears to me, that the gentlemen of this stamp are, for the most part, arrant flovens, expelled the colleges, and never able to gain admittance to the company of the ladies. These poor wretches, urged by their filthy calls, gratify themselves with their printers-devils who bring them their proofs, or with the shoe-black at the corner of the

* Who can credit it, dear reader? This is printed in the 209th p. of M. Toxotes's book, entitled, *Supplement de la Philosophie de l'Histoire*.

street. This was precisely the case of that Ex-Jesuit Desfontaines, predecessor to the Ex-Jesuit Freron‡.

Art thou not, friend, ashamed to collect all this filth in a Supplement to the Philosophy of History? Is it the history of Sodomy that you are inclinable to write? *There will*, says he, *be occasion to mention this again in another work.* He has recourse to an Assyrian, named Bardezanus, who said, that among the Welch, all the young boys were addicted to this infamous practice. *Para de Gallois oi neoi gamontai.* Shocking! Dare you blend such wickedness with the decent wisdom which my uncle piqued

‡ See the following epigram in the *Antologie Française*:

Un Ramoneur à face bazanée,
Le fer en main, les yeux ceints d'un bandeau,
S'allait glissant dans une cheminée,
Quand de Sodome un antique bedeau,
Vint endosser sa figure inclinée, &c.

himself upon? Dare you thus insult the ladies, and want so much respect for the august Empress of Russia, to whom I dedicated the learned and instructive book of the late abbé Bazin?

CHAP.



C H A P. VI.

On Incest.

MY uncle's cruel adversary is not satisfied with having denied Providence, with adopting the ridiculous fables of Herodotus against right reason, with having falsified Baruch and the Alcoran, with having apologized for Brothels and Sodomy; he would even canonize incest. The abbé Bazin was always convinced that incest in the first degree, that is to say, between father and daughter, mother and son, was never allowed among any polished nations. Paternal authority and filial respect would thereby be too much hurt. Nature, strengthened with a proper education, revolts at it with horror. Among the Jews, a man might marry his sister.

When

When Ammon, the son of David, ravished his sister Thamar, David's daughter, Thamar literally says: *Do not make me commit such follies, for I should endure the scandal, and you would pass for a fool; but ask me of the king my father in marriage, and he will not refuse you.*

This custom is somewhat contrary to Leviticus; but contradictions are often reconciled. The Athenians, the Egyptians, and the Persians, wedded their uterine sisters. This was not allowed among the Romans; they could not even marry their nieces. The emperor Claudius was the only one who could obtain this favour from the senate. Amongst us, who are separated from Barbarians, we may marry a niece with the permission of the Pope, on paying the usual tax, which, I believe, amounts to forty thousand little crowns, including the contingent expences. I always heard, that it cost M. de Montmartel no more than eighty thousand livres. I have
known

known those who have lain with their nieces at a cheaper rate. In fine, the pope has incontestably by divine right, the power of dispensing with all laws. My uncle even thought, that, upon a pressing emergency, his holiness might allow a brother to marry his sister, particularly if it tended to the emolument of the church; for my uncle was a very obedient servant to the pope.

As to the dispensation for wedding a father or mother, he thought it a very embarrassing case; and he doubted, if I may be allowed the expression, whether the divine right of the holy father extended so far. We have not, I think, any example of this kind in modern history.

Ovid, indeed, says in his beautiful *Metamorphoses*:

*Gentes tamen esse feruntur,
In quibus & nato genitrix & nata parenti
Jungitur, & pietas geminato crescit amore.*

Ovid had doubtless in view the Per-
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fian-Babylonians, whom the Romans, their adversaries, accused of this infamous practice.

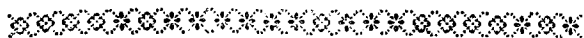
The advocate of the sins of the flesh, who has wrote against my uncle, defies him to produce another passage than that of Catullus. What is the consequence? That only one accuser against the Persians should be found, and therefore they should not be pronounced guilty. But it is sufficient, that one author should have given credit to a false report, for twenty others to be his echoes. The Hungarians, at this hour, reproach the Turks with a thousand things that are not a whit better founded.

Grotius himself, in his tolerably ill written book upon the Christian Religion, goes so far as to quote the fable of Mahomet's pigeon. There is a lust inherent in mankind, to make their enemies odious and ridiculous.

Our adversary has, certainly, not read an extract of the Zenda Vasta of Zo-roaster,

roafter, communicated in Surat to Lordius, by one of thofe Magii, who ftill fubfift. The Ignicoles have always been allowed five wives ; but it is exprefly faid, that they have ever been forbid to marry their coufins. Here is proof pofitive. Tavernier in his fourth book acknowledges, that this truth was confirmed to him by another of the Magii.

Why then fhould our inceftuous antagonift be difpleafed, that the abbé Bazin has defended the ancient Perfians ? Why does he fay, that it was customary for them to lie with their mothers ? What advantage would he reap from this ? Would he introduce this fafhion in our families ? Let him be contented with the good fortunes of Babylon.



C H A P. VII.

On Bestiality, and the Goat of the Sabbath.

MY uncle's barbarous foe was wanting in no sin but bestiality; and he is, at length, convicted of it. The abbé Bazin was deeply read in the history of forcery, from Jannes and Mambres, counsellors to the king, and forcerers at the court of Pharaoh, down to the Reverend Father Gerrard, juridically accused of having possessed Mademoiselle Cadiers of the devil, by blowing upon her. He was perfectly acquainted with all the different gradations through which the Sabbath, and the adoration of the goat, had passed. It is greatly to be lamented that his manuscripts are lost. He says a word upon

on

on these great secrets in the Philosophy of History. *The goat with which it is supposed the forcereffes copulated, sprung from that ancient connection the Jews had with the goats in the desert, with which they are reproached in Leviticus.*

Observe, if you please, the discretion and modesty of my uncle. He does not say that the forcereffes copulated with a goat; he says they were supposed to copulate.

Hereupon my gentleman grows as warm as a Calabrian for his goat, and flying out at random about fornication with animals, quotes away Pindar and Plutarch to prove the ladies of the dynasty of Mendes publicly lay with goats. See how he would justify the Jewish women by the Mendesian women! Where will he carry his insults against the ladies? He is not satisfied with prostituting the princesses of Babylon to muleteers, but he gives the princesses of Mendes

D

goats

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goats for lovers. I expect he will come to the Parisian ladies next.

It is true, and with grief I acknowledge it, that Leviticus reproaches the Jewish ladies who wandered in the desert with this crime. I shall say in their justification, that they could not wash themselves in a country that was entirely destitute of water, and where the inhabitants are still obliged to have it brought them upon camels backs. They could neither change cloaths nor shoes, as they wore the same cloaths forty years successively. They had no shifts; and the goats of the country might very well have taken them for she-goats by their smell. This odoriferous similitude might also, probably, have laid the foundation for a little gallantry between the two species. My uncle is of opinion, that this happened very rarely in the desert, as he had proved that such connections occur extremely seldom, notwithstanding what has been said to the contrary. But it appeared

peared to him very evident, indeed, that some Jewish ladies had been guilty of this sin. What is said in Leviticus removes all manner of doubt. They would not have been reproached with amorous intrigues, had they not been guilty of them. *And let them offer no more to the hairy creatures, with which they have fornicated.* Lev. chap. xvii. *Women shall not commit fornication with beasts.* Chap. xix. *The woman who has served as a succubus to a beast, shall be punished with the beast, and their blood shall fall again upon them.* Chap. 20.

This remarkable expression, *their blood shall fall again upon them*, evidently proves, that beasts were thought then to have some intelligence. The serpent and the she-as had not only spoke, but God, after the deluge, had made a-part an alliance with the beasts. Hence it is that very illustrious commentators think, that the punishment of beasts which had overcome women, is very

analogous with all that is said of beasts in the holy scripture. They were susceptible of good and evil. As to the *hairy creatures*, it is believed in all the East that they were monkies. But it is certain, that the people of the East are deceived in this; for there are no monkies in the deserts of Arabia. They are too cunning to come into a barren country, whither provisions must be brought from a great distance. By *hairy creatures* we can, therefore, understand nothing but he-goats.

It is certain, that the cohabitation of forcereffes with he-goats; the custom of kissing their posteriors, which has become a proverb; the circular dance round the goat; the little flaps given him with vervain; and all the ceremony of these orgia came from the Jews, who borrowed them of the Egyptians, for the Jews never invented any thing.

I am in possession of a Jewish manuscript, which I believe is upwards of
two

two thousand years old; it appears to me, that the original must be dated from the time of the first or second Ptolomy; it is a detail of all the ceremonies of the adoration of the goat; and it was probably from a copy of this work, that those who were addicted to magic, have composed what is called the Grimoire, or Conjuring-book. A grandee of Spain offered me a hundred louis d'ors for it, but I would not have let him had it for two hundred. In this work the he-goat is constantly called the *hairy creature*. It would easily refute all the hypercriticisms of my uncle's antagonist,

In a word, I am glad to inform the most remote posterity, that a very learned man, having in this chapter found that Mr. ——— was convicted of *bestiality*, wrote on the margin, Read *Betise*, (brutal-stupidity).



C H A P. VIII.

Of Abraham and Ninon L'Enclos.

THE abbé Bazin was convinced with Onkelos, and all the eastern Jews, that Abraham was about 135 years of age when he left Chaldea. It is of little consequence to know the precise age of the father of the believers. When God shall judge us all in the valley of Jehoshaphat, he will not, probably, punish us for having been bad chronologists, like my uncle's reviler. He will be punished for his vanity, insolence, brutality, and calumny, and not for being deficient of common sense, and having tired the ladies.

It is very true, that it is said in Genesis, that Abraham came out of Aran in Mesopotamia in the 75th year of his age,
after

after the death of his father Thareus the potter. But it is also said in Genesis, that Thareus having begot him at 70 years of age, lived till 205; it is therefore necessary, that one of these passages should be explained by the other. If Abraham came out of Chaldea after the death of Thareus, when he was 205 years old, it is evident, that Abraham was just ~~7~~35 years old when he set out upon his travels.

Our dull antagonist proposes another system to avoid the difficulty; he calls Philo the Jew to his aid; and he thinks to ring the changes upon my dear readers, in saying, that the city of Aran is the same as Carres. I am very certain of the contrary, and I have verified it upon the spot. But I beg to know, what connection has the city of Carres with the age of Abraham and Sarah?

My uncle has been again asked, how

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could Abraham, after leaving Mesopotamia, make himself heard at Memphis? My uncle answered, that he knew nothing of the matter; that he did not trouble himself about it; that he believed all that was in the holy scripture, without endeavouring to explain it; and that it was the business of the gentlemen of the Sorbonne, who are never mistaken.

What is of much more consequence, is the impiety with which our mortal foe compares Sarah, the wife of the father of the believers, with the famous Ninon L'Enclos. He asks how it could come to pass, that Sarah being 75 years old, going from Sichem to Memphis upon her ass in search of corn, should captivate the heart of the king of superb Egypt, and should afterwards make the same impresson upon the little king of Gerar in the desert of Arabia? He answers this difficulty by the example of Ninon. *We know, says he, that at 80*
years

years of age Ninon was capable of inspiring the abbé Gedoin with such sentiments as seem only compatible with youth or the age of virility. You must own, dear reader, that this is a very pleasant manner of explaining holy writ; he has a mind to divert himself, and fancies he has hit upon the *bon ton*. He wants to imitate my uncle; but when a certain animal with long ears wants to give his paw like a lap-dog, you know in what manner he is treated.

He is equally mistaken in regard to modern history, as he is with respect to ancient. No one is more capable of giving an account of the latter years of Mademoiselle L'Enclos than myself, and which in no respect resembled those of Sarah. I am her legatee. I saw her in her latter days, and she was as dry as a mummy. It is true, that the abbé Gedoin was presented to her, just upon his quitting the Jesuits college; but not for the same reasons as Desfontaines and Freron

Freron retired from it. I sometimes accompanied the abbé in his visits to her, when he had no other lodging but my house. He was far from being susceptible of any desires for a decrepid wrinkled beldame, whose bones were covered with only a yellow skin, that bordered somewhat upon black.

This extravagance was not imputed to the abbé de Gedoin, but to the abbé de Chateauneuf, brother to him who had been embassador at Constantinople. Chateauneuf had indeed conceived a desire of lying with her 20 years before. She was still tolerably handsome at 60. She smiling gave him a rendezvous for a certain day of the month. And why do you fix on that day particularly? said the abbé Chateauneuf. - Because, said she, I shall then be 60 years old. This is the truth of this story, which has been so industriously propagated, and which the abbé de Chateauneuf, my god-father, to whom I am indebted for being a christian,

christian, often related to me in my infancy, to form my mind and properly dispose my heart; but Mademoiselle L'Enclos did not expect to be one day compared to Sarah, in a libel against my uncle.

Though Abraham did not put me in his will, and Ninon L'Enclos thought proper to notice me in her's, I shall nevertheless leave her here for the father of the believers. I am necessitated to acquaint the abbé Tou——, my uncle's calumniator, with the sentiments of all the Guebrians whom I met with in my travels. They call him *Ebrahim*, and give him the surname of *Zerateukt*, that is, our Zoroaster. It is certain, that there are dispersed Guebrians, who were never blended with other nations, governed in Asia before the settlement of the Jewish clan; and that Abraham came from Chaldea, as it is so said in the Pentateuch. The abbé Bazin fathomed

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fathomed this matter to its depth. He often said to me, Nephew, we are not sufficiently acquainted with the Guebrians, nor with *Ebrahim*; let me advise you to read with attention the *Zenda Vesta*, and the *Vedam*.

CHAP.



C H A P. IX.

Of Thebes, Bossuet, and Rollin.

MY uncle, as I have before said, was fond of the marvellous and fiction in poetry; but he detested it in history; he could not bear that fabulous story-tellers should be ranked with a Tacitus, a Gregory de Tours, or a Rabin de Toiras. He was in his youth seduced by the brilliant style of Bossuet's Discourse upon Universal History. But when he had studied a little history and men, he found that most authors were only desirous of printing agreeable lies, and to astonish their readers with incredible adventures. Every thing was wrote upon the plan of Amadis. My uncle laughed when he saw Rollin copy Bossuet word for word, and Bossuet copy

the ancients, who relate, that ten thousand warriors sallied out from each of the hundred gates of Thebes, besides two hundred armed chariots from each gate, which would amount to a million of soldiers in a single city, without reckoning the drivers and warriors in the chariots, who must have been four thousand men more, reckoning only two persons to each chariot.

It was very justly observed by my uncle, that this city of Thebes must have contained five or six million of inhabitants, to furnish such a number of warriors : he knew that there are not at present above three millions of inhabitants in Egypt ; he knew that Diodorus of Sicily did not allow any more in his time ; so that he diminished greatly all the exaggerations of antiquity.

He doubted the existence of one Sesostris, who set out from Egypt to conquer the whole world with six thousand men and twenty-seven thousand warlike chariots.

chariots. Such a story he thought worthy of *Picrocole* in Rabelais. The preparations made for this conquest of the whole world appeared to him still more ridiculous. The father of Sesostris had destined his son for this fine expedition upon the faith of a dream; for at that time dreams were certain instructions sent from heaven, and the foundation of all undertakings. The good man, whose name is not even mentioned, thought proper to dispose of all the children born on the same day as his son, to assist him in the conquest of the earth, and become so many heroes. He did not allow them to breakfast till they had run eighty furlongs at one breath: this is a good race in a boggy country where people sink to the middle of their legs at every pace, and where almost all correspondence is carried on by boats upon the canals.

What says my uncle's contemptible critic? Instead of feeling all the ridicule
of

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of this story, he enters into a comparative computation of the great and little stadium, and thinks he has proved that the little boys destined to conquer the world ran only one half, three of our great leagues, before breakfast.

It is, indeed, necessary to know precisely whether Sefostris reckoned according to the great or little stadium; he who never heard such a word mentioned, it being a Grecian measure. Thus ridiculous are scholiasts and commentators; he confines himself to the arbitrary explanation of an useless word, and forgets the ground-work of the argument. The point in question is to undeceive men with regard to fables in which they have been nursed for so many years. My uncle weighs probabilities in the scale of reason; he makes his readers judge by the criterion of good sense, and yet the great and little stadium are brought into play.

I will again acknowledge, that my
uncle

uncle raised his shoulders when he read in Rollin, that Xerxes had given the sea three hundred lashes with a whip; that he had thrown into the Hellespont a pair of fetters to manacle that sea; that he had wrote a threatening letter to mount Athos; and, in fine, that when he arrived at the pass of Thermopylæ, too narrow for two men to go a-breast, he was followed by 5,280,220 persons, according to the veridical and exact Herodotus.

When he read these tales of Mother-goose, he always said, *Not so fast, not so fast*. He said Herodotus was in the right to amuse and flatter the Greeks with those romances, and Rollin was to blame not to reduce them to their just value in writing, for Frenchmen of the eighteenth century.



C H A P. X.

Of the priests, or prophets, or schoen of Egypt.

YES, Barbarian, the priests of Egypt were called *Schoen*, and they are called by no other name in Genesis ; and this name is rendered by the Vulgate *Sacerdos*. But what signify names ? If thou hadst known how to profit by the Philosophy of my uncle, thou wouldst have sought for the functions of these *schoen*, their sciences, their impostures ; thou wouldst have endeavoured to learn whether a *schoen* was always in Egypt a man of constituted dignity, as is with us a bishop, and even an arch-deacon ; or whether sometimes the title of *schoen* was arrogated, like that of abbé among us ; whether a *schoen*, on account of
having

having been preceptor to a great lord, and nourished in his house, had a right to attack, with impunity, the living and the dead, and to write, without any kind of sense, against the Egyptians, who were reputed to have some.

I do not doubt but there have been very learned men among the schoen; for instance, those who made a trial of miracles with Moses, who changed all the waters of Egypt into blood, who covered all the country with frogs, who went so far as to create lice, but who could not get rid of them; for in the Hebrew text we find, *they did so, but they could not drive away the lice.* The Vulgate treats them still more severely; for it is there said, they could not even produce lice.

I know not whether thou art a schoen, and if thou canst work such curious miracles; for it is said, thou art deeply initiated in the mysteries of the schcen of St. Medard; but I should always prefer

a gentle, modest, decent schoen, to a schoen who injures his neighbour ; to a schoen who quotes falsely, and reasons upon his quotation ; to a schoen who is so scandalous as to say, the abbé Bazin was but little conversant with Greek, because his printer omitted a sigma, and put *oi* for *ei*.

Ah ! my son, when calumny against the dead is carried to this pitch, nothing can atone for it but penance the rest of one's days.

CHAP.



C H A P. XI.

Of the temple of Tyre.

I Shall pass over in silence an infinite number of trifling errors committed by the schoen so enraged at my uncle; but I beg, dear reader, that I may be allowed to observe to you, how evil-minded he is. The abbé Bazin had said, that the temple of Hercules at Tyre, was not one of the most ancient temples. The young ladies, who warm from the comic opera, sing at supper Mr. Collet's pretty airs; the young officers, and even the counsellors of the grand chamber, with Messieurs the Farmers-general, and all what is called good company at Paris, are, perhaps, very little solicitous to know in what year the temple of Hercules was built. My uncle knew it.

His implacable persecutor goes no farther than saying, that it was as old as the city. This is no answer ; he should have told us in what year the city was built. This is a very important object to the present state of Europe. These are the words of the abbé Bazin :

“ It is said in the annals of China, that the first emperors sacrificed in a temple. That of Hercules at Tyre does not seem to be the most ancient. Hercules was never considered by any people but as a second rate divinity ; nevertheless, the temple of Tyre is much older than that of Judea. Hiram had a very magnificent one, when Solomon, with Hiram’s assistance, built his own. Herodotus, who travelled among the Tyrians, says, that in his time, according to the archives of Tyre, this temple had been built only 2,300 years.”

Hence it is evident, that the temple of Tyre was antecedent to that of Solomon

mon

mon only about a dozen years. This cannot be called very remote antiquity, as all wise men must agree. Alas! all our antiquities are little more than yesterday: it is but 4,600 years since a temple was erected at Tyre. You are sensible, friendly reader, what a trifling affair 4,600 years is in the whole revolution of ages, what a trifling affair we are, and particularly how trifling an affair is an imperious pedant.

As to the divine Hercules, god of Tyre, who deflowered fifty damsels in one night, my uncle calls him a second rate god. Not that he could have met with any other god of the Gentiles that could have done more, but he had very good reasons for believing, that all the gods of antiquity, even those who were *majorum gentium*, were only second rate gods, over whom presided the God who formed and presided over the universe, the *Deus optimus* of the Romans, the *Knef* of the Egyptians, the *Jabo* of the Phenicians,

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Phenicians, the *Mitra* of the Babylonians, the *Zeus* of the Greeks, master of the gods and men, the *Jezad* of the ancient Persians. My uncle, who was an adorer of the Divinity, was well pleased to see the universe adore one only God, notwithstanding the abominable superstition wherein all the ancient nations, except the Chinese, were immersed.

CHAP.



C H A P. XII.

Of the Chinese.

WHENCE arises this implacable fury of our adversary against the Chinese, and all the sensible people of Europe, who do justice to them? The Barbarian does not hesitate saying, that *little philosophers only allow such a remote antiquity to China, to invalidate the scripture.*

What! was it to invalidate the scripture, that the archbishop of Navarette, Gonzales de Mendoza, Hemmingius, Louis de Gusman, Semmedo, and all the missionaries, without a single exception, agree in shewing, that the Chinese must have been united in a body as a people for upwards of 5000 years? What! was it to insult the christian religion, that

that latterly father Paremin so evidently refuted the chimera of a supposed colony sent from Egypt to China? Shall we never be tired at the extremity of our western lands, to dispute with the people of the East their titles, arts, and customs? My uncle was much irritated at this kind of absurd temerity. But how shall we reconcile the Hebrew text with the Samaritan? In faith, said my uncle, just as well as you can; but do not ridicule the Chinese; let them remain in peace as they do you.

Listen then, cruel foe, to my uncle; answer, if thou canst, the argument which he so vigorously maintained in his pamphlet of eight volumes, upon general history. My uncle was as learned as thou art; but he was better learned, as Montagne has it; or if thou wilt, he was as ignorant as thou art, (for, in fact, what do we know?) but he reasoned, he did not compile. Here is a specimen of his powerful reasoning, in the first
 volume

volume of that Essay upon History, where he ridicules many histories.

“ After all, of what consequence is it whether those histories always comprehend an exact chronology? I am willing that we should be ignorant of the precise period in which Charlemain lived, as long as it is certain, that he made vast conquests with great armies: it is certain, that he must have been born in a populous nation, formed into a body of people by a long succession of ages. Wherefore, then, as the Emperor Hiao, who incontestably lived upwards of 2,400 years before our æra, conquered all the country of the Corea, it cannot be doubted that his people were of the most remote antiquity. Moreover, the Chinese invented a cycle, a computation which begins 2,602 years before our own. Is it for us to dispute with them a chronology universally received among them; for us, who have sixty different systems to reckon

reckon ancient times, and therefore have not a single one ?

“ Men do not multiply so easily as is imagined. One third of the children born, die before they attain their tenth year. The calculators upon the propagation of the human species have observed, that favourable circumstances must occur for a nation to increase one twentieth part in a century ; and it frequently happens, that the people diminish instead of increase. Learned chronologists have calculated, that a single family, after the deluge, being constantly employed in population, and their children pursuing the same vocation, there were, at the end of 250 years, more inhabitants than now cover the earth. The Talmud and the Thousand and One Nights fall far short of such absurdity. Children are not thus begot with the stroke of a pen. Observe our colonies, observe the immense archipelagos of Asia, which produce no emigrants ; the Maldivia, the

Philippine and Molucca islands, have not a sufficient number of inhabitants. All this is a fresh proof of the very remote antiquity of the population of China."

No answer can be given to this, my friend.

Again, my uncle reasoned in this manner: "Abraham went into Egypt with his wife to fetch corn in the year said to be the 1917th before our æra, which makes just 3714 years, being 428 years after the universal deluge. He goes to find the king of Egypt; he meets with kings every where, at Sodom, Gomorrah, Gerar, Salem; Babel was already built 314 years before Abraham's journey into Egypt. Now, as there were so many kings, and as such fine towers were erected, it is evident, that many centuries must have elapsed." This is what the abbé Bazin stuck to, and he left the reader to draw his conclusions.

What

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What a discreet man was the abbé Bazin ! likewise had he lived familiarly with Jerome Clarre, Guillaume Vade, the late Mr. Ralph, the author of *Candide*, and several other great personages of this century. Tell me who are thy companions, and I will tell thee who thou art.

CHAP.



C H A P. XIII.

Of India and of the Vedam.

THE abbé Bazin, before his death, sent to the king's library the most precious manuscript to be met with in all the East. It is an ancient commentary of a Bramin named *Shumonton*, upon the *Vedam*, which was the sacred book of the ancient Brachmans. This manuscript was incontestably written at the time when the ancient religion of the Gymnosophists began to be corrupted: it is, after our holy books, the most respectable monument of the belief of the Unity of God; it is entitled, *Exour Vedam*, that is to say, *the true Vedam, the Vedam explained, the pure Vedam*. There can be no doubt of its having been written before Alexander's expedition to India,

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dia, as long before Alexander, the ancient Bramin or Abramim religion had been corrupted by superstition and fables. These superstitions had even penetrated into China, in the time of Confucius, who lived about 300 years before Alexander. The author of the *Ezour Vedam* combats all these superstitions, which began to appear in his time. Now, a great number of years must have been necessary for their making their way into India and China; wherefore, when we suppose that this scarce manuscript was written about 400 years before the conquest of one part of India by Alexander, we are not very distant from the truth.

Shumonton opposes every kind of idolatry, with which the Indians then began to be infected; and what is very important is, that he repeats the very words of the *Vedam*, of which no man in Europe was before acquainted with a single passage. These then are the expressions
of

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of the Vedam, attributed to Brama, and quoted in the *Ezour Vedam*. *It is the Supreme Being that has created every thing, the sensible and the insensible. There have been four different ages; every thing perishes at the end of each age; every thing is overflowed, and the deluge is a passage from one age to another, &c.*

When God existed alone, and no other being existed with him, he formed the design of creating the world. He at first created time, then water and earth; and by the mixture of the five elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air, and light, he formed the different bodies, and gave them earth for their basis. He made this globe we inhabit in an oval form like an egg. In the center of the earth is the highest of all mountains, named Merou (Imaiis). Adimo (which was the name of the first man) came out of the hands of God. Pocriti was the name of his wife. Of Adimo was born Brama, who was the legislator of nations, and the father of the Bramins.

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A proof equally forcible, that this book was written long before Alexander is, that the names of the rivers and mountains of India, are the same as in the *Hanscrit*, which is the sacred language of the Bramins. We do not find in the *Ezour Vedam*, one single name that the Greeks gave to the countries they conquered. India is called *Samboudipo*, the Ganges *Zauoubi*, mount Imaüs, *Merou*, &c.

Our antagonist, jealous of the service the abbé Bazin has done to letters, to religion, and his country, leagues with the most implacable enemy of our dear country, our letters, and our religion, Doctor Warburton (become, I know not how, bishop of Gloucester) the commentator of Shakespear, and author of a deal of lumber against the immortality of the soul, under the name of the Divine Legation of Moses. He quotes an objection of this brave heretical priest against the opinion of the abbé Bazin, who was a
good

good catholic, and against conviction, that the *Ezour Vedam* was written before Alexander. Here is the bishop's objection.

“ This is as judicious as it would be to observe, that the annals of the Saracens and the Turks were written before the conquests of Alexander; because we do not there find the names which the Greeks gave to rivers, cities, and countries, which they conquered in Asia Minor; and that we only there read the ancient names they bore from primitive times. It never entered into the head of this poet, that the Indians and the Arabs could have exactly the same desire to give the primitive names to those places from whence the Greeks had been driven.”

Warburton knows as little of probability, as he does of politeness. The Turks and the modern Greeks are still ignorant of the ancient names of the country which they inhabit as conquerors,

querors, the others as slaves. Were we to discover an ancient Greek manuscript, in which *Stamboul* was called Constantinople, the *Almeïdam* Hippodroma, *Scutari* the suburbs of Caledonia, the Cape of *Janissari* the Promontory of Sigea, *Cara Deugoes* the Euxine Sea, &c. we should conclude, that this manuscript was of an anterior date to Mahomet II. and we should judge this manuscript to be very ancient, if it contained only the dogmas of the primitive church.

It is therefore very probable, that the Brachman who wrote in the *Samboudipo*, that is in India, wrote before Alexander, who gave another name to the *Samboudipo*; and this probability becomes a certainty, as this Brachman wrote in the time of the first corruption of his religion, an epocha evidently antecedent to the expedition of Alexander.

Warburton, some of whose errors the abbé Bazin had corrected with his usual circumspection, has taken his revenge with
all

all the acrimony of pedantry. He has imagined, according to ancient custom, that doing injuries was reasoning; and he has pursued the abbé Bazin with such fury, as hath made all England reproach him with it. It is only necessary to apply to an ^{*}old member of the English parliament who has taken up his residence at Paris, to be acquainted with the character of bishop Warburton, the commentator of Shakespear, and the calumniator of Moses: a proper judgment will then be formed of this man; and we shall learn how the men of letters in England, and particularly the celebrated bishop Lowth, have suppressed his pride, and confounded his errors.



C H A P. XIV.

That the Jews hated all Nations.

THE author of the Supplement to the Philosophy of History thinks to confound the abbé Bazin, in repeating the atrocious injuries penned by Warburton against him, with respect to the Jews. My uncle was connected with the most learned Jews of Asia. They acknowledged to him, that their ancestors were commanded to look upon all nations with horror; and, in fact, amongst all the historians that have spoken of them, there is not one who has differed with respect to this truth; and indeed, let us take ever so cursory a view of the books of their laws, you will find, as in the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, *he has conducted you with his great power, to*
exter-

exterminate at your entrance very great nations.

Chapter VII. *He will, by degrees, consume the nations before you; you cannot exterminate them altogether, lest the beasts of the earth should multiply too fast.*

They will put their kings into your hands. You will destroy even their name; nothing can resist you.

We might meet with above a hundred passages that pointed out this abhorrence expressed against the people they were acquainted with; they were not allowed to eat with Egyptians, in the like manner as the Egyptians were forbid to eat with them. A Jew was defiled, and would be to this day, if he had touched a sheep killed by a stranger; if he had made use of a stranger's kettle. It is therefore indubitable, that they were necessarily by their law, the enemies of the human race. According to Genesis indeed, all nations are descended from one common father. The Persians, the Pheni-

cians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Indians, came from Noah as well as the Jews ; but what doth this prove, except it be that the Jews hated their brothers ? The English are also the brothers of the French. Does this consanguinity prevent Warburton from hating us ? He even hates his fellow-countrymen, who do him service.

He may, if he please, say that the Jews hated only the idolatry of other nations ; he does not absolutely know what he says. The Persians were not idolaters, and they were the object of the Jews hatred. The Persians adored one sole God, and had at that time no images. The Jews adored one only God, and had images ; twelve oxen in the temple, and two cherubims in the Sanctum Sanctorum. They were to look upon all their neighbours as their enemies, as they had been foretold, that they would govern from one sea to the other, and from the banks of the Nile to those of the

Eu-

Euphrates. This extent of ground would have composed an immense empire. Their law, by which they were promised this empire, necessarily rendered them the enemies of all the people who inhabited from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean. Their extreme ignorance did not allow them to be acquainted with any other nations ; and detesting all whom they knew, they thought they detested the whole earth.

This is the exact truth. Warburton pretends to say, that the abbé Bazin expressed himself in this manner, because a Jew, who he says was a great gossip, formerly broke in the abbé Bazin's debt. It is true, that my uncle was a great sufferer by the failure of the Jew Médina ; but does this prevent Joshua's having hanged thirty-one kings, according to the holy scripture ? I ask Warburton, whether we love the people we hang ? *Hang him.*



C H A P. XV.

Of Warburton.

CONTRADICT a man who reckons himself learned, and you may be sure of drawing upon yourself volumes of abuse. When my uncle heard that Warburton, after having commented upon Shakespear, was commenting upon Moses, and that he had already produced two large volumes to prove that the Jews, instructed by God himself, had no idea either of the immortality of the soul, nor of a judgment after death; this appeared to him a monstrous enterprize, as it did, indeed, to every timorous conscience in England. He wrote his sentiments to Mr. S. with his usual moderation. Mr. S.'s answer was as follows:

“ S I R,

“ S I R,

“ ’Tis an undertaking wonderfully scandalous in a priest, to endeavour to destroy the most ancient and most useful opinion to men. It would have been much better for Warburton to have commented upon the Beggar’s Opera, after being a very bad commentator of Shakespear, than to patch together so much undigested and erroneous learning to destroy religion. For, after all, our holy religion is founded upon that of the Jews. If God left the people of the Old Testament ignorant of the immortality of the soul, and of rewards and punishments after death, he has deceived his beloved people: the Jewish religion is then false; the Christian, which is founded upon the Jewish, has then nothing for its support but a rotten trunk. What is the drift of this daring man? I do not know. He flatters the ministry; and if he obtains a bishopric, he will become a christian; if he does not obtain it, I know not what he

he will be. He has already written two large volumes upon the legation of Moses, in which he has not said one syllable about his subject. This is like the chapter of the boots, in which Montagne treats of every thing except the boots; it is a chaos of quotations, which afford no sort of illustration. He was sensible of the danger of his audacity, and he was willing to hide it in the obscurity of his stile. He shews himself a little more openly in his third volume: here it is that he heaps together all the passages that favour his impiety, and he lays aside all those that support the common opinion. He has recourse to Job, who was no Hebrew, for this equivocal passage: *As the cloud is dissipated and vanishes, so is man in the grave, who never returns.* And this idle discourse of a poor woman to David: *We must die; we are like water spread over the earth, which can no more be collected together.* And these verses of the eighty-eighth Psalm: *The dead cannot remember*

remember thee. Who can do you friendly services in the tomb? What will become of my blood when I am put into the grave? Will the dust make vows to it? Will it declare to it the truth? Wilt thou shew thy miracles to the dead? Will the dead rise? Wilt thou have prayers from them? The book of Ecclesiastes (he says, p. 170) is still more positive. *The living know they are to die, but the dead know nothing; there is no recompence for them, their memory perishes for ever.*

“ Thus he lays Ezechias, Jeremiah, and all that can favour his system under contribution.

“ This passion for propagating the fatal dogma of the mortality of the soul, has united all the clergy against him. He trembled to think his patron, who thinks like himself, had not sufficient interest to make him a bishop. What was his next step? To abuse all philosophers. *Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?* He raised, with one hand, the standard of

fanaticism, whilst with the other he displayed that of irreligion. By this means he dazzled the court; and whilst he really teaches the mortality of the soul, feigning afterwards to admit the immortality, he will probably have the bishopric he desires. With you every road leads to Rome; and with us, every road leads to a bishopric."

This is what Mr. S. wrote in 1758, and all that he foretold has happened. Warburton enjoys a good bishopric, and insults philosophers. Lowth has pulverised his book; but this has not diminished his audacity, for he endeavours even to persecute; and if he could, he would imitate Peachum, in the Beggar's Opera, who has great pleasure in hanging his accomplices. Most hypocrites, like cats, offer a velvet paw, and hide their claws; but he shews his in boldly raising his head; he has openly been an informer, and he would be a persecutor.

The English philosophers reproach him with his extreme bad faith and pride;
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the English church looks upon him as a dangerous man; men of letters, as a writer without taste or method, who can only heap quotation upon quotation; politicians, as a disturber of the peace, who, if he could, would revive the star-chamber. But he laughs at all this, *and writes about it, goddes, and about it.*

Warburton will, perhaps, answer me, and say, he has only followed the opinion of my uncle, and of several other learned men, who have all acknowledged, that the immortality of the soul is not expressly mentioned in the Judaical law. This is true, which none but the ignorant doubt of, and which none but men of bad faith pretend to doubt of; but the pious Bazin said, that this doctrine, without which there is no religion, not being explained in the Old Testament, should be understood; that it is there virtually expressed; and if we do not meet with it *totidem verbis*, it is *totidem literis*; or, in fine, if it be not there at all, it is not for a bishop to say so.

But

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But my uncle always has maintained that God is good ; that he had given intelligence to those whom he has favoured, and removed our ignorance : he never endeavoured to persecute any one ; on the contrary, he has written against intolerance the most decent, the most circumspect, the most christian, and the most pious book that hath been produced since the time of Thomas à Kempir. My uncle, though somewhat disposed to raillery, was kneaded with softness and indulgence. He wrote several theatrical pieces in his youth, whilst Warburton was only capable of being the commentator of comedy. When any of my uncle's pieces were hissed, he hissed with the audience. If Warburton has printed William Shakespear with notes, abbé Bazin has likewise printed Peter Corneille with notes. If Warburton governs one church, the abbé Bazin has built another, which does not indeed vie with the magnificence of M. le Franc Pompignan, but is nevertheless very neat. In a word, I shall always be on my uncle's side.



C H A P. XVI.

Conclusion of the preceding chapters.

EVERY body knows the judicious reply of a coachman to a waterman, “If you say that my coach is a rascal, I say your boat is a villain.” The waterman who wrote against my uncle, has found in me a coachman who drives him at a great rate. These are some of those literary complaints, of which too many examples cannot be given, in order to train youth to politeness, and the *bon-ton*. But I prefer Montaigne’s apothegm, *Do not consider who is the most learned, but who is the best learned*, to this coachman’s smart repartee. Science does not consist in repeating by chance what others have said; to stitch a Hebrew passage, which one does not understand, to a Greek passage

G page

page but little understood; to give in a new 12mo, what we found in a folio; to cry out,

*Nous redigeons au long de point en point
Ce qu'on pensa, mais nous ne pensons point*.*

The real learned man is he who has trained his mind only by good books, and has been able to contemn bad authors; who knows how to distinguish truth from falsehood, and probability from chimera; who judges of a people more by their manners than their laws, because the laws may be good, and the manners bad. He does not support an incredible fact by the authority of an ancient writer. He may, if he will, set forth the little faith that is due to this author, by the interest he had, and the taste of his country for the fabulous: he may even prove, that this author is only an imaginary being. But what determines

* “ We revise and correct every punctum and comma in others thoughts; but we do not trouble ourselves to think.”

him

him the most, is when the book is full of extravagance; he then rejects it, and considers it with contempt, let it have been written at what time, or by whomsoever.

If he finds in Titus Livius, that an Augur cut a flint with a razor, in the presence of a stranger named Lucumon, become king of Rome; he will say, that Titus Livius has either written nonsense, or Lucumon Tarquin and the Augur were two knaves, who imposed upon the people, in order to govern them more easily. In a word, the fool copies, the pedant quotes, and the man of learning judges.

M. Toxotes, who copies and quotes, but is incapable of judging; who can utter nothing but the insults of a waterman, against a man whom he never saw; hath, then, had to do with a coachman, who gives him the proper chastisement of the whip which he deserved; and the lash has sprinkled Warburton with blood.

The only chagrin I feel upon this occasion, is, nobody will read the *Diatribes* of M. Toxotes*, very few will read the answer of the abbé Bazin's nephew : the subject is, nevertheless, interesting, as it relates to nothing less than the ladies and little boys of Babylon, the goats of Mendes, Warburton and the immortality of the soul. But all these objects are exhausted. There are so many books, that reading is out of fashion. I compute, that there are at least twenty thousand sheets a month printed in Europe. I, though a great reader, do not read the fortieth part; how much, then, does the rest of mankind read? I wish from the bottom of my heart, that the conclave of cardinals would return me thanks, for having anathematized an English bishop; that the Empress of Russia, the King of Poland, the King of Prussia, the Hospodar of Vala-

* Toxotes is a Greek word, that signifies a bailiff's follower.

chia, and the Grand Vizir, paid me some compliments upon my pious tenderneſs towards my uncle, who was well known to them. But they will not ſay a ſyllable to me about it, unleſs they are acquainted with my quarrel. I may continue proteſting in the face of the whole world, that M. Toxotes does not know what he is talking about; but I ſhall be aſked, who is M. Toxotes? and then nobody attends to me. I obſerve in the bitterneſs of my heart, that all literary diſputes have a like fate. The world has become quite lukewarm; a piece of nonſenſe can no longer be celebrated; it is ſtified the next day by a hundred other nonſenſical productions, which are obliged to make way, in turn, for others. The Jeſuits are happy; they will be long ſpoken of from Rochelle to Macao. *Vanitas vanitatum.*



C H A P. XVII.

Upon Warburton's modesty, and his Antimosaical system.

THE nature of man is so weak, and there are so many pursuits in life, that in speaking of this dear Warburton, I have forgot to observe, how pernicious this bishop would be to the christian religion, and indeed to all religion, if my uncle had not opposed his boldness with so much vigour.

*The ancient sages, says Warburton *, thought it legal and useful to the public to speak the contrary of what they thought.*

† *Utility, and not truth, was the intent of religion.*

A whole chapter is taken up to strengthen this system, by all the examples which he can collect.

* Vol. ii. p. 89.

† Vol. i. p. 87.

Observe,

Observe, that in order to prove that the Jews were a nation instructed by God himself, he says, that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and of a judgment after death, is absolutely necessary, and that the Jews were ignorant of it. *All mankind, says he, and specially the most learned nations, and the greatest sages of antiquity, are agreed in this principle**.

What horror, and what mistakes, dear reader, are there in these few words, which are the subject of this book ! If the whole universe, and particularly the wisest and most learned nations, believed in the immortality of the soul ; the Jews, who did not believe it, must then have been only a savage insensible people, not guided by God. How horrid this is for a priest, who insults poor laymen ! Alas ! what would he not have said against a layman, who advanced the same proposition ; but it is, nevertheless, erroneous. For, at

* P. 91.

the time when the Jews were nothing but an itinerant crew, wandering in the deserts of Arabia, it cannot be proved that all the other nations of the earth believed in the immortality of the soul. The abbé Bazin was, indeed, persuaded that this opinion was received amongst the Chaldeans, the Persians, and Egyptians, that is to say, adopted by the philosophers of those nations; but it is certain, that the Chinese were entirely ignorant of it; and that it is not mentioned in the five *kings*, which were many ages antecedent to the period when the Jews inhabited the deserts of Oreb and Cades Barnea.

How then could this Warburton, in advancing things so false and dangerous, attack the philosophers, and particularly the abbé Bazin, whose opinion he ought to have fought for?

You must attribute, my brethren, this want of just inference only to vanity. It is vice that makes us act against our interest. Reason says, We undertake a difficult

difficult enterprife; let us have partizans. Self-love declaims, 'Crush every thing to reign. We believe in self-love; and at length we finish by being crushed ourselves.

I shall add to this short appendix, that the abbé Bazin is the first who has proved that the Egyptians are a very modern people, though they be of more ancient date than the Jews. No man of letters has opposed the reason he has given, because a country that is overflowed four months in the year, after being intersected by canals, must have been inundated eight months in the year before these drains were cut. Now, a country that is always overflowed is uninhabitable, and consequently many ages were necessary to form Egypt.

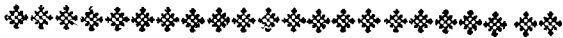
Consequently, the Syrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Indians, the Chinese, the Japonese, &c. must have been formed as bodies of people, before Egypt could

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could have been made a place of tolerable habitation.

From this truth, the reader may draw what conclusion he pleases. But are there many people who trouble their heads about Egyptian antiquity ?

CHAP.



C H A P. XVII.

Of men of different colours.

MY duty compels me to say, that the abbé Bazin admired the Eternal Wisdom in that profusion of varieties with which it has spread our little globe. He never thought that English oysters were engendered by the crocodiles of the Nile; or that the gilliflowers of the Molucca islands derived their origin from the firs of the Pyrenees. He held in equal respect the beards of the orientals, and the chins, ever divested of hair, which God has given the Americans. The partridge eyes of the Albinos, their hair, which resembles the finest white silk, the dazzling whiteness of their skins, their long ears, and low stature, of about three feet and a half in

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height,

height, gave him extatic raptures, when he compared them with the neighbouring negroes, who have woolly heads, and a beard upon their chins, which God has refused the Albinos. He had seen red and copper coloured men; he had handled the apron of the Hottentots, which hangs from the navel half way down the thighs. † What a profusion of riches! he cried. Oh nature! how fruitful art thou!

I am also glad to have an opportunity of revealing, in this place, to the five or six readers who may chuse to be acquainted with this *Diatrise*, that the abbé Bazin has been violently attacked in a journal stiled *Oeconomique*, which I have hitherto purchased, but shall no longer. I have been sensibly afflicted, that this journal-writer should, after having given me an infallible recipe against bugs and madness; and after having taught me, in a moment, to extinguish a chimney on fire,

express

express himself with the cruelty he does towards the abbé Bazin.

“ The opinion of the abbé Bazin (he says) who believes, or pretends to believe, that there are several species of men, is as absurd as that of some Pagan philosophers, who have supposed there are black and white atoms, the fortuitous junction whereof has produced a variety of men and animals.”

The abbé had in his travels seen part of the *reticulum mucosum* of a negro, which is entirely black; this is a fact known to all the anatomists of Europe. Whoever is inclined to dissect a negro (I mean after he is dead) will find this mucus membrane to be as black as ink from head to foot. Now, if this *net* is black in negroes, and white in us, this constitutes a specific difference. Now a specific difference between two races certainly forms two different races. This hath no sort of analogy with the black,
white

white, and red atoms of Anaxagoras, who lived about two thousand three hundred years before my uncle.

There lived not only negroes and Albinos, whom he very carefully examined, but there also lived four red men, who came into France in the year 1725. The same journal-writer has denied him these red men. He avers, that the inhabitants of the Caribbee islands are only red, when they are painted. We plainly see, that this man has never travelled in America. I will not pretend to say that my uncle ever was there; but here is the copy of a letter which I have just received from a man who resided a long time at Guadeloupe, in quality of a king's officer.

There really are at Guadalope, in a certain part of Grand Terre, called the Pistolet, belonging to the parish of L'Anse Bertrand, five or six Caribbee families, whose skin is of the colour of our red copper: they are well made, and have long hair; I have seen them twice. They are governed by their

DEFENCE OF MY UNCLE. 95

their own laws, and are not christians. All the inhabitants of the Caribbees are reddish, &c.

Signed, RIEU, May 20. 1767.”

The Jesuit Laffiteau, who had also lived among the Caribbeans, agrees, that these people are red*; but like a judicious man, he attributes this colour to their mothers passion of painting themselves red; as he attributes the colour of the negroes to the taste of the ladies of Congo and Angola, to paint themselves black. These are the remarkable words of the Jesuit.

“ This general taste in the whole nation, and the continual sight of similar objects, must necessarily have made an impression on pregnant women, like rods of different colours upon Jacob’s lambs; and this must have contributed, in the first instance, to have made the one black by nature, and the others reddish, as they are to this day.”

* Manners of the Savages, p. 68. vol. i.

Add to this forcible reason, that the Jesuit Laffiteau is of opinion, that the Caribbeans are descended in a right line from the people of Caria, and you must acknowledge this is powerful reasoning, as the abbé Grizel says.



C H A P. XIX.

Of mountains and shells.

I Will ingenuously acknowledge, that my uncle had the misfortune to be of an opposite opinion to that of a great naturalist; who has imagined, that mountains were formed by the sea; that after it had formed them by its flux and reflux, it covered them with its waves, and left them perfectly cemented by its petrified fish.

“ My dear nephew, said he, these are my reasons. 1st, If the sea had at first, by its flux, formed a small mountain of some feet of sand, from the place where at present stands the Cape of Good Hope to the last branches of Mount Imaus, or *Merou*; I very much fear, that

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the reflux would have destroyed what the flux had formed.

“ 2. The flux of the ocean has certainly heaped up, in a long succession of time, the sands which form the Downs of Dunkirk and England ; but it could never create rocks ; and these Downs have very little elevation.

“ 3. If in six thousand years time, it has raised hills of sand forty feet perpendicular, it must have required thirty millions of years to form the highest mountain of the Alps, which is twenty thousand feet high : this is supposing too there were no obstacles to this operation, and that sand was always ready at hand.

“ 4. How could the flux of the sea, which, at most, never rises above eight feet high upon our coasts, have formed mountains twenty thousand feet high ? and how must it have covered them to leave fish upon the summits ?

“ 5. How must the tide and currents have formed chains of mountains, almost
circular,

circular, such as those which circumscribe the kingdom of Cachemire, the Great Dutchy of Tuscany, Savoy, and the country of Vaud?

“ 6. If the sea were for a number of ages above the mountains, all the rest of the globe must necessarily have been covered with another ocean equal in height, otherwise the waters must have fallen again by their own weight. Now, an ocean that for so many ages covered the mountains of the four parts of the world, must have been equal to above forty of our present oceans: so that thirty-nine oceans must necessarily have vanished since the time those gentlemen pretend petrified sea-fish were to be found upon the summit of the Alps and Mount Ararat.

“ 7. Consider, my dear nephew, that according to this supposition, of mountains being formed and covered by the sea, our globe must have been inhabited by nothing but fish. This, I believe, is

the opinion of Teliamed. It is difficult to comprehend how porpoises could have produced men.

“8. It is evident, that if, by an impossibility, the sea had for a long time covered the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Caucasus, there would have been no sweet water for the two-footed animals and quadrupeds. The Rhine, the Rhone, the Soane, the Danube, the Po, the Euphrates, the Tyber, whose springs I have seen, owe their water to nothing but snow and rain, which fall upon the summits of these rocks. Thus you see all nature explodes this opinion.

“9. Never lose sight of that great truth. Nature never belies itself. All species ever remain in the same situation. Animals, vegetables, minerals, metals, every thing is invariable in this great variety. Every thing preserves its essence. The essence of the earth is to have mountains, without which it would be divested of rivers; wherefore it is impossible that
moun-

mountains should not be equally ancient as the earth. One might as well say, that our bodies had been for a long time without heads. I know that much is said about shells. I have observed them, as well as others. The steep banks of some rivers and lakes are embroidered with them; but I never observed, that they were the spoils of sea-monsters; they rather resemble the torn coats of muscles, and other small shell-fishes, which inhabit rivers and lakes. There are some which are apparently nothing but talc, which hath taken different forms. In a word, there are a thousand earthly productions, that are taken for marine productions.

“I do not deny, that the sea had advanced thirty or forty feet upon the continent, and that collections of earth had forced it to retire. I know that it formerly washed Ravenna, Aigues-mortes, Alexandria, Rosetta, and that it is at present at a great distance from them. But

because it has by turns inundated and retired from some leagues of earth, we must not conclude from thence, that it was the same every where. The petrifications about which there is so much talk, these pretended medals of the length of its reign, are to me very suspicious. I have seen above a thousand Ammons-horns in the fields towards the Alps. I never could conceive that they formerly inclosed an Indian fish called a Nautilus, which, by the bye, does not exist at all. They appeared to me mere fossils turned in voluta; and I have been no more tempted to believe they were the habitation of fish of the sea of Surat, than I was to take the *conchi Veneris* for chapels of Venus, and the stary-stones for stars themselves. I have thought with several good observers, that nature, inexhaustible in her works, might very well form a great quantity of fossils, which we erroneously suppose to be marine productions. If the sea had
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in a succession of ages formed mountains and beds of earth and shells, we should find these beds from one end of the earth to the other; and this certainly is not true, the chain of high mountains in America being entirely unfurnished with them. Do you know what answer is made to this dreadful objection? *They will be found one day.* Let us then wait till they are found.

“ I am even tempted to believe, that the famous *Fallun* of Touraine is nothing but a species of mineral; for if it were a real collection of the shells of fish, which the sea had gradually deposited in beds in this canton, in the course of about forty or fifty centuries, how came it not to leave as much in Brittany and Normandy? Certainly, if it inundated Touraine for so long a time, by a more forcible reason, it must have covered the country beyond it. Why then should these supposed shells appear in only one

district of a single province? Let this difficulty be answered.

“ I have met with petrifications in a hundred places ; I have seen some oyster-shells petrified a hundred leagues from the sea. But I have also seen twenty feet deep Roman money, and the rings of knights, upwards of nine hundred miles from Rome ; and I did not conclude, that these rings, and this species of gold coin, were fabricated here. Neither did I say these oysters were born here ; but that travellers had brought hither rings, money, and oysters.

“ When I read, forty years ago, that Syrian shells had been found upon the Alps, I said, I own somewhat in raillery, that these shells were probably brought there by Pilgrims, upon their return from Jerusalem, M. de Buffon reproved me very smartly in his *Theory of the Earth*, P. 281. I did not chuse to quarrel with him about a few shells ; but I still preserved my opinion, because

it was to me evidently impossible that the sea should form mountains. People may tell me that porphyry is formed of bears bristles; I will believe them when I find that white marble is made of ostrich feathers.

“Some years since, an Irishman, secretly a Jesuit, by name Needham, who said he had excellent microscopes, fancied, by their assistance, he perceived eels, which he had created by the infusion of corn shaken in bottles. No sooner had this notion got wind, but other philosophers were persuaded, that if a Jesuit could create eels without seed, men might be formed in the same manner. The hand of a great Demiurgos is no longer necessary; the Author of nature is of no efficacy. If coarse flour can produce eels, a finer flour will produce monkeys, men, and asses. The seed is useless; every thing will grow spontaneously. Upon this supposed experiment a new universe is constructed, in
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the same manner as a new world was formed a hundred years ago, with a subtle, globulous, and spicey matter. A wag, who did not reason amiss, said the eel was under the rock, and falsehood would soon appear. In fact, it soon was proved, that the eels were nothing more than corrupted parts of the flour that fermented, and the new world disappeared.

“ It was so formerly. Worms were formed in corrupted meat exposed to the air ; these philosophers did not suspect that these worms might arise from flies, who deposited their eggs upon this meat, and that these eggs became worms before they had wings. Cooks locked up their meat in safes made of cloth, no worms then appeared, and a stop was put to the generation of corruption.

“ I have sometimes opposed such like chimeras, and particularly that of the Jesuit Needham. One of the great conveniencies of this world is, that every
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one may have his own opinion without disturbing the tranquillity of society. I may esteem M. Guignes's extensive erudition, without sacrificing to him the Chinese, whom I shall ever believe were the first civilized nation upon earth, after the Indians. I know how to do justice to M. Buffon's great knowledge and genius; though I am at the same time strongly persuaded, that mountains are of as early a date as our globe and all other things, and without believing in the *organic moleculæ*. I may acknowledge that the Jesuit Needham, luckily disguised as a layman, was possessed of microscopes; but I would not pretend to wound him, in doubting that he had created eels of flour.

“ I preserve the spirit of charity towards all the learned till such time as they insult me, or they play me some bad trick; for man is framed in such a manner that he does not like to be teased and tormented. If I have been somewhat pleasant,

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fant, and formerly displeas'd a Laponian philosopher, who wanted to make a hole to the center of the earth, to have the brains of giants anatomized to be acquainted with the essence of thought, the soul to be exalted to foretel events, and patients to be anointed with pitch; the truth is this, the Laponian most horribly molested me; yet I very fervently prayed for forgiveness for having ridiculed him; for we should not afflict our neighbour: this is being wanting in universal justice. In other respects, I have always taken the parts of poor authors, when they have been unjustly persecuted: for instance, when the writers of a dictionary of twenty volumes in folio, have been juridically accused of composing this dictionary, in order to encrease the price of provisions, I have loudly complained of this injustice."

This discourse of my good uncle made the tears of affection trickle down my cheeks.

CHAP.



C H A P. XX.

Of the tribulations incident to poor men of letters.

WHEN my uncle had thus mollified me, I took the liberty of telling him, “You have run a very difficult course: I am sensible that it were better to be a receiver of the finances, a farmer-general, or a bishop, than a man of letters; for, in fine, when you first taught the French, that the English and the Turks gave their children the small-pox to preserve them from it, you know that all the world laughed at you; some said you was a heretic, others a Mussulman. It was still worse when you endeavoured to explain the discoveries of Newton, which the *Witch* schools had
not

not yet heard of; you were considered as the enemy of France. You ventured to write some tragedies: *Zara*, *Orestes*, *Semiramis*, *Mahomet*, were damned upon their first representation. Do you recollect, my dear uncle, how your *Adelaide Duguenlin* was hissed from one end of the house to the other? How pleasant it was! I was present at the fall of *Tancred*; they said, with tears and groans, This poor man never wrote any thing so bad.

“ You were attacked at different times in about seven hundred and fifty pamphlets; wherein some said, in order to prove that your *Merope* and *Alzira* were detestable tragedies, that your father, who was my grandfather, was a peasant; and others, that he was invested with the dignity of turn-key to the parliament of Paris; an important post in the state, but which I never before heard of, and which besides had very little connection with *Alzira* and *Merope*, or indeed
with

with the rest of the universe, which all manufacturers of pamphlets, as you have said, should keep in view.

“That excellent book entitled (*Les Hommes*) Men, was attributed to you (though neither you nor I know what sort of a book it is) and several other immortal poems, such as the *Candle of Arras*, the *Hen to my Aunt*, the *second volume of Candide*, and the *Jolly Fellow Matthew*. How many anonymous letters have you received? How many times have you been told in writing, *Give me some money, or I will write a pamphlet against you*. Have not even those who have partook of your charity, testified their gratitude by some very cutting satire?

“Having thus gone through all the proofs, tell me, I beseech you, my dear uncle, which are the most implacable enemies, the lowest, most infamous, and the most capable of hurting in the republic of letters?”

The good abbé Bazin answered me

with a sigh, "My nephew, after the Theologians, the most blood-thrifty dogs are the *Echoes*, and after these come the theatrical cabalists. As to historical and physical critics, they make but very little noise. Be sure you in particular avoid the trade of Sophocles and Euripides, unless you write your tragedies in Latin, like Grotius, who has left us those fine pieces, quite unknown, of Adam driven out of Paradise, Patient Jesus, and of Joseph, under the name of Sofonfone, which he takes to be an Egyptian word."

"And why, uncle, would you not have me write tragedies, if I have a genius for it? Every man may learn Latin or Greek, geometry or anatomy; every man may write history, but you know we very seldom meet with a good poet. Would it not be mighty agreeable to make some fine sonorous verses, in which *des heros deplorables* would rhyme with *des exemples memorables*: Again, *les forfaits*
 & *les*

Et *les crimes* with *les coeurs magnanimes*; and *les justes dieux* with *les exploits glorieux*? An imperious actress would bellow forth this bombast, and gain the applause of two hundred apprentices and journeymen; and after it was over, she would tell me, Had it not been for me your piece had been hissed: to me then you owe your fame. It must be acknowledged, that such success is enough to turn one's brain, when we are fired with a noble emulation."

"I agree, my dear nephew, replied the abbé Bazin, that nothing can be finer; but do you recollect how the author of *Cinna*, who taught the nation how to think and express themselves, was treated by Claveret, Chapelain, Scuderi, governor of Notre Dame de la Garde, and by the abbé d'Aubignac, chaplain to the king.

"Consider that the preacher who is the author of the worst modern tragedy ex-

tant, and what is still more ridiculous, it is in prose, calls Corneille a black-guard: this preacher says, he is only fit to associate with the porters at the play-house doors; *Corneille is always scolding and sneering, without saying any thing worth repeating.* Such are the honours paid to the man who rescued France from barbarity; he was reduced, for mere subsistence, to receive a pension from cardinal Richelieu, whom he calls *his master.* He was forced to solicit the protection of Montauron, to dedicate *Cinna* to him, and to compare, in his dedication, Montauron to Augustus; and Montauron had even the preference.

“ John Racine; who equalled Virgil for the harmony and beauty of his language, and was superior to Euripides and Sophocles; Racine, the truly sentimental poet, and who is the more sublime for never being so but at
proper

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proper times ; Racine, the only tragic poet of his time, whose genius was guided by taste ; Racine, the first man of the age of Lewis XIV. for the fine arts, and the eternal glory of France, has he undergone less disgust and opprobrium ? Were not all his capital pieces turned into ridicule, at that farcical-booth called the Italian Opera.

“ Was not Vise, the author of the *Mercure Galant*, his constant foe ? Did not Subigni attempt to turn him into ridicule ? Were not various parties raised to depreciate his works ? Had he not incessant foes, till at length the Jesuit La Chaise made the king suspect him of Jansenism.

“ The fashion now, nephew, is not to accuse people of Jansenism ; but if you have the misfortune to write for the stage and succeed, you will be accused of Atheism.”

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These words of my uncle remained graven in my heart. I had already begun a tragedy; I threw it into the fire; and I advise every one frantic enough to woo Melpomene to do the same.

CHAP.



C H A P. XXI.

Of the sentiments of Theologians with regard to the late abbé Bazin.

Of the justice he did antiquity ; and of four Diatribes composed by him on the occasion.

THE better to illustrate the piety and equity of the abbé Bazin, I am glad of this opportunity to publish in this place four Diatribes in his way, written only for private amusement. The first is upon causes and effects. The second treats of Sanchoniaton, one of the most ancient writers who *took pen in hand* soberly to write nonsense. The third is upon Egypt, which he considered of but little importance (I do not mean he considered his Diatribe of little importance, but Egypt). In the fourth he treats of an ancient people, whose noses

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were cut off, and who were sent into the desert. This last lucubration is very curious and very instructive.

DIATRIBE I.

By the ABBE BAZIN.

Upon the primary cause.

ONE day as the young Madetes was walking towards the Pyrean gate, he met Plato, whom he had never seen before. Plato finding him to have a happy physiognomy, joined conversation with him; he found him possessed of a great share of good sense. Madetes had been instructed in the Belles Lettres; but he was utterly ignorant as to physics, geometry, and astronomy. He nevertheless owned to Plato that he was an Epicurean.

“ My son, said Plato to him, Epicurus was a very honest man; he lived and died like a sage; his voluptuousness,

which has been so differently represented, consisted in avoiding excesses: he recommended friendship to his disciples, and never was a precept better observed. I have as high an opinion of his philosophy as of his manners. Are you deeply acquainted with the doctrine of Epicurus?" Madetes ingenuously answered, that he had not studied him. "All I know, said he, is, that the gods never interfered with any thing, and that the principles of all things is in the atoms, which have arranged themselves so, that they have produced this world in the manner we see it."

PLATO.

"Thus then, my son, you do not believe that any Intelligence has presided over this universe, in which there are so many intelligent beings? Will you please to tell me your reason for adopting this philosophy?"

I 4

MADETES.

MADETES.

“My reason is, that I have always heard my friends say so to one another, and their mistresses with whom I sup; and I agree very well with their atoms. I acknowledge to you, I know nothing about the matter; but this doctrine appeared to me as good as any other; and we must adopt some opinion when we keep good company. I have been very desirous of gaining instruction, but it has hitherto appeared to me much easier to think without knowledge.”

Plato said to him: “If you are desirous of being enlightened, I am a magician, and will shew you some very extraordinary things. Be so good only as to accompany me to my country house, which is about five hundred paces from hence, and you will not repent you were so complaisant.” Madetes followed him with transport. As soon as they arrived Plato shewed him a skeleton: the young
man

man shrunk back with terror at this spectacle, which was so new to him. Plato addressed him in these terms :

“ Attentively consider this horrid form, which seems the refuse of nature, and judge of my art by my operations on this unformed mass, which appears to you so hideous.

“ In the first place, you observe that kind of ball, which seems to crown this shocking jumble. I shall, by speaking, insert in the hollow of this ball, a soft pithy substance, divided into a thousand small ramifications, which I shall cause to descend imperceptibly along that kind of knotty stick which joins to this ball, and which terminates with a point in the hollow. I shall apply a tube to the summit of this stick, through which the air is communicated by a sucker that incessantly plays ; and you will presently see this fabric move by itself.

“ As to all those unformed particles which appear to you like fragments of
rotten

rotten wood, and which seem equally destitute of utility, strength, and grace, as soon as I speak, they will begin to move, by kinds of cords of an inconceivable structure. I shall place in the midst of these cords, an infinite number of canals filled with a liquor, which, by passing through sieves, will change into various liquors, and will circulate through the whole machine twenty times in an hour. The whole is to be covered with a white, pithy, fine stuff. Each part of this machine will have a peculiar movement, that it will not fail performing. I will place between these semi-hoops, which seem to be of no use, a large reservoir, nearly resembling a pineapple. This reservoir will contract and dilate itself every moment with surprising velocity. It will change the colour of the liquor that passes through the whole machine. Not far from this, I will place a bag perforated in two places, resembling the Danaides tun, which will

will incessantly fill and empty itself; but it will not fill itself with any thing but what is necessary, and will avoid only what is superfluous. This machine will be such an astonishing chemical laboratory, such an elaborate work of mechanism and hydraulics, that those who study it will never be able to comprehend it. Small motions will produce in it prodigious strength; it will be impossible for human art to imitate the powers that direct this automaton. But what will surprize you still more is, that this automaton approaching a figure nearly similar, a third figure will be formed. These machines will have ideas; they will reason, they will speak like you, they will be able to measure the earth and heavens. But I will not let you see this curiosity, unless you promise, that after you have seen it, you will acknowledge I have great sense and power."

MADETES.

MADETES.

“ If the thing be really so, I will acknowledge, that you know more than all the philosophers of Greece.”

PLATO.

“ Well then, all that I have promised is performed. You are this machine ; in this manner you are formed ; and I have not shewn you a thousandth part of the springs that compose your existence. All those springs are exactly proportioned to each other ; they all reciprocally aid one another ; the one preserve life, the others give it ; and the species is perpetuated from age to age by an artifice that it is impossible to discover. The vilest animals are constructed in a manner equally admirable, and the celestial spheres move in a vacuum, with a mechanism still more sublime. Judge, after this, whether the world was not formed by an intelligent Being.”

Madetes,

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Madetes, in astonishment, asked the magician who he was. Plato told him his name; the young man fell upon his knees, adored God, and loved Plato all his life.

What appears to us very remarkable is, that he lived with the Epicureans as before. They were not scandalized at his having changed his opinion. He loved them, and he was always beloved by them. People of different sects supped together cheerfully among the Greeks and Romans. These were happy times.

D I A T R I B E II.

By the ABBE BAZIN.

Of Sanchoniaton.

SANCHONIATON cannot be a supposititious author. We do not imagine an ancient book to have been written, but upon the same principle as ancient titles are forged, to found a disputed claim.

claim. Pious frauds were formerly used to support truths, that did not stand in need of this unhappy assistance. Some indiscreet zealots forged some very bad Greek verses, that were attributed to the Sybils; letters from Pilate; and the History of Simon the magician, who fell from the upper regions in Nero's fight. It was upon the same principle, that the donation of Constantine and the false decretals were supposed. But those who have handed us down the fragments of Sanchoniaton, could have no interest in proposing this heavy cheat. What could Philo of Biblos gain, who translated Sanchoniaton into Greek, by ranking this history and this cosmogony under the name of this Phenician? This were like saying, that Hesiod was a supposititious author.

Eusebius of Cæsarea, who quotes various fragments of this translation rendered by Philo of Biblos, never thought proper to suspect, that Sanchoniaton was an apo-

apocryphal writer. There is no reason to deprive him of his cosmogony.

This Sanchoniaton lived about the same period in which we place the last years of Moses. He probably had no knowledge of Moses, as he does not mention him, although he was in his neighbourhood. Had he mentioned him, Eusebius would not have failed quoting him, as an authentic testimony of the prodigies performed by Moses. Eusebius would have insisted still more upon this testimony; whilst neither Manethon or Cheremon, who are Egyptian writers, nor Eratosthenes, Herodotus, and Diodorus of Sicily, who have written so much upon Egypt, being too much engaged upon other subjects, have said a syllable concerning these famous and dreadful miracles, which must have graven a durable remembrance, and terrified men from age to age. This silence of Sanchoniaton has given sufficient grounds
for

for many of the learned to suppose that he lived before Moses.

Those who make him a contemporary with Gideon, do not support their opinion by any thing but a misconstruction of the words of Sanchoniaton himself. He acknowledges, he has consulted the high priest Jerombal. Now, say our critics, this Jerombal is probably Gideon. But why, pray, should this Jerombal be Gideon? It is not said, that Gideon was a priest. If the Phenician had consulted the Jew, he would have spoken of Moses and the conquests of Joshua. He would not have admitted a cosmogony directly opposite to Genesis; he would have spoken of Adam; he would not have imagined generations quite different from those which Genesis has sanctified.

This ancient Phenician author acknowledges in plain terms, that he has extracted part of his history from the writings of Thot, who flourished eight hundred
years

years before him. This acknowledgment, which is not sufficiently attended to, is one of the most curious testimonies antiquity has handed down to us. It proves, that eight hundred years had already elapsed since books were written with the assistance of the alphabet, and that cultivated nations could by this aid understand each other, and reciprocally translate their works. Sanchoniaton understood the books of Thot, written in the Egyptian language.

The first Zoroaster was of much earlier antiquity, and his books were the Persians catechism. The Chaldeans, the Syrians, the Persians, the Phenicians, the Egyptians, the Indians, must necessarily have had intercourse with each other; and alphabetic writing must have facilitated this correspondence. I do not speak of the Chinese, who had for a long time been a great people, and composed a separate world.

Each of these people had already their
K history.

history. When the Jews entered into the neighbouring country of Phenicia, they penetrated as far as the city of Dabir, which was formerly stiled the City of Letters. * *Caleb then said, I will give my daughter Axa for a wife to him who shall take Eta, and ruin the City of Letters; and Othoniel, son to Cenés, and younger brother to Caleb, having taken it, he gave him his daughter Axa for a wife.*

It appears from this passage, that Caleb was not fond of men of letters; but if the sciences were in ancient times cultivated in this little city of Dabir, how greatly must they have been revered in Phenicia, Sidon, and Tyre, which were called the Region of Books, the Country of Archives, from whom the Greeks learnt their alphabet.

It is amazingly strange, that Sancho-niaton, who begins his history at the same period as that of Genesis, and who

Judges, chap. i.

reckons

reckons the same number of generations, does not mention the deluge, any more than the Chinese. How could Phenicia, that country so renowned for its naval expeditions, be ignorant of so great an event ?

Antiquity, nevertheless, believed it, and the magnificent description which Ovid gives of it, is a proof that this idea was very general ; for of all the accounts we find in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, there is not a single one of his own invention. It is even said, that the Indians had mentioned an universal deluge before that of Deucalion. Many Brachmans believed, it is said, that the earth had undergone three floods.

No mention is made of them in the *Exour Vedam*, nor in the *Cormovedam*, which I have read with great attention ; but many missionaries sent into India, agree in believing, that the Bramins acknowledged several floods. It is true, that among the Greeks only, the two

peculiar floods of Ogyges and Deucalion were known. The only Greek author we are acquainted with, who has mentioned an universal deluge, is Apollodore, who did not live above one hundred and forty years before our æra. Neither Homer, Hesiod, or Herodotus, make mention of Noah's flood; and even the name of Noah is not to be met with in any ancient prophane writer.

There is no circumstantial account of this flood, except in our holy books. Although Voffius and many other learned men have pretended, that this inundation could not have been universal, we are not allowed to question it. I quote the Cosmogony of Sanchoniaton only as a prophane work. The author of Genesis was inspired, and Sanchoniaton was not. The work of this Phenician is only a precious monument of the ancient errors of men.

It is him who teaches us, that one of the first worships established on earth, was
that

that of the productions of the earth itself; and therefore onions were consecrated in Egypt long before those ages in which we find this custom was introduced. These are the words of Sanchoniaton: “ Those ancient men consecrated plants which the earth had produced; they judged them divine: they, their posterity, and their ancestors, revered those things which furnished them with existence; they offered them their victuals and drink. These inventions, and this worship, were agreeable to the weakness and pusillanimity of their minds.”

This very curious passage invincibly proves, that the Egyptians adored their onions long before Moses; and it is astonishing, that no Hebrew book should reproach the Egyptians with this worship. But this should be considered; Sanchoniaton does not expressly mention a God in his Cosmogony; every thing, according to him, seems to derive its origin from chaos, and this chaos

was disintricated by that vivifying spirit which is blended with the principles of nature. He carries the boldness of his system so far as to say, *that animals devoid of sensation, engendered intelligent animals.*

It is not surprising after this, that he should reproach the Egyptians with having consecrated plants. For my part, I believe that this worship of plants useful to man, was not in the beginning so ridiculous as Sanchoniaton imagines it be. Thot, who governed part of Egypt, and who had established a theocracy eight hundred years before the Phenician writer, was at once both a priest and king. It was impossible he should adore an onion as the Master of the world; and it was impossible, that he should present offerings of onions to an onion; this would have been too absurd, too contradictory: but it is very natural, they should thank the gods for the care they took in providing them the sustenance of life, and that they should for a series of time consecrate

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secrate the most delicious plants of Egypt; and that they should, in those plants, revere the benefactions of the gods. This was practised from time immemorial, in China and India.

I have already said, there is a great deal of difference between a consecrated onion, and an onion god. The Egyptians, after Thot, consecrated animals; but they certainly did not believe, that these animals had formed the earth and heavens. The brazen serpent, raised by Moses, was consecrated; but it was not considered as a divinity. Abraham's turpentine, Membré's oak, were consecrated, and sacrifices were made even in the places where these trees had been, till the time of Constantine; but they were not gods. The cherubims of the ark were sacred, but not adored.

The Egyptian priests, amidst all their superstitions, acknowledged a sovereign Master of nature; they called him *Knef*, or *Knusi*, and they represented him un-

der the figure of a globe. The Greeks translated the word *Knef*, by the word *Demiourgos*, *supreme artist, maker of the world*.

What I think very probable, and very true, is, that the primitive legislators were men of great sense.

Two things are necessary for the institution of a government, courage, and good sense, superior to that of other men. They seldom thought of absurd and ridiculous things, which exposed them to contempt and insult. But what happened to almost all the nations of the earth, and particularly the Egyptians? The sage began by consecrating to God the ox which tilled the earth; and this foolish people, at length adored the bull, and even the fruits the earth produced. When such superstition hath once taken root in vulgar minds, it is very difficult for the sage to eradicate it.

I have not the least doubt, even that some Schoen of Egypt persuaded the
wives

wives and daughters of the ferry-men of the Nile, that cats and onions were real gods. Some philosophers may have doubted the fact ; and these philosophers must certainly have been treated as men of little understanding, and insolent blasphemers ; they must have been anathematized and persecuted. The Egyptian people considered the Persian Cambyfes, who adored one only God, as an atheist, when he spitted the bull Apis. When Mahomet, in Mecca, opposed the worship of the stars ; when he said only one God should be adored, by whom the stars had been produced ; he was expelled as an atheist, and a price fixed upon his head. He was wrong in respect to us ; but he was right with regard to the people of Mecca.

What shall we conclude from this little digression upon Sanchoniaton ? That we have been a long time laughed at ; but that in searching into the ruins of antiquity, we may still find under these ruins

some precious monuments, useful to those who are willing to be acquainted with the follies of the human mind.

D I A T R I B E III.

By the ABBE BAZIN.

Upon Egypt.

I HAVE seen the pyramids, and I was not astonished. I am fonder of the fowl-ovens, the invention of which, it is said, is as ancient as the pyramids. A trifling thing that is useful pleases me; a monstrous production which only astonishes, has no merit in my eyes. I consider these monuments as the games of grown children, who were willing to do something extraordinary, without proposing to derive the least advantage from it. The foundations of the Invalids, St. Cyr, and the Military School, are the monuments of men.

When the fragments of that famous labyrinth, of those places, those temples,
which

which are spoken of with so much emphasis, were pointed out to me, as matter of admiration, I, in pity, shrugged my shoulders: I saw nothing but pillars destitute of proportion, which supported large flat stones; no taste for architecture, no beauty; vast indeed, but barbarous. And I observed, as I have said in another place, the Egyptians were never possessed of any thing that could be called fine, but from the hands of the Greeks. Alexandria alone, erected by the Greeks, hath been the real glory of Egypt.

With respect to their sciences, if in their vast libraries there had been some books of good erudition, the Greeks and Romans must have translated them. We are not only without any translation, but even any extract from their books of philosophy, morality, or the Belles-Lettres: indeed every thing evinces, that they did not deign to write upon these subjects.

What idea can we form of the knowledge and sagacity of a people, who were

unacquainted with the spring of the river that nourished them? The Ethiopians, who twice conquered that effeminate, dastardly, superstitious people, should have taught them, at least, that the springs of the Nile were in Ethiopia. It is pleasant, that a Portuguese Jesuit should discover these springs.

The boasts that have been made of the Egyptian government, appear to me absurd and abominable. The lands, it is said, were divided into three portions; the first belonged to the priests, the second to the kings, and the third to the soldiers. If this were the case, it is evident, that the government had a great length of time been theocratic, as the priests had allotted themselves the best share. But how came the kings to allow of this distribution? Probably they were lazy kings. And how came it that the soldiery did not destroy this ridiculous government? I flatter myself, that the Persians, and after them the Ptolemys,

intro-

introduced good order; and I am very glad to find, that after the Ptolemys, the Romans, who reduced Egypt to a province of the empire, pared the sacerdotal portion.

All the rest of this little nation, which never amounted to more than three or four millions of men, were, then, nothing more than a mob of silly slaves. That law is highly praised, whereby every man was obliged to exercise the profession of his father. This was an infallible recipe for abolishing all talents. He that would have made a good physician, or an excellent sculptor, was hereby compelled to continue a shepherd or vintager; the poltroon and the dwarf must profess arms; and the pew-keeper, who would have made a good military general, passed his life in sweeping a temple.

Nothing was ever more contemptible than the superstition of this people. I do not suspect their kings and priests to have been so weak, as seriously to adore crocodiles,
goats,

goats, monkies, and cats; but they let the people brutalize themselves in a worship which classed them far beneath the animals they adored. The Ptolemies could not eradicate this abominable superstition, or did not care to do it. The great let the people enjoy their folly in its full latitude, provided they obey. Cleopatra was no more disturbed about the superstitions of Egypt, than Herod was with regard to those of Judea.

Diodorus relates, that in the time of Ptolemy Auletes, he saw them massacre a Roman, who had casually killed a cat. The death of this Roman was well avenged when the Romans governed. Nothing now remains, thank God, of these unfortunate priests of Egypt, but their memory, which must be for ever odious. Let us learn not to be too prodigal of our esteem.

D I A T R I B E IV.

Of the ABBE BAZIN.*Of a people who had lost their noses, but retained their ears.*

THERE are many kinds of fables. Some are nothing more than history disfigured ; such are all the ancient descriptions of battles and gigantic feats, with which almost all historians have been pleased to embellish their chronicles. Other fables are ingenious allegories. Thus Janus has a double visage, which represents the past and beginning year. Saturn, who devours his children, is Time, which destroys all that it has created. The Muses, daughters of Memory, teach us, that without memory we have no sense, and that to combine ideas we must begin by retaining them. Minerva engendered in the brain of the Master of the world, requires no explanation. Venus,

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nus, the goddess of beauty, accompanied by the Graces, and mother of Love; the mother's girdle, the arrows and blindness of the son, sufficiently speak for themselves.

Those fables which communicate nothing, such as Blue-beard, and the tales of Herodotus, are the fruits of a barbarous extravagant imagination, that may amuse children, and, unfortunately, even men. *The history of the two thieves who came every night to steal king Rampf-inches' money, and of the king's daughter, who married one of the thieves; Gyges's ring, and a hundred other such conceits, are unworthy of serious attention.*

But it must be acknowledged, that we find in ancient history many strokes, that carry with them an air of probability, which have been overlooked in the multitude, and from whence some lights might be drawn. Diodorus of Sicily, who had consulted the ancient historians
of

of Egypt, relates, that that country was conquered by Ethiopians. I have no difficulty in believing it; for I have already observed, that whoever appeared to conquer Egypt, always accomplished his design at the end of one year, except our extravagant Crusaders, who were all either killed upon the spot, or made captives, because they had to do, not with Egyptians, unacquainted with war, but with Mamelucs, the conquerors of Egypt, and better soldiers than the Crusaders. I have, therefore, no sort of difficulty to believe, that a king of Egypt, called by the Greeks Amasis, who was cruel and effeminate, was vanquished with his ridiculous priests by an Ethiopian chief, named Actisan, who probably possessed both sense and courage.

All the world agrees that the Egyptians were great thieves. It is very natural, that the number of thieves should increase during the war between Actisan and Amasis. Diodorus relates, after the

historians of the country, that the conqueror was willing to purge Egypt of these robbers; and that he sent them towards the deserts of Sinai and Oreb, after having previously had the ends of their noses cut off, that they might be easily known, if ever they thought proper to return and rob in Egypt. All this is very probable.

Diodorus justly observes, that the country into which they were sent, afforded none of the conveniences of life; and that it is very rare to meet with there either water or victuals. Such, in fact, is the state of this unhappy country, from the desert of Pharam to near Eber.

This noseless gang might, perhaps, with care, procure some cistern water, or serve themselves from wells with ill scented and unwholesome water, which usually occasions a kind of leprous scurvy. They might again, as Diodorus observes, make nets in which they might catch tortoises. It is, indeed, remarked, that great numbers

numbers of tortoises pass every year over the Red-sea, and come into this desert. So far this history has nothing in it that sets common sense at defiance, or is, indeed, improbable.

But if from hence it were inferred, that these noseless gentlemen were the fathers of the Jews, and that their children, habituated to theft, by degrees penetrated into Palestine, part of which they conquered; this would not be allowed us as christians. I know that this is the opinion of the Consul Maillet, of the learned Freret, of Boulanger, of Herbert, Bolingbroke, and Toland. But though their conjecture be, consistent with the common order of things in this world, our sacred books give a very different origin to the Jews, and make them descend from the Chaldeans by Abraham, Thare, Nachor, Serug, Rehu, and Phaleg.

It is very true, that we are taught in Exodus, that the Israelites, before they inhabited this desert, had carried off the

robes and utensils of the Egyptians, and that they fed upon tortoises in the desert; but this slight resemblance with the relation of Diodorus of Sicily, extracted from the Egyptian books, will never entitle us to aver, that the Jews descended from a gang of thieves whose noses were cut off. Several authors have in vain endeavoured to support this prophane conjecture upon the eightieth Psalm; where it is said, *that the festival of the trumpets was instituted to remind the holy people of the time they came out of Egypt, and when they heard a language spoken, which to them was unknown.*

These Jews, then, are said to have been Egyptians, who were astonished to hear a language spoken beyond the Red-sea, which was not that of Egypt; and from thence it was concluded, that it is not improbable that the Jews should be the descendants of those rogues whom king Actifanes had banished.

Such a conjecture is not admissible.

First,

First, because if it be said in Exodus, that the Jews carried off the utensils of the Egyptians, before they went into the desert, it is not said they were exiled for theft. Secondly, Whether they were thieves, whether they were Egyptians or Jews, they could scarce understand the language of the small bands of wandering Arabs in the desert of Arabia, to the north of the Red-sea; and no consequence can be drawn from the eightieth Psalm, either in favour of the Jews, or against them. All the conjectures of Herodotus, Diodorus of Sicily, Manethon, Eratosthenes, upon the Jews, must, doubtless, yield to the truths which are consecrated in the holy books. If those truths, which are of a superior order, create great difficulties, if they cast down our minds, it is precisely because they are of a superior order. The less able we are to comprehend them, the more we should respect them.

Some writers have suspected, that these

banished thieves are the same with the Jews who wandered in the desert, because the place where they remained for some time was since called *Rbinocolure, cut nose*, and that it is not very distant from Mount Carmel, the deserts of Sur, Ethan, Sin, Oreb, and Cades-Barnea.

It is again believed that the Jews were this very banditti, because they had no established religion, which agrees very well, it is said, with the sentiments of thieves; and their want of an established religion is thought to be proved by several passages from scripture itself.

The abbé de Tilladet, in his dissertation upon the Jews, pretends, that the Jewish religion was not established till a very long time after. Let us examine his reasons.

1. According to Exodus, Moses married the daughter of a priest of Madian, called Jethro; and it is not said that the Madianites acknowledged the same God,
who

who appeared afterwards to Moses in a bush near Mount Horeb.

2. Joshua, who was the chief of the Egyptian fugitives after Moses, and under whom he put to fire and sword part of the little country which is between the Jordan and the sea, says to them in the twenty-fourth chapter, *Cast out from amongst you the gods whom your fathers adored in Mesopotamia and Egypt, and serve Adonai.—Choose what you please to adore, either the gods who served your fathers in Mesopotamia, or the gods of the Amonbeans in the land which you inhabit.*

3. Another proof, it is added, of their religion being not yet fixed, is, that it is said in the book of Judges, chapter first, *Adonai (the Lord) conducted Judah, and made himself master of the mountains; but he could not make himself master of the valleys.*

The abbé Tilladet and Boulanger infer from thence, that these robbers,

whose retreats were in the hollows of rocks, which abound in Palestine, acknowledged a god of the rocks, and a god of the valleys.

4. They add to these supposititious proofs, what Jephtha said to the Ammonites, in the second chapter : *Is not what Chamos your god possesses your right due? So should what our God, the conqueror, has obtained, be in our possession.*

Mr. Freret infers from these words, that the Jews acknowledged Chamos for their god as well as Adonai, and that they thought every nation had its local divinity.

5. This dangerous opinion is farther strengthened by the discourse of Jeremiah, in the beginning of chapter forty-nine : *Wherefore hath the god Melchem taken possession of the country of Gad? And from thence it is concluded, that the Jews acknowledged the divinity of the god Melchem.*

The same Jeremiah says in the seventh
7 chapter,

chapter, in making God speak to the Jews, *I did not order your fathers, on the day I took them out of Egypt, to offer me holocausts and victims.*

6. Isaiah complains in the forty-seventh chapter, that the Jews adored several gods: *You seek your consolation in your gods in the midst of thickets; you sacrifice to them little-children in torrents, under great stones.* It is not probable, it is said, that the Jews should immolate their children to the gods in torrents, under large stones, if their law had then existed, which forbid them to sacrifice to the gods.

7. The prophet Amos is again quoted as a proof, who avers in the fifth chapter, that the Jews never sacrificed to the Lord during forty years in the desert; on the contrary, says Amos—*You carried thither the tabernacle of your god Moloc, the image of your idols, and the star of your god (Remphan).*

8. This was so general an opinion, it is
is

is said, that St. Stephen, the first martyr, says in the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, *That the Jews in the desert adored the militia of heaven, that is to say, the stars, and that they brought the tabernacle of Moloc, and the star of the god Remphan to adore them.*

Men of letters, such as Messrs. Maillet and Dumarfais, have concluded from the researches of the abbé de Tilladet, that the Jews did not begin to form their religion, such as it is at present, till their return from captivity in Babylon. They persist in the opinion, that those Jews, slaves for such a length of time, and so long deprived of a well known religion, could be no other than the descendants of a gang of thieves, without manners and without laws. This opinion seems the more probable, as the time when Actisan, king of Ethiopia and Egypt, banished a gang into the desert, after they had been mutilated by his orders, agrees with the time at which

is fixed the flight of the Israelites conducted by Moses ; for Havian Josephus says, that Moses made war upon the Ethiopians ; and what Josephus called war, might very well be stiled robbery by the historians of Egypt.

What compleatly bewilders these learned men, is the conformity they meet with between the manners of the Israelites and that of a people of thieves ; not sufficiently remembering that God himself directed these Israelites, and that he punished, by their hands, the people of Canaan. It appears to these critics, that the Hebrews had no right over the country of Canaan ; and if they had, they should not put to fire and sword a country which they should have considered as their inheritance.

These audacious critics suppose, then, that the Hebrews always continued their original trade of thieving. They imagine they have discovered the origin of this people in their constant hatred for
Egypt,

Egypt, where their fathers lost their noses, and in the conformity of several Egyptian practices they retained; such as the sacrifice of the red cow, the scape goat, the ablutions, the priests dresses, circumcision, abstinence from pork, pure and impure meats. It is not uncommon, they say, for a nation to hate a neighbouring people, whose customs and laws they have imitated. The populace of France and England are a striking example.

In fine, these Scholiasts, too confident of their first lights, which should always be mistrusted, have imagined, that the origin which they attribute to the Hebrews, is more probable than that which the Hebrews glory in. *You agree with us, says Mr. Toland, that you robbed the Egyptians in your flight from Egypt; that you took from them gold and silver vases, and cloaths. All the difference between what you own, and our opinion is, that you pretend you did not commit this robbery but by*
God's

God's command. But if we judge from reason, there is no thief who may not plead the same excuse. Is it very customary for God to work such miracles in favour of a gang of renegades, who acknowledge they robbed their masters? In what country of the earth would such rapine go unpunished? Suppose the Greeks of Constantinople should take from the Turks all their wardrobes and plate, to go and say mass in a desert, do you in good faith believe, that God would drown all the Turks in the Propontis to favour this robbery, though it were committed with a good design?

These detractors do not confine themselves to such assertions as are easily answered; they go so far as to say, that the Pentateuch could not be written till the time the Jews began to fix their worship, which till then was very uncertain. It was, say they, in the time of Esdras and Nehemiah. They bring, as a proof, the fourth book of Esdras, for a long while received as Canonical; but

but they forget that this book was rejected by the council of Trent. They support themselves with the sentiment of Abenefra, and a multitude of heretical Theologians; they at length call in the decision of Newton for a support. But what signify all their outcries of heresy and infidelity against an œcumenical council?

They moreover deceive themselves in believing, that Newton attributed the Pentateuch to Esdras. Newton imagines that Samuel was the author, or rather editor of it.

It is again a great blasphemy to say with some men of letters, that Moses, such as he is described, never existed; that all his life is fabulous from his cradle to his death; that it is nothing more than an imitation of the ancient Arabian fable of Bacchus, transmitted to the Greeks, and afterwards adopted by the Hebrews. Bacchus, say they, was saved from the waters; Bacchus had crossed the Red-sea

sea dry-footed ; a column of fire conducted his army ; he wrote his laws upon two tables of stone ; rays issued from his head. These conformities make them suspect, that the Jews attributed this ancient tradition of Bacchus to their Moses. The writings of the Greeks were known over all Asia, and the writings of the Jews were cautiously concealed from other nations. It is probable, according to these bold critics, that the metamorphosis of Edith, Lot's wife, into a pillar of salt, is taken from the fable of Eurydice ; that Sampson is a copy from Hercules, and the sacrifice of the daughter of Jephtha imitated from that of Iphigenia. They imagine, that a barbarous people, who never invented any art, must have drawn all they knew from an inventive people.

It is easy to destroy all these systems, by only shewing that the Greek authors, except Homer, wrote since Esdras, who collected and restored the Canonical books.

books. Were these books restored only in the time of Cyrus and Artaxerxes, they were prior to Herodotus, the first Greek historian. They are not only anterior to Herodotus, but the Pentateuch is much more ancient than Homer.

If it be asked why these books, so ancient and so holy, were unknown to the nations, till the time the first christians circulated the Greek translation under Ptolemy Philadelphus; I answer, it is not our province to interrogate Providence. He was willing that these ancient monuments, known to be authentic, should proclaim miracles; and that these miracles should be unknown to all the people, till such time as a new light came to manifest them. Christianity hath been an evidence for the Mosaic law, above which it hath raised itself, and by which it was foretold. Let us submit, pray, adore, and not dispute.

EPILOGUE.

THOSE were the last lines my uncle wrote: he died with that resignation to the Supreme Being, persuaded that all the learned may be deceived, and acknowledging, that nothing but the Romish Church is infallible. The Greek Church viewed him with an evil eye for it, and made him some bitter reproaches in his last moments. This afflicted my uncle; and to die in peace, he said to the archbishop of Astracan, "Go, and be not sad; do you not see, I also think you infallible?" This was at least related to me, in my last journey to Moscow. But I always doubt of those anecdotes which are propagated concerning the living and the dead.



C H A P. XXII.

*A defence of a military general attacked by
Pedants.*

AFTER having avenged the memory of an honest priest, I yield to the noble desire of avenging Belifarius. Not that I think Belifarius was exempted from human frailties. I candidly acknowledge, that the abbé Bazin was too fond of raillery; and I am somewhat inclined to believe, that Belifarius was too ambitious, a great filcher, and often cruel; a courtier sometimes polished, and sometimes unpolished. This is nothing rare.

I will not the least dissemble with my dear reader. He knows that the bishop of Rome Silverus, son to the bishop of Rome
Rome

Rome Hormisdas, had purchased his papacy from Theodatus king of the Goths. He knows that Belisarius, imagining he was betrayed by this Pope, despoiled him of his episcopal sizar, made him dress in a groom's habit, and sent him into prison at Patara in Lycia. He knows that this same Belisarius sold the papacy to a sub-deacon, named Vigilus, for four hundred marks of gold, of twelve ounces to the pound; and that at length the wife Justinian put to death the good Pope Silverus in the island of Palmaria. These are only little court intrigues, of which panegyrists keep no account.

Justinian and Belisarius had for wives two of the most impudent jades in the whole empire. Belisarius's greatest fault was, in my opinion, not knowing how to be a cuckold. Justinian, his master, was much more skilful than him in this respect. He had married a street-walker, a bunter who had prostituted herself in

the public theatre; and this does not give me any high opinion of the wisdom of this emperor, notwithstanding the laws he had compiled, or rather abridged, by his rogue Tribonian. He was besides a coward and vain, avaricious and prodigal, mistrustful and blood-thirsty; but he at length knew how to wink at the lubricity of Theodora; and Belisarius wanted to assassinate Antonina's lover. Belisarius is also accused of much rapine.

Be this as it may, it is certain, that the aged Belisarius, who was not so blind as old Justinian, gave him, towards the close of his life, some very good advice, which the emperor profited of but little. A very ingenious Greek, and who had preserved the true taste of eloquence in the decline of letters, has handed down to us Belisarius and Justinian's dialogues. As soon as they appeared, all Constantinople was delighted. The
fifteenth

fifteenth dialogues, in particular, enchanted all reasonable minds.

In order to be perfectly acquainted with this anecdote, it should be known, that Justinian was an old fool who meddled with theology. He thought proper to declare by an edict in five hundred sixty-four, that the body of Jesus Christ could not change, and was incorruptible; and that he never had occasion to eat during his life, or after his resurrection.

Several bishops judged his edict to be very scandalous. He declared to them, that they would be damned in the other world, and persecuted in this; and to prove it by facts, he exiled the Patriarch of Constantinople, and several other prelates, in the same manner as he had banished Pope Silverus.

It is upon this occasion that Belifarius makes some very wise remonstrances to the emperor. He tells him, that one should not damn for such a trivial cause one's neighbour, and still less persecute

him; that God is the father of men; that those who are in some shape his images upon earth (if we dare say it) should imitate his clemency; and that the Patriarch of Constantinople should not be starved to death, under pretence that Jesus Christ did not require victuals. Nothing, perhaps, is more tolerating, more humane, more divine, than this admirable discourse of Belisarius; I like it much better than his last campaign into Italy, in which he was reproached with doing nothing but ridiculous things.

The learned, it is true, are of opinion, that this discourse is not his, that he did not speak so well; and that a man who had immured Pope Silverus, and sold his place for four hundred marks of gold, of twelve ounces to the pound, was not a man to talk of clemency and toleration: they suspect, that all this discourse is from the eloquent Greek Marmontelos, who published it. This may be; but consider, my dear reader, that Belisarius was old
and

and unhappy; opinions then change, and people become compaffionate.

There were at that time fome little envious Greeks, ignorant pedants, who wrote pamphlets for bread. One of thefe animals, named Cogeos, had the impudence to write againft Belifarius, becaufe he thought that this old general flood but ill at court.

Belifarius, after his difgrace, became a devotee. This is frequently the resource of old courtiers in difgrace; even now, the grand vizirs lift under the banner of devotion, when, inftead of ftrangling them with a filken rope, they are banifhed to the ifland of Mitylene. Fine women too turn devotees, we know, about their fiftieth year; particularly if they have loft all their charms; and in proportion as they are ugly, their devotion is fervent. The devotion of Belifarius was very humane; he believed, that Jefus Chrift had died for all, and not for feveral. He faid to Juftinian, that God wanted to promote the
happi-

happinefs of all men; and this feemed ftill to fmell of the courtier; for Juftinian had many fins to reproach himfelf with; and Belifarius, in a converfation, drew him fuch a picture of divine mercy, that the confcience of the wicked crowned old man was thereby infured it.

The fecret enemies of Juftinian and Belifarius brought to life, therefore, fome pedants who wrote violently againft God's goodnefs. The ridiculous Cogeos, among others, wrote in his pamphlet, page 63, *There will then be none to be reprov'd!* "Oh! yes, he was anfwered, you will be very much reprov'd: confole yourfelf, my friend, be you, and fuch as you reprov'd, and be affured all Conftantinople will laugh at you." Ah! college pedants, how far you are from fufpecting what paffes among good company at Conftantinople!

P O S T-

P O S T S C R I P T U M.

A GARDENER'S DEFENCE.

THE same Cogeos attacked in a manner not less barbarous, a poor provincial gardener of Cappadocia, and accused him, in page 54, with writing these words: *Our religion, with all its revelation, is not, nor can it be any thing more than the perfection of natural religion.*

Observe, my dear reader, the malignity of this calumny! This good gardener was one of the best christians in the whole canton, who nourished the poor with roots he had himself planted; and who, during the winter, amused himself with writing, to edify his neighbour whom he loved. He never wrote these ridiculous and almost impious words, *with all its revelation*; such an expression is always contemptible; this man *with all his Latin*, that critic *with all his verbosity*. There is not a single word in this passage of the gardener,

dener, which has the least connection with this imputation. His works have been collected; and in the last edition of 1764, page 252, as well as in all the other editions, we find the passage which Cogeos or Cogé has so basely falsified. Here it is, as it has been faithfully translated from the Greek.

“ He who thinks that God has deigned to allow a resemblance between him and men; that he has made them free, capable of good and evil; and that he has given to all of them that good sense which is the instinct of man, and which is the foundation of the law of nature; that man hath, doubtless, a religion, and a much better religion than all the sects out of our church; for all those sects are false, and the law of nature is true. Our revealed religion is not, nor can it be any thing but the law of nature in perfection. So that theism is good sense, as yet uninstructed by revelation, and the other religions

ligions are good sense perverted by superstition."

This moral had been honoured by the approbation of the patriarch of Constantinople, and several bishops; nothing can be more christian, more catholic, or more sagacious.

How then could this Cogeos dare mix his venom with the pure water of this garden? Why would he destroy this man, and have Belisarius condemned? Is it not enough to be in the last class of the last writers? Must he also falsify? Dost thou know, Cogeos, what chastisements were ordained for the crime of falsification? Such as thee, are usually as badly instructed with respect to the laws, as the principles of honour. Why dost thou not read Justinian's institutes under the head of *publicis judiciis*, and the law *Cornelia*.

Friend Cogeos, falsification is like polygamy; it is *a matter, a hanging matter*.

172 DEFENCE OF MY UNCLE.

Listen, wretch—see how good I am—I pardon thee.

The LAST ADDRESS to the READER.

FRIENDLY reader, I have entertained you with the greatest objects that can interest the learned, the formation of the world, according to the Phenicians, the flood, the ladies of Babylon, Egypt, the Jews, Mountains, and Ninon. You would prefer a good comedy, or a good comic opera; and so would I too. Enjoy thyself, and let pedants cavil. Life is short. The only good thing, says Solomon, is to live with our friend, and rejoice in her works.

F I N I S.

