

## **Studies of nature (Volume 1).**

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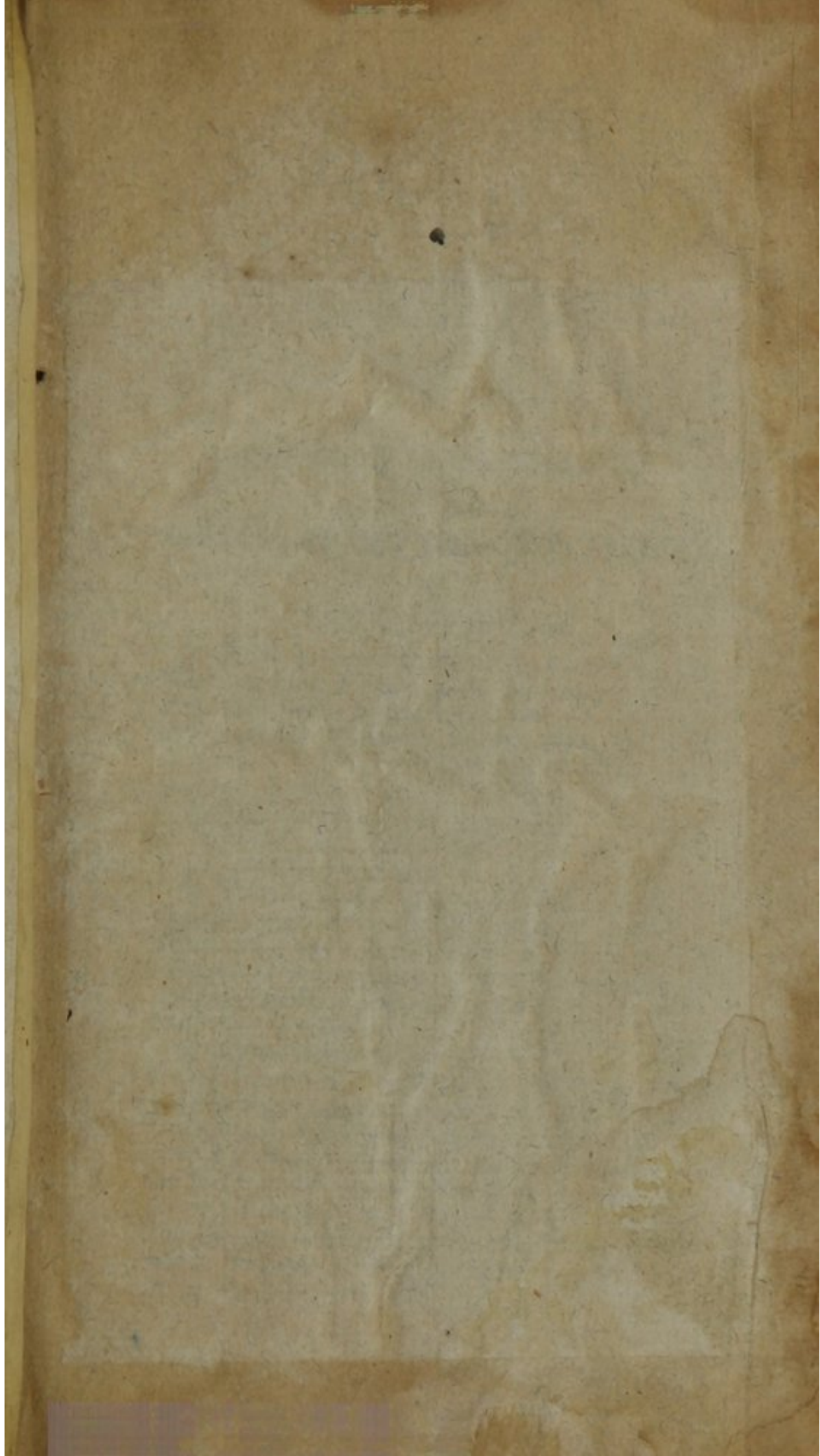
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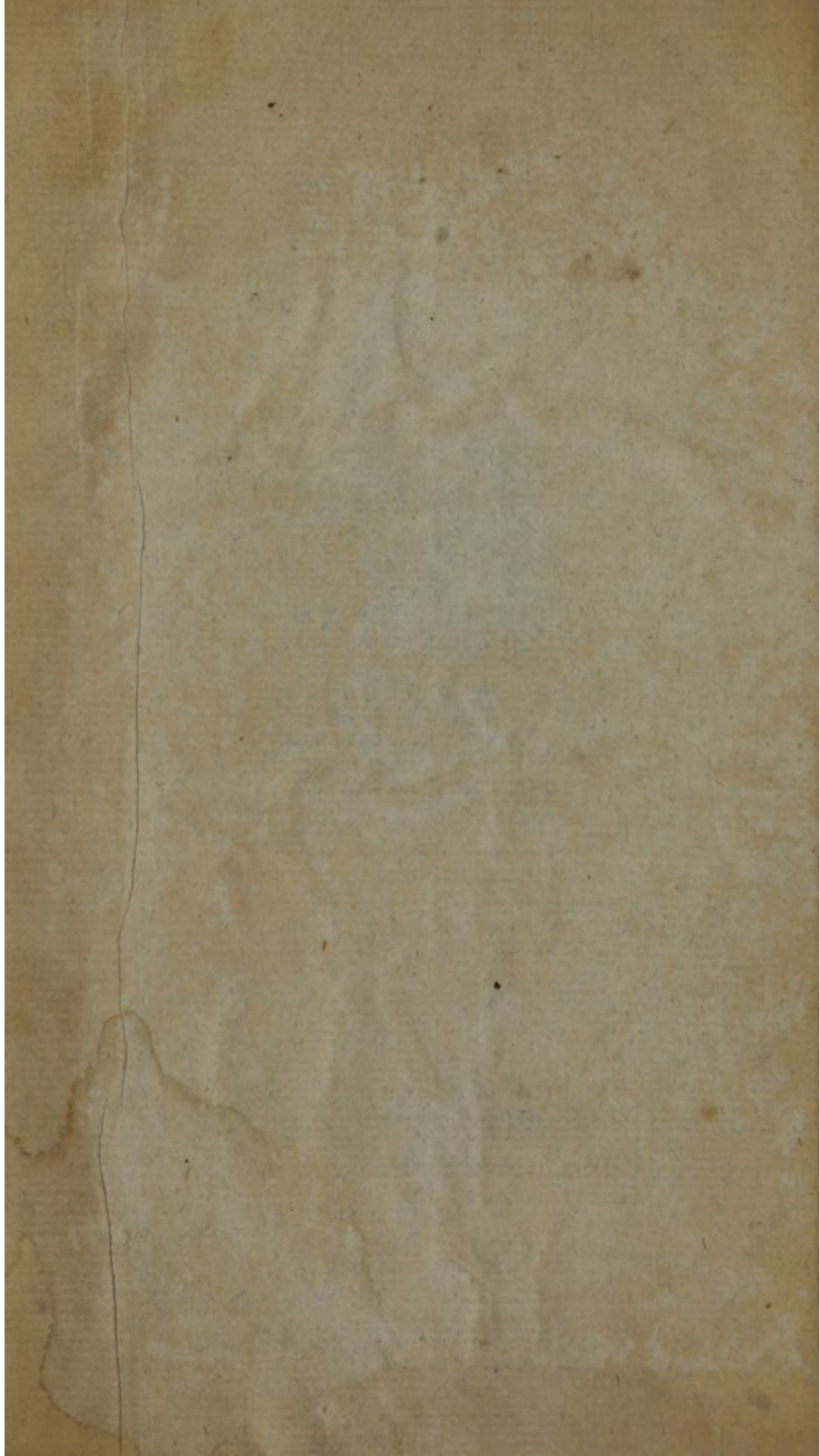
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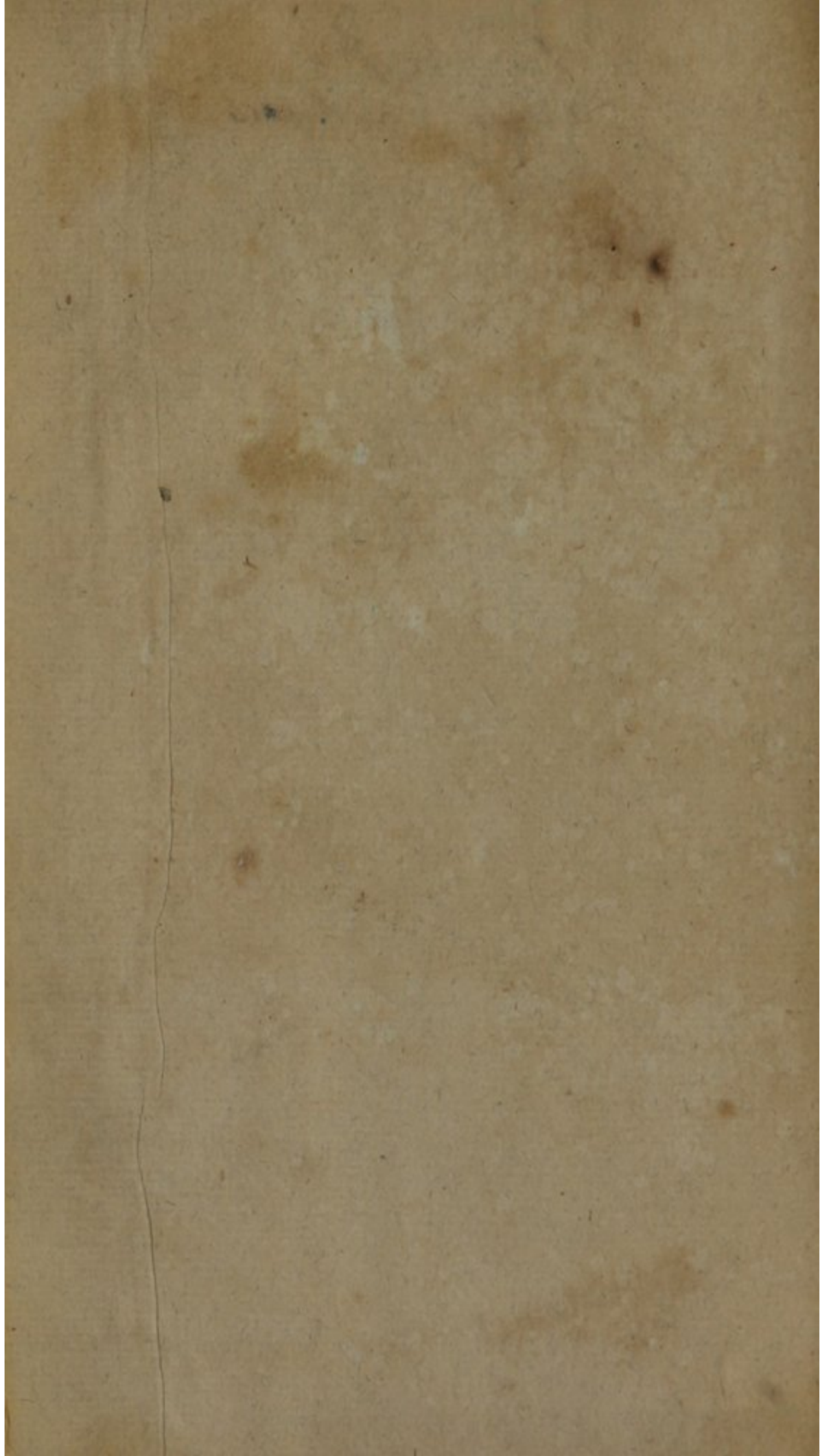
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MASS. MEDICAL COLLEGE







PHILOCLES *in the Island of* SAMOS

*S. Bell, Sc. Boston.*

Published by J. Nancrede, N<sup>o</sup>. 49, Marlboro<sup>gh</sup> Street, Boston.

STUDIES

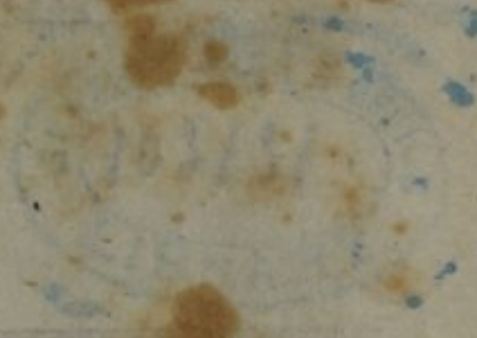
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HENRY FOSTER, D. D.

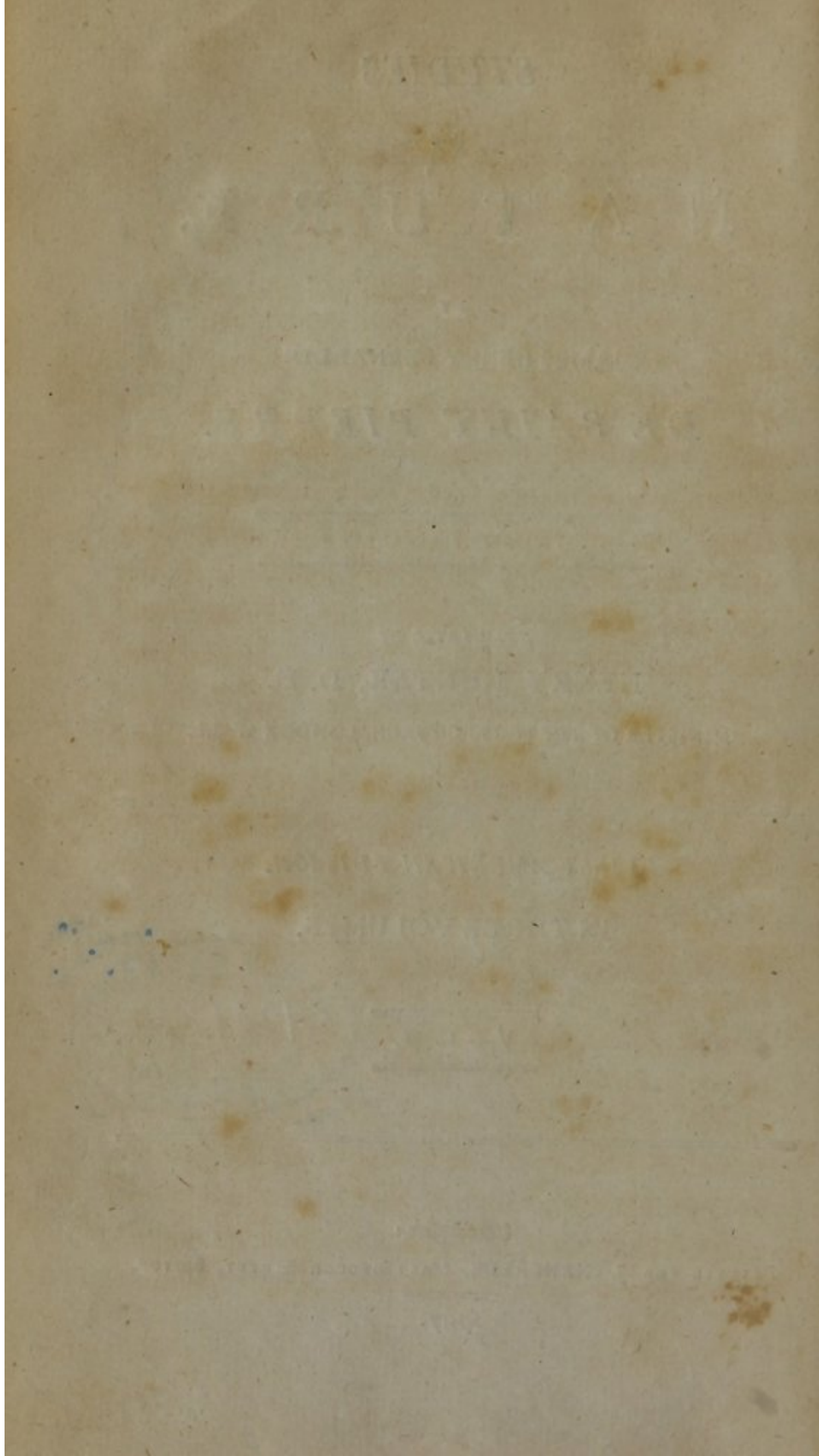
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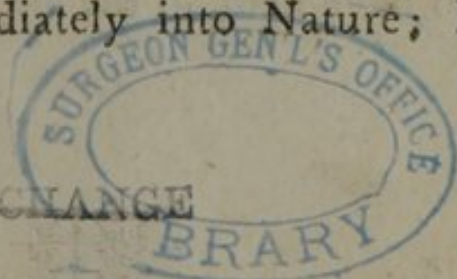




## P R E F A C E.

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A MAN who has himself derived pleasure, or instruction, from the perusal of a Book, naturally wishes to have these advantages communicated to others; for we presume, that what has singularly affected ourselves, is likely to produce a similar impression on the rest of Mankind. I have read few Performances with more complete satisfaction, and with greater improvement, than the *Studies of Nature*: In no one have I found the useful and the agreeable more happily blended. What Work of Science displays a more sublime Theology, inculcates a purer Morality, or breathes a more ardent and more expansive Philanthropy? *Saint Pierre* has enabled me to contemplate the Universe with other eyes, has furnished new arguments to combat Atheism, has established, beyond the power of contradiction, the doctrine of an Universal Providence, has excited a warmer interest in favour of suffering Humanity, and has disclosed sources, unknown before, of moral and intellectual enjoyment. Unfettered by System, unawed by authority, he looks immediately into Nature; he ob-





serves, he thinks, he reasons for himself, and teaches his Reader thus to observe, think and reason.

Like every one who has the courage to attack established error, and to advance new truths, he has been treated, in his own Country, with affected contempt, has been traduced, has been ridiculed. But time, and farther observation and experience alone must determine, whether his, or the received Theory of the Tides, that great engine of Nature, be most conformable to the real order of the Globe. He no where discovers the spirit of an adversary; he contends not for triumph, but for what he deems to be truth; he honours the virtues of those whose opinions he finds himself constrained to oppose; for, with him, Goodness is ever in higher estimation than Science, and Probity than Talents.

He discovers more than one trait of resemblance to his illustrious friend and fellow labourer in the field of Nature, *John James Rousseau*; the same over acute sensibility, the same occasional fits of querulousness, the same irritability under the flea-bitings of anonymous criticism. *Saint Pierre* ought to have known that his immortal Work was to be transmitted for the instruction and delight of ages and nations unborn, long, long after the diurnal and menstrual effusions of anonymous journalists had sunk into everlasting oblivion. He ought to have held on the majestic "tenor of his



way," equally regardless of their notice and of their neglect, of their censure and of their approbation, of their flattery and of their frown. What matters it to such a man, whether *Etudes de la Nature* be abused or extolled in the *Journal de Paris*? He has unwittingly conferred on his critics an immortality not their own. One *Homer* has formed ten thousand critics, but all the critics that ever existed could not constitute the ten thousandth part of one *Homer*.

It is a singular phenomenon in the History of the present Period, that the Author of *Studies of Nature*, the professed Panegyrist and Pensioner of the ill fated *Louis XVI*, should be caressed, should be respected, should be promoted to honour, by that very National Convention which degraded, dethroned, decapitated his patron and benefactor. Can a stronger testimony be borne to wisdom and virtue?

Unfortunately for the Translator, the times admitted not of opening a correspondence with the Author, by which he might have availed himself, for obtaining a solution of many difficulties and doubts that arose in the execution of his task, and by which he might have rendered the Translation less unworthy of the Original. The same cause forbade the gratification of a wish which he fondly entertained, that of presenting the English Reader with an engraved portrait of the form of the Man,



with whose mind he was endeavouring to make him acquainted. I have not even been able to discover whether a portrait of him actually exists; at any rate, the present state of things rendered impracticable every attempt to procure a copy of it.

After what the Author has himself said, in his advertisements, of the reception which his Book has met with on the Continent, it would be impertinent to trouble the Reader with any History of the Publication. The incense which has been offered to him, and the abuse he has sustained; the rapid sale of his own successive Editions, and the multiplied piratical depredations committed upon him, constitute together an irresistible proof of the merit of the Work. How it is to be relished by the English Public, must be submitted to the determination of time. The Translator dares not to flatter himself with the belief, that the enthusiasm of the Reader of this Version is to keep pace with his own admiration of the Original; but if he may judge of the general mind from the sentiments occasionally expressed, by persons of various descriptions, and of both sexes, to whom a considerable part of the Book was submitted, in the progress of Translation, he is not destitute of hope that it may excite something of that interest, and produce a part of that effect, in England, which have attended the several French Editions.



*Saint Pierre*, Frenchman as he ardently professes himself to be, omits no occasion to do justice to the English Character. If he combats an astronomical Theory of our deservedly boasted *Newton*, he bestows unreserved praise on his real discoveries, and on what he prizes still more highly, the great qualities of his heart and mind. If he seems to have acquired any advantage over the Prince of Philosophers, he himself ascribes it chiefly to the weapons furnished him by English Observers and Navigators, particularly *Dampier*, *Ellis*, *Anson*, *Carteret*, *Byron*, *Cooke*, *Clerke*, *Wales*, and the great *Newton* himself. Thus, in a noble and liberal mind, candor and acuteness of investigation walk hand in hand.

I have endeavoured to profit by all the foreign Editions which I was able to procure. The few notes which I have presumed to introduce, are marked with my initials, to distinguish them from those of the Author. With all my attention to the press, a few slips, I am sorry to observe, have crept in. The names of several Tropical vegetables, fishes, quadrupeds and birds, in a great measure unknown to Europe, are exactly transcribed, or translated, according as the case required. I have, in a few instances, adopted the Author's orthography of certain names of Places, in preference to our own, because it seemed more agreeable to the eye, and, at the same time, con-



veyed a more distinct sound to the Ear. If I have failed in doing justice to my great Original, it is to be imputed neither to want of zeal nor to wilful inattention: To what then?—capacity inadequate to an undertaking so arduous.

H. H.

BETHNAL GREEN ROAD,

*4th Nov. 1795.*

*GEORGE WASHINGTON*

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

SIR,

THE EDITOR of the *STUDIES OF NATURE*, indulges the idea that in dedicating to you the AMERICAN Edition of a work, so much esteemed, he does not take a disrespectful or unwelcome license. As a member of the human family, he finds a superior gratification, in testifying his respect for a character, equally known and revered among mankind. As an AMERICAN CITIZEN, he feels a sweet satisfaction in paying the tribute of gratitude and veneration, in his power, to the MAN,



whom his country delights to honour and to blefs, as having eminently contributed to eftablifh her independence, by his military command ; to infure her peace and profperity, by his civil adminiftration ; and to enhance her glory, by his public and private virtues. But however congenial it is with his fentiments and feelings, he confiders it unauthorifed by propriety, for him to addrefs to you declarations of this nature, but as he appears in the character of Editor of a work, which he wifhes to obtain, and conceives to deferve, your favorable acceptance. The belief that the general intention and execution, if not all the peculiar fentiments of the *STUDIES OF NATURE* will coincide with your views, encourages him to offer them to your attention. Such a belief is the natural confequence of his opinion that the work is calculated to intereft the Philofopher, by prefenting ingenious and useful speculation.....the Philanthropift, by exciting “ A

WARMER INTEREST IN FAVOUR OF SUFFER-  
ING HUMANITY".....the Friend of Religion  
and Morals, by illustrating the being and  
providence of DEITY.....and the Lover of Na-  
ture, by displaying the harmony and propor-  
tion, the beauty and utility that mark her pro-  
ductions.

JOSEPH NANCREDE.

*Boston, February, 1797.*



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# ADVERTISEMENT

RESPECTING THE

*SECOND LONDON EDITION,*

AND THE

WORK IN GENERAL.

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THE first Edition of this Work, published in December 1784, was nearly out of print in December 1785. It run its natural course, in about the space of a year, without my having employed any one trick of the trade to puff it off, to accelerate the sale, or to send it abroad for a market : I may therefore flatter myself, that it has been graciously received in my own Country. It appears likewise to have been relished by strangers ; for, within these six months, pirated impressions of it have appeared at Geneva and Avignon ; and this literary plunder might have injured me, had not M. *Laurent de Villedeuil*, then Director general of the Press, now Intendant of Rouen, and universally known for the strictest honour and probity of character, given, on my simple request, the most peremptory orders to prohibit the admission of these pirated copies into the Kingdom.\* Far-

\* I have been informed, that, within these four months, they had found their way to Lyons, to Marseilles, to Toulon, and undoubtedly to other places ; so that the booksellers of those cities have not been provided, for four months past, with copies of my Edition, by which the sale of it has been considerably checked. An infringement, so unjustifiable of the rights



ther, the publication of this work afforded an opportunity to Messrs. the Count *de Vergennes*, the Baron *de Breteuil* and *de Calonne*, my ancient and illustrious subscribers, at the solicitation of my respectable friends, Messrs. *Hennin* and *Mesnard*, of Conichard, of procuring for me, or for my family, some annual marks of the KING'S benevolence.

This success ought, undoubtedly, to have satisfied me; but I am no less so with the honourable professions of friendship which have been tendered to me, by persons of all conditions, and of both sexes, most of whom are unknown to me. Some distinguished me by their visits; and others, by epistolary addresses the most affecting, conveying their thanks for my Book, as if, in giving it to the Public, I had conferred a personal obligation on themselves. Several of them have invited me to take up my residence at their country seats, and to enjoy those rural scenes, of which, as they are pleased to say, I am so passionately fond. Yes, undoubtedly, I should dearly love a country residence, but a residence which I could call my own, and not another man's.

I made the best acknowledgment in my power, to tenders of service so flattering; but could avail myself only of the good will which they breathed. Benevolence is the flower of friendship, and its perfume always lasts while you let it remain on the stem, without gathering it. The afflicted father of a family has informed me, that my studies were to him the sweetest source of consolation in his distress. An Atheist, of a city far distant from Paris, has paid me frequent visits, struck even to admiration, as he said, at the harmonies of plants which I had indicated, and of which he had recognized the existence in Nature.

Personages of real importance, and others who wished to pass for such, have endeavoured to allure me to them, by

of property of Authors, and of their privileges, and so contrary to legal authority, ought certainly to be discouraged. And I look for redress against these acts of injustice from the equity of the Magistrate who presides over the Press.



holding out gilded prospects of melioration of fortune : But as long as I can attain the rare felicity of being beloved, and, what is of still greater importance to me, the power of being useful, so long shall I fly, if I can, the calamity so common, and so humiliating, of being under protection. I speak not thus out of vanity, but to express my gratitude, in the best manner I am able, as my custom is, for the slightest marks of kindness shewn me, provided I can believe them sincere.

I have reason to believe, then, from these concurring suffrages of persons of character, that GOD has been pleased to bless my labours, though chargeable with manifold imperfections. I consider it to be my duty to render the Work as worthy of the public esteem as I can : Accordingly, I have corrected, in this New Edition, the errors of the Press, the blemishes in point of style, and the obscurities in point of meaning, which I remarked in the first ; and this partly by myself, partly with the assistance of certain well informed friends, without however retrenching any thing material, and this too in conformity to their wishes. I have only taken the liberty, for the sake of perspicuity, to make some transpositions in the notes. In the same view I have added some others, and among these, in the explication of the plates, a geometrical figure, which renders perceptible to the eye the mistake of our Astronomers, respecting the flatness of the Earth at the Poles, and affords new proofs of the alternate and half yearly course of the Atlantic Ocean, by the melting of the polar ices. Finally, I have employed a set of new and beautiful types of the foundery of M. *Didot* the younger, that the reputation of this Artist might contribute its share toward the celebrity of the Work.

I should have deemed myself happy to derive information respecting the subject of my Book, from the illumination, and candid decisions, of literary Journalists. Gentlemen of this description have been left, for this purpose, entirely to their own discretion ; for I have neither by



myself, or others, solicited approbation, or deprecated criticism; but they have, for the most part, confined themselves to observations of no essential importance. That Journal which contains, of all others, the greatest variety of articles, and which, from the great talents of the persons engaged in conducting it, seemed most likely to instruct me, finds fault with me for having affirmed, That animals were not exposed, by Nature, to perish, like Man, by famine; and it has objected to me, the case of partridges and hares, in the vicinity of Paris, which sometimes die of hunger in the Winter. But as, on the one hand, these animals are multiplied without end, all around Paris; and as, on the other, we mow down every thing, even to a blade of grass, it necessarily must, sometimes, happen, that they perish with hunger, especially if the Winter is somewhat long. The famine, therefore, which they endure in our fields, is occasioned by the inconsiderateness of Man, not the improvidence of Nature. Partridges and hares do not die of hunger in the forests of the North, where the Winter lasts for six months together: They know well how to find under the snow, the herbage and fir apples of the preceding year, which Nature has buried there to serve them as a seasonable supply.

The other objections raised, against some of my positions, by the Gentlemen Journalists, are neither more important, nor much better founded. Most of them treat as a paradox the cause of the flux and reflux of the Sea, which I ascribe to the alternate fusion of the polar ices; which ices, in the Winter proper to each Hemisphere, are from five to six thousand leagues in circumference, but in their Summer, are not above two or three thousand. But as no one of them has produced a single argument, either against the principles of my theory, or against the facts by which I support them, or against the consequences which I thence deduce, I have nothing to say in reply, unless that, as to the point in question, they have pronounced a decision, without having examined into the



merits of the cause; an expeditious, indeed, but not perfectly equitable, method of administering justice.

The Gentleman, who has the greatest number of supporters, and who, undoubtedly well merits that support, for the taste which he displays, in his daily criticisms of literary productions, has objected to me, transiently, that I destroy the action of the Moon, which is in such perfect harmony with the phenomena of the tides. It is evident, that he has not taken the trouble to inform himself, either respecting my new Theory, or the old one. I destroy nothing of the Moon's action on the Seas; but, instead of making her to act on the fluid Seas of the Equator, by an astronomical attraction, which produces not the slightest effect on the mediterraneans and lakes of the torrid Zone itself, I make her to act on the frozen Seas of the Poles, by the reflected heat of the Sun, acknowledged by the Ancients\*, demonstrated by the Moderns, and which every man may experimentally demonstrate to himself, with a glass of water.

\* "The Moon dissolves ice by the humidity of her influence." Pliny's Natural History, book ii. chap, 101. When the Moon shines, in the nights of Winter, in all her lustre, it freezes, no doubt, very sharply: Because that, in this case, the North wind, which occasions this serenity of the air, checks the warming influence of the Moon; but if the wind is stilled ever so little, you see the Heavens covered with vapours which exhale from the Earth, and you feel the Atmosphere softened. I ascribe, as Pliny does to the light of that Star, a particular action on the frozen waters of the Earth and on the Air; for I have frequently seen, in the fine nights of the torrid Zone, all the clouds of the Atmosphere disperse, in an ascending direction; which suggested the proverb in common use among sailors, *the Moon is eating up the clouds.*

Besides, our Naturalists contradict themselves, in supposing that the Moon moves the Ocean, while they refuse it all manner of influence, not only on the ices, but on plants, because, say they, its heat does not make the fluid to ascend in the thermometer. I do not know, in fact, whether it does, or does not act, on spirit of wine: But what conclusion can be deduced from this? The igneous particles contained in pepper, cloves, pimento, caustics, &c. which have such a powerful action on the fluids of the human body, would they communicate to spirit of wine the slightest tendency to ascend, by making an infusion of them with that fluid? Fire, as well as the other Elements, undergoes combinations, which multiply its ac-



Besides, it is far from being true, that the phases of the Moon are, all over the earth, in harmony with the movements of the Seas. The flux and reflux of the Sea, on our coasts, follow rather the mean, than the real motion of the Moon. In other places, they are subject to different laws, which obliged *Newton* himself to admit, "That there must of necessity be, in the periodical return of the Tides, some other mixed cause, hitherto undiscovered\*." The explanation of these phenomena, which bid defiance to the Astronomic System, are in perfect harmony with my natural Theory, which ascribes to the alternate heat of the Sun, whether direct, or reflected by the Moon, on the ices of the two Poles, the cause, the variety, and the constant return, of the Tides; and, especially, of the general and alternate Currents of the Ocean, which are the immediate moving principles of these Tides. Our astronomers, notwithstanding, have never attempted to give any account of the half yearly versatility of these general Currents, so well known in the Indian Ocean; nay, they appear to have been hitherto ignorant, that there existed similar Currents in the Atlantic. This is, however, a fact which can no longer be called in question, after the new proofs which I exhibit in the Third Volume of this Work.

I have advanced, then no paradox, respecting causes so evident; but I have opposed to an astronomical system, totally destitute of physical proof, facts incontrovertible, deduced from all the kingdoms of Nature; facts which have a multitude of correspondencies, in the flux and reflux of all rivers and lakes which are fed from icy mountains, and which I could easily multiply, and exhibit in new lights, relatively to the Ocean itself, if there were occasion, and if health permitted.

tion, in such and such an alliance, and reduce it to mere nothing in a different situation. We must not pretend, then, with our instruments of Philosophy, to arrive at the capability of determining the effects of natural causes.

\* *Newton's Philosophy*, chap. xxv.



One Journal, which, from the title it assumes, would seem destined to inform all Europe, as well as that which, from its title, would be thought reserved for the use of the learned, has thought proper to maintain a profound silence, not only with regard to natural truths so new, and so important, but even with respect to my whole Work. Others have opposed to me, as a complete refutation, the authority of *Newton*, who did not think as I do. I respect *Newton* for his genius and for his virtues, but I respect truth still much more. The authority of great names serves but too frequently as a strong hold to error. It is thus that, on the faith of a *Maupertuis*, and of a *Condamine*, Europe has till now believed, that the Earth was flattened at the Poles. I demonstrate, after their own operations, in the *explication of the plates*, at the end of the first volume, that it is lengthened out at the Poles. What answer is it possible to give to the geometrical demonstration which I produce of it? For my own part, I am perfectly convinced, that *Newton* himself would, at this day, renounce such an erroneous opinion, though he was the first who broached it, if the truth must be told.

The Reader will be, undoubtedly, very much surpris'd, to find men, of such celebrity, falling into contradiction so unaccountable; a contradiction adopted on their assertion, and publicly taught in all the Schools of Europe; and that no one should have appeared to refute the error, and armed with sufficient courage to maintain the truth. I was so astonished at it myself, that I remained for some time under the belief that I, and not they, had, on this article, lost every sentiment of evidence. I dared not even to disclose my thoughts to any person respecting this, any more than the other objects of these Studies; for scarcely have I met, in my progress through life, any but men sold to the systems which have led to fortune, or to those which promise to do so. Accordingly, the more I was in the right, being alone and not backed by puffers, the more disadvantageous was the ground on which I had to combat them.



Besides, how is it possible to reason with persons, who shroud themselves in the clouds of equations, or of metaphysical distinctions, if you press them ever so little by the sentiment of truth? When such refuges fail, they overwhelm you with authorities innumerable, which have subjugated themselves, without a process of reasoning; and by which they mean to subdue, in their turn, the man especially who has not joined himself to any party.

What then could I have done in this crowd of men, vain and intolerant, to each of whom an European education says, from the days of infancy, *Be the first*; and among so many Doctors titled, and without titles, who have appropriated to themselves the right to freedom of speech, unless it were to shut myself up, as I frequently do, in my freedom of silence? \* If I speak there, it is of few things, or of things of slight importance.

In the solitary and unconstrained paths, however, through which I followed truth, I recovered my confidence, with the new rays which her light diffused, recollecting that the most celebrated scholars had been, in all ages, as much blinded by their own errors, as the illiterate are by those of other people. Besides, in order to detect the inconsequent reasoning of modern Astronomers, it was

\* In such society, a man is not permitted to remain long in possession of his right of silence; for they who speak chuse to have no hearers but such as are disposed to applaud.

I have remarked, that the degree of attention which the world pays to its orators, is always in proportion to the degree of power, or of malignity, which it supposes them to possess. Truth, reason, wit itself, in that case, go for nothing. If you would make the world listen to you, you must make yourself feared. Those, accordingly, who shine in it, frequently employ turns of phraseology which give you to understand, that they are powerful friends, or dangerous adversaries. Every plain, modest, candid, good man, is, therefore, reduced to silence before them: It is in his power, however, to get deliverance from this state of constraint, if he can bring himself to flatter his tyrants. But this would, in me, produce the diametrically opposite effect, for I can flatter only where I love.

Fly from the world, then, ye who will neither flatter nor malign; for you will lose in it, at once, the good which you expected from it, and that which is the gift of your own conscience.



necessary to employ only some principles of Geometry, which are level to my capacity, and to that of all mankind. Accordingly, having full conviction, from a multitude of observations, meteorological, nautical, vegetable and animal, that the waters of the polar ices had a natural proclivity southward as far as the Equator, and vexed at being contradicted by the operations, more celebrated than they deserve to be, of Geometricians, I had the courage to examine their results, and became convinced, that they ought to be the same with my own. In a former Edition, I presented both the one and the other to the Public: Theirs remain without a defence, and mine stand unimpeached, though without declared partisans. In a second Edition, I have demonstrated their error on the principles of Geometry; I now expect a decision from the conscience of every candid Reader.

By the prejudices of education our Astronomers have been thus misled; those prejudices which, from infancy, attach us, without reflecting, to fashionable errors, that lead to fortune, and which engage us to reject solitary truths that lead to none. They have been seduced by the reputation of *Newton*, which has been objected to by myself, and *Newton* had himself been seduced, as usually happens, by his own system. That sublime Geometrician proceeded on the supposition, that the centrifugal force, which he applied to the motion of the Stars, had flattened the Poles of the Earth, by acting upon its Equator. *Norwood*, a Mathematician of England, having found, by measuring the Meridian from London to York, the terrestrial degree to be eight fathom greater than that which *Cassini* had measured in France, "*Newton*," says *Voltaire*, "ascribed this small excess of eight fathom, in a degree, to the figure of the Earth, which he believed to be that of a spheroid flattened toward the Poles; and he concluded, that *Norwood*, having taken his Meridian in a region to the northward of ours, must have found his degree to be greater than that of *Cassini*, as he supposed the



“curve of the Earth measured by *Norwood* to be the longer of the two.”\* It is evident that, the degree being greater, and the curve longer, toward the North, *Newton* ought to have concluded that the Earth was lengthened out at the Poles; but he deduced the directly opposite conclusion, namely, that it was flattened there. The truth is, his system of the Heavens occupying all the faculties of his vast genius, prevented his detecting on the Earth a geometrical inconsequence: He adopted, therefore, without examination, an experiment which he thought favourable to his system, not perceiving that it was diametrically opposite to him. Modern Astronomers have, in their turn, suffered themselves to be seduced by the reputation of *Newton*, and by a weakness so apt to warp the human mind, that of attempting to explain all the operations of Nature by a single law. *Bouguer* himself, one of their co-operators, in his *Treatise on Navigation*, book v. chap. v. §. 2. page 435, says expressly, that, “on this discovery of the flattening of the Poles, the whole of Physics, almost, depends.”

Our Astronomers, then, have set out on a ramble to the extremities of the Earth, in quest of physical proofs of a celestial system, happy and luminous; and they were so dazzled with it beforehand, that they mistook, in their turn, the truth itself, which, far from the prejudices of Europe, had, in deserts, just sought refuge under their wings. If the most illustrious of modern Geometricians, could fall into so gross an error in his peculiar Science; and if Astronomers, in other respects, abundantly filled with a sense of their own sagacity, have, under the influence of his name merely, deduced from their own operations a false conclusion in support of that error; rejected the preceding experiments of their Schools, respecting the sinking of the barometer in the North, with the other geographical observations which contradicted it; established on it the basis of all future physical knowledge; and have

\* *Newton's Philosophy*, chap. xviii.



given it afterwards, by the weight of their own reputation, an authority which has not left, to the rest of the Learned World, so much as the liberty of doubting; it behoves us, poor, ignorant and obscure men, to take good care of ourselves, we who search after truth singly for the happiness of knowing it. Let us mistrust, then, in our researches after it, all human authority, as *Descartes* did, who, by doubting only, dissipated the Philosophy of the age in which he lived, which had so long concealed the laws of Nature from the eyes of all Europe, by means of the prejudice of the name of Aristotle, then held sacred in every University: And let us assume as a maxim, that which led *Newton* himself to so many real discoveries, and after him the Royal Society of London, who have taken it for their motto: NULLIUS IN VERBA.

To return to literary Journals, if they have, as it were in concert, withheld their approbation from the natural objects of these Studies, one of them has advanced, as I am told, that I had borrowed my Theory of the Tides by means of the polar ices, from certain Latin Authors. This Theory is at last, it seems, gaining profelytes, since it is exciting envy.

To that imputation this is my answer. Had I known of any Latin Author who ascribed the Tides to the melting of the polar ices, I would certainly have named him, as a piece of justice, which the design of my Work, as well as every principle of conscience, demanded of me. I have not had, like so many Philosophers, the vanity of creating, at my ease, a World after my own fancy: But I have endeavoured, with no small labour, to collect the several pieces of the plan of that in which we live, dispersed among the men of all ages, and of all nations, who have observed it with the greatest care. Accordingly, I have taken my ideas of the allongation of the Earth at the Poles, from *Childrey*, *Kepler*, *Tycho Brhaé*, *Cassini*.....and above all, from the operations of modern Astronomers; of the extent of the frozen Oceans which cover the Poles, from



*Denis, Barents, Cook*, and all the Navigators of the North and South Seas; of the ancient deviation of the Sun from the Ecliptic, from Egyptian Traditions, Chinese Annals, and even from the Grecian Mythology; of the total fusion of the polar ices, and of the universal Deluge which it produced, from Moses and Job; of the heat of the Moon, and its effects on ice and water, from *Pliny*, and from recent experiments made at Rome and at Paris; of the Currents and Tides which flow alternately from the Poles toward the Equator, from *Christopher Columbus, Barents, Marten, Ellis, Linschotten, Abel Tasman, Dampier, Penant, Rennefort, &c.* I have quoted all these Observers in terms of high approbation.

Had I known of any Latin Author, who ascribed to the melting of the polar ices the cause of the Tides, in so much as any one part of the Ocean, I would have quoted him in like manner, reserving to myself the glory of the Architect, that of combining, and arranging these detached observations; of allotting them to their peculiar seasons and latitudes, in order to clear them of the apparent contradictions, which had hitherto prevented the deduction of any fair consequence from them; and, in a word, to assign a cause, and evident means, for effects which, during so many ages, had been involved in mystery. I have formed, then, one Whole of all these scattered truths, and have deduced from them the general harmony of the movements of the Ocean, of which the heat of the Sun is the first cause, the polar ices are the means, and the half yearly and alternate Currents of the Seas, with the diurnal Tides on our coasts are the effects.\* Accordingly, if some persons

\* It will be a matter of some difficulty for many persons, to conceive how our Tides should possibly, in Summer, reascend toward the North Pole, at the very season when the Current which produces them is rushing down from that Pole. They may see a very sensible image of these retrograde effects of running waters, at the bridge of Notre Dame, at the opening of the arch which is supported by the Quay Pelletier. The Current of the Seine, directed obliquely by a kind of dam, against a pile of that arch, produces there a countercurrent, which constantly reascends against the course of the



before me, have affirmed, that the Tides are produced by the melting of the polar ices, which I am to this hour ignorant that any one ever did, I, at least, am the first who demonstrated it. Other Europeans, prior to *Christopher Columbus*, said that there was another World; but he was the first who landed upon it. If others, in like manner, had affirmed, that the Tides have their origin at the Poles, no one had believed them, because it was an affirmation destitute of proof.

Before it was possible for me to collect and to complete my proofs, and to render them perfectly luminous, it became necessary to dispel those thick clouds of venerable errors, such as Poles flattened, and washed with Seas clear of ice, which our pretended Sciences had spread between truth and us, and which were sufficient to involve all our Physics in an eternal night. Here, then, is the glory at which I aspire, that of assembling some of the harmonies of Nature, in order to form a concert of them, which should elevate Man toward the great AUTHOR of All: Or, rather, I have aimed only at the felicity of knowing them myself, and of pointing them out to my fellow creatures; for I am ready to adopt any other system, which shall present to the human understanding a higher degree of probability, and to the heart of Man a purer consolation.

To GOD alone glory is to be ascribed, and peace is Man's choicest possession, which is never so pure and so

river, up to the very bubbling over of the dam. In like manner, the meltings of the northern ices descend, in Summer, from the bays adjacent to the polar Circle, going at the rate of from eight to ten leagues an hour, according to *Ellis*, *Linschotten* and *Barents*; they flow towards the South, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean; but coming to meet on their shores, almost in front, Africa and America, where they project on both sides, a violent reflux is produced, to right and left, along the coasts of both Continents, which is forced northward above the Capes Boïador and St. Augustin, which are rendered famous by their Currents. Now, as the sources from which they issue have an intermittent flux of acceleration and retardation, occasioned by the diurnal and nocturnal action of the Sun on the ices of the eastern and western Hemisphere of the Pole, their lateral countercurrents, that is, their Tides, have likewise a similar intermittent flux.



profound as in the perception and the feeling of that very Glory which governs the Universe. My highest ambition is the delight of discovering some new rays of it, and, henceforward, my most ardent wish is to have the remainder of my days illuminated by it, to the exclusion, as far as I am personally concerned, of that vain, fantastical, unsatisfying, inconstant glory, which the world gives and takes away at pleasure.

I have been thus diffuse on the right which I claim to the discovery of the cause of the Currents and Tides, from the melting of the polar ices, because, having opposed to most of the received opinions on that subject, many observations which I challenge as my own, if each required a special manifesto, to ascertain my property in it, there would be no end to my advancing such pretensions. Besides, if they shall acquire so much celebrity as to procure me, according to the spirit of the age in which we live, perfidious applause, underhand persecution, affected commiseration, all calculated to blast my uncertain, tardy and hitherto hardly budding fortunes, I solemnly declare that, associated with no party, and able to oppose no one but myself singly to every new adversary, instead of cramming the public prints, as the custom is, with recrimination, abuse, complaint, lamentation, the waste of time, I shall defend myself only on my own ground, and shall oppose to my enemies, whether secret or avowed, Truth; and nothing but Truth. Its mirror shall be my Egis; and their image reflected from it, shall become to each a Medusa's head. Or rather, may it be my lot, far remote from fickle and treacherous Man, under the roof of a small rustic cot, which I can call my own, on the border of a wood, to elicit the statue of my Minerva from the trunk of her own tree, and place, at last, a whole Globe at her feet.

Farther, if the Gentlemen Reviewers have withheld from me their suffrages, respecting objects of so much importance to the progress of natural knowledge, and if



Others have got the start of me, in precluding my claim to those of the Public, I can already boast the concurrence of illustrious names, among all conditions of men. The Sorbonne, to whom I am personally unknown, has done me the honour of adopting the new proofs of the Universal Deluge, which I have deduced from the total fusion of the polar ices: These proofs have been laid down as axiomatical, in one of its theses, maintained, for the first time, by the *Abbé de Vigueras*, in his academical exercise of the 6th July, 1785.

After all, supposing my friends, the Reviewers, to have expressed still more reluctance to give an account of opinions, which contradict those of Academies, and strange even to most of themselves; and which must have had a suspicious appearance, from their very novelty, they have made me most ample compensation, in applauding me, far beyond my desert, for moral qualities, infinitely beyond the value of physical discoveries, and which I should deem myself singularly happy to attain.\*

All that is left me, therefore, is to congratulate myself on the general interest, with which the Public has received the moral part of this Work. I have, however, left untouched the great objects of political and moral reform; the one, because it was not permitted me to treat them as my conscience would have directed; and the other, because my plan could not comprehend them. I have restricted myself merely to abuses, which it is in the power of Government to rectify: But there are others as universal, which depend entirely on national manners. Such is among others, the celibacy of most domestic servants. Had it been in my power to have enlarged on this topic,

\* I ought, undoubtedly, to distinguish, in the number of my panegyrists, the two first Writers who have given an account of my Work. The one, notwithstanding the smallness of his page, and his propensity to find fault, has announced it in a manner the most flattering; and the other, devoted to the defence of morals and religion, has placed me by the side of a man, at whose feet I would have thought myself happy to sit, had Providence bestowed on me the blessing of being his contemporary.



I could have demonstrated, that the arrangements of Society never can contravene the laws of Nature ; that it is the interest of masters to have their domestics marry, because they pay, let them do their best, the expense of the smuggled libertinism of servants, much more excessive, beyond all question, than that of an honest settlement, for the strumpet always will spend more than the woman of character.

I could have demonstrated the pernicious influence which the bad morals of unmarried servants have on the children of their masters. I could, likewise, have dilated on the harshness of our pretended Fathers of families, who abandon their servants, on the first attack of sickness, or the approach of old age, or when they become parents ; on the obligations under which they lie, to provide for the necessities of these men, who are their natural friends, the victims of their ill temper, the witnesses of their weakness, and the sources of their reputation, whether good or bad. I could have insisted on the necessity of reestablishing in, at least, the first rights of humanity, the unfortunate wretches deprived of most of the privileges of citizens. I could have demonstrated what an influence their happiness has on the happiness of families, and on national felicity, from what I have seen in some Prussian families, where you find, in general, domestics zealous, affectionate, respectful and attached to their masters ; for they are born, they marry, and they die in the house of the master ; and you frequently find under the same roof a succession of fathers and sons, who have been masters and servants for two or three centuries successively.

Once more, if I have been somewhat diffuse on the disorders and intolerance of Associations, I have respected States ; I have attacked particular bodies of men, in the view of defending my country, and above all, in supporting the corps of HUMANITY. Of this we are all members in particular. But GOD forbid that I should think of giving a moment's pain to any one individual possessed

of sensibility : I who have assumed the pen, only to support the motto prefixed to my Work ; *Miseris succurrere disco ; (the experience of misery has taught me to succour the miserable.)*

My dear Reader, whatever, then, may be your situation in life, I shall cheerfully submit to your decision, if you judge me as a man, in a Work whose leading object is the happiness of Mankind. If, on the other hand, I have attained the glory of communicating to you some new pleasures, and of extending your views into the unbounded and mysterious field of Nature, reflect that, after all, these are the perceptions but of a man ; that they are a mere nothing compared to that which is ; that they are the shadows only of that Eternal Truth, collected by one who is himself a shadow, and that a small ray of that Sun of intelligence which fills the Universe, has been playing in a drop of troubled water.

*Multa abscondita sunt majora his ; pauca enim vidimus operum ejus.*

There are yet hid greater things than these be ; for we have seen but a few of his Works.

ECCLIASTICUS xliiii. 32.



# EXPLANATION of the PLATES.

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## FRONTISPIECE.

### PLATE FIRST.

THE Frontispiece represents a solitude in the mountains of the Island of Samos. An attempt has been made, notwithstanding the smallness of the field, to introduce, and to display, some elementary harmonies, peculiar to islands and to lofty mountains. Clouds of sand, formed by the winds on the shores of the Island, and of water, pumped up by the Sun from the bosom of the Sea, are wafted toward the summits of the mountains, which arrest them by their fossil and hydraulic attractions.

In the foreground of the landscape are presented some of the trees which thrive in cold and humid Latitudes, among others, the fir tree and the birch. These two species of tree, which, in such situations, are almost always found in company, exhibit different contrasts in their colours, their forms, their port, and in the animals which they nourish. The fir raises into the air his tall pyramid, clothed with leaves stiff, filiform, and of a dark verdure: And the birch opposes to these a pyramidical form inverted, with leaves moveable, roundish, and of a light green colour.

The squirrels are playing along the stem, and among the boughs of the fir; and the female of the heath cock makes her nest in the moss which covers the roots. The beavers, on the contrary, have built their habitation at the foot of the birch; and a bird of that species which eats the buds, is fluttering round the branches. The fir accommodates its quadrupeds in its boughs, and the birch finds lodging for its guest upon its roots. The habits of their respective birds are equally contrasted. Among all these animals, however, the most perfect harmony subsists. The dog is looking quietly at

their different employments, and expresses, by the listlessness of his attitude, the profound peace which reigns among the inhabitants of this desert.

At the entrance of a grotto formed in the side of the mountain, is represented a man busied in carving a statue of Minerva in the trunk of a tree. The figure of this Goddess, the symbol of Divine Wisdom, and the substance out of which it is formed, here characterize the Supreme Intelligence manifested in the harmony of vegetables. This Philosopher is Philocles. His history is to be found in *TELEMACHUS*, Books XIII and XIV.



## ATLANTIC HEMISPHERE.

## PLATE SECOND.

## Volume I.

THIS Plate represents the Atlantic Hemisphere, with its Sources, its Ices, its Channel, its Currents, and its Tides, in the months of January and February.

Though I am under the necessity of here repeating several observations which have a place in the text, to these I am going to subjoin some others, worthy, I am bold to say, of the Reader's most serious attention.

Observe, in the first place, that the Globe of the Earth is not represented here, after the manner of those Geographers, who, in their maps of the World, exhibit it as a cavity, in order to give the retreating parts the appearance of being on a great scale. Their projection conveys a false idea of the Earth, by shewing the retiring parts of its circumference, as the widest; and, on the contrary, the prominent parts of the middle, as the narrowest. They present, not a convex Globe, but a concave. This figure represents it, such as it would appear to an eye placed in the Heavens, when the Atlantic Ocean is turned to it, and in our Winter.

You may distinguish in it the sources of the Atlantic Ocean, which issue, in Summer, from the North Pole; its channel formed by the projecting and retreating parts of the two Continents; and its discharge comprehended between Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope, by which this Ocean empties itself, in Summer, into the Indian Ocean.

The opposite side of this Hemisphere, though still, in a great measure, unknown to us, would present, as well as the Northern, a fluviatic channel with all the same accessories; sources, ices, currents, and tides, formed, not by Continents, but by the projections of islands, and of its steep beds, which direct, during our Winter, the course of the Southern polar effusions into the Indian Ocean. However interesting these new projections of the Globe may be, it was impossible for me to make the expenditure necessary to procure



engravings of them. It would have been extremely desirable to have exhibited a representation of both Hemispheres, each in its Summer and in its Winter, in order to see their different Currents at each season, and to have presented a bird's eye view of the Poles themselves, as well in Winter as in Summer, in order to convey an idea of the extent of the cupolas of ice which cover them, and the currents which issue from them, at the different seasons of the year. These different sections would have required at least eight plates on a scale greater than this, perceptibly to unfold the harmonies of this single branch of my Studies of Nature. Besides, this increase of charts would have led to more particular and more copious details, respecting the distributions of the Globe, which I did not mean to treat of in this Work, except as the subject occasionally presented.

The simple aspect of the Atlantic Hemisphere, in the months of January and February, will be sufficient to render intelligible what we have said respecting the polar ices, and their periodical effusions. We shall treat, in their order, of the sources of the Atlantic, of its ices, of its channel, of its currents, of its tides, and even of its discharge.

The Sources of the Atlantic Ocean, are, in Summer, at the North Pole. They are situated in the Baltic Sea, the bays of Baffin and Hudson, at Waigat's Strait, &c. It may be remarked on a Globe in relief, that these sources, which constitute the origin of the Atlantic Canal, turn round the Pole in a winding course, nearly similar to the circuitous current of a river round the mountain from which it descends; so that they collect, in this part, all the discharges of the rivers which empty themselves to the North, and carry their waters along into the Atlantic Ocean. From this arises a presumption, that there is, in proportion, much less polar effusion in the part of the South Seas which is opposite to it. We shall farther see, that Nature has subjected to the Atlantic channel the extremities of the two general currents of the Poles, which there terminate, after having made the circuit of the Globe; and it is by way of opposition to the sources from which these currents issue, that I give to the extremities of their courses the name of mouth. But let us at present confine ourselves to the subject of their sources.

We conceive that the waters of these sources must flow toward the Line, whither they are carried to replace those which the Sun is there every day evaporating; but they have, besides, an elevation which facilitates their course. Not only are the ices from which they proceed very considerably elevated over the Hemisphere, but



the Poles have themselves a great elevation of soil. I ground this assertion, in the first place, on the observations of *Tycho Brhaé* and *Kepler*, who saw the shadow of the Earth oval at the Poles, in central eclipses of the Moon; and on the authority of *Cassini*, who assigns fifty leagues more to the axis of the Earth, than to its diameter in any other direction. In the second place, I have on my side authentic experiments, collected by the Academy of Sciences, but which have no longer been referred to since the opinion became prevalent, that the Earth was flattened at the Poles.

For example, it is well known, that in proportion as you ascend on a mountain, the mercury on the barometer subsides: Now, the mercury sinks in the barometer, in proportion as you advance northward. It falls about one line, in our Climates, when you ascend to an elevation of eleven fathom. According to the History of the Academy of Sciences, for 1712, page 4, the weight of one line of mercury, at Paris, is equivalent to an elevation of ten fathoms and five feet, whereas, in Sweden, you have to ascend only ten fathom, one foot and six inches, to make the mercury sink one line. The Atmosphere of Sweden, therefore, is not so high as that of Paris, and consequently the ground of Sweden is higher.

To these observations may be farther subjoined, those made by the Navigators of the North, who have always seen the elevation of the Sun above the Horizon greater, the nearer they approached to the Poles. It is impossible to ascribe these optical effects to the simple laws of the refraction of the Atmosphere. According to *Bouguer*, a well known Academician, in his *Treatise on Navigation*, book iv. chap. 3. section 3. "Refraction elevates the stars in appearance; " and we are assured, by an infinite number of certain observations, " that when they appear to us in the Horizon, they are, in reality, " 33 or 34 minutes under it.....In regions where the air is more " dense, the refractions must be somewhat stronger, and they are, " likewise, every thing else being equal, somewhat greater in Win- " ter than in Summer. In the practice of navigation that difference " may be entirely neglected, and perpetual recurrence may be had " to the small table placed on the margin."

You see, in fact, at this part of his work, a small table, in which he lays down the greatest refraction of the Sun in the Horizon, at 34 minutes, for all the climates of the Globe. But how came it to pass that *Barents* should have seen the Sun above the Horizon of Nova Zembla, on the 24th of January, in the sign of Aquarius, at five degrees, twentyfive minutes, whereas he ought to have been there, in sixteen degrees, twentyseven minutes, in order to be perceived in the



seventy-sixth degree of northern Latitude, where *Barents* then was? The refraction of the Sun, then, above the Horizon, was nearly two degrees and a half, that is, four times as great, nay, more than *Bouguer* supposes it to be, as he assigns only thirty four minutes, or nearly, for every climate in general.

*Barents*, in truth, was very much astonished to see the Sun fifteen days sooner than he expected; and he could not be persuaded that it actually was only the 24th of January, but, by observing that very night the conjunction of the Moon and Jupiter, announced for the Latitude of Venice at one hour after midnight, in the ephemeris of *Joseph Scala*, and which took place that very night, at Nova Zembla, at six of the clock of the morning, in the sign of Taurus, which gave him, at once, the longitude of his hut in Nova Zembla, and the certainty that it must be the 24th of January.

A refraction of two degrees and a half is undoubtedly very considerable. We may, in my opinion, ascribe one half of it to the apparent elevation of the Sun in the very refractive Atmosphere of Nova Zembla, and the other half, to the real elevation of the Observer above the Horizon of the Pole. *Barents*, accordingly, observed, from Nova Zembla, the Sun in the Equator, just as a man sees him earlier from the summit of a mountain than at its basis. It is, besides, a principle which admits of no exception, of the harmonic laws of the Universe, that Nature proposes to herself no one end, without constraining all the elements to concur, at once, to the production of it. Of this we have adduced manifold proofs in the course of this Work. Nature, accordingly, having determined to indemnify the Poles for the absence of the Sun, makes the Moon pass toward the Pole, which the Sun abandons: She crystallizes, and reduces into brilliant snows, the waters which cover it; she renders its Atmosphere more refractive, that the presence of the Sun may be detained longer in it, and restored sooner to it: And hence, also, there is reason to conclude, that she has drawn out the Poles of the Earth themselves, in order to bestow on them a longer participation of the influence of the Orb of Day.

Certain celebrated Academicians have, it is true, laid it down as a fundamental principle, that the Earth was flattened at the Poles. Hear what the Academician, whom I last quoted, says on this subject. He had been employed, with some others, to measure a degree of the Meridian, near the Equator, which they found to contain 56,748 fathoms: "But," continues he, "what is well worthy of attention, the terrestrial degrees have not been found of the same length,



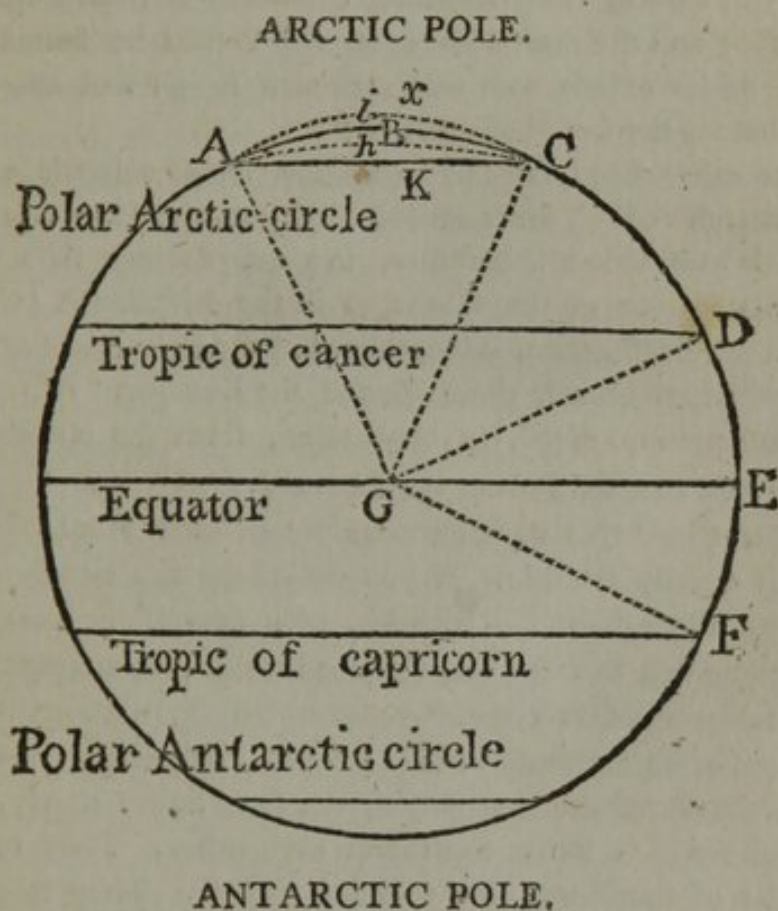
“ in other regions, where similar operations have been performed,  
 “ and the difference is too great to be ascribed to the unavoidable  
 “ errors in observation. The degree upon the polar Circle is found  
 “ to be 57,422 fathoms. Accordingly, it follows, beyond contra-  
 “ diction, that the Earth is not perfectly round, and that it must be  
 “ higher toward the Equator, than toward the Poles, conformably  
 “ to what other experiments indicate, which it is not necessary here  
 “ to detail. The curving of the Earth is more sudden toward the  
 “ Equator in the direction of North and South, as the degrees are  
 “ smaller there : And the Earth, on the contrary, is flatter toward  
 “ the Poles, because there the degrees are greater.” *Bouguer's*  
*Treatise on Navigation*, book ii. chap. 14. art. 29.

I deduce, without hesitation, a conclusion diametrically opposite, from the observations of these Academicians. I conclude that the Earth is lengthened out at the Poles, precisely for this reason, that the degrees of the Meridian are greater there than under the Equator. Here is my demonstration. If you place a degree of the Meridian, at the polar Circle, over a degree of the same Meridian at the Equator, the first degree, which is 57,422 fathoms, would exceed the second, which contains only 56,748 fathoms, by 674 fathoms, conformably to the operations of the Academicians themselves. Consequently, if you were to apply the whole arch of the Meridian, which crowns the polar Circle, and which contains 47 degrees, to an arch of 47 degrees of the same Meridian, near the Equator, it would produce a considerable protuberance, its degrees being greater. This polar arch of the Meridian could not extend, in length, over the equinoctial arch of the same Meridian, because it contains the same number of degrees, and, consequently, a chord of the same extent. If it extended in length exceeding the second at the rate of 674 fathoms for each degree, it is evident that it would, at the extremity of its 47 degrees, get out of the circumference of the Earth ; that it would no longer pertain to the circle on which it was traced, and that it would form, on applying it to one of the Poles, a species of flattened mushroom, which would project round and round, its brim touching the Earth in no one point.

In order to render the thing still more apparent, let us always suppose that the profile of the Earth at the Poles, is an arch of a circle, and that it contains 47 degrees, is it not evident, if you trace a curve on the inside of this arch, as the Academicians do, who flatten the Earth at the Poles, that it must be smaller than this arch within which it is described, as being contained in it ; and that the more this curve is flattened, the smaller it becomes, as it will ap-

proach more and more to the chord of the arch, that is, to a straight line? Of consequence, the 47 degrees, or divisions, of this interior curve, will be, each in particular, as they are when taken together, smaller than the 47 degrees of the arch of the containing circle. But, as the degrees of the polar curve are, on the contrary, greater than those of an arch of a circle, it must follow, that the whole curve should, likewise, be of greater extent than an arch of a circle: Now it cannot be of greater extent, but, on the supposition of its being more protuberant, and circumscribed round this arch; the polar curve, of consequence, forms a lengthened ellipsis.

I here present a figure of the Globe, which I have got engraved, in order to render the mistake of our Astronomers perceptible to every eye.



Let  $x$  be the unknown arch of the Meridian comprehended above the arctic polar circle  $A B C$ , and let  $D E F$  be the arch of the same Meridian comprehended between the Tropics. These two arches are, it is well known, each of 47 degrees. But though they both are subtended by equal angles,  $A G C$  and  $D G F$ , they are by no



means of equal expansion: For, according to our Astronomers, a degree of the Meridian at the polar Circle is greater, by 674 fathoms, than a degree of the same Meridian near the Equator. It follows, therefore, that the unknown polar arch  $x$  of 47 degrees, exceeds, in extent, the equinoctial arch  $DE F$ , which likewise contains 47 degrees, by 47 times 674 fathoms, which amount to 31,678 fathoms, or twelve leagues and two thirds. The question now to be determined, then, is, whether this unknown polar arch  $x$  is contained within the circle, in the curve  $Ab C$ , or coincides with it, as  $ABC$ , or falls without its circumference, in the direction  $Ai C$ .

The unknown polar arch  $x$  cannot be contained within the Globe, as  $Ab C$ , as is pretended by our Astronomers, who will have it to be flattened there: For if it were contained, it would be evidently smaller than the spherical arch  $ABC$ , which surrounds it, conformably to this axiom, that the thing contained is smaller than what contains it; and the more this curve  $Ab C$  shall be flattened, the less will be its extent, as it will approach nearer and nearer to its chord, that is, the straight line  $AK C$ .

On the other hand, this polar arch  $x$  cannot coincide with the spherical arch  $ABC$ , for it exceeds it by twelve leagues and two thirds. It must belong, therefore, to a curve which falls without the circumference of the Globe, as in the direction  $Ai C$ . The Globe of the Earth, then, is lengthened at the Poles, as degrees of the Meridian are greater there than at the Equator. Astronomers have consequently erred, in concluding, from the magnitude of those degrees, that the Poles were flattened.

I shall conclude this demonstration by an image more trivial indeed, but equally sensible. If you divide the two circumferences of an egg, in length and in breadth, each into 360 degrees, would you conclude that this egg was flattened toward its extremities, because the degrees of its circumference in length, were greater than the degrees of its circumference in breadth? What is very singular here, is, that Academicians employ the same figure nearly, to deduce results which flatly contradict each other. They represent the Globe of the Earth like a Dutch cheese. They take it for granted that the Globe is very elevated over the Equator. "The curve of the Globe," says *Bouguer*, in the passage above quoted, "is more sudden toward the Equator, in the direction of North and South, because the degrees there are smaller: And the Earth, on the contrary, is flatter toward the Poles, because the degrees there are greater. One would imagine that the Equator was distinguished only by the greatest rapidity of motion performed



“ in the space of twentyfour hours ; but it is marked by a distinction still more real, namely, a continued elevation, which must be about six marine leagues and a half quite round the Earth, and every where at an equal distance from both Poles.”

We here see the strange consequence deduced, at once, from the flattening of the Earth at the Poles, and from the magnitude of the degrees of the Meridian at that part, which necessarily give to the polar circle a projection beyond its circumference : Those which may be deduced from the elevation and more sudden curve of the Equator, would be no less extraordinary. They are precisely these, if both the one and the other existed, there would be no Sea under the Equator ; because the course of the waters would be in this case determined, by the elevation of six leagues and a half, and by the more sudden curvature of that part of the Earth, to withdraw from it, and, by the power of gravity, to flow toward the flattened Poles, nearer to the centre, and there to reestablish the spherical segment which the Academicians have cut off. Accordingly, on this hypothesis, the Seas would cover the Poles, and would there be of a prodigious depth, whereas we should have nothing but elevated Continents under the Line. But Geography demonstrates the direct contrary ; for it is around the Line that we find the greatest Seas, and a great quantity of Land barely up to their level ; and, on the contrary, elevated countries and lofty beds of water are very frequent, especially toward the North Pole.

Let us now proceed to consider the polar ices. Though they are here represented, precisely in the fugitive, and least visible, parts of the Globe, it is easy to form a judgment of their very considerable extent from the arch of the Meridian which embraces them. At the South Pole, where they are in a smaller quantity, having just undergone all the ardor of the Summer of that Hemisphere, they still extend from that Pole to the 70th degree of southern Latitude at the least. They there form, accordingly, a cupola, of an arch of more than 40 degrees, which, at the rate of twentyfive leagues, at least, to a degree, for degrees at this part of the Globe, conformably to the experience of our Academicians, are greater than toward the Equator, give a breadth of more than a thousand and twenty leagues, or a circumference of more than three thousand. It is impossible to call in question these dimensions, for they are taken from the last observations of Captain *Cook*, who made the tour of this cupola during their Summer.

The ices of the North Pole are much more extensive, because they are represented in their Winter. On both the one and the



other, a crest is expressed, of about twenty leagues of elevation, at the Poles. I shall not here repeat what I have already said respecting the height of those ices which are discovered floating at the extremities of their cupolas, the elevation of which extends to twelve, nay, to fifteen hundred feet. I was exceedingly desirous of procuring a representation, around these ices, of an irradiation, or kind of *Aurora Borealis*, which might have rendered perceptible their circular extent, and have heightened the picturesque effect of the Globe, by rendering its Poles radiant; for the South Pole, too, emits nocturnal coruscations, as *Cook* observed; and it appears that these glories owe their origin to the ices. But *M. Moreau* the younger, who made the drawings for the plates of this Work, and particularly those under review, with all the intelligence and complaisance which characterize him, made me sensible that the Chart had not a field sufficiently ample. He has, in other respects, rendered these polar ices abundantly luminous, to make them distinguishable, without eclipsing the contours of the Islands, and of the Continents which they cover.

As to the Atlantic channel, you can easily distinguish in it, the prominent and the retreating parts of the two Continents, in correspondence with each other. If to this you add the sinuosity of its source to the North, which seems to pursue a serpentine progress round our Pole, and its wide and divergent mouth, formed by Cape Horn on the one side, and the Cape of Good Hope on the other, by which it discharges itself, for six months, into the Indian Ocean, as we shall presently see, you will perceive in it all the proportions of a fluvial canal. As to its declivity, in taking its departure from the Pole, to empty itself even in the Indian Ocean, and South Sea, by the Cape of Good Hope, I believe it to be, as I have said in the text, nearly the same with that of the course of the Amazon.

Let us now consider the course of the polar effusions, produced by the action of the Sun on the ices of the Poles. There issues every year, a general Current from that which is heated by the Sun: And as that great Luminary visits them alternately, it follows that there must be two general opposite currents, which communicate to the Seas their movement of circulation, and which are known in India by the name of the easterly and westerly monsoons, or Winter and Summer.

This being laid down, let us examine the effusions of the South Pole, which is here represented in its Summer. The general Current, which issues from it, divides into two branches, the one of



which sets in toward the Atlantic Ocean, and penetrates even to its northern extremity. When this branch comes to force its way between the prominent part of Africa and America, finding itself straitened on passing from a wider to a narrower space, it forms, on the coast, two counter currents, or *vortices*, which proceed in contrary directions. The one of these counter currents runs to the East, along the coasts of Guinea, up to the fourth degree South, according to the testimony of *Dampier*. The other takes its departure from Cape St. Augustin, proceeds to the South West, along the coasts of Brasil, up to Maires Strait inclusively. This effect is the result from a law in Hydraulics, the operation of which is generally known: It is this, that as often as a current passes from a wider channel into a narrower, it forms on the sides two counter currents. The truth of this may be ascertained, by observing the current of a brook, to the passage of the water of a river under the arches near the abutment of a bridge, &c. Accordingly, the current bears to the East, along the coasts of Guinea, and to the South West, along the coasts of Brazil, during the Summer of the South Pole. But in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, and beyond the strait of the two Continents, it pushes on to the North in full force, and advances to the very northern extremities of Europe and of America, bringing us twice every day, along our coasts, the tides of the South, which are the half daily effusions of the two sides of the South Pole.

The other branch, which issues from the South Pole, takes a direction to the westward of Cape Horn, rushes into the South Sea, produces in the Indian Ocean the Eastern monsoon, which takes place in India during our Winter; and having made the tour of the Globe by the West, comes to the East, to unite itself by the Cape of Good Hope, to the general Current which enters into the Atlantic Ocean. It is possible, partly, to trace on the Chart this general Current of the South Pole, with its two principal branches, its counter currents and its tides, by the arrows which indicate its direct, oblique, and retrograde movements.

Six months after, that is, in our Summer, commencing toward the end of March, when the Sun, at the Line, begins to forsake the South Pole, and proceeds to warm the North, the effusions of the South Pole are stayed; those of our Pole begin to flow, and the Currents of the Ocean change in all Latitudes. The general Current of the Seas then takes its departure from our Pole, and divides, like that of the South, into two branches. The first of these branches derives its sources from Waigat's, Hudson's bay, &c. which then



flow, in certain straits, with the rapidity of a sluice, and produce, to the North, tides which come from the North, from the East, and from the West, to the great astonishment of *Linschotten*, *Ellis*, and other Navigators, who had been accustomed to see them come from the South along the coasts of Europe.

This Current, formed by the fusion of most of the ices of the North of America, of Europe, and of Asia, which, at that season, present a circumference of almost six thousand leagues, descends through the Atlantic Ocean, passes the Line, and finding itself confined at the same Strait of Guinea and Brasil, it forms on its sides, two lateral counter currents, which set in northward, as those formed, six months before, by the Current of the South Pole, set in southward. These counter currents produce, on the coasts of Europe, the tides which always appear to come directly from the South, though they actually come, at that season, from the North.

The branch which produces them advances afterward to the South, doubles the Cape of Good Hope, takes its course eastward, forms, in the Indian Ocean, the westerly monsoon; and having encompassed the Globe, even to the South Sea, it proceeds to Cape Horn, reascends along the coast of Brasil, and there produces a current which terminates at Cape St. Augustin, and is opposed to the principal Current, which descends from the North.

The other branch of the Current, which, in Summer, flows from our Pole, on the opposite side of our Hemisphere, issues through the passage called the North Strait, situated between the most easterly extremity of Asia, and the most westerly of America. It descends into the South Sea, where it is reunited to the first branch, which then forms, as has been said, the westerly monsoon of that Sea. Besides, this branch, which issues by the North Strait, receives much less of the icy effusions than that of the Atlantic Ocean, because the deep bays which are at the sources of that Ocean, and the contours of these same sources, which surround the Pole spirally, receive, as we have seen, the greatest part of the icy effusions of the North Pole, and pour them into the Atlantic Ocean.

The Ocean, accordingly, flows, twice a year round the Globe, in opposite spiral directions, taking its departure alternately from each Pole, and describes on the Earth, if I may venture to say so, the same course which the Sun does in the Heavens.

This Theory, I confidently affirm, is so luminous, that, by means of it, a multitude of difficulties may be resolved, which involve in much obscurity the journals of our Navigators. *Froger*, for example, says, that in Brasil the Currents come in conformity to the di-



rection of the Sun ; that is, they run northward, when he is in the northern signs of the Zodiac, and southward, when he is in the southern signs. It is impossible, assuredly, to explain this versatile effect, from the pressure, or the attraction of the Sun and of the Moon between the Tropics, as these two Luminaries never transcend their bounds, and always proceed in one direction, from East to West : But here is the solution, When this Current of Brasil runs to the South in our Winter, it is the general counter current of the South Pole, which is then setting in to the North ; and when this Brasilian Current runs to the North in our Summer, it is the extremity of this same general Current, which returns by Cape Horn.

The same thing does not take place respecting the Current in the Gulf of Guinea, which is opposite, and which runs always to the East, though it be in precisely the same situation ; for, in our Winter, this Current, in the Gulf of Guinea, is the extremity of the general Current of the South Pole, which returns by the Cape of Good Hope, and which, at that season, sets in to the North, along the coasts of Africa, from the thirtieth degree of South Latitude, as far as to the fourth degree of the same Latitude, according to the testimony of *Dampier*. But this extremity of the general Current which sets in to the North, and which then takes its departure from the fourth degree South, to join the general Current, does not enter into the Gulf of Guinea, because of the prodigious retreat of that Gulf ; so that, in this part only, the Sea flows always to the East, conformably to the observation of all African Navigators.

I shall support the principles of my Theory by well authenticated facts, supplied by Navigators of the highest credit. Hear what *Dampier* says of the Currents of the Ocean, in his *Treatise of Winds*, pages 386 and 387.

“ Besides, it is certain, that, universally, Currents change their  
 “ courses at certain seasons of the year : In the East Indies, they run  
 “ from East to West one part of the year, and from West to East the  
 “ other part. In the East Indies, and in Guinea, they change only a-  
 “ bout the time of full Moon. But this is to be understood of the parts  
 “ of the Sea which are at no great distance from the coast : Not but  
 “ that there are, likewise, very powerful Currents, in the great O-  
 “ cean, which are not subjected to these laws ; but that is not  
 “ common.

“ On the coast of Guinea the Current sets in to the East, except  
 “ at full Moon, or about it. But to the South of the Line, from  
 “ Loango up to 25 or 30 degrees, it runs with the wind from South  
 “ to North, except toward full Moon.



“To the East of the Cape of Good Hope, from the thirtieth degree to the twentyfourth South Latitude, the Current sets in to the East, from the month of May to October, and the wind blows during that period from West South West, or South West; but from October to May, when the wind is between East North East, and East South East, the Current sets in to the West; and this is to be understood of five or six leagues distance from land, up to fifty, or thereabout; for at five leagues from land, there is no Current, but we have a tide; and beyond fifty leagues from land, the Current entirely ceases, or becomes imperceptible.

“On the coast of India, to the North of the Line, the Current runs with the monsoon. But it does not change quite so soon, sometimes by three weeks or more; after that, it changes no more till the monsoon is fixed in the opposite direction. For example, the western monsoon commences about the middle of April, but the Current does not change till the beginning of May; and the eastern monsoon commences about the middle of September, but the Current changes not till October, has begun.”

*Dampier* seems to ascribe the cause of these Currents to the winds, which he calls Monsoons. But this is not the proper place for investigating the cause of the atmospheric revolution, which, however, likewise depends on the Poles, whose Atmospheres are more or less dilated in Winter and in Summer, and whose revolutions must precede those of the Ocean. I shall confine my attention, at present, to the retardation of the westerly Current, which does not affect the Indian Ocean till the month of May, in order to demonstrate, that it is the same which takes its departure from our Pole, in the month of March, and which takes place in various regions of India at eras proportional to the distance of the point from which it sets out.

This Current arrives, then, toward the month of April, at the Cape of Good Hope; and this it is which renders the passage round the Cape so difficult to vessels returning from India in Summer. I shall once more support myself, on this ground, by the authority of *Dampier*, in his *Voyage round the World*, vol. ii. chap. 14. This was on his return from India to Europe.

“We lost time in trying to reach the Cape, which we could not make till the month of October or November; and it was now only the end of March. In fact, it is not usual to make the Cape after the tenth of May.” In addition to this, the Dutch East India Company do not permit their ships to remain there later than the month of March, because from that period the Winds and the Currents steadily set in from the West, which drive the shipping on the



coast: Hence we see, that this Current, which comes from the West, in doubling the Cape, arrives there in the month of April.

From the preceding passage, in *Dampier's Treatise on Winds*, we have seen that this westerly Current reached the coasts of India toward the middle of May: I shall produce another authority to prove that it reaches, about the middle of June, the island of Tinian, which is much farther to the East. I extract it from *Anson's Voyage*, chap. 14; in the year 1742, on the subject of the island of Tinian. "The only good anchorage ground for large ships is off the South West part of the island. The bottom of this road is filled with rocks of coral, very sharp pointed. It is unsafe to anchor there from the middle of June to the middle of October, which is the season of the westerly monsoons; and the danger is farther increased by the extraordinary rapidity of the current of the tide which sets in to the South West, between this island and that of Agnigan. During the other eight months of the year, the weather there is steady." Observe, by the way, that while the monsoon, or the current, comes from the West, the tide bears in a contrary direction between those two islands; which is a confirmation of what we have said, that tides are, for the most part, only the counter currents of general Currents forced through narrow straits.

It is, accordingly, evident that this Current, which leaves our Pole in March, reaches the Cape of Good Hope in April, the coast of India in May, the island of Tinian by the middle of June; and that it traces round the Globe, the spiral line which I have indicated. It might be possible to calculate the velocity, by the time employed in running over these several distances, and in reaching the other points of Latitude, till it gets up with Cape Horn, from which it sets in to the North, as far as Cape St. Augustin, where it meets the general Atlantic Current toward the end of July. But the detail of so many curious circumstances would carry me too far.

In no one respect is it possible to ascribe the general Currents of the Indian Ocean, which, as has been said, sets in, for six months, to the East, and six months to the West, to the attraction or pressure of the Sun and of the Moon, between the Tropics; for these Orbs move invariably in one direction, and their action is the same at all times, within the extent of that Zone to which their motion is restricted. Besides, if their action were the cause of it, when the Sun is to the North of the Line, the westerly monsoon ought to be felt on the coasts of India, as early as the month of March, for the Sun is then nearly in the Zenith of the Indian Ocean; but it becomes not perceptible till six weeks after, that is, till the month of May.



On the contrary, when the Sun is to the South of the Line, and at the greatest distance from the Indian Ocean, the monsoon takes place there a little after our autumnal Equinox, that is, in the month of October. Hence it is evident, that these revolutions of the Indian Ocean have not their focuses under the Equator, but at the Poles; and that the revolution of the month of March, which proceeds from the North by the West, takes six weeks to render itself perceptible in India, because of the vast circuit which it is obliged to make round the Cape of Good Hope; whereas that of the South Pole, which commences in the month of September, arrives much sooner, because it has no circuit to make: And, finally, that the era of these versatile revolutions commences precisely at the Equinoxes, that is, the very moment when the Sun withdraws from the one Pole, on his way to warm the other.

It is manifest, therefore, that the half yearly and alternate Currents of the Indian Ocean derive their origin from the half yearly and alternate fusion of the ices of the North and South Poles; and that their direction from East to West, and from West to East, is determined, in this Ocean, by the very projection of the Continent of Asia.

The Atlantic Ocean has, in like manner, two half yearly and alternate Currents, which have the same origin, but one natural direction from North to South, and from South to North, though with some deviation from West to East, and from East to West, by the very projection of the Atlantic channel. Our Navigators go on the supposition that, in this channel, there is but one perpetual Current, which, in our Hemisphere, always runs from South to North. Into this mistake they have been led by the course of the tides, which, in fact, always do set in to the North along our coasts, and those of Bahama; but especially, by our Astronomical system, which ascribes all the movements of the Ocean to the action of the Moon, between the Tropics.

How many errors may one single prejudice introduce into the elements of human knowledge! It blinds even the most enlightened of Mankind, to such a degree, as to make them resist the clearest evidence, and to reject, for a long series of ages, the experience which every year is accumulating.

I have collected from a multitude of Sea Voyages, and principally from those which Captain *Cook* performed round the World, with equal sagacity and intelligence, a great variety of nautical observations, which demonstrate, that the Currents of the Atlantic Ocean are alternate and half yearly, like those of the Indian Ocean. Not-



withstanding, the very persons who made and who relate these observations, misled by the prejudice, that the action of the Moon between the Tropics alone communicates motion to the Seas, and unable to reconcile their Currents with the course of that Luminary, deduced only this conclusion, that they were naturally irregular, and their cause inexplicable.

Had they adhered to their own experience, which assured them that these Currents changed twice every year; that, in the Indian Ocean, they run for six months in the same direction with the course of the Moon, and six months directly opposite to it; and, in the Atlantic Ocean, in directions which have no relation whatever to the course of that Star; that they are much more rapid as you approach the Poles, than between the Tropics, under the very gravitation of the Moon; and, finally, that they diverge from the Pole that is heated by the Sun, toward that which he has deserted; they would then have referred the causes of these variations to the Summer and Winter of each Hemisphere; and they would have dissipated, in part, that cloud of error, with which our pretended Sciences have veiled the operations of Nature.

Though these nautical observations are decisive as to myself, for they have been made by enlightened partisans of the Astronomical System which they totally subvert, while they confirm the truth of my theory, I shall, however, quote two still more curious, more authentic, and more impartial than all the others, because they have not been picked up by men bred to the Sea, and who, consequently, have neither the prejudices nor the systems of the profession. The one has the inhabitants of a whole kingdom to vouch for him; and the other, one of the most terrible epochas of the naval History of Europe: And both of them wonderfully confirm one of the most agreeable harmonies of the vegetable History of Nature, the elements of which I have presented in the emigration of plants.

From the first of these observations, we shall demonstrate, that the Atlantic Current comes, in fact, from the South, and sets in northward, as Navigators believe, but this only during our Winter. It is, accordingly, produced, in this direction, by the effusions of the ices of the South Pole, which, in our Winter, flow toward the North; and not by the action of the Moon between the Tropics, according to our Astronomers, because, at that very season, the Navigators of the Southern Hemisphere have found, beyond the Tropics, this same Current coming from the South, which assuredly could not take place, if this Current were produced by the action of the Moon on the Equator; for, on this hypothesis, it would flow in a contra-



ry direction in the Southern Hemisphere. But this is by no means the case, as I am able to prove, by the Journals of *Abel Tasman*, of *Dampier*, of *Frazer*, of *Cook*, &c. who found, beyond the Tropics in the Southern Hemisphere, this Current setting in from the South, but only during our Winter.

By the second of these observations we shall demonstrate, that the Atlantic Current comes from the North, and sets in southward in our Hemisphere, contrary to the opinion of Navigators, but only during Summer. Of consequence, it then proceeds directly from the effusions of the ices of the North Pole, which, in our Summer, flow toward the South; and it evidently destroys, by this direction toward the Equator, the pretended action of the Moon between the Tropics, which, according to our Astronomers, impresses on the Ocean a motion toward both Poles.

The first of these observations is related by Mr. *Thomas Pennant*, a well informed English Naturalist, unfettered by prejudice and by system, at least as far as this important subject is concerned. It is extracted from his Voyage, in 1772, to the Hebrides, small islands on the West of Scotland.\* “But,” says this enlightened Traveller, “what is more real, and more worthy of attention, is this, that there are frequently found here (on the Island of Ilay) on the coasts of all the Hebrides and Orkney Islands, the seeds of the plants which grow in Jamaica, and the adjacent Islands; such as those of the *do-lichos urens*, *guilandina bonduc*, *bonducetta*, the *mimosa scandens* of LINNÆUS. These seeds, which are here called Molucca beans, grow on the banks of the rivers of Jamaica; and thence wafted along by the westerly winds and currents, which predominate for two thirds of the year, in that part of the Atlantic, they are driven even to the shores of the Hebrides. The same thing sometimes happens to the turtles of America, which are caught alive on these coasts; and this is put beyond the reach of doubt, since there was found, on the coast of Scotland, a part of the mast of the *Tilbury* man of war, which took fire, and was burnt near Jamaica.”

Mr. *Pennant* has neglected to inform us at what season those seeds, and those turtles, reach the western coast of Scotland. Such omission of dates is an essential defect, though very common with Travellers, who frequently neglect those of even their own particular observations. It is only, however, by means of these dates,

\* Printed at Geneva in 1785, in a collection of Voyages and Travels to the Mountains and Islands of Scotland; Paris, Nyon senior, 2 vols. 8vo. vol. i., page 216 and 217.



That we are enabled to take a glimpse of the combined harmonies of Nature. What shall we think, then, of the taste of our Compilers of Voyages and Travels, who retrench these as tedious and unimportant circumstances? It is easy to see, notwithstanding, in the present case, that the seeds from the rivers of Jamaica, and the turtles of America, arrive in Winter on the coasts of the Hebrides and of the Orkneys, being driven thither, according to Mr. *Pennant*, by the "westerly winds and currents," which "predominate there," says he, "two thirds of the year."

Now, it is well known that the westerly winds blow there all the Winter through; which is confirmed, in this relation, by its own proper testimony, and, in the same Collection, by other Travellers to Scotland. After all it cannot possibly be the West wind which wafts these seeds and these tortoises so far from Jamaica northward. The winds have no hold of bodies level with the surface of the water; and, assuredly, those from the West could not drive them to the North. Nay, Currents from the West could not possibly produce this effect, for they would hurl them to the East; and as Jamaica is about 18 degrees to the North of the Line, these seeds and tortoises would be driven ashore on the coast of Africa of the same Latitude, and not in the 59th degree North, on the coasts of the Hebrides and Orkneys, where, in fact, they do come ashore.

The Current therefore, which wafts them along, proceeds in a northern direction, tending a little toward the East, precisely as the Atlantic channel itself does, in that part of it. Accordingly, the important observations of the inhabitants of Scotland, on the subject of the grains of the Island of Jamaica, of the turtles of America, and of a fragment of the mast of the *Tilbury*, thrown upon their coasts, incontestably prove that the Atlantic Current comes from the South, and sets in to the North, as Navigators are disposed to believe. But it has this direction only in our Winter; for I am going to demonstrate by another observation, no less curious, that in Summer, and in the same Latitudes, the Atlantic Current comes from the North, and sets in to the South, in direct opposition to the pretended action of the Moon between the Tropics, and contrary to the opinion of Navigators. But I ought not to say *opinion*, for they have not a well informed opinion on the subject.

We have already produced the testimony of the most respectable northern Navigators, who unanimously bear witness, that the Atlantic Current comes from the North, and sets in to the South in Summer, in its northern extremity: Such are those of *Ellis*, of *Barents*, of *Linschotten*, &c. who, having navigated, in Summer,



toward the vicinity of the arctic polar Circle, attest that the Currents, and even the tides have a southerly direction, and descend from the North, or, at most, from the North West, or North East, according to the bearing of the bays into which they have penetrated.

We have besides adduced, in support of this important truth, the testimony of the Navigators of North America, quoted by *Denis*, Governor of Canada, who attest that the Currents of the North annually convey, in Summer, toward the South, long banks of floating ices, of a very considerable depth and elevation, which run a-ground so far to the South as the banks of Newfoundland; and, finally, we have quoted the observation of *Christopher Columbus*, who, in a much more southern Latitude, nay approaching to the Tropic of Cancer, found, by experience, in September, that the middle of the Atlantic channel ran southward, and, consequently, descended from the North. To these authorities we might subjoin those of a multitude of other Navigators, who paid attention only to the driving of their ships, and were convinced, in Summer, of the existence of this northern Current, without daring to admit it, or venturing to oppose their own experience to an Astronomical System, which had got into vogue.

But that I may omit nothing relating to a subject so essential to Navigation, and to the study of Nature, and to remove every possibility of doubt as to the existence of this northern Current in Summer, we shall confine ourselves to a single observation, but connected with a well known historical event. This observation is the less liable to suspicion, that it is related without an intention to favour any one System, by a Traveller, who was neither Mariner nor Naturalist, and who deduced no other consequences from it, except those which concerned his fortune and his liberty. It is that of *Souche de Rennefort*, Secretary to the Supreme Council of Madagascar, on leaving the Azores, the 20th of June, 1666, at that time on his return to Europe. *History of the East Indies*. Book iii. chap. 5.

“From 40 degrees,” says he, “up to 45, we saw broken masts, “fail yards, and round tops of ships, which awakened an apprehension that some dreadful naval disaster had taken place. We “were not a little afraid that these fragments might have run foul “of one of our convoy, a vessel of considerable burthen, called the “Virgin, an old crazy ship and very leaky. It has been since ascertained, that this wreck was occasioned by the naval combat “which took place between the French and Dutch on one side, and



“the English on the other. It would have been a happiness to those concerned to have known this sooner.”

In fact, the vessel on board of which *Rennefort* was, and to whom it was unknown that France and England were at war, had the misfortune to be taken and sunk by an English frigate, as far up the channel as Guernsey, ten days after this observation, that is, the 8th of July.

This horrible devastation, scattered over the Ocean, through a space of three degrees, or 75 leagues, was the effect of the most obstinate and bloody combat that ever took place on that element, between the English and the Dutch. It began the 11th of June, and lasted four days. The English fleet consisted of 85 ships of war, and the Dutch fleet of 90, commanded by *De Ruyter*. There were 21 thousand men nearly on each side, and 4,500 pieces of cannon. In that engagement the English lost 23 ships, most of which were burnt or sunk, and the Dutch only 4; but there was scarcely a ship which did not lose her masts in whole, or in part. Nine thousand men, nearly, perished on both sides. The Historians of each Nation, as usual, exalted the glory of their own fleet up to the skies. One thing is certain, that nine thousand human bodies, mutilated and half burnt, given up to sharks and sea dogs, presented, to the monsters of the deep, the spectacle of a ferocity which has no example, except in the annals of the Human Race; and that this prodigious number of round tops, sail yards, and masts, floating about, mixed with flags bearing red crosses and white crosses, must have conveyed some information to the Barbarians of all the Southern regions of the Atlantic Ocean, in what manner the Powers, who pretend to be subjected to the laws of JESUS CHRIST, settle their quarrels\*.

\* These wrecks were, undoubtedly, carried farther than the Azores. It is probable that, at this season, a considerable part of them floated as far as the coasts, and the western islands of Africa. Now the ground of this quarrel between England and Holland was precisely the African Slave Trade. Those Powers had commenced hostilities the year before, on the coasts of Guinea, and at the Cape de Verd Islands, to the ruin of these Countries. I suppose, therefore, that those awful monuments of the battle off Ostend, must have passed through the Cape de Verd Islands, and near to that of St. John, which is so little frequented by Europeans, that the Portuguese call it *Brava*, or savage. Its good and hospitable inhabitants, according to an English Navigator, of the name of *Roberts*, who had a most delightful opportunity of putting these amiable qualities to the test, are so humble, that they look on men of their own colour as subjected, by the authority of God himself, to



These wrecks, scattered over 75 leagues of Sea, came from about twelve miles to the North west of Ostend, where this naval combat was fought, and were carried as far as the Azores, which *Renne-*

the yoke of white men. In this opinion they are confirmed by observing the balance of European commerce, one of the beams of which presents to Europe benefits only, while the other, weighed down by calamities, continually presses on wretched Africa.

But when from the summit of their rocks, under the shade of their cotton trees, and of their plantains, they beheld, along their peaceful shores, this frightful train of masts, yards, galleries, poops, prows, half burnt, stained with human blood, and intermingled with European standards, they then saw the scale, loaded with the miseries of Africa, rise for a moment, and the other, in its turn, sink with an oppressive weight on Europe: And from this reaction of calamity, they, undoubtedly, perceived that an universal Justice governs, by equal laws, all the Nations of the Globe.

A King of France, it has been said, ordered the bodies of malefactors to be thrown into the river, marked with this dismal inscription: *Let the King's Justice pass.* The Chinese and Japanese punish, in the same manner, the pirates who infest the navigation of their rivers. Thus the wrecks of these ships of war, which had so often scattered terror over the Atlantic Ocean, were hurried along by its Currents; and their enormous bulging hulks, blackened by the fire, reddened with human blood, and become a sport to the billows of Africa, spoke much more distinctly than any inscription could, to the oppressed inhabitants of those shores: *Behold now, O, ye black men! the glory of the Whites, and the Justice of God, passing along.*

It would be a calculation worthy, I do not say of our modern Politicians, who no longer set a value on any thing in the World, except gold and power, but of a friend of humanity, to ascertain, Whether the Negro Slave trade has not occasioned as many woes to Europe as to Africa; and what are the benefits of which it has been productive to these two divisions of the Globe.

In the first place, it would be necessary to take into the account, of the calamities of Africa, the wars which its Potentates wage with each other, in order to find a supply of slaves to answer the demand of European traders; the barbarous despotism of its Sovereigns, who, for the attainment of this object, deliver up their own subjects; the unnaturally degraded character of their subjects, who, after their example, frequently drag to these inhuman markets their wives and their children; the depopulation of most of the maritime countries of Africa, reduced to a desert, by the emigration of their inhabitants, who have been swept away into slavery; the mortality of a very considerable proportion of these wretches, who perish on their passage to America and the



*fort's* squadron was leaving when he fell in with them. Ostend is about 51 degrees North; and the Azores about 40, and far to the West. The first of these wrecks were put in motion, from the North

West Indies, by unwholesome food and the scurvy, excessive labour, scantiness of provisions, the merciless whippings, and other punishments which they are doomed to endure in our Colonies, and which destroy the greatest part, with misery, mortification and despair.

Here, undoubtedly, is a sad detail of tears and bloodshed, on the African side of the account. But it is balanced, at least, by an equal train of evils on that of Europe: If you state on this side, the very navigation of the coast of Africa, the corrupted air of which carries off the seamen of our trading vessels by whole crews at once, as well as the garrisons of our settlements on the coast, and up the country, by the dysentery, the scurvy, putrid fevers, and especially by a fever peculiar to the coast of Guinea, which brings the stoutest man to his grave in three days. To these physical evils may be added, the moral maladies of Slavery, which destroy, in our American Colonies, the very first feelings of humanity; because, wherever there are slaves, tyrants spring up, together with the influence of this moral depravation upon Europe. Add to the evils of this quarter of the World, the resources, in the field employments of America, from which our own commonalty and peasantry are excluded, multitudes of whom are languishing at home, in wretchedness, for want of employment, and the means of subsistence; the wars which the Slave trade kindles among the maritime Powers of Europe, their settlements taken and retaken; their naval engagements, which sweep away nine thousand men at a stroke, without reckoning those who are maimed for life; their wars which, like a pestilence, are communicated to the interior of Europe, by their alliances, and to the rest of the World by their commerce; when all these are taken into the statement, it must be allowed that the amount of European evils is a complete balance to those of Africa.

As to the balance of benefits, it is reduced, on both sides, to a very narrow compass. It is impossible with a good conscience, to enumerate among the blessings which the inhabitants of Africa derive from the sale of their compatriots, our iron sabres, with which they mangle each other, our wretched firelocks, with which they contrive to knock one another on the head, and our ardent spirits, which destroy their reason and their health: The whole then is reduced, in their favour, nearly, to a few paltry mirrors and tinkling bells.

With respect to the benefits derived from this trade to Europe, there is sugar, coffee and cotton, with which America and its Islands supply us, by means of the labour of negro slaves; but these rude and formless productions



west of Ostend, on the 11th of June, which is the date of the beginning of the engagement, conformably to *De Ruyter's* letter, and the History of France, and they were found near the Azores by the 20th of the same month at farthest, as must be concluded from the relation of *Rennefort*, though the date of every day, in particular, is not inserted. The Currents from the North had, accordingly, wafted them along, in nine days, more than 275 leagues to the South; without taking into the account, the considerable progress which had been made to the westward, on the whole amounting to much more than 34 leagues a day.

It was not the wind, surely, which hurried those fragments toward the South West with so much rapidity: The prevailing wind, at that season, was contrary to them. *Rennefort's* Squadron, which had just met them, were sensible of no other wind, but that which was carrying them to the North East; and *De Ruyter*, in his dispatches, makes mention only of the South West winds, which blew during the engagement. Besides, as has been formerly observed, what hold could the winds have of bodies, level with the water? Much less could they have been carried southward, by the tides, which then set in to the North, on our coasts: It must have been, therefore, a direct Current from the North which carried them to the South, even in opposition to the tides, and somewhat to the West, by the direction of the Atlantic channel. The Atlantic Current, therefore, sets in to the South, in Summer, notwithstanding the pretended action of the Moon between the Tropics, and its course, at that season, can be ascribed only to the melting of the northern polar ices.

These two observations, so authentic, farther confirm a position elsewhere laid down, that islands are placed at the extremities of currents. *Linschotten*, who had sojourned at the Azores, remarks, that the fragments of most of the shipwrecks suffered in the Atlantic O-

can stand no manner of comparison with the perfected manufactures, and the crops of every kind, which might be derived from the same fields, by free, happy, and intelligent, European cultivators.

It appears to me, that, if this balance of evils so oppressive, and of benefits so trivial, were presented to the maritime and Christian Powers of Europe, they would discover, at length, that it is not sufficient to have banished Slavery from their own territories, in order to render their subjects industrious and happy; but that they must likewise proscribe it in their Colonies, for the sake of these very subjects themselves, for that of the Human Race, and for the glory of their Religion,



ocean are thrown upon their coasts. The same thing happens on the shores of the Bermudas, on those of Barbadoes, &c. These floating bodies are wafted to prodigious distances, regularly and alternately, as the Currents of the Ocean themselves are. The seeds of the island of Jamaica are, accordingly, conveyed, in Winter, as far as the Orkneys, that is more than 1060 leagues from South to North, and a distance of more than 1800 leagues, by the flux of the South Pole; and, beyond a doubt, the fluviatic seeds of the Orkneys are carried along, in Summer, to the shores of Jamaica, by the flux of the North Pole.

These selfsame correspondencies must subsist between the vegetables of Holland and of the Azores. I am not acquainted with any of the seeds peculiar to the rivers of Jamaica; but I am absolutely certain, that they possess the nautical characters which I have observed in those of all fluviatic plants. Here, then, is a new confirmation of the vegetable harmonies of Nature, founded on the emigration of plants. It may be likewise applied to the emigration of fishes, which pursue such long and winding directions through the open Sea, guided, unquestionably, by the floating seeds of fluviatic plants, for which they have, in all countries, a decided preference of taste, and which Nature produces on the banks of rivers particularly, with a view to their nourishment.

It appears to me possible for Mankind, by means of the alternate Currents of the Ocean, to maintain a regular mutual correspondence, free of all expense, over all the maritime countries of the Globe. It might, perhaps, be possible, by these means, to turn to very good account those vast forests which cover the northern districts of Europe and of America, consisting mostly of fir, and which rot on the face of those deserted lands, without producing any benefit to Man. They might be committed, in Summer, in well compacted floats, first to the current of the rivers, and afterward to that of the Ocean, which would convey them, at least, to the Latitude of our coasts which are stripped of planting, as the course of the Rhine pours every year into Holland, prodigious rafts of oak, felled in the forests of Germany. The wrecks of the naval engagement off Ostend, conveyed with such rapidity as far as the Azores, discover, in some degree, the extent of the resources which Nature offers to supply in this way.

Geography might, likewise, make this a source of many future useful and important discoveries. To the effects of those Currents is *Christopher Columbus* indebted for the discovery of America. A simple reed of foreign growth, thrown on the western coasts of the



Azores, suggested to that great Man, the probability of the existence of another Continent to the West. He farther thought of availing himself of the Currents of the Ocean, on his return from his first voyage to America; for, being in imminent danger of perishing in a storm, amidst the Atlantic Ocean, without having it in his power to inform Europe, which so long slighted his services, and derided his enlightened theory, that he had actually, at length, found out a New World, he inclosed the History of his discovery in a cask, which he committed to the waves, confident that, sooner or later, it would reach some shore.

A common glass bottle might preserve such a deposit for ages on the surface of the Deep, and waft it repeatedly from Pole to Pole. It is not for the sake of our haughty and unfeeling Academicians, who refuse to see any thing in Nature, which they have not imagined in their closet, it is not for them that I thus dwell on the detail, and the application of these oceanic harmonies; no, it is for your sake, unfortunate mariners! It is from the mitigation of the woes to which your profession exposes you, that I one day expect my noblest and most durable recompence. One day, perhaps, a wretched individual of your description, shipwrecked on a desert island, may intrust to the Currents of the Seas, the sacred task of announcing to the habitations of Men, the news of his disaster, and of imploring assistance. Some Cæyx, perhaps, perishing amidst the tempests of Cape Horn, may charge them to waft his expiring farewell; and the billows of the Southern Hemisphere shall speed the tender sigh to the shores of Europe, to sooth the anguish of some future Alcyone.

After the facts which I have just detailed, it is no longer possible to doubt, that the Indian and Atlantic Oceans have their sources in the half yearly and alternate fusions of the ices of the South and North Poles; as they have half yearly and alternate Currents perfectly corresponding to the Summer and Winter of each Pole. These Currents, it may well be believed, flow with much greater velocity, than the floating bodies on their surface. There is produced, at the Equinoxes, a retrogressive impulsion in the whole mass of their waters at once, as appears, at these eras, from the universal agitation of the Ocean in all Latitudes. This total, and almost instantaneous subversion cannot possibly be produced by the operation of the Moon and of the Sun, which proceed always in one direction, and are constantly confined within the Tropics: But, as I have again and again repeated, it is produced by the heat of the Sun, which then passes almost instantaneously from the one Pole to the other, melts the frozen Ocean which covers it, communicates, by the effusion of its ices,



new sources to the fluid Ocean, opposite directions to its currents, and inverts the preceding preponderancy of its waters.

Much less is it possible to deduce, as has been done, the cause of the tides, from the action of the Sun and of the Moon upon the Equator; for, if this were so, they must be much more considerable between the Tropics, near to the focus of their movements, than any where else: But this is by no means the case. Hear what *Dampier* says, respecting the tides on the coasts of India, near the Equator, in his *Treatise on the Winds*, page 378.

“ From Cape Blanc, on the coasts of the South Sea, from the third  
“ to the thirtieth degree of South Latitude, the flux and reflux of  
“ the Sea is only a foot and a half, or, at most, two feet.....The tides  
“ in the East Indies rise very little, and are not so regular as with  
“ us, that is, in Europe!.....They rise,” says he in another place,  
“ to four, or, at most, five feet.” He afterwards informs us, that the highest tide which he ever observed on the coast of New Holland, did not take place till three days after the full, or new Moon.

The weakness, and the very considerable retardation of these Tides, between the Tropics, evidently demonstrate, therefore, that the focus of their movements is not under the Equator; for if it were so, the tides would be tremendous on the coasts of India, which are in its vicinity, and parallel to it: But their origin is near the Poles, where they rise, in fact, from twenty to twentyfive feet, near Magellan's Strait, according to the Chevalier *Narborough*, and to a height equally considerable at the entrance of Hudson's Bay, if we may believe *Ellis*.

Let us make a brief recapitulation. The tides are the half daily effusions of the ices of one of the Poles, just as the general Currents of the Ocean are its half yearly effusions. There are two general opposite Currents annually, because the Sun warms by turns, in the course of one year, the southern and northern Hemispheres; and there are two tides every day, because the Sun warms, by turns, every twentyfour hours, the eastern and the western side of the Pole that is in fusion. The same effect exactly is visible in many lakes situated in the vicinity of icy mountains, which have currents, and a flux and reflux in the day time only. But it cannot admit of doubt, that, if the Sun warmed, during the night, the other side of those mountains, they would produce, likewise, another flux and reflux in their lakes, and consequently, two tides in twentyfour hours, like the Ocean.

The retardation of the tides of the Ocean, which is about twentyfour minutes the one from the other, arises from the daily diminution of the diameter of the icy cupola of the Pole in fusion. Accord-



ingly, the focus of the tides is removing farther and farther from our coasts. If their intensity is such, according to *Bouguer*, that our evening tides are the strongest in Summer, it is because they are the diurnal effusions of our Pole, produced by the heat of the day in the sultry season. If, at that season, they are less strong in the morning than in the evening, it is because they are the nocturnal effusions which come from the other part of the Pole, and discharge themselves into the sources, in the spiral direction of the Atlantic Ocean, but in a smaller quantity.

If, on the contrary, at the end of six months, the strongest tides, that is, those of the evening, become the weakest; and the weakest, that is, those of the morning, become the strongest: It is because they are then produced by the action of the Sun on the South Pole, and the cause being opposite, the effects must be so likewise. If the tides are stronger one day and a half, or two days after the full Moon, it is because that Luminary increases by her heat the polar effusions, and, consequently, the quantity of water in the Ocean. The Moon possesses a degree of heat which not only evaporates water, as was ascertained by recent experiments at Rome and at Paris, but which melts the ices, as *Pliny* relates, in conformity to the observations of Antiquity. "The Moon produces thaw, resolving all ices and frosts by the humidity of her influence." *Natural History*, Book ii. chap. 101. Finally, if the tides are more considerable at the Equinoxes than at the Solstices, it is because, as has been observed, at the Equinoxes, there is the greatest possible mass of water in the Ocean, for the greatest part of the ices of one of the Poles is then melted, and those of the opposite Pole then begin to dissolve.

We are not to imagine that every tide is a polar effusion of the particular day when it happens; but it is an effect of that series of polar effusions which perpetually succeed to each other; so that the tide which takes place to day on our coasts, is, perhaps, part of that which takes place, it may be for six weeks together; and its motion is kept up by those which flow every day in its series. Thus in a row of balls placed on a billiard table, the first which receives an impulsion, communicates it to the next, and that one to the following, and so through the whole series, and the last only is detached from the row with what remains of the moving force. But here, too, we must admire that other harmony which pervades the most remote effects of Nature: It is this, that the evening and morning tides take place on our coasts, as if they issued that very day from the higher and lower part of our Hemisphere; and that the tides of Summer are precisely opposite to those of Winter, as the Poles themselves from which they flow.



I could support this new theory by a multitude of facts, and apply it to most of the nautical phenomena which have hitherto been deemed inexplicable ; but the time and the space left me forbid it. It is sufficient for me to have deduced from it the principal movements of the Seas. I was under the necessity of tracing the windings of this labyrinth with an application and labour of which the Reader cannot easily form an idea. I have shewn him its entrance and outlet, and present him with the clew. He will be able, undoubtedly, to go much farther without my assistance. I can venture to assure him, that, by taking advantage of these principles, in perusing journals and Sea voyages, that pretend to any thing like exactness in dates and observations, such as those of *Abel Tasman*, of *Hugues*, of *Linschotten*, of *General Beaulieu*, of *Froger*, of *Frazer*, of *Dampier*, of *Ellis*, &c. he will find a new light diffused over those passages of marine journals, which are, for the most part, so dry, and so obscure.

Had time and means been granted me to unfold this part of my subject, and to display it in all the luminous simplicity of which it is susceptible, I have the vanity to think that I could have rendered it, in many other respects, highly interesting. I would have procured a representation on two large solid globes, of the two general Currents of the Ocean in Winter and in Summer, with arrows which should have expressed the exact intervals between one tide and another ; and of their counter currents, lateral to the passage of all straits, which produce on different shores the counter tides, half daily, daily, weekly, lunar, half yearly. These counter tides should have produced others, on the return, at the passage of islands ; so that the Ocean would have been represented as a vast fluid issuing from each Pole, to make the circuit of the Globe, and forming, on its shores, a multitude of counter currents, and counter tides, all dependent on the effusions of one Pole singly. I should have employed for this purpose the best authenticated marine Journals.

It would, then, have been evidently clear, that the bays of Continents, and even of Islands, are sheltered from the general Currents ; and I would have demonstrated, on the contrary, that the course and the direction of all rivers are adapted to those Currents and those tides of the Ocean, in order to accelerate them in certain places, and to retard them in others, just as the course of brooks and rivulets is itself adapted to the current of rivers, and for the same end.

I would have done more ; in order to vindicate Geography from the charge of dryness, and to unite the graces which all the king-



doms of Nature communicate to each other, instead of arrows, I should have illustrated my subject by figures more analogous to the Seas, and have added new proofs to the theory of those polar effusions, by a representation of several species of fishes of passage, which, at certain seasons of the year, resign themselves to their currents, in order to pass from the one Hemisphere to the other.

This much is certain, that the principal point of their union, as well from the one Pole as from the other, precisely is at the strait formed by Guinea and Brasil, where, as has been said, are formed those two great lateral counter currents which return toward the Poles. There is the rendezvous of the fishes from the North Pole, and from the South. Herrings, whales, and mackarel, are in Summer, found in great abundance on those shores. The whales of the North have formerly been so common at Brasil, that, according to the report of Navigators, the fishery on its coasts was farmed out, and produced a considerable revenue to the King of Portugal. I know not how it may be at present: Perhaps the noise of European artillery may have chased them away from those coasts. A very productive cod fishery was likewise carried on there, known all over America by the name of the Brasil cod.

On the other hand, according to the testimony of *Bosman*, a Dutch Navigator, who has published a very good account of Guinea, the whales of that species which is called *Northcaper* are found in great abundance on the coast of Guinea. He alleges that they resort thither to bring forth their young: *Artus* has favoured us with a catalogue of the fishes of passage which appear on that coast during the different months of the year. Though it is very imperfect, we are enabled by it to distinguish the fishes which are peculiar to each Pole. In the months of April and May, it is a species of ray which rises to the surface of the water: In June and July, a sort of herring, in such quantities that the Negroes, on throwing among them a simple leaden weight, at the extremity of a long line, furnished with hooks, always draw up a considerable number at every throw. During the same months they catch a great many lobsters, similar, says *Artus*, to those of Norway.

In September, innumerable legions, and various species, of mackarel arrive there. At that season, too, appears a kind of mullet, which, unlike all other fishes, who delight in silence, flock to noise. The Negroes avail themselves of this instinct as the means of catching them. They tie to a piece of wood surrounded with hooks, a sort of cornet with its clapper; thus furnished, it is thrown into the sea; and the motion of the waves tossing about the cornet, produces



a certain noise, which attracts the fish in question, so that, in attempting to lay hold of the piece of wood, they are thus themselves caught. Kind Nature, accordingly, thus furnishes to the poor Negroes a fishery adapted to their capacity and industry.

This species of mullet appears, from its instinct, destined to travel through turbulent seas, and at noisy seasons, for he is visible only about the autumnal Equinox, at the revolution of the seasons. But in the months of October and November, those shores are crowded with fishes, whose names and manners are unknown to Europe, and which seem to appertain to the South Pole, whose Currents are then in a state of activity. Such are, a sea pike or jack, the teeth of which are extremely sharp, and the bite very dangerous: A species of salmon, with white flesh, and of an exquisite flavour: Another called the star of the sea: A species of sea dog, which has a very large head, and the throat in form of a warming pan; it is marked on the back with a cross: Some of them grow to such a size, that a single one is sufficient to load two or three canoes. In December arrive vast quantities of the korkofedo, or moon fish; they appear likewise in June. The korkofedo seems to regulate his progress by the solstices. He is as broad as long; and is caught by a bit of sugar cane fixed on a hook. The taste which this fish has for the sugar cane is another proof of the harmonies established between fishes and vegetables. Finally, in the months of January, February and March, may be seen, on the coast of Guinea, a species of small fish with large eyes, which *Artus* supposes to be the *oculus*, or *piscis oculatus* (eyed fish) of *Pliny*. This, too, is an inhabitant of the boisterous equinoctial Seas, for he frisks and jumps about with a great deal of noise.

Had time permitted, I would have extended these elementary concords to the different inhabitants of the departments of the Ocean. We should have seen, for example, the cause of the alternate transition of turtles, which, for six months of the year, take up their abode in certain islands, and which are found again, six months after, in other islands, seven or eight hundred leagues distant, putting it beyond the power of imagination to conceive how an amphibious animal, so sluggish and unwieldy, should be able to make a passage so immense toward places which it is impossible she should perceive. We should have seen their heavy sailing squadrons committing themselves, almost without motion, in the night time, to the general Current of the Ocean, coasting by moon light the gloomy promontories of islands, and seeking, in their deserted creeks, some sandy and tranquil bank, where, far from din, they may undisturbedly deposit their eggs.



Others, such as the mackarel, never fail to arrive, at the accustomed season, on other shores, conveyed by the same Currents, because then they are blind. "When the mackarel come to the coasts of Canada," says *Denis*, formerly Governor of that country, "they have not the least glimmering of sight. They have a speck on their eyes, which does not fall off till toward the end of June; thenceforward they see, and are caught by the line\*." His testimony is confirmed by other Navigators, though there was no necessity for it.

Other fishes, such as herrings, expose their silvery legions to glitter in the Sun on the northern strands of Europe and America, shaded with firs, and advance forward and forward, till they reach even the palm groves of the Line, forcing their way along the shores, in opposition to the tides of the South, which are continually supplying them with fresh pasture.

Others, as the thunny, make their way, by favour of these very tides, and enter, in the Spring, into the Mediterranean, of which they make a complete circuit; and, though they leave no trace on their watery way, they do not fail to render themselves visible in the darkest night, by means of the phosphoric lights which their motion excites. It is by those same gleams of light that we perceive, in the night time, the turtle with their dusky colour, on the surface of the waters. You would imagine that these animals, surrounded by light, had flambeaus affixed to their fins and tails. The phosphoric qualities, accordingly, of the sea water, are in unison even with the nocturnal voyages of fishes.

The Sun is the grand mover in all these harmonies. Arrived at the Equinox, he abandons one Pole to Winter, and gives to the other the signal of Spring, by the fires with which he environs it. The heated Pole pours out, in every direction, torrents of water, and of melted ices, into the Ocean, to which it supplies new sources. The Ocean then changes its course; it draws into its general Current most of the fishes of the North toward the South; and by its lateral counter currents, those of the South toward the North. It attracts others even from the Continent, by the alluvions of the land, which the rivers discharge: Such are the fishes with scales, as salmon, which love, in general, to make their way upward against the course of rivers.

These floating legions are attended by innumerable cohorts of sea fowls, which quit their natural climates, and hover around the

\* Natural History of North America, chap. ii.



fishes, to live at their expense. It is then that we find the sea fowls of the South flocking to the shores of the North, as the pelican, the flamingo, the heron, the stork; and those of the North finding their way to the South, as the lomb, the burgomaster, the cormorant. It is then that sands and shallows the most deserted, are crowded with inhabitants, and that Nature presents new harmonies on every shore.

If the voyages of the inhabitants of the Seas would have diffused new light on the Currents of the Ocean, these same Currents would have furnished us with new light respecting the forms and manners of fishes, which have to us such an uncouth appearance. Most of these fishes cast their spawn in such abundance, that the Sea is frequently covered by it for several leagues together. The Currents carry off this spawn to prodigious distances, and while the fathers and mothers unconcernedly indulge in the dalliance of love, on the coasts of Norway, their fry are hatching on those of Africa or Brasil.

We should have seen their categories, so wonderfully varied, of a configuration perfectly adapted to the different sites of the Ocean: Some, cut out into long sword blades, like the African fish which bears that name, take pleasure in penetrating into the narrowest crevices of rocks, and in stemming the most rapid currents: Others, equally flat, are cut into a circular form, with two long horns, like sail yards, issuing from the head, and inverted behind, to serve them as a helm, as the silvery moon fish of the Antilles. These moon fish are continually sporting among the billows which break upon the rocks, without a single instance being known of any one thrown ashore. Other fishes of a triangular shape, and cut into the form of the chess whose name they bear, advance into the very middle of the shelvy ground upon the shore, where there is scarcely any water, and display, in the bosom of the dusky rocks their blue shining robes, bespangled with stars of gold.

While some, perpetually restless, scratch and scrape into every chink along the beach, in quest of their prey; others, in perfect tranquillity respecting their provision, remain immoveable, on a fixed station, expecting it. Some, incrustated in lumpish habitations of stone, pave the ground of the shores, as the *helmet*, the *lambi*, and the *thuilée*; others, attached by threads to little pebbles, ride at anchor at the mouths of rivers, as the muscle; others glew themselves to each other, as the oyster; others fix themselves as the heads of nails to the rocks, to which they cling by suction, as the *limpit*; others bury themselves in the sand, as the *barpe*, the cockle, the knife handle; and most of the shell fish whose exterior garments



are clear and brilliant; others, as the lobster and the crab, armed with bucklers and corslets, lie in ambush among the stones, where they present to view only the extremities of their horns and their great claws.

Had it been in my power, I would have studied the contrasts which those innumerable families form on the slime and on the rocks, where their shells sparkle with the fires of *Aurora*, and with the lustre of purple and of the *lapis lazuli*. I would have described those sea covered regions, clothed with plants of an infinite variety of forms, which never receive the rays of the Sun but through the medium of water. Their very valleys, where the currents gush with the rapidity of sluices, produce plants elastic, and perforated, such as the leaves of the seapeacock, through the apertures of which the waves pass as through a sieve. I would have represented their rocks, rising from the depth of the abyss, like mounds incapable of being moved, with cavernous sides, presenting bristly beds of madrepores, and festooned with moveable garlands of *fucus*, *alga marina*, and other sea weeds of all colours, which serve as shelter, and bedding, for the calves and horses of the Sea.

During storms, their dark bases are covered with clouds of a phosphoric light; and sounds unutterable, issuing from their untraceable mazes, invite to the prey the silent legions of the inhabitants of the mighty Deep. I would have endeavoured to force my way into those palaces of the Nereids, in order to unveil mysteries hitherto concealed from the human eye, and to contemplate from afar the footsteps of that infinite WISDOM which are impressed on the oozy bottom of the Ocean. But researches so laborious, though so delightful; of such importance to our fisheries, and so fertile of materials for Natural History, far transcend the fortunes and the exertions of a Solitary.

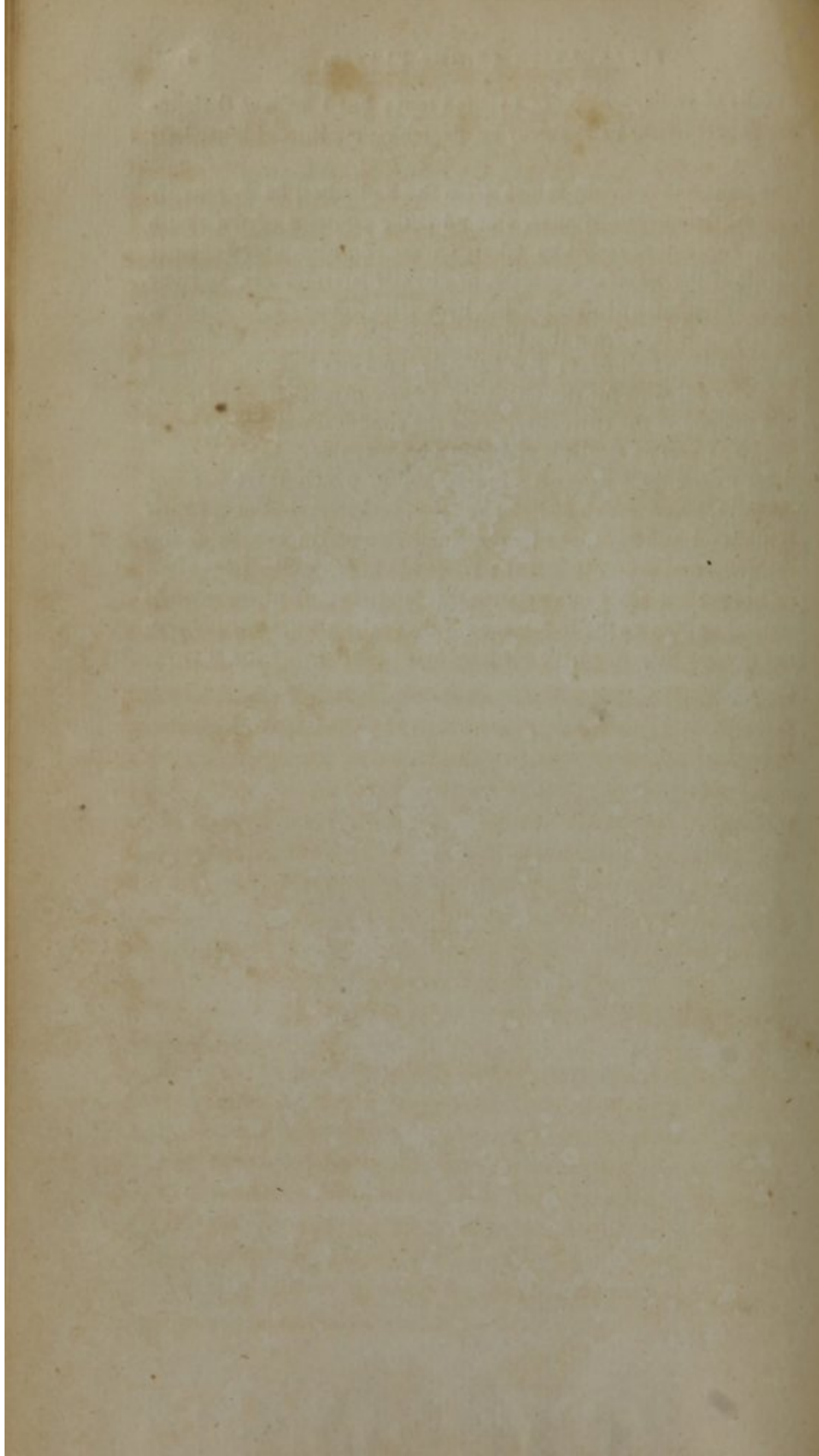
I have the confidence, however, to flatter myself with the belief, that the new Theory which I have presented, respecting the causes of the general Currents, and of the Tides of the Ocean, may be rendered useful to Navigation. It appears to me, that a vessel taking her departure hence in the month of March, with the course of our polar effusions, and keeping in the middle of the Atlantic channel, might proceed, in Summer, all the way to the Eastindies, continually favoured by the current. This I am able even to prove by the experience of various Navigators. It is true that, during the season which is the Winter of the South Pole, the weathering of the Cape is dangerous, because the westerly monsoon, which then predominates, in those Seas, excites in them frequent storms, as well as on

the coasts of India, which are opposed to it ; but I believe these inconveniences might be avoided, by stretching out into a higher Latitude.

The same vessel might return from the Eastindies, six months afterwards, during our Winter, aided by the effusions of the South Pole. Advantage might be taken, on the contrary, of the counter currents of the general Currents, or of their lateral Tides, to go or return, at the intermediate seasons, by coasting along the Continents. It is easy to deduce from this theory other means of information for the navigation of all Seas : For example, assistance might be derived from those currents for the discovery of new islands ; for every island is situated at the extremity, or at the confluence of one or more currents as every volcano is placed in a counter tide.

Here I close these nautical disquisitions, in which there are undoubtedly, inaccuracies of style, and manifold imperfections of various kinds ; but determined by particular circumstances to bring this Work, without delay, before the tribunal of the Public, I have hastened to present my Country with this last testimony of my attachment. I reckon on the indulgence of the really intelligent, and presume to hope they will have the goodness to rectify my mistakes.





STUDIES  
OF  
NATURE.

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STUDY FIRST.

IMMENSITY OF NATURE: PLAN OF MY WORK.

SOME years have elapsed, since I formed the design of composing a general History of Nature, in imitation of *Aristotle*, *Pliny*, Chancellor *Bacon*, and several illustrious modern Authors. The field appeared to me so vast, that I could not believe the possibility of its being entirely pre-occupied. Besides, Nature invites to the cultivation of herself, persons of every age and country; and if she promises the golden harvest of discovery, only to men of genius, she reserves some gleanings, at least, for the simple and unlearned; for such, especially, as, like myself, are making a pause every step they advance, transported at the beauty of her divine productions.

I was farther prompted to the execution of my great design, in the view of rendering an acceptable service to my fellow-creatures, and of meriting their approbation; particularly that of *Louis XVI.* my illustrious benefactor, who, after the example of *Titus* and *Marcus-Aurelius*, devotes his whole attention to the felicity of mankind.

In Nature herself alone we must expect to find the laws of Nature; and we plunge into difficulty and distress, only in proportion as we deviate from these laws. To study Nature,



therefore, is to act the part of a good subject, and of a friend to humanity. I have employed in my researches, all the powers of reasoning I possess; and though my means may have been slender, I can say, with truth, that I have not permitted a single day to pass, without picking up some agreeable, or useful, observation.

I proposed to begin the composition of my Work, when I had ceased from observing, and when I should have collected all the materials necessary to a History of Nature; but I found myself in the condition of the child, who, with a shell, had dug a hole in the sand, to hold the water of the Ocean.

Nature is of unbounded extent, and I am a human being, limited on every side. Not only her general History, but that of the smallest plant, far transcends my highest powers. Permit me to relate, on what occasion I became sensible of this.

One day, in Summer, while I was busied in the arrangement of some observations which I had made, respecting the harmonies discoverable in this Globe of ours, I perceived on a strawberry plant, which had been, accidentally, placed in my window, some small winged insects, so very beautiful, that I took a fancy to describe them. Next day, a different sort appeared, which I proceeded, likewise, to describe. In the course of three weeks, no less than thirty-seven species, totally distinct, had visited my strawberry plant: at length, they came in such crowds, and presented such variety, that I was constrained to relinquish this study, though highly amusing, for want of leisure, and, to acknowledge the truth, for want of expression.

The insects, which I had observed, were all distinguishable from each other, by their colours, their forms, and their motions. Some of them shone like gold, others were of the colour of silver, and of brass; some were spotted, some striped; they were blue, green, brown, chestnut coloured. The heads of some were rounded like a turban, those of others were drawn out into the figure of a cone. Here it was dark as a tuft of black velvet, there it sparkled like a ruby.

There was not less diversity in their wings. In some they



were long and brilliant, like transparent plates of mother of pearl; in others, short and broad, resembling net-work of the finest gauze. Each had his particular manner of disposing and managing his wings. Some disposed theirs perpendicularly; others, horizontally; and they seemed to take pleasure in displaying them. Some flew spirally, after the manner of butterflies; others sprung into the air, directing their flight in opposition to the wind, by a mechanism somewhat similar to that of a paper-kite, which, in rising, forms, with the axis of the wind, an angle, I think, of twenty-two degrees and a half.

Some alighted on the plant to deposit their eggs; others, merely to shelter themselves from the Sun. But the greatest part paid this visit from reasons totally unknown to me: for some went and came, in an incessant motion, while others moved only the hinder part of their body. A great many of them remained entirely motionless, and were like me, perhaps, employed in making observations.

I scorned to pay any attention, as being already sufficiently known, to all the other tribes of insects, which my strawberry plant had attracted; such as the snail, which nestles under the leaves; the butterfly, which flutters around; the beetle, which digs about its roots; the small worm, which contrives to live in the *parenchyme*, that is, in the mere thickness of a leaf; the wasp and honey-bee, which hum around the blossoms; the gnat, which sucks the juices of the stem; the ant, which licks up the gnat; and, to make no longer an enumeration, the spider, which, in order to find a prey in these, one after another, distends his snares over the whole vicinity.

However minute these objects may be, they, surely, merited my attention, as Nature deemed them not unworthy of her's. Could I refuse them a place in my general History, when she had given them one in the system of the Universe? For a still stronger reason, had I written the history of my strawberry plant, I must have given some account of the insects attached to it. Plants are the habitation of insects; and it is impossible to give the history of a city, without saying something of its inhabitants.



Besides, my strawberry plant was not in its natural situation, in the open country, on the border of a wood, or by the brink of a rivulet, where it could have been frequented by many other species of living creatures. It was confined to an earthen pot, amidst the smoke of Paris. I observed it only at vacant moments. I knew nothing of the insects which visited it during the course of the day; still less of those which might come only in the night, attracted by simple emanations, or, perhaps, by a phosphoric light, which escapes our senses. I was totally ignorant of the various species which might frequent it, at other seasons of the year, and of the endless other relations which it might have, with reptiles, with amphibious animals, fishes, birds, quadrupeds, and, above all, with Man, who undervalues every thing which he cannot convert to his own use.

But it was not sufficient to observe it, if I may use the expression, from the heights of my greatness; for, in this case, my knowledge would have been greatly inferior to that of one of the insects, who made it their habitation. Not one of them, on examining it with his little spherical eyes, but must have distinguished an infinite variety of objects, which I could not perceive without the assistance of a microscope, and after much laborious research. Nay, their eyes are inconceivably superior even to this instrument; for it shows us the objects only which are in its focus, that is, at the distance of a few lines; whereas they perceive, by a mechanism of which we have no conception, those which are near, and those which are far off. Their eyes, therefore, are, at once, microscopes and telescopes. Besides, by their circular disposition round the head, they have the advantage of viewing the whole circuit of the heavens at the same instant, while those of the Astronomer can take in, at most, but the half. My winged insects, accordingly, must discern in the strawberry plant, at a single glance, an arrangement and combination of parts, which, assisted by the microscope, I can observe only separate from each other, and in succession.

On examining the leaves of this vegetable, with the aid of a lens which had but a small magnifying power, I found them divided into compartments, hedged round with bristles, separated



by canals, and strewed with glands. These compartments appeared to me similar to large verdant inclosures, their bristles to vegetables of a particular order; of which some were upright, some inclined, some forked, some hollowed into tubes, from the extremity of which a liquid distilled; and their canals, as well as their glands, seemed full of a brilliant fluid. In plants of a different species, these bristles, and these canals exhibit forms, colours, and fluids entirely different. There are even glands, which resemble basons, round, square, or radiated.

Now, Nature has made nothing in vain. Wherever she has prepared a habitation, she immediately peoples it. She is never straitened for want of room. She has placed animals, furnished with fins, in a single drop of water, and in such multitudes, that *Leeuwenhoek*, the natural Philosopher, reckoned up to thousands of them. Many others after him, and, among the rest, *Robert Hook*, have seen, in one drop of water, as small as a grain of millet, some 10, others 30, and some as far as 45 thousand. Those who know not how far the patience and sagacity of an Observer can go, might, perhaps, call in question the accuracy of these observations, if *Lyonnet*, who relates them in *Leffer's Theology of Insects\**, had not demonstrated the possibility of it, by a piece of mechanism abundantly simple. We are certain, at least, of the existence of those beings whose different figures have actually been drawn. Others have been found, whose feet are armed with claws, on the body of the fly, and even on that of the flea.

It is credible, then, from analogy, that there are animals feeding on the leaves of plants, like the cattle in our meadows, and on our mountains; which repose under the shade of a down imperceptible to the naked eye, and which, from goblets formed like so many suns, quaff nectar of the colour of gold and silver. Each part of the flower must present, to them, a spectacle of which we can form no idea. The yellow *antheræ* of flowers, suspended by fillets of white, exhibit to their eyes, double rafters of gold in equilibrio, on pillars fairer than ivory; the *corolla*, an arch of unbounded magnitude, embellished with the ruby and the topaz; rivers of nectar and honey; the

\* Book II. chap. 3. See the last note.



other parts of the flowret, cups, urns, pavilions, domes, which the human Architect and Goldsmith have not yet learned to imitate.

I do not speak thus from conjecture : for having examined, one day, by the microscope, the flowers of thyme, I distinguished in them, with equal surprize and delight, superb flagons, with a long neck, of a substance resembling amethyst, from the gullets of which seemed to flow ingots of liquid gold. I have never made observation, of the *corolla* simply, of the smallest flower, without finding it composed of an admirable substance, half transparent, studded with brilliants, and shining in the most lively colours.

The beings which live under a reflex thus enriched, must have ideas, very different from ours, of light, and of the other phenomena of Nature. A drop of dew, filtering in the capillary, and transparent, tubes of a plant, presents, to them, thousands of cascades ; the same drop, fixed as a wave on the extremity of one of its prickles, an Ocean without a shore ; evaporated into air, a vast ærial Sea. They must, therefore, see fluids ascending, instead of falling ; assuming a globular form, instead of sinking to a level ; and mounting into the air, instead of obeying the power of gravity.

Their ignorance must be as wonderful as their knowledge. As they have a thorough acquaintance with the harmony of only the minutest objects, that of vast objects must escape them. They know not, undoubtedly, that there are men, and, among these, learned men, who know every thing, who can explain every thing, who, transient like themselves, plunge into an infinity on the ascending scale, in which they are lost ; whereas they, in virtue of their littleness, are acquainted with an opposite infinity, in the last divisions of time and matter.

In these ephemeral beings, we must find the youth of a single morning, and the decrepitude of one day. If they possess historical monuments, they must have their months, years, ages, epochs, proportioned to the duration of a flower ; they must have a chronology different from ours, as their hydraulics and optics must differ. Thus, in proportion as Man brings the elements of Nature near him, the principles of his Science disappear.



Such, therefore, must have been my strawberry plant, and its natural inhabitants, in the eyes of my winged insects, which had alighted to visit it; but though I had been able to acquire, with them, an intimate knowledge of this new world, I was still very far from having the History of it. I must have, previously, studied its relations to the other parts of Nature; to the Sun which expands its blossom, to the winds which sow its seeds over and over, to the brooks whose banks it forms and embellishes. I must have known, how it was preserved in Winter, during a cold capable of cleaving stones asunder; and how it should appear verdant in the Spring, without any pains employed to preserve it from the frost; how, feeble and crawling along the ground, it should be able to find its way, from the deepest valley, to the summit of the Alps, to traverse the Globe from north to south, from mountain to mountain, forming, on its passage, a thousand charming pieces of chequered work, of its fair flowers, and rose-coloured fruit, with the plants of every other climate; how it has been able to scatter itself from the mountains of Cachemire to Archangel, and from the *Felices*, in Norway, to Kamtschatka; how, in a word, we find it, in equal abundance, in both American Continents, though an infinite number of animals is making incessant and universal war upon it, and no gardener is at the trouble to sow it again.

Supposing all this knowledge acquired, I should still have arrived no farther than at the history of the *genus*, and not that of the *species*. The varieties would yet remain unknown, which have each its particular character, according as they have flowers single, in pairs, or disposed in clusters; according to the colour, the smell, and the taste of the fruit; according to the size, the figure, the edging, the smoothness, or the downy clothing of their leaves. One of our most celebrated botanists, *Sebastian le Vaillant*\*, has found, in the environs of Paris alone, five distinct species, three of which bear flowers, without producing fruit. In our gardens, we cultivate at least twelve different sorts of foreign strawberries; that of Chili, of Peru; the Alpine, or perpetual; the Swedish, which is green, &c. But

\* *Botanicon Parisiense*.



how many varieties are there, to us totally unknown! Has not every degree of latitude a species peculiar to itself? Is it not presumable, that there may be trees which produce strawberries, as there are those which bear pease and French-beans? May we not even consider as varieties of the strawberry, the numerous species of the raspberry and of the bramble, with which it has a very striking analogy, from the shape of its leaves; from its shoots, which creep along the ground, and replant themselves; from the rose-form of its flowers, and that of its fruit, the seeds of which are on the outside? Has it not, besides, an affinity with the eglantine and the rose-tree, as to the flower; with the mulberry, as to the fruit; and with the trefoil itself, as to the leaves; one species of which, common in the environs of Paris, bears, likewise, its seeds aggregated into the form of a strawberry, from which it derives the botanic name of *trifolium fragiferum*, the strawberry bearing trefoil? Now, if we reflect, that all these species, varieties, analogies, affinities, have, in every particular latitude, necessary relations with a multitude of animals, and that these relations are altogether unknown to us, we shall find, that a complete History of the strawberry-plant would be ample employment for all the Naturalists in the world.

What a task, then, would it be, to write the History, in like manner, of all the species of vegetables, scattered over the face of the whole Earth? The celebrated *Linnaeus* reckoned up from seven to eight thousand of them; but he had not travelled. The famous *Sherard*, it is said, was acquainted with sixteen thousand. Another Botanist swells his catalogue up to twenty thousand. Finally, one still more modern, boasts of having himself made a collection of twenty-five thousand; and he estimates the number of those which he has not seen, at four or five times as many. But all these enumerations must be extremely defective, if it is considered, as has been remarked by this last Observer himself, that we know little or nothing of the interior of Africa; of that of the three Arabias, and even of the two Americas; very little of New Guinea, New Holland and Zealand, and of the innumerable islands of the South Sea, the greatest part of which are themselves still undiscovered. We know hardly any thing of the Isle of Ceylon, except



a little of the coast; of the great island of Madagascar; of the immense archipelagos of the Philippines and Moluccas, and of almost all the Asiatic islands. As to that vast Continent, with the exception of some great roads in the interior, and some parts of the coast resorted to by the traffick of Europe, we may affirm that it is wholly unknown to us.

How many immense districts are there in Tartary, in Siberia, and even in many of the kingdoms of Europe, where the foot of Botanist never trod! Some, indeed, have given us a herbal of Malabar, Japan, China, &c. but if we reflect, that, in these countries, their researches never penetrated beyond the sea-coast, and were generally confined to one season of the year, when a part only of the plants, peculiar to each climate, appear; that they have visited only the narrow regions adjoining to our European factories; that they have never dared to plunge into deserts, where they could have found neither subsistence nor guide; nor ventured themselves among the numerous tribes of barbarous Nations, whose language they did not understand; we shall find reason to conclude, that their boasted collections, however valuable, are still extremely imperfect.

In order to be convinced of this, we have only to compare the time employed by them, in making their collections of plants, in foreign countries, with that which it cost *Le Vaillant* to collect those of the vicinity of Paris only. The learned *Tournefort* had already made this a particular study; and, after a master so indefatigable had completed his Work, all the Botanists of the capital, it was thought, might have gone to rest. *Le Vaillant*, his pupil, had the courage to walk over the same ground after him, and discovered such a considerable quantity of distinct species, overlooked by *Tournefort*, that he doubled, at least, the catalogue of our plants. He made it amount to fifteen or sixteen hundred. And even then, he did not include in this enumeration, those which differ only in the colour of the flowers, and the spots of the leaves, though Nature frequently employs such signs as these, in the vegetable world, to distinguish the species, and to form their true characters. Hear what *Boerhaave*, his illustrious Editor, says of his laborious researches:



*Incubuit quippe huic labori ab anno 1696, usque in Martium 1722 ; toto quidem tanti decursu temporis in eo occupatus semper, nullum præteriens unquam, cujus plantas haud excuteret, angulum : vias, agros, valles, montes, hortos, nemora, stagna, paludes, flumina, ripas, fossas, puteos, undequaque lustrans. Contigit ergo, crebro, ut detegeret maximi quæ Tournefortii intentissimos oculos effugerant\**. (Preface to the *Botanicon Parisiense*, page 3 and 4.)

*Sebastian le Vaillant*, accordingly, employed no less than twenty-six whole years, in his own country, and with the assistance of his pupils, in completing his botanical description of the plants of a few square leagues ; whereas the persons who pretend to give us the Botany of many foreign countries, were alone and unassisted, and dispatched the business in a few months. But, though his sagacity and perseverance seem to have left us nothing more to wish for, I have my doubts, whether he has made a complete collection of all the gifts which Flora scatters over our plains ; and whether he has seen, if I may use the expression, to the bottom of her basket. Pliny observed plants, in places not comprehended in *Boerhaave's* enumeration, and which grow on the tiles that cover our houses, on rotten sieves, and the heads of ancient statues. It is, undoubtedly, certain, that we are, from time to time, discovering some, at no great distance from Paris, which have no place in the *Botanicon* of *Le Vaillant*.

For my own part, if I might be permitted to hazard a conjecture, respecting the number of the distinct species of plants, spread over the Earth, such is my idea of the immensity of Nature, and of her subdivisions, that I am disposed to believe, there is not a square league of earth, but what presents some one plant peculiar to itself, or, at least, which thrives there better, and appears more beautiful, than in any other part of

\* He devoted his whole attention to this laborious undertaking, from the year 1696 to March 1722. During a period of such length, he was constantly and unwearily employed in it, never passing by the smallest corner without examining what plants it contained. With the eye of an Observer, he pried into every place the roads, fields, vallies, mountains, gardens, forests, pools, morasses, rivers, their banks, ditches, wells ; hence he had, frequently, the good fortune, to discover many things which escaped even the eager eyes of the great *Tournefort*.



the world. This makes the number, of the primordial species of vegetables, amount to several millions, diffused over as many millions of square leagues, of which the surface of our Globe consists. The farther south we advance, the more their variety increases within spaces of the same dimension. The Isle of Taity, in the South Sea, was found to have a botany peculiar to itself, and which had nothing in common with that of the places in Africa and America, which are situated in the same latitude; nay, totally different from that of the adjacent islands. And if we now reflect, that each plant has several different names, in its own country: that every Nation imposes particular denominations, and that all these names, at least the greater part, are varying every age, what difficulties does not the vocabulary alone oppose to the study of Botany?

All these preliminary notions, however, would still form only a useless Science, did we even know, in the most complete detail, all the parts of which plants are composed. It is the combination of these parts, the attitude of the plants, their port, their elegance, the harmonies which they form, when grouped, or in contrast with each other, which it would be interesting to determine. I do not know that any thing has been so much as attempted on this subject,

As to their virtues, it may be affirmed, that they are for the most part, unknown, or neglected, or abused. Their qualities are often perverted, in making cruel experiments on innocent animals, while they might be usefully employed as miraculous remedies, to counteract the ills of human life. We have preserved, for example, in the Royal Cabinet at Paris, arrows more formidable than those of Hercules, though dipped in the blood of the snake of Lerna. Their points are impregnated with the juice of a plant so venomous, that, though exposed to the air for many years, they can, with the slightest puncture, destroy the most robust of animals, in a few minutes. The blood of the creature, be the wound ever so trifling, instantly congeals. But if the patient, at the same instant, is made to swallow a small quantity of sugar, the circulation is immediately restored. Both the poison and the antidote have been discovered by the savages which inhabit the banks of the Amazon; and it is of im-



portance to observe, that they never employ in war, but only in the chace, this murderous method of destroying life.

Wherefore do not we, who pretend to so much humanity and illumination, endeavour to ascertain, by experiment, whether this poison might not be rendered medicinal in cases of a sudden dissolution of the blood; and sugar, in cases of sudden coagulation? Alas! how is it to be expected we should apply to the preservation of Mankind, the malignant and destructive qualities of a foreign vegetable, we who are continually abusing, for mutual destruction, the precious gifts which Nature has bestowed, in the view of rendering human life innocent and happy? The elm and the beech, under the shade of which our shepherds and their mates delight to dance, are hewn down into carriages, for mounting the thundering ordnance. We intoxicate our soldiers into madness, that they may kill each other, without hatred, with that very juice of the vine which Providence has given to be the means of reconciliation among enemies? The lofty fir-trees, planted by the benignant hand of Nature, amidst the snows of the North, to shelter and warm the inhabitants, are converted into masts, for the vessels of Europe, to carry the flames of devouring fire against the peaceful inhabitants of the Southern Hemisphere; and the canvas, designed for the humble cloathing of the village-maid, becomes a sail for the plundering corsair, to extend his ravages to remotest India. Our crops, and our forests, are wasted over the Ocean, to spread desolation over both the Old and New Worlds.

But let us drop the history of Man, and resume that of Nature. If, from the vegetable, we make a transition to the animal kingdom, a field of incomparably greater extent presents itself. An intelligent Naturalist, at Paris, some years ago, announced, that he was in possession of more than thirty thousand distinct species of animals. I know not whether the King's magnificent Cabinet may not contain more; but I know well, that his Herbars contain only eighteen thousand plants, and that about six thousand are in a state of cultivation in the Royal Botanic Garden. This number of animals, however, so superior to that of vegetables, is a mere nothing, in comparison with what exists on the Globe.

When we recollect, that every species of plant is a point of



union for different genera of insects, and that there is not, perhaps, a single one, but which has, peculiar to itself, a species of fly, butterfly, gnat, beetle, lady-bird, snail, &c. that these insects serve for food, to other species, and these exceedingly numerous, such as the spider, the dragon-fly, the ant, the formicaleo; and to the immense families of small birds, of which many classes, such as the wood-pecker, and the swallow, have no other kind of nourishment; that these birds are, in their turn, devoured by birds of prey, such as kites, falcons, buzzards, rooks, crows, hawks, vultures, &c. that the general spoil of these animals, swept off by the rains, into the rivers, and thence to the Sea, becomes the aliment of almost innumerable tribes of fishes, to the greatest part of which the Naturalists of Europe have not hitherto given a name; that numberless legions of river and sea-fowls prey upon these fishes: we shall have good ground for believing, that every species of the vegetable kingdom serves as a basis to many species of the animal kingdom, which multiply around it, as the rays of a circle round its centre.

At the same time, I have not included in this superficial representation, either quadrupeds, with which all the intervals of magnitude are filled, from the mouse, which lives under the grass, up to the camelopard, who can feed on the foliage of trees, at the height of fifteen feet; or the amphibious tribes; or the birds of night; or reptiles; or polypuses, of which we have a knowledge so slender; or sea insects, some families of which, such as the crab-fish, shrimp, and the like, would be alone sufficient to fill the greatest cabinets, were you to introduce but a single individual of every species. I do not include the madrépore, with which the bottom of the sea is paved between the Tropics, and which present so many different species, that I have seen, in the Isle of France, two great halls filled with those which were produced in the immediate vicinity of that Isle, though there was but a single specimen of each sort.

I have made no mention of insects of many kinds, as the louse and the maggot, of which every animal species has its particular varieties, proper to itself, and which triple, at least, the kingdom of creatures existing by respiration. Neither have I taken into the account, that infinite number of living



things, visible and invisible, known and unknown, which have no fixed determination, and which Nature has scattered about, through the Air, over the Earth and along the depths of the Ocean.

What an undertaking, then, would it be, to describe each of these beings, with the sagacity of a *Reaumur*? The life of one man of genius, would be scarcely sufficient to compose the History of a few insects. However curious may be the memoirs transmitted to us, after the most careful research, respecting the manners, and the anatomy, of the animals most familiarly known, in vain do we still flatter ourselves with our having acquired a complete acquaintance. The principal [requisite, in my opinion, is yet wanting; I mean, the origin of their friendships and of their feuds. In this consists, if I am not mistaken, the essence of their History, to which must be referred their instincts, their loves, their wars; the attire, the arms, and the very form which Nature gives them. A moral sentiment seems to have determined their physical organization. I know not of any Naturalist who has engaged in a research of this sort. The Poets have endeavoured to explain these wonderful and innate instincts, by their ingenious fictions. The swallow Progné flies the forest; her sister Philomela delights to sing in solitary places. Progné thus, one day, addressed her:

Le désert est-il fait pour des talens si beaux ?  
 Venez faire aux cités éclater leurs merveilles :  
 Aussi bien, en voyant les bois,  
 Sans cesse il vous souvient que Térée autrefois,  
 Parmi des demeures pareilles,  
 Exerça sa fureur sur vos divins appas.—  
 Et c'est le souvenir d'un si cruel outrage,  
 Qui fait, reprit sa sœur, que je ne vous suis pas :  
 En voyant les hommes, hélas !  
 Il m'en souvient bien davantage.\*

\* Thus imitated :

Why waste such sweetness on the desert air !  
 Come, charm the city with thy tuneful note,  
 Think too, in solitude, that form so fair  
 Felt violation : flee the horrid thought.



I never hear the enchantingly melancholy song of a night-ingale, shrouded in shrubbery, and the lengthened piou-piou, which interrupt, like sighs, the music of that solitary songster, without believing, that Nature had revealed her adventure to the sublime *La Fontaine*, at the time she inspired him to compose these verses. If these fables were not the history of men, they would be, to me, at least a supplement to that of animals. Philosophers of name, unfaithful to the testimony of their reason and conscience, have dared to represent them as mere machines. They ascribe to them blind instincts, which regulate, in a manner perfectly uniform, all their actions, without passion, without will, without choice, and even without any degree of sensibility. I one day expressed my astonishment at this to *J. J. Rousseau*; and said to him, it seemed exceedingly strange, that men of genius should maintain a position so extravagant. He very sagely replied, *The solution is this, When man begins to reason, he ceases to feel.*

In order to confute the opinions of such Philosophers, I shall have recourse, not to those animals whose sagacity and industry excite our admiration, such as the beaver, the bee, the ant, &c. I shall produce only one example, taken from the class of those which are most indocile, such as fishes, and shall select it from among a species, governed by an instinct the most impetuous and the most stupid, which is gluttony.

The shark is a fish so voracious, that he will not only devour his own species, when pressed by hunger, but he swallows, without distinction, every thing that drops from a ship into the sea, cordage, cloth, pitch, wood, iron, nay, even knives. Nevertheless, I have been a frequent witness of his abstinence, in two remarkable circumstances; the one is, however urged by famine; he never touches a kind of small fish, speckled with yellow and black, called the pilot fish, which swim just before his snout, to guide him to his prey, which he cannot see till he is close to it; for Nature, as a counterbalance to

Ah! sister dear, sad Philomel replies,

'Tis this that makes me shun the haunts of men:

Terçus and Courts the anguish'd heart allies,

And hastes, for shelter, to the woods again.



the ferocity of this fish, has rendered him almost blind. The other case is this, when you throw into the sea a dead fowl, the noise brings him to the spot, but on discovering it to be a fowl, he immediately retires, without devouring it; this has furnished sailors with a proverb: *The shark flees from the feather.* It is impossible, in the first case, not to ascribe to him some portion of understanding, which represses his voracity, in favour of his guides; and not to attribute, in the second, his aversion to feathered flesh, to that universal reason, which, destining him to live along the shallows, where cadaverous substances, of creatures perishing in the sea, fall and are deposited, inspires him with an aversion for feathered animals, that he may not destroy the sea-fowls, which resort thither in great numbers, employed, like himself, in looking out for a livelihood, and in cleansing the shores from impurities.

Other Philosophers, on the contrary, have ascribed the manners of animals, as those of men, to education; and their natural affections, as well as their animosities, to resemblance or dissimilitude of form. But if friendship is founded in similitude of form, how comes it, that the hen, that walks in security, at the head of her brood, among the horses and oxen of a farm-yard, though part of her family is sometimes accidentally crushed by the feet of those animals, collects her young with anxious inquietude at sight of the hawk, a feathered animal like herself, who appears in the air but as a black point, and which, perhaps, she hardly, if ever, saw before? Why does the dog, in the yard, fall a barking, in the night time, at the smell only of the fox, an animal which has a strong resemblance to himself? If habits of long standing could influence animals, as they do men, how has it been possible to render the ostrich of the desert familiar to such a degree, that he has been made to carry children on his plumeless crupper; whereas no skill has, hitherto, been able to tame the swallow, a bird which has, from time immemorial, built his nest in our houses?

Where can we find, among the Historians of Nature, a *Tacitus*, who shall unveil to us these mysteries of the Cabinet of Heaven, without an explanation of which, it is impossible to write the History of a single animal of the Earth? We find



no one species deviating, like the human, from the laws imposed on it by Nature. Bees, universally, live in republics, as they did in the time of *Esop*. The common fly has always been a vagabond, a herd without any police or restraint. How comes it that, among these, no *Lycurgus* has ever yet arisen, to reduce them into order, for the general good; and to prescribe to them, as Philosophers tell us the first Legislators among men did, laws dictated by their weakness, and by the necessity of uniting in society?

On the other hand, Whence is it, as *Machiavel* affirms of Nations possessing too much happiness, that among the canine species, exulting in the superiority of their strength, no *Catiline* arises, to impel his associates to take advantage of the security of their masters, and destroy them at once; no *Spartacus* to rouse them to liberty by his howling, that they may live as sovereigns of the forest, they to whom Nature has given arms, courage, and skill to subdue, in whole armies, animals the most formidable? When so many trivial laws of Nature are, under our very eyes, unknown, or misunderstood, how dare we to assign those which regulate the course of the stars, and which embrace the immensity of the Universe?

To the difficulties opposed to us by Nature, let us add those which we ourselves throw in the way. First, methods and systems of all sorts prepare, in every man, his manner of viewing objects. I do not speak of Metaphysicians, who explain all by means of abstract ideas; nor of Algebraists, with their formulæ; nor of Geometricians, with their compasses; nor of Chemists with their salts; nor of the revolutions which their opinions, though intolerant in the extreme, undergo in every age. Let us confine ourselves to notions the most universally admitted, and supported by the highest authority.

To begin with Geographers. They represent the Earth as divided into four principal parts, whereas, in reality, there are only two. Instead of the rivers which water it, the rocks which form its barriers, the chains of mountains which divide it into climates, and other natural subdivisions, they exhibit it speckled all over with parti-coloured lines, which divide and subdivide it into empires, dioceses, principalities, electorates, bailliwicks, salt-magazines. They have disfigured the origi-



nals, or substituted names without a meaning, in place of those which the native inhabitants of every country had given them, and which so well expressed their nature. They call, for example, a city, near to that of Mexico, where the Spaniards shed such oceans of human blood, the *City of Angels*, but to which the Mexicans give the name of *Cuet-lax-coupan*, that is *the snake in the water*, because that of two fountains, which issue from thence, one is poisonous; they call the *Mississipi*, that great river of North America, which the natives denominate *Mèchassipi*, *the father of waters*; the *Cordelières*, those high mountains bordering on the South Sea, which are always covered with snow, and which are called by the Peruvians, in the royal language of the Incas, *Ritijuyu*, *snow-ridge*; and so of an infinite number of other proper names. They have stripped the works of Nature of their distinctive characters, and Nations of their monuments.

On reading these ancient names, with their explanations, in *Garcillafo de la Vega*, in *Thomas Gage*, and the earliest navigators, you have impressed on the mind, by means of a few simple words, the landscape of every country, and something of its natural History: without taking into the account, the respect attached to their antiquity, for this renders the places, which they describe, still more venerable. Those only of the Chinese, who traffic with the Europeans, know that their country is called China. The name given it by the inhabitants is *Chium-hoa*, *the middle-kingdom*. They change the name of it, when the families of their sovereigns become extinct. A new dynasty gives it a new name; thus the law has determined, to instruct Kings, that the destiny of their people was attached to them, as that of their own family. Europeans have destroyed all these correspondencies. They shall forever bear the punishment of this injustice, as well as that of so many other of their violations; for, obstinately persevering in giving what names they please to the countries which they seize, or in which they settle, it comes to pass that, when you see the same countries on maps, or in Dutch, English, Portugueze, Spanish, or French books of travels, you are utterly incapable of distinguishing any thing. Their very longitude is changed, for every Nation now makes its own capital the first meridian,



Botanists mislead us still more. I have spoken of the perpetual variations of their dictionaries; but their method is no less faulty. They have devised, in order to distinguish plants, characters the most complicated, which frequently deceive them, though derived from all the parts of the vegetable kingdom, while they have never been able to express, by a single descriptive term, their combination, from which the unlearned can distinguish them at first sight. They must have magnifying glasses and scales, in order to class the trees of a forest. It is not sufficient to see them standing and covered with leaves, the Botanist must examine the flower, and frequently the fruit too. The clown knows them all perfectly, in the boughs which compose his faggot.

In order to give me an idea of the varieties of germination, I am shewn, in bottles, a long series of naked grains of all forms, but it is the capsule which preserves them, the downy tuft which re-sows them, the elastic branch which darts them to a distance, which I am interested to examine. To shew me the character of a flower, it is presented to me dry, discoloured, and spread out on the leaf of a herbary. Is it in such a state that I can distinguish a lily? Is it not on the brink of a rivulet, raising its stately stem over the verdant declivity, and reflecting, in the limpid stream, its beautiful calix\*, whiter than ivory, that I discern, and admire, the king of the vallies? Is not its incomparable whiteness rendered still more dazzling, when spotted, as with drops of coral, by the little, scarlet, hemispherical ladybird, garnished with black specks, which constantly resorts to it as an asylum? Who can discover the queen of flowers in a dried rose? In order to its being an object, at once, of love and

\* According to Botanists, the lily, has no *calix*, but only a *corolla*, consisting of many petals. They call the flower a *corolla*, and the case which contains the flowers a *calix*. This is, evidently, an abuse of terms. *Calix*, in Greek, and in Latin, means a cup; and *corolla*, a little crown. Now, an infinite number of flowers, as the cruciform, the papilionaceous, those with long throats, and a multitude of others, are not formed like a coronet, nor their cases like cups. I dare venture to affirm, that if Botanists had given the simple name of case, or wrapper, to the parts of the plant which inclose and protect the flower before it blows, they would have been on the road to more than one curious discovery. This impropriety of elementary terms in the Sciences, is the first twist given to human reason; it is thereby put, from the very first setting out, entirely aside from the path of Nature. See *Vol. II. Study XI.*



of philosophy, it must be viewed when, issuing from the cleft of a humid rock, it shines on its native verdure, when the zephyr balances it, on a stem armed with thorns; when Aurora has bedewed it with her tears; when, by its lustre and its fragrance, it invites the hands of lovers. A cantharide, sometimes, lurking in its corolla, heightens the glowing carmine, by presenting the contrast of his emerald-coloured robe; it is then this flower seems to say, that, symbol of pleasure, from her charms, and the rapidity of her decay, like pleasure too, she carries danger around her, and repentance in her bosom.

Naturalists betray us into still wider deviations from Nature, in attempting to explain, by uniform laws, and by the mere action of air, water, and heat, the expansion of so many plants, growing on the same dunghill, of colours, forms, favours, and perfumes so different. Do they try to decompose the principles of them? Poison and food present, in their stoves, the same results. Thus Nature sports herself with their art, as with their theory. The corn plant alone, gathered in handfuls only by the vulgar, answers a thousand valuable purposes, while a multitude of vegetables have remained entirely useless, in the laboratories of the learned.

I remember my having read, many years ago, several grave dissertations on the manner of employing the horse-chestnut as food for cattle. Every Academy in Europe has, at least, proposed its own; and the result of all their learned disquisitions was, that the horse-chestnut was useless, unless prepared by a very expensive process, and that, even then, it was good only in the manufacture of tapers and hair powder. I was astonished at this, not that Naturalists should be ignorant of its use, and that they had studied it merely as an article of luxury, but that Nature should have produced a fruit of no use even to the brute creation. But I was, at last, cured of my ignorance, by the brutes themselves. I happened to take my walk, one day, to the *Bois de Boulogne*\*, with a branch of the horse-chestnut in my hand, when I perceived a goat feeding. I went up, and amused myself with stroking her. As soon as she perceived the horse-chestnut bough, she seized, and snapped it up, instant-

\* The *Bois de Boulogne*, and *Château de Madrid*, are a wood, and castle, not many miles from Paris.



ly. The lad who tended her told me, that the goats were all very fond of this plant, and that it contributed greatly to the increase of their milk. I perceived, at some distance, in the chestnut alley, which leads to the *Château de Madrid*, a herd of cows eagerly looking for horse-chestnuts, which they greedily devoured, without sauce or pickle. Thus, our learned and ingenious systems conceal from us natural truths, with which every peasant is acquainted.

What a spectacle do our cabinets of preserved animals present? To no purpose has the art of a *Daubenton* endeavoured to keep up the appearance of life. Let industry do its utmost to preserve the form, their stiff and motionless attitude, their fixed and staring eyes, their bristly hair, all declare that they have been smitten with the stroke of death. In such a state, even beauty itself inspires horror; whereas objects the most homely are agreeable, when placed in the situation which Nature has assigned them. I have been often highly diverted, in the West-Indies, at the sight of a crab on the sand, straining, with his claws, to break into a huge cocoa-nut; or a shaggy ape balancing himself on the summit of a tree, at the extremity of a *lianne*, loaded with pods and brilliant flowers.

Our books of Natural History are merely the romance of Nature, and our cabinets her tomb. To what a degree have our speculations and our prejudices degraded her? Our treatises on Agriculture shew us, on the plains of Ceres, nothing but bags of grain; in the meadows, the beloved haunt of the nymphs, only bundles of hay; and in the majestic forest, only cords of wood and faggots.

What shall we say of the violence done to her by Pride and Avarice? How many charming hills have been reduced to a state of villanage, by our laws! What majestic rivers degraded into servitude by imposts!

The History of Man has been disfigured in a very different manner. If we except the interest which religion, or humanity, has prompted some good men to take, in favour of their fellow-creatures, the rest of Historians have written under the impulse of a thousand different passions. The Politician represents Man, as divided into nobility and commonalty, into papists and huguenots, into soldiers and slaves; the Moralist,



into the avaricious, the hypocritical, the debauched, the proud; the Tragic Poet, into tyrants and their victims; the Comic, into drolls and buffoons; the Physician, into the pituitous, the bilious, the phlegmatic. They are universally exhibited as subjects of aversion, of hatred, or of contempt: Man has been universally dissected, and now nothing is shewn of him but the carcase. Thus the master-piece of Creation, like every thing else in Nature, has been degraded by our learning.

I do not mean to affirm, however, that from such partial means, no useful discovery has proceeded: but all these circles, within which we circumscribe the Supreme Power, far from determining its bounds, only mark the limits of human genius. We accustom ourselves to crowd all our own ideas into that narrow space, and dishonestly to reject all that does not accord with them. We act the part of the tyrant of Sicily, who fitted the unhappy traveller to his bed of iron; he violently stretched, to the length of the bed, the limbs of those who were shorter, and cut short the limbs of those who were longer. It is thus we apply all the operations of Nature to our pitiful methods, in order to reduce the whole to one common standard.

Hurried away myself, by the spirit of the age in which I live, I gave, at the end of the journal of my voyage to the Isle of France, a system of botany, in which I pretended to explain the expansion of plants, as our Naturalists explain that of madrépores, from the mechanism of the small animals which constitute them. I quote this Work, though I composed it merely as an amusement, to prove how easy it is to support a false principle by true observations; for having communicated it to *J. J. Rousseau*, who was, it is well known, a great proficient in Botany, he said to me; *I do not adopt your system; but it would cost me, at least, six months to refute it; and even then, I could not flatter myself with the certainty of having succeeded.* Had the decision of this candid gentleman been wholly unreserved, it could not have justified my libertinism.

Fiction embellishes the history of Man only, it degrades that of Nature. Nature is herself the source of all that is in-



genuous, amiable, and beautiful. By applying to her the violence of our imaginary laws, or by extending to all her operations, those with which we are acquainted, we conceal others, worthy of the highest admiration, with which we are totally unacquainted. We add, to the cloud with which she veils her divinity, that of our own errors. They get into credit by time, by professorships, by books, by protectors, by associations, and especially by pensions; whereas no one is paid for searching after truths, which have the improvement of Mankind for their only object. We carry with us, into researches so independent and sublime, the passions of the college and of the world, intolerance and envy.

Those who enter first on the career, oblige those who come after them to walk in their footsteps, or to give it up; as if Nature were their patrimony, or, as if the study of Nature were an exclusive trade, that did not admit of every one's participation. What trouble did it cost to eradicate, in France, the metaphysics of *Aristotle*, which had become a species of religion? The philosophy of *Descartes*, which supplanted it, might have subsisted to this day, had its revenues been as ample. That of *Newton*, with its attractions, is not more solidly established. I have an unbounded respect for the memory of these great men, whose very deviations have assisted us, in opening great highways through the vast empire of Nature; but, on more occasions than one, I shall combat their principles, and especially, the general applications which have been made of them, in the full persuasion, that, if I renounce their systems, I promote their intentions. It was the study of their whole life to raise men toward the DEITY, by their sublime discoveries, without suspecting, that the laws which they were establishing in Physics, might, one day, serve to subvert those of Morality.

In order to form a right judgment of the magnificent spectacle of Nature, we must suffer every object to remain in its place, and remain ourselves in that which she has assigned to us. It is from a regard to our happiness, that she has concealed from us the laws of her Omnipotence. How is it possible for a being so feeble as Man, to embrace infinite space? But she has brought within our grasp what it is at once useful and



delightful to know : namely, the emanations from her beneficence. In the view of uniting Mankind, by a reciprocal communication of knowledge, she has given to each of us, in particular, ignorance, treasuring up Science in a common stock, to render us necessary and interesting to each other.

The Earth is covered over with vegetables and animals, the simple vocabulary of which no Scholar, no Academy, no one Nation, will ever be able perfectly to acquire ; but it is to be presumed, that the human race is acquainted with all their properties. In vain do enlightened Nations boast, that they are the great repositories of all the Arts and Sciences. It is to Savages, to men utterly unknown, that we are indebted for the first observations, which are the source of all Science. It is neither to the polished Greeks nor Romans, but to Nations which we denominate barbarous, that we owe the use of simples, of bread, of wine, of domestic animals, of cloths, of dye-stuffs, of metals, and of every thing most useful, and most agreeable, for human life.

Modern Europe glories in her discoveries ; but the invention of the art of Printing, one of the fairest titles to immortality, is to be ascribed to a person so obscure, that several cities of Holland, of Germany, nay, of China, have claimed the discovery as their own. *Galileo* would never have calculated the gravity of air, but for the observation of a fountain-player, who remarked that water could rise only up to thirty-two feet in the tubes of a forcing engine. *Newton* had never read the starry heavens, unless a spectacle maker's children, in Zealand, had, at play, with the lenses in their father's shop, suggested the first idea of the telescopic cylinder. Our artillery would never have subjugated the New World, but for the accidental discovery of gun-powder by a lazy monk ; and whatever glory Spain may pretend to derive from the discovery of that vast Continent, the Savages of Asia had planted Empires there, long before the arrival of *Christopher Columbus*. What must have become of that great man himself, if the good and simple inhabitants whom he found in the country had not supplied



him with provisions? Let Academies, then, accumulate machines, systems, books, eulogiums: the chief praise of all is due to the ignorant, who furnished the first materials.

Advancing no higher claim, I presume to contribute my humble offering. It is the fruit of many years of application, which, amidst storms long and severe, stole away in these calm researches, like a single day of serenity. I earnestly wished, if it should not be permitted me to reach a boundary, at which to stop, to communicate to others, at least, the pleasure which I had enjoyed on my way.

I have conveyed my observations in the best style of which I am capable; frequently stepping aside to the right hand and to the left, as the subject carried me; sometimes abandoning myself to a multitude of projects, which the infinite intelligence of Nature inspires; sometimes dwelling with complacency on happier seasons and situations, which are never more to return; sometimes plunging into futurity, panting after a more fortunate state of being, of which the goodness of Heaven affords us now and then a glimpse, through the dark clouds of this wretched life. Descriptions, conjectures, perceptions, views, objections, doubts, nay, my very ignorances, I have heaped all on one pile; and I have given to these ruins the name of *Studies*, as a Painter does to the studies of a great original, to which he was unable to give a finishing.

Amidst this disorder, it was necessary, however, to adopt something like method, without which, the confusion of the matter must have still more increased the insufficiency of the Author. I have followed the most simple. First, I endeavour to refute the objections raised against a Providence; I, then, proceed to examine into the existence of certain sentiments, which are common to all men, and which constrain us to acknowledge, in all the works of Nature, the laws of her wisdom and goodness; and, finally, I make an application of these laws to the Globe, to Plants, to Animals, and to MAN.

Such, from the outset, is the manner in which I propose to direct my course. If, in the rapid sketch I am going to pre-



sent of it, the Reader should be disgusted with its driness, I must intreat him to reflect, that the same complaint must lie against all abridgments; that, in return, I spare him the fatigue of a preface; and that *Pliny*, who had a much better head than mine, has not hesitated to make up the first book of his Natural History, of the bare titles of the Chapters which compose it.

I said, then, to myself: In the FIRST PART of my Work, I will display the blessings bestowed by Nature, on the age in which we live; and the objections which have been started in it, against the Providence of its AUTHOR. I will conceal no one of these that I know of; and in order to give them greater force, I will exhibit them in their combination. I will employ, in refuting them, not metaphysical reasonings, like those of which the objections consist, and which never brought any dispute to a termination, but the facts themselves of Nature, which admit of no reply. With these same facts, I will raise in my turn, difficulties which militate against the principles of human Science, and which have been deemed infallible. I will from thence proceed to infer the feebleness of our reason; I will inquire whether there be universal truths, and what we are to understand by order, beauty, correspondency, harmony, pleasure, happiness, and their contraries; and, finally, what an organized body is.

From this examination of our faculties, and of the effects of Nature, will result the evidence of many physical laws, constantly directed to one single end, and that of a moral law, which affects Man alone, and the sentiment of which has been universal, in all ages, and among all Nations. These are necessary preliminaries. Before we attempt to rear the fabric, the ground must be cleared, and the foundation laid.

In the SECOND PART, I shall make an application of these laws to the Globe; I shall examine its form, its extent, the division of its Hemispheres, and as it is composed, like every other organized work of Nature, of parts similar, and of parts contrary. I shall consider, successively, its different elements, and the manner of their adaptation to each other, the



fire to air, the air to water, the water to the earth. This order establishes among them a real subordination, of which the Sun is the principal agent. But he is not the only mover in Nature, and still less the Sovereign Disposer. His uniform action on the elements would, at last, separate or confound them. Other laws counterbalance his, and maintain the general harmony.

I shall point out the admirable variety of his course, the effects of his heat and light, and the wonderful manner in which they are weakened or multiplied in the Heavens, in the inverse ratio of latitudes and seasons. I shall speak of the great reverberations of Heaven, of the Moon, of the *Aurora Borealis*, of the Stars, and of the mysteries of Night, only so far as the human eye is permitted to perceive them, and the heart to feel their impression.

I shall speak, likewise, of the nature of *Fire*, not to explain it, but to evince our profound ignorance of the subject. This element, which renders all things else perceptible, itself eludes our most eager researches. We shall demonstrate, that there is neither animal, nor plant, nor even fossil, capable of subsisting any length of time in it. It is the only being which increases its bulk by communicating itself. It penetrates all bodies, without being penetrated by them. It is divisible only in one dimension. It has no gravity. Though nothing attracts it to the centre of the Earth, it is diffused through all the parts of the Globe. Its nature differs from that of all other bodies. Its destructive and indefinable character seems to favour the opinion of *Newton*, who considered it only as a motion communicated to matter, and thereby reduced the number of Elements to three. However, as it is one of the four general principles of life in every living creature; as we often discover it, in others, in a dormant state, and as there is no one, as we shall see, but what has organs, or parts, disposed to weaken, or to multiply these effects, we must acknowledge it not only to be an Element, but Nature's primary agent.

I shall next consider the properties of *Air*. I shall examine the quality which it has of expanding and contracting, of heating and cooling; and the effects of that vast stratum of frozen air which surrounds our Globe, about a league above the surface,



and of which hardly any one of the phenomena has hitherto been explained.

I shall, next, consider the effects of *Water*: in what manner heat evaporates, and cold fixes it; its different existences; of volatility in the air, in clouds, in dew, and in rain; of fluidity on the earth, in rivers, and in Seas: of solidity at the Poles, and on lofty mountains, in snow and ice. I shall inquire, how the Seas, which are the great reservoirs of this element, are distributed, with relation to the Sun; how they receive from him, through the mediation of the air, a part of their movements; in what manner they continually renew their waters, by means of the ice accumulated at the Poles; the annual or periodical fusion of which, maintains their flux and reflux as constantly, as the fusion of the ices on the summit of high mountains renews and supplies the waters of great rivers. I shall hence deduce the phenomena of the Tides, of the Monsoons in the Indian Ocean, and of the principal Currents of the vast watery Element.

I shall, afterwards, hazard my conjectures respecting the quantity of water which surrounds the Earth, in the three states of volatility, fluidity, and solidity; and shall examine whether it is possible, that, on being all reduced to a state of fluidity, they should entirely cover the Globe.

I shall consider in what manner all the parts of the *Earth*, that is, the dry land, are distributed with relation to the Sun; so that there should be no cavity or valley, nor elevation of rocky mountain, but what must be, at some season of the year, exposed to his rays, and disposed, at the same time, in the most perfectly adapted order, to multiply, or to mitigate his heat, by its form, or even by its colour. I will demonstrate that, notwithstanding the apparent irregularity of the different parts of this Globe, they are opposed, with so much harmony, to the different currents of air, that there is no one but what is, by turns, ventilated by winds, hot, cold, dry, and humid; that the cold winds blow most constantly into warm countries, and warm winds into cold countries; that these countries, in their turn, re-act on the air; so that the cause of the winds is not to be sought, according to the received opinion, in the places whence they proceed, but in those which they visit.



I shall, after that, speak of the direction of mountains, of their declivities, and of their aspects, with relation to the Lakes and Seas, whose emanations their different ridges are all adapted to receive; of the matter which attracts them, and fixes round their peaks, rising like so many electric needles.

Finally, I shall examine, For what reason Nature has divided the Globe into two Hemispheres; what means she employs to accelerate, or retard, the course of rivers, and to protect their mouths against the movements and currents of the Ocean. I shall treat of banks, of shallows, of rocks, of isles, whether in seas or rivers; and I shall prove, I am confident to say, to a demonstration, that these parcels, detached from the Continent, are no more ruinous fragments, violently separated from them, than bays, gulfs, and inland-seas, are violent irruptions of the Ocean.

I shall terminate this part, by indicating the principal agents, employed by Nature, in repairing her works: how she makes use of fire to purify, in the form of thunder, the air, so frequently loaded with mephitic vapours during the violent heats of Summer; and the waters of great Lakes and Seas, by the volcanos which she has placed in their neighbourhood, at the extremity of their currents, and which she has multiplied in warm countries; how she cleanses the basons of these very waters, which, in the course of a few ages, would be choaked up by the accumulated spoils of the Earth, by means of tempests and hurricanes, which agitate them to the very foundation, and cover their banks with the wreck; and how, after having restored these wrecks to their first elements, by fires in the air, by volcanos, and the perpetual motion of the waves, which reduces them to sand, and to an impalpable powder on the shore of the Sea, she repairs, by means of winds and attractions, the incessant diminution of the mountains, occasioned by the rains and torrents.

I shall demonstrate, in a word, that, notwithstanding the enormous masses of the mountains, the profundity of the valleys, the tempestuous Oceans, and temperatures the most opposite, which enter into the composition of this Globe, the



communication of all its parts has been rendered easy to a being so small, and so feeble, as Man, and is possible only to him. This last view will furnish me with some curious conjectures respecting the earliest voyages undertaken by Mankind.

I flatter myself, that I have said enough to shew, in this simple prospectus, that the same Intelligence, whose productions we so justly admire in plants and animals, presides equally in the edifice which we inhabit. The Earth has, hitherto, been considered as only in a state of ruin; and it is this prejudice which renders the study of Geography so insipid; but I venture to affirm that, after perusing my trivial observations, the course of a rivulet, on a map, will appear more agreeable than the port of a plant in a Botanist's herbal, and the topography of a place, as interesting as its landscape.

In the THIRD PART of this Work, I will shew how the different parts of plants are disposed in correspondence with the Elements, in such a manner that, far from being a necessary production of theirs, as some Philosophers pretend, they are, on the contrary, almost always in opposition to their action. I shall refer, therefore, their flowers to the Sun; the thickness of their barks, the scurf which covers their buds, the hair, the down, the resinous substances with which they are cloathed, to the absence of that solar heat; the pliancy, or stiffness, of their stems, to the different impulsions of the Air; their leaves, to the waters of Heaven; finally, their roots, to sands, to mires, to rocks, by their fibres, their pivots, and their long cordage. This last relation of plants to the Earth is, if I may judge, the most important of all, though the least observed, for there is not a single one, but what is attached to it, whether it floats in water, or balances itself in the air; no one but derives part, at least, of its nutriment from thence, and, in its turn re-acts on the Earth, by the shade which contributes to its freshness, by the offal which fertilizes it, and by the roots which bind its different *strata*.

I shall adhere, however, to the exterior characters by which Nature seems to divide them into different genera. Their prin-



principal character, it is very difficult to determine, not only because the simplest plant unites a very great variety of relations to all the Elements, but because Nature does not place the character of her works, in any one of the parts, but in their combination. We shall seek that of each plant, therefore, in its grain, which, as being the principle, must unite every thing proper for its expansion, and determine, at least, the Element in which it must grow. Those, accordingly, which have grains extremely volatile or furnished with tufts of down, pinions, sails, &c. shall be referred to the Air. They grow, in fact, in places exposed to the wind, as most part of the gramineous, of thistle tribe, &c. Those which have fins, floaters, and other instruments of swimming, shall be assigned to the Water; not only such as the fucus, the alga, and other sea-plants, but the cocoa-tree, the walnut, the almond, and other vegetables which affect the Water's edge. Those, finally, which, by their roundness, and other varieties of form, are adapted for rolling, springing, catching, &c. and are susceptible of various other movements, shall be allotted to the Earth, properly so called.

This reference of plants to Geography, presents to us, at once, a great general order of easy comprehension, and a multitude of subdivisions, which we may run over, very agreeably, in detail. First, their genera divide themselves, like those of animals, into aërial, aquatic, and terrestrial. Then, their classes are subdivided relatively to the Zones, and to the degrees of latitude of each Zone; such are, to the South, the class of palms, and, to the North, that of firs; and their species to the territory of that Zone, according as it is champaign, mountainous, rocky, marshy, &c. Accordingly, in the class of palms, the cocoa tree of the sea-shore, the latanier on the strand, the date of the rocks, the palmist of the mountains, and so on, crown the various sites of the torrid Zone; whereas in that of firs, the pine, the spruce, the larch, the cedar, &c. divide among themselves the empire of the North. This order, by putting every vegetable in its natural place, furnishes us besides, with the means of tracing the use of all its parts:



and, I am bold enough to affirm, of tracing the reasons which have determined Nature to vary their form, and create so many species of the same genus, and so many varieties of the same species, by discovering to us the admirable correspondency which they have, in every latitude, with the Sun, the Winds, the Water, and the Earth.

On this plan, we have a glimpse of the light which Geography may diffuse over the study of Botany; and of the light with which Botany, in its turn, may illuminate Geography; for, supposing we were enabled to form botanical charts, in which, by colours and signs, should be represented, in each particular country, the reign of each vegetable there produced, by determining its centre and limits, we might perceive, at once, the fecundity proper to each district. This knowledge would supply very ample means of rural economy, as we might substitute to the indigenous plants which were there in greatest abundance, and most vigorous, such of our domestic plants as are of the same species, and which would there infallibly succeed. Besides, these different classes of vegetables would, in their various natural arrangement, indicate the degrees of the humidity, of the driness, of the cold, of the heat, and of the elevation of each district, with a precision which our barometers, thermometers, and other physical apparatus, can never attain. I omit a multitude of other relations, productive of pleasure and of utility, which would result from such classification, but which I shall endeavour to unfold in their place.

In the FOURTH PART, which treats of Animals, I shall pursue the same track. I shall present, first, their relations to the elements. Beginning with that of Fire, I shall consider the relation which they have to the Luminary which is the source of it, from their eyes furnished with lids and lashes, to moderate the lustre of his light; from that state of torpidity, called sleep, into which most of them fall, when he is no longer above the Horizon; and by the colour of their skin, and the thickness of their furs, corresponding to their distance from him.



We shall then trace the relations in which they stand to the Air, by their attitude, their weight, their lightness, and the organs of respiration; to the Water, by the various curves of their bodies, the unctuousness of their hair and plumage, their scales and fins; and, finally, to the Earth, by the form of their feet, sometimes forked, or armed with prongs and claws, adapted to a hard soil, sometimes broad, or furnished with a hide, suited to a yielding soil, and by other means of progression, which Nature has varied, in proportion to the obstacles which are to be surmounted.

On the whole of this we shall observe, as in the case of Plants, that so many configurations, so different, far from being, in animals, mechanical effects of the action of the Elements in which they live, are, on the contrary, almost always, in the inverse ratio of these very causes. Thus, for example, a great many fishes are cased in rough and hard shells, in the bosom of the waters; and many animals, the inhabitants of the rocks, are clothed with soft furs. We shall divide animals, therefore, as we did vegetables, by referring their genus to the Elements, their classes to the Zones, and their species, to the different Districts of each Zone. This arrangement, at once, puts every animal in its natural place; but we shall reduce it to a fixedness of determination, still more precise, and more interesting, by referring the species of animal to that of the plant which a particular District produces in greatest abundance.

Nature herself indicates this order. She has adapted to plants, the smelling, the mouths, the lips, the tongues, the jaws, the teeth, the beaks, the stomach, the chylification, the secretions which ensue, in a word, the appetite and instinct of animals. It cannot, indeed, be affirmed with truth, that every species of animal lives on one single species of plant; but any person may convince himself, by experiment, that each of them prefers some one to every other, when permitted to choose. This preference is particularly remarkable, at the seasons when the production of their young engages attention. Then they are determined in favour of that which provides



them, at once, with nutriment, litter, and shelter, in the most perfect suitability to their situation. Thus the goldfinch affects the thistle, and hence, in the French language, derives his name from that of the plant\*, because he finds a rampart in its prickly leaves, food in its seeds, and materials for his nest in its down. The bird-fly of Florida, for similar reasons, prefers the bignonia: this is a creeping plant, which finds its way to the tops of the highest trees, and frequently covers the whole trunk. He builds his nest in one of its leaves, which he rolls into the form of a cornet; he finds his food in its red flowers, resembling those of the foxglove, the nectareous glands of which he licks; he plunges his little body into them, which appears in the heart of the flower, like an emerald set in coral; and he gets in, sometimes, so far, that he suffers himself to be surprized there, and caught.

In the nests of animals, then, we shall look for their character, as we sought that of plants in their grains. It is from these we shall be enabled to determine the Element in which they must live, the proper site of their habitation, the aliment best adapted to their constitution, and the first lessons of industry, of love, or of ferocity, which they receive from their parents. The plan of their life is contained in their cradles. However strange these indications may appear, they are those of Nature, who seems to tell us, that we may distinguish the character of her children, like her own, in the fruits of love, and in the care which they take of their posterity.

She, frequently, lodges under the same roof, the vegetable and animal life, and unites the destiny of the one to that of the other. We see them bursting together from the same shell, blowing, expanding, propagating, dying, in a similar progression. At the same instant of time they present, if I may be allowed the expression, the same metamorphoses. While the plant is unfolding, in succession, its germs, its buds, its flowers, its fruits, the insect is displaying, successively, on one of its leaves, the egg, the worm, the nymph, the butterfly, which contains, like its parents, the seeds of its posterity, with those

\* In French, goldfinch is *chardonneret*, and thistle *chardon*.



of the plant which nourished it. It is thus that fable, far less marvellous than Nature, inclosed the life of the Dryad within the bark of the Oak.

These relations are so striking, in insects, that Naturalists themselves, notwithstanding their prodigious number of isolated, and indeterminable classes, have characterized some of them by the name of the plant on which they live; such are the caterpillar of the tithymale, and the silk-worm of the mulberry. But I do not believe there is a single animal which deviates from this plan, not even excepting the carnivorous. Though the life of these last appears to be, in some measure, ingrafted on that of the living species, there is not one among them, but what makes use of some species of vegetable. This is observable, not only in dogs, which feed on the grass that bears their name, and in wolves, foxes, birds of prey, which eat the plants denominated from the names of the respective animals, but even in the fishes of the Sea, which are entire strangers to our Element. They are attracted, at first, to the banks by insects, whose spoils they collect, which establishes between them and vegetables, intermediate relations; afterwards by the plants themselves, for most of them come to spawn on our coasts, only when certain plants are in flower, or in fruit. If these happen to be destroyed, the fishes visit us no longer.

*Denis*, Governor of Canada, relates, in his Natural History of North America\*, that the cod, which, in shoals, used to frequent the coasts of the Island of Miscou, disappeared in 1669, because in the year preceding, the forests had been devoured by a conflagration. He remarks, that the same cause had produced the same effect in different places. Though he ascribes the disappearance of these fishes to the particular effects of fire, and is, in other respects, a very intelligent Writer, we shall demonstrate, by other curious observations, that it must have been occasioned by the destruction of the vegetables which used to attract them to the shore. Thus, every thing in Nature is in strict alliance. The Fauns, the Dryads, and the Nereids, walk every where hand in hand.

\* Vol. II. chap. 22. page 350.



What a charming spectacle would a botanical Zoology present? What unknown harmonies would be reflected from a plant to an animal, and from an animal to a plant! What picturesque beauties would appear! What relations of utility, of every species, contributing either to pleasure or to profit, would result from it! The introduction of a new plant into our fields, would be sufficient to allure a new set of songsters to our groves, and shoals of unknown fishes to the mouths of our rivers. Might it not be possible to increase even the family of our domestic animals, by peopling the glaciers of the lofty mountains of Dauphiné, and of Auvergne, with herds of reindeer, an animal so valuable in the northern parts of Europe; or with the lama of Peru, which delights in the snows at the foot of the Andes, and which Nature has clothed in the finest of wool? A little moss, a few rushes of their own country, would be enough to fix them in ours.

Attempts have frequently been made, I admit, to propagate the breed of foreign animals in our parks, by observing even the choice of those species whose native climate came nearest to ours; but they all languish and die, because no care was taken to transplant with them their proper vegetable. You see them always restless, with the head hanging down, scratching up the ground, as if demanding from it the nourishment which they had lost. A single herb would have been sufficient to quiet them, by recalling the tastes of their early life, the breezes which used to fan them, the cool fountains and refreshing shades of their native country: less unhappy, however, than Man, who can be cured of regret only by the total loss of memory.

In the FIFTH PART, we shall speak of MAN. Every Work of Nature has presented to us, hitherto, only partial relations; Man will furnish such as are universal. We shall examine, first, those which he stands in to the Elements. Beginning with that of Light and Fire; we shall observe, that his eyes are turned, not towards Heaven, as the Poets, and even some Philosophers, allege, but to the Horizon; so that he may view, at once, the Heaven which illuminates, and the



Earth which supports him. His visual rays take in near half of the celestial Hemisphere, and of the plane on which he treads, and their reach extends from the grain of sand, which he tramples under foot, to the star which shines over his head, at an immeasurable distance.

He alone, of animals, can enjoy equally the day and the night; he alone can bear to live within the torrid Zone, and upon the ice of the frigid. If certain animals are partakers with him in these advantages, it is only by means of his instructions, and under his protection. For all this he is indebted to the Element of Fire, of which he alone is the Sovereign Lord. Some Authors pretend, that some of the brute creation understand the management of it, and that the monkeys in America keep up the fires kindled by travellers in the forests. No one denies that they love its heat, and resort to it for warmth when Man retires. But as they have perceived its utility, Why have they not preserved the use of it? However simple the manner of keeping up fire may be, by supplying it with fuel, not one of them will ever attain to that degree of sagacity,

The dog, much more intelligent than the monkey, a witness every hour of the effects of fire; accustomed, in our kitchens, to live only on meat that is dressed, if you give him raw flesh, will never think of going to roast it on the coals. This barrier, which separates Man from the Brute, weak as it may appear, is insurmountable to animals. And this is one of the great blessings of Providence, bestowed for the general security; for how many unforeseen, and irreparable conflagrations would take place, were Fire at their disposal? God has intrusted the first agent in Nature, to that being alone who, by his reason, is qualified to make a right use of it.

While some Historians bestow this faculty on the brutes, others deny it to Man. They allege, that many Nations were entirely destitute of it, till the arrival of the Europeans among them. To prove this, they quote the inhabitants of the Marianne Islands, otherwise called the Isle of Thieves, by a calumnious imputation so common among sailors; but this assertion is grounded on bare supposition; namely, on the very na-



tural astonishment expressed by the Islanders, on seeing their villages set on fire by the Spaniards\*, whom they had received with kindness. They contradict themselves, at the same time, by relating, that these very people used canoes, daubed over with bitumen, which necessarily supposes, in the case of savages unacquainted with iron, that fire had been employed in the hollowing of their canoes, or, at least, in careening them. Finally, we are told, that they fed on rice, the preparation of which, however simple, requires, of necessity, the application of fire.

This Element is universally necessary to human existence, even in the hottest climates. By means of fire alone, Man guards his habitation, by night, from the ravenous beasts of prey; drives away the insects which thirst for his blood; clears the ground of the trees and plants which cover it, and whose stems and trunks would resist every species of cultivation, should he find means, any other way, to bring them down. In a word, in every country, with Fire he prepares his food, dissolves metals, vitrifies rocks, hardens clay, softens iron, and gives, to all the productions of the Earth, the forms, and the combinations, which his necessities require.

The benefits which he derives from the Air are no less extensive. Few animals are, like him, capable of respiring, with equal ease, at the level of the Sea, and on the summit of the loftiest mountains. Man is the only being who gives it all the modulations of which it is susceptible. With his voice alone, he imitates the hissing, the cries, the singing of all animals; while he enjoys the gift of speech, denied to every other. Sometimes he communicates sensibility to the Air; he makes it sigh in the pipe, to complain in the flute, to threaten in the trumpet, and to animate to the tone of his passions the brass, the box-tree, and the reed. Sometimes he makes it his slave; he forces it to grind, to bruise, and to move, to his advantage, an endless variety of machinery. In a word, he yokes it to

\* See the History of their Discoveries, by Magellan; the History of the Mari-  
anne Isles, by Father Gobien, vol. ii. page 44; and that of the West-Indies, by  
Herrera, vol. iii. page 10 and 712.



his car, and constrains it to waft him even over the billows of the Ocean.

That element, in which few of the inhabitants of the Earth are able to live, and which separates their different classes, by a boundary more insurmountable than that of Climate, presents to Man alone the easiest of communications. He swims in it, he dives, he pursues the sea-monster to the abyfles of the deep; he hunts and stabs the whale even under mountains of ice; and alights on every island in the bosom of the Sea, and asserts his empire over it.

But he had no need of that which he exercifes over Air and Water, to render his fovereignty univerfal. He has only to remain on the Earth where he was born. Nature has planted his throne on his cradle. Every thing that lives comes thither to pay him homage. There is not a vegetable but what fixes its roots under his feet, not a bird but there builds his nest, not a fish but there deposits her spawn.

Whatever irregularity may appear on the surface of his domain, he is the only being formed with the capacity of pervading all its parts. And what, in this respect, excites the highest admiration, there is established, among all his limbs, an equilibrium so perfect, so difficult to be preserved, so contrary to the laws of our mechanism, that there is no Sculptor capable of forming a statue resembling Man, broader and heavier above than below, which shall be able to maintain an erect position, and remain immovable, on a basis so small as his feet. It would be quickly overfet by the slightest breath of wind. How much more, then, would be requisite to make it walk like Man? There is no animal whose body is fufceptible of so many different movements; and I am tempted to believe, that he unites in himself all the possible varieties of animal motion, on seeing how he bends, kneels, creeps, slides, swims, tumbles himself into the form of an arch, rounds himself like a wheel, like a bowl, walks, runs, leaps, springs, mounts, descends, climbs; in a word, how his frame is equally adapted to clamber to the summit of the rock, and to walk on the surface of the snow; to traverse the river and the forest, to pick the mofs of the fountain, and the fruit of the palm-tree; to feed the bee, and to tame the elephant.



With all these advantages, Nature has collected in the human figure every thing that is lovely in colour and form, whether from harmony or from contrast. To these she has added movements the most majestic and the most graceful. From an accurate observation of this Virgil, has been enabled to finish, by a master-stroke, the portrait of Venus disguised, talking with Eneas, who remained ignorant who she was, while beauty only was displayed, but distinguished her the instant she began to move: *Vera incessu patuit Dea*; "Her gait declared the Goddesses."\*

The AUTHOR of Nature has united in Man every species of beauty, and has formed of these a combination so wonderful, that all animals, in their natural state, are struck, at sight of him, with love, or terror; this we shall demonstrate by more than one curious remark. Thus, too, is fulfilled the Word which conferred on him the original sovereignty of the World: †"And the fear of you, and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the Earth, and upon every fowl of the Air, upon all that moveth upon the Earth, and upon all the fishes of the Sea: into your hand are they delivered."

As he is the only being who has the disposal of Fire, which is the principle of life, so he alone practises Agriculture, which is its support. All frugiverous animals have, like him, occasion for it, most of them the experience, but no one the practice. The ox never thinks of re-sowing the grain which he treads out in the barn floor, nor the monkey, the maize of the field which he plunders. We are presented with far-fetched theories of the relations which we may subsist between brutes and Man, in the view of reducing them to a level, while the trivial differences are overlooked, which are continually before our eyes, and interpose between us and them an immeasurable interval, and which are the more wonderful, the more easy it appears to surmount the difficulty.

Every one of the brute creation is circumscribed within a narrow sphere of vegetables, and of means necessary to gather

\* Milton's description of Eve is still more characteristic of female majesty:

Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye;

In every gesture, dignity and love.

PAR. LOST. BOOK IV.

† Genesis ix. 2.



them. No one extends its industry beyond its instinct, be its wants what they may. Man alone raises his intelligence up to that of Nature. He not only pursues her plans, but recedes from them. He substitutes others in their place. He covers regions destined for forests with corn and wine. He says to the pine of Virginia, and to the chestnut of India, "You shall grow in Europe." Nature seconds his efforts, and seems, by her complaisance, to invite him to prescribe laws to her.

For him she has covered the Earth with plants, and though their species be infinite, there is not a single one but may be converted to his use. She has, first, selected some out of every class, to minister to his pleasure, or support, wherever he pleases to fix his habitation: from among the palm-groves of Arabia, the date; among the ferns of the Moluccas, the sago; among the reeds of Asia, the sugar-cane; among the solanums of America, the yam; among the lianne tribe, the vine; among the papilionaceous, the French-bean and the pea; finally, the potatoe, the manioc, the maize, and an innumerable multitude of fruits, grains, and roots, proper for food, are distributed for him, in every family of vegetables, and over every latitude of the Globe. She permits the plants which are the most useful to him to grow in all climates; the domestic plants, from the cabbage up to the corn, alone like Man himself, are citizens of the World. The others serve for his bed, for his roof, for his cloathing, for medicine, at least for fuel. And, in order that there might be no one but what should contribute to the support of his life, and that the distance, or ruggedness of the soil in which they grow might interpose no obstacle to his enjoyment of them, Nature has formed certain animals to seek them out for him, and to convert them to his use.

These animals are formed, in the most wonderful manner, at once to live in situations the most rugged, and animated by an instinct the most tractable, to associate with Man. The lama of Peru, with his forked feet, armed with two spurs, scrambles over the precipices of the Andes, and brings back to him his rose-coloured fleece. The rein-deer, with her broad and cloven hoof, traverses the snows of the North, and fills



for him her dugs distended with cream, in the mossy pastures. The ass, the camel, the elephant, the rhinoceros, are detached, on his service, to the rocks, to the sands, to the mountains, and to the morasses of the torrid Zone. Every region is supporting a race of servants for him; the roughest, the most robust; the most patient, the most ungrateful.

But animals alone, in which are united the greatest number of utilities, live with him over the whole face of the earth. The sluggish cow pastures in the cavity of the valley, the bounding sheep on the declivity of the hill. The scrambling goat browses among the shrubs of the rock; the hog armed with a snout, turns up the foundation of the marshy ground, with the help of an appendage of spurs, which Nature has planted above his heels, to prevent his sinking in it; the swimming duck feeds on the fluvial plants; the hen, with attentive eye, picks up every grain scattered about, and lost in the field; the pigeon, on rapid wing, collects a similar tribute from the refuse of the grove, and the frugal bee turns to account, for Man, even the small dust on the flower.

There is no corner of the Earth where the whole vegetable crop may not be reaped. Those plants which are rejected by one, are a delicacy to another; and even to the finny tribes, contribute to their fatness. The hog devours the horse-tail and hen-bane; the goat, the thistle and hemlock. All return, in the evening, to the habitation of Man, with murmurs, with bleatings, with cries of joy, bringing back to him the delicious tribute of innumerable plants, transformed, by a process the most inconceivable, into honey, milk, butter, eggs, and cream.

Man subjects, to his dominion, not only the whole vegetable, but the whole animal creation, though their smallness, their swiftness, their strength, their cunning, nay, the very Elements, may seem to exempt them from his jurisdiction.

To begin with the infinite legions of insects, his duck and his hen feed upon them. These fowls swallow even various sorts of venomous reptiles, without sustaining the slightest injury. His dog subdues for him every other species of brute. The numerous varieties of that animal are evidently adapted to



their several uses and ends; the shepherd's dog, for the wolf; the terrier, for the fox; the grey-hound, for animals of the plain; the mastiff, for those of the mountain; the pointer, for birds; the water-spaniel, for the amphibious race; in a word, from the little lap-dog of Malta, formed only for amusement, up to the huge hunter of the Indies, who, according to Pliny and Plutarch, scorns to attack any thing inferior to the lion or the elephant, and whose breed still subsists among the Tartars, their species are so varied, in form, in size, in respect of instinct, that I am constrained to believe, Nature has produced as many sorts of them, as she has produced animal species to be subjugated. We cross the breed of cats, of goats, of sheep, of horses, a thousand different ways; and after all our efforts and combinations, we can produce only a few trivial varieties, which deserve, in no respect, to be compared with the natural varieties of the canine species.

While some philosophers assign to every species of dog a common original, others ascribe a difference of origin to Man. Their system is founded on the variety of size and colour in the human species; but neither colour, nor stature, are distinctive characters, in the judgment of all Naturalists. According to them, colour is merely accidental; superior stature only a greater expansion of forms. Difference of species arises from the difference of proportions: now this characterizes that of dogs. The proportions of the human body nowhere vary; the black colour, within the Tropics, is simply the effect of the heat of the Sun, which tinges him in proportion as he approaches the line. And it is, as we shall see, one of the blessings of Nature. His size is invariably the same in every age, and in all places, notwithstanding the influence of food and climate, by which other animals are so powerfully affected. There are breeds of horses and of black cattle, double the size the one of other, as as any one may be convinced, by comparing the large artillery horses of Holstein, with the small ponies of Sardinia, no taller than sheep; and the huge-Flanders ox with the diminutive one of Bengal; but from the tallest to the shortest of the human race, there is not, at most, the difference of a foot. Their stature is the same, at this day, as it was in the time of the Egyptians;



and the same at Archangel as in Africa, as is evident from the length of mummies, and that of the tombs of the ancient Indians, found in Siberia, along the banks of the river Petzora.

The somewhat contracted stature of the Laplanders is to be imputed, I presume, to their sedentary mode of living; for I have observed, among ourselves, a similar contraction of size in persons of certain occupations, which require little exercise. That of the Patagonians, on the contrary, is more expanded than that of the Laplanders, though they inhabit a latitude as cold, from their greater disposition to be moving about. The Laplander passes the greater part of the year shut up amidst his herds of rein-deer; whereas the Patagonian is perpetually a stroller, for he lives entirely by hunting and fishing. Besides, the first travellers to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of these two nations, have greatly exaggerated the smallness of the one, and the magnitude of other, because they saw the Laplanders squatted on the floor of their smoky huts; and the Patagonians in a position which magnifies every object, namely, at a distance, on the summit of their rocky shores, whither they flock as soon as a vessel appears, and through the fogs which are so frequent in their climates, and which, it is well known, greatly increase the apparent size of all bodies, especially when in the Horizon, by refracting the light wherewith they are surrounded.

The Swedes and Norwegians, who inhabit similar latitudes, in which the cold prevents, as it is alleged, the expansion of the human body, are of the same stature with the natives of Senegal, where the heat, for the opposite reason, ought to favour growth; but neither the one nor the other is taller than we are. Man, over the whole Globe, is at the centre of all magnitudes, of all movements, and of all harmonies. His stature, his limbs, his organs, have proportions so adjusted to all the works of Nature, that she has rendered them invariable as their combination. He constitutes himself alone, a genus which has neither class nor species, dignified, by way of excellence, with the title of MANKIND.

He forms a real family, all the members of which are scattered over the face of the Earth, to collect her productions, and



are capable of maintaining a most wonderful correspondence, adapted to their mutual necessities. Man has been, in every age, the friend of Man, not merely from the interests of commerce, but by the more sacred, the more indissoluble, bands of Humanity. Sages appeared, two or three thousand years ago, in the East, and their wisdom is now illuminating us at the remotest verge of the West. To-day, a savage is oppressed in the wilds of America; he sends his arrow round from family to family, from nation to nation, and the flame of war is kindled in the four quarters of the Globe. We are all bondsmen for each other.

We shall frequently recur to this great truth, which is the basis of the morality of Subjects as well as of Sovereigns. The happiness of every individual is attached to the happiness of Mankind. He is under obligation to exert himself for the general good, because his own depends on it. But interest is not the only motive which renders virtue a duty to him; to Nature he is indebted for its sublimest lessons. Being born destitute of instinct, he was laid under the necessity of forming his intellect on her productions. He could imagine nothing but after the models of every kind with which she had presented him. He was instructed in devising and perfecting the mechanic Arts, from plans suggested by the industry of animals; and in the liberal Arts and Sciences, after the model of Nature's own immediate harmonies and plans. To her sublime studies he is indebted for a light which illuminates no other animal. Instinct discovers to the animal its necessities only; but Man alone, has raised himself from the dark womb of profound ignorance, to the knowledge and belief of a GOD.

This knowledge has not been confined to a Socrates, or a Plato: No, they have it in common with Tartars, Indians, Savages, Negros, Laplanders; with men of every description. It is the result of every contemplation, whatever be the object, a grain of moss, or the Sun. On it are founded all the associations of the human race, without a single exception.

As Man has formed his intellect on that of Nature, he has been obliged to regulate his moral sense by that of her AUTHOR. He felt, that, in order to please Him who is the principle of all



good, it was necessary to contribute to the general good; hence the efforts made by Man, in every age, to raise himself to GOD, by the practice of virtue. This religious character, which distinguishes him from every other sensible being, belongs more properly to his heart than to his understanding. It is, in him, not so much an illumination as a feeling, for it appears independent even of the spectacle of Nature, and manifests itself with equal energy in those who live most remote from it, as in those who are continually enjoying it. The sensations of the infinity, of the universality, of the glory, and of the immortality with which it is connected, are incessantly agitating the inhabitants of the city, as well as those of the country, Man, feeble, miserable, mortal, indulges himself, every where, in these celestial passions. Thither he directs, without perceiving it, his hopes, his fears, his pleasures, his pains, his loves; and passes his life in pursuing, or combating, these fugitive impressions of DEITY.

Such is the career which I have prescribed to myself. But as, in a long voyage, we sometimes perceive, on our way, flowery isles, in the bosom of a great river, and enchanting groves on the summit of inaccessible precipices: in like manner, the progress we shall make in the study of Nature, will gradually disclose to us some delightful prospects. With these we shall, at least, feast the eye as we pass along, if we are not permitted to stop, and survey them at leisure. We shall have frequent occasion to remark, that the works of Nature exhibit contrast, harmonies, and transitions, which wonderfully unite their different empires to each other.

We shall examine by what magic it is, that the contrasts are productive, at once, of pleasure and pain, of friendship and hatred, of existence and destruction. From them proceeds that great principle of LOVE, which divides all the individuals into two great classes, objects loving, and objects beloved. This principle extends from animals and plants, which are distinguished by sex, down to insensible fossils; as metals, which have magnetic powers, most of which are still unknown to us; and from salts which strive to unite in the fluids where they swim, up to the Globes, which have a mutual attraction in the Heavens. It opposes individual to individual by difference



of sex, and genus to genus by difference of forms, in order to extract from them harmonies innumerable.

In the Elements, Light is opposed to Darknes, Heat to Cold, Earth to Water, and their accords produce days, temperatures, views, the most agreeable. In vegetables, we shall see, in the forests of the North, the thick and gloomy foliage, the tranquil attitude and the pyramidical form of the fir, contrast with the tender verdure, and moveable foliage, of the birch, which, from its spreading top and slender base, presents the appearance of a pyramid inverted. The forests of the south will exhibit similar harmonies, and we shall find them even in the herbage of our meadows.

The same oppositions reign in the animal kingdom; and, to instance only in such as are most familiar to us, the bee and the butterfly, the hen and the duck, the indigenous sparrow and rambling swallow, the nimble courser and sluggish ox, the patient ass and capricious goat; in a word, the cat and dog, display an endless contrast, on our flower-beds, in the meadow, in our houses, of forms, of movements, of instincts.

I do not comprehend, in these harmonical oppositions, the carnivorous animals, which make war on the others, and whose corresponding intercourse regards them not as living, but as dead. I understand by contrast, that which Nature has established between two classes, different in manners, in inclinations, and in figures, and to which, nevertheless, she has given certain secret sympathetic sensibilities, which engage them, in their natural state, to inhabit the same places, to associate together, and to live in peace. Such is the contrast of the horse, who delights to gallop about in the same field where the ox walks gravely on, ruminating as he goes. Such, again, is that of the ass, who, well-pleased, follows, with a slow and measured pace, the nimble-footed goat, up to the very precipices over which she scrambles. From the bee and the butterfly, up to the elephant and the camelopard, there is not a single animal on the Earth but what has its contrast, Man only excepted.

The contrast of Man are all within himself. Two opposite passions, Love and Ambition, balance all his actions. To



Love, are referable all the pleasures of the senses; to Ambition, all those of the soul. These two passions are in perpetual counterpoise in the same subject; and while the first is accumulating on Man every kind of corporeal enjoyment, and insensibly sinking him below the level of the beasts; the second prompts him to aim at universal dominion, and to exalt himself, at length, up to the DEITY. These two contradictory effects are observable in all men, who have it in their power, without obstruction, to follow these opposite impulses, whether in the class of Kings, or that of slaves. The *Neros*, the *Caligulas*, the *Domitians*, lived like brutes, and exacted the adoration due to Gods. We find in Negros the same incontinence, the same pride, and the same stupidity.

Nature, however, has bestowed these two passions on Man, as a source of happiness. She produces an equal number of each sex, in order to direct the love of every man to a single object, and in that object she has united all the harmonies which are scattered over her most beautiful productions. There is between Man and Woman a wonderful analogy of forms, of inclinations, and of tastes; but there is a difference still greater, of these very qualities. Love, as we shall have occasion to observe, results only from contrasts, and the greater they are, the more powerful is its energy. I could easily demonstrate this, by the evidence of a thousand historical facts. It is well known, for example, with what a mad excess of passion that tall and clumsy soldier *Mark Anthony* loved, and was beloved by, *Cleopatra*; not the person whom our Sculptors represent, of a tall, portly, sabbine figure, but the *Cleopatra* whom Historians paint, as little, lively, sprightly, carried, in disguise, about the streets of Alexandria, in the night-time, packed up in a parcel of goods, on the shoulders of *Appollodorus*, to keep an assignation with *Julius Caesar*.

The influence of contrasts, in Love, is so certain, that, on seeing the lover, it would be easily possible to draw the portrait of the beloved object, without having seen it, provided only it were known that the passion was extremely violent. Of this I myself have made proof, on various occasions; among others, in a city where I was entirely a stranger. A gentleman of the



place, one of my friends, carried me to visit his sister, a very virtuous young lady, and he informed me, as we were going, that she was violently in love. Being arrived at her apartments, and Love happening to become the subject of conversation, it came into my head to say to her, that I knew the laws which determined our choice in love, and that, if she would permit me, I could draw her lover's picture, though he was utterly unknown to me. She bid me defiance: upon this, taking the opposite to her tall and buxom figure, to her temperament and character, which her brother had been describing to me, I painted her favourite as a little man, not overloaded with flesh, with blue eyes, and fair hair, somewhat fickle, eager after information. Every word I uttered made her blush up to the eyes, and she became seriously angry with her brother, accusing him of having betrayed her secret. This, however, was not the case, and he was fully as much astonished as herself.

These observations are of more importance than we, generally, imagine. They will enable us to demonstrate, to what a degree our Institutions deviate from the Laws of Nature, and weaken the power of Love, when they assign to Woman the studies and the employments of Man. Virtue alone knows how to turn these contrasts to good account, in the married state, in which the duties of the two sexes are so very different. There, too, she presents to their natural ambition, a career the most sublime, in the education of their children, whose reason it is their duty to form; and their sweetest recompense to receive, in exchange, the first sentiments of filial affection. In the hearts of their children their memory is to be perpetuated on the earth, in a manner more affecting, and infinitely more indelible, than the memory of Kings on public monuments. What power can equal that which confers existence, and the power of thought; and what recollection can last so long as that of filial gratitude?

The government of a good King has been compared to that of a Father; but the empire of a virtuous Father can be compared only to that of GOD himself. Virtue is, to Man the true law of Nature. It is the harmony of all harmonies. Virtue alone can render Love sublime, and Ambition beneficent. It can derive the purest gratification even from privations the



most severe. Rob it of Love, Friendship, Honour, the Stars, the Elements, it feels that, under the administration of a Being just and good, abundant compensation is reserved for it, and it acquires an increase of confidence in GOD, even from the cruelty and injustice of Man. It was virtue that supported, in every situation of life, an *Antoninus*, a *Socrates*, an *Epicletus*, a *Fenelon*; that rendered them, at once, the happiest, and the most respectable of Mankind.

If, on the one hand, Nature has established contrasts, in all works, on the other, she has deduced from them harmonies which re-unite them all again. It would appear that, having fixed upon a model, it was her intention to communicate to all places a participation in its beauty. The light and disk of the Sun are accordingly, reflected a thousand different ways, by the planets in the heavens, by the parhelions and rainbow in the clouds, by the *Aurora Borealis* in the ices of the North; in a word, by the refractions of the Atmosphere, the reflexes of the Waters, and the specular reflexions of most bodies on the Earth. The islands, in the midst of the Ocean, represent the mountainous forms of the Continent; and the Mediterranean Seas and Lakes in the bosom of mountains, represent the vast plains of the mighty Deep.

Trees, in the climate of India, affect the port of herbs; and the herbs in our gardens that of trees. A multitude of flowers seem modelled after the rose and the lily. Among our domestic animals, the cat appears to be formed on the model of the tyger, the dog on that of the wolf, the sheep on that of the camel. Every species has its correspondent, Mankind only excepted. That of the Monkey, which some would make a variety of the human species, has relations, much more direct, to other animals. The man of the woods, with his long arms, his meagre feet, his fleshless paws, his flattened nose, his lipless mouth, his round eyes, his abominable hairy coat, has, certainly, a very imperfect resemblance to the Apollo of the Vatican; and whatever inclination one might have to reduce Man to the beast, it would be difficult to find, in the female of that animal, a second model of the human figure, which should come near the Venus de Medicis, or the Diana of Allegrain, which is shewn



at Lucienne. But I have seen monkeys which had a strong resemblance to the bear, as the bavian of the Cape of Good-Hope; or to the greyhound, as the maki of Madagascar. Some are formed like little lions; such is a very handsome white species, with a mane, found in Brasil. I presume that most species, of quadrupeds, especially among the ferocious kinds, have their counterparts in those of the monkey tribe.

These same correspondencies are likewise discernible in the numerous varieties of parrots, which, in their forms, their bills, their claws, their scream, and their sports, imitate, for the most part, birds of prey. Finally, they extend even to the plants, denominated, for this very reason, *mimosas*, which represent, in their flowers, or in the aggregation of their grains, insects, and reptiles, such as snails, flies, caterpillars, lizards, scorpions, &c.

Nature, in forming and presenting these correspondencies, must have some intention, which I do not comprehend. What is very remarkable, they are common only between the Tropics, where the forests swarm with every species of the monkey and parrot race. Perhaps she meant to exhibit, under harmless forms, those of the noxious animals, which are there found in great numbers, in order to expose to the light of day the terrible figure of those sons of darkness and carnage, and that none of her productions should remain concealed, in the womb of Night, from the eyes of Man.

Whatever may be in this, no one animal, on the face of the Earth, is formed on the noble proportions of the human figure; and if Man, under the impulse of passion, frequently degrades himself to the level of the beasts, his restlessness, his intelligence, and his sublime affections, sufficiently demonstrate, that he himself is the counterpart of the DEITY.

Finally, the spheres of all beings have a communication, by means of rays, which seem to unite their extremities. We shall remark on the stalactites and chrySTALLIZATIONS of fossils, the processes of vegetation; and I think we may perceive even the movement of animals in that of their magnetic influence. On the other hand, we shall see plants forming themselves, after the manner of fossils, without any apparent organization; such is, among others, the truffle, which has neither leaves,



nor flowers, nor roots. Others represent, in their flowers, the figure of animals, as the orchites; or their sensibility, as the sensitive plant which lets fall, and shuts its leaves at the slightest touch; or their instinct, as the *dionæa muscipula*, which catches flies. The petals of this plant are formed of opposite little leaves, impregnated with a sugary substance, which attracts the flies; but the instant they alight, these little leaves suddenly close together with a spring, like the jaws of a fox-trap, and pierce the fly with their prickly edges.

There are others still more astonishing, as having within themselves the principle of motion; such is the *hedyfarum movens* or *burum chandali*, imported, some years ago, from Bengal into England. This plant moves, alternately, the two pendent lobes which are attached to its leaves, though no exterior or apparent cause contributes to this species of oscillation.

But, without going so far in quest of wonders, we shall find, perhaps, in our common gardens, appearances of Nature still more surprizing. We shall see the pea, for example, pushing out its tendrils, precisely at the height where they begin to stand in need of support, and curling them round the boughs, with an address which can hardly be ascribed to chance. These relations seem to suppose intelligence; but we shall find others still more amiable, which are a demonstration of goodness, not in the vegetable, but in the hand which formed it. The *sylphium*, of our gardens, is a great ferulaceous plant, which resembles, on the first glance, what is known by the name of the sunflower. Its capacious leaves are opposed at the base, and their cavities uniting, form an oval cup, in which the rain water collects, to the quantity of a pretty large glass-full. They are placed in stories, not in the same direction, but at right angles, in order to receive the rain water that falls in the whole extent of their circumference. Its square stem is very commodious for being firmly caught by the claws of birds; and its flowers produce seeds of which many of them are excessively fond, particularly the thrush. So that this whole plant, like the perch of a parrot-cage, presents, at once, to the birds, a resting place, and meat, and drink.

We shall, likewise, speak of the smell and taste of plants. We shall remark, under these relations, a great number of bo-



tanical characters, which are not the least certain. It was from the smell and taste that Man acquired the first knowledge of their poisonous, medicinal, or nutritive qualities. Nay, the very sounds of plants are not to be overlooked; for, when agitated by the winds, most of them emit sounds peculiar to themselves, and which produce harmonies, or contrasts, the most agreeable, with the sites of the places where they usually grow. In India, the hollow canes of the bamboo, which shade the banks of rivers, imitate, as they rustle against each other, the gushing noise excited by the motion of a ship through the water; and the pods of the cinnamon, agitated by the winds on the mountain's top, the tic-tac of a mill. The moveable leaves of the poplar convey to our ears, in the wood, the bubbling of a brook. The green meadows, and the calm forests, fanned by the zephyrs, represent, in the hollow of the valley, and on the declivity of the rock, the undulations and murmurs of the waves of the sea breaking on the shore. The early inhabitants of the Globe, struck with these mysterious sounds, imagined that they heard oracles pronounced from the trunk of the oak, and that Nymphs and Dryads, inclosed in the rugged bark, inhabited the mountains of Dodona.

The sphere of animals extends still farther these wonderful harmonies. From the motionless shelly race, which pave and strengthen the capacious bed of the Sea, to the fly who wings his way by night, over the plains of the torrid Zone, glittering with rays of light like a star, you will find in them the configurations of rocks, of vegetables, of stars. A thousand ineffable passions, a thousand instincts animate them, which they express in songs, in cries, in hummings, nay, even in the articulate sounds of the human voice.

Some of them compose noisy republics, others live in a profound solitude. The whole life of some is employed in waging war, that of others in making love. In their combats they use every imaginable species of armour, and every possible method of availing themselves of the weapons with which Nature has furnished them, from the porcupine, who darts his pointed arrows at the foe, to the torpedo, who invisibly smites his assailant, as with a stroke of electricity.



Their loves are not less varied than their animosities. One must have his seraglio; another is satisfied with a transient mistress; a third unites himself to a faithful companion, whom he never abandons till death makes the separation. Man unites, in his enjoyments, their pleasures and their transports; and, satiated, sighs, and demands of Heaven felicity of a different kind.

We shall examine, simply by the light which reason supplies, whether Man, subjected, by his body, to the condition of the animal creation, all whose necessities he unites in himself, is not, by his soul, allied to creatures of a superior order: whether Nature, who has assigned the jurisdiction of the immensity of her productions on the earth, to a being naked, destitute of instinct, and who must undergo an apprenticeship of several years in learning to walk only, has reduced him, from his birth, to the alternative of studying their qualities or of perishing; and whether she has not reserved to herself some extraordinary means of interposing for his relief, amidst the evils of every kind which check his existence, even among beings of the same species with himself.

On reviewing the transitions which unite the different kingdoms, and which extend their limits to regions hitherto unknown, we shall not adopt the opinion of those who believe, that the works of Nature, being the results of all possible combinations, must present every possible mode of existence. "You will find in them," say they, "order, and, at the same time disorder. Throw about the characters of the alphabet, in an infinite variety of manners, and you shall form of them the Iliad, and poems superior even to the Iliad; but you will have, at the same time, an infinity of formless assemblages." We adopt this comparison, observing, however, that the supposition of the twenty four letters of the alphabet suggests a previous idea of order, which it was necessary to admit as a foundation even to the hypothesis of chance. If, then, the multiplied throws of these twenty-four letters gave, in fact, an infinite number of poems,



good and bad, how many must principles, much more numerous, of existence in itself, such as the elements, colours, surfaces, forms, depths, movements, produce of different modes of existing, were we to take but a single hundred of the modifications of each primordial combination of matter!

We should have, at least, the general transitions of the different kingdoms. We should see plants walking on feet like animals; animals fixed in the earth by roots like plants; rocks with eyes; herbs which vegetated only in air. The chief intervals of the spheres of existence would be filled up. But every thing possible does not exist. There exists nothing but what is useful relatively to Man. The same order which pervades the general combination of the spheres, subsists in the parts of each of the individuals which compose them. There is not a single one which has, in its organs, either deficiency or redundancy.

Their mutual adaptation is so perceptible, and they possess characters so very striking, that if you were to shew to a Naturalist of ability any representation of a plant, or animal, which he had never seen, he could tell, from the harmony of its parts, whether it were a creature of the imagination, or a copy after Nature. One day, the students in Botany, wishing to put to trial the knowledge of the celebrated *Bernard de Jussieu*, presented to him a plant which was not in the collection of the Royal Garden, requesting him to indicate its genus and species. The moment he cast his eyes on it, he replied, "This plant is artificially composed; you have taken the leaves of one, the stalk of another, and the flower of a third." This was the fact. They had, however, selected, with the greatest art, the parts of such as had the most striking analogy.

I am confident to affirm, that, by the method which I shall propose, the Science may be carried still much farther, and that we shall be enabled, by it, to determine, at sight of an unknown plant, the nature of the soil in which it grew; whether it is a native of a hot or a cold country; whether it is an inhabitant of the mountain, or of the stream; and, perhaps, even the animal species to which it is particularly allied.



In studying these laws, most of which are unknown, or neglected, we shall reject others, which are founded only on particular observations, and which have been too much generalized. Such are, for example, the following; that the number and fecundity of created beings are in the inverse ratio of their magnitude; and that the time of their decay is in proportion to that of their increase. We shall shew, that there are mosses less prolific than the fir, and shell fish less numerous than whales; such is, to name only one, the hammer-fish. There are animals which grow very fast, and decay very slowly: this is the case of most fishes. I should never have done, if I went about to prove, that the longevity, the strength, the size, the fecundity, the form, of every being is adapted, in a most wonderful manner, not only to its individual happiness, but to the general happiness of all, from which results that of Mankind.

We shall, likewise, reject those analogies, so commonly admitted, which are drawn from climate and soil, in order to explain all the operations of Nature by mechanical causes; for I shall demonstrate, that she frequently produces in these, both vegetables and animals, whose qualities are diametrically opposite to those of their climate and soil.

The tubulous and driest plants, such as reeds, rushes, as well as the birch, whose bark, similar to leather overlaid with oil, is incorruptible by humidity, grow by the water sides, like boats provided for crossing over. On the contrary, plants with the richest juices, and the most humid, grow in the driest situations, such as the aloe, the taper of Peru, and the lianne impregnated with water; which are to be found only on the parched rocks of the torrid Zone, where Nature has placed them like so many vegetable fountains.

Even the instincts of animals appear to be less adapted to their own personal utility, than to that of Man; and are sometimes in harmony with the nature of the soil which they inhabit, and sometimes in opposition to it. The gluttonous hog delights to live in the mire, from which he is intended to purify the habitation of Man; and the sober camel, to force



his way through the burning sands of Africa, impervious, but for him, to every effort of the traveller. The appetites of these animals do not grow out of the places which they inhabit; for the ostrich, who is a fellow-tenant of the same deserts with the camel, is still more voracious than the hog.

No one law of magnetism, of gravity, of attraction, of electricity, of heat, or of cold, governs the World. These pretended general laws, are nothing more than particular means. Our Sciences mislead us, by ascribing to Nature a false providence. They put the balance into her hand, it is true, but not of justice; no, it is only the balance of commerce. They weigh only the salts and the masses, but put aside the wisdom, the intelligence, and the goodness. They are not afraid of excluding from the heart of Man that sentiment of the divine qualities, which communicates to him so much force; and of accumulating on his mind, the weights and movements which oppress him. They put in opposition the squares of times and velocities, but they neglect those wonderful compensations with which Nature interposes for the relief of all beings, having bestowed the most ingenious on the most feeble, the most abundant on the poorest, and having united all for the relief of the Human Race, undoubtedly, as being the most wretched species of all.

We can know that only which Nature makes us feel; and we can form no judgment of her Works but in the place, and at the time, she is pleased to display them. All that we imagine, beyond this, presents only contradiction, doubt, error, or absurdity. I do not except, from this description, even our imaginary plans of perfection. For example, it is a tradition common to all Nations, supported by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, and founded on a natural feeling, that Man has lived in a better order of things, and that we are destined to another, which is still to surpass it. We are incapable, however, of saying any thing of either the one or the other. It is impossible for us to retrench any thing from that in which we live, or to add any thing to it, with-



out rendering our condition worse. Whatever Nature has introduced into it, is necessary. Pain and death are among the proofs of her goodness. But for pain, we should be bruising ourselves, every step we took, without perceiving it. But for death, new beings could not be raised into existence; and supposing those which already are in the world could be rendered eternal, that eternity would involve in it the ruin of generations, of the configuration of the two sexes, and of all the relations of conjugal, filial, and parental affection; that is to say, of the whole system of actual happiness.

In vain do we search, in our cradles, for the archives which our tombs deny us: the past, like the future, covers our mysterious destiny with an impenetrable veil. In vain do we apply to it the light which illumines us, and seek, in the origin of things, the weights, the times, and the measures, which we find in their enjoyment; but the order which produced them has, with relation to GOD, neither time, nor weight, nor measure. The divisions of matter and time were made only for circumscribed, feeble, transient Man. The Universe, said *Newton*, was produced at a single cast. We are seeking for youth in what was always old, for old age in what is always young, for germs in species, births in generations, epochs in nature; but when the sphere, in which we live, issued from the hand of its divine AUTHOR, all times, all ages, all proportions, manifested themselves in it at once.

In order that Etna might vomit out its fires, from the very first construction of these tremendous furnaces, lavas must have been provided which had not yet begun to flow. In order that the Amazonian river might roll its stream across America, the Andes of Peru must have been, from the beginning, covered with the snows, which the winds of the East had not yet accumulated upon them. In the bosom of new-created forests, ancient trees must have sprung up, that insects and birds might find their proper aliment on the antique rind. Carrion must have been created for the support of carnivorous animals. There must have been produced, in all the kingdoms of Nature, beings young, old, living, dying,



and dead. All the parts of this immense fabric must have appeared at the same instant; and if there was a scaffolding, to us it has disappeared.

Let others extend the boundaries of our Sciences, I shall consider myself as having rendered a more useful service to my fellow-creatures, if I am enabled to fix those of our ignorance. Our illumination, like our virtue, consists in descending: and our force in becoming sensible of our feebleness. If I do not pursue the road which Nature has reserved for herself, I shall, at least, walk in that which Man ought to take. It is the only one which presents him easy observations, useful discoveries, enjoyments of every description, without instruments, without a cabinet, without metaphysics, and without system.

In order to be convinced how agreeable it is, let us construct, in conformity to our method, any group, with the siles, the vegetables, and the animals, most commonly to be found in our Climates. Let us suppose a soil the most obdurate, a craggy protuberance on the coast, where a river disgorges itself into the Ocean, presenting a steep toward the sea, and a gentle declivity toward the land: that, on the side turned toward the sea, the billows cover with foam rocks clothed with sea-weed, fucuses, alga-marinas, of all colours, and of all forms, green, brown, purple, in tufts and garlands, as I have seen them on the coasts of Normandy, affixed to the rocks of white marl, which the sea detaches from the main shore. Let us farther suppose, that, on the side of the river, we see on the yellow sand, a scanty verdure, mixed with a little trefoil, and here and there a sprig of marine wormwood. Let us introduce some willows, not like those which grow in our meadows, but the native crop of the soil, and similar to those which are to be seen on the banks of the Sprée, in the vicinity of Berlin, with broad bushy tops, and rising to the height of more than fifty feet. Let us not forget, in this arrangement, the harmony of different ages, which it is so agreeable to meet, in every species of aggregation, but especially



in that of vegetables. Let us observe, of these willows so smooth and full of moisture, some pushing their young branches into the air, and others of an aged form, with pendent top and hollow trunk.

Let us add to these their auxiliary plants, such as the green mosses and gilded *lichen*, which marble their gray rind, and and some of the convolvuluses, vulgarly called lady's-smock, which delight to scramble along their trunk, and to embellish the branches, which have no flowers of their own, with leaves in form of a heart, and flowers white as snow, hollowed into the shape of a spire. Let us, finally, introduce the inhabitants natural to the willow, and its accessory plants, their butterflies, their flies, their beetles, and other insects, together with the feathered animals which make war on them, such as the water-hen, polished like the burnished steel, which catches them in the air; the wag-tail, which pursues them on the land, making the movement from which he derives his name; and the king's-fisher who hunts for them along the surface of the water; and you will see a multitude of agreeable harmonies arising out of one single species of tree.

They are, however, still imperfect. To the willow let us oppose the alder, which likewise affects the bank of the river, and which, by its form resembling that of a long tower, its broad foliage, its dusky verdure, its fleshy roots, formed like cords running along the banks, and binding together the soil, forms a complete contrast with the extended mass, the light foliage, the white-streaked verdure, and the trundling roots of the willow. Add to this the individuals of the alder, of different ages, rising like so many verdant obelisks, with their parasite plants, such as the maiden hair, spreading into stars of verdure over the humid trunk, the long hart's tongue hanging from the boughs down to the ground, and the other accessories of insects and fowls, and even of quadrupeds, which, probably, contrast as to form, colour, gait and instinct, with those of the willow; and we shall have a delicious



concert of vegetables and animals, composed of two trees only, together with their accompaniments.

If we illuminate our little plantation with the first rays of Aurora, we shall behold, at once, shades deep and shades transparent, diffused over the verdure; a dusky and a silvered verdure intersect each other, on the azure of the Heavens, and their soft reflexes, blended together, moving along the bosom of the waters. Let us, farther, suppose, what neither poetry nor painting can pretend to imitate, the odour of the plants, and even the smell of the sea, the rustling of leaves, the humming of insects, the matin-song of the birds, the hollow murmuring noise, intermixed with silence, of the billows breaking on the shore, and the repetitions of all these sounds, repercussed by the distant echos, which, losing themselves in the sea, resemble the voice of the Nereïds: Ah! if Love, or Philosophy, should ever tempt you to such a solitude, you will find in it an asylum more delicious than the palaces of Kings can bestow.

Would you wish that sensations of a different order should be excited? Would you wish to hear the voice of passion and sentiment burst from the bosom of the rock? Let the tomb of a virtuous and unfortunate man start up amidst the weeping willows, presenting this inscription to the eye:—*Here rests J. J. ROSSEAU.*

Would you wish to strengthen the impression of this picture, without, however, doing violence to Nature, as to the subject? Change the time, the place, the monument; let this isle be Lemnos; the trees of these groves, laurels and wild olives, and this tomb the tomb of *Philoctetes*. Look at the grotto, which served as a habitation to that great man, when abandoned by the Greeks, whose battles he had fought; his wooden pot, the tatters in which he was clothed, the bow and arrows of Hercules, which, in his hands, had subdued so many monsters, and with which he, at last wounded himself: and you will be impressed with two powerful sensations at once, the one physical, which increases in proportion as



you approach the works of Nature; because their beauty discloses itself only to the eye which examines it; the other moral, which grows upon you, in proportion as you retire from the monuments of Virtue, because to do good to men, and to be no longer within their reach, is a resemblance to the DEITY.

What would it be then, were we to take a glance of the general harmonies of this Globe? To dwell only on those which are best known to us, behold how the Sun constantly encircles with his rays one half of the Earth, while Night covers the other with her shade. How many contrasts and concords result from their ever changing oppositions? There is not a single point in the two Hemispheres, in which there does not appear, by turns, a dawn, a twilight, an aurora, a noon, a setting of burnished gold, and a night sometimes studded with stars, sometimes clothed in a sable mantle.

The Seasons walk hand in hand under his eye, like the hours of the day. Spring crowned with flowers, precedes his flaming car; Summer furrounds it with her golden sheaves: and Autumn follows it, bearing her cornucopia running over with glossy fruit. In vain would Winter and Night, retiring to the Poles of the World, attempt to set bounds to his majestic career: In vain do they raise out of the bosom of the polar Seas of the North and of the South, new Continents with their vallies, their mountains, and their icy coruscations: the Father of Day, with his fiery shafts, overturns the fantastical fabric; and without descending from his throne, resumes the empire of the Universe. Nothing can screen itself from his prolific heat.

From the bosom of the Ocean, he raises into the Air, the rivers which are afterwards to flow through the Old and New Worlds. He gives commandment to the Winds to distribute them over islands and continents. These invisible children of the Air transport them, from place to place, under a thousand capricious forms. Sometimes they are spread over the face of Heaven like veils of gold and streamers of silk;



sometimes they are rolled up in the form of frightful dragons and roaring lions, vomiting out torrents of fire and thunder. They pour them out on the mountains in as many different ways, in dews, in rains, in hail, in snow, in impetuous torrents.

However extravagant the mode of performing their services may appear, every part of the Earth annually receives from them neither more nor less, than its accustomed portion of water. Every river fills his urn, and every Naiad her shell. In their progress, they impress on the liquid plains of the Sea, the variety of their characters. Some hardly ruffle the smooth expanse; others swell it into billows of azure; and others turn it up from the bottom with a dreadful noise, and dash it foaming over the rocky promontory.

Every place possesses harmonies peculiar to itself, and every place presents them in rotation. Run over, at pleasure, a Meridian, or a Parallel, you will find on it mountains of ice, and mountains of fire; plains of every kind of level, and hills of every curve; islands of all forms, and rivers of all currents; some spouting up, as if they issued from the centre of the Earth, others precipitating themselves down in cataracts, as if they were descending from the clouds. Nevertheless, this Globe, agitated with such a variety of convulsive movements, and loaded with such a variety of burdens, apparently so irregular, advances in a steady and unalterable course through the immensity of the Heavens.

Beauties of a different order decorate its Architecture, and render it habitable to sensible beings. A girdle of palm-trees, to which are suspended the date and the cocoa, surrounds it between the burning Tropics; and forests of mossy firs begird it under the Polar Circles. Other vegetables extend, like rays, from South to North, and, having reached a certain latitude, expire. The banana advances from the Line to the southern shore of the Mediterranean. The orange crosses that Sea, and embellishes, with its golden fruit, the southern extremities of Europe. The most necessary plants, such as corn and the gramineous tribes, penetrate the farthest, and strong



from their weakness, stretch, in the shelter of the vallies, from the banks of the Ganges to the shores of the Frozen Ocean.

Others, more hardy, take their departure from the rude climates of the North, advance over the summit of Mount Taurus, and make their way, under favour of the snows, into the very bosom of the Torrid Zone. The fir and the cedar clothe the mountains of Arabia, and of the kingdom of Cachemire, and view at their feet the scorched plains of Aden and Lahor, where the date and the sugar-cane are reaped. Other trees, equally averse to heat and cold, have their centre in the Temperate Zones. The vine languishes in Germany and Senegal. The apple, the tree of my own country, never saw the Sun perpendicularly over its head; or describing round it the complete circle of the Horizon, to ripen its beautiful fruit.

But every soil has its Flora, and its Pomona. The rocks, the morasses, the mire, the sand, have each vegetables peculiar to itself. The very shallows of the sea are fertile. The cocoa-tree thrives only on the strand, and suspends its milky fruit over the billows of the briny Deep. Other plants are adapted to the winds, to the seasons, to the hours of the day, with such exact precision, that, by means of them, *Linnaeus* constructed botanical almanacks and time-pieces.

Who is capable of describing the infinite variety of their figure? What cradles, arches, avenues, pyramids of verdure, loaded with fruits, present the most enchanting habitations? What happy republics lodge under their tranquil shade! What delicious banquets are there prepared! Nothing of them is lost. The quadrupeds eat the tender foliage, the feathered race the feeds, and other animals the roots and the rind. The insects feed on the offal. Their infinite legions are armed with every kind of instruments for collecting it. The bees have their thighs furnished with spoons, lined with hair, for picking up the fine powder of their flowers: the fly is provided with a pump for sucking out the sap; the worm has an augre, a wimble, a file, to separate the solid parts; and the ant has pin-



cers for carrying off the crumbs. On considering the diversity of form, of manners, of governments, of all these animals, and the continual wars which they wage, you would suppose them a multitude of foreign and hostile nations, who are on the point of destroying each other. From their constancy in love, the perpetuity of their species, their wonderful harmony with all the parts of the vegetable kingdom, you would receive the idea of a single people, which had its hereditary nobility, its carpenters, its pump makers, and other artifans.

Other tribes hold vegetables in contempt, and are adapted to the Elements, to Day, to Night, to Tempests, and to different parts of the Globe. The eagle trusts her nest to the rock which looses itself in the clouds; the ostrich, to the parched sands of the desert; the rose-coloured flamingo, to the mires of the Southern Ocean. The white bird of the Tropic, and the black frigate, take pleasure to sweep along, in company, over the vast extent of the Seas, to view, from the highest regions of the Atmosphere, the fleets of India toiling after them in vain; and to circumscribe the Globe from East to West, disputing rapidity of flight with the Sun himself.

In the same latitudes, the turtle dove and the parroquet, less daring, travel only from isle to isle, having their young ones in their train, and picking up, in the forests, the grains of spicery which they brush off as they hop from branch to branch. While fowls of this description preserve an equal temperature, under the same Parallels, others find it in the track of the same Meridian. Long triangles of wild-geese and of swans go and come every year from South to North, stop only at the hoary limits of Winter, hurry, without desire, or astonishment, over the populous cities of Europe, and look down with disdain on their fertile plains, presenting the furrows of green corn in the midst of snow: to such a degree does liberty appear preferable to abundance, even in the eyes of the animal creation!

On the other hand, legions of heavy quails cross the Sea, and go to the South, in quest of the Summer's heat. Toward the end of September, they avail themselves of a northerly



wind to take their departure from Europe, and flapping one wing, while they present the other to the gale, half sail, half oar, they graze the billows of the Mediterranean, with their fattened rump, and bury themselves in the sands of Africa, to serve as food to the famished inhabitants of Zara.

There are animals which travel only by night. Millions of crabs in the Antilles, descend from the mountains by the light of the Moon, clashing their claws; and present to the Caraihs, on the sterile strand of their isles, innumerable shells replenished with exquisite marrow. At other seasons, on the contrary, the tortoise quits the Sea, and lands on the same shores, to accumulate layers of eggs in their barren sands.

The very ices of the Pole are inhabited. We find in their Seas, and under their floating promontories of crystal, the black enormous whale, with more oil on his back than a whole plantation of olives could produce. Foxes cloathed in precious furs, find the means of living on shores abandoned by the Sun; herds of rein-deer there scratch up the snow in search of moss, and advance, braying, into those desolate regions of night, by the glimmering light of the *Aurora Borealis*. Through a Providence, worthy of the highest admiration, places the most unprolific, present to Man, in the greatest abundance, provisions, cloathing, lamps, and firing, not of his own production.

How delightful would it be to behold the Human Race collecting all these various blessings, and communicating them to each other, in peace, from Climate to Climate! We look with expectation, every Winter, to the period when the swallow and the nightingale shall announce to us the return of serenity. How much more affecting would it be, to behold the People of distant Lands arrive, with the Spring, on our shores, not with the dreadful noise of artillery, like modern Europeans, but with the sound of the flute and the hautboy, as the ancient Navigators, in the earlier ages of the World! We should behold the tawny Indian of Southern Asia, forcing his way, as formerly, up its mighty rivers, in his leathern



canoe; penetrating, through the current of the Petzora, to the extremities of the North, and displaying, on the frozen shores of the Icy Sea, the riches of the Ganges. We should see the copper-coloured Indian of America, in his hollowed log, traversing the extended chain of the Antilles, conveying from isle to isle, from shore to shore, perhaps to our very Continent, his gold and emeralds. Numerous caravans of Arabs, mounted on camels and oxen, would arrive, following the course of the Sun, from pasture to pasture, recalling the memory of of the innocent and happy life of the ancient Patriarchs.

Winter itself would be no interruption to the communication of mankind. The Laplander, covered with warm fur, would arrive, under favour of the snow, in his sledge drawn by the rein-deer, and expose for sale, in our markets, the sable skins of Siberia. Did men live in peace, every Sea would be navigated, every region would be explored, all their productions would be collected. What a gratification of curiosity would it be to listen to the adventures of these foreign travellers, attracted to us by the gentleness of our manners! They would not be slow in communicating, to our hospitality, the secrets of their plants, of their industry, and of their traditions, which they will for ever conceal from our ambitious commerce.

It is among the members of the vast family of Mankind that the fragments of their History are scattered. How interesting would it be learn that of our ancient separation, the motives which determined each tribe to choose a separate habitation, on an unknown Globe; and to traverse as Chance directed, mountains which presented no path; and rivers which had not yet received a name?

What pictures would be presented to us in the descriptions of those countries, decorated with a pompous magnificence, as they proceeded from the hands of Nature, but wild, and unadapted to the necessities of Man destitute of experience! They would paint to us the astonishment of their forefathers, at sight of the new plants which every new Climate exhibited to their view, and the trials which they made of them, as the means of subsistence; how they were aided, no doubt, in their



necessitous circumstances, and in their industry, by some celestial Intelligence, who commiserated their distress; how they gradually formed an establishment: what was the origin of their laws, of their customs, and of their religions.

What acts of virtue, what instances of generous love have ennobled the deserts, and are unknown to our pride! We flatter ourselves, that we have got a clear insight into the history of foreign nations, because we have collected a few anecdotes, picked up at random by travellers. But this is much the same, as if they were to compose ours from the tales of a mariner, or the artificial representations of a courtier, amidst the jealousies of war, or the corruptions of commerce. The knowledge and the sentiments of a Nation, are not deposited in books. They repose in the heads, and in the hearts, of its sages; if there be on Earth such a thing as a secure asylum for Truth. We have already employed ourselves sufficiently in passing judgment on them; it would be of more importance for us, to submit to be judged by them, in our turn, and to profit by their expressions of astonishment, at sight of our Customs, of our Sciences, and of our Arts.

If it be delightful to acquire knowledge, it is much more delightful still to diffuse it. The noblest reward of Science is the pleasure of the ignorant man instructed. What a sublime satisfaction should it be to us, to enjoy their joy, to behold their dances in our public squares, and to hear the drums of the Tartar, and the ivory cornet of the Negro re-echo round the statues of our Kings! Ah, if we were good, I figure them to myself, struck with astonishment and sorrow, at the excessive and unhappy populousness of our cities, inviting us to spread ourselves over their solitudes, to contract marriages with them, and by new alliances to re-unite the branches of the Human Race, which are unhappily separating farther and farther, and which national prejudices disunite still more than Ages and Climates!

Alas! blessings have been given us in common, and we communicate to each other only the ills of life. Man is every where complaining of the want of land, and the Globe is covered with deserts. Man alone is exposed to famine, while



the animal creation, down to insects, are wallowing in plenty. Almost every where he is the slave of his equal, while the feeblest of animals maintain their liberty against the strongest. Nature, who designed him for love, denied him arms, and he has forged them for himself, to combat his fellow. She presents to all her children asylums and festivals; and the avenues of our cities announce our approach to them only by the sad spectacle of wheels and gibbets. The history of Nature exhibits blessings only, that of Man, nothing but robbery and madness. His heroes are the persons who have rendered themselves the most tremendous. Every where he despises the hand which spins the garment that clothes him, and which cultivates for him the fertile bosom of the Earth. Every where he esteems his deceiver, and reveres his oppressor. Always dissatisfied with the present, he alone of beings regrets the past, and trembles at the thought of futurity. Nature has granted to him alone, the knowledge of a DEITY, and swarms of inhuman religions have sprung up out of a sentiment so simple and so consolatory. What, then, is the power which has opposed barriers to that of Nature? What illusion has misled that marvellous reason, which has invented so many arts, except the art of being happy? O ye Legislators! boast no longer of your laws. Either Man is born to be miserable; or the Earth every where watered with his blood, and with his tears, accuses you all of having misunderstood those of Nature.

He who adapts not himself to his Country, his Country to Mankind, and Mankind to GOD, is no more acquainted with the laws of Politics, than he who, forming a system of Physics for himself alone, and separating his personal relations from all connection with the Elements, the Earth, and the Sun, is acquainted with the laws of Nature. To the investigation of these divine harmonies, I have devoted my life, and this Work. If, like so many others, I have gone astray, at least my errors shall not be fatal to my religion. It alone appears to me the natural bond of Mankind, the hope of our sublime passions, and the complement of our miserable



destiny. Happy, if I have been able sometimes to prop, with my feeble support, that sacred edifice, assailed as it is, in these times, on every side! But its foundations rest not on the Earth, and to Heaven its stately columns rear their heads. However bold some of my speculations may be, they have nothing to do with bad people. But, perhaps, more than one Epicurean may discern in them, that Man's supreme pleasure is in Virtue. Good citizens will, perhaps, find in them new means of being useful. At least, I shall have the full recompense of my labour, if so much as one unfortunate wretch, ready to sink at the melancholy spectacle which the World presents, shall revive, on beholding, in Nature, a Father, a Friend, a Rewarder.

Such was the vast plan I proposed to execute. I had collected, in this view, more materials than I had occasion for. But a variety of obstacles has prevented my making a complete arrangement of them. I shall, perhaps, resume this employment in happier times. I have, meanwhile, selected as much as was sufficient to convey an idea of the harmonies of Nature. Though my labours are here reduced to simple *Studies* merely, I have, however, been careful to preserve so much order, as was necessary to unveil my original design. Thus, a peristyle, an arcade half in ruins, avenues of columns, simple fragments of walls, present still to travellers, in an isle of Greece, the image of an ancient temple, notwithstanding the ravages of time, and of the barbarians who demolished it.

In setting out, I change scarcely any thing of the *First Part* of my Work, the arrangement excepted. I there display, in the first place, the benefits conferred by Nature on our World, and on the Age we live in; and the objections which have been raised to the Providence of their AUTHOR. I, next, reply successively to those which are started from the disorder of the Elements, of Vegetables, of Animals, of Man; and to those which are levelled against the nature of GOD himself. I am bold to affirm, that I have treated these subjects, without any personal, or extraneous, consideration



whatever. Having replied to these objections, I propose some, in my turn, to the elements of human Science, which we deem infallible; and I combat that pretended principle of our knowledge, which we call *Reason*.

After having cleared the ground of our opinions, in my first Studies, I proceed, in those that follow, to rear the fabric of human Knowledge. I examine what may be the portion of our intelligence, at which the light of Nature fixes its boundary; and what we understand by the terms Beauty, Order, Virtue, and their contraries. I deduce the evidence of it, from several laws, physical and moral, the sentiment of which is universal among all Nations of the Globe. I afterwards make application of the physical laws, not to the order of the Earth, but to that of Plants.

I balanced long, I acknowledge, between these two orders. The first would have exhibited, I confidently affirm, relations entirely new, useful to Navigation, to Commerce, and to Geography. But the second has presented me with relations equally new, equally agreeable, more easily demonstrable to the generality of Readers, of high importance to agriculture, and, consequently, to the most numerous description of Mankind. Besides, some of the harmonic relations of this Globe are to be found displayed in my replies to the objections against Providence, and in the elementary relations of Plants, in a manner sufficiently luminous to demonstrate the existence of this new order. The vegetable order has, moreover, furnished me with occasion to speak of the relations of the Globe, which extend directly to animals and to men; and, likewise, to suggest some hints respecting the earliest voyages of the Human Race, to the principal Quarters of the World.

I apply, in the following *Study*, the laws of Nature to Man. I establish the proofs of the immortality of the soul, and of the existence of the DEITY, not on the principles of our reason, which so frequently misleads us, but on an intimate feeling, which never deceives nor betrays. I refer to those physical and moral laws, the origin of our predominant passions, Love and Ambition, and even the causes which in-



interrupt the enjoyment of them, and which render our joys so transient, and our melancholy so profound. I flatter myself with the belief, that these proofs will interest the Reader, both by their novelty, and by their simplicity.

I proceed, afterwards, from these notions, to propose the palliatives, and the remedies, adapted to the ills of Civil Society, the representation of which is delineated in the first Volume. It was not my wish to imitate the example of most Moralists, who satisfy themselves with lashing vice, or with turning it into ridicule, without either assigning the principal causes, or indicating the remedies: much less shall I act the part of our modern Politicians, who foment vice, in order to make a gain of it. I am vain enough to hope, that this last *Study*, which has been a most agreeable one to myself, will exhibit some views, which may be rendered highly beneficial to my Country.

The rich and the great imagine, that every one is miserable, and out of the World, who does not live as they do; but they are the persons who, living far from Nature, live out of the World. They would find thee, O eternal Beauty! always ancient, and always new\*; O life pure and blissful, of all those who truly live, if they sought thee only within themselves! Wert thou a sterile mass of gold, or a victorious Prince, who shall not be alive to-morrow, or some attractive and deceitful female, they would perceive thee, and ascribe to thee the power of conferring some pleasure upon them. Thy vain nature would employ their vanity. Thou wouldst be an object proportioned to their timid and grovelling thoughts. But, because thou art too much within themselves, where they never choose to look, and too magnificent externally, diffusing thyself through infinite space, thou remainest to them an unknown GOD †. In losing themselves, they have lost thee.

\* St. Augustin's *City of God*.

† Fenelon, on the *Existence of God*.



The order, nay, the beauty, with which thou hast invest-  
ed all thy creatures, to serve as so many steps by which  
Man may raise himself to Thee, are transformed into a  
veil, which conceals Thee from his sickly eyes. Men have  
no sight but for vain shadows. The light dazzles them.  
Mere nothings are to them every thing ; and all perfec-  
tion passes with them for nothing. Nevertheless, he who  
never saw Thee, has never seen any thing ; he who has no  
relish for Thee is an utter stranger to true pleasure ; he is  
as if he were not, and his whole life is only a miserable  
dream.

I myself, O my God, misled by the prejudices of a  
faulty education, pursued a vain felicity, in systems of  
Science, in arms, in the favour of the Great, sometimes  
in frivolous and dangerous pleasures. In all these agita-  
tions, I was hunting after calamity, while happiness was  
within my reach. At a distance from my native Land, I  
sighed for joys which it contained not for me ; and, never-  
theless, thou wert bestowing on me blessings innumerable,  
scattered by thy bountiful hand over the whole Earth,  
which is the Country of Mankind. I was anxious to  
think that I had no powerful protector, that I belonged to  
no corps ; and by Thee I have been protected amidst a  
thousand dangers, in which they could have afforded me  
no assistance. It grieved me to think of living solitary,  
unnoticed, unregarded ; and Thou hast vouchsafed to  
teach me, that Solitude is far preferable to the bustle of  
a Court, and Liberty to Grandeur. It filled me with  
many a painful reflection, that I had not the felicity of  
being directed to some fair spouse, to be the companion of  
my life, and the object of my affection ; and thy wisdom  
invited me to walk to her habitation, and discovered to  
me, in each of her productions, an immortal Venus.

I never ceased to be happy, but when I ceased to trust  
in Thee. O my God ! give to these labours of a man, I  
do not say the duration, or the spirit of life, but the fresh-  
ness of the least of thy Works ! Let their divine graces



be transfused into my writings, and bring back a corrupted Age to Thee, as by them I myself have been brought back ! Opposed to Thee, all power is weakness ; supported by Thee, weakness becomes irresistible strength. When the rude northern blasts have ravaged the Earth, thou callest for the feeblest of winds ; at the sound of thy voice, the zephyr breathes, the verdure revives, the gentle primrose, and the humble violet cover the bosom of the bleak rock with a mantle of gold and purple.



## STUDY SECOND.

## BENEFICENCE OF NATURE.

**M**OST men, in policed Nations, look on Nature with indifference. They are in the midst of her Works, and they admire only human grandeur. What charm, after all, can render the History of Men so interesting? It has to boast of vain objects of glory alone, of uncertain opinions, of bloody victories, or, at most, of uselefs labours. If Nature, sometimes, finds a place in it, we are called upon to observe only the ravages which she has committed, and to hear her charged with a thousand calamities, which may be all traced up to our own imprudence.

With what unremitting attention, on the contrary, is this common Mother providing for us the means of happiness! She has diffused her benefits over the Globe, from Pole to Pole, entirely in the view of engaging us to unite in a mutual communication of them. She is incessantly recalling us from the prejudices, which unhappily separate Mankind, to the universal laws of Justice and Humanity, by frequently putting our ills in the hands of the so highly vaunted conquerors, and our pleasures in those of the oppressed, whom we hardly deign to favour with so much as our pity.

When the Princes of Europe issued forth, with the Gospels in their hand, to ravage Asia, they brought back with them the pestilence, the leprosy and the small pox; but Nature pointed out to a Dervise the coffee plant, in



the mountains of Yemen, and produced, at one and the same time, our plagues from our Croifades, and our delicious beverage from the cup of a Mahometan monk. The fucceffors of these Princes fubjugated the American Continent, and have transmitted to us, by means of this difcovery and conquest, an inexhaustible fucceffion of wars and venereal difeafes. While they were exterminating the inoffensive inhabitants of it by their murderous artillery, a Caraïb, in token of peace, fet the failors to fmoking his calumet ; the perfume of tobacco diffipated their chagrin, and the use of it is difseminated over the whole Earth ; and while the miferies of two Worlds are iffuing from the cannon's mouth, which Kings call their *ULTIMA RATIO*, the confolations of the civilized States of Europe, fteam from the pipe of a Savage.

To whom are we indebted for the use of fugar, of chocolate, of fo many agreeable means of fubfiftence, and fo many falutary medicines ? To naked Indians, to poor Peafants, to wretched Negroes. The fpade of flaves has done more good, than the fword of conquerors has done mischief. But in which of our great fquares are we to look for the ftatues of our obfcure benefactors ? Our Hiftories have not vouchsafed fo much as to preferve their names. We need not, however, to go fo far, in queft of proofs of the obligations under which we lie to Nature. Is it not to the ftudy of her laws, that Paris is indebted for fuch multiplied illumination, collected from every quarter of the Globe, combined a thousand different ways, and reflected over Europe in Sciences the moft ingenious, and enjoyments the moft refined, of every fpecies ?

Where is now the time, when our forefathers leaped for joy at finding a wild plumb tree, on the banks of the Loire ; or at catching a poor roe in the chace in the vast plains of Normandy ? Our fields, now fo richly clothed with harvefts, and orchards and flocks, did not then produce the common neceffaries of life. They wandered up and down, living on the precarious fupplies of hunt,



ing, and not daring to trust to Nature. Her simplest phenomena filled them with terror. They trembled at the sight of an eclipse, of an *ignis fatuus*, of a branch of mistletoe on the oak. Not that they believed the affairs of the World to be surrendered to Chance. They recognized every where Gods possessed of intelligence ; but not daring to believe them good, while cruel priests were their only instructors in religion, these unfortunate people imagined, that the Gods took pleasure only in tears, and immolated to them human victims, on the very spot, perhaps, on which now stands a receptacle for the wretched.\*

Let me suppose, that a Philosopher, such as *Newton*, were, then, to have treated them with the spectacle of some of our natural Sciences, and to have shewn them, with the microscope, forests in moss, mountains in grains of sand, thousands of animals in drops of water, and all the wonders of Nature, which, in a downward progress to

\* Some Writers, of our own, have composed the eulogium of the Druids. I shall oppose to them, among other authorities, that of the Romans, who, it is well known, were abundantly tolerant in matters of religion. Cæsar in his Commentaries, informs us, that the Druids, in honour of their Gods, burnt men in baskets of osier ; and that when criminals were wanting for this horrible purpose, they sacrificed even the innocent. Suetonius, in his life of Claudius, gives this account of the matter : “ The religion of the  
“ Druids, too cruel, it must be confessed, and which, from the time of Au-  
“ gustus had been simply forbidden, was by him entirely abolished.” Herodotus had, long before, loaded them with the same reproach.

All that can be opposed to the testimony of three Roman Emperors, and to that of the Father of History, is the silly evidence of the romance of *Altræa*. Have we not faults enough justly chargeable on ourselves, without undertaking the difficult task of justifying those of our ancestors ? They were not, indeed, it must be allowed, more culpable than other Nations, who all presented human sacrifices to the DIVINITY. Plutarch reproaches the Romans themselves, with having immolated, in the earlier times of the Republic, two Gauls and two Greeks, whom they buried alive.

Is it possible, then, that the first sentiment of Man, in a state of nature, could have been that of terror ; and that he must have believed in the Devil before he believed in God ? O ! no. It is Man who, universally, has misled Man. One of the great benefits, for which we are indebted to the Christian Religion, has been the destruction, in a considerable part of the World, of these inhuman doctrines and sacrifices.



nothing, multiplies the resources of her intelligence, while the human eye becomes incapable of perceiving the boundary : Let me go on to suppose, that afterwards, discovering to them, in the Heavens, a progression of greatness equally infinite, he had shewn them, in the planets, hardly perceptible to the naked eye, Worlds much greater than ours, Saturn, three hundred millions of leagues distant ; in the fixed stars, infinitely more remote, Suns which, probably, illuminate other Worlds ; in the whiteness of the Milky Way, stars, that is Suns, innumerable, scattered about in the Heavens, as grains of dust on the Earth, without Man's knowing whether all this may not be more than the threshold of Creation merely ; with what transports would they have viewed a spectacle which we, at this day, behold without emotion ?

But I would rather suppose, that, unprovided with the magic of Science, a man like *Fenelon* had presented himself to them, in all the majesty of Virtue, and thus addressed the Druids : “ You frighten yourselves, my  
“ friends, with the groundless terrors which you instil in-  
“ to the people. God is righteous. He conveys to the  
“ wicked terrible apprehensions, which recoil on those  
“ who communicate them. But He speaks to all men in  
“ the blessings which He bestows. Your religion would  
“ govern men by fear ; mine draws them with cords of  
“ love, and imitates his Sun in the firmament, whom He  
“ causes to shine on the evil and on the good.” Let me finally, suppose, that, after this, he had distributed among them the simple presents of Nature, till then unknown, sheaves of corn, slips of the vine, sheep clothed with the woolly fleece : Oh ! what would have been the gratitude of our grandfathers ! They would, perhaps, have fled with terror from the Inventor of the telescope, mistaking him for a Spirit ; but, undoubtedly, they would have fallen down, and worshipped the Author of *Telemachus*.

These, after all, are only the smallest part of the blessings for which their rich descendants stand indebted to



Nature. I say nothing of that infinite number of arts, which are employed at home, to diffuse knowledge and delight ; nor of that terrible invention of artillery, which secures to them the enjoyment of these, while the noise of it disturbs their repose at Paris, only to announce victories ; nor of that new, and still more wonderful, art of electricity, which screens\* their hotels from the thunder ; nor of the privilege, which they have, in this venal age, of presiding, in all States, over the happiness of men, when they believe they have nothing more to fear from the powers of Earth and Heaven.

But the whole world is engaged only in the pursuit of pleasure. England, Spain, Italy, the Archipelago, Hungary, all Southern Europe, is adding, every year, wools

\* On the subject of the effects of Electricity, a thought abundantly impious has been expressed, in a Latin verse, the import of which is, that Man has *disarmed the DEITY*. Thunder is by no means a particular instrument of divine Justice. It is necessary to the purification of the air, in the heats of Summer. God has permitted to Man the occasional disposal of it, as He has given him the power of using Fire, of crossing the Ocean, and of converting every thing in Nature to his advantage. It is the ancient Mythology, which, representing Jupiter always wielding the thunder, has inspired us with so much terror. We find, in the Holy Scriptures, ideas of the DIVINITY much more consolatory, and a much sounder Philosophy. I may, perhaps, be mistaken, but I do not believe there is a single passage in the Bible, in which thunder is mentioned as an instrument of divine Justice. Sodom was destroyed by showers of fire and brimstone. The ten plagues, with which Egypt was smitten, were the corruption of the waters, swarms of reptiles, lice, flies, the pestilence, ulcers, hail, caterpillars, thick darkness, and the death of the first born. Corah, Dathan and Abiram, were consumed by fire issuing out of the Earth. When the Israelites murmured in the wilderness of Paran ; *the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp*, Numb. xi. 1. In the threatenings denounced against the people in Leviticus, no mention is made of thunder. On the contrary, it was amidst the noise of thunder that GOD promulgated his law to his chosen people, from Mount Sinai. Finally, in that sublime piece of poetry, wherein David summons all the works of JEHOVAH, to praise him, he calls, among the rest, upon the thunder ; and it is not foreign to our purpose to remark, that he includes, in his summons, all the meteors which enter into the necessary harmony of the Universe. He qualifies them with the majestic title of the *Angels, and Hosts of the MOST HIGH*. See *Psalms cxlvi.*



to their wools, wines to their wines, silks to their silks. Asia sends them diamonds, spices, muslins, chintzes and porcelain; America, the gold and silver of her mountains, the emeralds of her rivers, the die stuffs of her forests, the cochineal, the sugar cane, and the cocoa nut of her fervid plains, which their hands did not cultivate; Africa, her ivory, her gold, her very children, which serve them as beasts of burden all over the globe.

There is not a spot of the Earth, or of the Sea, but what furnishes them with some article of enjoyment. The gulfs of the Ocean provide them pearls, its shallows, ambergris, and its icy promontories, furs. At home, they have reduced the rivers and mountains to a state of vassalage, in order to reserve to themselves feudal rights to fisheries and chaces. But there was no occasion to put themselves to so much expense. The sands of Africa, where they have no gamekeeper, send them, in clouds, quails, and other birds of passage, which cross the Sea in Spring, to load their table in Autumn. The Northern Pole, where they have no cruiser, pours on their shores, every Summer, legions of mackerel, of fresh cod and of turbot, fattened in the long nights of Winter.

Not only the fowls and the fishes change, for them, their climate, but the very trees themselves. Their orchards, formerly, were transplanted from Asia, and now, their parks from America. Instead of the chestnut and walnut, which surrounded the farms of their vassals, in the rustic domains of their ancestors, the ebony, the forb apple of Canada, the great chestnut of India, the magnolium, the tulip bearing laurel, encircle their country palaces with the umbrage of the new World, and, ere long, of its solitudes. They have summoned the jafmin from Arabia, the orange from China, the pineapple from Brasil, and a multitude of sweet scented plants, from every region of the torrid Zone. They have no longer occasion for furs: They can dispose of latitudes. They can convey, in their hot houses, the heats of Syria to exotic plants, at the very



season when their hinds are perishing with the cold of the Alps, in their hovels.

No one of the productions of Nature can escape their avidity. What they cannot have living, they contrive to have dead. The insects, birds, shell fish, minerals, nay, the very soil of the most distant lands, enrich their cabinets. Painting and engraving present them with the prospect, and procure them the enjoyment, of the Glaciers of Switzerland, during the burning heat of the Dogdays; and of the Spring of the Canaries, in the midst of Winter. The intrepid Navigator brings them, from regions into which the Arts dare not to penetrate, journals of voyages, still more interesting than the productions of the pencil; and redouble the silence, the tranquillity, the security of their nights, sometimes by a recital of the horrible tempests of Cape Horn, sometimes by that of the dances of the happy Islanders of the South Seas.

Not only every thing that actually exists, but Ages past, all contribute to their felicity. Not for the Temple of Venus only did Corinth invent those beautiful columns, rising like palm trees; no, but to support the alcoves of their beds. There voluptuous Art veils the light of the day through taffetas of every colour; and imitating, by softened reflexes, either of moonlight, or of sun-rising, represents the objects of their loves like so many Dianas or Auroras. The art of Phidias has for them produced a contrast to female beauty, in the venerable busts of a Socrates and a Plato.

Obscure scholars, by efforts of labour, which nothing can remunerate, have for them procured the knowledge of the sublime geniuses, who were ornaments of the World, in times nearer to the Creation; Orpheus, Zoroaster, Esop, Lokman, David, Solomon, Confucius and a multitude of others, unknown even to Antiquity. It was not for the Greeks, it is for them, that Homer still sings of



Heroes and of Gods, and that Virgil warbles the notes of the Latin flute, which ravished the ears of the Court of Augustus, and there rekindled the love of Country and of Nature. For them it is that Horace, Pope, Addison, La Fontaine, Gefner, have smoothed the rough paths of Wisdom, and have rendered them more accessible, and more lovely, than the treacherous steeps of Folly.

A multitude of Poets and Historians of all Nations, a Sophocles, an Euripides, a Corneille, a Racine, a Shakspear, a Taffo, a Xenophon, a Tacitus, a Plutarch, a Suetonius, introduce them into the very closets of those terrible Potentates, who bruised, with a rod of iron, the head of the Nations, whose happiness was intrusted to their care, and call them to rejoice in their happy destiny, and to hope for a better still, under the reign of another Antonius. Those vast geniuses, of all Ages, and of all Countries, celebrating, without concert, the undecaying lustre of Virtue, and the Providence of Heaven, in the punishment of Vice, add the authority of their sublime reason to the universal instinct of Mankind, and multiply, a thousand and a thousand times, in their favour, the hopes of another life, of much longer duration, and of more exalted felicity.

Does it not seem reasonable, that a chorus of praise should ascend, day and night, from the dome of every hotel, to the AUTHOR of Nature? Never did ancient King of Asia accumulate so many means of enjoyment in Suza, or Ecbatana, as our common tradesmen do in Paris. These Monarchs, nevertheless, every day paid adoration to the Gods; they would engage in no enterprize till the Gods were consulted; they would not so much as sit down to table, until the libation of religious acknowledgment was poured out. Would to GOD that our Epicureans were chargeable with indifference only to the hand which is continually loading them with benefits! But it is from



the very lap of plenteoufnefs and pleafure, that the voice of murmuring againft Providence now arifes. From their Libraries, ftored with fo many fources of knowledge, iffue forth the black clouds which have obfcured the hopes and the virtues of Europe.



## STUDY THIRD.

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### OBJECTIONS AGAINST PROVIDENCE.

“ THERE is no God,” say these self constituted sages,  
 “ From the work form your judgment of the workman.\*  
 “ Observe first of all, this Globe of ours, so destitute of  
 “ proportion and symmetry. Here it is deluged by vast  
 “ seas ; there it is parched with thirst, and presents only  
 “ wildernesses of barren sand. A centrifugal force, oc-  
 “ casioned by its diurnal rotation, has heaved out its E-  
 “ quator into enormous mountains, while it flattened the  
 “ Poles : For the Globe was originally in a state of  
 “ softness ; whether it was a mud recovered from the  
 “ empire of the Waters, or, what is more probable, a  
 “ scum detached from the Sun. The volcanoes, which  
 “ are scattered over the whole Earth, demonstrate, that  
 “ the fire which formed it is still under our feet. Over  
 “ this scoria, so wretchedly levelled, the rivers run as  
 “ chance directs. Some of them inundate the plains ;  
 “ others are swallowed up, or precipitate themselves in  
 “ cataracts, and no one of them presents any thing like a  
 “ regular current. The islands are merely fragments of  
 “ the Continent, violently separated from it by the O-  
 “ cean ; and what is the Continent itself, but a mass of  
 “ hardened clay ? Here the unbridled Deep devours its

\* See replies to this objection in Study IV.



“ shores ; there, it deserts them, and exhibits new moun-  
 “ tains, which had been formed in its womb. Amidst  
 “ this conflict of contending elements, this baked lump  
 “ grows harder and harder, colder and colder, every day.  
 “ The ices of the Poles, and of the lofty mountains, ad-  
 “ vance into the plains, and insensibly extend the uni-  
 “ formity of an eternal Winter over this mass of confu-  
 “ sion, ravaged by the Winds, the Fire and the Water.

“ In the vegetable World, the disorder increases upon  
 “ us.\* Plants are a fortuitous production, of humid and  
 “ dry, of hot and cold, the mould of the Earth merely.  
 “ The heat of the Sun makes them spring up, the cold  
 “ of the Poles kills them. Their sap obeys the same me-  
 “ chanical laws with the liquid in the thermometer, and  
 “ in capillary tubes. Dilated by heat, it ascends through  
 “ the wood, and redescends through the rind, following  
 “ in its direction the vertical column of the air which  
 “ impresses that direction. Hence it is that all vegeta-  
 “ bles rise perpendicularly, and that the inclined plane  
 “ of a mountain can contain no more than the horizon-  
 “ tal plane of its base, as may be demonstrated by Geom-  
 “ etry. Besides, the Earth is an ill assorted garden,  
 “ which presents, almost every where, useless weeds, or  
 “ mortal poisons.

“ As to the animals, which we know better, because  
 “ they are brought nearer to us, by similar affections,  
 “ and similar wants, they present still greater absurdities.†  
 “ They proceeded, at first, from the expansive force of  
 “ the Earth, in the first Ages of the World, and were  
 “ formed out of the fermented mire of the Ocean and of  
 “ the Nile, as certain Historians assure us ; among oth-  
 “ ers Herodotus, who had his information from the Priests  
 “ of Egypt. Most of them are out of all proportion,

\* The reply is in Study V.

† The reply to this is in Study VI.



“ Some have enormous heads and bills, such as the tou-  
 “ can ; others long necks and long legs, like the crane :  
 “ These have no feet at all, those have them by hundreds ;  
 “ others have theirs disfigured by superfluous excres-  
 “ cences, such as the meaningless spurs of the hog, which,  
 “ appended at the distance of some inches from his feet,  
 “ can be of no service to him in walking.

“ There are animals scarcely capable of motion, and  
 “ which come into the World in a paralytic state, such  
 “ as the sloth or sluggard, who cannot make out fifty paces  
 “ a day, and screams out lamentably as he goes.

“ Our cabinets of Natural History are filled with mon-  
 “ sters ; bodies with two heads ; heads with three eyes,  
 “ sheep with six feet, &c. which demonstrate that Nature  
 “ acts at random, and proposes to herself no determinate  
 “ end, unless it be that of combining all possible forms :  
 “ And, after all, this plan would denote an intention  
 “ which its monotony disavows. Our Painters will al-  
 “ ways imagine many more beings than can possibly be  
 “ created. Add to all this, the rage and fury which def-  
 “ olate every thing that breathes : The hawk devours  
 “ the harmless dove in the face of Heaven.

“ But the discord which rages among animals is noth-  
 “ ing, compared to that which consumes the human race.\*  
 “ First, several different species of men, scattered over  
 “ the earth, demonstrate that they do not all proceed from  
 “ the same original. There are some black, others white,  
 “ red, copper coloured, lead coloured. There are some  
 “ who have wool instead of hair ; others who have no  
 “ beard. There are dwarfs and giants. Such are, in  
 “ part, the varieties of the human species, every where  
 “ equally odious to Nature. No where does she nourish  
 “ him with perfect good will. He is the only sensible  
 “ being laid under the necessity of cultivating the earth,

\* The reply is in Study VII.



“ in order to subsist : And, as if this unnatural mother  
“ were determined to persecute, with unrelenting feveri-  
“ ty, the child whom she has brought forth, insects devour  
“ the seed as he sows it, hurricanes sweep away his har-  
“ vests, ferocious animals prey on his cattle, volcanoes  
“ and earthquakes destroy his cities ; and the pestilence  
“ which, from time to time, makes the circuit of the  
“ Globe, threatens, at length, his utter extermination.

“ He is indebted to his own hands for his intelligence,  
“ his morality is the creature of climate, his governments  
“ are founded in force, and his religion in fear. Cold  
“ gives him energy ; heat relaxes him. Warlike and  
“ free in the North, he is a coward and a slave between  
“ the Tropics. His only natural laws are his passions.  
“ And, what other laws should he look for ? If they  
“ sometimes lead him astray, is not Nature, who bestow-  
“ ed them upon him, an accomplice at least, in his crim-  
“ inality ? But he is made sensible of their impulse, only  
“ as a warning never to gratify them.

“ The difficulty of finding subsistence, wars, imposts,  
“ prejudices, calumnies, implacable enemies, perfidious  
“ friends, treacherous females, four hundred sorts of bod-  
“ ily distemper, those of the mind, both more cruel and  
“ more numerous, render him the most wretched of crea-  
“ tures that ever saw the light. It were much better that  
“ he had never been born. He is every where the victim  
“ of some tyrant. Other animals are furnished with the  
“ means of fighting, or, at least, of flying ; but man has  
“ been tossed on the Earth by chance, without an as-  
“ ylum, without claws, without fangs, without velocity,  
“ without instinct, and almost without a skin ; and as if it  
“ were not enough for him to be persecuted by all nature,  
“ he is in a state of perpetual war with his own species.  
“ In vain would he try to defend himself from it. Vir-  
“ tue steps in, and binds his hands, that vice, in safety, may



“ cut his throat. He has no choice, but to suffer, and to  
“ be silent.

“ What, after all, is this virtue, about which such pa-  
“ rade is made? A combination of his imbecility; a re-  
“ sult of his temperament. With what illusions is she  
“ fed? Absurd opinions, founded merely on the soph-  
“ isms of designing men, who have acquired a supreme  
“ power by recommending humility, and immense riches  
“ by preaching up poverty. Every thing expires with us.  
“ From experience of the past, let us form a judgment of  
“ the future; we were nothing before our birth; we shall  
“ be nothing after death. The hope of our virtues is a  
“ mere human invention, and the instinct of our passions  
“ is of divine institution.

“ But there is no GOD.\* If there were, He would be  
“ unjust. What being, of unlimited power and goodness,  
“ would have exposed, to so many ills, the existence of  
“ his creatures; and laid it down as a law, that the life of  
“ some could be supported only by the death of others?  
“ So much disorder is a proof that there is no GOD. It  
“ is fear that formed him. How must the World have  
“ been astonished at such a metaphysical idea, when Man  
“ first, under the influence of terror, thought proper to  
“ cry out, that there was a GOD! What could have made  
“ him GOD? Why should he be GOD? What plea-  
“ sure could he take in that perpetual circle of woes, of  
“ regenerations and deaths.†”

\* The reply is in Study VIII.

† The refutation of these objections will be found by the numeral char-  
acters, which correspond to each particular Study. All of them are there  
resolved directly, or indirectly; For it was not possible to follow, in a  
Work of this kind, the scholastic order of a system of philosophy,



## STUDY FOURTH.

## REPLIES TO THE OBJECTIONS AGAINST PROVIDENCE.

SUCH are the principal objections which have been raised, in almost every Age, against a Providence, and which no one will accuse me of having stated too feebly. Before I attempt a refutation of them, I must be permitted to make a few reflections on the persons who maintain them.

Did these murmurings proceed from some wretched mariners, exposed at sea to all the revolutions of the Atmosphere, or from some oppressed peasant, labouring under the contempt of that society whom his labour is feeding, my astonishment would be less. But our Atheists are, for the most part, well sheltered from the injuries of the Elements, and especially from those of Fortune. The greatest part of them have never so much as travelled. As to the ills of Civil Society, they most unreasonably complain; for they enjoy its sweetest and most respectful homage, after having burst asunder all its bands, by the propagation of their opinions. What have they not written on Friendship, on Love, on Patriotism, and on all the Human Affections, which they have reduced to the level of those of the beasts, while some of them could render human affection almost divine by the sublimity of their talents!



Are not they, in part, the very persons to whom many of our calamities may be justly imputed, for their flattering, in a thousand different ways, the passions of our modern tyrants, whilst a cross, rising in the midst of a desert, comforts the miserable? It is a matter of no small difficulty to retain these last in a rational devotion; and it is a moral phenomenon which appeared to me, for a long time, inexplicable, to behold, in every Age, atheism springing up among men who had most reason to cry up the goodness of Nature, and superstition among those who have the justest ground of complaint against her. It is amidst the luxury of Greece and Rome, in the bosom of the wealth of Indostan, of the pomp of Persia, of the voluptuousness of China, of the overflowing abundance of European Capitals, that men first started up, who dared to deny the existence of a DEITY. On the contrary, the houseless Tartars; the Savages of America, continually pressed with famine; the Negroes, without foresight, and without a police; the inhabitants of the rude climates of the North, such as the Laplanders, the Greenlanders, the Esquimaux, see Gods every where, even in a flint.

I long thought that atheism, in the rich and luxurious, was a dictate of conscience. "I am rich, and I am a knave," must be their reasoning, "therefore there is no GOD." "Besides, if there is a GOD, I have an account to render." But these reasonings, though natural, are not general. There are atheists, who possess legitimate fortunes, and use them morally well, at least externally. Besides, for the contrary reason, the poor man ought to argue thus; "I am industrious, honest and miserable; therefore there must be no Providence." But in Nature herself we must look for the source of this unnatural ratiocination.

In all countries, the poor rise early, labour the ground, live in the open air, and in the fields. They are penetrated



with that active power of Nature which fills the Universe. But their reason, sinking under the pressure of calamity, and distracted by their daily occasions, is unable to support its lustre. It stops short, without generalizing, at the sensible effects of this invisible cause. They believe, from a sentiment natural to weak minds, that the objects of their religious worship will be at their disposal, in proportion as they are within their reach. Hence it is that the devotions of the common people, in every country, are presented in the fields, and have natural objects for their centre. It always attracts the religion of the peasantry. A hermitage on the side of a mountain, a chapel at the source of a stream, a good image of the Virgin, in wood, niched in the trunk of an oak, or under the foliage of a hawthorn, have, to them, a much more powerful attraction than the gilded altars of our Cathedrals. I except those, however, whom the love of money has completely debauched, for such persons must have saints of silver, even in the country.

The principal religious acts of the people in Turkey, in Persia, in the Indies and in China, are pilgrimages in the fields. The rich, on the contrary, prevented in all their wants and wishes by men, no longer look up to GOD for any thing. Their whole life is passed within doors, where they see only the productions of human industry, lustres, wax candles, mirrors, secretaries, parasites, books, wits. They come insensibly to lose sight of Nature; whose productions are, besides, almost always exhibited to them disfigured, or out of season, and always as an effect of the art of their gardeners, or artificers.

They fail not, likewise, to interpret her sublime operations, by the mechanism of the arts most familiar to them. Hence so many systems, which easily enable you to guess at the occupation of their authors. Epicurus, exhausted by voluptuousness, framed his world and his atoms, with



which Providence has nothing to do, out of his own apathy; the Geometrician forms it with his compasses; the Chemist compounds it of salts; the Mineralogist extracts it from the fire; and they who apply themselves to nothing, and these are not few in number, suppose it, like themselves, in a state of chaos, and moving at random.

Thus, the corruption of the heart is the original source of our errors. Afterwards, the Sciences employing, in the investigation of natural things, definitions, principles, methods, invested with a great geometrical apparatus, seem, by this pretended order, to reduce to order what widely deviates from it. But supposing this order to exist, such as they present it to us, of what use could it be to Man? Would it be sufficient to restrain, and to console, the miserable; and what interest will they take in that of a society which tramples them under foot, when they have nothing to hope from that of Nature, who abandons them to the laws of motion?

I now proceed to answer, one after another, the objections, formerly stated, against Providence, founded on the disorders of the Globe; of vegetables, of animals, of Man, and on the nature of GOD himself.

*Replies to the Objections against Providence, founded on the Disorders of the Globe.*

Though my ignorance of the means employed by Nature, in the government of the World, is greater than I am able to express; it is sufficient, however, to throw one's eyes on a geographical chart, and to have read a little, to be enabled to demonstrate that those, by which her operations are pretendedly explained to us, have no foundation in truth. From human insufficiency spring the objections levelled at the divine Providence.



First, it appears to me, no more natural to compose the uniform motion of the Earth through the Heavens, of the two motions of projection and attraction, than to attribute to similar causes, that of a man walking on the Earth. The centrifugal and centripetal forces seem, to me, no more to exist in the Heavens, than the two circles denominated the Equator and the Zodiac. However ingenious these hypotheses may be, they are only scaffoldings imagined by men of genius, for rearing the fabric of Science, but which no more assist us in penetrating into the sanctuary of Nature, than those employed in the construction of our churches, can introduce us into the sanctuary of Religion. These combined forces are no more the moving principle of the course of the stars, than the circles of the sphere are their barriers. They are signs merely, which have, at last, usurped the place of the objects which they were intended only to represent, like every thing else of human establishment.

If a centrifugal force had swelled the mountains of the Globe, when it was in a state of fusion, there must have been mountains much more elevated than the Andes of Peru and Chili. That of Chimboraco, which is the highest of them, is only 3220, or 3350 fathoms in height, for the Sciences are not perfectly agreed, even in matters of observation. This elevation, which is nearly the greatest known on Earth, is less perceptible on it than the third part of a line would be on a globe of six feet diameter. Now, a mass of melted metal presents, in proportion to its size, scorias much more considerable. Look at the anfractuosities of a simple morsel of iron dross. What frightful swellings, then, must have been formed on a globe, of heterogeneous and fermenting materials, more than three thousand leagues thick? The Moon, whose diameter is much less considerable, contains, according to *Cassini*, mountains three leagues high. But what would



be the case if, with the action of the heterogeneousness of our terrestrial materials, all in fusion, we should besides suppose that of a centrifugal force, produced by the Earth's rotatory motion round its axis? I imagine that this force must have been necessarily exerted in the direction of its Equator, and instead of forming it into a globe, must have flattened it out in the Heavens, like those large plates of glass which glass blowers expand with their breath.

Not only the diameter of the Earth, at the Equator, is no greater than under its Meridians, but the mountains there are not more elevated than elsewhere. The noted Andes of Peru have not their commencement at the Equator, but several degrees beyond it, toward the South; and coasting along Peru, Chili, and Magellan's land, stop at the fifty fifth degree of Southern Latitude, in the Terra del Fuego, where they present to the Ocean a promontory of eternal ice, of a prodigious height. Through the whole extent of this immense track, they never open but at the Straits of Magellan, forming throughout, according to the testimony of *Garcillaso de la Vêga*,\* a rampart fortified with pyramids of ice, inaccessible to men, to quadrupeds and even to birds.

The mountains of the isthmus of Panama, on the contrary, which are nearly under the Line, have an elevation so small, in comparison with the Andes, that Admiral *Anson*, who had coasted along the whole, relates, that on his arriving at these heights, he experienced stifling heats, because the air, says he, was not refreshed by the Atmosphere of the lofty mountains of Chili and Peru.

The highest mountains of Asia are entirely out of the Tropics. The chain, known by the names of Taurus and Imäus, commences, in Africa, at Mount Atlas, toward the thirtieth degree of northern latitude. It runs across all Africa and all Asia, between the thirtyeighth and for-

\* History of the Incas. Book I. chap. 8.



tieth degree of north latitude, having its summit covered, for the most part, through that immense extent, with snows that never melt; a proof, as shall afterwards be demonstrated, of a very considerable elevation.

Mount Ararat, which makes part of this chain, is, perhaps, more elevated than any mountain of the New World, if we form a judgment from the time which *Tournefort*, and other travellers, took to perform the distance from the basis of that mountain, up to the commencement of the snow which covers its summit, and, which is less arbitrary, from the distance at which it may be seen, and that is, at least, six days' journey of a caravan.

The Peak of Teneriff is visible forty leagues off. The mountains of Norway called Felices, and, by some, the Alps of the North, are visible at sea fifty leagues distant; and, if we may believe an ingenious Swedish Geographer, are three thousand fathoms high.

The peaks of Spitzberghen, of New Zealand, of the Alps, of the Pyrennées, of Switzerland, and those on which ice is found all the year round, are exceedingly elevated, though most of them very remote from the Equator. They do not even run in directions parallel to that circle, as must have been the case, on the supposition of the effect produced by the rotation of the Globe; for if the chain of Taurus, in the ancient Continent, runs from West to East, that of the Andes, in the new, runs from North to South. Other chains proceed in other directions.

But if the pretended centrifugal force had, once, the power of heaving up mountains, why does it not possess, at this day, the power of tossing up a straw into the air? It ought not to leave a single detached body on the surface of the Earth. They are affixed to it, I shall be told, by the centripetal force of gravity. But if this last power, in fact, forces every body toward it, why have not the



mountains too submitted to this universal law, when they were in a state of fusion? I cannot conceive what reply can be made to this twofold objection.

The sea appears, to me, not more adapted to the formation of mountains, than the centrifugal force is. How is it possible to imagine the possibility of its having thrown them out of its womb? It is incontrovertible, however, that marbles, and calcareous stones, which are only pastes of madrépores and of shells amalgamated; that flints, which are concretions of these; that marles, which are a dissolution of them; and that all marine bodies, which are found in every part of both Continents, have issued out of the Sea. These matters serve as a basis to great part of Europe; hills of a very considerable height are composed of them, and they are found in many parts of both the Old and New Worlds, at an equal degree of elevation. But their strata cannot be explained by any of the actual movements of the Ocean. In vain would we ascribe to it revolutions from West to East; never will it have the power of raising any thing above its level. If certain ports of the Mediterranean are produced as instances, which the Sea has actually left dry, it is no less certain, that there is a much greater number, on the same coasts, which the water has not deserted. Hear what is said on the subject by that judicious Observer *Maundrel*, in his journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, in 1669: “ In  
 “ the Adriatic Gulf, the lighthouse of Arminium, or Rim-  
 “ ini, is a league from the sea; but Ancona, built by  
 “ the Syracufans, is still close to the shore. The arch  
 “ of Trajan, which rendered its port more commodious  
 “ for merchants, is situated immediately upon it. Be-  
 “ ritta, the favourite spot of Augustus, who gave it the  
 “ name of *Julia Felix*, preserves no remains of its an-  
 “ cient beauty, except its situation on the brink of the Sea,



“ above which it is elevated no higher than is necessary  
 “ to secure it against the inundations of that element.”

The testimony of travellers the most accurate, is conformable to that of this ingenious English gentleman. His compatriot, *Richard Pocock*, who travelled into Egypt in 1737, with less taste, but with still greater accuracy, attests, that the Mediterranean has gained fully as much ground as it has lost.\* “ Nothing more is necessary,” says he, “ to produce a conviction of this, than  
 “ to examine the coast; for you will see, under water,  
 “ not only a variety of artificial productions, manufactured in the rock, but, likewise, the ruins of many edifices. About two miles from Alexandria, are to be  
 “ seen, under water, the ruins of an ancient temple.”

An anonymous English traveller, in the journal of a voyage stored with excellent observations, describes several very ancient cities of the Archipelago, such as Samos, the ruins of which are close to the Sea. Hear what he says of Delos, which is, as every one knows, in the centre of the Cyclades.† “ We found nothing else, all  
 “ along the coast, but the remains of superb edifices, which  
 “ had never been completed, and the ruins of others  
 “ which have been destroyed. The Sea appears to have  
 “ gained on the Isle of Delos; and the water being clear,  
 “ and the weather calm, we had an opportunity of observing the remains of beautiful buildings, in places  
 “ where now the fishes swim at their ease, and on which  
 “ the small boats of these cantons row, to get at the  
 “ coast.

The ports of Marseilles, Carthage, Malta, Rhodes, Cadiz, &c. are still frequented by Navigators, as they were in the remotest Antiquity. The Mediterranean could

\* Travels into Egypt. Vol. I. page 4 and 30.

† Voyage into France, Italy and the Islands of the Archipelago, in 1763. Vol. iv. Letter cxxvii. page 256.



not have sunk at any one point of its shores, without sinking at every other, for water in the basin always comes to its level. This reasoning may be extended to all the coasts of the Ocean. If there are found any where tracks of land abandoned, it is not because the sea retires, but because the Earth is gaining ground. This is the effect of allusions, occasioned frequently by the overflowing of rivers, and sometimes by the ill advised labours of Man. The encroachments of the Sea on the Land are equally local; and are the effect of earthquakes, which can be extended to no great distance. As these reciprocal invasions of the two Elements are particular, and frequently in opposition on the same coasts which have, in other respects, constantly preserved their ancient level, it is impossible to deduce from them any general law for the movements of the Ocean.

We shall presently examine, how so many marine fossils could have been extracted from its bed; and I confidently believe that, conformably to respectable traditions, we shall be able to advance something on this subject, not unworthy of the Reader's attention. To return, then, to other mountains, such as those of granite, which are the highest on the Globe, and the formation of which has not been imputed to the Sea, because they contain no deposit to attest such transition, the same Naturalists employ another system to account for their origin. They suppose a primitive Earth, whose height equalled that of the present elevation of the highest peaks of the Andes, of Mount Taurus, of the Alps, &c. which remains so many evidences of the existence of that primeval soil: After this, they employ snows, rains, winds, and I know not what besides, to lower this original Continent down to the brink of the Sea; so that we inhabit only the bottom of this enormous quagmire. This idea has an imposing air; first, because it terrifies; and then, because it is conformable



to that picture of apparent ruin which the Globe presents : But it vanishes away before this simple question, What has become of the earth and the rocks of this tremendous ridance ?

If it is said, they have been thrown into the Sea, we must suppose, prior to all degradation, the existence of the bed of the Sea, and its excavation would then present a great many other difficulties. But let us admit it. How comes it that these ruins have not, in part, accumulated ? Why has not the Sea overflowed ? How can it have happened, on the contrary, that it should have deserted such immense tracks of land, as are sufficient to form the greatest part of two vast Continents ? Our systems, therefore, cannot account for the steepy elevation of mountains of granite, by any kind of degradation, because they know not how to dispose of the fragments ; nor for the formation of calcareous mountains, by the movements of the Ocean, because, in its actual state, it is incapable of covering them.

Besides, it is not an opinion of yesterday, that Philosophers have considered the Earth as a decaying edifice. Hear what Baron *Busbequius* says of the opinion of *Polybius*, in his curious and entertaining letters : “ *Polybius* “ pretends to have proved, that the entrance of the “ Black Sea would, in process of time, be choked by the “ banks of sand, and by the mud, which the Danube and “ the Boristhenes were constantly forcing into it : And “ that, consequently, the Black Sea would be rendered “ inaccessible, and its commerce entirely destroyed. The “ sea of Pontus, nevertheless, is just as navigable at this “ hour as in the days of *Polybius*.\*”

Bays, gulfs, and Mediterranean seas, are no more the effects of irruptions of the Ocean into the Land, than mountains are productions of the centrifugal motion.

\* Letter I, page 131.



These pretended disorders are necessary to the harmony of all the parts of the Earth. Let us suppose, for example, that the Straits of Gibraltar were closed, as it has been said was formerly the case, and that the Mediterranean existed no longer. What would become of so many rivers of Europe, Asia and Africa, which are kept flowing by the vapours which ascend out of that Sea, and bring back their waters to it, in a wonderful exactness of proportion, as the calculations of many ingenious men have demonstrated? The North winds, which constantly refresh Egypt in Summer, and which convey the emanations of the Mediterranean as far as the mountains of Ethiopia, to supply the sources of the Nile, blowing, in this case, over a space destitute of water, would carry drought and barrenness over all the northern regions of Africa, and even, into the interior of that Continent.

The southern parts of Europe would fare still worse; for the hot and parching winds of Africa, which load themselves with so many rainy clouds, as they cross the Mediterranean, now blowing over the dry bed of that Sea, without tempering the heat by humidity of any kind, would blast, with scorching sterility, all that vast region of Europe, which extends from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Euxine Sea, and utterly dry up all the countries through which, at present, flow a multitude of rivers, such as the Rhone, the Po, the Danube, &c.

Besides, it is not sufficient to suppose, that the Ocean forced a passage into the bed of the Mediterranean, as a river spreads over a champaign country, after having overflowed its banks; it must farther be supposed, that the track of land inundated was lower than the Ocean, a phenomenon not to be met with in any other part of the *terra firma*, all of which is above the level of the Sea, those parts excepted which have been wrested from the



Deep by means of human industry, as is the case in Holland.

It must still farther be supposed, that a lateral sinking of the Earth must have taken place all round the basin of the Mediterranean, to regulate the circuits, declivities, canals and windings of so many rivers, which come from such a distance to empty themselves into it, and that this sinking must have been effected with admirable proportions: For these rivers, issuing, in many cases, from one and the same mountain, arrive, by the same declivities, to distances widely different, without their channels ceasing to be full, or their waters flowing too fast or too slow, notwithstanding the difference of their courses and levels.

It is not, then, to an irruption of the Ocean that we are to ascribe the Mediterranean, but to an excavation of the Globe, more than twelve hundred leagues long, and above eight hundred broad, which has been executed with dispositions so happy, and so favourable to the circulation of so many lateral rivers, that if time permitted me to trace the course of any single one, it would be evident how destitute of all foundation the supposition is which I am combating. Earthquakes, indeed, produce excavations, but of small extent; and which, far from forming channels for rivers, sometimes absorb the course of rivulets, and change them into pools, or marshes. These hypotheses may be applied to all gulfs, bays, great lakes and Mediterranean seas; and we shall be convinced, that if these interior waters did not exist, not a fountain would remain in the greatest part of the habitable Globe.

If we would form a just idea of the order of Nature, we must give up our circumscribed ideas of human order. We must renounce the plans of our Architecture, which frequently employs straight lines, that the weakness of our sight may be enabled to take in the whole extent of our domain at a single glance; which symmetrizes all our



distributions, and which, in constructing our houses, places wings to the right, and wings to the left, that all the parts of our habitation may be comprehended in a single view, while we occupy the centre; and which levels, fits to the plummet, smooths and polishes the stones employed in building, that the monuments we raise may be soft to the eye and to the touch. The harmonies of Nature are not those of a Sybarite; but they are those of Mankind, and of all beings. When Nature raises a rock, she introduces clefts, inequalities, points, perforations. She hollows and roughens it with the chisel of Time, and of the Elements; she plants herbs and trees upon it; she stores it with animals, and places it in the bosom of the Sea, in the very focus of storms and tempests, that it may there afford an asylum to the inhabitants of the Air and of the Waters.

When Nature, in like manner intended to scoop out basins to receive the Seas, she neither rounded the borders, nor applied the line to them; but contrived and produced deep bays, sheltered from the general currents of the Ocean, that, during stormy weather, the rivers might discharge themselves into it in security; that the finny legions might resort thither, for refuge, at all seasons, there lick up the alluvion of the earth, carried down by the fresh water; come thither to spawn, mounting upward and upward, many of them, toward the very source, where they can find both food and shelter for their young. And for the preservation of these adaptations it is, that Nature has fortified every shore with long banks of sand, shelves, enormous rocks and islands, which are arranged round them, at proper distances, to protect them from the fury of the Ocean.

She has employed similar dispositions in forming the beds of rivers, as we shall shew in the sequel of this Study, though we have room only to glance at a subject so new



and so fertile in observation. Accordingly, she has made the current of rivers to flow, not in a straight line, as they must have run, had the laws of Hydraulics been observed, because of the tendency of their motions toward a single point; but she makes them wind about for a long time through the bosom of the Land, before they pour themselves into the Sea.

In order to regulate the course of these rivers, and to accelerate or retard it, conformably to the level of the countries through which they flow, she pours into them lateral rivers, which accelerate it in a flat country, when they form an acute angle with the source of the main river; or which retard it in a mountainous country, by forming a right, and sometimes an obtuse, angle, with the source of the principal stream. These laws are so infallible, that a judgment may be formed, simply from the map, whether the rivers which water any country are slow or rapid, and whether that country is flat or elevated, by the angle which the confluent rivers form with their courses.

Thus, most of those which throw themselves into the Rhone, form right angles with that rapid river, to check its impetuosity. Some of these confluent rivers are real dikes, which cross the main river from side to side, in such a manner, that the river crossed, which was running very rapidly above the confluence, flows very gently below it. This observation applies to many of the rivers of America, and remarkably to the Méchassipi. From these simple perceptions, which I have, at present, only time to indicate, it may be concluded, that it is easy to retard, or accelerate the course of a river, by simply changing the angle of incidence of its confluent rivers. I produce this not as a matter of advice, but as a very curious speculation; for it is always dangerous for Man to derange the plans of Nature.



The rivers, on throwing themselves into the Sea, produce, in their turn, by the direction of their mouths, acceleration, or retardation, in the course of the tides. But I must not launch farther out into the study of these grand and sublime harmonies, I satisfy myself with having said enough to convince the candid Reader, that the bed of the Seas was scooped out, expressly for receiving them.

Nevertheless, I must produce one argument more, calculated to remove every possibility of doubt on the subject. Had the bed of the Seas been formed, as is supposed, by a sinking down of the solid parts of the Globe, the shores of the Sea, under water, would have the same declivities with the adjoining Continent. Now, this is not found to be the case on any coast whatever. The declivity of the basin of the Sea is much steeper than that of the bounding lands, and by no means a prolongation of it. Paris, for example, is raised above the level of the Sea, about 26 fathoms, reckoning from the base of the bridge of *Notre Dame*. The Seine, accordingly, from this point, to where it empties itself into the Sea, has a declivity of little more than 130 feet, in a distance of forty leagues; whereas, measuring from the mouth of the river, out into the sea, only a league and a half, you find, at once, an inclination of from 60 to 80 fathom, for this is the depth at which vessels anchor, in the road of Havre de Grace.

These differences of level at Land, from the level of the bed of the Sea, in the same line of direction, are to be met with on all coasts, more or less. Dampier, an English Navigator, has, indeed, observed, that Seas which wash steep coasts are much deeper; and that along flat shores their depth is small; but this striking difference is universally observable, that along flat coasts, the bed of the Sea is much more inclined than the soil of the ad-



joining Continent, and that along high lands, sometimes, no bottom is to be found.

This clearly demonstrates, therefore, that the beds of the Seas were hollowed out expressly to contain them. The declivity of their excavations has been regulated by laws infinitely wise; for if it were the same with that of the adjacent Lands, the billows of the Sea, whenever the wind blew toward the shore, however lightly, would considerably encroach on the Land. This actually happens in the case of storms and extraordinary tides, the waves overflow their usual bounds; for then, meeting a declivity flat and gentle, compared to that of their bed, they sometimes inundate the Land to the distance of several leagues. This happens, from time to time, in the island of Formosa, the natural ramparts of which, such as the Manglier, the inhabitants, it is probable, formerly destroyed. Holland, for nearly a similar reason, is exposed to inundations, because it has encroached on the very bed of the Sea.

It is principally on the shores of the Ocean that the invisible boundary is fixed, which the AUTHOR of Nature has prescribed to its waves. It is there you perceive, that you are at the intersection of two different planes, the one of which terminates the declivity of the Land, and the other commences that of the Sea.

It cannot be alleged, that it was by currents of the Sea the bed was hollowed out; for where could the earth that filled it before be deposited? They could raise nothing above their own level. It cannot even be alleged, that the channels of rivers have been excavated by the current of their own streams; for there are several which have found a subterraneous passage through masses of solid rock, so hard and so thick, as to bid defiance to the pickaxes and the mattocks of our labourers. Besides, on the supposition which we are examining, these rivers must have formed, at the place of their falling into the Ocean, banks



of sand, and accumulations of earthy substances, of a magnitude proportional to the quantity of ground which they must have cleared away, in forming their channels. Most of them, on the contrary, as has been already observed, empty themselves at the bottom of bays, hollowed for the express purpose of receiving them.

How is it that they have not completely filled up these bays, as they are incessantly hurling down into them substances separated from the land? Why is not the very bed of the Ocean choked up, from the constant accumulation of the spoils of vegetables, sands, rocks, and the wreck of earth, which, on every shower that falls, tinge with yellow the rivers which fall into it? The waters of the Ocean have not risen a single inch since Man began to make observations, as might easily be demonstrated from the state of the most ancient seaports of the Globe, which are still, for the most part, at the same level.

Time permits me not to speak of the means employed by Nature for the construction, the support, and the purification, of this immense basin: They would suggest fresh subject of admiration. Enough has been said to prove, that what in Nature may appear to us the effect of ruin, or chance, is, in many cases, the result of intelligence the most profound. Not only, no hair falls from our head, and no sparrow from Heaven to the ground, but not a pebble rolls on the shore of the Ocean, without the permission of GOD: According to that sublime expression of Job: *Tempus posuit tenebris, & universorum finem Ipse considerat, lapidem quoque caliginis, & umbram mortis.*\*  
 “ He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection; the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death:” He likewise knows the moment when that stone, buried in darkness, must spring into light, to serve as a monument to the Nations.

\* Job xxviii. 3.



Independent of geographical proofs, without number, which demonstrate, that the Ocean, by its irruptions, has not hollowed out one single bay on the face of the Globe, nor detached any one part of the Continent from the rest, there are still many more which may be deduced from the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and from Man.

This is not the proper place for dwelling on the subject : But I shall quote, on my way, an observation from the vegetable World, which proves, for example, that Britain never was united to the European Continent, as has been supposed, but must have been, from the beginning, separated by the Channel. It is a remark of Cæsar's, in his Commentaries, that during his stay in that Island, he had never seen either the beech tree or the fir ; though these trees were very common in Gaul, along the banks of the Seine, and of the Rhine. If, therefore, these rivers had ever flowed through any part of Britain, they must have carried with them, the seeds of the vegetables, which grew at their sources, or upon their banks. The beech and the fir, which, at this day, thrive exceedingly well in Britain, must, of necessity, have been found growing there in the time of Julius Cæsar, especially as they would not have changed their Latitude, and being, as we shall see, in the proper place, of the genus of fluvial trees, the seeds of which resow themselves, through the assistance of the waters. Besides, from whence could the Seine, the Rhine, the Thames, and so many other rivers, whose currents are supplied from the emanations of the Channel, from whence, I say, could they have been fed with water ? The Thames, then, must have flowed through France, or the Seine through England ; or, to speak more conformably to truth and nature, the countries now watered by these rivers, would have been completely dry.

By our geographical charts, as by most other instruments of Science, we are misled. Observing in these so



many retreatings and projections along the coasts of the Continent, we have been induced to imagine, that these irregularities must have been occasioned by violent Currents of the Sea. It has just been demonstrated, that this effect *was* not thus produced; I now proceed to shew, that it *could not possibly* have been the case.

The English *Dampier*, who is not the first Navigator that sailed round the Globe, but who is, in my opinion, the best of the travellers who have made observations on it, says, in his excellent treatise on winds, and tides: \*  
 “ Bays scarcely have any currents, or if there be such a  
 “ thing, they are only counter currents running from one  
 “ point to another.” He quotes many observations, in proof of this, and many others, of a similar nature, are found scattered over the journals of other Navigators. Though he has treated only of the Currents between the Tropics, and even that with some degree of obscurity, we shall proceed to generalize this principle, and to apply it to the principal bays of Continents.

I reduce to two general Currents, those of the Ocean. Both of these proceed from the Poles, and are produced, in my opinion, by the alternate fusion of their ices. Though this be not the place to examine the cause of it, to me it appears so natural, so new, and of such curious investigation, that the Reader, I flatter myself, will not be angry with me, if I give him an idea of it, on my way.

The Poles appear to me the sources of the Sea, as the icy mountains are the sources of the principal rivers. It is, if I am not mistaken, the snow and the ice which cover our Pole, that annually renovate the waters of the Sea, comprehended between our Continent and that of America, the projecting and retreating parts of which have, besides, a mutual correspondence, like the banks of a river.

\* Vol. ii. page 385.



It may be remarked, at first sight, on a map of the World, that the bed of the Atlantic Ocean becomes narrower and narrower toward the North, and widens toward the South; and that the prominent part of Africa corresponds to that great retreating part of America, at the bottom of which is situated the Gulf of Mexico; as the prominent part of South America corresponds to the vast Gulf of Guinea; so that this basin has, in its configuration, the proportions, the sinuosities, the source and the mouth, of a vast fluviatic channel.

Let us now observe, that the ices and snows form, in the month of January, on our Hemisphere, a cupola, the arch of which extends more than two thousand leagues over the two Continents, with a thickness of some lines in Spain, of some inches in France, of several feet in Germany, of several fathoms in Russia, and of some hundreds of feet beyond the sixtieth degree of Latitude, such as the ices which *Henry Ellis*,\* and other navigators of the North encountered there at Sea, even in the midst of Summer, and of which some, if *Ellis* is to be believed, were from fifteen to eighteen hundred feet above its level; for their elevation must probably go on increasing, up to the very Pole, in conformity to the proportions observable in those which cover the summits of our icy mountains; which must give them, under the very Pole, a height which there is no possibility of determining.

From this simple outline, it is clearly perceptible what an enormous aggregation of water is fixed, by the cold of Winter, in our hemisphere, above the level of the Ocean. It is so very considerable, that I think myself warranted to ascribe to the periodical fusion of this ice, the general movement of our Ocean, and that of the tides. We may apply, in like manner, the effects of the fusion of the

\* *Ellis's Voyage to Hudson's Bay.*



ices of the South Pole, which are there still more enormous, to the movements of its Ocean.

No conclusion has, hitherto, been drawn, relatively to the movements of the Sea, from the two masses of ice so considerable, alternately accumulated and dissolved at the two Poles of the World. They necessarily must, however, occasion a very perceptible augmentation of its waters, on their return to it, by the action of the Sun, which partly melts them once every year; and a great diminution, on being withdrawn, by the effect of the evaporations, which reduce them to ice at the Poles, when the Sun retires.

I proceed to lay before the Reader, some observations and reflections on this subject, which I have the confidence to call highly interesting; and shall submit the decision to those who have not got into the trammels of system and party. I shall endeavour to abridge them to the utmost of my power, and flatter myself with the hope of forgiveness, at least, in consideration of their novelty. I am going to deduce, merely from the alternate dissolution of the polar ices, the general movements of the Seas, which have hitherto been ascribed to gravitation, or to the attraction of the Sun, and of the Moon, on the Equator.

It is impossible to deny, in the first place, that the Currents and the Tides come from the Pole, in the vicinity of the polar Circle.

*Frederic Martens*, who, in his voyage to Spitzbergen, in 1671, advanced as far as to the eightyfirst degree of northern Latitude, positively asserts, that the Currents, amidst the ices, set in toward the South. He adds, farther, that he can affirm nothing with certainty respecting the flux and reflux of the Tides. Let this be carefully remarked.



*Henry Ellis* observed, with astonishment, in his voyage to Hudson's Bay, in 1746, and 1747, that the Tides there came from the North, and that they were accelerated, instead of being retarded, in proportion as the Latitude increased. He assures us that these effects, so contrary to their effects on our coasts, where they come from the South, demonstrate that the Tides, in those high Latitudes, do not come from the Line, nor from the Atlantic Ocean. He ascribes them to a pretended communication between Hudson's Bay and the South Sea: A communication which, with much ardor, he sought for, and which was, indeed, the object of his voyage; but now we have complete assurance that it does not exist, from the fruitless attempts lately made by *Captain Cook* to find it by the South Sea, to the north of California, in conformity to the advice, long before given respecting it, by the illustrious Navigator *Dampier*, whose sagacity and observations have, by the by, greatly assisted *Captain Cook* in all his discoveries.

*Ellis* farther observed, that the course of these northern Tides of America, was so violent, at *Wager's Strait*, which is about  $65^{\circ} 37'$  North Latitude, that it ran at the rate of from eight to ten leagues an hour. He compares it to the sluice of a mill. He remarked that the surface of the water was there very smooth, which puzzled him exceedingly, by damping his hope of a communication between this Bay and the South Sea. He remained, nevertheless, convinced of the existence of such a passage; such is the pertinacity of Man in favour of preconceived opinions, in the very face of evidence.

*John Huguez de Linshotten*, a Dutchman, had made nearly the same remarks on the currents of the northern Tides of Europe,\* when he was at *Waigat's Strait*, at  $70^{\circ}$

\* See the first and Second Voyages to *Waigats*, by *H. J. Linshotten*. Voyages to the North, vol. iv. page 204.



20' North Latitude. In the two voyages which that exact Observer made to this Strait, in 1594 and 1595, undertaken in the view of discovering a passage to China by the North of Europe, he repeated the same observations: "We observed," says he, "once more, from the course of the tide, what we had already remarked with much exactness, that it comes from the East." He likewise observed, that there the water was brackish, or half salt; this he ascribes to the fusion of a prodigious quantity of floating ice, which stopped his passage at Waigat's Strait; for the ice formed even of sea water is fresh. But *Linschotten* draws no conclusion, any more than *Ellis*, from these tides of water half fresh, which descend from the North; and full of his object, like the English Navigator, he ascribes them to a Sea, which he supposes opens to the East, beyond Waigat's Strait, through which he proposed to find his way to China.

His compatriot, the unfortunate *William Barents*,\* who made the same voyages in the same fleet, but in another vessel, and who ended his days on the northern coasts of Nova Zembla, where he had wintered, found, to the North and to the South of that island, a perpetual current of ice, setting in from the East, with a rapidity, which he compares, as *Ellis* does, to a sluice. Some of these ices were to 36 fathoms of depth under water, and 16 fathoms high above the surface. This was at Waigat's Strait, in the months of July and August. He found there some Russian fishermen from Petzarah, who navigated these Seas, covered with floating rocks of ice, in a boat made of the bark of trees sewed together. These poor people made presents of fat geese to the Dutch mariners, with strong demonstrations of friendship; for calamity has, in all Climates, a powerful tendency to concili-

\* Consult the second and third Voyages of the Dutch by the North, in the first volume of the Voyages of the Eastindia Company.



ate affection between man and man. They informed him, that this same Strait of Waigat's, which was then disgorging such immense quantities of ice, would be entirely shut up toward the end of October, and that it would be possible to go into Tartary over the ice, by what they called the Sea of Marmara.

It is incontrovertible, that all these effects which I have been relating, can proceed only from the effusions of the ices which surround the Pole. I shall here remark, by the way, that these ices, which flow with such rapidity to the north of America and of Europe, towards the months of July and August, greatly contribute to our high equinoctial tides, in September; and that when their effusions are stopped in the month of October, like those of Waigat's, this too is the time when our Tides begin to diminish.

I may now be asked, Why the tides come from the North and the East to the North of America, and of Europe; and from the South, on our coasts, and on those of America which are under the same Latitudes?

I might satisfy myself with having said enough to demonstrate, that all the Tides do not proceed from the pressure, or the attraction of the Sun, and of the Moon, on the Equator? I should have proved the imperfection of our scientific systems which ascribe them to these causes: But I proceed to repair what I have been pulling down, by other observations; and to demonstrate that there is no one Tide, on any coast whatever, but what owes its origin to polar effusions.

An observation of *Dampier's*\* will serve, at first, as a basis to my reasonings. That careful and ingenious observer distinguishes between Currents and Tides. He lays it down as a principle, founded on many experiments, of which he gives the history, that *Currents are*

\* See *Dampier's* Treatise on Winds and Tides.



*scarcely ever felt but out at Sea, and Tides upon the Coasts.* This being laid down; the polar effusions, which are the Tides of the North and of the East, to those who are in the vicinity of the Poles, or of bays which have a communication with it, take their general course to the middle of the channel of the Atlantic Ocean, attracted toward the Line by the diminution of the waters, which the Sun is there incessantly evaporating. They produce, by their general Current, two contrary Currents, or collateral Whirlpools, similar to those which rivers produce on their banks.

I am not taking for granted, without any foundation, the existence of these counter currents, or *vortices*, after the manner of System makers, who create new causes, in proportion as Nature presents them with new effects. These *vortices* are hydraulic reactions, the laws of which Geometry explains, and the reality of which is completely ascertained by experience. If you look at a small running brook, you will frequently see straws floating along the brink, and carried upward in a direction opposite to the general current of the stream; and on arriving at the points, where the counter currents cross the general, you observe them agitated by these two opposed powers turning and spinning round a considerable time, till they are at last carried down the general current.

These counter currents are still more perceptible, when such a rivulet flows through a basin which has itself no flux; for the reaction is, in that case, so considerable round the whole circumference of the basin, that the counter currents carry about all bodies floating in it, to the very place where the rivulet disengages itself.

These lateral counter currents are so perceptible on the banks of rivers, that the watermen frequently take the advantage of them, to make their way in the direction opposite to the general course. They are still more decid-



edly remarkable on the banks of lakes. Father *Charlevoix*, who has given us many judicious observations respecting Canada, informs us, that when he embarked on Lake Michigan, he made out eight good leagues a day, by the assistance of these lateral counter currents, though the wind was contrary. He supposes, and with good reason, that the rivers, which throw themselves into this lake, produce, in the middle of its waters, strong contrary currents: "But these strong currents," says he,\* "are perceptible only in the middle of the channel, and produce on the banks, *vortices*, or counter currents, of which those avail themselves who have to coast along the shore, as is the case with persons who are obliged to take the water in canoes made of bark."

*Dampier's* Work is filled with observations on the counter currents of the Ocean, which are very common, especially in the straits of islands situated between the Tropics. He speaks frequently of the extraordinary effects produced by the meeting of the particular currents which occasions them; but as he does not consider the Tides themselves, as *vortices* of the general Current of the Atlantic Ocean; and as I believe he did not so much as suspect the existence of its general Current, though he has thoroughly investigated the two Currents, or Monsoons, of the Indian Ocean, I shall proceed to adduce certain facts, which establish the most perfect conformity between the Atlantic Current and those which he himself observed in the Indian Ocean, and in the South Sea.

These facts will farther prove, to a demonstration, the existence of these polar effusions: For, universally, wherever these effusions happen to meet, in their progress southward, their own counter currents which are setting in toward the North, they produce, by their collision,

\* *Charlevoix*, History of New France, Vol. vi, page 2.



Tides the most tremendous, and whose direction is diametrically opposite.

Let us consider them only at their point of departure to the North of Europe, where they begin to leave our coasts, and to stretch out into the open Sea. *Pont Oppidan* says, in his History of Norway, that there is above Berghen a place called *Malestrom*, very formidable to mariners, where the Sea forms a prodigious *vortex* of several miles diameter, in which a great many vessels have been swallowed up. *James Beverell*\* says positively, that there are in the Orkney islands two opposite Tides, the one running from the North West, and the other from the South East; that they dash their roaring billows up to the clouds, and convert the separating strait into an enormous mass of foam. The Orkneys lie a little under the Latitude of Berghen, and in the prolongation of the northern coast of Norway, that is, at the confluence of the polar effusions and of their counter currents.

Other islands of the Sea are in similar positions, as we could prove, did room permit. The channel of Bahama, for example, which runs with so much rapidity to the North, between the Continent of America and the Lucayo islands, produces, round those islands, by its encountering the general Current of that Sea, Tides the most tumultuous, and similar to those of the Orkneys.

These counter currents to the course of the Atlantic Ocean produce, then, our European and American Tides, which set in to the North on the coast, while its general Current runs southward, at least in the Summer time. I could adduce a thousand other observations respecting the existence of these contrary Currents; but a single one, more general than those which I have quoted, will be sufficient for my purpose, both from its importance and its

\* See *James Beverell*, Beauties of Scotland, Vol. vii. page 1405.



authenticity, being the first of all those which have been made in Europe, and perhaps the only one; it is that of *Christopher Columbus*, setting out on the discovery of the New World.

He set sail from the Canaries about the beginning of September, and steered to the West. He found, during the first days of his voyage, that the currents carried him to the North East. When he had advanced two or three hundred leagues from land, he perceived that their direction was southward. This greatly terrified his companions, who believed that the Sea was there driving to a precipice. Finally, as he approached the Lucayo Islands, he again found the currents setting in northward. The journal of this important voyage may be found in *Herrera*.

My opinion is, that this general Current, which flows from our Pole, in Summer, with so much rapidity, and which is so violent toward its source, according to the experience of *Ellis* and *Linschotten*, crosses the equinoctial Line, in as much as its flux is not stemmed by the effusions of the South Pole, which, at that season are consolidated into ice. I presume, for the same reason, that it extends beyond the Cape of Good Hope, from whence it is directed toward the torrid Zone, to which it is attracted by the diminution of the waters, which the Sun is there incessantly pumping up; and that being directed eastward by the position of Africa and of Asia, it forces the Indian Ocean into the same direction, contrary to its usual motion. I consider it, therefore, as the prime mover of the westerly Monsoon, which takes place in the Seas of India, in the month of April, and ends not till the month of September.

I am likewise of opinion, that the general Current which issues, during our Winter, from the South Pole, at that time heated by the rays of the Sun, restores the In-



dian Ocean to its natural motion westward, which is besides determined, on this side, by the general impulsions of the easterly winds, which usually blow in the torrid Zone, when nothing deranges their course. I, farther, presume, that this current, in its turn, penetrates into our Atlantic Ocean, directs its motion northward by the position of America, and produces various other changes in our Tides.

In fact, *Froger* says that, in Brasil, the Currents follow the Sun. They run southward when he is in the South, and northward when he is to the North.\* Those who have had experience of these effusions of the South Pole, beyond Cape Horn, have found, that, in the Summer of the Southern Hemisphere, the Tides set in northward, as was observed by *William Schouten*, who, in January, 1661, discovered Maire's Strait. But such, on the contrary, as have gone thither in the Winter of those regions, have found that the Tides run southward, and came from the North, as was observed by *Frazer* in the month of May of the year 1712.

It now seems, to me, possible to explain the principal phenomena of our Tides, from these polar effusions. It will be evident, for example, why those of the evening should be stronger, in Summer, than those of the morning; because the Sun acts more powerfully by day than by night, on the ices of the Pole, which are on the same Meridian with ourselves. This effect resembles the intermittance of certain fountains which are supplied from mountains of ice, and flow more abundantly in the evening than in the morning. It will farther be evident, how it happens that our morning Tides, in Winter rise higher than those of the evening; and why the order of our Tides changes, at the end of every six months, as *Bou-*

\* Voyage to the South Sea.



# ATLANTIC HEMISPHERE:

with its Channel, its Ices, its Currents, & its Tides, in the Months of January & February.





COLLEGE.



*guer*\* has well remarked, who thought the fact astonishing, but without assigning any reason for it; because the Sun being alternately toward both Poles, the effects of the Tides must necessarily be opposite, like the causes which produce them.

But I beg leave to suggest harmonies, between the Ocean and the Poles, still more extensive and more striking. At the Solstices the Tides are lower than at any other season of the year; and these, likewise, are the seasons when there is most ice on the two Poles, and, consequently, least water in the Sea. The reason is obvious. The Winter Solstice is, with respect to us, the season of the greatest cold; there is, accordingly, at that time, on our Pole, and on our Hemisphere, the greatest possible accumulation of ice. It is, indeed, at the South Pole, the Summer Solstice; but there is little ice melted on this pole, because the action of the greatest heat is not felt there, as with us, but when the Earth has an acquired heat, superadded to the actual heat of the Sun, which takes place only in the six weeks that follow the Summer Solstice; and these give us, likewise, in our Summer, the hottest season of the year, which we call the Dog Days.

At the Equinoxes, on the contrary, we have the highest Tides. And these are precisely the seasons when there is the least ice at the two Poles, and, of course, the greatest mass of water in the Ocean. At our autumnal Equinox, in September, the greatest part of the ices of the North Pole, which has undergone all the heats of Summer, is melted, and those of the South Pole begin to dissolve. It is farther remarkable, that the tides, at our vernal Equinox, in March, rise higher than those of September, because it is the end of Summer to the South Pole, which contains much more ice than ours, and, consequently, tends to the

\* *Bouguer, Treatise of Navigation, page 153.*



Ocean, a much greater mass of water. And it contains more ice, because the Sun is six days less in that Hemisphere, than in ours. If I am asked, Why the Sun does not communicate his light and heat, in exactly equal proportions, to both Poles? I shall leave it to the learned to assign the *cause*, but shall ascribe the *reason* of it to the Divine Goodness, which has been pleased to bestow the larger share of these blessings, on that half of the Globe which contains the greatest quantity of dry land, and the greatest number of inhabitants.

I shall say nothing of the intermittance of these polar effusions, which produce, on our coasts, two fluxes and two refluxes, nearly in the same time that the Sun, making the circuit of the Globe, over our Hemisphere, alternately heats two Continents and two Oceans, that is, in the space of twentyfour hours, during which his influence twice acts, and is twice suspended. Neither shall I speak of their retardation, which is nearly three quarters of an hour from one day to another, and which seems to be regulated by the different diameters of the polar cupola of ice, the extremities of which, melted by the Sun, diminish and retire from us every day, and whose effusions must, consequently, require more time to reach the Line, and to return from the Line to us. Neither shall I dwell on the other relations which these polar periods have to the phases of the Moon, especially when she is at the full; for her rays possess an evaporating heat, as the late experiments, made at Rome and at Paris, have demonstrated: For this would lay me under the necessity of detailing a series of observations and facts, which might carry me too far.

Much less shall I involve myself in a discussion of the Tides of the South Pole, which, in the Summer of that Pole, in the open Sea, come immediately from the South and South West, in vast surges, conformably to the expe-



rience of the Dutch Navigator, *Abel Tafman*, in the months of January and February 1692; and of their irregularity on the coasts of that Hemisphere, such as those on the coasts of New Holland, where *Dampier*, in the month of January 1688, found, to his great astonishment, that the highest Tide, which set in from east quarter north, did not come till three days after full moon, and where his ship's company, struck with consternation, were, for several days together, under the apprehension that their vessel, which they had hauled up on the beach to be refitted, could never be got afloat again.\* I shall say nothing of those of New Guinea, where, toward the end of April, the same Navigator experienced several, on the contrary, in the space of a single night, which extended, in direct opposition to ours, from North to South, and came from the West in very rapid swells, tumultuous, and preceded by enormous surges, which did not break; nor of the inconsiderable elevation of these Tides on the coast of Brasil, and in most of the islands of the South Sea, and of the East Indies, where they rise only to 5, 6, 7, feet, whereas *Ellis* found them 25 feet high at the entrance of Hudson's Bay, and the *Chevalier Narbrough*, 20 feet at the entrance of Magellan's Straits.

Their course toward the Equator in the South Sea, their retardations and accelerations on these shores, their directions, sometimes eastward, sometimes westward, according to the Monsoons; finally, their rise, which increases in proportion as we approach the Pole, and diminishes in proportion to our distance from it, even between the Tropics, demonstrates, that their focus is not under the Line. The cause of their motions depends not on the attraction, or the pressure, of the Sun and of the Moon, on that part of the Ocean; for these forces would, un-

\* *Dampier's Voyages: Treatise on Winds and Tides*, pages 378 and 379.



doubtedly, act there with the greatest energy, and in periods as regular as the course of these two luminaries; but it seems to depend entirely on the combined heat of these same luminaries, on the Poles of the Globe, the irregular effusions of which, not being narrowed in the southern Hemisphere, as in ours, by the channel of two adjacent Continents, produce, on the shores of the Indian Ocean and the South Sea, expansions vague and intermitting.

It is sufficient, therefore, to admit these alternate effusions of the polar ices, which it is impossible to call in question, to explain, with the greatest facility, all the phenomena of the Tides, and of the Currents of the Ocean. These phenomena present, in the journals of Navigators the most enlightened, a perpetual obscurity, and a multitude of contradictions, as often as these same Navigators persist in ascribing the causes of them to the constant pressure of the Moon and of the Sun on the Equator, without paying attention to the alternate Currents from the Poles, which direct their course to that same Equator; to their counter currents, which returning toward the Poles, produce Tides; and to the revolutions which Winter and Summer effect on these two movements.

It has been supposed, indeed, in modern times, that the Sea must be clear of ice under the Poles, and this is founded on the groundless assertion, that the Sea freezes only along the shore; but this supposition is the creature of men in their closets, in contradiction to the experience of the most celebrated Navigators. The efforts of Captain *Cook*, toward the South Pole, demonstrate its erroneousfness. That intrepid mariner, in the month of February, the Dog Days of the Southern Hemisphere, never could approach nearer to that Pole, where there is no land, than the 70th degree of Latitude, that is, no nearer than five hundred leagues, though he had coasted round



its cupola of ice for a whole Summer; besides this distance did not compose half the magnitude of the cupola, for he was permitted to advance so far only under favour of a bay, opened in a part of its circumference, which every where else was of much greater extent.

These bays, or openings, are formed in the ice, merely by the influence of the nearest adjacent lands, where Nature has distributed sandy zones, to assist in accelerating the fusion of the polar ices, at the proper season. Such are, to throw it out only on our way, for time permits me not here to unfold all the plans of this wonderful Architecture; such, I say, are those long belts of sand which encompass South America, in Magellan's Land; and those of Tartary, which commence in Africa, at Zara, or the Desert, and proceed forward till they terminate in the north of Asia. The winds, in Summer, convey the igneous particles, with which those Zones are filled, toward the Poles, where they accelerate the action of the Sun upon the ices.

It is easy to conceive, independent of experience, that the sands multiply the heat of the Sun, by the reflections of their specular and brilliant parts, and preserve it a long time in their interstices. It is certain, at least, that the greatest openings in the polar ices are always to be found in the direction of the warm winds, and under the influence of these sandy tracks of land, as I could easily demonstrate, were this the proper place. But we may see examples of it, without quitting our own Continent, nay, in our very gardens. In Russia, the rivers and lakes always begin to thaw at the banks, and the fusion of their ices is accelerated, in proportion as the strand is more or less gravelly, and as they meet, relatively to the strand, in the direction of the South wind.

We observe the same effects in our own gardens, toward the close of Winter. The ice which covers the



gravel on the alleys, melts first; afterward that which is on the earth, and last of all, that which is in the basons. The fusion of this, too, begins at the brink, and the length of time necessary to complete it, is in proportion to the extent of the bason; so that the central part, or that which is farthest from the earth, is likewise, the last that dissolves.

There can remain, therefore, not the slightest shadow of doubt, that the Poles are covered with a cupola of ice, conformably to the experience of Navigators, and the dictates of natural reason. We have taken a glance of the icy dome of our own Pole, which covers it, in Winter, to an extent of more than two thousand leagues over the Continents. It is not so easy to determine its elevation at the centre, and under the very Pole; but the height must be immense.

Astronomy sometimes presents, in the Heavens, an image of it so considerable, that the rotundity of the Earth seems to be remarkably affected by it.

I take the liberty of quoting, what I find, on this subject, in an English Author of note, *Childrey*.\* This Naturalist supposes, as I do, that the Earth, at the Poles, is covered with ice, to such a height, that its figure is thereby rendered sensibly oval. This he proves by two very curious astronomical observations. "What obliges me, besides," says he, "to embrace this paradox, is, that it serves to resolve admirably well, a difficulty of no small importance, which has greatly embarrassed *Tycho Brhaë* and *Kepler*, respecting central eclipses of the Moon, which take place near the Equator; as that was which *Tycho* observed in the year 1588, and that observed by *Kepler* in the year 1624: Of which he thus speaks: *Notandum est hanc Lunæ eclipsim (instar illius quam*

\* Natural History of England, pages 246 and 247.



“ Tycho, anno 1588, observavit totalem, & proximam cen-  
 “ trali) egregiè calculum fefellisse; nam non solum mora  
 “ totius Lunæ in tenebris brevis fuit, sed et duratio reli-  
 “ qua multò magis; perindè quasi tellus elliptica esset, de-  
 “ metientem breviorè habens sub Æquatore, longiorè a  
 “ polo uno ad alteram. That is, It is worthy of remark,  
 “ that this eclipse of the Moon,” (he is speaking of that  
 “ of the 26th September, 1624) like the one which Tycho  
 “ observed, in the year 1588, which was total, and very  
 “ nearly central, differed widely from the calculation; for  
 “ not only was the duration of total darkness extremely  
 “ short, but the rest of the duration, previous, and posterior,  
 “ to the total obscuration, was still shorter; as if the fig-  
 “ ure of the Earth were elliptical, having the smaller di-  
 “ ameter under the Equator, and the greater, from Pole  
 “ to Pole.

The detached masses, half melted, which are every year  
 torn from the circumference of this cupola, and which  
 are met with, floating at sea, prodigiously distant from the  
 Pole, about the 55th degree of Latitude, are of such an  
 elevation, that *Ellis*, *Cook*, *Martens*, and other Navigators  
 of the North, and of the South, the most accurate in their  
 details, represent them as, at least, as lofty as a ship under  
 sail: Nay, *Ellis*, as has already been mentioned, does not  
 hesitate to assign to them an elevation of from 1500 to  
 1800 feet. They are unanimous in affirming, that these  
 vast fragments emit coruscations, which render them per-  
 ceptible before they come to the Horizon. I shall re-  
 mark by the way, that the *Aurora Borealis*, or Northern  
 Light, may, very probably, owe its origin to similar re-  
 flections from the polar ices, the elevation of which may,  
 perhaps, one day be determined by the extent of these  
 very lights.

Whatever may be in this, *Denis*, Governor of Canada,  
 speaking of the ices which descend, every Summer, from



the North, upon the great bank of Newfoundland, says, that they are higher than the turrets of Notre Dame, and that they may be seen at the distance of from 15 to 18 leagues. Their cold is felt on ship board at a similar distance. "They are," according to his account,\* "sometimes in such numbers, being all carried forward by the same wind, that there have been vessels, making toward the land to fish, which fell in with some of them, in a series of a hundred and fifty leagues in length, and upward; which coasted along them for a day or two, the night included, with a fresh breeze, and every sail set, without being able to reach the extremity. In this manner they keep on under way, looking for an opening through which the vessel may pass; if they find one, they cross it, as through a strait; otherwise, they must get on, till they have outailed the whole chain, in order to make good their passage; for the way is throughout blocked up with ice. These ices do not melt, till they meet the warm water toward the South, or are forced by the wind on the land side. Some of them run aground in from 25 to 30 fathoms of water; judge of their height, exclusive of what is above water. The fishermen have assured me, that they saw one aground, on the great bank, in 45 fathom water, and which was, at least, ten leagues round. It must have been of a great height. Ships do not come near these ices, for there is danger lest they should overturn, according as they dissolve on the side exposed to the greatest heat."

It is to be observed, that the ices in question are already more than half melted by the time they reach the banks of Newfoundland; for, in fact, they scarcely go any farther. It is the Summer's heat which detaches them from

\* Natural History of North America, Vol. ii. chap. 1, pages 44 and 45.



the North, and they are enabled to make even such a progress southward, only by means of their floating down the current, which carries them toward the Line, where they arrive, in a state of dissolution, to replace the waters which the Sun is continually evaporating in the torrid Zone.

These polar ices, of which our mariners see only the borders and the crumbs, must have, at their centre, an elevation proportioned to their extent. For my own part, I consider the two Hemispheres of the Earth as two mountains with their bases applied to each other at the Line, the Poles as the icy summits of these mountains, and the Seas as rivers flowing from these summits.

If, then, we represent to ourselves the proportions which the glaciers of Switzerland have to their mountains, and to the rivers which flow from them, we shall be able to form some faint idea of those proportions which the glaciers of the Poles bear to the whole Globe and to the Ocean. The Cordeliers of Peru, which are only mole-hills, compared to the two Hemispheres, and the rivers, which issue from them, only rills of water compared to the Sea, have selvages of ice, from twenty to thirty leagues broad, bristled, at their centre, with pyramids of snow from twelve to fifteen hundred fathoms high. What, then, must be the elevation of these two domes of polar ice, which have in Winter, bases of two thousand leagues in diameter? I can have no doubt, that their thickness, at the Poles, must have represented the Earth as oval, in central eclipses of the Moon, conformably to the observations of *Kepler* and *Tycho Brhaë*.

I deduce another consequence from this configuration. If the elevation of the polar ices is capable of changing in the Heavens the apparent form of the Globe, their weight must be sufficiently considerable to produce some influence on its motion in the Ecliptic. There is, in fact,



a very singular correspondence between the movement, by which the Earth alternately presents its two Poles to the Sun, in one year, and the alternate effusions of the polar ices, which take place in the course of the same year. Let me explain my conception of the way in which this motion of the Earth is the effect of these effusions.

Admitting, with Astronomers, the laws of Attraction among the heavenly bodies, the Earth must certainly present to the Sun, which attracts it, the weightiest part of its Globe. Now, this weightiest part must be one of its Poles, when it is surcharged with a cupola of ice, of an extent of two thousand leagues, and of an elevation superior to that of the Continents. But as the ice of this Pole, which its gravity inclines toward the Sun, melts in proportion to its vertical approximation to the source of heat, and as, on the contrary, the ice of the opposite pole increases in proportion to its removal, the necessary consequence must be, that the first Pole becoming lighter, and the second heavier, the centre of gravity passes alternately from the one to the other, and from this reciprocal preponderancy must ensue that motion of the Globe in the Ecliptic, which produces our Summer and Winter.

From this alternate preponderancy, it must likewise happen, that our Hemisphere, containing more land than the southern Hemisphere, and being, consequently, heavier, it must incline toward the Sun for a greater length of time; and this, too, corresponds to the matter of fact, for our Summer is five or six days longer than our Winter. A farther consequence is, that our Pole cannot lose its centre of gravity, till the opposite Pole becomes loaded with a weight of ice superior to the gravity of our Continent, and of the ices of our Hemisphere; and this, likewise, is agreeable to fact, for the ices of the South Pole are more elevated, and more extensive than those



of the northern ; for mariners have not been able to penetrate farther than to the 70th degree of South Latitude, whereas they have advanced no less than 82° North.

Here we have a glimpse of the reasons by which Nature was determined to divide this Globe into two Hemispheres, of which the one should contain the greatest quantity of dry land, and the other the greatest quantity of water ; to the end that this movement of the Globe should possess, at once, consistency and versatility. It is farther evident, why the South Pole is placed immediately in the midst of the Seas, far from the vicinity of any land ; that it might be able to load itself with a greater mass of marine evaporations, and that these evaporations accumulated into ice around it, might balance the weight of the Continents with which our Hemisphere is surcharged.

And here I lay my account with being opposed by a very formidable objection. It is this. If the polar effusions occasion the Earth's motion in the Ecliptic, the moment would come in which, its two Poles being in equilibrio, it could present to the Sun the Equator only.

I acknowledge that I have no reply to make to that difficulty, unless this be one ; We must have recourse to an immediate will of the AUTHOR of Nature, who is pleased to destroy the instant of this equilibrium, and who reestablishes the balancing of the Earth on its Poles, by laws with which we are unacquainted. Now, this concession no more weakens the probability of the hydraulic cause, which I apply to it, than that of the principle of the attraction of the heavenly bodies, which attempts to explain it, I am bold to say, with much less clearness. This very attraction would soon deprive the Earth of all manner of motion, if it alone acted in the stars. If we would be sincere, it is in the acknowledgment of an intelligence, superior to our own, that all the mechanical



causes, of our most ingenious systems, must issue. The will of GOD is the *ultimatum* of all human knowledge.

From this objection, however, I shall deduce consequences, which will diffuse new light on the ancient effects of polar effusions, and on the manner in which they might have produced the Deluge.\*

On the supposition, then, of the reestablishment of the equilibrium between the Poles, and of the Earth's constantly presenting its Equator to the Sun, it is extremely probable, that, in this case, it would be set on fire. In fact, on this hypothesis, the waters which are under the Equator, being evaporated by the unremitting action of the

\* The Priests of Egypt maintain, according to Herodotus, that the Sun had several times deviated from his course; accordingly our hypothesis has nothing new in it. They had, perhaps, deduced the same consequences from this, that we have done. One thing is certain; they believed that the Earth would, one day, perish by a general conflagration, as it had been overwhelmed by an universal deluge. Nay, I believe it was one of their Kings, who, as a security against either one or the other of these calamities, had two pyramids built, the one of brick, a preservative against fire; the other of stone, a preservative against an inundation. The opinion of a future conflagration of Nature is diffused over many nations. But effects so terrible, which would speedily result from the mechanical causes, by which Man endeavours to explain the laws of Nature, can take place only by an immediate order of the DEITY. He preserves his works conformably to the same Wisdom with which they were created. Astronomers have, for many Ages, been observing the annual motion of the Earth in the Ecliptic, and never have they seen the Sun so much as a single second short of, or beyond, the Tropics. GOD governs the World by variable powers, and deduces from these, harmonies which are invariable. The Sun neither moves in the circle of the Equator, which would set the Earth on fire, nor in that of the Meridian, which would produce an inundation of water; but his course is traced in the Ecliptic, describing a spiral line between the two Poles of the World. In this harmonious course, he dispenses cold and heat, dryness and humidity, and derives from these powers, each of them destructive by itself, Latitudes so varied, and so temperate, all over the Globe, that an infinite number of creatures, of an extreme delicacy, find in them, every degree of temperature adapted to the nature of their frail existence.



Sun, would become irrevocably fixed in ice at the Poles, where they would receive, without effect, the influence of that luminary, which would be to them constantly in the Horizon. The Continents being thus dried up, under the torrid Zone, and inflamed by a heat every day increasing, would quickly catch fire. Now, if it be probable that the Earth would perish by fire, were the Sun's motion confined to the Equator, it is no less probable, that it must be deluged with water, if the course of the Sun were in the direction of the Meridian. Opposite means produce contrary effects.

We have just seen, that the alternate effusions of part of the polar ices merely, are sufficient for renewing all the waters of the Ocean, for producing all the phenomena of the Tides, and for effecting the balancing of the Earth in the Ecliptic. We believe them capable of entirely inundating the Globe, were the fusion to take place all at once. Let it but be remarked, that the effusion of only a part of the ices of the Cordeliers, in Peru, is sufficient to produce an annual overflow of the Amazon, of the Oroonoko, and of several other great rivers of the New World, and to inundate a great part of Brasil, of Guiana, and of the *Terra Firma* of America.; that the melting of part of the snows on the mountains of the Moon in Africa, occasions every year the inundations of Senegal, contributes to those of the Nile, and overflows vast tracts of country in Guinea, and the whole of Lower Egypt; and that similar effects are annually reproduced in a considerable part of southern Asia, in the kingdoms of Bengal, of Siam, of Pegou, and of Cochìn China, and in the districts watered by the Tigris, the Euphrates, and many other rivers of Asia, which have their sources in chains of mountains perpetually covered with ice, namely, Taurus and Imaüs. Who, then, can entertain a doubt, that the total fusion of the ices of both Poles, would be



sufficient to swell the Ocean above every barrier, and completely to inundate the two Continents?

The elevation of these two cupolas of polar ice, vast as Oceans, must it not far surpass the height of the highest land, when the simple fragments of their extremities, after they are half dissolved, are as high as the turrets of Notre Dame; nay, rise to the height of from fifteen to eighteen hundred feet above the Sea? The ground on which Paris stands, at forty leagues distance from the shore of the Sea, is only twentytwo fathom above the level of neap tides, and no more than eighteen above the highest spring tides. A great part of both the Old and New World is of an elevation much inferior even to this.

For my own part, if I may venture to declare my opinion, I ascribe the general Deluge to a total effusion of the polar ices, to which may be added that of the icy mountains, such as the ices of the Cordeliers and of Mount Taurus, the chains of which extend from twelve to fifteen hundred leagues in length, with a breadth of twenty or thirty leagues, and an elevation of from twelve to fifteen hundred fathom. To these may be still farther added the waters diffused over the Atmosphere, in clouds, and imperceptible vapours, which would not fail to form a very considerable mass of water, were they collected on the Earth.

My supposition then is, that, at the epocha of this tremendous catastrophe, the Sun, deviating from the Ecliptic, advanced from South to North,\* and pursued the di-

\* I find an historical testimony in support of this hypothesis, in the History of China by Father *Martini*, Book I. "During the reign of *Yaius*, the seventh Emperor, the Annals of the Country relate, that for six days together the Sun never set, so that a general conflagration was apprehended." The result, on the contrary, was a deluge which inundated the whole of China. The epoch of this Chinese deluge, and that of the Universal Deluge, are in the same century. *Yaius* was born 2307 years before CHRIST, and the Universal Deluge happened 2348 years before the same



rection of one of the Meridians which passes through the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and of the South Sea. In this course he heated only a Zone of water, frozen as well as fluid, which, through the greatest part of the circumference has a breadth of four thousand five hundred leagues. He extracted long belts of land and sea fogs, which accompany the melting of all ices, of the chain of the Cordeliers, of the different branches of the icy mountains of Mexico, of Taurus, and of Imaüs, which like them run South and North; of the sides of Atlas, of the summits of Teneriff, of Mount Jura, of Ida, of Lebanon, and of all the mountains covered with snow, which lay exposed to his direct influence.

He quickly set on fire, with his vertical flame, the Constellation of the Bear, and that of the Cross of the South; and, presently, the vast cupolas of ice, on both Poles, smoked on every side. All these vapours, united to those which arose out of the Ocean, covered the Earth with an universal rain. The action of the Sun's heat was farther augmented by that of the burning winds of the sandy Zones of Africa and Asia, which blowing, as all winds do, toward the parts of the Earth where the air is most rarefied, precipitated themselves, like battering rams of fire, toward the Poles of the World, where the Sun was then acting with all his energy,

Innumerable torrents immediately burst from the North Pole, which was then the most loaded with ice, as the Deluge commenced on the 17th of February, that season of the year, when Winter has exerted its full power over our Hemisphere. These torrents issued all at once from every flood gate of the North; from the straits of the Sea of Anadir, from the deep gulf of Kamtschatka, from the

epoch, according to the Hebrew computation. The Egyptians likewise, had traditions respecting these ancient alterations of the Sun's course.



Baltic Sea, from the strait of Waigat's, from the unknown fluices of Spitzbergen and Greenland, from Hudson's Bay, and from that of Baffin, which is still more remote. Their roaring currents rushed furiously down, partly through the channel of the Atlantic Ocean, hurled it up from the abyfles of its profound bafon, drove impetuoufly beyond the Line, and their collateral counter tides forced back upon them, and increased by the Currents from the South Pole, which had been fet a flowing at the fame time, poured upon our coasts the most formidable of Tides. They rolled along, in their farges, a part of the spoils of the Ocean, fituated between the ancient and the new Continent. They fpread the vast beds of fhells which pave the bottom of the Seas at the Antilles and Cape Verd Islands, over the plains of Normandy; and carried even thofe which adhere to the rocks of Magellan's Strait, as far as to the plains which are watered by the Saône. Encountered by the general Current of the Pole, they formed at their confluences horrible counter tides, which conglomerated, in their vast funnels, fands, flints and marine bodies, into mafles of indigested granite, into irregular hills, into pyramidical rocks, whose protuberances variegate the foil in many places of France and Germany. Thefe two general Currents of the Poles happening to meet between the Tropics, tore up, from the bed of the Seas, huge banks of madrépores, and tossed them, unfeperated, on the fhores of the adjacent iflands, where they fubfift to this day.\*

\* I have feen in the Ifls of France, fome of thefe great beds of madrépores, of the height of feven or eight feet, refembling ramparts, left quite dry, more than three hundred paces from the fhore. The Ocean has left, on every land, fome traces of its ancient excursions. There have been found, on the fteep ftrand of the diftrict of Caux, fome of the fhells peculiar to the Antilles Iflands, particularly a very large one, called the *Thuilee*; in the vineyards of Lyons, that which they call the cock and hen, which is caught



In other places, their waters, slackened at the extremity of their course, spread themselves over the surface of the ground in vast sheets, and deposited, by repeated undulations, in horizontal layers, the wreck and the viscidities of an infinite number of fishes, sea urchins, sea weeds, shells, corals, and formed them into strata of gravel, pastes of marble, of marle, of plaster and calcareous stones, which constitute, to this day, the soil of a considerable part of Europe. Every layer of our fossils was the effect of an universal Tide. While the effusions of the polar ices were covering the westerly extremities of our Continent with the spoils of the Ocean, they were spreading over its easterly extremities those of the Land, and deposited on the soil of China, strata of vegetable earth, from three to four hundred feet deep.

alive in no Sea whatever but the Straits of Magellan : The teeth and jaws of sharks, in the sands of Estampes. Our quarries are filled with the spoils of the Southern Ocean. On the other hand, if we may believe the Memoirs of Father *Le Comte*, the Jesuit, there are in China strata of vegetable earth from three to four hundred feet deep. This Missionary ascribes to these, and with good reason, the extreme fertility of that country. Our best soils in Europe are not above three or four feet deep. If we had Geographical Charts which should represent the different layers of our fossil shells, we might distinguish in them the directions and the focuses of the ancient currents which lodged them. I shall pursue this idea no farther ; but here is another, which may present new objects of curiosity to the learned, who put greater value on the monuments raised by Man, than on those of Nature. It is this, As we find in the fossils of these western regions, a multitude of the monuments of the Sea, we might, perhaps, be able to trace those of our ancient Continent, in those strata of vegetable earth, of three and four hundred feet depth, in the countries of the East. First, it is certain, from the testimony of the Missionary above quoted, that pit coal is so common in China, that most of the Chinese make use of no other fuel. Now, it is well known that pit coal owes its origin to the forests which have been buried in the bowels of the Earth. It might be possible, therefore, to find amidst these wrecks of the vegetable creation, those of terrestrial animals, of men, and of the first arts of the World, such, at least, as possessed some degree of solidity.



Then it was that all the plans of Nature were reversed. Complete islands of floating ice, loaded with white bears, run aground among the palm trees of the torrid Zone, and the elephants of Africa were tossed amidst the fir groves of Siberia, where their large bones are still found to this day. The vast plains of the Land, inundated by the waters, no longer presented a career to the nimble courser, and those of the Sea, roused into fury, ceased to be navigable. In vain did Man think of flying for safety to the lofty mountains. Thousands of torrents rushed down their sides, and mingled the confused noise of their waters with the howling of the winds, and the roaring of the thunder. Black tempests gathered round their summits, and diffused a night of horror in the very midst of day. In vain did he turn an eager eye toward that quarter of the Heavens where Aurora was to have appeared: He perceives nothing in the whole circuit of the Horizon but piles of dark clouds heaped upon each other; a pale glare here and there furrows their gloomy and endless battalions; and the Orb of Day, veiled by their lurid coruscations, emits scarcely light sufficient to afford a glimpse, in the firmament, of his bloody disk, wading through new Constellations.

To the disorder reigning in the Heavens, Man, in despair, yields up the safety of the Earth. Unable to find in himself the last consolation of Virtue, that of perishing free from the remorse of a guilty conscience, he seeks, at least, to conclude his last moments in the bosom of Love, or of Friendship. But in that age of criminality, when all the sentiments of Nature were stifled, friend repelled friend, the mother her child, the husband the wife of his bosom. Every thing was swallowed up of the waters: Cities, palaces, majestic pyramids, triumphal arches, embellished with the trophies of Kings: And ye, also, which ought to have survived the ruin even of a World, ye



peaceful grottos, tranquil bowers, humble cottages, the retreats of innocence ! There remained on the Earth no trace of the glory and felicity of the Human Race, in those days of vengeance, when Nature involved in one ruin all the monuments of her greatness.

Such convulsions, of which traces without number still remain, on the surface, and in the bowels of the Earth, could not possibly have been produced simply by the action of an universal rain.

I am aware that the letter of Scripture is express in respect to this ; but the circumstances which the Sacred Historian combines, seem to admit the means which, on my hypothesis, effected that tremendous revolution.

In the book of Genesis it is said, that it rained, over the whole Earth, for forty days and forty nights. That rain, as we have alleged, was the result of the vapours produced by the melting of the ices, both of the Land and of the Sea, and by the Zone of Water which the Sun passed over in the direction of the Meridian. As to the period of forty days, that quantity of time appears to me abundantly sufficient to the vertical action of the Sun on the polar ices, to reduce them to the level of the Seas, as scarcely more than three weeks are necessary, of the proximity of the Sun to the Tropic of Cancer, to melt a considerable part of those on our Pole. Nay, at that season, nothing more seems to be wanting but a few puffs of southerly, or south west wind, for a few days to disengage from the ice the southern coast of Nova Zembla, and to clear the strait of Waigat's, as has been observed by *Martens*, *Barents*, and other Navigators of the North.

It is farther said, in the Book of Genesis, " *All the fountains of the great Deep were broken up, and the windows of Heaven were opened.*" The expression, *the fountains of the great Deep*, can, in my opinion, be applied only to an effusion of the polar ices, which are the real sources of the Sea, as the effusions of the ice on mountains are the sources of all the great rivers. The expres-



sion, *the windows*, or cataracts, of *Heaven*, denotes likewise, if I am not mistaken, the universal resolution of the waters diffused over the Atmosphere, which are there supported by the cold, the focuses of which were then destroyed at the Poles.

It is afterwards said, in Genesis, that after it had rained for forty days, GOD *made a wind to blow*, which caused the waters that covered the Earth to disappear. This wind, undoubtedly, brought back to the Poles the evaporations of the Ocean, which fixed themselves anew in ice. The Mosaic account, finally, adds circumstances which seem to refer all the effects of this wind to the Poles of the World, for it is said, Gen. viii. 2, 3, “The  
“ fountains also of the Deep, and the windows of Heav-  
“ en, were stopped, and the rain from Heaven was re-  
“ strained; and the *waters returned from off the Earth*  
“ *continually*, and after *the end of the hundred and fifty*  
“ *days* the waters were abated.”

The agitation of these waters from side to side continually, perfectly agrees to the motion of the Seas, from the Line to the Poles, which must then have been performed without any obstacle, the Globe being, on that occasion, entirely aquatic; and it being possible to suppose that its annual balancing in the Ecliptic, of which the polar ices are at once the moving powers and the counterpoise, had degenerated, at that time, into a diurnal titubation, a consequence of its first motion. These waters retired, then, from the Ocean, when they came to be converted anew into ice upon the Poles; and it is worthy of remark, that the space of a hundred and fifty days, which they took to fix themselves in their former station, is precisely the time which each of the Poles annually employs, to load itself with its periodical congelations.

We find, besides, in the sequel of this historical account of the Deluge, expressions analagous to the same causes: “GOD said again to Noah, while the Earth re-  
“ maineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and



“Summer and Winter, and day and night, shall not  
“ cease.\*”

There must be nothing superfluous in the *Words* of the AUTHOR of Nature, as there is nothing of this description in his *Works*. The Deluge, as has been already mentioned, commenced on the seventeenth day of the second month of the year, which was among the Hebrews, as with us, the month of February. Man had by this time cast the seed into the ground, but reaped not the harvest. That year, cold succeeded not to the heat, nor Summer to Winter, because there was neither Winter nor cold, from the general fusion of the polar ices, which are their natural focuses; and the night, properly so called, did not follow the day, because then there was no night at the Poles, where there is alternately one of six months, because the Sun, pursuing the direction of a Meridian, illuminated the whole Earth, as is the case now, when he is in the Equator.

To the authority of Genesis, I shall subjoin a very curious passage from the Book of Job,† which describes the Deluge, and the Poles of the World, with the principal characters of them which I have just been exhibiting.

4. Ubi eras quando ponebam fundamenta Terræ? Indica Mihi, si habes intelligentiam.

5. Quis posuit mensuras ejus, si nôsti? Vel quis tendit super eam, lineam?

6. Super quo bases illius solidatæ sunt? Aut quis demisit lapidem angularem ejus,

7. Cum manè laudarent simul Astra matutina, & jubilarent omnes Filii DEI?

8. Quis conclusit ostiis ‡ Mare, quando erumpebat quasi ex utero procedens:

\* Gen. ch. viii. ver. 22.

† Ch. xxxviii.

‡ Though the sense which I affix to this passage, does not greatly differ from that of M. de Sacy, in his excellent translation of the Bible, there are, at the same time, several expressions, to which I assign a meaning rather opposite to that of this learned Gentleman.



9. Cum ponerem nubem vestimentum ejus, & caliginem, illud, quasi pannis infantiae, obvolverem ?

10. Circumdedi illud terminis meis, & posui vectem & ostia ?

11. Et dixi : Usque huc venies, sed non procedes amplius ; & hic confringes tumentes fluctus tuos.

12. Numquid post ortum tuum præcepisti diliculo, & ostendisti Auroræ,\* locum suum ?

13. Et tenuisti concutiens extrema Terræ, & excussisti impios ex ea ?

14. Restituetur ut lutum † signaculum, & stabit sicut vestimentum.

15. Auferetur ab impiis lux sua, & brachium excelsum confringetur.

1st. *Ostium*, properly speaking, signifies an opening, a disgoring, a sluice, a flood gate, a mouth ; and not a barrier, according to *Saci's* Translation. Observe how admirably the sense of this verse, and of that which follows, is adapted to the state of constraint and inactivity to which the Sea is restricted at the Poles, surrounded with clouds and darkness, like a child in swaddling clothes in his cradle. They are, likewise, expressive of the thick fogs which surround the basis of the polar ices, as is well known to all the mariners of the North.

2dly. The preceding epithets of the foundations of the Earth ; of the fastening of the foundations ; of stretching the line upon it ; of the Sea's breaking forth, as if issuing from the womb, determine particularly the Poles of the World, from whence the seas flow over the rest of the Globe. The epithet of *corner stone*, seems, likewise, to denote more particularly the North Pole, which, by its magnetic attraction, distinguishes itself from every other point of the Earth.

\* *Auroræ locum suum*, the place of the Aurora. The *Aurora Borealis* is, perhaps, here intended. The cold of the Poles produces the Aurora, for there is scarce any such thing between the Tropics. The Pole is, accordingly, properly speaking, the natural place of the Aurora. In the verse following, the expression, *tenuisti concutiens extrema Terræ*, evidently characterizes the total effusions of the polar ices, situated at the extremities of the Earth, which occasioned the Universal Deluge.

† *Restituetur ut lutum signaculum*. This verse is very obscure in the Translation of *M. de Saci*. It appears to me here descriptive of the fossil shells, which, over the whole Earth, are monuments of the Deluge.



16. Numquid ingressus es profunda Maris, & in novissimis Abyssi \* deambulâsti ?

17. Numquid apertæ sunt tibi portæ Mortis,† & ostia tenebrofa vidisti ?

18. Numquid considerâsti latitudinem Terræ ?‡ Indica Mihi, si nôsti omnia.

19. In quâ viâ lux habitet, & tenebrarum quis locus sit.

20. Ut ducas unumquodque ad terminos suos, & intelligas femitas domûs ejus.

21. Sciebas tunc quòd nasciturus esses ? Et numerum dierum tuorum noveras ?

22. Numquid ingressus es thesauros nivis, aut thesauros grandinis aspexisti ?

23. Quæ preparavi in tempus hostis, in diem pugnæ & belli.

\* *In novissimis Abyssi, in the search (at the sources) of the Depth.* Sæci translates it, *in the extremities of the Abyss.* This version destroys the correspondence of the expression under review, with that of the other polar characters, so clearly explained before; and the antithesis of *novissima*, with that of *profunda Maris*, which goes before, by affixing the same meaning to it. Antithesis is a figure in frequent use among the Orientals, and especially in the Book of Job. *Novissima Abyssi*, literally denote, the places which renovate the Abyss, the sources of the Sea, and, consequently, the polar ices.

† *Porta Mortis, & ostia tenebrofa; the gates of Death, and the doors of the shadow of Death, or, the gates of Darkness.* The Poles, being uninhabitable, are, in reality, the gates of Death. The epithet *dark* here denotes the nights of six months duration, which hold their empire at the Poles. This sense is farther confirmed by what is subjoined in the following verses; the *locus tenebrarum*, place of darkness, and the *thesaurus nivis*, treasures of the snow. The Poles are, at once, the place of darkness, and that of the Aurora.

‡ *Latitudinem Terræ.* Literally: *Hast thou perceived the breadth (the Latitude) of the Earth?* In truth, all the characters of the Pole could be known only to those who had coursed over the Earth in its Latitude. There were, in the times of Job, many Arabian travellers who went eastward, and westward, and southward, but very few who had travelled northward, that is to say, in Latitude.



*Common Version of the Bible.*

4. Where wast thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding.

5. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it?

6. Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof?

7. When the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of GOD shouted for joy.

8. Or who shut up the Sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

9. When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it,

10. And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors,

11. And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther: And here shall thy proud waves be staid.

12. Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days? and caused the dayspring to know his place,

13. That it might take hold of the ends of the Earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?

*Translation of SAINT PIERRE'S Version.*

4. Where wast thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Tell it Me, if thou hast any knowledge.

5. Knowest thou who it is that determined its dimensions, and who regulated its levels?

6. On what are its bases secured; and who fixed its corner stone?

7. When the stars of the morning praised Me all together, and when all the Sons of GOD were transported with joy.

8. Who appointed gates to the Sea, to shut it up again, when it inundated the Earth, rushing as from its mother's womb;

9. When I gave it the clouds for a covering, and wrapped it up in darkness, as a child is wrapped up in swaddling clothes?

10. I shut it up within bounds well known to me: I appointed for it a bulwark and sluices,

11. And said to it, Thus far shalt thou come, but farther thou shalt not pass, and here the pride of thy billows shall be broken.

12. Is it thou who, in opening thine eyes to the light, hast given commandment to the dawning of the day to appear, and hast shewn to Aurora the place where she ought to arise?

13. Is it thou who, holding in thy hands the extremities of the Earth, hast convulsed it, and shaken the wicked out of it?



14. It is turned as clay to the seal, and they stand as a garment.

15. And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.

16. Hast thou entered into the springs of the Sea ? or, Hast thou walked in the search of the Depth ?

17. Have the gates of Death been opened unto thee ? or, Hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of Death ?

18. Hast thou perceived the breadth of the Earth ? Declare if thou knowest it all.

19. Where is the way where light dwelleth ? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof ?

20. That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof ?

21. Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born ? or, Because the number of thy days is great ?

22. Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow ? or, Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

23. Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war ?

14. A multitude of minute monuments of this event shall remain impressed in the clay, and shall subsist as the memorials of that devastation.

15. The light of the wicked shall be taken from them, and their lifted up arm shall be broken.

16. Hast thou penetrated to the bottom of the Sea, and walked over the sources which renovate the Abyss ?

17. Have these gates of Death been opened to thee ; and hast thou surveyed the dark disgorgings of the Depth ?

18. Hast thou observed where the breadth of the Earth terminates ? If thou knowest all these things, declare them unto Me.

19. Tell me where the light inhabits, and what is the place of darkness,

20. That thou mayest conduct each to its destination, seeing thou knowest their habitation, and the way that leads to it.

21. Didst thou know, as these things already existed, that thou thyself wert to be born ; and hadst thou then discovered the fleeting number of thy days ?

22, 23. Hast thou, I say, entered into the treasures of the snow, and surveyed those tremendous reservoirs of hail, which I have prepared against the time of the adversary, and for the day of battle and war ?



The Reader, I flatter myself, will not be displeas'd at my having deviated somewhat from my subject, that I might exhibit to him the agreement between my hypothesis and the traditions of the Holy Scriptures; and especially between it and those, though not free from obscurity, of a Book, perhaps, the most ancient that exists. Our most learned Theologians agree in thinking, that Job wrote prior to Moses. Whether this be the case or not, surely no one ever painted Nature with greater sublimity.

We may, farther, arrive at complete assurance of the general effect of the polar effusions on the Ocean, from the particular effects of the icy effusions of mountains, on the lakes and rivers of the Continent. I shall here relate some examples of these last; for the human mind, from its natural weakness, loves to particularize all the objects of its studies. And this is the reason why it apprehends, much more quickly, the laws of Nature, in small objects, than in those which are great.

*Addison*, in his remarks on *Misson's* Tour to Italy, page 322, says, that there is in the Lake of Geneva, in Summer, towards evening, a kind of flux and reflux, occasioned by the melting of the snows, which fall into it in greater quantities after noon, than at other seasons of the day. He explains, besides, with much clearness, as he generally does, from the alternate effusions of the ices on the mountains of Switzerland, the intermittance of certain fountains of that country, which flow only at particular hours of the day.

If this digression were not already too long, I could demonstrate, that there is no one fountain, nor lake, nor river, subject to a particular flux and reflux, but what is indebted for it to icy mountains, which supply their sources. I shall subjoin but a very few words more respecting those of the Euripus; the frequent and irregular movements of which so much embarrassed the Philosophers of Antiquity, and which may be so easily explain-



ed from the icy effusions of the neighbouring mountains.

The Euripus, it is well known, is a strait of the Archipelago, which separates the ancient Beotia from the island of Eubea, now Negropont. About the middle of this strait, where it is most narrow, the water is known to flow, sometimes to the North, sometimes to the South, ten, twelve, fourteen times a day, with the rapidity of a torrent. These multiplied, and, very frequently, unequal movements, cannot possibly be referred to the tides of the Ocean, which are scarcely perceptible in the Mediterranean. A Jesuit quoted by *Spon*,\* endeavours to reconcile these to the phases of the Moon; but supposing the table of them, which he produces, to be accurate, their regularity and irregularity will always remain a difficulty of no easy solution. He refutes *Seneca*, the Tragic Poet, who ascribes to the Euripus but seven fluxes, in the day time only:

Dùm lassâ Titan mergat Oceano juga.

Till Titan's tired steeds in th' Ocean plunge.

He adds farther, I know not after whom, that in the Sea of Persia the flux never takes place but in the night time; and that under the Arctic Pole, on the contrary, it is perceptible twice in the day time, without being ever observed in the night. It is not so, says he, with the Euripus.

I shall observe, by the way, that his remark with respect to the Pole, supposing it true, evinces that its two diurnal fluxes are the effects of the Sun, who acts, only during the day, on the two icy extremities of the Continents of the New World, and of the Old. As to the Euripus, the variety, the number, and the rapidity of its fluxes, prove that they have their origin, in like manner; in icy mountains, situated at different distances, and under

\* Voyage to Greece and the Levant, by *Spon*, vol. ii. page 340.



different aspects of the Sun. For, according to that same Jesuit, the island of Eubea, which is on one side of the strait, contains mountains covered with snow for six months of the year; and we know equally well, that Beotia, which is on the other side, contains several mountains of an equal elevation, and even some which are crowned with ice all the year round, such as Mount Oëta. If these fluxes and refluxes of the Euripus take place as frequently in Winter, which is not affirmed, the cause of them must be ascribed to the rains which fall, at that season of the year, on the summits of these lofty collateral mountains.

I shall enable the Reader to form an idea of these, not very apparent, causes of the movements of the Euripus, by here transcribing what *Spon* relates, in another place,\* of the Lake of Livadia, or Copaïde, which is in its vicinity. This lake receives the first fluxes of the icy effusions of the mountains of Beotia, and communicates them, undoubtedly, to the Euripus, through the mountain which separates them. "It receives," says he, "several small  
 " rivers, the Cephifus and others, which water that beau-  
 " tiful plain, whose circumference is about fifteen leagues  
 " and abounds in corn and pasture. Besides, it was for-  
 " merly one of the most populous regions of Beotia.  
 " But the water of this lake, sometimes, swells so vio-  
 " lently, by the rains and melted snows, that it once in-  
 " undated two hundred villages of the plain. It would  
 " even be capable of producing a regular annual inunda-  
 " tion, if Nature, assisted, perhaps, by Art,† had not con-

\* Voyage to Greece and the Levant, by *Spon*, vol. ii. pages 88 and 89.

† *Spon*, undoubtedly, did not consider what he was saying, when he suggested an idea of the possibility of Art assisting Nature in the construction of five subterranean canals, each ten miles long, through a solid rock. These subterranean canals are frequently met with in mountainous countries, of which I could produce a thousand instances. They contribute to the circulation of waters, which could not otherwise force a passage through extended chains of mountains. Nature pierces the rocks, and sends rivers



“trived for it an outlet, by five great canals, under the  
 “adjacent mountain of the Euripus, between Negropont  
 “and Talanda; through which the water of the lake is  
 “gulped up, and throws itself into the Sea on the oppo-  
 “site side of the mountain. The Greeks call this place  
 “*Catabathra*: (the whirlpools.) Strabo, speaking of this  
 “lake, says, nevertheless, that there appeared no outlet  
 “in his time, unless it be, that the Cephifus, sometimes,  
 “forced a passage under ground. But it is only necessary  
 “to read the account which he gives of the changes that  
 “take place in this morafs, not to be surprifed at what

through the apertures, juft as ſhe has pierced ſeveral of the bones of the hu-  
 man body, for the purpoſe of transmitting certain veins. I leave to the Read-  
 er the proſecution of this new idea. I have ſaid enough to convince him,  
 that this Globe is not the production of diſorder or chance.

I ſhall conclude theſe obſervations, with a reflection reſpecting the two  
 Travellers, whom I have been quoting: It may, perhaps, have a good  
 moral effect. *Spon* was a Frenchman, and *George Wheeler* Engliſh. They  
 travelled in company over the Archipelago. The former brought home  
 with him a great collection of Greek inſcriptions and epitaphs; and the lit-  
 erati of the laſt age cried him up highly. The other has given us the names  
 and characters of a great many very curious plants, which grow on the ru-  
 ins of Greece, and which, in my opinion, convey a very affecting intereſt  
 into his relations. He is little known among us.

According to the deſcriptive titles which each of theſe Gentlemen aſſum-  
 ed, *Jacob Spon* was a Phyſician aſſociate of Lyons, and an eager investigator  
 of the monuments of men. *George Wheeler* was a Country Gentleman, and  
 enthuſiaſtically attached to thoſe of Nature. Their taſtes, to judge from  
 ſituations, ought to have been reverſed; and that the Gentleman ſhould  
 have been fond of monumental inſcriptions, and the Phyſician of plants;  
 but, as we ſhall have occaſion to obſerve, in the ſequel of theſe Studies, our  
 paſſions ſpring out of contrarieties, and are, almoſt always, in oppoſition to  
 our conditions. It was from an effect of this harmonic law of Nature, that  
 though theſe Travellers were, the one Engliſh, and the other French, they  
 lived in the moſt perfect union. I remark, to their honour, that they quote  
 each other in terms of the higheſt reſpect and approbation.

Miniſters of State, would you form Societies which ſhall be cordially  
 united among themſelves, do not aſſort Academicians with Academicians,  
 Soldiers with Soldiers, Merchants with Merchants, Monks with Monks,  
 but aſſociate Men of oppoſite conditions, and you will behold harmony  
 pervade the aſſociation; provided, however, that you exclude the ambitious,  
 which is indeed, no eaſy taſk, ambition being one of the firſt vices which  
 our mode of education inſtils.



“ he has affirmed of its outlets. Mr. *Wheeler*, who went  
 “ to examine this spot after my departure from Greece,  
 “ says it is one of the greatest curiosities in the country,  
 “ the mountain being near ten miles broad, and almost en-  
 “ tirely one mass of solid rock.”

I have no doubt that several objections may be started against the hasty explanation which has been given of the course of the Tides, of the Earth's motion in the Ecliptic, and of the Universal Deluge, by the effusions of the polar ices; but, I have the courage to repeat it, these physical causes present themselves with a higher degree of probability, of simplicity and of conformity to the general progress of Nature, than the astronomical causes, so far beyond our reach, by which attempts have been made to explain them. It belongs to the impartial Reader to decide. If he is on his guard against the novelty of systems, which are not yet supported by puffers, he ought to be no less so, against the antiquity of those which have many such supporters.

Let us now return to the form of the great basin of the Ocean. Two principal Currents cross it from East to West, and from North to South. The first, coming from the South Pole, puts in motion the Seas of India, and, directed along the eastern extent of the Old Continent, runs from East to West, and from West to East, in the course of the same year, forming, in the Indian Ocean, what are called the Monsoons. This we have already remarked; but what has not been hitherto brought forward, though it well deserves to be so, is, that all the bays, creeks and mediterraneans of southern Asia, such as the gulfs of Siam and Bengal, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and a great many others, are directed, relatively to this Current, North and South, so as not to be stemmed by it.

The second Current, in like manner, issuing from the North Pole, gives an opposite movement to our Ocean, and, inclosed between the continent of America and ours, proceeds from North to South, and returns from South to



North in the same year, forming, like that of India, real Monsoons, though not so carefully observed by Navigators. All the bays and mediterraneans of Europe, as the Baltic, the Channel, the Bay of Biscay, the Mediterranean properly so called; and all those on the eastern coast of America, as the Bay of Baffin, Hudson's Bay, the Gulf of Mexico, as well as many others which might be mentioned, are directed, relatively to this Current, East and West; or, to speak with more precision, the axis of all the openings of the Land in the Old and New Worlds, are perpendicular to the axis of these general Currents, so that their mouth only is crossed by them, and their depth is not exposed to the impulsions of the general movements of the Ocean.

It is because of the calmness of bays, that so many vessels run thither in quest of anchoring ground; and it is for this reason that Nature has placed, in their bottoms, the mouths of most rivers, as we before observed, that their waters might be discharged into the Ocean, without being driven furiously back by the direction of its Currents. She has employed similar precautions for the security of even the smallest streams which empty themselves into the Sea. There is not a single experienced seaman who does not know, that there is scarcely a creek but what has its little rivulet. But for the Wisdom apparent in these dispositions, the streams, destined to water the Earth must frequently have deluged it.

Nature employs still other means for securing the course of rivers, and especially for protecting their discharges into the Sea. The chief of these are islands. Islands present, to the rivers, channels of different directions, that if the Winds, or the Currents of the Ocean, should block up one of their outlets, the waters might have a free passage through another. It may be remarked, that she has multiplied islands at the mouths of rivers the most exposed to this twofold inconveniency; such as, for example, at that of the Amazon, which is forever attacked by the East



wind, and situated on one of the most prominent parts of America. There they are so many in number, and form with each other channels of such different courses, that one outlet points North East, and another South East, and from the first to the last the distance is upward of a hundred leagues.

Fluviatic islands are not formed, as has been currently believed, of solid substances washed down by rivers, and aggregated: They are, on the contrary, for the most part, very much elevated above the level of these rivers, and many of them contain rivers and mountains of their own. Such elevated islands are, besides, frequently found at the confluence of a smaller and a greater river. They serve to facilitate their communication, and to open a double passage to the current of the smaller river. As often then as you see islands in the channel of a great river, you may be assured there is some lateral inferior river, or rivulet, in the vicinity.

There are, in truth, many of these confluent rivulets which have been dried up by the ill advised labours of men, but you will always find, opposite to the islands which divided their confluence, a correspondent valley, in which you may trace their ancient channel. There are, likewise, some of these islands in the midst of the course of rivers, in places exposed to the winds. I shall observe, by the way, that we recede very widely from the intentions of Nature, in reuniting the islands of a river to the adjoining Continent; for its waters, in this case, flow in only one single channel, and when the winds happen to blow in opposition to the current, they can escape neither to the right nor to the left; they swell, they overflow, inundate the plains, carry away the bridges, and occasion most of the ravages which, in modern times, so frequently endamage our cities.

We do not, then, find bays or gulfs at the extremities of the Currents of the Ocean; but, on the contrary, islands. At the extremity of the great eastern Current of



the Indian Ocean is placed the Island of Madagascar, which protects Africa against its violence. The islands of the Terra del Fuego defend, in like manner, the southern extremity of America, at the confluence of the eastern and western Currents of the South Seas. The numerous archipelagos of the Indian Ocean and South Sea are situated about the Line, where the two general Currents of the North and South Seas meet.

With islands, too, it is that Nature protects the inlets of bays and mediterraneans. Great Britain and Ireland cover that of the Baltic; the islands of Welcom and Good Fortune cover Hudson's Bay; the island of St. Laurence protects the entrance of the gulf which bears that name; the chain of the Antilles, the gulf of Mexico; the isles of Japan, the double gulf formed by the peninsula of Gorée with the country adjacent. All currents bear upon islands. Most of these are, for this reason, noted from their prodigious swells, and their gusts of wind; such are the Azores, the Bermudas, the island of Tristan, of Acunhah, &c. Not that they contain within themselves the causes of such phenomena, but from their being placed in the focuses of the revolutions of the Ocean, and even of the Atmosphere, for the purpose of weakening their effects. They are in positions nearly similar to those of Capes, which are all celebrated for the violent tempests which beat upon them: As Cape Finisterre, at the extremity of Europe; the Cape of Good Hope, at that of Africa; and Cape Horn, at that of America. Hence comes the sea proverb to *double the Cape*, to express the surmounting of some great difficulty. The Ocean accordingly, instead of bearing upon the retiring parts of the Continent, sets in upon those which are most prominent; and it must speedily have destroyed these, had not Nature fortified them in a most wonderful manner.

The western coast of Africa is defended by a long bank of sand, on which the billows of the Atlantic Ocean are



continually breaking. Brasil, in the whole extent of its shores, opposes to the winds, which blow continually from the East, and to the Currents of the Sea, a prodigious rampart of rocks, more than a thousand leagues long, twenty paces broad at the summit, and of an unknown thickness at the base. It is a musket shot distant from the beach. It is entirely covered at high water, and on the retreating of the tide, it exhibits the elevation of a peak. This enormous dike is composed of one solid mass lengthwise, as has been ascertained by repeated borings; and it would be impossible for a vessel to get into Brasil, were it not for the several inlets which Nature has formed.\*

Go from South to North, and you find similar precautions employed. The coast of Norway is provided with a bulwark nearly resembling that of Brasil. *Pont Oppidan* tells us, that this coast, which is nearly three hundred leagues in length, is, for the most part, steep, angular, and pendant; so that the Sea, in many places, presents a depth of no less than three hundred fathoms close in shore. This has not prevented Nature from protecting these coasts, by a multitude of isles, great and small. "By such a rampart," says that Author, "consisting of, perhaps, a million, or more, of massy stone pillars, founded in the very depth of the Sea, the chapiters of which rise only a few fathoms above the surface, all Norway is defended to the West, equally against the enemy, and against the Ocean." There are, however, some coast harbours behind this species of sea bulwark, of a construction so wonderful. But as there is frequently great danger, adds he, of ships being driven ashore, before they can get into port, from the winds and currents which are very violent in the straits of these rocks and isles, and from the difficulty of anchoring in such a vast depth of water, Government has been at the expense of fastening several hundreds of strong iron rings in the rocks, more

\* See History of the Troubles of Brasil, by *Peter Morcau*.



than two fathoms above water, by which vessels may be safely moored.

Nature has infinitely varied these means of protection, especially in the islands themselves which protect the continent. She has, for example, surrounded the Isle of France with a bank of madrépores, which opens only at the places where the rivers of that island empty themselves into the Sea. Other islands, several of the Antilles in particular, were defended by forests of mangliers which grow in the sea water, and break the violence of the waves, by yielding to their motion. To the destruction, perhaps, of these vegetable fortifications, we ought to ascribe the irruptions of the Sea, now so frequent in several islands, particularly that of Formosa. There are others which consist of pure rock, rising out of the bosom of the waves, like huge moles; such is the Maritimo, in the Mediterranean. Others are volcanic, as the Isle of Fuego, one of the Cape de Verd islands, and several others, of the same description, in the South Sea, rise like pyramids with fiery summits, and answer the purpose of lighthouses to mariners, by their flame in the night time, and their smoke by day.

The Maldivia islands are defended against the Ocean, by precautions the most astonishing. In truth, they are more exposed than many others, being situated in the very midst of that great Current of the Indian Ocean, of which mention has been already made, and which passes and repasses them twice a year. They are, besides, so low, as hardly to rise above the level of the water; and they are so small, and so numerous, that they have been computed at twelve thousand, and several are so near each other, that it is possible to leap over the channel which divides them. Nature has first collected them into clusters, or archipelagos, separated from each other by deep channels which go from East to West, and which present various passages to the general Current of the Indian Ocean. These clusters are thirteen in number, and extend, in a



row, from the eighth degree of northern to the fourth degree of southern Latitude, which gives them a length of three hundred of our leagues of 25 to a degree.

But let us permit the interesting and unfortunate *Francis Pyrard*, who there passed the flower of his days, in a state of slavery, to describe the architecture of them; for he has left us the best description which we have of these islands, as if it were necessary that, in every case, things the most worthy of the esteem of Mankind should be the fruit of some calamity. “It is wonderful,” says he, “to behold each of these clusters encompassed round and round with a great bulwark of stone, such as no human art can pretend to equal in securing a spot of ground within walls.\* These clusters are all roundish, or oval, and are about thirty leagues each in circumference, some a very little more, others a very little less, and are all in a series, and end to end, without any contract whatever. There are, between every two, channels of the Sea, some broad, others very narrow. When you are in the centre of a cluster, you see, all around, that great bulwark of stone, which, as I have said, encompasses it, and defends the isles against the impetuosity of the Ocean. But it is truly frightful, even to the boldest, to approach this bulwark, and to behold the billows coming from afar, to burst with fury on every side: For then, I assure you, as a thing I have seen a thousand and a thousand times, the perturbation, or bubbling over, exceeds the size of a house, and is whiter than a fleece of cotton: So that you seem surrounded with a wall of brilliant whiteness, especially when Ocean is in his majesty.”

*Pyrard* farther observes, that most of the isles, inclosed in these subdivisions, are surrounded, each in particular, by a particular bank, which farther defends them against the Sea. But the Current of the Indian Ocean, which

\* Voyage to the Maldivias, chap. x.



passes through the parallel channels of these clusters of islands, is so violent, that it would be impossible for Mankind to keep up a communication between one and another, had not Nature arranged all this in her own wonderful manner. She has divided each of these clusters by two particular channels, which intersect them diagonally, and whose extremities exactly terminate at the extremities of the great parallel channels which separate them. So that if you wish to pass from one of these archipelagos to another, when the current is easterly, you take your departure from that where you happen to be, by the diagonal canal of the East, where the water is calm, and committing yourself afterward to the current which passes through the parallel channel, you proceed, in a deflecting course, to land on the opposite cluster, into which you enter by the opening of its diagonal channel, which is to the West. The mode of proceeding is reversed, when the current changes six months afterwards. Through these interior communications the islanders, at all seasons, can make excursions from isle to isle, the whole length of the chain, from North to South, notwithstanding the violence of the currents which separate them.

Every isle has its proper fortification, proportioned, if I may say so, to the danger to which it is exposed from the billows of the Ocean. It is not necessary to suppose the water roused into a tempest, in order to form an idea of their fury. The simple action of the trade winds, however uniform, is sufficient to give them, unremittingly, the most violent impulsion. Each of these billows, joining, to the constant velocity impressed upon it every instant by the wind, an acquired velocity, from its particular movement, would form, after running through a considerable space, an enormous mass of water, were not its course retarded by the currents which cross it, by the calms which slacken it, but, above all, by the banks, the shallows, and the islands which break it.



A very perceptible effect of this accelerated velocity of the waves is visible on the coasts of Chili and Peru, which undergo, however, only the simple concussion and repercussion of the waters of the South Sea. The shores are inaccessible through their whole extent, unless at the bottom of some bay, or under the shelter of some island situated near the coast. All the islands of that vast Ocean, so peaceful as to have obtained the distinctive appellation of Pacific, are unapproachable on the side which is exposed to the Currents occasioned by the Trade Winds only, unless where shelves or rocks break the impetuosity of the billows. In that case, it is a spectacle at once magnificent and tremendous, to behold the vast fleeces of foam, which incessantly rise from the bosom of their dark and rugged windings; and to hear their hoarse roaring noise, especially in the night time, carried by the winds to several leagues distance.

Islands, then, are not fragments separated by violence from the Continents. Their position in the Ocean, the manner in which they are there defended, and the length of their duration, constitute a complete demonstration of this. Considering how long the Sea has been battering them with its utmost fury, they must have been, by this time, reduced to a state of total ruin. Scylla and Carybdis, nevertheless, emit to this day their ancient roarings, so as to be heard at the extremities of Sicily.

This is not the proper place to indicate the means which Nature employs to preserve the islands, and to repair them; nor the other proofs from the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and from Man, which evince that they have existed, such as we now see them, from the very origin of the Globe: It will be sufficient for me to give an idea of their construction, in order to produce perfect conviction in every candid mind, that they are in no one respect the work of chance. They contain, as Continents themselves do, mountains, peaks, rivers and lakes, proportioned to their magnitude. For the purpose of de-



monstrating this new truth, I shall be still under the necessity of saying somewhat respecting the distribution of the Globe; but I shall not be long, and shall endeavour to introduce nothing but what is absolutely needful to make myself understood.

It is, first, to be remarked, that the chains of mountains in both Continents, are parallel to the Seas which wash their coasts: So that if you see the plan of one of these chains, with its different branches, you are able to determine the shore of the Sea which corresponds to them; for, as I have just said, the mountains and these are always parallel. You may, in like manner, on seeing the sinuosities of a shore, determine those of the chains of mountains which are in the interior of a country; for the gulfs of a Sea always correspond to the valleys of the mountains of the lateral Continent.

These correspondencies are perceptible in the two great chains of the Old, and of the New Worlds. The long chain of Taurus runs East and West, as does the Indian Ocean, the different gulfs of which it incloses by branches prolonged as far as to the extremities of most of their Capes. On the contrary, the chain of the Andes, in America, runs North and South, like the Atlantic Ocean. There is, besides, another thing worthy of remark, nay, I venture to say, of admiration, it is, that these chains of mountains are opposed to the regular winds which cross those Seas, and which convey the emanations from them; and that their elevation is proportioned to the distance at which they are placed from such shores: So that the farther they are removed from the Sea, the greater is their elevation into the Atmosphere.

For this reason it is, that the chain of the Andes is placed along the South Sea, where it receives the emanations of the Atlantic Ocean, wafted by the East wind over the vast Continent of America. The broader that Continent becomes, the greater is the elevation of that chain. Toward the isthmus of Panama, where the Continent has no



great breadth, and, consequently, the distance from the Sea is small, the elevation of the mountains is inconsiderable: But they suddenly rise, precisely in proportion as the American Continent widens. Its highest mountains look over the broadest expansion of America, and are situated in the Latitude of Cape Saint Augustin.

The situation, and the elevation, of this chain were equally necessary to the fertility of this grand division of the New World. For, if this chain, instead of extending lengthwise, by the coast of the South Sea, had extended along the coasts of Brasil, it would have intercepted all the vapours conveyed over the Continent by the East wind; and if it were not elevated to a region of the Atmosphere, to which no vapour could ascend, because of the subtilty of the air, and of the intenseness of the cold, all the clouds borne by the East wind would be carried beyond it, into the South Sea. On either of these two suppositions, most of the rivers of South America would remain dry.

The same reasoning may be applied to the chain of Taurus. It presents to the Northern and Indian Oceans a double ridge, with opposite aspects, from which flow most of the rivers of the ancient Continent, some to the North, and others to the South. Its branches are disposed in like manner: They do not coast along the peninsulas of India, by their shores; but cross them through the middle at their full length; for the winds of these Seas do not blow always from one and the same quarter, as the East wind in the Atlantic Ocean; but six months in one direction, and six in another. It was proper, accordingly, to divide to them the land which they were intended to water.

It remains that I subjoin some farther observations respecting the configuration of these mountains, to confirm the use to which they are destined by Nature. They are crowned, from distance to distance, by long peaks similar to lofty pyramids. These peaks, as has been well observed, are of granite, at least, most of them. I do not know



the component parts of granite; but I know well, that these peaks attract the vapours of the Atmosphere, and fix them around in such a quantity, that they themselves frequently disappear. This is a remark which I have made times without number, with respect to the peak of Piterboth, in the Isle of France, where I have seen the clouds driving before the South East wind, turn aside perceptibly from their direction, and gather around it, so as sometimes to form a very thick cap, which rendered the summit totally invisible.

I had the curiosity to examine the nature of the rock of which it is composed. Instead of being formed of grains, it is full of small holes, like the other rocks of the island; it melts in the fire, and when melted, you may perceive on its surface small grains of copper. It is impossible to doubt that it must be impregnated with that metal; and to the copper we must, perhaps, ascribe the virtue which it possesses of attracting the clouds. For it is known by experience, that this metal, as well as iron, has the property of attracting thunder. I do not know of what materials other peaks are composed; but it is very remarkable, that at the summit of the Andes, and on their ridges, are found the gold and silver mines of Chili and Peru, and that, in general, all mines of iron and copper are found at the source of rivers, and in elevated situations, where they discover themselves by the fogs which surround them. Whatever may be in this, whether this attractive quality be common to granite, and to rocks of a different nature, or whether it depends on some metal which is amalgamated with them, I consider all the peaks in the world as real electric needles.

But it was not sufficient that clouds should collect and fix on the tops of mountains, the rivers which have their sources there, could have only an intermittent course. As soon as the rainy season was at an end, the rivers must have ceased to flow. Nature, in order to remedy this inconveniency, has contrived, in the vicinity of their peaks,



lakes, which are real reservoirs, or cisterns, of water, to furnish a regular and constant supply to their expenditure. Most of those lakes are of an incredible depth; they answer several other purposes, such as that of receiving the melted snows of the adjacent mountains, which would otherwise flow with too great rapidity. When they are once full, it requires a very considerable time to exhaust them. They exist, either internally or externally, at the source of all regular currents of water; but when they are external, they are proportioned, either by their extent, or by their depth and their discharges, to the size of the river which they are designed to emit, as well as the peaks which are in the vicinity. These correspondencies must have undoubtedly been known to Antiquity; for I think I have seen some very ancient medals, in which rivers were represented by figures leaning on an urn, and stretched along at the basis of a pyramid; which was probably designed to denote at once their source and their discharge.

If, then, we come to apply these general dispositions of Nature to the particular conformation of islands, we shall see that they have, like Continents, mountains with branches parallel to their bays; that these mountains are of an elevation corresponding to their distance from the Sea; and that they contain peaks, lakes, and rivers, proportional to the extent of their territory. Like Continents, too, they have their mountains disposed in a suitableness to the winds which blow over the Seas whereby they are surrounded. Those which are in the Indian Ocean, as the Moluccas, have their mountains toward the centre, so as to receive the alternate influence of the two atmospheric Monsoons. Those, on the contrary, which are under the regular influence of the East winds, in the Atlantic Ocean, as the Antilles, have their mountains thrown to the extremity of the island which is under the wind, precisely as the Andes with respect to South America. The part of the island that is toward the wind, is, in the Antilles, called *cabsterre*, as who should say *caput terræ* (the head of the



land;) and that which is from the wind *basseterre* (low land;) though, for the most part, says Father *du Terre*,\* this last is higher, and more mountainous than the other.

The island of Juan Fernandez, which is in the South Sea, but very far beyond the Tropics, being in  $33^{\circ} 40'$  of South Latitude, has its northern part formed of rocks very lofty and very steep, and its South side flat and low, to receive the influences of the South wind, which blows there almost all the year round. The description of it is to be found in *Anson's Voyage round the World*.

The islands which deviate from these dispositions, and which are but few in number, have remote relations still more wonderful, and certainly well worthy of being studied. They furnish, besides, in their vegetable and animal productions, other proofs, that they are small Continents in miniature. But this is not the place to bring them forward. If they were, as is pretended, the remains of a great Continent swallowed up by the Ocean, they would have preserved part, at least, of their ancient and vast fabric. We should see arise immediately out of the middle of the Sea, lofty peaks, like those of the Andes, from twelve to fifteen hundred fathom high, without the mountains which support them. In other places, we should see these peaks supported by enormous mountains, proportioned to their magnitude, and which should contain in their cavities great lakes, like that of Geneva, with rivers issuing from them, such as the Rhône, and precipitating themselves at once into the Sea, without watering any land. There should be, at the bottom of their majestic protuberances, no plains, nor provinces, nor kingdoms. These grand ruins of the Continent, in the midst of the Ocean, would have some resemblance to those enormous pyramids reared in the sands of Egypt, which present to the eye of the traveller only so many frivolous and unmeaning structures; or to those vast royal palaces, which the hand of time has

\* Natural History of the Antilles, page 12.



demolished, of which you perceive turrets, columns, triumphal arches ; but the habitable parts of which are entirely destroyed. The sage productions of Nature are not useless and transitory, like the works of Men. Every Island has its champaign country, its valleys, its hills, its hydraulick pyramids, and its Naiads, in proportion to its extent.

Some islands, it is true, but they are very few, contain mountains more elevated than the extent of their territory may seem to require. Such is that of Teneriff: Its peak is so high, as to be covered with ice a great part of the year. But that island contains mountains of no great elevation, which are proportioned to its bays: That of the mountains which support the peak, swells up amidst the others in form of a dome, not unlike the dome of the Invalids rising above the adjacent buildings. I myself observed it with particular attention, and made a drawing of it, on my way to the Isle of France. The lower mountains are an appertenance to the island, and the peak to Africa.

This peak, covered with ice, is situated directly opposite to the entrance of the great sandy desert, called Zara, and contributes, undoubtedly, to refresh the shores and Atmosphere of it, by the effusion of its snows, which takes place in the midst of Summer. Nature has placed other glaciers besides, at the entrance of this burning desert, such as Mount Atlas. Mount Ida, in the Island of Crete, with its collateral mountains, covered at all seasons with snow, is situated, according to the observation of *Tournefort*, precisely opposite to the burning desert of Barca, which coasts along Egypt from North to South. These observations will furnish a farther opportunity of making some reflections on the chains of icy mountains, and of the Zones of sand scattered over the Globe.

I ought to beg forgiveness of the Reader, for these digressions, into which I have been insensibly drawn; but I will render them as short as I possibly can, though, by abridging them, their clearness is considerably diminished.



The icy mountains appear to be principally designed to convey coolness to the shores of the Seas situated between the Tropics; and the Zones of sand, on the contrary, to accelerate, by their heat, the fusion of the polar ices. We can indicate, only in a cursory manner, these most wonderful harmonies; but it is sufficient to peruse the journals of Navigators, and to study geographical charts, to be convinced, that the principal part of the Continent of Africa is situated in such a manner, that it is the wind of the North Pole which blows most constantly on its coasts; and that the shore of South America projects beyond the Line, so as to be cooled by the wind of the South Pole. The Trade Winds, which prevail in the Atlantic Ocean, always participate of the influence of both Poles; that which is on our side draws considerably toward the North; and that which is beyond the Line depends greatly on the South Pole. These two winds are not oriental, as has been erroneously imagined, but they blow nearly in the directions of the channel which separates America from Africa.

The warm winds of the torrid Zone blow, in their turn, the most constantly toward the Poles; and it is singularly remarkable, that as Nature has placed icy mountains in its vicinity to cool its Seas, conjointly with those of the Poles, as Taurus, Atlas, the Peak of Teneriff, Mount Ida, &c. she has, likewise, extended a long Zone of sand, in order to increase the heat of the South wind on its way to warm the Seas of the North. This Zone commences beyond Mount Atlas, and encompasses the Earth like a belt, extending from the most westerly point of Africa to the most easterly extremity of Asia, in a reduced distance of more than three thousand leagues. Some branches of it deviate from the general direction, and advance directly toward the North.

We have already remarked, that a region all sand is so hot, even in our Climates, from the multiplied reflection of its brilliant particles, that we never find the snow cov-



ering it for any considerable time together, even in the middle of our severest Winters. Those who have crossed the sands of Estampes, in summer, and in the heat of the day, know well to what a violent degree the heat is there reverberated. It is so ardent, certain days in Summer, that, about twenty years ago, four or five paviors, who were at work on the great road leading to that City, between two banks of white sand, were suffocated by it. Hence it may be concluded, from facts so obvious, that but for the ices of the Pole, and of the mountains in the vicinity of the torrid Zone, a very considerable portion of Africa and Asia would be absolutely uninhabitable, and that but for the sands of Africa and Asia, the ices of our pole would never melt.

Every icy mountain, too, has, like the Poles, its sandy girdle, which accelerates the fusion of its snows. This we have occasion to remark, in the description of all mountains of this species, as of the Peak of Teneriff, of Mount Ararat, of the Cordeliers, &c. These Zones of sand surround not only their bases, but there are some of them on the higher regions of the mountains, up to the very peaks; it frequently requires several hours walking to get across them.

The sandy belts have a still farther use, that of contributing to the repair of the waste, which the territory of the mountain, from time to time, undergoes: Perpetual clouds of dust issue from them, which rise, in the first instance, on the shores of the Sea, where the Ocean forms the first deposits of these sands, which are there reduced to an impalpable powder by the incessant dashing of the waves upon them; we afterwards find these clouds of dust in the vicinity of lofty mountains. The conveyance of the sands is made from the shores of the Sea into the interior of the Continent, at different seasons, and in various manners. The most considerable happens at the Equinoxes, for then the Winds blow from the Sea into the Land. See what *Corneille le Bruyn* says of a sandy tempest, in



which he was caught, on the shore of the Caspian Sea. These periodical conveyances of the sand form a part of the general revolution of the Seasons. But as to the interior of different countries, partial transits take place every day, which are very perceptible toward the more elevated regions of the Continents.

All travellers who have been at Peking, are agreed, that it is not possible to go abroad, during a part of the year, into the streets of that City, without having the face covered with a veil, on account of the sand with which the air is loaded.

When *Isbrand Ides* arrived on the frontiers of China, at the extremity of the outlet of the mountains in the neighbourhood of *Xaixigar*, that is, at that part of the crest of the Asiatic Continent, which is the most elevated, from which the rivers begin their courses, some to the North, others to the South, he observed a regular period of these emanations. "Every day," says he,\* "at noon regularly, there blows a strong gust of wind, for two hours together, which, joined to the sultry heat of the Sun by day, parches the ground to such a degree, that it raises a dust almost insupportable. I had observed this change in the air some time before. About five miles above *Xaixigar*, I had perceived the Heavens cloudy, over the whole extent of the mountains; and when I was on the point of leaving them, I saw perfect serenity. I even remarked at the place where they terminate, an arch of clouds, which swepted from West to East, as far as the mountains of *Albaze*, and which seemed to form a separation of Climate." Mountains, accordingly, possess, at once, nebulous and fossil attractions. The first furnish water to the sources of the rivers which issue from them, and the second supply them with sand, for keeping up their territory and their minerals.

\* Journey from Moscow to China, chap. xi.



The icy and sandy Zones are found in a different harmony, on the Continent of the New World. They run, like its Seas, from North to South, whereas those of the Old Continent are directed, conformably to the lengthwise direction of the Indian Ocean, from West to East.

It is very remarkable, that the influence of icy mountains extends farther over the Ocean than over the Land. We have seen those of the two Poles take the direction of the channel of the Atlantic Ocean. The snows which cover the long chain of the Andes, in America, serve, in like manner, to cool the whole of the South Sea, by the action of the East wind which passes over it; but as part of that Sea, and of its shores, which is sheltered from this wind, by the very height of the Andes, would have been exposed to an excessive heat, Nature has formed an elbow westward, at the most southerly part of America, which is covered with icy mountains, so that the fresh breezes, which perpetually issue from them, may graze along the shores of Chili and Peru. These breezes, denominated the southerly, prevail there all the year round, if we may believe the testimony of every Navigator. They do not, in truth, come from the South Pole; for if it were so, no vessel could ever double Cape Horn; but they come from the extremity of Magellan's Land, which is evidently bent backward, with relation to the shores of the South Sea.

The ices of the Poles, then, renovate the waters of the Sea, as the ices of mountains renovate those of the great rivers. These effusions of the polar ices press toward the Line, from the action of the Sun, who is incessantly pumping up the waters of the Sea, in the torrid Zone, and determines, by this diminution of bulk, the waters of the Poles to rush thitherward. This is the first cause of the motion of the South Seas, as has been already observed. It would appear highly probable, that the polar effusions are proportioned to the evaporations of the Ocean. But without losing sight of the leading object of our en-



quiry, we shall examine for what reason Nature has taken still greater care to cool the Seas, than the Land, of the torrid Zone : For it merits attention, that not only the polar Winds which blow there, but most of the rivers which empty themselves into the South Seas, have their sources in icy mountains, such as the Zara, the Amazon, the Oroonoko, &c.

The Sea was destined to receive, by means of the rivers, all the spoils of vegetable and animal productions over the whole Earth ; and as its course is determined toward the Line, by the daily diminution of its waters, which the Sun is there continually evaporating, its shores, within the torrid Zone, would have been quickly liable to putrefaction, had not Nature employed these different methods to keep them cool. It is for this reason, as certain Philosophers allege, that the Sea is salt between the Tropics. But it is likewise so to the North ; nay, more so, if we may rely on the recent experiments of the interesting *M. de Pages*. It is the saltest, and the heaviest in the World, according to the testimony of an English Navigator, Captain *Wood*, in 1676.

Besides, the saltness of the Sea does not preserve its waters from corruption, as is vulgarly believed. All who have been at Sea know well, that if a bottle, or a cask, is filled, in hot climates, with sea water, it soon becomes putrid. Sea water is not a pickle ; it is, on the contrary, a real lixivial, which very quickly dissolves dead bodies. Though salt to the taste, it takes out salt sooner than fresh water, as our common sailors know, from daily experience, who employ no other, in freshening their salt provisions. It blanches, on the shore, the bones of all animals, as well as the madrépores, which, when in a state of life, are brown, red, and of various other colours, but which, being rooted up, and put into sea water, on the brink of the shore, in a little time become white as snow. Nay more, if you fish in the sea for a crab, or a sea urchin, and have them dried, to preserve them, unless you



first wash them in fresh water, all the claws of the crab, and all the prickles of the urchin, will fall off. The joints by which the limbs are attached, dissolve in proportion as the sea water, with which they were moistened, evaporates. I myself have made this experiment to my cost. The water of the Sea is impregnated not only with salt, but with bitumen, and other substances besides, which we do not know; but salt is in it, in such a proportion, as to assist the dissolution of cadaverous bodies floating in it, as that which we mingle with our food assists digestion. Had Nature made it a pickle, the Ocean would be covered with all the impurities of the Earth, which would thus be kept in a state of perpetual preservation.

These observations will indicate to us the use of volcanoes. They do not proceed from the internal fires of the Earth, but they derive their origin, and the materials which keep them up, from the waters. In order to be convinced of this, you have only to remark, that there is not a single volcano in the interior of Continents, unless it be in the vicinity of some great lake, such as that of Mexico. They are situated, for the most part, in islands, at the extremity, or at the confluence of the Currents of the Sea, and in the counter tide of their waters. This is the reason why we find them in such numbers toward the Line, and along the shore of the South Sea, where the South wind, which perpetually blows there, brings back all the substances swimming about in a state of dissolution.

Another proof that they owe their support to the Sea is this, that, in their eruptions, they frequently vomit out torrents of salt water. *Newton* ascribed their origin, and their duration, to caverns of sulphur, inclosed in the bowels of the Earth. But that great man had not reflected on the position of volcanoes in the vicinity of water, nor calculated the prodigious quantity of sulphur, which the magnitude, and the duration, of their fires must have required. *Vesuvius* alone, which burns night and day, from time immemorial, would have consumed a mass of it larg-



er than the whole kingdom of Naples. Besides, Nature does nothing in vain. What purpose could be answered by such magazines of sulphur in the interior of the Earth? We should find them completely entire in places, where they are not consumed by the fire. Mines of sulphur are no where found but in the vicinity of volcanoes. What, besides, could renovate them when exhausted? A supply so constant, for keeping up volcanoes, is not in the Earth, but in the Sea. It is furnished by the oils, the bitumens, and the nitres of vegetables and animals, which the rains and the rivers convey off from every quarter into the Ocean, where the dissolution of all bodies is completed by its lixivial water. To these are joined metallic dissolutions, and especially those of iron, which, as is well known, abounds all over the earth. Volcanoes take fire, and feed themselves with all these substances.

*Lemery*, the Chymist, has imitated their effects, by a composition consisting of filings of iron, sulphur and nitre, moistened with water, which caught fire of itself. If Nature had not kindled these vast furnaces on the shores of the Ocean, its waters would be covered with vegetable and animal oils, which could never evaporate, for they resist the action of the air. You may have frequently observed them, when stagnated in some undisturbed basin, from their colour resembling the pigeon's neck. Nature purifies the waters by the fire of volcanoes, as she purifies the air by those of thunder; and as storms are more common in hot countries, she has in these, likewise, multiplied volcanoes, and for the same reason. She burns on the shores the impurities of the Sea, as a Gardener burns, at the end of Autumn, the refuse of his garden.

We find lavas, indeed, in the interior of countries; but a proof that they are indebted to the water for their original is this, that the volcanoes which produced them, became extinct whenever the waters failed them. These volcanoes were kindled, like those which still subsist, by vegetable and animal fermentations, with which the Earth



was covered after the Deluge, when the spoils of so many forests, and of so many animals, whose trunks and bones are still found in our quarries, floated on the surface of the Ocean, and formed prodigious deposits, which the currents accumulated in the cavities of the mountains. It cannot be doubted, that in this state, they caught fire by the effect of fermentation merely, just as we see stacks of damp hay catch fire in our meadows. It is impossible to call in question these ancient conflagrations, the traditions of which are preserved in Antiquity, and which immediately follow those of the Deluge. In the ancient Mythology, the history of the serpent Python, produced by the corruption of the waters, and that of Phaëton, who set the world on fire, immediately follow the history of Philemon and Baucis,\* escaped from the waters of the Deluge, and are allegories of the pestilence, and of the volcanoes, which were the first results of the general dissolution of animals and vegetables.

All that now remains is, to refute the opinion of those who maintain, that the Earth is a secretion from the Sun. The chief arguments by which they support it are its volcanoes, its granites, the vitrified stones scattered over its surface, and its progressive refrigeration from year to year. I respect the celebrated Author who has advanced this opinion, but I venture to affirm, that the grandeur of the images which this idea presented to him, has seduced his imagination.

We have said enough respecting volcanoes, to demonstrate that they do not proceed from the interior of the Earth. As to granites, they do not present, in the aggregation of their grains, the remotest vestige of the action of fire. I do not know their origin; but certainly there is no foundation for referring it to that element, because it cannot be ascribed to the action of water, and because shells are not found in them. As this assertion is destitute

\* The Author, undoubtedly, means Deucalion and Pyrrha.



of all proof, it is unnecessary to undertake a refutation of it. I shall observe, however, that granites do not appear to be the production of fire, on a comparison with the lavas of volcanoes; the difference of their substances supposes different causes in their formation.

Agates, flints, and every species of the flint, seem to be analogous to vitrifications, from their half transparency, and from their being usually found in beds of marl, which resemble banks of lime extinguished; but these substances are not the productions of fire, for lavas never present any thing similar. I have picked up, on the flinty hills of Lower Normandy, oyster shells perfectly complete, amalgamated with black flints, which they call *bifets*. Had these *bifets* been vitrified by fire, they would have calcined, or, at least, altered the oyster shells which adhered to them; but these were as found as if just taken out of the water. The shelving sea coast along the district of Caux, are formed of alternate strata of marl and *bifets*, so that, as they are cut perpendicularly, you would call it a great wall, of which the layers had been regulated by an Architect; and with so much the greater appearance of probability, that the people of the country build their houses of the same materials, disposed in the self same order.

These banks of marl are from one to two feet broad, and the rows of flints, which separate them, are three or four inches thick. I have reckoned seventy or eighty of such horizontal strata from the level of the Sea up to that of the Land. The thickest are undermost, and the smaller atop, which, from the sea mark, makes the aggregate appear higher than it really is; as if Nature intended to employ a certain degree of perspective to increase the apparent elevation: But, undoubtedly, she has been determined to adopt this arrangement from reasons of solidity, which are perceptible in all her Works. Now, these banks of marl and flint are filled with shells, which have undergone no alteration from the force of fire, and which would be in perfect preservation, had not the pressure of



that enormous mass broken in pieces the largest of them. I have seen fragments extracted of that which is called the *tuilée*, which is found alive only in the Indian Ocean, and the broken pieces of which, when put together, formed a shell much more considerable than those of the same species which are used for holding the holy water, in the church of Saint Sulpice at Paris.

I have, likewise, remarked there a bed of flints completely amalgamated, and forming a single table, the section of which was perceptibly about one inch thick by more than thirty feet in length. Its depth in the cliff I did not ascertain; but, with a little art, it might be detached, and fashioned into the most superb agate table in the world. Wherever these marls and flints are found, shells are likewise found in great quantities, so that as marl has been evidently formed of their wreck, it appears to me extremely probable, that the flints have been composed of the very substance of the fishes which were there inclosed.

This opinion will appear less extraordinary, if we observe that many of the *cornes d'ammon*, and of single shelled fossils, which, from their form, have resisted the pressure of the ground, and not being compressed by it, have not ejected, like the double shelled, the animal matter which they contained, but exhibit it within them, under the form of crystals, with which they are usually filled, whereas the two shelled are totally destitute of it.

The animal substances of these last, I presume, confounded with their crushed fragments, have formed the different coloured pastes of marble, and have communicated to them the hardness and polish of which these marbles are susceptible. This substance presents itself, even in shell fish when alive, with the characters of agate, as may be seen in several kinds of mother of pearl, and among others, in the half transparent, and very hard knob, which terminates what is called the *harp*. Finally, this stony substance is found, besides, in land animals; for I have



seen, in Silesia, the eggs of a species of the woodcock, which are highly prized in that country, not only because they are a great delicacy for the table, but because the white, when dried, becomes hard as a flint, and susceptible of a polish so beautiful, that they are cut and set as rings and other trinkets.

I could easily swell this article, by demonstrating the geometrical impossibility that our Globe should have been detached from that of the Sun, by the transit of a Comet, because it must have, on the very hypothesis of this impulsion, been hurried along in the Sphere of the Comet's attraction, or carried back into that of the Sun. It has, in truth, remained in the sphere of the Sun's attraction; but it is not easy to conceive how it never came to approach nearer, and how it comes to maintain the distance of nearly thirtytwo millions of leagues, while no Comet prevents its returning to the place from which it set out. The Sun, it is said, has a centrifugal force. The Globe of the Earth, therefore, must be retiring from it. No, it is alleged, because the Earth has a constant tendency toward that Luminary. It must, accordingly, have lost the centrifugal force, which should adhere to its very nature, as being a portion of the Sun.

I could go on to swell the article, by farther demonstrating the physical impossibility, that the Earth should contain in its bowels so many heterogeneous substances, on the supposition of its being a separation from a body so homogeneous as the Sun; and I could make it appear, that it is impossible they should be, in any respect, considered as the wreck of solar and vitrified substances (if it be possible for us to have an idea of the substances from which light issues) seeing some of our terrestrial Elements, such as Water and Fire, are absolutely incompatible. But I shall confine myself to the refrigeration ascribed to the Earth, because the evidence on which this opinion rests, is level to the comprehension of all men, and is of importance to their security.



If the Earth is getting colder and colder, the Sun, from which it is said to have been separated, must be getting cold in proportion; and the mutual diminution of the heat in these two Globes, must become perceptible in a course of ages, at least on the surface of the Earth, in the evaporations of the Seas, in the diminution of rains, and especially in the successive destruction of a great number of plants, which are killed every day, merely from the diminution of only a few degrees of heat, when the Climate is changed upon them. Not a single plant, however, has been lost of all those which were known to Circé, the most ancient of Botanists, whose Herbal Homer has, in some measure, preserved for us. The plants celebrated in song by Orpheus, and their virtues, subsist to this day. There is not even a single one which has lost any thing of its ancient attitude. The jealous Clytia still turns toward the Sun; and the beautiful son of Liriope, Narcissus, continues to admire himself on the brink of the fountain.

Such are the testimonies adduced from the vegetable kingdom, respecting the uniformity and constancy of the temperature of the Globe; let us examine those of the Human Race. There are some of the inhabitants of Switzerland, it is alleged, who have perceived a progressive accumulation of the ices on their mountains. I could oppose to this evidence, that of other modern Observers, who, in the view of ingratiating themselves with the Princes of the North, pretend, with as little foundation, that the cold is diminishing there, because these Princes have thought proper to cut down the forests of their States; but I shall adhere to the testimony of the Ancients, who could not possibly intend to flatter any one on a subject of this nature.

If the refrigeration of the Earth is perceptible in the life of one man, it must be much more so in the life of Mankind; now, all the temperatures described by the most ancient Historians, as that of Germany by Tacitus,



of Gaul by Cefar, of Greece by Plutarch, of Thrace by Xenophon, are precisely the fame at this day, as they were at the time when these feveral Historians wrote. The Book of Job the Arabian, which, there is reason to believe, is more ancient than the Writings of Mofes, and which contains views of Nature much more profound than is generally imagined, views, the moft common whereof were unknown to us two centuries ago, makes frequent mention of the falling of the fnows in that country, that is, toward the thirtieth degree of North Latitude. Mount Lebanon, from the remotest antiquity, bears the Arabian name of *Liban*, which fignifies white, on account of the fnows with which its fummit is covered all the year round. Homer relates that it fnowed in Ithaca when Ulyffes arrived there, which obliged him to borrow a cloak of the good Eumeus.

If, during a period of three thousand years, and more, the cold had gone on increafing from year to year, in all these Climates, their Winters muft now have been as long and as fevere, as in Greenland. But Lebanon, and the lofty provinces of Asia, have preferved the fame temperature. The little Ifle of Ithaca is ftill covered in Winter with the hoar froft; and it produces, as in the days of Telemachus, the laurel and the olive.



## STUDY FIFTH.

REPLY TO THE OBJECTIONS AGAINST PROVIDENCE,  
FOUNDED ON THE DISORDERS OF THE  
VEGETABLE KINGDOM.

THE Earth is, say the Objectors, a garden very injudiciously laid out. Men of wit, who never travelled, have amused themselves with painting it, proceeding from the hand of Nature, as if the giants had been fighting in it. They represent its rivers flowing at random; its morasses as vast collections of mud; the trees of its forests turned upside down; its plains buried under rocks, or overspread with briars and thorns; all its highways rendered unpassable; all its culture the puny efforts of human genius. Such representations, though picturesque, have, I acknowledge, sometimes afflicted me, because they inspired me with distrust of the AUTHOR of Nature. To no purpose could it be supposed that, in other respects, He had loaded Man with benefits; one of our first and most pressing necessities had been overlooked, if He had neglected to care for our habitation.

The inundations of rivers, such as those of the Amazon, of the Oroonoko, and a great many others, are periodical. They manure the lands which they inundate. It is well known, besides, that the banks of these rivers swarmed with populous nations, before any European had formed a settlement there. The inhabitants derived much benefit



From these inundations, partly from the abundance of the fisheries, partly from the fertility communicated to the lands. So far from considering them as convulsions of Nature, they received them as blessings from Heaven, just as the Egyptians prized the overflowings of the Nile. Was it, then, a mortifying spectacle to them, to see their deep forests intersected with long alleys of water, which they could without trouble traverse, in all directions, in their canoes, and pick the fruits at their ease? Nay, certain tribes such as those of the Oroonoko, determined by these accommodations, had acquired the singular habit of dwelling on the tops of trees, and of seeking under their foliage, like the birds, an habitation, and food, and a fortress. Whatever may be in this, most of them inhabited only the banks of the rivers, and preferred them to the vast deserts with which they are surrounded, though not exposed to inundations.

We see order only where we can see corn grow. The habit which we have acquired of confining the channels of our rivers within dikes and mounds, of gravelling, and paving our high roads, of applying the straight line to the alleys in our gardens, and to our basons of water, of squaring our parterres, nay, our very trees, accustoms us insensibly to consider every thing which deviates from our rectangles, as abandoned to confusion. But it is in places with which we have been tampering, that we frequently see real disorder. We set fountains a playing on the tops of mountains; we plant poplars and limes upon rocks; we throw our vineyards into valleys, and raise our meadows to the declivities of hills.

Let these laborious exertions be relaxed ever so little, and all these petty levellings will presently be confounded under the general levelling of Continents, and all this culture, the work of Man, disappears before that of Nature. Our sheets of water degenerate into marshes; our hedge row elms burst into luxuriancy; every bower is choked, every avenue closes: The vegetables natural to



each foil declare war against the strangers; the starchy thistle and vigorous verbascum, stifle under their broad leaves the English short grassy sod; thick crops of rye grass and trefoil gather round the trees of Palestine; the bramble scrambles along their stem, with its prickly claws, as if mounting a breach; tufts of nettles take possession of the urn of the Naiads, and forests of reeds, of the forges of Vulcan; greenish scales of minium corrode the faces of our Venuses, without paying any respect to their beauty. The trees themselves lay siege to the castle; the wild cherry, the elm, the maple, mount upon its ridges, plunge their long pivots into its lofty pediments, and, at length, obtain the victory over its haughty cupolas. The ruins of a park no less merit the reflections of the Sage, than those of an empire: They equally demonstrate how inefficient the power of Man is, when struggling against that of Nature.

I have not had the felicity, like the primitive Navigators, who discovered uninhabited islands, to contemplate the face of the ground as it came from the hand of the CREATOR; but I have seen portions of it which had undergone alterations sufficiently small to satisfy me, that nothing could then equal their virgin beauties. They had produced an influence on the first relations which were formed by them, and had diffused over these a freshness, a colouring, a native grace inexpressible, which will ever distinguish them to advantage, notwithstanding their simplicity, from the learned descriptions which have been given of them in modern times.

To the influence of these first aspects, I ascribe the superior talents of the earliest Writers who have painted Nature, and the sublime enthusiasm which a Homer and an Orpheus have transfused into their poetry. Among the Moderns, the Historian of *Anson's* expedition, *Cook*, *Banks*, *Solander*, and some others, have described several of these natural sites, in the islands of Tinian, Masso, Juan Fernandez and Taïti, which have delighted all persons



of real taste, though these islands had been, in part, degraded by the Indians and Spaniards.

I have seen only countries frequented by Europeans, and desolated by war, or by slavery: But I shall ever recollect with pleasure two of these sites, the one on this side the Tropic of Capricorn; the other beyond the sixtieth degree of North Latitude. Notwithstanding my inability, I am going to attempt a sketch of these, in order to convey, as well as I can, an idea of the manner in which Nature disposes her plans in Climates so very opposite.

The first was a part, then uninhabited, of the Isle of France, of fourteen leagues extent, which appeared to me the most beautiful portion of it, though the black freebooters, who take refuge there, had cut down, on the sea shore, the lataniers with which they fabricate their huts, and on the mountains, the palmettos, whose tips they use as food, and the liannes, of which they make fishing nets. They likewise degrade the banks of the rivulets, by digging out the bulbous roots of the nymphæa, on which they live, and even those of the Sea, of which they eat, without exception, every species of the shelly tribes, and which they leave here and there on the shore, in great piles burnt up. Notwithstanding these disorders, that part of the island had preserved traces of its ancient beauty. It is perpetually exposed to the South east wind, which prevents the forests that cover it from extending quite down to the brink of the Sea; but a broad selvage of turf, of a beautiful sea green, which surrounds it, facilitates the communication all around, and harmonizes, on the one side, with the verdure of the woods, and, on the other, with the azure of the billows.

The view is thus divided into two aspects, the one presenting land, the other water. The land prospect presents hills flying behind each other, in the form of an amphitheatre, and whose contours, covered with trees in pyramids, exhibit a majestic profile on the vault of Heaven. Over these forests rises, as it were, a second forest of palmettos,



which balance, above the solitary valleys, their long columns, crowned with particoloured plumes of palms, and surmounted with a spiral peak. The mountains of the interior present, at a distance, oval shaped rocks, clothed with great trees, and pendent liannes, floating, like drape-ry, by every breath of the wind. Above these rise lofty pinnacles, round which are continually collected the rainy clouds; and when these are illuminated by the rays of the Sun, you see the colours of the rainbow painted on their peaks, and the rain water flowing over their dusky sides in brilliant sheets of chrystal, or in long-fillets of silver. No obstacle prevents your perambulating the borders which embellish their sides and their bases, for the rivulets which descend from the mountains, present, along their banks, slips of sand, or broad plates of rock, from which they have washed the earth clean away. Besides, they clear away a free passage from their source, to the place of their discharge, by undermining the trees which would grow in their channel, and by fertilizing those which do grow on their margin; and they expand over these, through their whole course, great arches of verdure which fly off in perspective, and which are visible from the shore of the Sea. The liannes interweave themselves along the circumference of these arches, secure their arcades against the winds, and decorate them most beautifully, by opposing to their foilage other foilages, and to their verdure garlands of glossy flowers, or pods of various colours. If a tree, wasted by age, happens to fall down, Nature, which universally hastens on the destruction of all usefess beings, covers its trunk with maiden hair of the most beautiful green, and agarics undulated with yellow, saffron and purple, which feed on its spoils.

Toward the sea side, the turf which borders the island, is up and down sowed with thickets of latanier, whose palms, formed into a fan, and attached to pliant membranes, radiate in the air, like so many verdant fans. These lataniers advance even into the Sea, on the capes



of the island, with the land fowls which inhabit them; while the small bays, swarming with multitudes of sea fowl which swim in the water, and which are paved, if I may be allowed the expression, with madrépores of the colour of the peach blossom; the black rocks covered with rose coloured nerits, and shells of every kind, penetrate into the island, and reflect, like so many mirrors, all the objects of the Land and of the Heavens. You would imagine that you saw the birds flying in the water, and the fishes swimming among the trees, and you would be tempted to say, Here is the marriage of *Terra* and *Oceanus*, who thus blend and confound their domains.

In the greatest part even of uninhabited islands, lying between the Tropics, when the discovery of them was made, the banks of sand which surround them were found to be filled with turtle, which came thither to lay their eggs, and with the scarlet flamingos, which, as they sit on their nests, resemble burning torches. They had, besides, a border of mangliers, covered with oysters, which opposed their floating foliage to the violence of the waves, and of cocoa trees loaded with fruit, which advancing into the very sea, along the breakers, presented, to the mariner's eye, the aspect of a city with its ramparts and its avenues, and announced to them from afar the asylum prepared for them by the God of the Seas. These different kinds of beauty must have been common to the Isle of France, with many other islands, and were, in all probability, destroyed by the craving necessities of the first mariners who landed upon them. Such is the very imperfect representation of a country, the Climate of which, according to ancient Philosophers, was uninhabitable, and the soil of which modern Philosophers consider as a scum of the Ocean, or of volcanoes.

The second rural scenery, which I surveyed with rapture, and of which I am going to attempt a description, was in Russian Finland, when I was employed, in 1764, on a visitation of its fortresses with the Generals of the



corps of Engineers, in which I then served. We were travelling between Sweden and Russia, through a country so little frequented, that the firs had encroached on the great line of demarkation which separates the boundaries of the two countries. It was impossible to get through in a carriage, and we were under the necessity of employing the country people to cut down the trees, that our equipages might follow us. We were able, however, to penetrate, in every direction, on foot, and frequently on horseback, though we were obliged to inspect the windings, the summits, and the smallest recesses of a great number of rocks, in order to ascertain their natural capability of defence, and though Finland is so covered with these, that ancient Geographers have given it the surname of *Lapidosa* (stony.)

Not only are those rocks scattered about in great blocks, over the surface of the earth, but the valleys, and entire hills, are there, in many places, formed of a single mass of solid rock. This rock is a soft granite which exfoliates, and whose scurf fertilizes the plants, at the same time that the enormous mass shelters them from the North Wind, and reflects on them the rays of the Sun, by their curves, and the particles of mica with which it is filled. The bottoms of these valleys were skirted with long borders of meadow, which every where facilitate the communication. At the places where they were pure rock, as in their original state, they were covered with a plant, called, by the natives, *Kloukva*, which thrives on the rock. It comes out of the clefts, and seldom rises higher than a foot and a half; but it spreads in all directions, and extends far and wide. Its leaves and verdure resemble those of the box, and its boughs are loaded with a red berry, good to eat, resembling the strawberry.

The fir, the birch, and the service tree vegetated wonderfully well on the sides of those hills, though in many places, they found scarcely earth sufficient in which to insert their roots. The summits of most of them were



rounded in form of a scull cap, and rendered quite glistering by the water which oozed across the long crevices that furrowed them. Many of these scull caps were perfectly bare, and so slippery, that it was difficult to walk over them. They were crowned, round and round, with a broad belt of moss of an emerald green, out of which started here and there an infinite multitude of mushrooms of every form, and of every colour. Some of them were shaped like large scarlet coloured tweezer cases, studded with dots of white; others were orange coloured and formed like a parasol; others yellow as saffron, and of the oblong form of an egg. Some were of the purest white, and so well rounded, that you would have taken them for ivory draughtsmen.

These mosses and mushrooms spread along the threads of water which flowed from the summits of the rocky hills, extended in long rays across the woods with which their sides were covered, and proceeded to skirt their extremities, till they were confounded with a multitude of strawberry and raspberry plants. Nature, to indemnify this country for the scarcity of apparent flowers to please the eye, of which it produces but few, has bestowed their perfumes on several plants, such as the *calamus aromaticus*, the birch which, in Spring, exhales a kind of odour of roses, and the fir, the apple of which is sweet scented. She has, in like manner, diffused colours the most agreeable, and the most brilliant, of flowers, on the most common of vegetables, such as on the cones of the larch, which are of a beautiful violet, on the scarlet grains of the forb apple, on mosses and mushrooms, and even on turnip radishes.

On the subject of this last vegetable, hear what the accurate *Corneille le Bruyn* says, in his *Voyage to Archangel*:\* “During our residence among them (the Samoïédes) they brought us several sorts of turnips, of various

\* Vol. iii, page 21.



“ colours, and extremely beautiful. Some of them were  
 “ violet coloured, like our plumbs, gray, white, yellowish,  
 “ all of them streaked with red, like vermillion, or the  
 “ finest laca, and as grateful to the eye as a pink. I painted  
 “ some of them on paper in water colours, and sent some  
 “ to Holland, in a box filled with dry sand, to one of my  
 “ friends, who is fond of such curiosities. I carried those  
 “ which I had painted to Archangel, where no one would  
 “ believe they were copied after Nature, till I produced  
 “ the turnips themselves : A proof that no great attention  
 “ is paid there, to the rarest and most curious produc-  
 “ tions of Nature.”

I take these turnips to be of the radish sort, the bulb of which grows above ground. At least I presume so, from the drawing itself of *Corneille le Bruyn*, and from having seen such in Finland ; they are in taste superior to that of our colewort, and have a flavour similar to the artichoke bottom. I have produced these testimonies of a Painter, and that Painter a Dutchman, respecting the beauty of these coloured vegetables, to correct the prejudice with which so many are hurried away, that in the Indies only the Sun gives a magnificent colouring to plants. But nothing, in my opinion, equals the beautiful green of the plants of the North, in Spring. I have frequently admired, in particular, that of the birch, of the turf, and of the mosses, some of which are glazed with violet and purple. The solemn firs themselves, then burst into festoons of the most delicate green ; and when they come to throw, from the extremity of their branches, the yellow tufts of stamina, they appear like vast pyramids, loaded all over with little lamps.

We encountered no obstacle in traversing their forests. Sometimes there lay in the way an aged birch, laid low by the hand of Time, and internally consumed by the worm ; but in stepping on the rind, it supports you like a piece of thick leather. The wood of these birches decays very fast, and their bark, which no humidity is able to corrupt, is



carried away, on the melting of the snows, into the lakes, where it swims about all in one piece. As to the firs, when they fall, humidity and the mosses consume them in a very little time. This country is intersected with great lakes; which every where present new means of communication, as they penetrate far into the land by their branching gulfs, and exhibit a new species of beauty, by reflecting, in their still waters, the openings of the valleys, the mossy hills, and the pendent firs bending from the promontories over their shores.

It would be no easy matter to describe the hospitable reception which we found in the solitary mansions of these northern regions. Their masters exerted themselves in every possible way, to detain us among them for many days together. They sent to the distance of ten, of fifteen leagues, invitations to their friends and relations, to come and assist them to entertain us. The days and the nights passed away in dancing and festivity. In the cities, the principal inhabitants regaled us by turns. Amidst this hospitable conviviality, we made the tour of the cities of poor Finland, Wiburg, Villemanstrand, Fredericksham, Nislot, &c. The castle of this last town is situated on a rock at the discharge of lake Kiemen, which surrounds it with two cataracts. From its platforms you perceive the vast extent of that lake. We dined in one of its four towers, in a small apartment illuminated by windows like gun ports. It is the very apartment in which the unfortunate *Ivan* was so long confined, who descended from the Throne of the Russian Empire, at the age of two years and a half. But this is not the place to expatiate on the influence which moral ideas may diffuse over Landscapes.

Plants, then, are not scattered about at random over the Earth; and though nothing has been hitherto said respecting their general arrangement in different Climates, this simple sketch is sufficient to demonstrate, that there is order in their combination. If we examine, in like



manner, however superficially, their expansion, their attitude, their magnitude and proportions, we shall find that there is as much harmony in the aggregation of their parts, as in that of their species. It is impossible, in any one respect, to consider them as mere mechanical productions of heat and cold, of dryness and humidity. Our scientific Systems have brought us back precisely to the opinions which precipitated barbarous Nations into idolatry, as if it were necessary that the perfection of our illumination should be the recommencement and return of our darkness; conformably to the well grounded censure of the Author of the Book of Wisdom: *Aut ignem, aut spiritum, aut citatum aërem, aut gyrum stellarum, aut nimiam aquam, aut solem & lunam, rectores orbis terrarum Deos putaverunt*:\* “They could not out of the good things that are seen, know him that is; neither, by considering the works, did they acknowledge the Work Master: But deemed either fire, or wind, or swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of Heaven, to be the Gods which govern the world.”

All these physical causes, united, could not have determined the port of one single moss. In order to be convinced of this, let us begin with examining the circulation of plants. It has been laid down as an indubitable principle, that their saps ascend through the wood, and redescend through the rind. To the experiments which have been detailed in proof, I shall oppose only the instance of a great chestnut tree, in the garden of the Thuilleries, near the terrace of the Feuillants, which, for twenty years past, has had no bark round its under part, and which, notwithstanding, is in perfect vigor. Many elms on the Boulevards are in the same state. On the other hand, we have seen old hollowed willows, which have not a bit of good wood left. Besides, how is it possible to apply this

\* Wisdom of Solomon, chap. xiii. ver. 2.



principle of vegetation to a multitude of plants, some of which are composed entirely of tubes, and to others which have no rind, being enclosed only in dry pellicles ?

Neither is there more truth in the supposition that they rise in a perpendicular line, and that to this direction they are determined by the action of columns of air. Some, it must be allowed, do follow this direction, as the fir, the stalk of corn, the reed. But a much greater number deviate from it, such as creeping plants of every species, vines, liannes, French beans, &c....Others ascend vertically, and having arrived at a certain height, in an air perfectly unobstructed, fork off in various tiers, and send out their branches horizontally, as the apple tree ; or incline them toward the earth, like firs ; or hollow them in form of a cup, like the saffrafras ; or round them into a mushroom's head, like the pine ; or straighten them into a pyramid, like the poplar ; or roll them as wool on the distaff, like the cypress ; or let them float at the discretion of the winds, like the birch.

All these attitudes may be seen under the same bearing of the wind. Nay, there are some which assume forms, that all the art of the gardener could hardly impress upon them. Such is the badamier of the Indies, which grows up into the form of a pyramid, and carries it divided into stories, like the king of the chess board. There are plants uncommonly vigorous, which, far from pursuing the vertical line, recede from it the very moment that they get above ground. Such is the false potatoe of India, which loves to crawl along the sand of the shores, in hot countries, covering whole acres in its progress. Such, too, is the ratan of China, which frequently grows in similar situations. These plants do not crawl from weakness. The scions of the ratan are so strong, that the Chinese make cordage of them for their shipping ; and when they are on the ground, they serve as a trap for the deer, who find it impossible, with all their force, to disengage themselves. They are nets spread out by the hand of Nature.



I should never have done were I to run over, ever so hastily, the different parts of vegetables ; what I have said is evidence sufficient, that there is not a single one whose direction is determined by the vertical column of the air. This error has gained currency, from its being taken for granted that plants affected the greatest volume of air ; and this error in Physics has produced another in Geometry ; for, on this supposition, they must all precipitate themselves to the Horizon, because there the column of air is much more considerable than in the Zenith. We must, in like manner, reject the consequences which have been deduced from it, and laid down, as principles of Jurisprudence for the division of lands in our boasted mathematical treatises ; such is the following, *That no more wood, or corn, or grass, can grow on the declivities of a mountain, than what would grow on the area of its basis.* There is not a woodcutter, nor haymaker, in the world, who could not demonstrate the contrary from his experience.

Plants, it has been said, are mechanical bodies. Well then, try to construct a body so slim, so tender, so fragile, as that of a leaf, which shall for whole years resist the winds, the rains, the keenest frost, the most ardent Sun. A spirit of life, independent of all Latitudes, governs plants, preserves them, reproduces them. They repair the injuries which they may have sustained, and skin over their wounds with a new rind. The pyramids of Egypt are crumbled into powder ; but the grasses which clothed the soil, while the Pharaohs filled the throne, subsist to this day. How many Greek and Roman sepulchral monuments, the stones of which were rivetted with iron, have, one after another, disappeared ! Nothing remains around their ruins, except the cypresses which shaded them.

It is the Sun, say they, who gives existence to vegetables, and who maintains that existence. But that great agent of Nature, all powerful as he is, must not be consid-



ered as the only and determining cause even of their expansion. If his heat invites most of those of our Climates to open their flowers, it obliges others to shut them. Such are of this last description, the great nightshade of Peru, and the *arbor tristis* (the sad tree) of the Moluccas, which flower only in the night time. Nay, his remoteness from our Hemisphere does not destroy in it the power of Nature. At that season vegetate most of the mosses which clothe the rocks with an emerald coloured green; and then the trunks of trees cover themselves, in humid situations, with plants imperceptible to the naked eye, called *Mnium* and *Lichen*, which give them the appearance, in frosty weather, of columns of green bronze. These vegetations, in the very severity of Winter, overturn all our reasonings, respecting the universal effects of heat, as plants, of an organization so extremely delicate, seem to need, in order to their expansion, a temperature the most gentle.

Again, the fall of the leaf itself, which we have been taught to consider as an effect of the Sun's absence, is not occasioned by the cold. If the palm retains its foliage, all the year round, in the South, the fir is equally an evergreen in the North. The birch, it is true, the larch, and several other species of trees, shed their leaves in northern Climates, on the approach of Winter; but a similar depredation is likewise made on other trees, to the Southward. It is the resinous substance, we are told, which preserves the foliage of the fir in the North: But the larch, which is likewise a resinous plant, is stripped of its verdure in Winter; whereas the filaria, the ivy, the privet, and many other species, which are not resinous, continue with us, in full verdure, at all seasons.

Without having recourse to mechanical causes, the effects of which always contradict themselves, whenever you attempt to generalize them, Why not recognize, in these varieties of vegetation, the steady and uniform direction of a Providence? That Providence has assigned to the



South, trees always green, and has clothed them with a broad foliage, to shelter the animal creation from the heat. In another respect, likewise, have the animals of hot climates been tenderly cared for, in being provided with clothing denuded of hair, consequently, light and cool ; and in having their habitations garnished with green ferns and liannes, ever fresh and ever comfortable. Neither has bountiful Nature neglected the animals of the North. She has spread as a roof over their heads, the ever green firs, whose lofty and tufted pyramids ward off the snow from their roots, and whose branches are so well furnished with long gray mosses, that the trunk is rendered almost invisible ; for a bed, she has accumulated a bank of moss on the ground, in many places more than a foot in thickness ; and the soft and dry leaves of many trees, which fall precisely at the approach of the inclement season : Finally, their provision too, is laid up in store, namely, the fruits of those very trees, which have then arrived at full maturity. To these she has added, here and there, the scarlet clusters of the forb apple, which, sparkling afar over the whiteness of the snows, invite the birds to an asylum ; so that the partridge, the moorcock, every species of snow bird, the hare, the squirrel, frequently find, under the shelter of the same fir, a lodging, food and the means of warmth.

But one of the greatest blessings of Providence to the animals of the North, is, the clothing of them with furred garments of long and thick hair, which regularly grow in Winter, and fall off in Summer. Naturalists, who consider the hair of animals as a species of vegetation, are at pains to account for this growth and decay, from the influence of heat. They pretend to support their system by the instance of the human hair and beard, which grow rapidly in Summer. But I would ask them, how it comes to pass that, in cold countries, horses which, in Summer, are sleek and smooth, assume, in Winter, a long and shaggy coat, like the fleece of a sheep ? To this they reply,



It is the internal heat of their body, increased by the external action of the cold, which produces this wonderful phenomenon.

This is all very well. But I am under the necessity of objecting, that cold does not produce this effect on the human beard and hair, for it retards their growth; that, besides, in the case of animals on which Providence bestows a clothing peculiarly warm, the hair is much longer and thicker on those parts of their body that have the least natural heat, such as the tail, which is very bushy in horses, martens, foxes and wolves; that this hair is short and thin on the parts which have most natural heat, as the belly. Their backs, their ears, and frequently their very paws, are the parts most amply furnished with hair. But I satisfy myself with merely proposing this last objection; the external and internal heat of an African lion ought, surely, to be, at least, as ardent as that of a Siberian wolf; Whence is it, then, that the first is smooth, as if newly shaven, whereas the other is shagged up to the eyes?

The cold, which we have been taught to consider as one of the greatest obstacles of vegetation, is as necessary to certain plants as heat is to others. If those of the South could not thrive in the North, those of the North would not succeed better in the South. The Dutch have made many a vain attempt to make the fir grow at the Cape of Good Hope, in order to find a supply of ship masts, which sell at a very high price in India. Many planters, in the Isle of France, have made attempts, equally fruitless, to raise in that island the lavender, the daisy, the violet, and other plants of our temperate climates. Alexander, who transplanted whole nations at his pleasure, could not, with all his efforts, make the ivy of Greece grow in the vicinity of Babylon,\* though he was very ambitious of acting, in India, the character of Bacchus in complete style.

\* See Plutarch and Pliny.



I am persuaded, however, that it might be possible to succeed in effecting these vegetable transmigrations, by employing ice, in the South, for the propagation of northern plants as we employ stoves, in the North, in the propagation of the plants of hot Climates. I do not believe there is a single spot on the Globe, in which we could not, with a little address and industry, procure ice, as easily as we can procure salt. In the whole course of my travels, I have never met with a temperature more sultry than that of the Island of Malta, though I have twice crossed the Line, and have passed a considerable part of my life in the Isle of France, where the Sun is vertical twice a year. The soil of Malta consists of little hills of white stone, which reflect the rays of the Sun with so much force, that the eyesight is sensibly affected by it; and when the wind from Africa, known by the name of *Syroco*, which issues from the sands of Zara, on its way to melt the ices of the North, comes to pass over that Isle, the air is as hot as the breath of an oven. I recollect, at that season, a figure of Neptune in bronze, on the sea shore, the metal of which was heated to such a degree, that you could scarcely apply your hand to it. They, however, imported into the island snow from Mount Etna, which is sixty leagues distant; they kept it for months together, laid on straw in vaults, and it was to be bought for a farthing a pound weight, even when farmed out. Since, then, it is possible to have ice in Malta, during the Dog Days, I think it might be procured in every country of the Globe. Nature, besides, as we have seen, multiplies icy mountains in the vicinity of hot countries. I may, perhaps, be here reproached with indicating the means of promoting the increase of luxury; but as the commonalty now live only on the luxury of the rich, my suggestion may tend to promote, at least, the extension of the science of Nature.

So far is cold from being the enemy of all plants, that it is in the North we find forests of the tallest growth, and



of the greatest extent in the World. It is only at the foot of the eternal snows of Mount Lebanon, that the cedar, the king of vegetables, rises in all his majesty. The fir, which is, next to him, the greatest tree of our forests, arrives at a prodigious size only on icy mountains, and in the cold climates of Norway and Russia. Pliny tells us, that the largest piece of timber which had ever been seen at Rome, up to his time, was a vast log of fir, a hundred and twenty feet long, and two feet square at both ends, which Tiberius had conveyed from the cold mountains of Voltolino, in Piedmont, and which Nero employed in his amphitheatre. You may judge, says he, what must have been the length of the tree as it grew when a cutting of it had such dimensions. However, as I believe that Pliny means Roman feet, which are of the same dimension with those of the Rhine, we must subtract from this measurement about a twelfth part nearly. He quotes, besides, the fir mast of the vessel which brought from Egypt the obelisk that Caligula ordered to be set up in the Vatican; this mast was four fathoms in circumference. I know not where it might have grown. But I myself have seen firs in Russia, compared to which those of our temperate climates are mere twigs. Among others I remember to have seen, between Petersburg and Moscow, two logs which exceeded in size the largest of our mast for ships of war, though these consist of several pieces. They were cut from the same tree, and served as mounting blocks at the gate of a peasant's farm yard. The boats which convey provisions from Lake Ladoga to Petersburg are not much smaller than those which ply between Rouen and Paris. They are constructed of fir planks from two to three inches thick, sometimes two feet broad, and whose length is that of the whole barge. The Russian carpenters of the cantons where they are built, make only a single plank out of one tree, timber being in such plenty there, that they do not take the trouble to saw it.



Before I had travelled into northern countries, I took it for granted, in conformity to the laws of our Physics, that the earth must there be stripped of every thing like vegetation, by the rigor of the cold. I was very much astonished to find there the largest trees I had ever seen in my life, and growing so near each other, that a squirrel could easily scamper over great part of Russia, without touching the ground, by springing from branch to branch. This vast forest of fir covers Finland, Ingria, Estonia, the whole space comprehended between Petersburg and Moscow, and thence extends over a great part of Poland, where oaks begin to appear, as I know from actual observation, having travelled through these countries. But what I have seen is a very small part only of these immense forests, for it is well known that they extend from Norway all the way to Kamfchatka, some sandy deserts excepted; and from Breslau to the shores of the Frozen Ocean.

I shall conclude this article with refuting an error alluded to in the preceding Study; namely, that cold is diminished in the North, in proportion as the forests are cut down. As this position has been advanced by some of our most celebrated Writers, and afterwards retailed, as the custom is, by a multitude of others; it is of importance to overturn it, as being highly prejudicial to rural economy. I had long adopted it as incontestably certain, on the faith of History; but I was at length cured of my mistake, not, however, by books, but by simple peasants.

One day in Summer, about two o'clock after noon, being about to cross the forest of Ivry, I saw some shepherds with their flocks, who kept at a considerable distance from it, reposing under the shade of some trees that were scattered up and down through the country. I asked them, Why they did not go, with their flocks, to take shelter in the forest, from the heat of the Sun? They told me it was too hot there at that time of the day, and that they never drove their sheep thither, except in the morning and evening. Being desirous, however, of traversing,



in broad day, the woods in which *Henry IV*, had hunted, and of arriving betimes at Anet, to take a view of the country palace of *Henry II*, and of the tomb of *Diana* of Poitiers, his mistress, I engaged a lad belonging to one of the shepherds to attend me as a guide, which was a very easy matter to him, for the great road leading to Anet crosses the forest in a straight line; and it is, on that side so little frequented, that I found it covered in many places, with tufts of grass and strawberry plants. I felt all the way, as I walked along, a stifling heat, and much more ardent than was at that hour felt in the open country. I did not begin to respire freely, till I had got fairly clear of it, and had made my escape from the edge of the forest more than the distance of three musket shot. In other respects, those shepherds, that solitude, that silence of the woods, blended with the recollection of *Henry IV*, appeared to me much more affecting and sublime, than the emblems of the chace in bronze, and the cyphers of *Henry II*, interwoven with the crescents of *Diana*, which embellish, on all sides, the domes of the Castle of Anet. This royal residence, loaded with ancient trophies of love, inspired, at first, a mixed emotion of pleasure and melancholy, which gradually subsided into profound sorrow, on recollecting that this love was illicit; but this was followed, at last, by sentiments of veneration and respect, which took complete possession of my mind, on being informed that, by one of those revolutions to which the monuments of men are so frequently subjected, the castle was then inhabited by the virtuous Duke of *Penthievre*.

I have since reflected on what the shepherds told me, respecting the heat of the woods, and on what I myself had experienced; and I have, in fact, remarked that, in the Spring, all plants are more forward in the vicinity of woods, and that you find violets in flower on their borders much earlier than you gather them on the open plain, or on a naked hill. Forests, then, shelter the land from



cold, in the North; but what is equally wonderful, they shelter it likewise from the heat in warm countries. These two opposite effects are produced entirely from the different forms and disposition of their leaves. In the North, those of the fir, the larch, the pine, the cedar, the juniper, are small, glossy and varnished; their delicacy, their varnish, and the endless variety of their direction, reflect the heat around them a thousand different ways: They produce nearly the same effects as the hair of the animals of the North, whose furs are warm in proportion as the hair is fine and glossy. Besides, the leaves of some species, as of the fir and of the birch, are perpendicularly suspended from the branches, by long moveable membranes, so that with every breath of the wind they reflect all around the rays of the Sun, like so many mirrors.

In the South, on the contrary, the palms, the tallipot, the cocoa, the banana, bear large leaves, which, on the side next the ground, are rather rough than glossy, and which, spreading horizontally, form a deep shade below, where there is not the least reflection of heat. I admit, at the same time, that the clearing away of forests dispels the coldness occasioned by humidity; but it increases the dry and sharp colds of the North, as has been found on the lofty mountains of Norway, which were formerly cultivated, but are now uninhabitable, because they are completely stripped of their woods.

This clearing of the ground likewise increases the heat in warm countries, as I have had occasion to observe in the Isle of France, on several parts of the coast, which are become so parched, since every species of tree has been swept away, that they are at this day absolutely uncultivated. The very grass which pushes away during the rainy season, is in a short time quite burnt up by the Sun. What is still worse, there results from this parchedness of the coasts, the drying up of a great many rivulets; for the trees, planted on the heights, attract thither the humidity of the air, and fix it there, as we shall see in



the Study on Plants. Besides, by destroying the trees which are on the high grounds, you rob the valleys of their natural manure, and the plains of the pallifades which shelter them from the high winds. These winds desolate, to such a degree the cultivation in many places, that nothing can be made to grow. I ascribe to this last piece of mismanagement the sterility of the heaths in Brittany. In vain has the attempt been made to restore their ancient fertility: It never can succeed, till you begin with recalling their shelter and their temperature, by reforesting the forests. But there is a requisite prior even to this; you must render the peasantry happy. The prosperity of a country depends, before, and above all things, on that of its inhabitants.



## STUDY SIXTH.

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REPLY TO OBJECTIONS AGAINST PROVIDENCE,  
FOUNDED ON THE DISORDERS OF THE  
ANIMAL KINGDOM.

WE shall continue to display the fecundity of Northern Regions, in order to overturn the prejudice, which would ascribe this principle of life, in plants and animals, only to the heat of the South. I could expatiate on the numerous and extensive chases of elks, rein deer, water fowls, heath cock, hares, white bears, wolves, foxes, martens, ermines, beavers, &c. which the inhabitants of the northern districts annually carry on, the very peltry of which, above what they employ for their own use, supplies them with a very considerable branch of commerce for the markets of all Europe. But I shall confine myself entirely to their fisheries, because these precious gifts of the Waters are presented to all Nations, and are no where so abundant as in the North.

From the rivers and lakes of the North are extracted incredible multitudes of fishes. *John Schaffer*, the accurate Historian of Lapland, tells us,\* that they catch annually at Torneo, no less than thirteen hundred boat loads of salmon; that the pike there grow to such a size, that some are found as long as a man, and that every year they

\* History of Lapland, by *John Schaffer*.



fat as many as are sufficient for the support of four kingdoms of the North. But these fisheries, however productive, fall far short of those of the Seas.\* From the bosom of these is dragged the enormous whale, which is usually about sixty feet in length, twenty feet broad over the body and at the tail, eighteen feet high, and which yields up to a hundred and thirty barrels of oil. The fat is two feet thick, and in cutting it off, they are under the necessity of using great knives, six feet long.

From the Seas of the North, annually take their departure innumerable shoals of fishes, which enrich the fishers of all Europe; such as cod, anchovies, sturgeon, dory, mackerel, pilchers, herrings, sea dogs, belugas, sea calfs, porpoises, sea horse, puffers, sea unicorns, saw fish, &c..... The size of them all is considerably larger than in temperate Latitudes, and they are divided into much more numerous species. There are computed as high as twelve species of the whale tribe; and plaice are caught in those seas of the enormous weight of four hundred pounds. But I shall farther confine myself to those fishes which are best known to us, herrings, for example. It is an incontestable fact, that the Seas of the North every year send out a quantity more than sufficient to feed all the inhabitants of Europe.

We are in possession of Memoirs which prove, that the herring fishery was carried on so far back as the year 1163, in the Straits of Sunda, between the Islands of Schonon and Seeland. *Philip de Mézières*, Governor to *Charles VI*, relates, in the *Old Pilgrim's Dream*, that in the year 1389, during the months of September and October, the quantity of herrings in those Straits was so prodigious, that, "For several leagues together you might," says he, "have cut them with a sword; and it is credibly reported, that there are forty thousand boats which are employed in nothing else, for two months, but in catching

\* Consult *Frederic Martens* of Hamburg.



“ herrings ; each boat containing, at least, six persons,  
“ and many not less than ten ; and besides these, there  
“ are five hundred great and small vessels of burden, em-  
“ ployed wholly in picking, salting, and barrelling up the  
“ herrings.” He makes the number of persons engaged  
in this fishery amount to three hundred thousand, Prus-  
sians and Germans.

In 1610, the Dutch, who carry on the herring fishery still farther to the North, where the fish is better, employed in it three thousand boats, fifty thousand fishermen without reckoning nine thousand other vessels employed in barrelling, and conveying them to Holland, and a hundred and fifty thousand persons, partly at sea, partly on shore, engaged in the carrying trade, in preparing and selling. At that period they derived a revenue from it, of two millions, six hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. I myself have witnessed in Amsterdam, in 1762, the joy of the populace, expressed by displaying streamers and flags over the shops where that fish was exposed to sale, on the first arrivals ; and in every street this was the case. I have been informed in that city, that the Company established for carrying on the herring fishery was richer, and fed more mouths, than the East India Company. The Danes, the Norwegians, the Swedes, the Hamburgers, the English, the Irish, and some traders of the ports of France, particularly of Dieppe, fitted out vessels for this fishery, but in too small a number for a fall of manna so plentiful and so easily gathered.

In 1782, at the mouth of the Gothela, a small river which washes the walls of Gottenburg, one hundred and thirtynine thousand barrels were cured by salt, three thousand seven hundred were smoked, and two thousand eight hundred and fortyfive casks of oil were extracted from what could not be preserved. The Gazette of France,\* which contains an account of this fishery, re-

\* Friday the 11th October, 1782.



marks that, previous to 1752, these fishes had entirely disappeared for 72 years together. I ascribe their desertion of this coast to some naval engagement, which had chased them away by the noise of the artillery, as is the case with the turtle of the island of Ascension, which forsake the road for weeks together, when vessels passing that way discharge their great guns. It may, perhaps, be likewise accounted for, from a conflagration of the forests, which might have destroyed the vegetables that attracted them to the coast.

The good Bishop of Berghen, *Pont Oppidan*, the *Fenelon* of Norway, who introduced into his popular sermons, complete tracts of Natural History, as being excellent articles of Theology, relates,\* that when the herrings coasted along the shores of Norway, “ The whales, “ which pursue them in great numbers, and which dart “ their water spouts into the air, give to the Sea, at a “ distance, the appearance of being covered over with “ smoking chimnies. The herrings, in order to elude “ the pursuit, throw themselves close inshore into every “ little bay and creek, where the water, before tranquil, “ forms considerable swellings and surges, wherever they “ crowd to make their escape. They branch off in such “ quantities, that you may take them out in baskets full, “ and the country people can even catch them by the “ hand.” After all, however, that the united efforts of all these fishers can effect, hardly any impression is made on their great general column, which coasts along Germany, France, Spain, and stretches as far as the Straits of Gibraltar; devoured, the whole length of their passage, by an innumerable multitude of other fishes, and sea fowls, which follow them night and day, till the column is lost on the shores of Africa, or returns, as other Authors tell us, to the Climates of the North.

\* *Pont Oppidan's* Natural History of Norway.



For my own part, I no more believe that herrings return to the Seas from which they came, than that fruits reascend the trees from which they have once dropped. Nature is so magnificent in the entertainments which she provides for Man, that she never serves up the same dishes a second time. I presume, conformably to an observation of Father *Lamberti*, a missionary in Mingrelia, that these fishes accomplish the circuit of Europe by going up the Mediterranean, and that the extreme boundary of their emigration is the extremity of the Black Sea; and this is the more probable, that the pilchers, which take their departure from the same places, follow the same track, as is proved by the copious fisheries of them carried on along the coasts of Provence and Italy. "Many herrings," says Father *Lamberti*,\* "are sometimes seen in the Black Sea; and in the years when this happens, the inhabitants of the adjacent countries draw a flattering prognostic of a plentiful sturgeon fishing season; and they deduce the opposite conclusion from the non-appearance of herrings. There was seen in 1642 a quantity so prodigious of them, that the Sea having thrown them on the shallows which separate Trebisond from the country of the Abcasses, the whole was covered and surrounded with a bank of herrings, which was, at least, three hand breadths high. The people of the country were under dreadful apprehensions, that the air would be poisoned by the corruption of these fishes; but they were presently followed by enormous flocks of crows and rooks, which eat up the herrings, and cured the honest folks of their terror. The natives talk of a similar appearance before that period, only the quantity was much inferior."

This immense glut of herrings is undoubtedly, matter of astonishment; but how is that astonishment increased, when it is considered, that this column is not the half of

\* Account of Mingrelia, Thevenot's Collection.



what annually issue from the Seas of the North ! It separates at the northern extremity of Iceland, and while one division proceeds to diffuse plenty over the shores of Europe, the other pushes forward to convey similar benefits to the shores of America. *Anderfon* informs us, herrings are in such abundance on the coasts of Iceland, that a shallop can with difficulty force its way through the shoal by dint of rowing. They are accompanied by an incredible multitude of pilchers and cod, which renders fish so plenty in the island, that the inhabitants have them dried, and reduced to meal with a grindstone, to become food for their oxen and horses.

Father *Rale*, a jesuit, and an American missionary, speaking of the Savages who inhabit between Acadia and Newengland, tells us,\* “ That they resort, at a certain season, to a river not far distant, where, for the space of a month, the fishes force their way upward in such quantities, that, with hands sufficient, fifty thousand barrels might be filled in a single day. These are a species of very large herrings, most agreeable to the taste when fresh. They are pressed upon each other to the thickness of a foot, and are taken out by pails full, like water. The Savages dry them for eight or ten days, and live on them during their whole feed time.”

This testimony is confirmed by a great many others, and particularly by a Gentleman of English extraction, but a native of America, who has favoured us with a History of Virginia. “ In Spring,” says he,† “ herrings push upwards, in such quantities, along the rivulets and fords of rivers, that it is almost impossible to pass on horseback without trampling on those fishes.....Hence it comes to pass, that at this season of the year, those parts of the rivers where the water is fresh, are rendered fetid by the fish which they contain. Besides her-

\* *Instructive Letters*, Vol. xxiii. page 199.

† *History of Virginia*, page 202.



“ rings, may be seen an infinite number of shads, roach,  
 “ sturgeon, and a few lampreys, which find their way  
 “ from the Sea up the rivers.”

It would appear, that another column of those fishes issues from the North Pole, to the eastward of our Continent, and passes through the channel which separates America from Asia, for we are informed, by a missionary, that the inhabitants of the land of Yaffo go to Japan, to sell, among other dried fishes,\* herrings also. The Spaniards, who have been attempting discoveries to the north of California, find all the nations of those regions to be fish eaters, and unacquainted with every kind of cultivation. Though they landed there only in the middle of Summer, before, perhaps, the fishing season had commenced, they found pilchers in the greatest abundance, the native country and emigrations of which are the same, for vast quantities of a smaller size, are taken at Archangel. I have eaten of them in Russia, at the table of Marechal Count *Munich* who called them the anchovies of the North.

But as the Northern Seas, which separate America from Asia, are not much known to us, I shall pursue this fish no farther. I must, however, observe, that more than half of those herrings are filled with eggs, and if the propagation were to go on, to its full extent, for three or four generations only, without interruption, the Ocean itself would be unable to contain them. It is obvious to the first glance of the eye, that the herring produces, at least, as many eggs as the carp. *M. Petit*, a celebrated practitioner in Surgery and Medicine, has found, by experiment, that the two parcels of eggs, of a carp eighteen inches long, weighed eight ounces two drachms, which make four thousand, seven hundred and fiftytwo grains; and that it required seventytwo of these eggs to make up the weight of one grain; which gives a product of three hun-

\* Ecclesiastical History of Japan, by Father *F. Soliar*. Book xix. chap. xi.



dred fortytwo thousand, one hundred and fortyfour eggs, contained in one roe weighing eight ounces and two drachms.

I have been somewhat diffuse on the subject of this particular species of fish, not in the view of promoting our commerce, which, by its offices, its bounties, its privileges, its exclusions, renders every article scarce with which it intermeddles, but in compassion to the poorer part of the community, reduced, in many places, to subsist entirely on bread, while Providence is bestowing on Europe, in the richest profusion, the most delicate fish, perhaps, that swims in the Sea.\* We are not to form our judgment from those that are brought to Paris, after the season is over, and which are caught on our coasts; but from those which are caught far to the North, known, in Holland, by the name of *pickled herrings*, which are thick, large, fat, with the flavour of a nut, so delicate and juicy, that they melt away in the cooking, and are eaten raw from the pickle, as we do anchovies.

The South Pole is not less productive of fishes than the North. The Nations which are nearest to it, such as the inhabitants of the islands of Georgia, of New Zealand, of Maire's Strait, of the Terra del Fuego, of Magellan's Strait, live on fish, and practice husbandry of no kind. That honest Navigator, Chevalier *Narbrught*, says, in his Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas, that Port Desire, which lies in 47°. 48.' South Latitude, is so filled with pinguins, sea calves, and sea lions, that any vessel touching there, may find provisions in abundance. All these animals, which are there uncommonly fat, live entirely on fish. When he was in Magellan's Strait, he caught, at a single draught of the net, more than five hundred large fishes, resembling the mullet, as long as a man's legs; smelts twenty inches long; a great quantity of fish like the anchovy: In a word, they

\* More than one epicure has already made this observation: But here is another, on which few are disposed to dwell, it is this, that in all cases, and in all countries, *the most common things are the best.*



found, of every sort, such an abundant profusion, that they ate nothing else during their stay in those parts. The beautiful mother of pearl shells, which enrich our cabinets, under the name of the Magellan oyster, are there of a prodigious size, and excellent to eat. The lempit, in like manner, grows there to a prodigious magnitude. There must be, continues he, on these shores, an infinite number of fishes to support the sea calves, the pinguins, and the other fowls, which live solely on fish, and which are all equally fat, though their number is beyond computation. They one day killed four hundred sea lions, in the space of half an hour. Of these some were eighteen feet long. Those which are only fourteen swarm by thousands. Their flesh is as tender and as white as lamb, and excellent food when fresh, but still better when it has been some time in salt. On which I must make this observation, that the fish of cold countries only take in salt easily, and retain, in that state, part of their flavour. It seems as if Nature intended thus to communicate to all the Nations of the Globe the abundance of the fisheries which issue from the frigid Zones.

The western coast of America, in that same Latitude, is not less amply supplied with fish. “ Along the whole sea coast,” says the Peruvian *Garcillafo de la Vega*,\* “ from Aréquipa to Tarapaca, a track of more than two hundred leagues in length, they employ no other manure to dung the land, except the excrement of certain fowls, called sea sparrows, of which there are flocks so numerous, as to exceed all belief. They inhabit the desert islands on the coast, and by the accumulation of their ordure, they whiten them to such a degree, that, at some distance, they might be taken for mountains covered with snow. The Incas reserved to themselves the right of disposing of those islands, as a royal boon to such and such a favourite province.” Now this dung

\* History of the Incas, book v, chap. iii.



was entirely the produce of the fishes on which those fowls constantly fed.

“ In other countries, on the same coast,” says he,\*  
 “ such as that of Atica, of Atitipa, of Villacori, of Mal-  
 “ la and Chilca, they dung the land with the heads of  
 “ pilchers, which they sow there in great quantities.  
 “ They put them in the ground at small intervals from  
 “ each other, along with two or three grains of maize.  
 “ At a particular season of the year, the Sea throws upon  
 “ the shore such quantities of live pilchers, that they  
 “ have an abundant supply for food, and for manure, and  
 “ this to such a degree, that after these demands were sat-  
 “ isfied, they could easily load whole ships with the o-  
 “ verplus.”

It is obvious that the coast of Peru is nearly the boundary of the emigration of the pilchers which set out from the South Pole, as the coasts of the Black Sea are the boundary of that of the herrings which issue from the North Pole. The continuation and direction of these two bands, the pilchers of the South, and the herrings of the North, are nearly of the same length, and their destinies are, at last, similar. It would appear as if certain Nereïds were annually commissioned to conduct, from the Poles, those innumerable swarms of fishes, to furnish subsistence to the inhabitants of the temperate Zones; and that, having arrived at the termination of their course, in the hot Latitudes, where fruits are produced abundantly, they empty the gleanings of their nets upon the shore.

It will not be so easy a task, I confess, to refer to the beneficence of Nature the wars which animals wage with each other. Why should beasts of prey exist? Supposing me incapable of resolving this difficulty, Nature must not be accused of cruelty because I am deficient in mental ability. She has arranged what we do know, with such consummate wisdom, that we are bound to give her credit

\* Consult the same Work.



for the same character of wisdom, in cases where we cannot find her out unto perfection. I will have the courage, however, to declare my opinion, and to offer a reply to this question; and so much the rather, as it affords me an opportunity of presenting some observations which I consider as at least new, if not worthy of attention.

First of all, Beasts of prey are necessary. What otherwise would become of the carcasses of so many animals, which perish both on the land and in the water, and which they would, consequently, poison with infection. Several species of carnivorous animals, it must be allowed, devour their prey while yet living. But who can tell whether, in this, they do not transgress the law of their nature? Man knows very little of his own History. How is it possible he should know that of the beasts? Captain Cook observed, in a desert island of the Southern Ocean, that the sea lions, the sea calves, the white bears, the fots, the eagles, the vultures, lived in perfect concord, no one tribe giving the least disturbance to another. I have observed a similar good agreement among the fool and the frigate of the Island of Ascension. But, after all, we must not compliment them too highly on their moderation. It was merely an association of plunderers; they lived peaceably together, that they might devour, unmolested, their common prey, the fishes, which they all gulped down alive.

Let us revert to the great principle of Nature. She has made nothing in vain. She destines few animals to die of old age; nay, I believe, that she permits Man alone to complete his career of life, because his old age alone can be useful to his fellow creatures. To what purpose would serve, among the brute creation, grandfathers destitute of reflection, to progeny brought into existence in the maturity of their experience? On the other hand, what assistance could decrepit parents find among children, which abandon them, the instant they have learned to swim, fly, or walk? Old age would be to them a burthen from which they are delivered by the ferocious animals.



Besides, from their unobstructed generations would arise a posterity without end; which the Globe is not sufficient to contain. The preservation of individuals would involve the extinction of species.

Animals might always live, I shall be told, in a proportion adapted to the places which they inhabit; but in that case they must cease to multiply; and from that moment farewell the loves, the nests, the alliances, the foresight, and all the harmonies which subsist among them. Every thing that is born is doomed to die. But Nature, in devoting them to death, takes from them that which could render the instant of it cruel. It is usually in the night time, and in the hour of sleep, that they sink under the fangs and the teeth of their destroyers. Twenty strokes, sent home in one instant to the sources of life, afford no leisure to reflect that they are going to lose it. That fatal moment is not embittered to them, by any of the feelings which render it so painful to most of the Human Race, regret for the past, and solicitude about futurity. Their unanxious spirits vanish into the shades of night, in the midst of a life of innocence, and frequently during the indulgence of the fond illusions of love.

Unknown compensations may, perhaps, farther sweeten this last transition. I shall observe at least, as a circumstance deserving the most attentive consideration, that the animal species, whose life is sacrificed to the support of that of others, such as that of insects, do not appear possessed of any sensibility. If the leg of a fly happens to be torn away, she goes and comes as if she had lost nothing; the cutting off a limb so considerable is followed by no fainting, or convulsion, or scream, or symptom of pain whatever. Cruel children amuse themselves with thrusting straws into their anus; they rise into the air thus empaled; they walk about, and perform all their usual motions, without seeming to mind it. Others take lady birds, tear off a large limb, run a pin through the nerves and cartilages of the thigh, and attach them with a slip of paper



to a stick. These unfeeling insects fly humming round and round the stick, unweariedly, and without any appearance of suffering pain. *Reaumur* one day cut off the fleshy and muscular horn of a large caterpillar, which continued to feed as if no mutilation had taken place. Is it possible to think, that beings so tranquil in the hands of children and philosophers, endure any feeling of pain when they are gobbled down in the air by the birds?

These observations might easily be extended much farther: Particularly to that class of fishes, which have neither bone nor blood, and of these consist the greatest number of the inhabitants of the Seas, and they appear to be equally void of sensibility. I have seen, between the Tropics, a tunny, from the nape of whose neck one of the sailors scooped out a large slice of the flesh, with a stroke of the harpoon, which was forced backward to his head, who followed the ship for several weeks, and was outdone by no one of his companions, either in speed or in friskiness. I have seen sharks, after being struck with musket bullets, return to bite at the hook from which they had just before escaped, with their mangled throat.

We shall find, besides, a greater analogy between fishes and insects, if we consider that neither have bones nor blood; that their flesh is impregnated with a glutinous liquid, and which likewise appears to be the same in both, from its emitting the same odour when burnt; that they do not respire by the mouth, but by the sides, insects by the trachea, fishes by the gills; that they have no auditory organ, but hear by means of the nervous impression made on their bodies by the commotion of the fluid element in which they live; that they see all round the horizon from the disposition of their eyes; that they equally run to the light; that they discover the same avidity, and are, for the most part, carnivorous; that, in both genera, the female is larger than the male; that these throw out their eggs, to an infinite number, without sitting on them: That most fishes pass, on their birth, through the state of



insects, issuing from their eggs, in form of worms, and even some in that of frogs, such as a species of fish in Surinam; that both are cased in scales; that many fishes are provided with beards and horns, like insects; that both the one and the other contain, in their categories, an incredible variety of forms, peculiar to themselves; finally, that their constitutions, their metamorphoses, their manners, their fecundity, being the same, there is a powerful temptation to ascribe to these two numerous classes, the same insensibility.

As to animals which have blood, let *Mallebranche*, say what he pleases, they are sensible. They express a sense of pain by the same signs which we do. But Nature has fenced them with thick hides, with long hair, with a plumage, which protect them against external blows. Besides, they are little, if at all, exposed to cruel treatment, except from the hands of bad men.

Let us now proceed to consider the generation of animals. We have seen that the greatest and most numerous species of the Globe, in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, are produced in the North, independently of the heat of the Sun. Let us now enquire, whether the prolific power of fermentation be greater in the South. Certain Egyptians told Herodotus, that particular species of animals were formed of the fermented mires of the Ocean, and of the Nile. Whatever respect I have for the Ancients, I absolutely reject their authority in Physics. Most of their Philosophers have a sufficiently striking resemblance to our own. They observed sparingly, and reasoned copiously. If some of them, in the view of speaking peace to voluptuous Princes, have advanced that every thing proceeded from corruption, and returned to corruption again, others more honest and sincere have refuted them, even in the earliest times.

It is not only certain, that corruption produces no one living body, but is fatal to all, especially to those which have blood, and chiefly to Man. No air is unwholesome



but where there is corruption. How could such a principle have generated in animals, feet provided with toes, nails and claws; skins clothed with so many sorts of hair and plumage; jaws palisaded with teeth cut out into a form adapted, some for cutting, and others for grinding; heads adorned with eyes, and eyes furnished with lids to defend them from the Sun? How could the principle of corruption have collected these scattered members; unite them by nerves and muscles; support them by bony substances, fitted with pivots and hinges; feed them with veins filled with a blood which circulates, whether the animal be in motion or at rest; cover them with skins so admirably provided with hairy furs, precisely adapted to the Climates which they inhabit; afterwards, make them move by the combined action of a heart and a brain, and give to all these machines, produced in the same place, and formed of the same slime, appetites and instincts so entirely different? How could it have inspired them with the sensation of themselves, and kindled in them the desire of reproducing themselves by any other method than that which originally gave them existence?

Corruption, so far from conferring life on them, must have deprived them of it, for it generates tubercles, inflames the eyes, dissolves the blood, and produces an infinite number of diseases in most animals which respire its emanations.\* The fermentation of any substance what-

\* Of all corruptions, that of the human flesh is most noxious. Of this a very singular instance is related by *Garcillafo de la Vega*, in his History of the Civil Wars of the Spaniards, in the Indies. Vol. i. Part ii. Chap. xlii. He observes, first, that the Indians, of the Islands of Barlovento, poison their arrows, by plunging the points of them into dead bodies; and then adds, "I shall relate what I myself saw happen in the case of one of the quarters of the dead body of Carvajal, which was exposed on the great road to Collafuyu, to the south of Cusco. We set out a walking one Sunday, ten or twelve school fellows of us, all mongrels, that is, the progeny of Spanish men by Indian women, the oldest not above twelve years of age. Having observed, as we went along in the open country, one of the quarters of Carvajal's body, we took a fancy to go and look at it, and having come up, we found it was one of his thighs, the fat of



ever could have formed no one animal, nor even the egg from which it issued. We find in the dunghills of our great towns, where so many substances ferment, organic

“ which had dropped to the ground. The flesh was greenish, and entirely  
 “ corrupted. While we were examining this mournful spectacle, a forward  
 “ boy chanced to say, I could wager no one here dares to touch it; an-  
 “ other replied, he would. At last the stoutest of all, whose name was  
 “ Bartholomew Monedero, imagining he was going to perform an act of  
 “ courage, plunged the thumb of his right hand into this putrid limb,  
 “ which it easily penetrated. This bold action astonished every one, to  
 “ such a degree, that we all run away from him, for fear of infection, call-  
 “ ing out, O abominable ! Carvajal will make you pay dear for this rash-  
 “ ness. He went, however, instantly to the brook, which was close by  
 “ the spot, washed his hand several times, rubbing it over with clay, and  
 “ so returned home. Next day he returned to school, where he shewed  
 “ us his thumb, which was swollen prodigiously ; but towards evening the  
 “ whole hand had become inflamed up to the wrist ; and next day, which  
 “ was Tuesday, the arm had swelled up to the elbow, so that he was re-  
 “ duced to the necessity of disclosing the case to his father. Professional  
 “ men were immediately called in, who had the arm tightly bandaged, a-  
 “ bove the swelling, and applied every remedy which art and experience  
 “ could suggest as a counter poison. After all, notwithstanding, it nearly  
 “ cost the patient his life ; and he recovered not without suffering intoler-  
 “ able pain, after having been for four months so enfeebled, as to be inca-  
 “ pable of holding the pen.”

From this anecdote it may be concluded, how dangerous the putrid emanations from our church yards must be to the inhabitants of cities. Parish Churches in which so many corpses are interred, become impregnated with an air so corrupted, especially in Spring, when the ground begins to grow warm, that I consider this as one of the chief sources of the small pox, and of the putrid fevers which are prevalent at that season. An unfavourable smell then issues from it which makes the stomach rise. I have felt this to an insufferable degree in some of the principal Churches of Paris. This smell is extremely different from that produced by a crowd of living people, for we are affected with no such sensation in the Churches of Convents, where few only are interred.

It would be a curious subject of enquiry to Anatomists, Why the putrefaction of dead bodies should destroy the animal economy of most beings, while it makes no derangement in that of carnivorous animals. Many species of insects and fishes live on carrion. I remark that the greatest part of these have no blood, which is the first fluid that corruption lays hold of, and that the apertures through which they breathe are not the same with those by which they take in their food. But these reasons, it must be allowed, are inapplicable to vultures, ravens, and other birds of prey.



particles of every species ; entire bodies of animals, blood, plants, salts, oils, excrements, spirits, minerals, substances more heterogeneous, and more combined by Man in a state of society, than ever the waves of the Ocean accumulated and confounded on its shores : There was never found there, however, a single organized body.

It must not be affirmed, that the heat necessary to their expansion is there wanting, for it exists in every possible degree, from ice up to fire. Salts crystalize in them, and sulphurs are formed. There was picked up in Paris itself, some years ago, sulphur formed by Nature, in ancient dunghills of the time of *Charles IX.* We see, every day, that fermentation may be excited in dung to such a degree, as to catch fire. Nay, its moderate heat is so favourable to the expansion of germs, that it is employed for the hatching of chickens. But the combinations of all these substances never produced any thing living, or organized. What do I say ? The first operations of Nature, which we wish to explain, are covered in so many mysteries, that an egg with an aperture ever so small loses its prolific power. The slightest contact with the exterior air, is sufficient to extinguish in it the radical principles of life. It is neither matter, then, nor degrees of heat, which are wanting to Man, to imitate Nature in the pretended creation of beings ; and this power, ever young and active, has by no means wasted itself, as it is always exerting itself in their reproduction ; a display of omnipotence equally wonderful with that of conferring existence at the first.

The wisdom with which she has settled their proportions, is not less worthy of admiration. On a careful examination of animals, we shall find no one deficient in its members, regard being had to its manners, and the situation in which it is destined to live. The large and long bill of the toucan, and his tongue formed like a feather, were necessary to a bird who hunts for insects, scattered about over the humid sands of the American shores. It



was needful that he should be provided, at once, with a long mattock wherewith to dig, with a large spoon to collect his food, and a tongue fringed with delicate nerves, to enjoy the relish of it. Long legs and a long neck were necessary to the heron, to the crane, to the flamingo, and other birds, which have to walk in marshy places, and to seek their prey under the water. Every animal has feet, and a throat, or a bill, formed in a most wonderful manner, to suit the soil which they have to tread, and the food by which they are to be supported. From the different configurations of these, Naturalists derive the characters which distinguish beasts of prey from such as live on vegetable substances.

These organs have never been wanting to the necessities of animals, and are themselves indelible as their instincts. I have seen, up in the country, ducks brought up at a distance from water, for several generations, which, nevertheless, retained on their feet the broad membranes of their species, and which, on the approach of rain, clapped their wings, screamed aloud, called upon the clouds, and seemed to complain to Heaven of the injustice of Man, who had banished them from their element. No animal wants any one necessary member, or is encumbered with one that is superfluous. Some philosophers have considered the spurs appended to the heels of the hog as useless, because they do not bear upon the ground; but this animal, destined to live in swampy places, where he delights to wallow, and to make, with his snout, deep trenches in the mire, would frequently sink under the impulse of gluttony, had not Nature placed above his heels two prominent excrescences, which assist him in getting out again. The ox, who frequents the marshy banks of rivers, is provided with nearly similar weapons. The hippopotamus, who lives in the water, and upon the banks of the Nile, is furnished with a cloven foot, and, above the pastern, with two small horny substances, which bend backward as he walks, so that he leaves on the sand an im-



pression, which seems to have been made by the pressure of four paws. The description of this amphibious animal may be seen toward the end of *Dampier's Voyages*.

How was it possible for enlightened men to misunderstand the use of these accessory members, the form of which is imitated by some of our country clowns, in stilts; which, from this very resemblance, they call *hogs feet*, and which they employ in wading through marshy ground? These same clowns have, in like manner, imitated that of the pointed and divergent spurs of the goat's foot, which assist them in scrambling over the rocks, in their pikes shod with two iron points, contrived to prevent the backward motion of loaded carriages, on the declivity of mountains.

Nature, who varies her means with the obstacles to be surmounted, has bestowed the appendix excrescences on the heels of the hog, for the same reason that she has clothed the rhinoceros with a hide rolled up in several folds, in the midst of the torrid Zone. This clumsy animal has the appearance of being invested with a threefold mantle: But, being destined to live in the miry morasses of India, where he grubs up with his horny snout the long roots of the bamboo, he would have been in danger of sinking, from his enormous weight, had he not been endowed with the strange faculty of extending, by blowing himself up, the multiplied folds of his skin, and of rendering himself lighter, by occupying a larger space.

What to us appears, at first sight, a deficiency in animals, is, you may rest perfectly assured, a most wonderful compensation of Providence; and it would be, in many cases, an exception from her general laws, if she had any other than the utility and happiness of the beings which she has formed. Hence she has given to the elephant a proboscis, which serves him, like a hand, as he scrambles over the roughest mountains, where he delights to live, in picking up the grass of the field, and the foliage of the



trees, which the thickness and inflexibility of his neck would not permit him otherwise to reach.

She has infinitely varied, among the animal creation, the means of defence, as well as those of subsistence. It is impossible to suppose that those which move slowly, or which scream violently, are in a state of habitual suffering: For how could a race of creatures always sickly perpetuate itself, nay, become one of the most universally diffused of the whole Globe? The sluggard, or sloth, is found in Africa, in Asia and in America. His tardiness is no more a paralytic affection, than that of the turtle and of the snail. The cries which he utters, when you go near him, are not the cries of pain. But among animals, some being destined to roam about over the face of the Earth, others to remain fixed on a particular post, their means of defence are varied with their manners. Some elude their enemies by flight; others repel them by hissings, by hideous figures, by poisonous smells, or lamentable cries. There are some which deceive the eye, such as the snail, which assumes the colour of the walls, or of the bark of trees, to which he flees for refuge; others, by a magic altogether inconceivable, transform themselves, at pleasure, into the colour of surrounding objects, as the cameleon.

O, how sterile is the imagination of Man, compared to the intelligence of Nature! He has produced no one thing, in any line whatever, of which he has not borrowed the model from her Works. Genius itself, about which such a noise is made, this creative genius, which our wits fondly imagine they brought into the world with them, and have brought to perfection in learned circles, or by the assistance of books, is neither less nor more than the art of observing. Man cannot forsake the path of Nature, even when he is determined to go wrong. We are wise only with her wisdom: And we play the fool only in proportion as we attempt to derange her plans.



The graver of *Callot*, so prolific of monsters, never patched up so many frightful demons, as the ill assorted members of different animals, the beak of the owl, the jaws of the crocodile, the body of the horse, the wings of the bat, the fangs and the paws which he has united to the human figure, to render his contrasts more hideous. Our female friends, too, who, sweetly capricious, amuse themselves with embroidering fancy flowers on the various articles of their dress, are reduced to the necessity of borrowing their patterns from the garden. Examine, on their gowns and handkerchiefs, the sportive productions of their imagination: There you have the flower of the pink, on the foliage of the myrtle; roses on the stalk of the reed; pomegranates in the place of ears of corn. Nature alone produces none but rational harmonies; and affords, in both animals and plants only parts adapted to the places, to the air, to the elements, to the uses, for which she has destined them. Never was a race of monsters beheld issuing from the sublimity of her conceptions.

I have frequently heard living monsters announced for exhibition at our fairs; but I never had the fortune to see a single one, whatever trouble I could take to that effect. One day a placard was displayed, at the fair of Saint Ovide, "a cow with three eyes, and a sheep with six feet." I had a curiosity to see these animals, and to examine into the use which they made of organs and members, to my apprehension, entirely superfluous. How, said I to myself, Nature plant six legs under the body of a sheep, when four were amply sufficient to support it? At the same time, I began to recollect, that the fly, who is much lighter than the sheep, had six; and this reflection, I acknowledge, staggered me. But having one day observed a fly which had alighted on the paper before me, I found she frequently employed herself in alternately brushing her head and wings with the two fore and the two hinder feet. I then evidently perceived, that she had occasion for six feet, in order to have the support of four, while the



Other two were applied to the brushing service, especially on a perpendicular plane. Having caught, and examined her by the microscope, I discovered that the two middle feet had no brush, but that the other four had. I farther observed, that her body was covered over with particles of dust, which adhere to it, in the atmosphere through which she flies; and that her brushes were double, furnished with fine hairs, between which she emitted, and drew back, at pleasure, two claws, similar to those of a cat, but incomparably sharper. These claws enable the fly to lay hold of the most polished surfaces, such as the glass of mirrors, along which you see them march upward and downward, without sliding.

I was very curious to see in what manner Nature had attached two new legs to the body of a sheep, and how she had formed, in order to put them in motion, new nerves, new veins and new muscles, with their insertions. The third eye of the cow perplexed me still more. I had nothing for it, then, but, like other simpletons, to part with my money for the gratification of my curiosity. The people were coming out in crowds, from the repository of those wonders, delighted and astonished with their pennyworth. At last, I too had the satisfaction of contemplating the marvellous sight. The two superfluous legs of the sheep were nothing but two shrivelled pieces of skin, cut out like thongs, and hanging down from the breast, but without touching the ground, and incapable of being of any use whatever to the poor animal. The pretended third eye of the cow, was a kind of oval wound in the middle of the forehead, without orbit, without apple, without a lid, and without any membrane which presented one single organized part of an eye. I withdrew, without examining whether these accidents were natural or artificial, for, in truth, it was not worth the trouble.

The monsters which are preserved in crystal globes filled with spirit of wine, such as pigs with the proboscis of an elephant; children double bodied, or with two



heads, which are exhibited in cabinets, with a philosophic mysteriousness, prove much less a laboured production of Nature than the interruption of it. No one of those beings could possibly have attained a complete expansion: And so far from demonstrating, that the intelligence which produced them had fallen into a blunder, they attest, on the contrary, the immutability of Supreme Wisdom, which has rejected them from its plan, by refusing them life.

There is a benignity, in the conduct of Nature toward Man, which challenges the highest admiration: It is this, that in defying him, on the one hand, to infringe the regularity of her laws, to gratify caprice; on the other, she frequently permits him to derange the course of some of them, to relieve his necessities. For instance, she connives at the production of the mule from the copulation of the ass and the mare, because that animal is so serviceable in mountainous countries, but positively forbids the reproduction to proceed, in order to preserve the primitive species, which are of more general utility.

It is easy to discern, in most of her works, these maternal condescensions and, May I call them so? regal provisions. They manifest themselves particularly in the productions of the garden. We find them in those of our flowers which have a profusion of *corollæ*, as in the double rose, which is not reproduced by seeds, and which, for this reason, certain Botanists have dared to brand with the name of monster, though it be the finest of flowers, in the estimation of all persons of taste and sensibility. Naturalists pretend, that it deviated from the laws of Nature, because it scorned to conform to their Systems: As if the first of laws, which governs the World, had not for its object the happiness of Man! But if roses, and other flowers, which have a superabundance of *corollæ*, are monsters, fruits which have a superabundance of pulpy flesh, and sugary pastes, of no use toward the expansion of their seeds, such as apples, pears, mel-



ons and fruits which have no seeds at all, as the pine apple, the banana, the bread fruit, all these must likewise be monsters. The roots which become so plump in our kitchen gardens, and which are converted into large balls, into succulent glands, into bulbs farinaceous, and of no effect toward the expansion of their stems, must, forsooth, be all monsters.

Nature feeds the human race, in part, only with this vegetable superabundance, and bestows it only as the reward of Industry. However fertile the soil may be, the vegetables of the same species with those which are produced in the garden, degenerate in the uncultivated plain, grow wild, and spend themselves in foliage and branches. Is it not, therefore, an instance of wonderful complaisance on the part of Nature, that she should transform, under the hand of Man, into pleasant and wholesome aliment, the same juices which would be converted, in the forest, into lofty stems, and tough roots? Where this condescension withheld, in vain would man say to the sap of trees, you shall flow into the fruit, and you shall go no farther. To no purpose would he, in the most fertile region, prune, crop, nip; the almond tree would refuse to cover its nut with a fleshy melting pulp, like that of the peach.

Nature, from time to time, makes Man a present of varieties both useful and agreeable, which she extracts from the same genus. All our fruit trees come originally from the forest, and no one there perpetuates itself in its species. The pear called Saint Germain was found in the forest of that name, with its well known flavour. Nature culled it, like the other fruits of our orchards, from the table of the animal, to serve it up on that of Man; and that it might be impossible for us to doubt respecting her bounty and its origin, it is her sovereign will that the seeds should reproduce crabs only. Ah! if she were to suspend her particular laws of beneficence in the gardens of our miscreants, in order to establish in them her pre-



tended general laws, what would be their astonishment to find nothing reproduced in their kitchen gardens and orchards, but some miserable wild carrots, pitiful dog roses, harsh pears, and unfavoury fruits of every sort, such as she produces, on the mountains, for the coarse palate of the wild boar! They would, in truth, find stems of trees lofty and vigorous. Their orchards would be doubled in size, and the crops reduced to one half.

The same metamorphosis would take place in the animals of their farm yards. The hen, which lays eggs much too large in proportion to her size, and that for nine months uninterruptedly, contrary to all the laws of incubation among the feathered race, would then fall back into the general order, and would produce, at farthest, twenty eggs in the course of a year. The hog would, in like manner, lose his superfluous fat. The cow, which yields, in the rich pastures of Normandy, up to twentyfour quarts of milk a day, would give no more than a bare sufficiency to suckle her calf.

To this it is replied, that this profusion of eggs, of fat, and of cream, from our domestic animals, is the effect of their copious feeding. But neither does the mare give as much milk as the cow, nor does the duck lay as many eggs as the hen, nor does the ass clothe himself with fat like the hog, though these animals all feed as plentifully the one as the other. Besides, the mare, the she goat, the ewe, the she ass, have only two teats, whereas the cow has four.

The cow, in this respect, deviates, in a very remarkable manner, from the general laws of Nature; who has adjusted, in every animal species, the number of teats in the mother to that of the young; she, however, is furnished with four paps, though she produces but one calf, and very rarely two; because the two supernumeraries were destined to be nurses to the Human Race. The sow it is granted, has only twelve teats, though she is intended to bring up, sometimes, a litter of fifteen or more. Here



the proportion seems defective. But if the first has more teats than are requisite to the number of her family, and the second too few for her's, it is because the one is ordained to present Man with the surplus of her milk, and the other with that of her brood. In all countries, pork is the poor man's meat, unless religion, as in Turkey, or political considerations, as in the islands of the South Sea, deprive him of the benefit of this gift of Nature. I shall observe, with Pliny, that of all flesh it is by far the most savoury. There may be distinguished in it, says he, up to fifty different relishes. It is employed in the kitchens of the rich to give flavour to every species of aliment. In every country, I repeat it, that which is best is always most common.

Is it not passing strange that, when so many plants and animals exhibit proportions so beautiful, adaptations so wonderful to our necessities, and proofs so evident of a Divine Benevolence, we should set about collecting shapeless abortions, pigs with a long proboscis, as if our yards teemed with young elephants, and ceremoniously arrange them in our cabinets, designed to exhibit a display of Nature? Those who preserve them as invaluable curiosities, and deduce from them consequences and doubts respecting the intelligence of their AUTHOR, Do they not discover as much want of taste, and act as unfairly, as one who should go into the workshop of a Founder, and pick up the figures which had been accidentally mutilated, the bubblings over of the melting pot, and the mere metallic moulds which might lie scattered about, and triumphantly display them as a proof of the Artist's blundering ignorance?

The Ancients burnt monsters, the Moderns preserve them in spirit of wine. They resemble those ungracious children, who watch their mother, in the hope of surprising her in a fault, that they may arrogate to themselves a right to do what they please. Oh! if the Earth were indeed abandoned to disorder, and that after an in-



finity of combinations, there should at least appear, amidst the monsters which covered it, a single body well proportioned, and adapted to the necessities of Man, what a source of satisfaction would it be to creatures at once sensible and unhappy, to catch but a glimmering of an INTELLIGENCE, somewhere, who took an interest in their destiny?



## STUDY SEVENTH.

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REPLIES TO THE OBJECTIONS AGAINST PROVIDENCE,  
FOUNDED ON THE CALAMITIES OF THE  
HUMAN RACE.

THE arguments, deduced from the varieties of the Human Race, and from the evils accumulated by the hand of Nature, by Governments, and by Religions, on the head of Man, attempt to demonstrate, that men have neither the same origin, nor any natural superiority above the beasts; that their virtues are destitute of all prospect of reward, and that no Providence watches over their necessities, to supply them.

We shall enquire into those evils, one after another, beginning with such as are imputed to Nature; the necessity and utility of which we shall endeavour to make appear; and shall afterwards demonstrate, that political evils are to be ascribed entirely to deviations from the law of Nature, and constitute, themselves, a proof of the existence of a Providence.

Our discussion of this interesting subject shall commence with a reply to the objections founded on the varieties of the human species. We pretend not to deny, that there are men black and white, copper coloured and pale. Some have a beard, others little, if any. But these pretended characters are accidents merely, as has been already shewn. Horses white, bay or black, with frizzled



hair, as those of Tartary, or with sleek, smooth hair, as those of Naples, are unquestionably animals of the same species. The *Albinos*, or white Negroes, are a species of Lepers; and no more form a particular race of Negroes, than persons with us who have been marked by the small pox form a race of spotted Europeans.

Though it does not enter into my plan here to detail all the natural adaptations, which may be opposed to all the accusations of our wretched systems of Physics, and though I have reserved, in the prosecution of this undertaking, some Studies expressly devoted to this object, as far as my poor ability enables me, I shall, however, by the way, observe, that the black colour is a blessing of Providence to the inhabitants of tropical countries. White reflects the rays of the Sun, and black absorbs them. The first, accordingly, redoubles his heat, and the second weakens it. Experience demonstrates this in a thousand different ways. Nature has employed, among other means, the opposite effect of these colours, for multiplying, or weakening, on the Earth, the heat of the Orb of day. The farther you advance toward the South, the blacker are men and animals; and the farther you proceed northward, the whiter is the colour of both the one and the other. Nay, when the Sun withdraws from the northern regions, many animals which were there, in Summer, of different colours, begin to whiten; such as squirrels, wolves, hares.....and those of the southern regions, to which he is approaching, then clothe themselves with tints deeper and more absorbent. Such are, in the feathery race, the *widow*, the cardinal, &c. which exhibit much more powerful colouring, when the Sun approaches toward the Line, than when he is retiring from it, it is therefore, by adaptations of climate, that Nature has made the inhabitants of the torrid Zone black, as she has whitened those of the icy Zones. She has given, besides, another preservative against the heat to the Negroes who inhabit Africa, which is the hottest part of the Globe,



principally by reason of that broad belt of sand which crosses it, and whose utility we have indicated. She has covered the head of those careless and unindustrious tribes, with a fleece more crisp than a tiffue of wool, which effectually shelters it from the burning heat of the Sun. They are so perfectly sensible of its accommodation to this purpose, that they never employ a substitute head dress; and there is no description of Mankind among whom artificial coverings, as bonnets, turbans, hats, &c. are more rare, than among the Negroes. They use such as are foreign to them, merely as objects of vanity and luxury, and I do not know of any one that is peculiar to their Nation. The inhabitants of the peninsula of India are as black as they; but their turbans communicate to the hair, which, but for their head dress, would, perhaps, be frizzled, the facility of growing and expanding.

The American tribes which inhabit under the Line, are not black, it must be admitted; they are simply copper coloured. I ascribe this weakening of the black tint to several causes peculiar to their country. The first is, the universal practice of rubbing themselves over with *roucou* (a kind of sweet scented paste) which preserves the surface of their skin from the too vehement impresson of the Sun. Secondly, they inhabit a country clothed with forests, and crossed by the greatest river in the World, which covers it with vapours. Thirdly, their territory rises insensibly from the shores of Brasil, up to the mountains of Peru; which, giving it a greater elevation in the Atmosphere, procures for it, likewise, a greater degree of coolness. Fourthly, in a word, the East Winds, which blow there incessantly, night and day, are always contributing to that coolness.

Finally, the colour of all those Nations is so much the effect of Climate, that the descendants of Europeans, settled there, assume the black tint after a lapse of some generations. This is evidently perceptible in India, in the posterity of the Moguls, tribes derived from the extremity



of Asia, whose name signifies *whites*, and who are this day as black as the Nations which they have conquered.

Tallness of stature no more characterizes species, be the genus what it may, than difference of colour. A dwarf and a large apple tree proceed from the same grafts. Nature, however, has rendered it invariable in the Human Species alone, because variety of magnitude would have destroyed, in the physical order, the proportions of Man with the universality of her productions, and because it would have involved, in the moral order, consequences still more dangerous, by subjecting, beyond recovery, the smaller species of Mankind to the greater.

There are no races of dwarfs, nor of giants. Those which are exhibited at fairs, are little men contracted, or tall overgrown fellows, without proportion and without vigor. They reproduce not themselves either in miniature or magnitude, whatever pains may have been taken by certain Princes to procure a distinct propagation; among others, by the late King of Prussia, Frederic II. Besides, Do sufficient varieties of proportion of the Human Species issue from the hand of Nature to merit the distinctive appellation of dwarfs and giants? Is there between any two of them so great a difference, as between a little Sardinian poney and a huge Brabant horse; as between a spaniel, and one of the large Danish dogs which run before our coaches?

All nations have been from the beginning, and still are, with very little difference, and very few exceptions, of the same stature. I have seen Egyptian Mummies, and the bodies of the *Guanches* \* of the Canary islands wrap-

\* *GUANCHES*, are the skeletons, covered with the skin, of the original inhabitants of the Canary Islands. The body of the Guancho was deposited in a cavity adapted to its size, hewn out of the rock. The stone being of a porous nature, the animal juices were absorbed, or filtered through, and the solid parts, with their natural skinny mantle, became indurated, by a process of natural embalming, to such a degree as to resist the future assaults of time. They are still exhibited, by the natives of those islands, to strangers who visit them, with emotions of pride and veneration; as the images of



ped up in their skins. I have seen in Malta, in a tomb hewn out of the solid rock, the skeleton of a Carthaginian, all the bones of which were violet coloured, and which had, perhaps, lain there from the days of Queen Dido. All these bodies were of the common size. Enlightened and sober minded Travellers have reduced to a stature hardly exceeding our own, the pretended gigantic form of the Patagonians. I am aware that I have elsewhere alleged these same reasons; but it is impossible to repeat them too frequently, because they overturn, beyond the possibility of contradiction, the pretended influences of Climate, which are become the principles of our Physics, and, what is still worse, of our Morality.

There were formerly, we are told, real giants. The thing is possible; but this truth is become to us inconceivable, like all others of which Nature no longer furnishes any testimony. If Polyphemuses, lofty as a tower, ever existed, every step they took in walking must, in moist soils, have sunk into the ground. How could their long and clumsy fingers have milked the little she goats, reaped the corn, mowed down the grass, picked the fruits of the orchard? The greatest part of our aliments would escape their eyes as well as their hands.

On the other hand, had there been generations of pigmies, how could they have levelled the forests to make way for the cultivation of the earth? They would have lost themselves among the rushes. Every brook would have been to them a river, and every pebble a rock. The birds of prey would have carried them off in their talons,

their illustrious ancestors were ostentatiously displayed by the Patrician families of Rome. Avarice has, however, infected the Canaries, as well as more enlightened Islands; and families have been prevailed on to part with their *Guanches* to the Museums of European Collectors of Curiosities, for a little ready money, or in consideration of a large order of wines.

—Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,  
Auri sacra fames!

in plain English, *The love of money will make a man sell his father.* H. H.



unless they made war upon their eggs, as *Homer* represents his pigmy race engaged in war with the eggs of cranes.

On either of these two suppositions, all the relations of natural order are burst asunder, and such discords necessarily involve the utter destruction of all social order. Suppose a nation of giants to exist possessed of our industry, and instigated by our ferocious passions. Let us place at the head of it, a *Tamerlane*, and see what would become of our fortifications and of our armies before their artillery, and their bayonets.

As much as Nature has affected variety in the species of Animals of the same genus, though they were to inhabit the same regions, and to subsist on the same aliments, so much has she studied uniformity in the production of the Human Species, notwithstanding the difference of Climates and of food. The accidental prolongation of the coccyx, in some human individuals, has been mistaken for a natural character, and a new species of men with tails, has been grafted on a principle so flimsy. Man may degrade himself to the level of the beast, by the indulgence of brutal appetite; but never was his noble form dishonoured by the tail, the forked feet, and the horns of the brute. In vain is the attempt made to trace an approximation of Man toward the class of mere animals, by insensible transitions.

Were there any human race in animal forms, or any animal endowed with human reason, they would be publicly exhibited. We should have them in Europe, especially in times like these, when the whole Globe is pervaded and ransacked by so many enlightened Travellers; and when, I do not say Princes, but puppet players import alive into our fairs, the Zebra so wild, the elephant so lumpish, tigers, lions, white bears, nay, up to crocodiles; which have all been presented to public inspection in London.



Vain is the attempt to establish analogies between the human female, and the she ourang outang, from the situation and configuration of the bosom, from the periodical sexual purgations, from the attitude, and even from a sort of modesty. Though the female ourang outang passes her life in the woods, *Allegrain*, surely, as has been observed, never could have modelled after her, his statue of Diana, which is shewn at Lucienne. There is a much greater difference still between the reason of Man and that of the beasts, than there is between their forms; and that man's must have been strangely perverted, who could advance, as a celebrated Author has done, that there is a greater distance between the understanding of *Newton*, and that of such or such a man, than between the understanding of this man and the instinct of an animal. As we have already said, the dullest of Mankind can learn the use of fire, and the practice of agriculture, of which the most intelligent of animals is absolutely incapable; but what I have not yet said, the simple use of fire, and the practice of agriculture, are far preferable to all *Newton's* discoveries.

Agriculture is the art of Nature, and fire her primary agent. From experience we are assured, that men have acquired by means of this element and of this art a plentitude of intelligence, of which all their other combinations, I venture to affirm, are merely consequences. Our Sciences and Arts are derived, for the greatest part, from these two sources, and they do not constitute a difference more real between the understanding of one man and another, than there is between the dress and furniture of Europeans and those of Savages. As they are perfectly adapted to the necessities of the one and of the other, they establish no real difference between the understandings which contrived them. The importance which we assign to our talents, proceeds not from their utility, but from our pride. We should take a material step towards its humiliation, did we consider that the animals which have



no skill in agriculture, and know not the use of fire, attain to the greatest part of the objects of our Arts and Sciences, and even surpass them.

I say nothing of those which build, which spin, which manufacture paper, cloth, hives, and practise a multitude of other trades, of which we do not so much as know. But the torpedo defended himself from his enemies by means of the electric shock, before Academies thought of making experiments in electricity; and the limpet understood the power of the pressure of the air, and attached itself to the rocks, by forming the vacuum with its pyramidical shell, long before the air pump was set a going. The quails which annually take their departure from Europe, on their way to Africa, have such a perfect knowledge of the autumnal Equinox, that the day of their arrival in Malta, where they rest for twentyfour hours, is marked on the almanacks of the island, about the 22d of September, and varies every year as the Equinox. The swan and wild duck have an accurate knowledge of the Latitude where they ought to stop, when, every year they reascend, in Spring, to the extremities of the North, and can find out, without the help of compass or octant, the spot where the year before they made their nests. The frigate, which flies from East to West, between the Tropics, over vast Oceans interrupted by no Land, and which regains at night, at the distance of many hundred leagues, the rock hardly emerging out of the water which he left in the morning, possesses means of ascertaining his Longitude, hitherto unknown to our most ingenious Astronomers.

Man, it has been said, owes his intelligence to his hands: But the monkey, the declared enemy of all industry, has hands too. The sluggard, or sloth, likewise has hands, and they ought to have suggested to him the propriety of fortifying himself; of digging, at least, a retreat in the earth, for himself and for his posterity, exposed as they are to a thousand accidents, by the slowness of



their progression. There are animals in abundance furnished with tools much more ingenious than hands, and which are not, for all that, a whit more intelligent. The gnat is furnished with a proboscis, which is at once an awl proper for piercing the flesh of animals, and a pump by which it sucks out their blood. This proboscis contains, besides, a long saw, with which it opens the small blood vessels at the bottom of the wound which it has made. He is likewise provided with wings, to transport him wherever he pleases; a corslet of eyes studded round his little head, to see all the objects about him in every direction; talons so sharp, that he can walk on polished glass in a perpendicular direction; feet supplied with brushes for cleaning himself; a plume of feathers on his forehead; and an instrument answering the purpose of a trumpet to proclaim his triumphs. He is an inhabitant of the Air, the Earth, and the Water, where he is born in form of a worm, and where, before he expires, the eggs, which are to produce a future generation are deposited.

With all these advantages, he frequently falls a prey to insects smaller, and of a much inferior organization. The ant which creeps only, and is furnished with no weapons except pincers, is formidable not to him only, but to animals of a much larger size, and even to quadrupeds. She knows what the united force of a multitude is capable of effecting; she forms republics; she lays up store of provisions; she builds subterraneous cities; she forms her attacks in regular military array; she advances in columns, and sometimes constrains Man himself, in hot countries, to surrender his habitation to her.

So far is the intelligence of any one animal from depending on the structure of its limbs, that their perfection is frequently, on the contrary, in the inverse ratio of its sagacity, and appears to be a kind compensation of Nature to make up a defect. To ascribe the intelligence of Man to his hands, is to deduce the cause from the means, and talent from the tool with which it works. It is just as if



I were to say, that *Le Sueur* is indebted for the happy native graces of his pictures to a pencil of fable's hair; and that *Virgil* owes all the harmony of his verses to a feather of the swan of Mantua.

It is still more extravagant to maintain, that human reason depends on Climate, because there are some shades of variety in manners and customs. The Turks cover their heads with turbans, and we cover ours with hats; they wear long flowing robes, and we dress in coats with short skirts. In Portugal, says *Montagne*, they drink off the sediment of wines, we throw it away. Other examples, which I could quote, are of similar importance. To all this I answer, that we would act as these people, if we were in their country; and that they would act as we do, were they in ours.

Turbans and flowing robes are adapted to hot countries, where the head and body stand in need of being cooled, by inclosing in the covering of both a greater mass of air. From this necessity has arisen the use of turbans among the Turks, the Persians and Indians, of the mitres of the Arabians, of the bonnets like a sugar loaf of the Chinese and Siamese, and that of wide and flowing robes, worn by most of the Nations of the South. From a contrary necessity, the Nations of the North, as the Polanders, the Russians, the Tartars, wear furred caps and close garments. We are obliged to have, in our rainy Climates, three aqueducts upon our head, and garments shortened, because of the dirt. The Portuguese drink the sediment of wine; and so would we do with the wines of Portugal; for in sweet wines, as those of hot countries, the most fugary particles are at the bottom of the cask; and in ours, which are sprightly, nothing is at the bottom but mere dregs, the best is uppermost. I have seen in Poland, where they drink great quantities of the wines of Hungary, the bottom of the bottle presented as a mark of preference. Thus the very varieties of national customs prove the consistency of human reason.



Climate has no greater influence in changing human morality, which is reason in perfection. I admit, at the same time, that extreme heat and cold produce an effect on the passions. I have even remarked, that the hottest days of Summer, and the coldest of Winter, were actually the seasons of the year when most crimes were committed. The dog days, say the vulgar, is a season of calamity. I could say as much of the month of January. I believe it must have been in conformity to these observations, that ancient Legislators had established, for that critical period, festivals designed to dissipate the melancholy of Mankind, such as the feast of Saturn among the Romans, and the feast of Kings \* among the Gauls. In each Nation the festival was adapted to the public taste ; among the Romans, it presented the images of a republic ; among our ancestors those of monarchy.

But I beg leave, likewise, to remark, that those seasons fertile in crimes, are the seasons, too, of the most splendid actions. This effervescence of season acts on our senses, like that of wine. It produces in us an extraordinary impulsion, but indifferently to good and to evil. Besides, Nature has implanted in our soul two powers, which ever balance each other in just proportion. When the physical sense, Love, debases us, the moral sentiment, Ambition, raises us up again. The equilibrium necessary to the empire of Virtue still subsists, and it is never totally lost, except in persons with whom it has been destroyed by the habits of society, and more frequently still by those of education. In that case, the predominant passion,

\* The *Feast of Kings* I apprehend, is coeval with the Christian Era, and had its origin in the star directed visit of the Eastern Magi to Bethlehem of Judah, recorded in the beginning of the second chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. We can hardly suppose the ancient Gauls so extremely attached to irregular and unsteady Monarchy, as to institute and celebrate annual feasts in honour of it. Whatever may be in this, modern Gauls can say of the political body, what the *Médecin malgré lui* of *Molière*, says, respecting the natural body : *We have changed all that.* H. H.



having no longer any counterpoise, assumes the command of all our faculties; but this is the fault of society, which undergoes the punishment of it, and not that of Nature.

I remark, however, that these same seasons exert their influence on the passions of Man, by acting only on his moral, and not on his physical principle. Though this reflection has something of the air of paradox, I shall endeavour to support it by a very remarkable observation. If the heat of Climate could act on the human body, it assuredly would be when one is in his mother's womb: For it then acts on that of all animals, whose expansion it accelerates. Father *du Tertre*, in his excellent History of the Antilles, says, that in those islands, the period of gestation of all European animals is shorter than in temperate Climates; and that the hen's eggs are not longer in hatching, than the seeds of the orange in bursting their shell, twentythree days. Pliny had observed in Italy, that they hatch in nineteen days in Summer, and in twentyfive in Winter.

In every country, the temperature of Climate hastens, or retards, the expansion of all plants, and the gestation of all animals, the Human Race excepted: Let this be carefully remarked. "In the Antilles islands," says Father *du Tertre*, "the white women and the negresses go with child nine months, as in France." I have made the same remark in all the countries through which I have travelled, in the Isle of France, under the Tropic of Capricorn, and in the extremity of Russian Finland. This observation is of considerable importance. It demonstrates that the body of Man is not subjected, in this respect, to the same laws with other animals. It manifests a moral intention in Nature, to preserve an equilibrium in the population of Nations, which would have been deranged, had the pregnancy of the woman been of shorter duration in hot countries than in cold. This intention is farther manifested in the admirable proportion she maintains in the production of the two sexes, so nearly equal in



number, and in the very difference which we find, of one country from another, between the number of males and females : For it is compensated from North to South, in such a manner, that if there be rather more women born to the South, there are rather more men born to the North ; as if Nature meant to attract and to unite Nations, the most remote from each other, by intermarriages.

Climate has an influence on morality, but by no means determines it ; and though this supposed determination may be considered, in many modern Books, as the fundamental basis of the Legislation of the Nations, there is no one philosophical opinion more completely refuted by historic testimony. " Liberty," say they, " has found her asylum in the lofty mountains ; from the North it was that the haughty conquerors of the World issued forth. In the southern plains of Asia, on the contrary, reign despotism, slavery, and all the political and moral vices which may be traced up to the loss of liberty."

So then, we must go and regulate, by our barometers, and thermometers, the virtues and the happiness of Nations ! There is no necessity to leave Europe, in order to find a multitude of monarchical mountains, such as those of Savoy, a part of the Alps, of the Apennines, and the whole of the Pyreneans. We shall see, on the contrary, many republics in plains, such as those of Holland, of Venice, of Poland, and even of England. Besides, each of those territories has, by turns, made trial of different sorts of government. Neither cold, nor ruggedness of soil, inspire men with the energy of liberty, and still less with the unjust ambition of encroaching on that of others. The peasants of Russia, of Poland, and of the cold mountains of Bohemia, have been slaves for many ages past ; whereas the Angrias, and the Marattahs, are free men and tyrants in the South of India. There are several republics on the northern coast of Africa, where it is excessively hot. The Turks, who have laid hold of the finest provinces of Europe, issued from the mild Climate of A-



fia. The timidity of the Siamefe, and of most Asiatics, has been quoted ; but it is to be imputed, in those Nations, to the multitude of their tyrants, rather than to the heat of their countries. The Macassars, who inhabit the island of Célèbes, situated almost under the Line, are possessed of a courage so intrepid, as the gallant Count *Forbin* relates, that a small number of them, armed with poniards only, put to flight the whole force under his command, at Bancoek, consisting of Siamefe and French, though the former were very numerous, and the others armed with muskets and bayonets.

If from courage we make the transition to love, we shall find that Climate has no more a determining power over Man, in the one case than in the other. I might refer myself, for proof of the excesses of this passion, to the testimony of travellers, to ascertain which has the superiority, in this respect, the Nations of the South, or those of the North. In all countries love is a torrid Zone to the heart of Man. I must observe, that these appropriations of Love to the Nations of the South, and of Courage, to the Nations of the North, have been imagined by our Philosophers, as effects of Climate, applicable only to foreign nations : For they unite these two qualities, as effects of the same temperament, in those of our heroes to whom they mean to pay their court. According to them, a Frenchman great in feats of love, is likewise great in feats of war ; but this does not hold as to other Nations. An Asiatic, with his seraglio, is an effeminate coward ; and a Russian, or any other soldier of the North, whose Courts give pensions, is a second Mars. But all these distinctions of temperament, founded on Climate, and so injurious to Mankind, vanish into air, before this simple question : Are the turtle doves of Russia less amorous than those of Asia ; and are the tigers of Asia less ferocious than the white bears of Nova Zembla ?

Without going to seek among men objects of comparison and contrast, from difference of place, we shall find



greater diversity in manners, in opinions, in habiliments, nay, in physiognomy, between an opera actor and a capuchin friar, than there is between a Swede and a Chinese. What a contrast is the talkative, flattering, deceitful Greek, so fondly attached to life, to the silent, stately, honest Turk, ever devoted to death! These men, so very opposite, are born, however, in the same cities, breathe the same air, live on the same food. Their extraction, we shall be told, is not the same; for pride, among us, ascribes a mighty influence to the power of blood. But the greatest part of those Janissaries, so formidable to the cowardly Greeks, are frequently their own children, whom they are obliged to give in tribute, and who pass, by a regular process, into this first corps of the Ottoman soldiery. The courtisans of India so voluptuous, and its penitents so austere, Are they not of the same Nation, and, in many cases, of the same family?

I beg leave to ask, In what instance was an inclination to vice or virtue known to be communicated with the blood? *Pompey*, so noted for his generosity, was the son of *Strabo*, infamously notorious to the Roman people for his avarice. The cruel *Domitian* was brother to the gracious *Titus*. *Caligula* and *Agrippina*, the mother of *Nero*, were, indeed, brother and sister; but they were the children of *Germanicus*, the darling hope of Rome. The barbarous *Commodus* was son to the divine *Marcus Aurelius*. What a difference is frequently observable in the same man, between his youth and his mature age; between *Nero*, saluted as the Father of his Country, when he mounted the throne; and *Nero*, execrated as its avowed enemy before his death: Between *Titus*, stigmatized with the name of a second *Nero*, in his youth, and *Titus* at his death; embalmed with the tears of the Senate, of the Roman people, and of strangers; and transmitted unanimously to posterity as the delight of mankind?

It is not Climate, then, which regulates the morality of Man; it is opinion, it is education; and such is their



power, that they triumph not only over latitudes, but even over temperament. *Cesar*, so ambitious, so dissolute; and *Cato*, so temperate and virtuous, were both of a sickly constitution. Place, Climate, Nation, Family, Temperament, no one of these, and in no part of the World, determine men to vice or to virtue. They are every where free to choose.

Before we take into consideration the evils which men bring upon themselves, let us attend to those which are inflicted by the hand of Nature. It is demanded, Why should beasts of prey exist? They are absolutely necessary. But for them the Earth would be infested with cadaverous substances. There perishes, annually, of a natural death, the twentieth part, at least, of quadrupeds, the tenth part of fowls, and an infinite number of insects, most of the species of which live only one year. Nay, there are insects whose life is contracted to a few hours, such as the ephemera.

As the rains convey all these spoils of the land to the rivers, and thence to the Seas, it is, accordingly, on their shores, that Nature has collected the animals which are destined to consume them. Most of the ferocious animals descend by night from the mountains, to hunt for their prey in this direction; there are even several classes created expressly for such situations; as the whole amphibious race; for example, the white bear, the otter, the crocodile. It is in hot countries especially, where the effects of corruption are most rapid and most dangerous, that Nature has multiplied carnivorous animals. Tribes of lions, tigers, leopards, panthers, civet cats, ounces, jackals, hyenas, condors, &c. resort thither, to reinforce those of wolves, foxes, martens, otters, vultures, crows, &c. Legions of voracious crabs are nestled in their sands; the caimans and the crocodiles lie in ambush among their reeds; shell fish, of innumerable species, armed with utensils fit for sucking, piercing, filing, bruising, roughen the face of the rocks, and pave the borders of their seas;



clouds of sea fowls hover, with a loud noise, over their shallows, or sail round and round, at the discretion of the waves, in quest of food; the lamprey, the becune, the carang, and the whole species of cartilaginous fishes, which live only on flesh, such as the hygian, the long shark, the broad thorn back, the slipper, the polypus, armed with air holes, and all the varieties of sea dogs, swim there in crowds, constantly employed in devouring the wreck of bodies thrown upon the shore.

Nature calls in, besides, the insect legions to hasten forward their consumption. The wasps, furnished with scissars, cut asunder the fleshy parts; the flies pump out the fluids, the sea worms cut in pieces the bones. These last, on the southern coasts and especially at the mouths of rivers, are in such prodigious quantities, and armed with augers so formidable, that they are capable of devouring a ship of war in less time than it cost to build her; and have thereby reduced the maritime Powers to the necessity of lately sheathing the bottoms of their squadrons with copper, as a security against their attacks.

The wrecks of all these bodies, after having served for food to the innumerable tribes of other fishes, some of which are provided with beaks formed like a spoon, and others like a pipe, for picking up the very crumbs of this vast table; reduced at length, through such a series of digestions, into phlegms, into oils, into bitumens, and united to the pulps of vegetables, which descend from all quarters into the Ocean, would reproduce in its waters a new chaos of putrefaction, did not the currents convey their dissolution to volcanoes, whose fires finish the process of decomposition, and give them back to the elements. For this reason it is, as has been already indicated, that volcanoes are frequent only in hot countries; that they are all situated in the vicinity of the Sea, or of great Lakes; that they are disposed at the extremity of their currents; and that they owe entirely to the purification



of the waters, the sulphurs and the bitumens which administer a constant supply to their furnaces.

Animals of prey are by no means an object of terror to Man. First, because most of them roam abroad only in the night. They have prominent characters, which announce their approach even before it is possible to perceive them. Some favour strongly of musk, as the marten, the civet cat, the crocodile; others have shrill and piercing voices, which may be heard by night, at a great distance, as wolves and jackals; others are distinguished by particoloured spots, or streaks, which are perceptible a great way off, on the yellow ground of their skin; such are the dusky stripes of the tiger, and the dark spots of the leopard. All of them have eyes which sparkle in the dark. Nature has bestowed some of these common signatures even on carnivorous and blood sucking insects; such is the wasp, whose ground colour is yellow, surrounded with rings of black like the tiger, and the gnat, spotted with white upon a dark ground, who announces his approach by a loud buzzing. Even those which attack the human body are furnished with remarkable indications. They either smell strongly, as the bug; or present oppositions of colour to the places on which they fix, as white insects on the hair; or the blackness of the flea contrasted to the whiteness of the skin.

A great many Writers exclaim violently on the cruelty of ferocious animals, as if our cities were liable to be invaded by swarms of wolves, or, as if bands of lions, from Africa, were, from time to time, making incursions into our European colonies. They all shun the habitations of Man, and, as I said, most of them stir abroad only in the night. These distinctive characters are unanimously attested by Naturalists, Hunters and Travellers. When I was at the Cape of Good Hope, *M. de Tolback*, who was then Governor, informed me, that lions were formerly very common in the adjacent country; but that since the



Dutch had formed a settlement there, you must travel fifty or sixty leagues up the country before one is to be seen.

After all, What is their ferocity to us? Even supposing we were not provided with arms, which they are incapable of resisting, and with a sagacity far superior to all their cunning, Nature has given us dogs able to combat, nay, to subdue them; and she has most admirably adapted their species to those of animals the most formidable. In the countries where lions are natives, there is likewise produced a breed of dogs capable of engaging them in single combat. I shall quote, after the ancient, but learned translation of *Dupinet*, what Pliny relates of a dog of this species, which was presented to Alexander, by a King of Albania.\* “King Alexander first opposed to him a lion, which the dog presently tore in pieces. After that he ordered to let loose an elephant, which afforded him the highest diversion that he ever had enjoyed. For the dog, bristling himself up from the first, began to wheel about, and snarl, at the elephant; then advanced to the attack, springing on this side and on that side, with all imaginable circumspection: Now leaping up to assault, now couching to the right, to the left, which caused the elephant to turn and wind about so frequently, that he was, at last, completely tired out, and fell down with a shock which made the ground tremble, on which the dog sprang upon him, and dispatched him.” I can hardly think this dog could be of the same race with our lap dogs.

The animals formidable to man are more to be feared from their smallness than from their magnitude; there is no one, however, but what may be rendered subservient to his benefit. Serpents, centipeds, scorpions, toads, inhabit scarcely any other than humid and unwholesome places, from which they keep us at a distance, more by their hideous figures than by their poisons. Such fer-

\* Pliny's Natural History, book viii. chap. xl.



pents as are really dangerous, give signals of their approach; such are the rattles of the snake which bears that name. Few persons perish by their sting, and only from their own carelessness and imprudence. Besides, our pigs and poultry eat them currently, without suffering the slightest inconvenience. Ducks, in particular, devour them with avidity, as they likewise do most poisonous plants. Those of the kingdom of Pontus acquired so much virtue by aliments of such sorts, which are common there, that Mithridates employed their blood in his famous counter poisons.

There are, it is admitted, noxious insects which prey upon our fruits, our corn, nay, our persons. But if snails, may bugs, caterpillars, and locusts, ravage our plains, it is because we destroy the birds of our groves which live upon them; or, because, that on transporting the trees of foreign countries into our own, such as the great chestnut of India, the ebony, and others, we have transported with them the eggs of those insects which they nourish, without importing, likewise, the birds of the same climate which destroy them. Every country has those peculiar to itself, for the preservation of its plants. I have seen one, at the Cape of Good Hope, called the gardener's bird, incessantly employed in catching the worms and caterpillars, which he stuck on the thorny prickles of the bushes. I have likewise seen, in the Isle of France, a species of starling called Martin, which comes from India, and which lives entirely on locusts, and on other insects which infest the cattle. If we were to naturalize these birds in Europe, no scientific discovery ever made would be so beneficial to Man.

But the birds of our own groves are still sufficient to clear our plains of noxious vermin, provided the bird catchers were laid under a prohibition to entrap them, as they do, by whole coveys in their nets, not to immure them in cages, but to make food of them. A fancy was adopted, some years ago, in Prussia, to exterminate the



race of sparrows, as inimical to agriculture. Every peasant in the country was subjected to an annual capitation tax of twelve heads of that kind of bird, which were employed in the manufacture of saltpetre, for in that country, nothing is suffered to go to waste. At the end of the second, or, at farthest, of the third year, it was discovered that insects had devoured their crops, and it was speedily found advisable to invite the sparrows from neighbouring countries, to repeople the kingdom with them. These birds, it is true, do eat some grains of corn, when the insects fail them; but these last among others the weevil, consume the grain by bushels, nay, by granaries. If, however, it were possible to extinguish the whole race of insects, it would be the height of imprudence to set about it; for we should destroy, along with them most of the feathered tribes of our plains, which have no other food for their young while in the nest.

As to the animals which fall upon our corn in the granary, and our woollens in the warehouse, such as rats, mice, mites, moths; I find that the former are useful in purifying the earth from human excrement, which constitutes a considerable part of their food. Besides, Nature has made Man a present of the cat, to clear the interior of his habitation from those vermin. She has endowed this animal not only with uncommon agility, and with wonderful patience and sagacity, but also with a spirit of domesticity perfectly adapted to her employment. The cat attaches herself solely to the house. If the master removes, she returns alone at night to her old habitation. She differs essentially in this from the dog, who attaches himself solely to the person of his master. The cat has the affection of a courtier, and the dog that of a friend; the former adheres to the possession, and the latter to the man.

The weevil and the moth, sometimes, commit, it is true, great depredations among our grain and our woollens. Some Writers have told us, that the common hen is suf-



ficient to clear the granaries of them: Possibly it may be so. We have, besides, the spider and the swallow, which destroy them at the season when they take wing. I shall here consider only their political utility. On looking into those prodigious magazines where monopolizers hoard up the provision and clothing of a whole province, are we not bound to bless the Hand that created the insect which obliges them to bring these necessary commodities to market? Were grain as incorruptible as gold and silver, it would soon become as scarce. See under how many locks and doors these metals are secured. The commonalty would, at length, be completely deprived of their subsistence, if it were as little susceptible of change as that which is the representative of it. The mite and the moth first lay the miser under the necessity of employing a good many hands in stirring about and sifting his grain, till they force him at last to dispose of it altogether. How many poor wretches would go naked, if the moth did not devour the wardrobes and warehouses of the rich! What is most wonderful here, is, that the articles which minister to luxury are not liable to perish by insects, as those which are subservient to the most pressing wants of human life. It is possible to preserve, without any diminution of value, coffee, silk and cottons, even for ages; but in India, where these commodities are real necessaries of life, there are insects which quickly corrode them, particularly cotton.

The insects which attack the human body equally oblige the rich to employ those who have nothing, as domestics, to keep up cleanliness around them. The Incas of Peru exacted even this tribute of the poor; for in all countries these insects attach themselves to Man, though it may have been said, that they did not pass the line. Besides these insects are rather teasing than noxious: They draw off the bad blood. As they immoderately increase only in great heats, they invite us to have recourse to bathing, which is so wholesome, and yet so



much neglected among us, because being expensive, it is become an object of luxury.

After all, Nature has placed other insects near us, which destroy them; these are the spiders.\* I have heard of an old officer, who being very much incommoded with bugs, at the Hospital of the Invalids, permitted the spiders to multiply round his bed, and thereby got the better of that nauseous vermin. This remedy, I am aware, will appear to many persons worse than the disease. But I believe it possible to find others more agreeable, in perfumes and oily essences; at least, I have remarked, that the odour of various kinds of aromatic plants puts to flight those abominable animals.

As to other calamities of Nature's inflicting, Man feels their pressure only because he deviates from her laws. If storms sometimes ravage his orchards and his corn fields, it is because he frequently places them where Nature never intended they should grow. Storms scarcely ever injure any culture except the injudicious cultivation of Man. Forests and natural meadows never suffer in the slightest degree. Besides, they have their utility. Thunder storms purify and cool the air. The hail, with which

\* I presume that it is a particular species of spider: For I am persuaded that there are as many species of these as there are of insects to be destroyed. They do not all expand nets; some catch their prey fairly in the chase, others succeed by lying in ambush. I have seen one in Malta of a very singular character, and which is to be found in every house of that island. Nature has bestowed on this species of spider the resemblance of a fly, in the head and fore part of the body. When she perceives a fly on the wall, she makes her first approaches in great haste, taking care always to maintain the higher station. When she has got within five or six inches of her object, she advances very slowly, presenting to it a treacherous resemblance; and when she has got within the distance of two or three inches, she makes a sudden spring on her prey. This violent leap, made on a perpendicular plane, must surely precipitate her to the ground. No such thing. You find her again still on the wall, whether she has made good her blow or missed it; for previously to this great effort, she had affixed a cord atop, by which to warp herself up again. Cartesian Philosophers, will you pretend, after this, to persist in maintaining that animals are merely machines!



they are sometimes accompanied, destroys great quantities of hurtful insects; and hails are frequent only at the season when such insects hatch and multiply; in Spring, and Summer. But for the hurricanes of the torrid Zone, the ants and locusts would render the islands situated between the Tropics totally uninhabitable.

I have already pointed out the utility, the absolute necessity of the volcanoes, whose fires purify the waters of the Sea, as those of the thunder purify the air. Earthquakes proceed from the same cause. Besides, Nature communicates previous notice of their effects, and of the places where their focuses are situated. The inhabitants of Lisbon know well that their city has been several times shattered by shocks of this kind, and that it is imprudent to build in stone. To persons who can submit to live in a house of wood, they have nothing formidable. Naples and Portici are perfectly acquainted with the fate of Herculaneum. After all, earthquakes are not universal; they are local and periodical. Pliny has observed that the Gauls were not subject to visitations of this kind; but there are many other countries which know of them only by report. They are scarcely ever felt except in the vicinity of volcanoes, on the shores of the Sea, or of great Lakes, and only at certain particular portions of the shore.

As to the epidemical maladies of the Human Race, and the diseases of animals, they are, in general, to be imputed to corrupted waters. Physicians, who have investigated their causes, ascribe them sometimes to the corruption of the air, sometimes to the mildew of plants, sometimes to fogs: But all these causes are simply effects of the corruption of the waters, from which arise putrid exhalations that infect the air, and vegetables, and animals. This may be charged, in almost every instance, on the injudicious labours of Man. The most unwholesome regions of the Earth, as far as I am at present able to recollect, are in Asia, on the banks of the Ganges,



from which proceed, every year, putrid fevers, that, in 1771, cost Bengal the life of more than a million of men. They have for their focus the rice plantations, which are artificial morasses, formed along the Ganges, for the culture of that grain. After the crop is reaped, the roots and stalks of the plant; left on the ground, rot and are transformed into infectious puddles, from which pestilential vapours are exhaled. It is in the view of preventing these pernicious consequences, that the culture of this plant has been expressly prohibited in many parts of Europe, especially in Russia, round Otchakof, where it was formerly produced in great quantities.

In Africa, the air of the island of Madagascar is corrupted, and from the same cause, during six months of the year, and will ever present an invincible obstacle to any European settlement upon it. All the French colonies which have been planted there, perished one after another, from the putridity of the air; and I myself must, with the rest, have fallen a victim to it, had not divine Providence, by means of which I could have no foresight, prevented my intended expedition, and residence in that part of the world.

It is from the ancient miry canals of Egypt, that the leprosy and the pestilence are perpetually issuing forth. In Europe, the ancient salt marshes of Brouage, which the water of the Sea no longer reaches, and in which the rain waters stagnate, because they are confined by the dikes and ditches of the old salt pits, are become constant sources of distemper among the cattle. Similar diseases, putrid and billious fevers, and the land scurvy, annually issue from the canals of Holland, which putrify, in Summer, to such a degree, that I have seen, in Amsterdam, the canals covered with dead fishes; and it was impossible to cross certain streets, without obstructing the passages of the mouth and nose with your handkerchief. They have, indeed, forced a kind of current to the stagnant waters by means of wind mills, which pump them up, and throw



them over the dikes, in places where the canals are lower than the level of the Sea; but these machines are still far too few in number.

The bad air of Rome, in Summer, proceeds from its ancient aqueducts, the waters of which are diffused among the ruins, or which have inundated the plains, the levels whereof have been interrupted by the magnificent labours of the ancient Romans. The purple fever, the dysentery, the small pox, so common all over our plains, after the heats of Summer, or in warm and humid springs, proceed, for the most part, from the puddles of the peasantry, in which leaves and the refuse of plants putrify. Many of our city distempers issue from the laystalls which surround them, and from the cemeteries about our churches; and which penetrate into the very sanctuary.

I do not believe there would have been a single unwholesome spot on the Earth, if men had not put their hands to it. The malignity of the air of St. Domingo has been quoted, that of Martinico, of Porto Bello, and of several districts of America, as a natural effect of Climate. But these places have been inhabited by Savages, who, from time immemorial, have busied themselves in diverting the course of rivers, and choking up rivulets. These labours constitute even an essential part of their defence. They imitate the beavers in the fortification of their villages, by inundating the adjacent country. Provident Nature, however, has placed those animals only in cold Latitudes, where, in imitation of herself, they form lakes which soften the air; and she has introduced running waters into hot Latitudes, because lakes would there speedily change, by evaporation, into putrid marshes. The lakes which she has scooped out in such Latitudes, are all situated among mountains, at the sources of rivers, and in a cool Atmosphere. I am the more induced to impute to the Savages the corruption of the air, so murderous in some of the Antilles, that all the islands which have been found uninhabited were exceedingly whole-



some; such as the Isle of France, of Bourbon, of St. Helena, and others.

As the corruption of the air is a subject peculiarly interesting, I shall venture to suggest, by the way, some simple methods of remedying it. The first is, to remove the causes of it, by substituting, in place of the stagnant puddles with which our plains abound, the use of cisterns, the waters of which are so salubrious, when they are judiciously constructed. They are universally employed all over Asia. Care should, likewise, be taken to prevent the throwing the bodies, and other offal, of dead animals into the laystalls of our cities; they ought to be carried to the rivers, which will be thereby rendered more productive of fish. In the case of Cities which are not washed by rivers to carry off the garbage, or if this method is found otherwise inconvenient, attention should be paid, at least, to placing the laystalls only to the North and North East of such cities, in order to escape, especially during Summer, the fetid gusts which pass over them from the South and South west.

The second is, to abstain from digging canals. We are well acquainted with the maladies which have resulted from those of Egypt, in the vicinity of Rome, and elsewhere, when care is not taken to keep them in repair. Besides, the benefits derived from them are very problematical. To look at the medals which have been struck in our own country, on occasion of the canal of Briare, would we not be induced to think that the Strait of Gibraltar was henceforth to become superfluous to the navigation of France? Granting it to have been of some little utility to the interior commerce of the country, has the mischief done to the plains through which it passes been taken into the account, as a counterbalance? So many brooks and springs diverted from their course, and collected from every quarter, to be gulped up in one great navigable canal, must have ceased to water a very considerable extent of land. And can that be



considered as a great commercial benefit, which is injurious to agriculture? Canals are adapted only to marshy places.

This is the third method of contributing to the restoration of the salubrity of the air. The attempts made in France to dry the marshes, have always cost us a great many men, and frequently, for that very reason, have been left incomplete. I can discover no other cause for this but the precipitancy with which such works are undertaken, and the multiplicity of the objects which they are intended to embrace. The Engineer presents his plan, the Undertaker gives in his estimate, the Minister approves, the Prince finds the money, the Intendant of the province provides the labourers; all things concur to the effect proposed, except Nature. From the bosom of rotten earth arise putrid emanations, which presently scatter death among the workmen.

As a remedy to these inconveniencies, I beg leave to throw out some observations, which I believe to be well founded. A piece of land entirely covered with water is never unwholesome. It becomes so, only when the water which covers it evaporates, and exposes to the air the muds of its bottom and sides. The putridity of a morass might be remedied as effectually by transforming it into a lake, as into solid ground. Its situation must determine whether of these two objects is to be preferred. If it is in a bottom, without declivity, and without efflux, the indication of Nature ought to be followed up, and the whole covered with water. If there is not enough to form a complete inundation, it might be cut into deep ditches, and the stuff dug out thrown on the adjoining lands. Thus we should have, at once, canals always full of water, and little isles both fertile and wholesome. As to the season proper for such labours, the Spring and Autumn ought to be preferred; and great care must be taken to place the labourers, with their faces to windward, and



to supply, by means of machinery, the necessity, to which they are frequently subjected, of plunging into mires and muds, to clear them away.

It has always appeared to me strangely unaccountable, that in France, where there are such numerous and such judicious establishments, we should have ministers of superintendance for foreign affairs, for war, the marine, finance, commerce, manufactures, the clergy, public buildings, horsemanship, and so on, but never one for agriculture. It proceeds, I am afraid, from the contempt in which the peasantry are there held. All men, however, are sureties for each other; and, independently of the uniform stature and configuration of the Human Race, I would exact no other proof that all spring from one and the same original. It is from the puddle, by the side of the poor man's hovel, which has been robbed of the little brook, whose stream sweetened it, that the epidemic plague shall issue forth to devour the lordly inhabitants of the neighbouring castle.

Egypt avenges herself, by the pestilence arising out of her canals, of the oppression of the Turks, who prevent her inhabitants from keeping them in repair. America, sinking under the accumulated strokes of Europeans, exhales from her bosom a thousand maladies fatal to Europe, and drags down with her the haughty Spaniard expiring on her ruins. Thus the Centaur left, with Deianira, his robe empoisoned with the blood of the Hydra, as a present which should prove fatal to his conqueror. Thus the miseries which oppress Mankind, pass from huts to palaces, from the Line to the Poles, from Ages past to Ages yet to come; and their long and lingering effects are a fearful voice crying in the ears of the Potentates of the Earth: "Learn to be just, and not to oppress the  
"miserable."

Not only the elements, but reason itself, corrupts in the haunts of wretchedness. What torrents of error, fear,



superstition, discord, have broken out in the lower regions of Society, and swelled to the terror and the subversion of Thrones! The more that men are oppressed, the more miserable are their oppressors, and the more feeble is the Nation which they compose. For the force which tyrants employ to support their authority at home, is never exercised but at the expense of that which they might employ, to maintain their respectability abroad.

First, from the haunts of misery issue forth prostitutions, thefts, murders, conflagrations, highway robberies, revolts, and a multitude of physical evils besides, which, in all countries, are the plagues that tyranny produces. But those of opinion are much more terrible. One man is bent on subjugating another, not so much for the sake of getting hold of his property, as to command his admiration, his reverence. Ambition proposes to itself no boundary short of this. To whatever condition he may be elevated, and however low his rival reduced; let him have at his mercy the fortune, the labour, the wife, the person, of his adversary, he has gained no point, unless he has gained his homage. It availed Haman nothing to have the life, the goods, of the Jews, at his disposal: He must see Mordecai prostrated at his feet. Oppressors are thus the oppressed, and become the arbiters of their own happiness; and the oppressed, for the most part, paying them back injustice for injustice, disturb them with false reports, religious terrors, dark surmises, calumnies, which engender, among them, suspicions, apprehensions, jealousies, feuds, lawsuits, duels; and, at last, civil wars, which issue in their total destruction.

Let us examine, in the case of some ancient and modern Governments, this reaction of evils upon each other, and we shall find its extent to be in proportion to the ills which they bring upon Mankind. On contemplating this tremendous balance, we shall be constrained to acknowledge the existence of Sovereign Justice.



Without paying regard to the common division of Governments,\* into Democracy, Aristocracy and Monarchy, which are only, at bottom, political forms that

\* Politicians, in classing Governments according to these exterior resemblances in form, have acted precisely as those Botanists do, who comprehend in the same category, plants which have similar flowers or leaves, without paying any attention to their virtues. The Botanist classes together the oak and the pimpernel; and the Politician the Roman Republic and that of St. Marino. This is not the way of observing Nature, she is throughout nothing but adaptation and harmony. Her spirit, not her forms, is the great thing which we ought to study.

If in the History of any People you do not attend to its moral and internal constitution, which scarcely any Historian keeps steadily in view, it will be impossible to conceive how Republics, apparently well constituted, have suddenly sunk into ruin: How others, on the contrary, in which nothing but agitation appeared, became formidable: Whence arise the duration and the power of Despotic States, so much decried by modern Authors: And, finally, how it came to pass, that, after the glorious reigns of *Marcus Aurelius* and of *Antonius*, which have been so highly extolled, the Roman Empire finished its progress to dissolution. It was, I am bold enough to affirm, because those good Princes thought only of preserving the exterior form of the Government. All was tranquillity around them; the form of a Senate remained; Rome was well supplied with corn; the garrisons in the provinces were regularly paid. There was no sedition, no disturbance, every thing to appearance went on well. But during this lethargy, the rich were going on in an unbounded accumulation of property, and the people were losing the little that they had. The great offices of the State were engrossed by the same families. In order to have the means of subsistence, it was necessary for the commonalty to attach themselves to the Great. Rome contained a populace of mere menials. The love of Country was extinguished. The wretched did not know of what to complain. No one did them any wrong. All was orderly; but this very order precluded the possibility of their ever coming to any thing. They did not cut the throats of the citizens, as in the days of *Marius* and *Sylla*, but they stifled them.

In all human Society, there are two powers, the one temporal, and the other spiritual. You find them in all the Governments of the World, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, and in America. The Human Race is governed in the same way as the human body. Such is the will of the AUTHOR of Nature, in order to the preservation and happiness of Mankind. When Nations are oppressed by the spiritual power, they resort for protection to the temporal; when this last oppresses, in its turn, they have recourse to the other. When both these concur to render them miserable, then arise heresies in swarms, scisms, civil wars, and a multitude of secondary powers, which balance the abuses of the two first, till there results, at length, a gen-



determine nothing, as to either their happiness, or their power, we shall insist only on their moral constitution.

Every Government, of whatever description, is internally happy, and respectable abroad, when it bestows on all its subjects their natural right of acquiring fortune and honours: And the contrary takes place, when it reserves to a particular class of citizens, the benefits which ought to be common to all. It is not sufficient to prescribe limits to the People, and to restrain them within these by terrifying phantoms. They quickly force the person who puts them in motion, to tremble more than themselves. When human policy locks the chain round the ancle of a slave, Divine Justice rivets the other end round the neck of the tyrant.

Few Republics have been more judiciously constituted than that of Lacedemon. Virtue and happiness were seen to flourish there, during a period of five hundred years. Notwithstanding the mediocrity of its extent, it gave law to Greece, and to the northern coasts of Asia; but as Lycurgus had not comprehended in his plan either the Nations which Sparta was to subdue, or even the Helots, who laboured the ground for her, by them were introduced the commotions, which shattered her Constitution, and at length, totally subverted it.

In the Roman Republic there subsisted greater equality, and proportionally more power and happiness. She was, indeed, divided into Patricians and Plebeians; but as these last were capable of attaining the highest military dignities, as they possessed, besides, an exclusive title to the tribunitial office, the power of which equalled, nay, surpassed, that of the Consuls, the most perfect harmony existed between the two orders. It is impossible to observe, without emotion, the deference and respect paid by

eral apathy, and the State falls into destruction. We shall presently go into a thorough investigation of this interesting subject, when we come to speak of France. We shall find that, though there is but one which governs, of right, there are five powers which govern, in fact.



the Plebeians to the Patricians, during the most glorious periods of the Republic. They selected their patrons from among that order; they attended them in crowds on their way to the Senate: When they happened to be poor, they assented themselves, to make up a marriage portion for their daughters. The Patricians, on the other hand, took an interest in all the affairs of the Plebeians; they pleaded their causes in the Senate; permitted them to bear their names; adopted them into their families, and gave them their daughters in marriage, when they distinguished themselves by their virtues. These alliances with Plebeian families were not disdained even by Emperors. *Augustus* gave his only daughter, *Julia*, in marriage to the Plebeian *Agrippa*. Virtue sat enthroned at Rome; and no where else upon Earth were altars raised more worthy of her. A judgment of this may be formed from the rewards assigned to illustrious actions. A criminal was condemned to be starved to death in prison; his daughter is allowed permission to visit him there, and keeps him alive by the milk from her own breast. The Senate, informed of this instance of filial tenderness, voted a pardon to the father, in consideration of the daughter, and on the spot where the prison stood, commanded to rear a Temple sacred to filial piety.

If a person condemned was carrying to execution, the sentence was remitted, if a vestal happened to pass that way. The punishment, due to criminality, disappeared in the presence of virtue. If, in battle, one Roman saved another out of the hands of the enemy, he became entitled to the civic crown. This crown consisted only of oak leaves, nay, it was the only military crown which had nothing golden about it, but it conferred the right of sitting, in the public theatres, on the bench adjoining to those which were allotted to Senators, who all stood up in deference, on the entrance of him who wore it. It was, says Pliny, the most illustrious of all crowns, and communicated higher privileges than the mural, the obsidional



and naval crowns, because there is more glory in saving a single citizen, than in taking cities, or in gaining battles. It was the same, for this reason, whether the person saved was the commander in chief, or a private soldier; but it was not to be earned by delivering an allied King, who might have come to the assistance of the Romans. Rome, in the distribution of rewards, distinguished only the citizen. By means of such patriotic sentiments, she conquered the Earth; but she was just only to her own people; it was by her injustice to other men, that she became weak and unhappy. Her conquests filled her with slaves, who, under *Spartacus*, brought her to the brink of destruction, and which decided her fate at last by the arms of corruption, much more formidable than those of war. By the vices and the flatteries of the Grecian and Asiatic slaves at Rome, were formed within her bosom the *Catilines*, the *Cesars*, the *Neros*; and while their voice was corrupting the masters of the World, that of the Goths, the Cimbri, the Teutones, the Gauls, the Allobroges, the Vandals, the companions of their lot, was inviting their compatriots from the North and from the East, who at length levelled the glory of Rome with the dust.

Modern Governments exhibit a similar reaction of equity and felicity, of injustice and misfortune. In Holland, where the People may aspire to every thing, abundance pervades the whole States, good order prevails in the cities, fidelity in wedlock, tranquillity in all minds; disputes and lawsuits are rare in that country, because every one is content. Few European Nations possess a territory so contracted, and no one has extended her power so far: Her riches are immense: She maintained singly successful war against Spain in all its splendor, and afterwards against France and England united: Her commerce extends over the whole Globe: She possesses powerful colonies in America, thriving settlements in Africa, formidable kingdoms in Asia. But if we trace up to their source the calamities and the wars with which she has



been visited for two centuries, it will be found that they proceed from the injustice of some of her settlements in those countries. Her happiness and her power are not to be attributed to her republican form of Government, but to that community of benefits, which she presents indiscriminately to all her subjects, and which produces the same effects in despotic Governments, of which we have had representations so frightful.

Among the Turks, as among the Dutch, there is no such thing as quarrelling, or calumniating, or stealing, or prostitution in the cities. Nay, there is not to be found, perhaps, over the whole Empire, a single Turkish woman carrying on the trade of a courtesan. There is, in the general mind, neither restlessness nor jealousy. Every man sees, without envy, in his superiors, a felicity attainable by himself, and he is at all times ready to lay down his life for the Religion and Government of his Country. Their force abroad is by no means inferior to the perfection of their union at home. With whatever contempt our Historians may expose their ignorance and stupidity, they have actually made themselves masters of the finest provinces of Asia, of Africa, of Europe, nay, of the Empire of the Greeks themselves, with all their wit and learning, because the sentiment of patriotism, which unites them, is sufficient to baffle all the talents and all the tactics in the world. They have undergone, however, frequent convulsions from the revolting of the conquered Nations; but the most dangerous proceed from their feeblest adversaries, from those very Greeks, whose property they plunder with impunity, and whose children they annually carry off, as a tribute to recruit the Seraglio. From these same children issue, by a reacting Providence, most of the Janizaries, the Agas, the Pachas, the Bashaws, the Viziers, which oppress the Turks, in their turn, and render themselves formidable even to their Sultans.

It is this same community of hopes and of fortunes presented, without distinction, to all conditions of men,



which has given so much energy to Prussia, whose internal police, and victories abroad, have been so highly celebrated by our political Writers, though its Government is still more despotic than that of Turkey ; for the Prince there is absolute master at once in temporals and in spirituals.

The Republic of Venice, on the contrary, so well known for her courtezans, for the restlessness and jealousy of her Government, is extremely feeble externally, though she is of higher antiquity, in a situation more advantageous, and under a much finer sky than Holland. Venice is a maritime power in the Mediterranean, hardly acknowledged as such in modern times, whereas Holland is enlivening the whole Earth by her commerce ; because the first has restricted the rights of humanity to the class of Nobility, and the second has extended them to the whole people.

It is, farther, from the influence of this unjust partition, that Malta, with the finest port in the Mediterranean, situated between Africa and Europe, in the vicinity of Asia, and swarming with a young Nobility of undaunted courage, will ever remain the last Power in Europe, because the People there are reduced to nothing.

I shall here take occasion to observe, that hereditary nobility in a State destroys, at once, all emulation in both the nobly and ignobly born. It is destroyed in the first, because, being entitled by birth to pretend to every thing, they have no need to call in the assistance of merit ; and in the second, being excluded from every pretension to rise, no degree of merit could avail them. This is the political vice which has undermined the power of Portugal, and that of Spain ; and not the monastic spirit, as so many Writers have asserted. The monkish order was all powerful from the times of *Ferdinand* and *Isabella*. It was a Monk who decided at Court, the expedition of *Christopher Columbus* in quest of a new World, the conquest of which quadrupled in Spain the number of Gentlemen. Not a



Spanish soldier went over to America, but gave himself out, on his arrival there, for a man of family, and who, on his return to Spain, with money in his pocket, did not make good his title. The same thing shewed itself among the Portuguese, who made conquests in Asia. The military order, in both these Nations, at that time performed prodigies, because the career of ambition, in feats of arms, was then open to the commonalty. But ever since it has been shut against them, by the prodigious number of gentlemen with which these two States abound, the balance has turned in favour of the monastic order, and conferred upon it a tribunitial Power.

However wonderful our political speculations may represent the threefold counterbalancing powers which constitute the Government of Great Britain, it is to the violent agitations of those powers we must ascribe the perpetual quarrels which disturb her happiness, and the venality which has, at length, corrupted her. The Commons, I grant, form one of her Houses of Parliament, but the right of sitting in it as a representative, being restricted to persons possessed of such a revenue, its doors must, of course, be shut against the admission of many a wise head, and be open to some not entirely of that description. An *Alcibiades* and a *Cataline* might have made a shining figure there; but a *Socrates*, the just *Aristides*, *Epaminondas*, who transferred the Empire of Greece to Thebes, *Attilius Regulus*, who was called from the plough to the Dictatorship, *Menenius Agrippa*, who settled the dispute between the Senate and People; no one of these could have procured a seat, because he had not an estate in land worth so much a year. Britain would destroy herself by her very boasted Constitution, did she not present a common career to every citizen, in her Marine. All the Orders of the State concur in this point of union, and give it such a preponderancy, that it fixes their political equilibrium. Whoever could destroy the Marine of England, would annihilate her Government. This unanimous concur-



rence of the whole Nation toward the cultivation of one single Art, has raised it to a height of perfection hitherto unattained in any other Country, and has rendered it the sole instrument of her power.

If we glance a look on the other States which bear the name of Republic, we shall find internal disorder, and external weakness, increasing in proportion to the inequality of the citizens. Poland has reserved to the Nobility exclusively, all the authority, and left her Commonalty in the most detestable slavery; so that war, which establishes, between the citizens of one and the same Nation, a community of danger, establishes, between those of Poland, no community of reward. Her History exhibits nothing but a long series of bloody quarrels between Palatinate and Palatinate, City and City, Family and Family, which have always rendered her extremely miserable. The greatest part of the Nobility themselves are there reduced to such wretchedness, that they are obliged, for a subsistence, to serve the Grandees in the most contemptible employments, as our own Nobility formerly did under the feudal Government, and as is the case to this day in Japan: For wherever the peasantry are slaves, the yeomanry are menials. The calamity has, at length, overtaken Poland, in our own days, which would have fallen upon her long ago, had not the Kingdoms which surround her laboured then under the same defects in their several Constitutions. She has been parcelled out by her neighbours, in despite of her long political discussions, as the Empire of the Greeks was by the Turks, at a time when certain priests, who had got possession of the public mind, were amusing them with theological subtilities.

In Japan, the wretchedness of the Nobles is in proportion to their tyranny. They formed at first a feudal Government, which it is so easy to subvert, as well as all those of the same nature; for the first of the feudal Chiefs who aspired at the sovereignty, effected his purpose by a single battle. He curtailed their power of determining their



quarrels by civil wars, but left them in full possession of all their other privileges ; that of abusing the peasants, who there are mere slaves, the power of life and death over all who are in their pay, even over their wives. The mass of the people, who, in extreme misery, have no way of subsisting, but by intimidating or corrupting their tyrants, have produced, in Japan, an incredible multitude of bonzes, of all sects, who have erected temples on every mountain ; comedians and drolls, who have theatres set up at every cross street of their cities ; and courtezans in such shoals, that the traveller is pestered with them on every high road, and at every inn where he stops. But this very people set such a high value on the consideration exacted of them by the Nobility, that if so much as a cross look passes between two of them, fight they must ; and if the insult be any thing serious, it is absolutely necessary that both parties should rip up each other, under pain of infamy. To this hatred of its tyrants we must impute the singular attachment which the Japanese expressed for the Christian Religion, because they hoped it was to efface, by its morality, distinctions so abominable between man and man : And to popular prejudices we must refer, in the Nobility of that Country, the contempt which they expressed on a thousand occasions, for a life rendered so precarious from the opinion of another.

A sage equality, proportioned to the intelligence, and to the talents of all her subjects, has, for a long time, rendered China the happiest spot on the Globe : But a taste for pleasure having there, at last, produced a dissolution of the moral principle, money, the instrument of procuring it, is become the moving principle of the Government. Venality has there divided the Nation into two great classes, the rich and the poor. The ancient ranks which, in that Country, elevated men to all the public offices, still exist, but the rich only actually fill them. This vast and populous Empire having no longer any patriotism, but what consists in certain unmeaning ceremonies,



has been, oftener than once, invaded by the Tartars, who were invited into the Country by the calamities which the People endured.

The Negroes, in general, are considered as the most unfortunate species of Mankind on the face of the Globe. In truth, it looks as if some destiny had doomed them to slavery. The ancient curse, pronounced by *Noah*,\* is by some believed to be still actually in effect: “Curst be  
“Canaan! a servant of servants shall he be unto his  
“brethren.” They themselves confirm it by their traditions. If we may give credit to a Dutch Author, of the name of *Bosman*, “the Negroes of the Guinea coast al-  
“lege, that GOD, having created blacks and whites, pro-  
“posed to them the power of choosing between two things,  
“namely, the possession of gold, and of the art of reading  
“and writing; and as GOD gave the power of the first  
“choice to the blacks, they preferred gold; and they left  
“learning to the whites, which was accordingly granted  
“them. But that the CREATOR, provoked at the appe-  
“tite for gold which they had manifested, immediately  
“passed a decree, that the whites should have eternal do-  
“minion over them, and that they should forever be  
“subject to their white brethren as slaves.†” I do not

\* Genesis, chap. ix. ver. 25.

† *Bosman's voyage to Guinea*, letter x. This decision of modern Negroes is highly to their honour. They seem to feel the inestimable value of knowledge. But could they have seen, in Europe, the condition of most men of literature, compared with that of men who possess gold, their tradition would have been completely reversed.

Similar opinions may be traced through other African black tribes, particularly among the blacks of the Cape de Verd Islands, as may be seen in the excellent account given of them by *George Robert*. This unfortunate Navigator was obliged to flee for refuge to the Island of St. John, where he received from the inhabitants the most affecting proofs of generosity and hospitality, after having undergone the most atrociously cruel treatment from his countrymen, the English pirates, who plundered his vessel.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that if some African tribes excel us in moral qualities, the Negroes, in general, are very inferior to other Nations in those of the understanding. They have never to this day discover-



mean to support, by Sacred Authority, nor by that which these unfortunate wretches themselves furnish, the tyranny which we exercise over them. If the malediction of a Father has been able to extend such an influence over his posterity, the benediction of GOD, which, under the Christian Religion, extends to them as well as to us, re-establishes them in all the liberty of the law of Nature. The precept of Christianity, which enjoins us to consider all men as brethren, speaks in their behalf, as in behalf of

ed the address of managing the elephant as the Asiatics have done. They have carried no one species of cultivation to its highest degree of perfection. They are indebted for that of the greatest part of their alimentary vegetables to the Portuguese, and to the Arabians. They practise no one of the liberal Arts, which had made, however, some progress among the inhabitants of the New World, who are much more modern than they. Nature has placed them on a part of the Continent, from whence they might with ease have penetrated into America, as the winds which blow thither are easterly, that is, perfectly fair; but so far from that, they had not even discovered the islands in their vicinity, such as the Canaries and the Cape de Verds. The black Powers of Africa have never to this hour discovered genius equal to the construction of a brigantine. So far from attempting to extend their boundaries, they have permitted strangers to take possession of all their coasts. For in ancient times, the Egyptians and Phenicians settled on their eastern and northern shores, which are now in possession of the Turks and Arabians. And for some ages past, the Portuguese, the English, the Danes, the Dutch and the French, have laid hold of what remained to the East and to the South, and to the West, simply for the purpose of getting slaves.

It must needs be, after all, that a particular Providence should have preserved the patrimony of these children of Canaan, from the avidity of their brethren, the children of Shem and Japhet; for it is astonishing, that persons such as we are, the sons of Japhet in particular, who, as being younger brothers, were hunting after fortune all the world over, and who, according to the benediction of Noah, our Father, were to extend our lodging even into the tents of Shem, our elder brother, should never have established colonies, in a part of the world so beautiful as Africa is, so near us, in which the sugar cane, the coffee plant, and most of the productions of Asia and America can grow, and, in a word, where slaves are the produce of the soil.

Politicians may ascribe the different characters of Negroes and Europeans to whatever causes they please. For my own part, I say it on the most perfect conviction, that I know no book, which contains monuments more authentic of the History of Nations, and of that of Nature, than the Book of Genesis.



our own countrymen. If this were the proper place, I could demonstrate how Providence enforces, in their favour, the laws of universal justice, by rendering their tyrants, in our colonies, a hundred times more wretched than they are. Besides, How many wars have been kindled among the maritime Powers of Europe, on account of the African slave trade? How many maladies, and corruptions of blood in families, have not the Negroes produced among us?

But I shall confine myself to their condition in their own country, and to that of their compatriots who abuse their power over them. I do not know that there ever existed among them a single Republic, except it were, perhaps, some pitiful Aristocracy along the western coast of Africa, such as that of Fantim. They are under the dominion of a multitude of petty tyrants, who sell them at pleasure. But, on the other hand, the condition of those kings is rendered so deplorable by priests, fetichas, grigris, sudden revolutions, nay, the very want of the common necessaries of life, that few of our common sailors would be disposed to change states with them. Besides, the Negroes escape a considerable proportion of their miseries, by the thoughtlessness of their temper, and the levity of their imagination. They dance in the midst of famine, as of abundance; in chains, as when at liberty. If a chicken's foot inspires them with terror, a small slip of white paper restores their courage. Every day they make up, and pull to pieces their gods, as the whim strikes them.

It is not in stupid Africa, but in India, the ancient wisdom of which stands in such high reputation, that the miseries of the Human Race are carried to their highest excess. The Bramins, formerly called Brachmans, who are the priests there, have divided the Nation into a variety of Casts, some of which they have devoted to infamy, as that of the Parias. No one will doubt that they have taken care to render their own sacred. No person is wor-



thy to touch them, to eat with them, much less to contract any manner of alliance. They have contrived to prop up this imaginary grandeur by incredible superstitions. From their hands have issued that infinite number of Gods, of monstrous forms, which scare the human imagination all over Asia. The Commonalty, by a natural reaction of opinions, render them, in their turn, the most miserable of all mankind. They are obliged, in order to support their reputation, to wash themselves from head to foot, on the slightest contamination by contact; to undergo frequent and rigorous fastings; to submit to penances the most horrible, before idols which they themselves have rendered so tremendous. And as the people are not permitted to intermix blood with them, they constrain, by the power of prejudice over the tyrants, their widows to burn themselves alive, with the body of the dead husband.

Is it not, then, a very horrible condition, for men reputed wise, and who give law to their Nation, to be witnesses of the untimely death, in circumstances so shocking, of their female friends and relations, of their daughters, their sisters, their mothers? Travellers have cried up their knowledge: But is it not an odious alternative for enlightened men, either to terrify perpetually the ignorant, by opinions which, at the long run, subjugate even those who propagate them; or, if they are so fortunate as to preserve their reason, to make a shameful and criminal use of it, by employing it to disseminate falsehood? How is it possible for them to esteem each other? How is it possible to retire within themselves, and to lift up their eyes to that Divinity, of whom, as we are told, they entertain conceptions so sublime, and of whom they exhibit to the People representations so abominable?

Whatever may be, as far as their ambition is concerned, the melancholy fruit of their policy, it has drawn in its train the misery of this vast Empire, situated in the finest region of the Globe. Their military is formed of



the Nobility, called Nairs, who possess the second rank in the State. The Bramins, in order to support themselves by force, as well as by guile, have admitted them to a participation in some of their privileges. Hear what *Walter Schouten* says, of the indifference expressed by the common People toward the Nairs, when any mischief befalls them. After a bloody encounter, in which the Dutch killed a considerable number of those who had taken the side of the Portuguese: "No outrage or insult," says he,\* "was offered to any artisan, peasant, fisherman, or other inhabitant of Malabar, not even in the rage of battle. They, in consequence, never thought of flight. A great many of them were posted at different places, merely as spectators of the action; and they appeared to take no manner of interest in the fate of the Nairs."

I have been an eyewitness of the same apathy in Nations, whose Nobility forms a separate class, among others, in Poland. The Commonalty of India subject the Nairs, as well as the Bramins, to their share of the miseries of opinion. The Nairs are incapacitated to contract legitimate marriages. Many of them, known by the name of Amocas, are obliged to sacrifice themselves in battle, or on the death of their kings. They are the victims of their unjust honour, as the Bramins are of their inhuman religion. Their courage, which is merely professional spirit, far from being beneficial to their Country, is frequently fatal to it. From time immemorial, it has been desolated by their intestine wars; and it is so feeble externally, that handfuls of Europeans have made settlements in it, wherever they pleased. At the close of the war in 1762, a proposition was made in the Parliament of Great Britain, to make the complete conquest of it, and to pay off the national debt, with the riches which might have been extracted out of it; and this the Proq-

\* Voyage to the East Indies, vol. i. page, 367.



poser undertook to effect, if he was landed in India with an army of five thousand Europeans. The boldness of the enterprize astonished no one of his compatriots, who were acquainted with the weakness of that Country, and it was laid aside, as is alleged, merely from the injustice of it.

In France, the people never acquire any share in the Government, from *Julius Cesar*, who is the first Writer that has made this observation, and who is not the last politician that has availed himself of it, to render himself easily its master, down to Cardinal *Richlieu*, who levelled the feudal power. During this long interval, our History presents nothing but a series of dissensions, of civil wars, of dissolute manners, of assassinations, of Gothic laws, of barbarous customs; and furnishes nothing interesting to the Reader, let the President *Henault*, who compares it to the Roman History, say what he will. It is not merely because the fictions of the Romans are more ingenious than ours; it is because we do not find in our History that of a people, but only the history of some great family.

From this, however, must be excepted the Lives of some good Kings, such as those of St. *Louis*, of *Charles V*, of *Henry IV*; and of some good Men, who are interesting to us, for this very reason, that they interested themselves in behalf of the Nation. In every other case, it is impossible to discover about what the Government was employing itself: It studied the interest only of the Nobility. The Country was subjugated successively by the Romans, the Franks, the Goths, the Alains, the Normans. The facility, with which France embraced Christianity, is a proof that she sought, in religion, a refuge from the miseries of slavery. To this sentiment of confidence the Clergy is indebted for the first rank which it obtained in the State. But the Clergy soon degenerated from its first spirit; and so far from meditating the destruction of tyranny, enlisted under the banner of tyrants;



adopted all their customs; assumed their titles; appropriated to itself their rights and their revenues; and even made use of their arms to maintain interests which were in such direct opposition to its morality. A great many churches had their knights and their champions, who supported their claims in single combat.

It would be unfair to impute to religion, the mischief occasioned by the avarice and the ambition of her ministers. She herself assists us in detecting their faults, and enjoins us to be on our guard against them. The greatest Saints, St. Jerom,\* among others, have exposed and condemned the vices of the clergy, with more vehemence than ever modern Philosophers have done. Much has been written of late to discredit religion, with a view to diminish the power of priests. But, universally, wherever she has fallen, their power has increased. Religion herself alone restrains them within due bounds. Observe in the Archipelago, and elsewhere, how many fraudulent and lucrative superstitions have been substituted by the Greek *Papas* and *Caloyers*, in place of the spirit of the Gospel! Besides, whatever reproach may be cast upon our own clergy, they have their answer ready, namely, that they have been, in all ages, like the rest of their compatriots, the children of this world. The Nobles, Magistrates, Soldiers, nay, the Kings themselves, of former times, were no better than they.

They have been accused of promoting every where the spirit of intolerance, and of aiming at superiority, by preaching up humility. But most of them, repelled by the world, carry, into their professional corps, that spirit of intolerance of which the world set the example, and of which they are the victims; and their ambition, frequently, is a mere consequence of that universal ambition, with which national education, and the prejudices of society, inspire all the members of the State.

\* Consult his Letters.



Without meaning to make their apology, and much less satirically to inveigh against them, or any body of men whatever, whose evils it was not my wish to discover, except for the purpose of indicating the remedies which seem to me to be within their reach. I shall here confine myself to a few reflections on religion, which is, even in this life, the avenger of the wicked, and the consolation of the good.

The world, in these days, considers religion as the concern only of the vulgar, and as a mere political contrivance to keep them in order. Our Philosophers state, in opposition to it, the philosophy of *Socrates*, of *Epicletus*, of *Marcus Aurelius*; as if the morality of those sages were less austere than that of JESUS CHRIST; and as if the benefits to be expected from it were better secured than those of the Gospel! What profound knowledge of the heart of man; what wonderful adaptation to his necessities; what delicate touches of sensibility, are treasured up in that divine Book! I leave its mysteries out of the question. Part of them, we are told, have been taken from *Plato*. But *Plato* himself borrowed them from Egypt, into which he had travelled; and the Egyptians were indebted for them, as we are, to the Patriarchs. These mysteries, after all, are not more incomprehensible than those of Nature, and than that of our own existence. Besides, in our examination of them, we inadvertently mislead ourselves. We want to penetrate to their source, and we are capable only of perceiving their effects. Every supernatural cause is equally impenetrable to man. Man himself is only an effect, only a result, only a combination for a moment. He is incapable of judging of divine things according to their nature, his judgment of them must be formed according to his own nature, and from the correspondence which they have to his necessities.

If we make use of these testimonies of our weakness, and of these indications of our heart, in the study of re-



ligion, we shall find that there is nothing that can pretend to that name, on the face of the Earth, so perfectly adapted to the wants of human nature, as the religion of the Bible. I say nothing of the antiquity of its traditions. The Poets of most Nations, Ovid among the rest, have sung the Creation, the happiness of the Golden Age, the indiscreet curiosity of the first woman, the miseries which issued from *Pandora's Box*; and the Universal Deluge, as if they had copied these Histories from the Book of Genesis.

To the Mosaic account of the Creation, and the recent existence of the World, have been objected the antiquity and the multiplicity of certain lavas in volcanoes. But have these observations been accurately made? Volcanoes must have emitted their fiery currents more frequently in the earlier ages, when the Earth was more covered with forests, and, when the Ocean, loaded with its vegetable spoils, supplied more abundant matter to their furnaces. Besides, as I have said in the course of this Work, it is impossible for us to distinguish between what is old and what is modern in the structure of the World. The hand of Creation must have manifested the impress of ages upon it, from the moment of its birth. Were we to suppose it eternal, and abandoned to the laws of motion simply, the period must be long past when there could not have been the smallest rising on its surface. The action of the rains, of the winds, and of gravity, would have brought down every particle of Land to the level of the Seas.

It is not in the works of GOD, but in those of men, that we are enabled to trace epochs. All our monuments announce the late Creation of the Earth which we inhabit. If it were, I will not say, eternal, but of high antiquity only, we should, surely, find some productions of human industry much older than from three to four thousand years, such as all those that we are acquainted with. We have certain substances on which time makes no



very perceptible alteration. I have seen, in the possession of the intelligent Count *de Caylus*, constellation rings of gold, or Egyptian 'talismans, as entire as if they had just come from the hand of the workman. Savages, who have no knowledge of iron, are acquainted with gold, and search after it, as much for its durability as for its shining colour. Instead, then, of finding antiques of only three or four thousand years, such as those of the most ancient Nations, we ought to possess some of sixty, of a hundred, of two hundred thousand years.

*Lucretius*, who ascribes the Creation of the World to atoms, on a system of Physics altogether unintelligible, admits that it is quite a recent production.

Præterea, si nulla fuit genitæ origo  
Terraï & cœli, semperque eterna fuere,  
Cur supra bellum Thebanum, & funera Trojæ,  
Non alias alii quoque res cecinere Poetæ.

*De rerum Natura, Lib. v. ver. 325.\**

“ Had Heaven and Earth known no beginning of existence, but endured from eternity, Why have we no Poets transmitting to us the knowledge of great events, prior to the Theban war, and the downfall of Troy ?”

The Earth is filled with the religious traditions of our Scriptures : They serve as a foundation to the religion of the Turks, the Persians, and the Arabians : They extend over the greatest part of Africa : We find them again in India, from whence all Nations and all Arts originally proceeded : We can trace them in the ancient and intricate religion of the Bramins ;† in the History of Brama,

\* Thus imitated :

If genial Nature gave the Heavens no birth,  
And from eternal ages roll'd the Earth,  
Why neither wars nor Poets—Sages, tell,  
Till *Homer* sung, how mighty *Hector* fell ?

† See *Abraham Rogers*, his *History of the Manners of the Bramins*.



or Abraham; of his wife Sarai, or Sara; in the incarnations of Wishtnou, or of Christnou; in a word, they are diffused even among the savage tribes which traverse America.

I say nothing of the monuments of our religion, as universally diffused as her traditions, one of which, inexplicable on the principles of our Physics, proves a general Deluge, by the wrecks of marine bodies scattered over the surface of the Globe; the other, irreconcilable to the laws of our Politics, attests the reprobation of the Jews, dispersed over all regions, hated, despised, persecuted, without Government, without a Country; nevertheless, always numerous, always subsisting, and always tenacious of their Law. To no purpose have attempts been made to trace resemblances between their condition, and that of several other Nations, as the Armenians, the Guebres, and the Banians. But these last mentioned Nations hardly emigrate beyond the confines of Asia: Their numbers are extremely inconsiderable: They are neither hated nor persecuted by other Nations; they have a Country; and, finally, they have not adhered to the religion of their ancestors. Certain illustrious Authors have stated these supernatural proofs of a Divine Justice, in a very striking light. I shall satisfy myself with adducing a few more, still more affecting, from their correspondence to Nature, and to the necessities of Mankind.

The morality of the Gospel has been challenged, because JESUS CHRIST, in the country of the Gadarenes, permitted a legion of demons to take possession of a herd of two thousand swine, which were thereby precipitated into the Sea, and choked. "Why," ask the objectors, "ruin the proprietors of those animals?" JESUS CHRIST acted in this as a Legislator. The persons to whom the swine belonged were Jews; they transgressed, therefore, the Law which declares those animals unclean. But here again starts up a new objection, levelled at Moses. "Why are those animals pronounced unclean?" Be-



cause, in the Climate of Judea, they are subject to the leprosy. But here is a fresh triumph for our Wits. "The Law of Moses," say they, "was, then, relative to Climate; it could be at most, of consequence, a mere political constitution." To this I answer, that if I found in either the Old Testament, or the New, any usage whatever which was not relative to the Laws of Nature, I should be still more astonished. It is the character of a Religion divinely inspired, to be perfectly adapted to the happiness of Man, and to Laws antecedently enacted by the AUTHOR of Nature. From this want of correspondence, all false religions may be detected. And as to the point in question, the Law of Moses, from its privations, was evidently intended to be the Law of a particular People; whereas that of the Gospel, from its universality, must have been intended for the whole Human Race.

Paganism, Judaism, Mahometanism, have all prohibited the use of certain species of animal food; so that if one of those religions should become universal, it would produce either total destruction, or unbounded multiplication; each of which evidently would violate the plan of the Creation. The Jews and Turks proscribe pork; the Indians of the Ganges reverence the heifer and the peacock. There is not an animal existing which would not serve as a Feticha to some Negro, or as a Manitou to some Savage. The Christian Religion alone permits the necessary use of all animals; and prescribes abstinence from those of the Land, only at the season when they are procreating, and when those of the Sea abound on the shores, early in the Spring.\*

\* Is it possible to abstain from smiling? No, the prejudices of education, in a good man, excite a serious emotion, in a benevolent mind. Brought up in the habit of abstinence from animal food, during the season of Lent, good M. de Saint Pierre takes it for granted, that this is an institution of Christianity, and endeavours ingeniously to reconcile it to a law of Nature. But the truth is, the Gospel contains no such injunction; and the universality of that religion is still greater than even the enlarged mind of our Au-



All religions have filled their temples with carnage, and immolated to DEITY the life of the brute creation. The Bramins themselves, so full of compassion to the beasts, present to their idols the blood and life of men. The Turks offer in sacrifice camels and sheep. Our Religion, more pure, if we attend merely to the matter of the sacrifice, presents in homage to GOD bread and wine, which are the most delicious gifts which He has bestowed on Man. Nay, here we must observe, that the vine, which grows, from the Line up to the fiftysecond degree of North Latitude, and from England to Japan, is the most widely diffused of all fruit trees; that corn is almost the only one of alimentary plants which thrives in all Climates; and that the liquor of the one, and the flour of the other, is capable of being preserved for ages, and of being transported to every corner of the Earth.

All religions have permitted to men, a plurality of women in marriage: Christianity permitted but one, long before our Politicians had observed that the two sexes are

thor apprehended, in one respect at least. How can it be imagined, that JESUS CHRIST, in fasting so long in the Wilderness, intended to set the example of an annual abstinence of the same duration, to his disciples? What Jew ever thought of making *Moses* a pattern in this same respect? But while I regret the power of prejudice in another, let me take care that my own be overcome; or if any remain, that they be harmless, or rather on the side of virtue.

In the very next paragraph, our Author is betrayed into a similar mistake, respecting the nature and design of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, by the phrase in use, in that Church whose communion he had, from education, adopted. That ordinance is, in Roman Catholic countries, denominated the *sacrifice* of the mass. Carried away by the word *sacrifice*, M. de Saint Pierre is led to represent the Christian Worshipper as presenting to GOD, in the Sacrament, an *offering* of bread and wine. But it is not so. He is commanded to *take and eat*, to *take and drink*, in remembrance of CHRIST. The sacrifice which Christianity demands, and which every sincere communicant presents to GOD, is the *living sacrifice* of himself, which St. Paul calls our *reasonable service*. We meet, however, with a beautiful train of thought, in what follows, respecting the elementary part of the institution, strongly characteristic of a pious, penetrating, and comprehensive mind; and which the devout Protestant may peruse to advantage.

H. H.



born in nearly equal numbers. All have boasted of their genealogies; and, regarding with contempt most other Nations, have permitted their votaries, when they had it in their power, to reduce them to a state of slavery. Ours alone has protected the liberty of all men, and has called them back to one and the same destination, as to one and the same origin. The religion of the Indians promises pleasure in this world; that of the Jews, riches; that of the Turks, conquest: ours enjoins the practice of virtue, and promises the reward of it in Heaven. Christianity alone knew that our unbounded passions were of divine original. It has not limited love, in the heart of Man, to wife and children, but extends it to all Mankind: It circumscribes not ambition to the sphere of a party, to the glory of one Nation, but has directed it to Heaven and Immortality: Our Religion intended that our passions should minister as wings to our virtues.\* So far from

\* Religion alone gives a sublime character to our passions. It diffuses charms ineffable over innocence, and communicates a divine majesty to grief. Of this I beg leave to quote two instances. The one is extracted from an account, not in very high estimation, of the Island of St. Erini, (chap. xii.) by Father *Francis Richard*, a jesuit missionary; but which contains some things that please me from their native simplicity. Of the other I was an eye witness.

“ After dinner,” says Father *Richard*, “ I retired to St. George’s, which  
 “ is the principal Church of the Island of Stamphalia. There one of the  
 “ *Papas* presented to me a book of the Gospels, in order to discover if I  
 “ could read their language as well as I spake it. Another came and asked  
 “ me, Whether our holy father the Pope were a married man. But I was  
 “ still more amused by the question of an old woman, who, after looking  
 “ steadily at me for a considerable time, besought me to tell her if I really  
 “ believed in GOD and in the Holy Trinity. Yes, said I, and to give her  
 “ full assurance of it, I made the sign of the cross. O! how glad I am,  
 “ says she, that you are a Christian! We had some doubt of it. On this I  
 “ pulled from my bosom the cross which I wore: The woman, quite  
 “ transported with joy, exclaimed, Why should we any longer call in  
 “ question his being a good Catholic, seeing he worships the cross! After  
 “ her, another applied to me, of whom I asked, Whether she had a mind to  
 “ confess. How! replied she, Would it not be a sin to confess to such  
 “ gentlemen as you? No, said I, for though I am French, I confess in  
 “ Greek. I will go, replied she, and ask our Bishop. In a little while



uniting us on Earth, to render us miserable, it is she who bursts asunder the chains by which we are held captive. How many calamities has she footed! how many tears

“ she returned, perfectly delighted at having obtained his permission. After confession, I gave her an *Agnus Dei*, which she went about and shewed to every one, as a curiosity which they had never seen before. I was presently beset by a multitude of women and children, who pressed me to give them some. I answered, that those *Agnuses* were given only to such as had confessed. In order to gain their point, they instantly offered to confess, and wanted to do so by pairs; that is to say, a young girl with her female confidant, a young man with his bosom friend, whom they denominate ἀδελφοπεῖθον, *Adelphopeithon*, confidential brother, alleging as a reason, that they had but one heart; and that, therefore, there ought to be nothing secret between them. It was with difficulty I could separate them; however they were under the necessity of submitting.”

Some years ago, I happened to be at Dieppe, about the time of the autumnal Equinox; and a gale of wind having sprung up, as is common at that season, I went to look at its effects on the sea shore. It might be about noon. Several large boats had gone out of the harbour in the morning, on a fishing expedition. While I was observing their manœuvres, I perceived a company of country lasses, handsome, as the *Cauchois* generally are, coming out of the city, with their long, white head dresses, which the wind set a flying about their faces. They advanced playfully to the extremity of the pier, which was, from time to time, covered with the spray which the dashing of the waves excited. One of them kept aloof, sad and thoughtful. She looked wistfully at the distant boats, some of which were hardly perceptible, amidst a very black Horizon. Her comrades, at first, began to rally, with an intention to amuse her: What, said they, Is your sweetheart yonder? But finding her continue inflexibly pensive, they called out, Come, come, don't let us stop any longer here! Why do you make yourself so uneasy? Return, return with us; and they resumed the road that led to town. The young woman followed them with a slow pace, without making any reply, and when they had got nearly out of sight, behind some heaps of pebbles which are on the road, she approached a great crucifix, that stands about the middle of the pier, took some money out of her pocket, dropped it into the little chest at the foot of the cross; then kneeled down, and with clasped hands, and eyes lifted up to Heaven, put up her prayer. The billows breaking with a deafening noise on the shore, the wind which agitated the large lanterns of the crucifix, the danger at sea, the uneasiness on the land, confidence in Heaven, gave to the love of this poor country girl, an extent, and a dignity, which the Palaces of the Great cannot communicate to their passions.



has she wiped away! how many hopes has she inspired, when there was no longer room for hope! how many doors of mercy thrown open to the guilty! how many supports given to innocence! Ah! when her altars arose amidst our forests, ensanguined by the knives of the Druids, how the oppressed flocked to them in quest of an asylum! How many irreconcilable enemies there embraced with tears! Tyrants, melted to pity, felt, from the height of their towers, their arms drop from their hands. They had known the Empire only of terror, and they saw that of charity spring up in its room. Lovers ran thither to mingle vows, and to swear a mutual affection, which should survive even the tomb. She did not allow a single day to hatred, and promised eternity to love. Ah! if this Religion was designed only for the consolation of the miserable, it was, of course, designed to promote that of the Human Race!

Whatever may have been said of the ambition of the Church of Rome, she has frequently interposed in behalf of suffering humanity. I produce an instance taken at random, and which I submit to the judgment of the Reader. It is on the subject of the African slave trade, which is practised without scruple by all the Christian and maritime Powers of Europe, and condemned by the Court of Rome. "In the second year of his mission, *Merolla* was left alone at Sogno, by the death of the Superior Gen-

It was not long before her tranquillity returned; for all the boats gained the harbour a few hours afterward, without having sustained the slightest injury.

Religion has been frequently calumniated, by having the blame of our political evils laid to her charge. Hear what *Montagne*, who lived in the midst of those civil wars, says on this subject: "Let us confess the truth: "Whoever should make a draught from the army, even the most legally embodied, of those who serve from the zeal of a religious affection, and add to them, such as regard only the protection of the laws of their Country, or the service of the Prince, would find it difficult to make up of them one complete company of soldiers." *Essays*, Book ii. chap. xii. page 217.



“ eral, whose place Father *Joseph Buffeto* went to fill at  
 “ the Convent of Angola. Much about the same time,  
 “ the Capuchin missionaries received a letter from Car-  
 “ dinal *Cibo*, in the name of the sacred College. It con-  
 “ tained severe reproaches on the continuation of the sale  
 “ of slaves, and earnest remonstrances, to put an end, at  
 “ last, to that abominable traffic. But they saw little ap-  
 “ pearance of having it in their power to execute the or-  
 “ ders of the Holy See, because the commerce of the  
 “ Country consists entirely in ivory and slaves.\*” All  
 the efforts of the missionaries issued simply in an exclu-  
 sion of the English from a share of the traffic.

The Earth would be a paradise, were the Christian Religion producing universally its native effects. It is Christianity which has abolished slavery in the greatest part of Europe. It wrested, in France, enormous possessions out of the hands of the Earls and Barons, and destroyed there a part of their inhuman rights, by the terrors of a life to come. But the people opposed still another bulwark to tyranny, and that was the power of the Women.

Our Historians are at pains to remark the influence which some women have had under certain reigns, but never that of the sex in general. They do not write the History of the Nation, but merely the History of the Princes. Women are nothing in their eyes, unless they are decorated with titles. It was, however, from this feeble division of Society, that Providence, from time to time, called forth its principal defenders. I say nothing of those intrepid females, who have repelled, even by arms, the invaders of their country, such as *Joan of Arc*, to whom Rome and Greece would have erected altars : I speak of those who have defended the nation from internal foes, much more formidable still than foreign assailants ; of

\* Extract from the *General History of Voyages*, by the Abbé *Prevost*, Book xxii. page 180 : *Merolla*, A. D. 1633.



those who are powerful from their weakness, and who have nothing to fear, because they have nothing to hope.

From the sceptre down to the shepherds's crook, there is, perhaps, no country in Europe where women are treated so unkindly by the Laws, as in France; and there is no one where they have more power. I believe it is the only kingdom of Europe where they are absolutely excluded from the throne. In my country, a father can marry his daughters, without giving them any other portion than a chaplet of roses: At his death, they have all together only the portion of a younger child. This unjust distribution of property is common to the clown as to the gentleman. In the other parts of the kingdom, if they are richer, they are not happier. They are rather sold, than given, in marriage. Of a hundred young women, who there enter into the married state, there is not, perhaps, one who is united to her lover. Their condition was even still more wretched in former times. Cæsar, in his Commentaries, informs us, "That the husband had  
 " the power of life and death over his wife, as well as  
 " over his children; that when a man of noble birth hap-  
 " pened to die, the relations of the family assembled; if  
 " there was the slightest shadow of suspicion against  
 " his wife, she was put to the torture as a slave; and if  
 " found guilty, was condemned to the flames, after a pre-  
 " vious process of inexpressible suffering.\*"

What is singularly strange, at that very time, and even before, they enjoyed the most unbounded power. Hear what the good *Plutarch* says on the subject, as he is communicated to us, through the medium of the good *Amyot*.  
 " Before the Gauls had passed the Alps, and got posses-  
 " sion of that part of Italy which they now inhabit, a vio-  
 " lent and alarming sedition arose among them, which is-  
 " sued in a civil war. But their wives, just as the two  
 " armies were on the point of engaging, threw themselves

\* Gallic War, book vi.



“ into the intervening space ; and taking up the cause of  
 “ their diffension, discussed it with so much wisdom, and  
 “ decided upon it with such moderation and equity, that  
 “ they gave complete satisfaction to both parties. The  
 “ result was an unanimous return to mutual benevolence,  
 “ and cordial friendship, which reunited not only city to  
 “ city, but family to family : And this with so much ef-  
 “ fect, that ever since, they invariably consult their wives,  
 “ on all deliberations, whether respecting war or peace ;  
 “ and they settle all disputes and differences with neigh-  
 “ bours and allies, conformably to the advice of the wom-  
 “ en. Accordingly, in the agreement which they made  
 “ with *Hannibal*, when he marched through Gaul, among  
 “ other stipulations, this was one, that if the Gauls should  
 “ have occasion to complain of any injury done them by  
 “ the Carthaginians, the cause was to be submitted to the  
 “ decision of the Carthaginian Officers and Governors  
 “ serving in Spain : And if, on the contrary, the Cartha-  
 “ ginians could allege any ground of complaint against  
 “ the Gauls, the matter should be left to the determina-  
 “ tion of the Wives of the Gauls.\*”

It will be difficult to reconcile these two clashing au-  
 thorities, unless we pay attention to the reaction of human  
 things. The power of women proceeds from their oppres-  
 sion. The commonalty, as oppressed as they, gave them  
 their confidence, as they had given theirs to the people.  
 Both parties were wretched, but misery attracted them to-  
 ward each other, and they made a common stock of woe.  
 They decided with the greater equity, that they had noth-  
 ing to gain or lose. To the women we must ascribe the  
 spirit of gallantry, the thoughtlessness, the gaiety, and, a-  
 bove all, the taste for raillery, which have, at all times,  
 characterized our Nation. With a song simply, they have  
 oftener than once made our tyrants tremble. Their bal-  
 lads have sent many a banner into the field, and put many

\* Plutarch, vol. ii. in folio : Virtuous Actions of Women ; page 282.



a battalion to flight. It is by them that ridicule has acquired such a prodigious influence in France, as to have become the most terrible weapon which it is possible to employ, though it be the armour only of the weak, because women are the first to lay hold of it; and as, from national prejudice, their esteem is the first of blessings, it follows, that their contempt must be the most grievous calamity imaginable.\*

Cardinal *Richlieu* having, at last, restored to Kings the legislative authority, thereby stripped the Nobility, in a great measure, of the power of injuring each other by civil wars; but he was not able to abolish among them the rage for duelling, because the root of this prejudice is in the people, and because edicts have no power over their opinions when they are oppressed. The edict of the Prince prohibits the gentleman to go to meet his antagonist in single combat, and the opinion of his valet de chambre forces him out. The Nobility arrogate to themselves all the national honour, but the People determine for them the object of it, and allot its proportions. *Louis XIV*, however, gave back to the People, a part of their natural liberty, by means of his very despotism. As he hardly saw any thing else in the world, except himself, every one appeared in his eyes nearly equal. It was his wish, that all his subjects should have permission to contribute their exertions toward the extension of his glory, and he rewarded them in proportion as such exertions had promoted this

\* A provincial Academy, some years ago, proposed this question as the subject for the prize of Saint *Louis*; "In what manner female education might be made to contribute toward rendering men better?" I treated it, and was guilty of committing two faults of ignorance, not to mention others. The first was, my presuming to write on such a subject, after *Fenelon* had composed an excellent treatise on the education of young women; and the second, to think of arguing for truth in an Academy. The one in question did not bestow the prize, and recalled its subject. All that can be said on this question is, that in every country, women are indebted for their empire, only to their virtues, and to the interest which they have always taken in behalf of the miserable.



end. The desire of pleasing the Prince reduced all ranks to a level. Under that reign, of consequence, were seen multitudes of men of all classes, rendering themselves eminent, each in his several way. But the misfortunes of that great King, and perhaps his policy, having obliged him to descend to the sale of employments, of which the pernicious example had been set him by his predecessors, and which has been extended, since his time, to the meanest offices in the State, this gave the finishing stroke to the ancient preponderancy of the Nobility; but it gave rise, in the Nation, to a power much more dangerous; that of gold. This, this has levelled every rival influence, and triumphed over even the power of women.\*

And first, the Nobility have preserved a part of their privileges, in the country; tradespeople possessed of some fortune, do not choose to live there, for fear of being exposed, on the one hand, to insult, and of being confounded, on the other, with the peasantry, by paying tallage and drawing for the militia. They like better to live in small cities, where a multitude of financial employments and revenues enable them to subsist in indolence and listlessness, rather than to vivify the fields which degrade their cultivators. Hence it comes to pass, that small landed estates sink in value, and are year after year falling into the hands of the great proprietors. The rich, who make

\* As most men are shocked at abuses, only by seeing them in detail, because every thing great dazzles, and commands respect, I shall here produce a few instances of the effect of venality in the lower orders of Society. All the subaltern conditions which naturally rank under others, of right, are become the superiors, in fact, merely because they are the richer. Accordingly, it is the Apothecary, now a days, who has the employing of the Physician; the Attorney of the Advocate; the Handicraft of the Merchant; the Master mason of the Architect; the Bookseller of the Scholar, even those of the Academy; the Chair hirer in Church, of the Preacher, &c.—I shall say no more. It is easy to see to what all this leads. From this venality alone must ensue the decline of all talents. It is, in fact, abundantly perceptible, on comparing those of the age in which we live, with those of the Age of *Louis XIV.*



the purchases of them, parry the inconveniencies to which they are subject, either by their personal nobility, or by buying off the imposts under which they labour.

I know well, that a celebrated Farmer general, some years ago, greatly cried up the over grown proprietors, because, as he alleged, they could afford to give a better bargain than the smaller : But without considering whether they could sell corn cheaper, and all the other consequences of the *nett produce*, which attempts have been made to establish as the alone standard and object of agriculture, nay, of morality ; it is certain, that if any given number of wealthy families were, year after year, to purchase the lands which might lie commodiously for them, such family bargains would speedily become fatal to the State. I have often been astonished, that there is no law in France, to prevent the unbounded accumulation of landed property. The Romans had censors, who limited, in the first instance, the extent of a man's possession to seven acres, as being sufficient for the subsistence of one family. By the word which we translate *acre*, was understood as much land as a yoke of oxen could plough in one day. As Rome increased in luxury, it was extended to five hundred : But even this Law, though indulgent in the extreme, was soon infringed, and the infraction hurried forward the ruin of the Republic.

“ Extensive parks,” says *Pliny*,\* “ and unbounded domains, have ruined our own Italy, and the Provinces which the Romans have conquered : For that which occasioned the victories, obtained by *Nero* (the Consul) in Africa, was simply this, six men were in possession of almost one half of Numidia, when *Nero* defeated them.” *Plutarch* informs us, that in his time, under *Trajan*, you could not have raised three thousand men in all Greece, which had formerly furnished armies so numerous ; and that you might have sometimes travelled a

\* Natural History, Book xviii. chap. iii. and vi.



whole day, on the high roads, without meeting a human being, except now and then a straggling solitary shepherd. The reason was, Greece had by this time been parcelled out among a few great proprietors.

Conquerors have always met with a very feeble resistance in countries where property is very unequally divided. We have examples of this in all ages, from the invasion of the Lower Empire by the Turks, down to that of Poland in our own days. Overgrown estates destroy the spirit of patriotism, at once, in those who have every thing, and in those who have nothing. "The shocks of corn," said *Xenophon*, "inspire those who raise them with courage to defend them. The fight of them in the fields, is as a prize exhibited in the middle of the theatre, to crown the conqueror."

Such is the danger to which excessive inequality of property exposes a State outwardly; let us take a look of the internal mischief which it produces. I have heard a person of undoubted veracity relate, that an old Comptroller general having retired to his native province, made a very considerable purchase in land. His estate was surrounded by about fifty small manors, the annual rent of which might be from fifteen hundred to two thousand livres each.\* The proprietors of these were good country gentlemen, who had through a succession of generations supplied their Country with gallant officers and respectable matrons. The Comptroller general, desirous of extending his landed property, invited them to his castle, entertained them magnificently, gave them a taste for Parisian luxury, and concluded with an offer of double the value of their estates, if they thought proper to dispose of them. They to a man accepted his offer, imagining they were going to double their revenue, and in the hope, no less fallacious to a country gentleman, of securing a powerful protector at Court. But the difficulty of laying

\* About from sixty to fourscore guineas.



out their money to advantage, a taste for elegant expense, inspired by the sight of sums of money such as they never before had in their coffers, in a word, frequent journeys to Paris, and back to the country, soon melted away the price of their patrimony. These respectable families disappeared one after another; and thirty years afterward, one of their descendants, who could reckon among his ancestors a long succession of captains of dragoons, and knights of St. *Louis*, was found scampering over his paternal inheritance, on foot, soliciting the place of keeper of a salt office, to keep him from starving.

Such are the mischiefs produced among the citizens of a country, by the excessive accumulation of property. Those produced on the state of the lands are not less to be deplored. I was, some years ago in Normandy, at the house of a gentleman in affluent circumstances, who cultivated, himself, a very considerable grass farm, situated on a rising ground, of a very indifferent soil. He walked me round his vast enclosure, till we came to a large space, completely overrun with mosses, horsetail and thistles. Not a blade of good grass was to be seen. The soil, in truth, was at once ferruginous and marshy. They had intersected it with many trenches, to drain off the water, but all to no purpose: Nothing could grow.

Immediately below, there was a series of small farms, the face of which was clothed with grassy verdure, planted with apple trees in full fruit, and enclosed with tall alder trees. The cows were feeding among the trees of the orchards, while the country girls sung, as they were spinning, around the door. These "native wood notes wild," repeated from distance to distance, under the shade of the trees, communicated to this little hamlet, a vivacity which increased still more the nakedness, and the depressing solitude, of the spot where we were. I asked its possessor, How it came to pass, that lands so contiguous, should present an aspect so very different?



“ They are,” replied he, “ of the self same nature, and  
 “ there formerly were, on this very spot, small houses  
 “ similar to those which you see below. I made a pur-  
 “ chase of them, but sadly to my loss. Their late inhab-  
 “ itants having abundance of leisure, and a small compass  
 “ of ground on their hands, cleared away the mosses, the  
 “ thistles, manured it ; up sprung the grass. Had they  
 “ a mind to plant ? They dug holes, they removed the  
 “ stones, and filled them with good mould, which they  
 “ went to collect from the bottom of the ditches, and a-  
 “ long the highway’s side. Their trees took root and  
 “ prospered. But all these necessary operations cost me  
 “ incredible time and expense. I never was able to make  
 “ out the common interest of my money.”

I am bound in justice to remark, that this wretched steward, but excellent gentleman, in every sense of that word, was at that very time relieving, by his charity, most of those ancient farmers, now disabled to earn a livelihood. Here, then, is another instance of both men and lands rendered useless, by the injudicious extension of property. It is not upon the face of vast domains, but into the bosom of industry, that the FATHER of Mankind pours out the precious fruits of the Earth.

I could easily demonstrate, that enormous property is the principal cause of the multiplication of the poor all over the kingdom, for the very reason which has procured it the eulogium of many of our Writers, namely, that it spares men the labours of agriculture. There are many places, where there is no employment to give the peasantry during a considerable part of the year ; but I shall insist only on their wretchedness, which seems to increase with the riches of the district where their lot is cast.

The district of Caux is the most fertile country which I know in the World. Agriculture, on the great scale, is there carried to the height of perfection. The deepness of the soil, which, in some places, extends to five and six feet ; the manure supplied from the stratum of marl over



which it is raised, and that of the marine plants on its shores, which are spread over its surface, concur toward clothing it with the noblest vegetables. The corn, the trees, the cattle, the women, the men are there handfomer and more vigorous than any where else. But as the laws have assigned, in that province, in every family, two thirds of the landed property to the first born, you find there unbounded affluence, on the one hand, and extreme indigence, on the other.

I happened one day to be walking through this fine country; and admired, as I went, its plains so well cultivated, and so extensive, that the eye loses itself in the unbounded prospect. Their long ridges of corn, humouring the undulations of the plain, and terminating only in villages, and castles surrounded with venerable trees, presented the appearance of a Sea of verdure, with here and there an island rising out of the Horizon. It was in the month of March, and very early in the morning. It blew extremely cold from the North East. I perceived something red running across the fields, at some distance, and making toward the great road, about a quarter of a league before me. I quickened my pace, and got up in time enough to see that they were too little girls in red jackets and wooden shoes, who, with much difficulty, were scrambling through the ditch which bounded the road. The tallest, who might be about six or seven years old, was crying bitterly. "Child," said I to her, "What makes you cry? and, Whither are you going at so early an hour?" "Sir," replied she, "my poor mother is very ill. There is not a morsel of broth to be had in all our parish. We are going to that church in the bottom, to try if the Curé of this parish can find us some. I am crying because my little sister is not able to walk any farther." As she spake, she wiped her eyes with a bit of canvas, which served her for a petticoat. On her raising up the rag to her face, I could perceive that she had not the semblance of a shift.



The abject misery of these children, so poor, in the midst of plains so fruitful, wrung my heart. The relief which I could administer to them was small indeed. I myself was then on my way to see misery in other forms.

The number of wretches is so great, in the best cantons of this province, that they amount to a fourth, nay, to a third of the inhabitants in every parish. The evil is continually on the increase. These observations are founded on my personal experience, and on the testimony of many parish ministers of undoubted veracity. Some Lords of the Manor order a distribution of bread to be made, once a week, to most of their peasantry, to eke out their livelihood. Ye stewards of the public, reflect that Normandy is the richest of our provinces; and extend your calculations, and your proportions, to the rest of the Kingdom! Let the morality of their financier supersede that of the Gospel; for my own part, I desire no better proof of the superiority of Religion to the reasonings of Philosophy, and of the goodness of the national heart to the enlarged views of our policy, than this, that notwithstanding the deficiency imputable to our laws, and our errors in almost every respect, the State continues to support itself, because charity and humanity almost constantly interpose in aid of Government.

Picardy, Brittany, and other provinces, are incomparably more to be pitied than Normandy. If there be twentyone millions of persons in France, as is alleged, there must be then, at least, seven millions of paupers. This proportion by no means diminishes in the cities, as may be concluded from the number of foundlings in Paris, which amounts, one year with another, to six or seven thousand, whereas the number of children, not abandoned by their parents, does not exceed, in that city, fourteen or fifteen thousand. And it is reasonable to suppose, that among these last, there must be a very considerable proportion, the progeny of indigent families. The others are partly, it must be admitted, the fruit of libertinism; but



irregularity in morals proves equally the misery of the people, and even more powerfully, as it constrains them at once to renounce virtue, and to stifle the very first feelings of Nature.

The spirit of finance has accumulated all these woes on the head of the People, by stripping them of most of the means of subsistence; but, what is infinitely more to be regretted, it has sapped the foundations of their morality. It no longer esteems or commends any but those who are making a fortune. If any respect be still paid by it, to talents and virtue, this is the only reason, it considers these as one of the roads to wealth. Nay, what, in the phrase of the world is called good company, has hardly any other way of thinking. But I should be glad to know, whether there be any honourable method of making a fortune, for a man who has not already got money, in a country where every thing is put up to sale. A man must, at least, intrigue, unite himself to a party and flatter it, secure puffers and protectors; and for this purpose he must be dishonest, corrupt, adulate, deceive, adopt another man's passions, good or bad, in a word, let himself down in one shape or another. I have seen persons attain every variety of situation; but, I speak it without reserve, whatever praise may have been bestowed on their merit, and though many of them really had merit, I never saw any one, even of the strictest honour, raise himself, and preserve his situation, but by the sacrifice of some virtue.

Let us now look at the reactions of these evils. The people usually balance the vices of their oppressors by their own. They oppose corruption to corruption. From the prolific womb of vulgar debauchery issues a monstrous swarm of buffoons, comedians, dealers in luxury of every sort, nay, even men of letters, who, to flatter the rich, and save themselves from indigence, extend dissipation of manners and of opinions to the remotest ex-



tremity of Europe. In the class of the unmarried vulgar, we find the most powerful bulwark opposed to rank and wealth. As this is a very numerous body, and comprehends not only the youth of both sexes, who, with us, do not form early marriages, but an infinite number of men besides, who, from peculiarity of condition, or want of fortune, are deprived, as youth is, of the honours of Society, and of the first pleasures of Nature, they constitute a formidable association, which has all reputations at their mercy, together with the power of disturbing the peace of all families. These are the persons who retail, for a dinner, that inexhaustible collection of anecdotes, favourable or unfavourable, which are, in every instance, to regulate public opinion.

It is not in the power of a rich man to marry a handsome wife, and enjoy himself at home in his own way; those persons lay him under the necessity, unless he would be laughed at, that is, under pain of the severest evil which can befall a Frenchman, of making his wife the central point of all fashionable society; he must exhibit her at all public places; and adopt the manners which his plebeian dictators think proper to prescribe, however contradictory they may be to Nature, and however inconsistent with conjugal felicity. While, as a regularly embodied army, they dispose of the reputation and the pleasures of the rich, two of the columns attack their fortune in front, in two different ways. The one employs the method of intimidation, and the other that of seduction.

I shall not here confine my reflections to the power and wealth gradually acquired by several religious orders, but extend them to their number in general. Some politicians pretend, that France would become too populous, were there no convents in it. Are England and Holland overpeopled, where there is no such thing? It betrays, besides, little acquaintance with the resources of Nature. The more inhabitants any country contains, the more productive it is. France could maintain, perhaps,



four times more people than it now contains, were it, like China, parcelled out into a great number of small freeholds. We must not form our judgment of its fertility from its immense domains. These vast, deserted districts yield only one crop in two years, or, at most, two in three. But with how many crops, and how many men, are small tenements covered ! Observe, in the vicinity even of Paris, the meadow land of St. Gervais. The soil is, in general, of a middling quality ; and notwithstanding, there is no species of vegetable which our Climate admits of, but what the industry of cultivation is there capable of producing. You see at once fields of corn, meadow grounds, kitchen gardens, flower plots, fruit trees and stately forest trees. I have seen there, in the same field, cherry trees growing in potatoe beds ; vines clambering up along the cherry trees, and lofty walnut trees rising above the vines ; four crops, one above another, within the earth, upon the earth, and in the air. No hedge is to be seen there, separating possession from possession, but an inter communication worthy of the Golden Age.

Here a young rustic, with a basket and ladder, mounts a fruit tree, like another *Vertumnus* ; while some young girl, in a winding of the adjoining valley, sings her song loud enough to be heard by him, presenting the image of another *Pomona*. If cruel prejudices have stricken with sterility and solitude a considerable part of France, and henceforth allot the possession of a great Kingdom to a little handful of proprietors, how is it that, instead of Founders of new orders, Founders of new colonies do not arise among us, as among the Egyptians and the Greeks ? Shall France never have to boast of an *Inachus*, and of a *Danaüs* ? Why do we force the African tribes to cultivate our lands in America, while our own peasantry is starving for want of employment at home ? Why do we not transport thither our miserable poor by families ; children, old men, lovers, cousins, nay, the very church-



es and fairs of our villages, that they may find in those far distant lands, the loves and the illusions of a country.

Ah! had liberty and equality been invited to those regions, where Nature does so much with moderate cultivation, the cottages of the New World would, at this day, have been preferable to the palaces of the Old. Will another Arcadia never spring up in some corner of the Earth? When I imagined I had some influence with men in power, I endeavoured to exert it in projects of this nature; but I have never had the felicity of falling in with a single one, who took a warm interest in the happiness of Mankind. I have endeavoured to trace, at least, the plan of them, as a legacy to those who shall come after me, but the clouds of calamity have spread a gloom over my own life; and the possibility of enjoying happiness, even in a dream, is no longer my portion.

Politicians have considered war itself as necessary to a State, because, as they pretend, it takes off the superflux of Mankind. In general, they have a very limited knowledge of Human Nature. Independent of the resources of the subdivision of property into small allotments, which every where multiply the fruits of the Earth, we may rest assured, that there is no country but what has the means of emigration within its reach, especially since the discovery of the New World. Besides, there is not a single State, even among those which are best peopled, but what contains immense tracts of uncultivated land. China and Bengal are, I believe, the countries on the Globe which contain most inhabitants. In China, nevertheless, are many and extensive deserts, amidst its finest provinces, because avarice attracts those who should cultivate them, to the vicinity of great rivers, and to the cities, for the conveniency of commerce. Many enlightened travellers have made this observation.

Hear what that honest Dutchman, *Walter Schouten*, says of the deserts of Bengal. "Toward the South, a



“ long the sea coast, at the mouth of the Ganges, there is  
 “ a very considerable extent of territory, desert and un-  
 “ cultivated, from the indolence and inactivity of the in-  
 “ habitants, and also from the fear which they are under  
 “ of the incursions of those of Arracan; and of the croc-  
 “ odiles and other monsters which devour men, lurking  
 “ in the deserts, by the sides of brooks, of rivers, of mo-  
 “ rasses, and in caverns.\*” Obstacles very inconsidera-  
 ble, it must be allowed, in a Nation where Fathers some-  
 times sell their children for want of the means of sup-  
 porting them! *Bernier*, the physician, remarks likewise,  
 in his travels over the Mogul Empire, that he found a  
 great many, but deserted islands, at the mouth of the  
 Ganges.

We must ascribe, in general, to the excessive number  
 of bachelors, that of profligate women; which univer-  
 sally are in exact proportion to each other. This evil, too,  
 is the effect of a natural reaction. As the two sexes are  
 born and die in equal numbers, every man comes into the  
 world, and leaves it, in company with his female. Every  
 man, therefore, who prefers celibacy to the married state,  
 dooms a female, at the same time, to a single life. The  
 ecclesiastical order robs the sex of so many husbands;  
 and the social order deprives them of the means of sub-  
 sistence. Our manufactures and machinery, so ingeni-  
 ously industrious, have swallowed up almost all the arts  
 by which they were formerly enabled to earn a liveli-  
 hood. I do not speak of those who knit stockings, em-  
 broider, weave, &c. employments which, in better times,  
 so many worthy matrons followed, but which are now  
 entirely engrossed by persons bred to the business, but  
 we have, forsooth! taylor, shoemakers, male hairdress-  
 ers for the ladies. We have men milliners, dealers in  
 linen, gauze, muslin, gum flowers. Men are not ashamed  
 to assume to themselves the easy and commodious oc-

\* *Walter Schouten's Voyage to the East Indies*, vol. ii. page 154.



cupations, and to leave to the poor women, the rougher and more laborious. We have female dealers in cattle, in pigs, driving through fairs on horseback: There are others who vend bricks, and navigate barges, quite embrowned with the sun; some labour in quarries.

We meet multitudes, in Paris, sweating under an enormous load of linen, under heavy water pails, blacking shoes on the quays; others yoked, like beasts, to little carts. Thus the sexes unsex themselves; the men dwindle into females, the women harden into men. The greatest part of females, in truth, would rather turn their charms to account than their strength. But what mischief is every day produced by women of the town! What conjugal infidelity, what domestic plunder, what quarrelling, beating, duelling, do they occasion! Scarcely has night begun to spread her curtain, when every street is inundated with them; every place of resort swarms with these unhappy creatures; at every corner they lie in wait for their prey. Others of them, known by the name, now of some consideration among the vulgar, of *kept mistresses*, loll it away to the opera and playhouse, in magnificent equipages. They take the lead, at the balls and festivals of the better sort of our trades folks. For them, in part, arise in the suburbs, in the midst of gar- ens in the English taste, gay alcoves in the Egyptian stile. Every one of them bent on melting down a fortune. It is thus GOD punishes the oppressors of a People, by the oppressed. While the rich are dreaming that they are expending their substance in tranquillity, men springing from the dregs, plunder them in their turn by the torments of opinion: If they are so fortunate as to escape these, fall they must into the hands of abandoned women; who, if they should happen to miss the fathers, make sure of indemnifying themselves upon the children.

An attempt has been made, for some years past, to give encouragement to virtue, in our poor country girls, by festivals called *Rosieres* (rose feasts;) for as to those who



are rich, and our city dames in business, the respect which they owe to their fortune, permits them not to put themselves on a level with the female peasantry, even at the foot of the altar. But you who bestow crowns on virtue, are you not afraid of blighting the prize by your touch? Know you not that among Nations who really honoured virtue, the Prince only, or the voice of the Country, presumed to confer the crown? The proconsul *Apronius* refused the civic crown to a soldier who had merited it, because he considered this privilege as belonging only to the Emperor. *Tiberius* bestowed it, finding fault with *Apronius* for not having done it, in quality of Proconsul.\* Have you been informed in what respect virginity was held among the Romans? The Vestals had the maces of the Prætors borne before them: We have mentioned, on a former occasion, that their presence, merely, bestowed a pardon on the criminal going to execution, provided, however, the Vestals could affirm, that they did not pass that way expressly for the purpose. They had a particular bench allotted them at the public festivals; and several Empreses requested, as the highest honour they could aspire to, permission to sit among them. And our Paris trades people, too, crown our rustic Vestals!† Noble and generous effort! They bestow a garland of roses upon indigent virtue, in the country; while, in the city, vice flaunts about glittering with diamonds.

On the other hand, the punishments of guilt appear to me as injudiciously adjusted as the rewards of virtue. We too frequently hear called aloud in our streets these terrible words, *The sentence of condemnation!* but never, *The sentence of reward.* Crimes are repressed by infamous

\* *Annals of Tacitus*, book iii. year 6.

† They *condescend*, likewise, to permit them to eat at the same table with themselves, for that day. See the journals of the festivity, which break out into raptures on this occasion.



punishments. A simple brand inflicted, instead of reforming the criminal, frequently plunges him deeper in guilt, and not seldom drives his whole family headlong into vicious courses. Where, let me ask, can an unhappy wretch find refuge, who has been publicly whipped, branded and drummed out? Necessity has made him a thief; indignation and despair will hurry him on to murder. His relations, dishonoured in the public estimation, abandon their home, and become vagabonds. His sisters give themselves up to prostitution.

These effects of the fear, which the hangman impresses on the lower orders, are considered as prejudices which are salutary to them. But they produce, as far as I am able to judge, unspeakable mischief. The vulgar extend them to actions the most indifferent, and convert them into a bitter aggravation of misery. Of this I witnessed an instance on board a vessel, in which I was a passenger, on my return from the Isle of France. I observed that not one of the sailors would eat in company with the cook of the ship; they hardly deigned even to speak to him. I enquired the reason of this at the Captain. He told me, that being at Pégú, about six months before, he had left this man on shore, to take charge of a warehouse which the people of the country had lent him. When night came on, these people locked the door of it, and carried home the key with them. The storekeeper being on the inside, and not having it in his power to go out to disburthen nature, was under the necessity of easing himself in a corner. Unfortunately, this warehouse was likewise a church. In the morning the proprietors came and opened the door; but observing that the place was polluted, they fell upon the poor storekeeper, with loud exclamations, bound him fast, and delivered him over to the executioner, who would have immediately hanged him, unless the Captain of the vessel, seconded by a Portuguese Bishop and the King's brother, had hastened to interpose in his behalf, and saved him from the gallows. From



that moment, the failors considered their countryman as degraded, from having passed, as they alleged, through the hands of the hangman.

This prejudice did not exist among either the Greeks or Romans. There are no traces of it among the Turks, the Ruffians and the Chinese. It does not proceed from a sense of honour, nor even from the shame of guilt; it is attached only to the species of punishment. The decapitation of a man for the crimes of treason and perfidy, or being shot for desertion, are considered as no stigma on the family of the person thus punished. The people, sunk below their level, despise that only which is peculiar to themselves, and shew no pity in their decisions, because they are miserable.

The wretchedness of the lower orders is, therefore, the principal source of our physical and moral maladies. There is another, no less fertile in mischief, I mean the education of children. This branch of political economy engaged, among the Ancients, the attention of the greatest Legislators. The Persians, the Egyptians and the Chinese, made it the basis of their Government. On this foundation *Lycurgus* reared the fabric of the Spartan Republic. We may even go so far as to affirm, that wherever there is no national education, there is no durable legislation. With us, education has no manner of reference to the constitution of the State. Our most celebrated Writers, such as *Montagne*, *Fenelon*, *John James Rousseau*, have been abundantly sensible how defective our police is, in this respect: But despairing, perhaps, of effecting a reformation, they have preferred offering plans of private and domestic education, to patching up the old method, and adapting it to all the absurdities of the present state of Society. For my own part, as I am tracing up our evils to their source, only in the view of exculpating Nature, and in the hope that some favoured genius may one day arise to apply a remedy, I find myself farther engaged,



to examine into the influence of education on our particular happiness, and on that of our Country in general.

Man is the only sensible being who forms his reason on continual observations. His education begins with life, and ends only with death. His days would fleet away in a state of perpetual uncertainty, unless the novelty of objects, and the flexibility of his brain gave, to the impressions of his early years, a character not to be effaced. At that period of life are formed the inclinations and the aversions which influence the whole of our existence. Our first affections are likewise the last. They accompany us through the events with which human life is variegated. They reappear in old age, and then revive the sensibilities of childhood with still greater force than those of mature age. Early habits have an influence even on animals, to such a degree, as to extinguish their natural instinct. *Lycurgus* exhibited a striking example of this to the Lacedaemonians, in the case of two hounds taken from the same litter, in one of which education had completely triumphed over Nature. But I could produce still stronger instances in the Human Species, in which early habit is found triumphant, sometimes, even over ambition. History furnishes innumerable examples to this purpose; I beg leave to produce one which has not yet obtained a place in the historic page, and which is, apparently, of no great importance, but is highly interesting to myself, because it brings to my recollection persons who were justly dear to me.

When I was in the Russian service, I frequently had the pleasure of dining at the table of his Excellency *M. de Villebois*,\* Grand Master of Artillery, and General of

\* *Nicolas de Villebois* was a native of Finland, but descended from a French family originally from Brittany. In the battle of Frankfort, he turned the tide of victory decidedly in favour of Russia, by charging the Prussians at the head of a regiment of fusileers of the artillery, of which he was then Colonel. This action, joined to his personal merit, procured him the blue ribbon of St. Andrew, and soon after the place of Grand Master of the Ordnance, which he held at the time of my arrival in Russia.



the corps of engineers to which I belonged. I observed that there was every day served up to him a plate of something gray coloured, I could not tell what, and similar, in form, to small pebbles. He ate very heartily of this dish, but never presented it to any one at table; though his entertainments were always given in the most elegant style, and every other dish indiscriminately recommended to his guests, of whatever rank. He one day perceived me looking attentively at his favourite mess; and asked, with a smile, if I would please to taste it. I accepted his offer, and found that it consisted of little balls of curdled milk, salted, and besprinkled with anise seeds, but so hard and so tough, that it cost me inexpressible exertion to force my teeth through them, but to swallow them down, was absolutely impossible.

Though his credit was then on the decline, he procured me an admission into the service of her Imperial Majesty *Catharine II*, and did me the honour of presenting me to her as one of the officers of his corps of engineers. He was making arrangements, in concert with General *Daniel de Bosquet*, Commander in Chief of the corps of engineers, for my farther promotion in it. They both employed all their powers of persuasion to retain me in that service, and endeavoured to render it agreeable by every affectionate and polite attention, and by assurances of an honourable and advantageous establishment. But the love which I bore to my country, in whose service I had previously engaged, and to which I still wished to devote my services, a fond wish, fed with vain hopes, by men of very high character, induced me to persist in demanding my dismissal, which I obtained, with Captain's rank, in 1765.

On leaving Russia, I made an effort to serve my country, at my own expense, by joining that party in Poland which France had espoused. There I was exposed to very great risks, having been made prisoner by the Polish Russian party. On my return to Paris, I presented memorials respecting the state of things in the North, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which I predicted the future partition of Poland, by the Powers contiguous. This partition actually took place some years afterward. I have since endeavoured to deserve well of my country by my services, both military, in the West Indies, in my capacity of Captain of the royal engineers, and literary, in France, and I add, with confidence, by my conduct likewise: But I have not, hitherto, enjoyed the felicity of experiencing, in my fortune, that she has been pleased graciously to accept the various sacrifices which I saw it my duty to make to her.



“ These are,” said the Grand Master to me, “ the  
 “ cheeses of my native country. It is a taste which I  
 “ acquired in my boyish days. I was accustomed, when  
 “ a child, to feed with the peasants on these coarse milk  
 “ beverages. When I am travelling, and have got to a  
 “ distance from great towns, on coming near a country  
 “ village, I send on my servants and carriages before;  
 “ and then my great delight is to go unattended, and care-  
 “ fully muffled up in my cloak, into the house of the first  
 “ peasant on the road, and devour an earthen pot full of  
 “ curdled milk, stuffed full of brown bread. On my last  
 “ journey into Livonia, on one of these occasions, I met  
 “ with an adventure, which amused me very highly.  
 “ While I was breakfasting in this style, in comes a man  
 “ singing cheerly, and carrying a parcel on his shoulder.  
 “ He sat down by me, and desired the landlord to give  
 “ him a breakfast such as mine. I asked this traveller so  
 “ gay, whence he came, and which way he was going. *I*  
 “ *am a sailor, says he, and just arrived from a voyage to*  
 “ *India; I disembarked at Riga, and am on my return to*  
 “ *Herland, which is my native country, where I have not*  
 “ *been these three years. I shall stay there till I have spent*  
 “ *these hundred crowns,* pulling out a leathern bag, and  
 “ chinking the money. I asked him several questions a-  
 “ bout the countries he had seen, which he answered ve-  
 “ ry pertinently. *But,* said I to him, *What will you do,*  
 “ *when your hundred crowns are gone?—Oh!* says he, *I*  
 “ *will return to Holland, embark again for India, earn a-*  
 “ *nother bag of crowns, come back and enjoy myself in*  
 “ *Herland, in Franconia, my native country.*” The good  
 “ humour and thoughtlessness of this fellow diverted me  
 “ exceedingly,” continued the Grand Master. “ To con-  
 “ fess the truth, I envied his situation.”

Wise Nature, in giving so much force to early habits,  
 intended that our happiness should depend on those, who  
 are most concerned to promote it, that is, our parents;  
 for on the affections which they, at that season, inspire,



depends the affection which we are one day to be called upon to return. But, with us, as soon as the child is born, he is transferred to a mercenary nurse. The first bond which Nature intended should attach him to his parents, is burst asunder before it is formed. The day will come, perhaps, when he will behold the funeral procession of those who gave him birth, leave his father's door, with as much indifference as they saw his cradle turned out. He may be recalled home, it is true, at the age when the graces, when innocence, when the necessity of having an object of affection should fix him there forever. But he is permitted to taste those sweets only to make him feel, in a little while, the bitterness of having them taken away from him. He is sent to school; he is put to board far from home. There he is doomed to shed tears which no maternal hand is ever more to wipe away. It is there he is to form friendships with strangers, pregnant with regret and repentance; and there he must learn to extinguish the natural affections of brother, of sister, of father, of mother, which are the most powerful, and the sweetest chains by which Nature attaches us to our Country.

After this first horrid outrage committed on his young heart, others equally violent are offered to his understanding. His tender memory must be loaded with ablatives, with conjunctions, with conjugations. The blossom of human life is sacrificed to the metaphysical jargon of a dead language. What Frenchman could submit to the torture of learning his own in that manner? And if there be those who have exercised such laborious patience, Do they speak better than persons who have never endured such drudgery? Who writes best, a lady of the Court, or a pedantic grammarian? *Montagne*, so replenished with the ancient beauties of the Latin tongue, and who has given so much energy to our own, congratulates himself on *never having understood what the word vocative meant*. To learn to speak by grammar rules, is the same thing with learning to walk by the laws of equilibrium. It is



practice that teaches the grammar of a language, and the passions are our best instructors in the rhetoric of it. It is only at the age, and in places where they expand, that the beauties of *Virgil* and *Horace* are felt, a thing which our most celebrated college translators never dreamt of.

I recollect that when I was at school, I was for a long time stunned, as other boys are, by a chaos of barbarous terms; and that, when I happened to catch a glimpse, in the Author I was studying, of any stroke of genius which met my reason, or any sentiment which made its way to my heart, I kissed the book for joy. It filled me with astonishment to find that the Ancients had common sense, I imagined that there must be as great a difference between their reason and mine, as there was in the construction of our two languages. I have known several of my school-fellows so disgusted at Latin Authors, by those college explanations, that, long after they had bidden farewell to the seminary, they could not bear to hear their names mentioned. But when they came to be formed by acquaintance with the world, and by the operation of the passions, they became perfectly sensible of their beauties, and resorted to them as the most delightful of all companions. It is thus that children, with us, become stupified; and that an unnatural constraint is used to repress a period of life all fire and activity, transforming it into a state, sad, sedentary, and speculative, which has a dismal influence on the temperament, by ingrafting maladies without number upon it. But these, after all, amount only to the production of languor, and physical evils. But they are trained to vice; they are decoyed into ambition under the guise of emulation.

Of the two passions which are the moving principles of the human heart, namely, love and ambition, the last is by far the most durable, and the most dangerous. Ambition is the last that dies in the aged, and our mode of education puts it prematurely in motion in the young. It would be infinitely better to assist them in directing



their early tender affections toward an amiable object. Most are destined, one time or another, to feel the power of this gentle passion. Nature has, besides, made it the firmest cement of Society. If their age, or rather, if our financial manners forbid a commerce of early love, their young affections ought to be directed into the channel of friendship, and thus, as *Plato* proposes in his Republic, and as *Pelopidas* affected at Thebes, battalions of friends might be formed among them, at all seasons prepared to devote themselves in the service of their Country.\*

But ambition never rises except at the expense of another. Give it whatever specious name you please, it is ever the sworn enemy of all virtue. It is the source of vices the most dangerous and detestable; of jealousy, of hatred, of intolerance and cruelty; for every one is disposed to gratify it in his own way. It is forbidden to all men by Nature and Religion, and to the greatest part of subjects by Government. In our colleges, a lad is brought up to empire, who must be doomed, for life, to sell pepper. The young people, the hope of a great Nation, are there employed, for, at least, seven years, in learning to be the first in the art of declamation, of versifica-

\* *Divide & impera* (divide and govern) is a saying, I believe, of *Machiavel's*. Judge of the goodness of this maxim, from the miserable state of the country which gave it birth, and where it has been reduced into practice.

Children, at Sparta, were taught only to obey, to love virtue, to love their country, and to live in the most intimate union, till they were divided in their schools into two classes, of *Lovers* and *Beloved*. Among the other Nations of Greece, education was arbitrary; it consisted of a great variety of exercises, of eloquence, of wrestling, of running, of pythian, of olympic, of isthmian prizes, &c. These frivolities fostered undue partialities. Lacedemon gave Law to them all: And while the first, on going to engage in the battles of their country, needed the stimulus of pay, of harangues, of trumpets, of clarions, to excite their courage, it was necessary, on the contrary, to repress the ardor of the Lacedemonians. They went to battle, unstimulated by mercenary considerations, by eloquent addresses, to the sound of the flute, and singing, in one grand concert, the hymn of the two twin brothers, *Castor* and *Pollux*.



tion, of prattling. For one who succeeds in these trivial pursuits, how many thousands lose, at once, their health and their Latin !

It is emulation, we are told, which awakens talents. It would be an easy task to demonstrate, that the most celebrated Writers, in every walk of literature, never were brought up at college, from *Homer*, who was acquainted with no language but his own, down to *John James Rousseau*, who was a very indifferent Latin scholar. How many young men have made a brilliant figure in the run of the classes, who were by and by totally eclipsed in the vast sphere of Literature ! Italy is crowded with colleges and academies ; but, Can she boast, at this day, of so much as one man eminently distinguished ? Do we not see there, on the contrary, talents distracted, by ill assorted societies, by jealousies, by cabals, by intrigues, and by all the restlessness of ambition, become enfeebled, and melt away ?

I think I am able to perceive still another reason of this decline ; it is, that nothing is studied in those seminaries but the methods and forms of learning, or what, in the Painter's phrase, is called *manner*. This study, by fixing us in the track of a master, forces us out of the path of Nature, which is the source of all talents. Look to France, and observe what are the arts brought there to the highest perfection ; and you will find that they are those for which there is no public school, no prize, no academy : Such as milliners, jewellers, hair dressers, cooks, &c. We have, it is true, men of high reputation in the liberal arts, and in the sciences ; but these men had acquired their talents before they were introduced into academies. Besides, Will any one venture to affirm, that they are equal to those of preceding ages, who appeared before academies existed ? After all, admitting that talents are formed in colleges, they would not for that be less prejudicial to the Nation ; for it is of inconceivably more importance that a Country should possess virtue rather than talents, and



men happy, rather than men renowned. A treacherous glare covers the vices of those who succeed in our Colleges. But in the multitude who never succeed, secret jealousies, malicious whispers, mean flatteries, and all the vices of a negative ambition are already in a state of fermentation, and ready to burst forth, at the command of their leader, upon the World.

While depravity is thus taking possession of the hearts of children, some branches of education go directly to the perversion of their reason. These two abuses always walk hand in hand. First, they are taught to deduce false consequences. The Regent informs them that *Jupiter*, *Mercury* and *Apollo*, are gods : The Parish minister tells them that they are demons. The professor assures his pupil, that *Virgil*, who has so nobly supported the doctrine of a Providence, is got, at least, to the Elysian Fields, and that he enjoys in this world the esteem of all good men : The Curé informs him, that this same *Virgil* was a pagan, and must certainly be damned. The Gospel holds a contradictory language in another respect ; it recommends to the young man to be the last ; his college urges him by all means to be the first : Virtue commands him to descend ; education bids him rise. And what renders the contradiction still more glaring to the poor lad, it frequently proceeds, especially in the country, from one and the same mouth : For the same good Ecclesiastic, in many places, teaches the classics in the morning, and the catechism at night.

I can very easily conceive how the matter may be arranged, and contradictions reconciled, in the head of the Regent ; but they must of necessity confound and perplex all the ideas of the Learner, who is not paid for comprehending, as the other is, for retailing them.

The case is much worse, when subjects of terror are employed, where nothing ought to be administered but consolation : When application is made to them, for example, at the age of innocence, of the woes pronounced by



JESUS CHRIST, against the Pharisees, the doctors, and the other tyrants of the Jewish nation; or when their tender organs are shocked by certain monstrous images so common in our churches. I knew a young man who, in his infancy, was so terrified with the dragon of St. Marguerite, with which his preceptor had threatened him in the village church, that he actually fell sick of horror, believing that he saw the monster constantly at his pillow, ready to devour him. His father, in order to quiet his disturbed imagination, was under the necessity of appearing sword in hand to attack the dragon, and of pretending that he had killed him. Thus, as our method is, one error was driven out by another. When grown up, the first use which he made of his reason was to reflect, that the persons entrusted with the formation of that faculty, had imposed upon him twice.

After having elevated a poor boy above his equals, by the title of Emperor, and even above the whole Human Race, by that of Son of the Church, he is cruelly brought low by rigorous and degrading punishments. "Among other things," says *Montagne*,\* "that part of the police of most of our schools, has always given me much offence. They ought, at all hazards, certainly with much less disadvantage, to have adopted the extreme of indulgence. Youth immured presents the most horrid of all gaols. To punish a child before he is debauched, is an infallible method to debauch him. If you happen to pass when the lesson is delivering, you hear nothing but the cries of poor children undergoing chastisement, and the storming of masters intoxicated with rage. What a method to inspire with the love of learning, those tender and timid spirits, to drive them to it with furlly looks, and birchen armed hand! Unjust, pernicious proceeding! Add to this, what *Quintilian* has well remarked on the subject, that this impe-

\* *Essays*, book i. chap. 25.



“ rious authority is pregnant with the most dangerous  
 “ consequences, particularly from the mode of chastise-  
 “ ment. How much more decent an appearance would  
 “ their classes exhibit, strewed with flowers and verdant  
 “ boughs, than with the fragments of bloody rods ! I  
 “ would have portrayed in them, Joy, Gaiety, Flora, the  
 “ Graces, as the Philosopher *Speusippus* had in his school,  
 “ Where should their improvement be looked for, but  
 “ where their pleasure is ?\*”

I have seen, at college, many a pretty creature ready to fall into a swoon with pain, receive on their little hands, up to a dozen of sharp strokes. I have seen, by the infliction of this punishment, the skin separated from the tip of their fingers, and the bare flesh exposed. What shall be said of those infamous punishments, which produce a disgraceful effect, at once, on the morals of both scholars and regents, and of which a thousand examples might be adduced ? It is impossible to enter into any detail, on this subject, without putting modesty to the blush. And yet they are employed by priests. They rest on a passage from *Solomon's* writings, of this import, “ He  
 “ that spareth the rod hateth the child.” But who knows whether the Jews themselves practised corporal punishment after our fashion ? The Turks, who have retained a great part of their usages, hold this in detestation. It has been diffused over Europe only by the corruption of the Greeks of the Lower Empire, and it was introduced there by the Monks. If the Jews actually employed it, Who can tell but their ferocity might proceed from this part of their education ?

\* *Michael Montagne* is likewise, one of those men who were not educated at college ; the time of his continuance there, at least, was very short. He was instructed without tasting corporal punishment, and without emulation, under the paternal roof, by the gentlest of fathers, and by preceptors whose memory he has preciousy embalmed in his writings. He became, by means of an education so diametrically opposite to ours, one of the best, and one of the most intelligent men of the Nation.



Besides, there are in the Old Testament many advices never intended for our use. We find in it passages of very difficult explication, examples dangerous, and laws impracticable. In Leviticus, for example, the use of swine's flesh is prohibited. It is represented as a crime worthy of death, to violate the Sabbath day, by working upon it; that of killing an ox \* without the camp is forbidden under a like punishment, &c. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, says positively, that the Law of *Moses* is a Law of servitude; he compares it to the slave *Hagar*, whom *Abraham* repudiated. Whatever respect may be due to the Writings of *Solomon*, and to the Laws of *Moses*, we are not their disciples, but the disciples of HIM, who said, "suffer little children to come to Me; forbid them not;" who blessed them, and said that in order to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, we must become like them.

Our children, subverted by the vices of a faulty education, become false reasoners, knavish, hypocritical, envious, ugly and wicked. In proportion as they increase in age, they increase also in malignity and the spirit of contradiction. There is not a single schoolboy who knows any thing of the laws of his Country, but there are some who may have heard talk about those of the Twelve Tables. No one of them can tell how our own wars are conducted; but many are able to entertain you with some account of the wars of the Greeks and Romans. Not one of them but knows that single combat is prohibited; and many of them go to the fencing schools, where the only thing taught is to fight duels. They are sent thither, we are told, merely to learn a graceful carriage, and to walk like gentlemen; as if a gentleman must walk in the positions of *terce* and *quarte*, and as if the gait and attitude of a citizen ought to be that of a gladiator.

\* In what part of the Mosaic Institution, could our Author possibly find this penal statute? It is, surely, unnecessary to give infidelity a groundless triumph.



Others, destined to functions more peaceful, are put to school to learn the art of disputation. Truth, they gravely tell us, is struck out of the collision of opinions. There may be something like wit in the expression. But, for my own part, I should find myself incapable of distinguishing truth, if I met with her in the heat of a dispute. I should suspect that I was dazzled either by my own passion, or that of another man. Out of disputations have arisen sophisms, heresies, paradoxes, errors of every kind. Truth never shews her face before tyrants; and every man who disputes would be a tyrant if he could. The light of truth has no resemblance to the fatal coruscations of the thunder, produced by the clashing of the elements, but to the brightness of the Sun, which is perfectly pure only when Heaven is without a cloud.

I shall not follow our youth into the World, where the greatest merit of ancient times could be of no manner of service to him. What should he make of his magnanimous, republican sentiments under a despotism; and of those of disinterestedness in a country where every thing is bought and sold? What use could he make even of the impassible philosophy of a *Diogenes*, in cities where beggars are taken up, and sent to the house of correction? Youth would be sufficiently unhappy, even supposing it to have preserved only that fear of blame, and that desire of commendation, under which its studies were conducted. Influenced from first to last by the opinion of another, and having in itself no steady principle, the silliest of women will rule over him with more unbounded empire than his professor. But, let us say what we will, the colleges will be always full. All I pretend to plead for is, that children should be delivered, at least, from that tedious apprenticeship to misery, by which they are depraved, at the happiest and most amiable period of their existence, and which has afterward so much influence on their characters. Man is born good. It is society that renders



him wicked; and our mode of education prepares the way for it.

As my testimony is not of sufficient weight to bear out an assertion of so much importance, I shall produce several which are not liable to suspicion, and which I shall extract at random from the Writings of Ecclesiastics, not in conformity to their opinions, which are dictated by their condition, but resulting from their personal experience, which, in this respect, absolutely deranges their whole theory.

Here is one from Father *Claude d' Abbeville*, a Capuchin Missionary, on the subject of the children of the inhabitants of the Island of Maragnan, on the coast of Brasil; where we had laid the foundations of a colony, whose fate has been similar to that of so many others, which have been lost by our want of perseverance, and by our unhappy divisions, the usual and natural consequence of injudicious education. "Farther, I know not whether it be from the  
 " singular affection which fathers and mothers here bear  
 " to their children, but certain it is, they never say a word  
 " which can possibly give them the slightest uneasiness;  
 " they are left at perfect liberty to do just what they  
 " please, and to take their own way in every case, with-  
 " out any apprehension of reproof whatever. It is, ac-  
 " cordingly, a most astonishing appearance, and what has  
 " often excited admiration in myself, and many others,"  
 (and with good reason) "the children hardly ever do any  
 " thing that can displease their parents; on the contrary,  
 " they are at pains to do every thing which they know,  
 " or imagine, will be agreeable to them.\*" He afterwards presents a very favorable portrait of their physical and moral qualities.

His testimony is confirmed by *John de Lery*, as far as it respects the Brasilians, whose manners are the same,

\* History of the mission of Capuchin Fathers to the Island of Maragnan, chap. xlvii.



and who are in the near neighbourhood of that island. I beg leave to produce another, that of *Anthony Biet*, Superior of the Missionary Priests, who, in the year 1652, went over to Cayenne, another colony lost to us from the same causes, and since indifferently settled. It is on the subject of the children of the Galibis Savages.\*

“ The mother takes great delight in nursing her child.  
 “ There is no such thing known among them as giving  
 “ out their children to be nursed by a stranger. They  
 “ are fond of their children to excess. They bathe them  
 “ regularly every day in a fountain or river. They do  
 “ not swaddle them, but put them to sleep in a little bed  
 “ of cotton, made expressly for the purpose. They al-  
 “ ways leave them quite naked : Their progress in growth  
 “ is perfectly wonderful ; some are able to walk alone at  
 “ the age of eight or nine months. When grown to a  
 “ certain age, if they are incapable of walking upright,  
 “ they march along on their hands and feet. Those  
 “ people love their children to distraction. They never  
 “ chide nor beat them, but permit them to enjoy perfect  
 “ liberty ; which they never abuse by doing any thing  
 “ to vex their parents. They express great astonish-  
 “ ment when they see any of our people correct their  
 “ children.”

Here is a third, extracted from the work of a Jesuit, I mean Father *Charlevoix*, a man of various and extensive learning. It is a passage from his *Voyage to New Orleans*, another colony which we have suffered to fall to nothing, through our divisions, a consequence of our moral constitution, and of our system of education. He is speaking, in general, of the children of the Savages of North America.

“ Sometimes,† as the means of correcting their faults,  
 “ they employ prayers and tears, but never threatenings...”

\* *Voyage to the Equinoctial Countries*, book iii. page 390.

† *Historical Journal of North America*. Lett. xxiii. Aug. 1724.



“ A mother, who sees her daughter behave improperly,  
 “ falls a crying. The daughter naturally asks what is  
 “ the matter with her, and she satisfies herself with re-  
 “ plying, *You dishonour me.* This mode of reproof sel-  
 “ dom fails to produce the effect intended. Since, how-  
 “ ever, they have had a little more commerce with the  
 “ French, some of them begin to chastise their children;  
 “ but scarcely any except among those who are *Christians,*  
 “ or who are fixed in the colony. The severest punish-  
 “ ment usually inflicted by the Savages, for correcting  
 “ their children, is to throw a little water in their face....  
 “ Young women have been known to hang themselves,  
 “ for having received from a mother some slight reprimand,  
 “ or a few drops of water thrown in the face;  
 “ after giving warning of what they were going to do,  
 “ in these words, *You shall no longer have a daughter.*”

It is very amusing, to observe the embarrassment of this Author, in attempting to reconcile his European prejudices with his remarks as a traveller; which produces perpetual contradictions in the course of his Work. “ It would seem,” says he, “ that a childhood so badly  
 “ disciplined, must be succeeded by a very turbulent and  
 “ very corrupted youth.” He admits that reason directs those people earlier than it does other men; but he ascribes the cause of it to their temperament, which is, as he alleges, more tranquil. He recollects not the pathetic representations which he himself has exhibited of the scenes that their passions present, when they expand and exalt themselves in the bosom of peace, in their national assemblies, where their harangues leave all the art of our Orators far behind, as to justness and sublimity of imagery; or amidst the fury of war, where they brave, in the face of fire and faggots, all the rage of their enemies. He does not choose to see, that it is our European education which destroys our temper, for he acknowledges, in another place, that these same Savages, brought up after our manner, become more wicked than others. There



are passages in his Work, in which he presents the most affecting eulogium of their morality, of their amiable qualities, and of their happy life. He sometimes seems to envy their condition.

Time permits me not to give at large those different passages that may be read in the Book from which the above extract is made, nor to produce a multitude of other testimonies, respecting the different Nations of Asia, which demonstrate the perceptible influence that gentleness of education has on the physical and moral beauty of mankind, and which must be, in every political constitution, the most powerful bond of union among the members of the State.

I shall conclude these foreign authorities by a touch which good *John James Rousseau* could not have given with impunity, and which is extracted word for word from the work of a Dominican; I mean the agreeable History of the Antilles, by Father *du Tertre*, a man replete with taste, with good sense and humanity. Hear what he says of the Caribs, whose education resembles that of the nations which I have been describing.\*

“ On mentioning the word Savage,” says he, “ most  
 “ people will figure to themselves a species of men, bar-  
 “ barous, cruel, inhuman, destitute of reason, deformed,  
 “ tall as giants, hairy like bears; in a word, rather mon-  
 “ sters than rational beings; though, in truth, our Sava-  
 “ ges are such only in name, just as the plants and the  
 “ fruits which Nature produces without culture in forests  
 “ and deserts; for these too we denominate wild or sav-  
 “ age, though they possess the real virtues and properties  
 “ in their native force and vigor, which we frequently  
 “ corrupt by art, and cause to degenerate by transplanta-  
 “ tion into our gardens.....It is of importance,” adds he  
 afterwards, “ to demonstrate in this treatise, that the Sav-  
 “ ages in these islands, are the most content, the happiest,

\* Natural History of the Antilles, vol. ii. treatise vii. chap. 1. sect. 1.



“ *the least vicious, the most sociable, the least deformed*  
 “ and the least tormented by disease of any people in the  
 “ world.”

If we trace among ourselves the history of a villain's life, we shall find that his infancy was always very miserable. Wherever I have found children unhappy, I always observed they were wicked and ugly; and wherever I saw them happy, there likewise they were beautiful and good. In Holland and Flanders, where they are brought up with the greatest gentleness, their beauty is singularly remarkable. It is from them that the famous sculptor, *Francis* the Flemish, borrowed his charming models of children; and *Rubens*, that freshness of colouring which glows on those of his pictures. You never hear them, as in our cities, uttering loud and bitter cries; still less do you hear them threatened with the rod by their mothers and nurses, as with us. They are not gay, but they are contented. You observe on their countenance an air of tranquillity and satisfaction which is perfectly enchanting, and infinitely more interesting than the boisterous mirth of our young people when they are no longer under the eye of their fathers or preceptors.

This calmness is diffused over all their actions, and is the source of a happy composure which characterizes their whole future life. I never saw any country where parental tenderness was so strikingly expressed. The children, in their turn, repay them, in their old age, the indulgence with which they were treated in helpless infancy. By bonds so endearing are these people attached to their country, and so powerfully that we find very few of them settling among strangers. With us, on the contrary, fathers like better to see their children sprightly than good, because in a constitution of ambitious society, spirit raises a man to the head of a party, but goodness makes dupes. They have collections of epigrams composed by their children; but wit being only the perception of the relations of society, children scarcely ever



have any but what is borrowed. Wit itself is frequently, in them, the proof of a miserable existence, as may be remarked in the schoolboys of our cities, who usually are sprightlier than the children of the peasantry; and in such as labour under some natural defect, as lameness, hunchbackedness, and the like, who, in respect of wit, are still more premature than others. But, in general, they are all exceedingly forward in point of feeling; and this reflects great blame on those who degrade them, at an age when they frequently feel more delicately than men.

Of this I shall produce some instances, calculated to demonstrate that, notwithstanding the defects of our political constitutions, there still exist, in some families, good natural qualities, or well informed virtues, which leave, to the happy affections of children, the liberty of expanding.

I was at Dresden, in 1765, and happened to go to the Court Theatre: The piece performed was, *The Father*. In came the Electress, with one of her daughters, who might be about five or six years of age. An officer of the Saxon guards, who had introduced me, said in a whisper, "That child will interest you much more than the play." In fact, as soon as she had taken her seat, she rested both hands on the front of the box, fixed her eyes on the stage, and remained, with open mouth, immoveably attentive to the performers. It was a truly affecting exhibition; her face, like a mirror, reflected all the different passions which the drama was intended to excite. You could see, in succession, depicted upon it, anxiety, surprise, melancholy, sorrow; at last, as the interest increased from scene to scene, the tears began to trickle copiously down her little cheeks; accompanied with shivering, sighing, sobbing: Till it became necessary at length to carry her out of the box, for fear of her being stifled. My companion informed me, that as often as this young princess attended the representation of a pathetic piece, she was obliged to retire, before it came to the crisis.



I have witnessed instances of sensibility still more affecting, in the children of the common people, because they were not produced by any theatrical effect. As I was taking my walk, some years ago, through the Pré St. Gervais, about the setting in of winter, I observed a poor woman, lying along the ground, employed in weeding a bed of sorrel; close by her was a little girl, of six years old at most, standing, motionless, and quite impurpled with the cold. I addressed myself to the woman, who betrayed evident symptoms of indisposition, and enquired into the nature of her malady. "Sir," said she to me, "for three months past, I have suffered very severely from the rheumatism; but my disease gives me much less pain than that poor child: She will not quit me a single moment. If I say to her, see, you are quite benumbed with cold, go within doors and warm yourself; she replies: alas! mother, if I leave you, your complaints will be your only companion."

Another time, being at Marly, I went into that magnificent park, and amused myself in the woods with looking at the charming group of children who are feeding, with vine boughs and grapes, a she goat which seems at play with them. At no great distance is an inclosed pavillion, where *Louis XV*, in fine weather, sometimes went to enjoy a collation. Being caught in a sudden shower, I went in for a few moments to shelter myself. I there found three children, who interested me much more than the children in marble without doors. They were two little girls, uncommonly handsome, employed with singular activity, in picking up round the arbour, the scattered sticks of dry wood, which they deposited in a basket that stood on the King's table, while a little boy, all in tatters, and extremely lean, was devouring a morsel of bread in a corner. I asked the tallest, who might be about eight or nine years old, what she intended to do with that wood, which she was so busily collecting. She



replied, "Look, Sir, at that poor boy, there; he is very  
 "miserable! He is so unfortunate as to have a stepmoth-  
 "er, who sends him out, all day long, to pick up wood:  
 "If he carries none home, he is beaten severely; when  
 "he happens to have got a little, and is carrying it off,  
 "the Swiss at the park gate takes it from him, and ap-  
 "plies it to his own use. He is half dead with hunger,  
 "and we have given him our breakfast." Having thus  
 spoken, she and her companion filled the little basket;  
 helped him up with it on his back, and ran away before  
 their unhappy friend to the gate of the park, to see if he  
 could pass unmolested.

Foolish Instructors! Human nature, you tell us, is  
 corrupted: Yes, but you are the persons who corrupt it  
 by contradictions, by unprofitable studies, by dangerous  
 ambition, by shameful chastisements; and by an equita-  
 ble reaction of divine Justice, that feeble and unfortunate  
 generation will one day give back to that which oppresses  
 it, in jealousies, in disputes, in apathies, and in oppositions  
 of tastes, of modes, and of opinions, all the mischief  
 which it first received.

I have explained, to the best of my ability, the causes,  
 and the reactions of our evils, in the view of vindicating  
 Nature from the charge of having produced them. I  
 propose, at the close of this Work, to exhibit the pal-  
 liatives and the remedies. They will, no doubt, prove  
 vain and inefficient speculations: But if some Minister  
 shall have the courage, one day, to undertake to render  
 the Nation internally happy, and powerful abroad, I can  
 venture to predict, that this will be effected neither by  
 plans of economy, nor by political alliances, but by re-  
 forming its manners, and its plan of education. He nev-  
 er will make good this revolution, by means of punish-  
 ments and rewards, but by imitating the processes of Na-  
 ture, who always carries her point by reaction. It is not  
 to the apparent evil that the remedy must be applied, but



to its cause. The cause of the moral power of gold; is in the venality of public officers; that of the excessive superabundance of indolent tradesmen in our cities, is in the imposts which degrade the inhabitants of the country; that of the beggary of the poor; is in the overgrown property of the rich; that of the prostitution of young women, is in the celibacy of the men; that of the prejudices of the Nobility, in the resentments of the vulgar; and that of all the evils of society, in the torments inflicted on children.

For my own part, I have spoken out; and if I could have spoken to the Nation in one vast assembly; from some point of the Horizon where Paris is discernible, I would have pointed out to my Country, on the one part, the monuments of the rich; the thousands of voluptuous palaces in the suburbs, eleven theatres, the steeples of a hundred and thirty four convents, among which arise eleven wealthy abbeys; those of a hundred and sixty other churches, twenty of which are richly endowed chapters: And, on the other part, I would have pointed out the monuments of the wretched; fifty seven colleges, sixteen courts of justice, fourteen barracks, thirty guard houses, twenty six hospitals, twelve prisons or houses of correction. I would have displayed the magnificence of the gardens, of the courts, of the greens, of the inclosures, and of the dependencies, of all these vast edifices, accumulated on a space of ground less than a league and a half in diameter. I would have demanded, whether the rest of the Kingdom is distributed in the same proportion as the Capital: Where are the properties of those who supply it with food, with clothing, with the means of lodging, of those who defend it; and what at last, is left for the multitude, to maintain citizens, fathers of families, and happy men? Oh! ye moral and political Powers, after having shewn you the causes and the effects of our evils, I would have prostrated myself at your feet,



and would have expected, as the reward of truth, the same recompense which the peasant of the Danube expected from the insatiable powers of Rome.\*

\* As a sequel to this Study, may be read that which terminates the third Volume of this Work.



## STUDY EIGHTH.

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REPLIES TO THE OBJECTIONS AGAINST A DIVINE PROVIDENCE, AND THE HOPES OF A LIFE TO COME, FOUNDED ON THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE NATURE OF GOD, AND THE MISERIES OF A PRESENT STATE.

“WHAT avails it me,” some one will say, “that my tyrants are punished, if I am still to be the victim of tyranny? Is it possible that such compensations should be the work of GOD? Great Philosophers, who have devoted their whole life to the study of Nature, have refused to acknowledge its Author. Who hath seen GOD at any time? What is it that constitutes GOD? But taking it for granted that an intelligent Being directs the affairs of this Universe, Man assuredly is abandoned to himself: No hand has traced his career: As far as he is concerned, there are, apparently, two Deities; the one inviting him to unbounded enjoyment, and the other dooming him to endless privation; one God of Nature, and another God of Religion. He is totally uncertain whether of the two he is bound to please; and whatever be the choice which he is determined to make, how can he tell whether he is rendering himself an object of love or of hatred?”

“His virtue itself fills him with doubts and scruples; it renders him miserable, both inwardly and outwardly; it reduces him to a state of perpetual warfare with him-



“ self, and with the world, to the interests of which he is  
 “ obliged to make a sacrifice of himself. If he is chaste,  
 “ the world calls him impotent ; if he is religious, he is  
 “ accounted silly ; if he discovers benignity of disposition  
 “ to those around him, it is because he wants courage ; if  
 “ he devotes himself for the good of his country, he is a  
 “ fanatic ; if he is simple, he is duped ; if he is modest,  
 “ he is supplanted ; he is every where derided, betrayed,  
 “ despised, now by the philosopher, and now by the dev-  
 “ otee. On what foundation can he build the hope of  
 “ a recompense for so many struggles and mortifications ?  
 “ On a life to come ? What assurance has he of its ex-  
 “ istence ? Where is the traveller that ever returned  
 “ from thence ?

“ What is the soul of man ? Where was it a hundred  
 “ years ago ? Where will it be a century hence ? It ex-  
 “ pands with the senses, and expires when they expire.  
 “ What becomes of it in sleep, in a lethargy ? It is the  
 “ illusion of pride to imagine that it is immortal : Nature  
 “ universally points to death, in his monuments, in his  
 “ appetites, in his loves, in his friendships : Man is uni-  
 “ versally reduced to the necessity of drawing a veil over  
 “ this idea. In order to live less miserable, he ought to  
 “ *divert* himself, that is, as the word literally imports, he  
 “ ought to *turn aside* from that dismal perspective of woes  
 “ which Nature is presenting to him on every side. To  
 “ what hopeless labours has she not subjected his misera-  
 “ ble life ? The beasts of the field are a thousand times  
 “ happier ; clothed, lodged, fed by the hand of Nature,  
 “ they give themselves up without solicitude to the in-  
 “ dulgence of their passions, and finish their career with-  
 “ out any presentiment of death, and without any fear of  
 “ an hereafter.

“ If there be a GOD who presides over the destiny of  
 “ all, he must be inimical to the felicity of the Human  
 “ Race. What is it to me that the Earth is clothed with  
 “ vegetables, if I have not the shade of a single tree at my



“ disposal? Of what importance are to me the laws of  
 “ harmony and of love, which govern Nature, if I be-  
 “ hold around me only objects faithless and deceiving;  
 “ or if my fortune, my condition, my religion, impose  
 “ celibacy upon me? The general felicity, diffused over  
 “ the Earth, serves only as a bitter aggravation of my  
 “ particular wretchedness. What interest is it possible  
 “ for me to take in the wisdom of an arrangement which  
 “ renovates all things, if, as a consequence of that very  
 “ arrangement, I feel myself sinking, and ready to be lost  
 “ forever? One single wretch might arraign Providence,  
 “ and say with *Job*, the Arabian: \* *Wherefore is light*  
 “ *given to him that is in misery; and life unto the bitter*  
 “ *in soul?* Alas! The appearances of happiness have been  
 “ disclosed to the view of Man, only to overwhelm him  
 “ with despair of ever attaining it. If a GOD, intelli-  
 “ gent and beneficent, governs Nature, diabolical spirits  
 “ direct and confound, at least the affairs of the children  
 “ of men.”

I shall, first, reply to the principal authorities, on which  
 some of those objections are supported. They are extract-  
 ed, in part, from a celebrated Poet, and a learned Philos-  
 opher, namely *Lucretius*, and from *Pliny*.

*Lucretius* has clothed the Philosophy of *Empedocles*  
 and *Epicurus* in very beautiful verses. His imagery is  
 enchanting; but that Philosophy of atoms, which adhere  
 to each other by chance, is so completely absurd, that  
 wherever it appears, the beauty of the poetry is impaired.  
 For the truth of this, I confidently refer to the judgment  
 of his partisans themselves. It speaks neither to the  
 heart nor to the understanding. It offends equally in its  
 principles, and in the consequences deduced from them.  
 To what, we may ask him, do those primary atoms, out of  
 which you construct the elements of Nature, owe their  
 existence? Who communicated to them the first move-

\* *Job*, chap. iii. ver. 20.



ment? How is it possible they should have given to the aggregation of a great number of bodies, a spirit of life, a sensibility and a will, which they themselves possessed not.

If you believe, with *Leibnitz*, that those *monads*, or unities, have, in truth, perceptions peculiar to themselves, you give up the laws of chance, and are reduced to the necessity of allowing to the elements of nature, the intelligence which you refuse to its AUTHOR. *Descartes* has, in truth, subjected those impalpable principles, and, if I may be allowed the expression, that metaphysical dust, to the laws of an ingenious Geometry; and after him, the herd of Philosophers, seduced by the facility of erecting all sorts of systems with the same materials, have applied to them, by turns, the laws of attraction, of fermentation, of crystallization; in a word, all the operations of Chemistry, and all the subtilities of dialectics: But all, with equal success, that is, with none whatever. We shall demonstrate, in the article which follows this, when we come to speak of the weakness of Human Reason, that the method adopted in our Schools, of rising up to first causes, is the perpetual source of the errors of our Philosophy, in physics as well as in morals. Fundamental truths resemble the stars, and our reason is like the graphometer. If this instrument, constructed for the purpose of observing the heavenly bodies, has been deranged however slightly; if from the point of departure, we commit a mistake of the minutest angle imaginable, the error, at the extremity of the visual rays, becomes absolutely incommensurable.

There is something still more strange, in the method which *Lucretius* has thought proper to pursue: Namely, that, in a Work, the professed object of which is to materialize the Deity, he sets out with defying matter. In this he has himself given way to an universal principle, which we shall endeavour to unfold, when we come to adduce the proofs of the Divinity from feeling; it is this, that we find it impossible powerfully to interest mankind,



whatever be the object, without presenting to the Mind, some of the attributes of Deity. Before he attempts, therefore, to dazzle the understanding, as a Philosopher, he begins with setting the heart on fire, as a Poet. Here is a part of his exordium.

.....Hominum divūmque voluptas,  
Alma *Venus*, cœli subter labentia signa  
Quæ mare navigerum, quæ terras frugiferentes  
Concelebras, per te quoniam genus omne animantū  
Concipitur, visitque exortum lumina solis,  
Te dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila cœli,  
Adventuque tuo, tibi suaves dædala tellus  
Submittit flores, tibi rident æquora ponti,  
Placatumque nitet diffuso lumine cœlum.

. . . . .  
Quæ quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas,  
Nec, sine te, quidquam dias in luminis oras  
Exoritur, neque sit lætum, neque amabile quidquam,  
Te sociam studeo scribendis versibus esse,  
Quos ego de rerum naturâ pangere conor.

. . . . .  
Quo magis æternum, da dictis, diva, leporem.  
Effice ut in terrâ fera munera militiai  
Per maria ac terras omnes sopita quiescant ;  
Nam tu sola potes tranquillâ pace juvare  
Mortales, quoniam belli fera munera Mavors.  
Armipotens regit, in gremium qui sæpe tuum se  
Rejjicit, æterno devictus vulnere amoris.

. . . . .  
Hunc, tu diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto  
Circumfusa super, suaves ex ore loquelas  
Funde, petens placidam Romanis, inclyta pacem :  
Nam neque nos agere, hoc patriâ tempore iniquo,  
Possumus æquo animo.

*De Rerum Natura, lib. 1.*

I shall endeavour, as well as I can, to give a plain prose translation of those beautiful verses.

“ ———— Delight of men and gods, gracious *Venus!*  
“ who presidest over the sail bearing Ocean, and the fer-  
“ tile Earth, while the hosts of Heaven glide majestically  
“ silent around ; since by thy prolific virtue, the whole  
“ animal creation teems with life, and turns the opening



" eyeball to the light of the Sun ; at thy approach, O  
 " Goddess, the winds are hushed, the vapours that ob-  
 " scure the face of the sky disperse, the variegated ground  
 " spreads a carpet of enamelled flowers underneath thy  
 " feet ; the waters of the deep smile with joy, and the  
 " placid sky is overspread with a milder light.....Seeing,  
 " then, that thou reignest, sole Empress of Nature ; since  
 " without thee no living creature arises into day, or pos-  
 " sesses the capacity of receiving or communicating de-  
 " light, how gladly would I assume thee as my associate  
 " in the arduous undertaking on which I now enter—an  
 " enquiry into the nature of things....Give, then, O God-  
 " dess, somewhat of thy unfading grace to my strains.  
 " And grant, meanwhile, that the din of battle may cease  
 " over every land, over every sea: For with thee it rests  
 " to reduce the troubled world to peace ; since *Mars*, all  
 " powerful in arms, directs the thunder of war ; who  
 " frequently retires well pleased from the ensanguined  
 " plain, to solace himself in the soft dalliance of thy un-  
 " cloying love.....In those fond moments, when affection  
 " can deny nothing, intreat him to have compassion on  
 " his own Rome and thine, and bestow on it lasting tran-  
 " quillity ; for how can the voice of the philosophic  
 " Muse be heard amidst the confused noise of civil dis-  
 " cord?\*"

\* Mr. *Craech* and Mr. *Dryden* have both translated this passage of *Lucretius*.  
 It would have saved me a little labour, had I dared to transcribe from ei-  
 ther of their poetical versions. But, every thing considered, I have ventur-  
 ed rather to hazard one of my own. If it shall be deemed deficient in po-  
 etical merit, two qualities, at least, it possesses ; it conveys enough of the  
 sense of the Original, to answer the purpose of its being quoted in this  
 Work, and it cannot possibly give offence to any modest ear.

VENUS, all hail ! of Gods and men the pride ;  
 Mov'd by whose pow'r, the heav'nly bodies glide,  
 In mystic round ; thine is the teeming Earth,  
 To Thee the swelling Ocean owes his birth :  
 Source of all life ! thou breath'st the living soul,  
 And kindest joy " from Indus to the Pole."



*Lucretius* is, in truth, constrained to admit, in the sequel of his Poem, that this goddess, so wonderfully beneficent, is directly chargeable with the ruin of health, of fortune, of parts, and, sooner or later, with the loss of reputation: That, from the very lap of the pleasures which she bestows, there issues a something which embitters enjoyment, which torments a man, and renders him miserable. The unfortunate Bard himself fell a victim to this, for he died in the very prime of life, either from excessive indulgence, according to some, or poisoned, according to others, by an amorous potion administered by the hand of a woman.

In the passage above quoted, he ascribes to *Venus* the creation of the world; he addresses prayers to her; he bestows on her person the epithet of sacred; he invests

At thy approach the noisy tempests cease,  
The air grows pure, and all the World is peace;  
For Thee the SPRING her flow'ry mantle weaves,  
For Thee AUTUMNUS piles his golden sheaves:  
The placid Deep reflects a clearer ray,  
And SOL emits through Heaven a brighter day.

. . . . .

Since, Goddess, thus all own thy sov'reign pow'r;  
Since, without Thee, none sees the natal hour;  
Without Thee nought of fair, of sweet, is seen,  
Delight of Nature! Universal Queen!  
Visit thy bard with some celestial dream;  
Be Thou, my Muse, for Nature is my theme.

. . . . .

Around my lays thy winning graces shed,  
So shall immortal honours crown my head.  
Meanwhile, command a troubled world to rest,  
Bid the fierce soldier calm his angry breast.  
Let Sea and Land thy genial influence feel;  
Let placid Nations at Thine altar kneel.  
Besmear'd with blood, and sick of war's alarms,  
Soothe back fierce MARS to thy all conqu'ring arms:  
Tell him how Rome now bleeds at every vein;  
Let thy sweet voice restore the gentle reign,  
Of golden SATURN. Bid the trumpet cease,  
Let all in ROME; and all the WORLD be peace.



her with a character of goodness, of justice, of intelligence, and of power, which belongs to GOD only ; in a word, the attributes are so exactly the same, that, suppressing only the word *Venus*, in the invocation of his Poem, you may apply it almost entirely to the Divine Wisdom. There are even points of resemblance, so striking, to the representation given of it in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, that I cannot refrain from exhibiting the counterpart, that the Reader may have it in his power to make the comparison.

## Ecclesiast. chap. xxiv.

*Vulgate Latin Version.**Common English Version.*

3, 4, 5. Ego ex ore Altissimi prodivi, primogenita ante omnem creaturam ; ego feci in cœlis ut oritur lumen indeficiens, & sicut nebula texi omnem terram. Ego in altissimis habitavi, & thronus meus in columnâ nubis.

3. I came out of the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth as a cloud.

6, 7, 8, 9. Gyrum cœli circui- vi sola & profundum abyssi penetravi ; in fluctibus ambulavi, & in omni terrâ steti & in omni populo ; & in omni populo primatum habui. Et omnium excellentium & humilium corda virtute calcavi, & in his omnibus requiem quasivi, & in hæreditate domini morabor.

4. I dwelt in high places, and my throne is in a cloudy pillar.

5. I alone compassed the circuit of Heaven ; and walked in the bottom of the Deep.

6. In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, and in every people and nation, I got a possession.

7. With all these I sought rest : And in whose inheritance shall I abide ?

13. Quasi cedrus exaltata sum in Libano, & quasi cypressus in Monte Sion.

13. I was exalted like a cedar in Libanus, and as a cypress tree upon the mountains of Hermon.

14. Quasi palma exaltata sum in Cades, & quasi plantatio rosæ in

14. I was exalted like a palm tree in Engaddi, and as a rose



Jericho. Quasi oliva speciosa in campis, & quasi platanus exaltata sum juxta aquam in plateis. plant in Jericho, as a fair olive tree in a pleasant field, and grew up as a plane tree by the water.

16. Ego quasi terebinthus extendi ramos meos, & rami mei honoris & gratiæ.

16. As the turpentine tree, I stretched out my branches, and my branches are the branches of honour and grace.

17. Ego quasi vitis fructificavi suavitatem odoris, et flores mei fructus honoris & honestatis.

17. As the vine brought I forth pleasant savour, and my flowers are the fruit of honour and riches.

18. Ego mater pulchræ dilectionis, & timoris, & agnitionis, & sanctæ spei. In me gratia omnis viæ & veritatis, in me omnis spes vitæ & virtutis.

18. I am the mother of fair love, and fear, and knowledge, and holy hope: I therefore being eternal, am given to all my children which are named of him.

19. Transite ad me, omnes qui concupiscitis me, & generationibus meis implemini.

19. Come unto me, all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruits.

20. Spiritus enim meus super mel dulce, & hæreditas mea super mel & favum.

20. For my memorial is sweeter than honey, and mine inheritance than the honeycomb.

“ Out of the mouth of the ALMIGHTY proceeded I.  
 “ Before any created being knew that it existed, I was.  
 “ If there be in Heaven a light never to be extinguished,  
 “ I commanded it to arise. If the Earth is involved in  
 “ clouds, I commanded the vapour to ascend. The lofty  
 “ places of the Earth are my habitation; and my  
 “ throne is in the cloudy pillar. In solitude I make  
 “ the round of the starry Heavens; I plunge to the bottom  
 “ of the vast abyss, and walk majestic under the  
 “ waves of the Sea. On every land the sole of my foot  
 “ alights, and I travel from shore to shore. Wherever I  
 “ appear, my sovereignty is acknowledged. In the greatness  
 “ of my might, I have subdued the heart of the  
 “ humble and of the proud. I have sought for a place



“ of habitation in the midst of them ; but I will fix mine  
 “ abode only in the heritage of JEHOVAH....I have lift-  
 “ ed up myself as a cedar upon Mount Lebanon, and as  
 “ the cypress tree on the hills of Zion. My branches  
 “ have been exalted to the Heavens, like the palm trees  
 “ of Kadesh, and as the blossoms of the rose which sur-  
 “ round Jericho. I am beautiful as the olive on the  
 “ brow of the hill, and majestic as the plane tree, in an  
 “ open place, by the fountains of water.....I have extend-  
 “ ed my boughs as the terebinthus ; my branches are  
 “ branches of honour and grace. I have put forth, as the  
 “ vine, blossoms of the sweetest perfume, and my buds  
 “ have produced the fruits of glory and abundance. I  
 “ am the parent of holy love, of fear, of knowledge, and  
 “ of sacred hope ; I alone point out the road that is safe  
 “ and easy ; and unfold truths that give delight ; in me  
 “ reposes all the expectation of life and virtue. Come  
 “ to me, all ye who love me ; and my never ceasing pro-  
 “ ductions shall fill you with rapture ; for my spirit is  
 “ sweeter than honey, and my distribution of it far supe-  
 “ rior to the cells of the honeycomb.”

This feeble translation is after the Latin prose version, itself a translation from the Greek, and it again from the Hebrew. It is not to be doubted, therefore, that in passing through so many strainers, much of the grace of the original must have evaporated. But even as it is, it possesses a decided superiority, in respect of pleasantness and sublimity of imagery, over the verses of *Lucretius*, who appears to have borrowed his principal beauties from this passage. And here I dismiss that Poet : The exordium of his performance is a complete refutation of it.

*Pliny* takes the directly opposite course. In the very threshold of his Natural History, he affirms, that there is no God, and the whole of that Work is an elaborate demonstration of the being of GOD. His authority must necessarily be of considerable weight, as it is not that of a Poet, to whom opinions are a matter of indifference, pro-



vided he can produce a striking picture ; nor that of a secretary, obstinately determined to support a party, whatever violence may be done to conscience ; nor, finally, that of a flatterer, making his court to vicious Princes. *Pliny* wrote under the virtuous *Titus*, and has dedicated his Book to him. He carries to such a height, the love of truth, and contempt of the glory of the age in which he lived, as to condemn the victories of *Cesar*, in Rome itself, and when addressing a Roman Emperor. He is replete with humanity and virtue. He frequently exposes to censure the cruelty of masters to their slaves, the luxury of the great, nay, the dissolute conduct of several Emperresses. He sometimes pronounces the panegyric of good men ; and exalts even above the inventors of arts, persons who have rendered themselves illustrious by their continency, their modesty, and their piety.

His Work, in other respects, is a combination of brilliancies. It is a real Encyclopedia, which contains, as it ought, the history of the knowledge, and of the errors of his time. These last are sometimes imputed to him very unjustly, for he frequently brings them forward, merely in the view of refuting them. But he has been abused by the Physicians, and the Apothecaries, who have extracted the greatest part of their prescriptions from him, because he finds fault with their conjectural art, and with their systematic spirit. He abounds, besides, in curious information, in profound views, and interesting traditions ; and, what renders his performance invaluable, he uniformly expresses himself in a picturesque manner. With all this taste, judgment and knowledge, *Pliny* is an atheist. Nature, from whose capacious stores, he has derived such various intelligence, may address him in the words of *Cesar* to *Brutus* : *What, you too, my son !*

*Pliny* I love, and I esteem : And if I may be permitted to say, in his justification, what I think of his immortal Work, I believe it to be falsified in the passage where he is made to reason as an atheist. All his commentators a-



gree in thinking, that no one Author has suffered more from the unfaithfulness of transcribers, than he has done ; and this to such a degree, that copies of his Natural History exist, in which there are whole chapters entirely different. Consult, among others, what *Mathiola* says on the subject, in his commentaries on *Dioscorides*. I shall here take occasion to observe, that the Writings of the Ancients, on their way to us, have passed through more than one unfaithful language, and what is much worse, through more than one suspicious hand. They have met with the fate of their monuments, among which their temples have been most of all degraded. Their books have, in like manner, been mutilated chiefly in those passages which are favourable to religion, or the reverse. An instance of this we have, in the transcription of *Cicero's* Treatise on the Nature of the Gods, in which the objections against Providence are omitted.

*Montagne* upbraids the first Christians with having suppressed, on account of four or five articles which contradicted their creed, a part of the Works of *Cornelius Tacitus*, " though," says he, " the Emperor *Tacitus*, his relation, had, by express edicts, furnished all the libraries " in the World with them.\*"

In our own days, Do we not see how every party exerts itself to run down the reputation, and the opinions of the party which opposes it ? Mankind is, in the hands of religion and philosophy, like the old man in the fable, between two dames of different ages. They had both a mind to trim his locks, each in her own way. The younger picked carefully out all the white hairs, which she could not bear ; the old one, for an opposite reason, as carefully removed the black : The consequence was, his head was speedily reduced to complete baldness.

It is impossible to adduce a more satisfactory demonstration of this ancient infidelity of the two parties, than

\* *Essays*, book ii. chap. xix.



an interpolation to be found in the Writings of *Flavius Josephus*, who was contemporary with *Pliny*. He is made to say, in so many words, that the Messiah was just born; and he continues his narration, without referring, so much as once, to this wonderful event, to the end of a voluminous history. How can it be believed that *Josephus*, who frequently indulges himself in a tedious detail of minute circumstances, relating to events of little importance, should not have reverted a thousand and a thousand times, to a birth so deeply interesting to his Nation, considering that its very destiny was involved in that event, and that even the destruction of Jerufalem was only one of the consequences of the death of JESUS CHRIST? He, on the contrary, perverts the meaning of the prophecies which announce Him, applying them to *Vespasian* and to *Titus*; for he, as well as the other Jews, expected a Messiah triumphant. Besides, had *Josephus* believed in CHRIST, Would he not have embraced his Religion?

For a similar reason, Is it credible that *Pliny* should commence his Natural History with denying the existence of GOD, and afterwards fill every page of it, with expatiating on the wisdom, the goodness, the providence, the majesty of Nature; on the presages and premonitions, sent expressly from the Gods; and even on the miracles divinely operated through the medium of dreams?

Certain savage tribes have likewise been adduced as affording examples of atheism, and every sequestered corner of the Globe has been for this purpose explored. But obscure, remote tribes were no more intended to serve as an example to the human race, than certain mean and obscure families, among ourselves, could be proposed as proper models to the Nation; especially when the professed object is to support, by authority, an opinion which is necessarily subversive of all society. Besides, such assertions are absolutely false. I have read the history of the voyages from which they are extracted. The travellers acknowledge, that they had but a transient view of



those people, and that they were totally unacquainted with their languages. They took it for granted, that there could be no religion among them, because they saw no temples ; as if any other temple were necessary to a belief in GOD than the temple of Nature ! These same travellers likewise contradict themselves ; for they relate, that those Nations, whom they elsewhere represent as destitute of all religion, make obeisance to the Moon, at the change, and when full, by prostrating themselves to the Earth, or by lifting up their hands to Heaven : That they pay respect to the memory of their forefathers, and place viands on their tombs. The immortality of the soul, admitted in whatever manner you will, necessarily supposes the existence of GOD.

But if the first of all truths stood in need of testimony from men, we could collect that of the whole Human Race, from geniuses the most exalted, down to the lowest state of ignorance. This unanimity of testimony is of irresistible weight ; for it is impossible that such a thing should exist on the Earth as universal error.

Hear what the sage *Socrates* said to *Euthydemus*, who expressed a wish to have a complete assurance that the Gods existed :

“ Know, assuredly, that I told you the truth,\* when I  
 “ declared the existence of the Gods, and asserted, that  
 “ Man is their peculiar care : But expect not that they  
 “ should assume a sensible appearance, and present them-  
 “ selves before you ; satisfy yourself with the contempla-  
 “ tion of their works, and with paying them adoration ;  
 “ remember that this is the way in which they make  
 “ themselves known unto men : For of all the heavenly  
 “ powers whose liberality towards us is so great, no one  
 “ ever becomes the visible dispenser of his own bounty ;  
 “ and the great GOD himself, who created the Universe,  
 “ and who sustains that vast fabric, all the parts of which

\* *Xenophon's Memorable Things of Socrates*, book iv.



“ are adjusted in perfect beauty and goodness ; He who  
 “ constantly watches over it, and takes care that it shall  
 “ not wax old, and fall into decay through length of du-  
 “ ration, but always subsist in immortal vigor \* ; He who  
 “ also, with power uncontrollable, constrains the whole to  
 “ obey his will ; and that with a promptitude which far  
 “ surpasses our imagination : HE, I say, is abundantly

\* *Socrates* had made a particular study of Nature ; and although his judgment, respecting the duration and preservation of her works, may be contrary to that of our philosophy, which considers the Globe of the Earth, especially, as in a progressive state of ruin, it is in perfect harmony with that of the Holy Scriptures, which give us positive assurances that GOD upholds it, and with our own experience on the subject, as I have already shewn. We have little reason to undervalue the physical knowledge of the Ancients, except in so far as it was reduced to system. We ought to recollect that they had made most of the discoveries which the Moderns boast as all their own. The Tuscan Philosophers understood the art of conjuring down the thunder. Good King *Numa* made experiments on this subject. *Tullus Hostilius* took a fancy to imitate, but fell a victim to his attempt, from want of understanding how to conduct the experiments in a proper manner. (Consult *Plutarch*.) *Philolaus*, the Pythagorean, advanced, long before *Copernicus*, that the Sun was the centre of the World ; and before *Christopher Columbus*, that our Earth consisted of two Continents, that on which we are placed, and the opposite to it. Several Philosophers of Antiquity maintained, that comets were stars which pursued a regular course. *Pliny* himself says, that they all move in a northerly direction, which is generally true. It is not yet, however, two hundred years, since comets were believed, in Europe, to be vapors which caught fire in the intermediate regions of the air. The general belief, about that period, likewise, was, that the Sea furnished a supply of water to the fountains and rivers, by a process of filtration through the pores of the Earth, though it is said in a hundred passages of Scripture, that by the rains their sources are kept flowing. Of this we now have the most complete conviction, by accurate observations on the evaporations of the Ocean. The monuments which the Ancients have transmitted to us in Architecture, Sculpture, Poetry, Tragedy, History, will ever serve as models to us. We are indebted to them besides for the invention of almost all the other Arts ; and it is presumable that these Arts had the same superiority over ours, which their liberal Arts have. As to the natural Sciences, they have not left us any object of comparison ; besides, the Priests, who were chiefly employed in the cultivation of them, carefully concealed their knowledge from the people. There is little room to doubt, that they possessed, on this subject, an illumination far transcending ours. Consult what the judicious Sir *William Temple* has said of the magic of the ancient Egyptians.



“ visible in all those wonders of which He is the Au-  
 “ THOR. But let our eyes attempt to penetrate to his  
 “ throne, and to contemplate all these mighty operations in  
 “ their source, here He must be ever invisible.

“ Observe, for a moment, that the Sun, who seems  
 “ designedly exposed to the view of the whole Creation,  
 “ permits no one, however, steadily to behold him: The  
 “ man who dares to make the rash attempt, is instantly  
 “ punished with blindness. Nay, more, every instrument  
 “ employed by the Gods is invisible. The thunder is  
 “ darted from on high; it dashes in pieces every thing it  
 “ meets: But no one can see it fall, can see it strike,  
 “ can see it return. The winds are invisible, though we  
 “ see well the ravages which they every day commit, and  
 “ feel their influence the moment that they begin to blow.  
 “ If there be any thing in Man that partakes of the di-  
 “ vine Nature, it is his soul. There can be no doubt  
 “ that this is his directing, governing principle, neverthe-  
 “ less, it is impossible to see it. From all this be instruct-  
 “ ed not to despise things invisible: Be instructed to  
 “ acknowledge their powers, in their effects and to honour  
 “ the DEITY.”

*Newton*, who pursued his researches into the Laws of Nature so profoundly, never pronounced the name of GOD, without moving his hat, and otherwise expressing the most devout respect. He took pleasure in recalling this sublime idea, even in his moments of conviviality, and considered it as the natural bond of union among all Nations. *Corneille le Bruyn*, the Dutch Painter, relates, that happening to dine one day at his table, in company with several other foreigners, *Newton*, when the desert was served up, proposed a health to the Men of every Country who believe in GOD. This was drinking the health of the Human Race. Is it possible to conceive, that so many Nations, of languages and manners so very different, and, in many cases, of an intelligence so contracted, should believe in GOD, if that belief were the



result of some tradition, or of a profound, metaphysical disquisition? It arises from the spectacle of Nature simply. A poor Arabian of the Desert, ignorant as most of the Arabians are, was one day asked, How he came to be assured that there was a God? "In the same way," replied he, "that I am able to tell, by the print impressed " on the sand, whether it was a man or a beast which " passed that way.\*"

It is impossible for Man, as has been said, to imagine any form, or to produce a single idea of which the model is not in Nature. He expands his reason only on the reasons which Nature has supplied. GOD must, therefore, necessarily exist, were it but for this, that Man has an idea of Him. But if we attentively consider, that every thing, necessary to Man, exists in a most wonderful adaptation to his necessities, for the strongest of all reasons, GOD likewise must exist, He who is the universal adaptation of all the societies of the Human Race.

But I should wish to know, In what way, the persons who doubt of his existence, on a review of the Works of Nature, would desire to be assured of it? Do they wish that he should appear under a human form, and assume the figure of an old man, as he is painted in our churches? They would say, This is a man. Were He to invest himself with some unknown and celestial form, could we in a human body support the sight? The complete and unveiled display of even a single one of his works on the Earth, would be sufficient to confound our feeble organs. For example, if the Earth wheels around its axis, as is supposed, there is not a human being in existence, who, from a fixed point in the Heavens, could view the rapidity of its motion without horror; for he would behold rivers, oceans, kingdoms whirling about under his feet, with a velocity almost thrice as great as that of a cannon ball. But even the swiftness of this diurnal rota-

\* Travels through Arabia, by *Monf. d'Arvioux.*



tion is a mere nothing : For the rapidity, with which the Globe describes its annual circle, and hurls us round the Sun, is seventy five times greater than that of a bullet shot from the cannon. Were it but possible for the eye to view through the skin, the mechanism of our own body, the sight would overwhelm us. Durst we make a single movement, if we saw our blood circulating, the nerves pulling, the lungs blowing, the humours filtrating, and all the incomprehensible assemblage of fibres, tubes, pumps, currents, pivots, which sustain an existence, at once so frail and so presumptuous ?

Would we wish, on the contrary, that GOD should manifest himself in a manner more adapted to his own nature, by the direct and immediate communication of his intelligence, to the exclusion of every intervenient mean ?

*Archimedes*, who had a mind capable of such intense application, as not to be disturbed from his train of thought, by the sack of Syracuse, in which he lost his life, went almost distracted, from the simple perception of a geometrical truth, of which he suddenly caught a glimpse. He was pondering, while in the bath, the means of discovering the quantity of alloy which a rascally goldsmith had mixed in *Hiero's* golden crown ; and having found it, from the analogy of the different weight of his own body, when in the water, and out of it, he sprung from the bath, naked as he was, and ran like a madman through the streets of Syracuse, calling out, *I have found it ! I have found it !*

When some striking truth, or some affecting sentiment, happens to lay hold of the audience at a theatre, you see some melted into tears, others almost choked with an oppressed respiration, others quite in a transport, clapping their hands, and stamping with their feet ; the females in the boxes actually fainting away. Were these violent agitations of spirit to go on progressively but for a few minutes only, the persons subject to them might lose their reason, perhaps their life. What would be the case, then,



if the Source of all truth, and of all feeling, were to communicate himself to us in a mortal body? GOD has placed us at a suitable distance from his infinite Majesty; near enough to have a perception of it, but not so near as to be annihilated by it. He veils his intelligence from us under the forms of matter; and He restores our confidence respecting the movements of the material world by the sentiment of his intelligence. If at any time He is pleased to communicate himself in a more intimate manner, it is not through the channel of haughty Science, but through that of our virtue. He discloses himself to the simple, and hides his face from the proud.

“But,” it is asked, “What made GOD? Why should there be a God?” Am I to call in question his existence, because I am incapable of comprehending his origin? This style of reasoning would enable us to conclude, that man does not exist: For, Who made men? Why should there be men? Why am I in the world in the eighteenth century? Why did I not arrive in some of the ages which went before? And, Wherefore should I not be here in those which are to come? The existence of GOD is at all times necessary, and that of Man is but contingent. Nay, this is not all; the existence of Man is the only existence apparently superfluous in the order established upon the Earth. Many islands have been discovered without inhabitants, which presented abodes the most enchanting, from the disposition of the valleys, of the waters, of the woods, of the animals. Man alone deranges the plans of Nature: He diverts the current from the fountain; he digs into the side of the hill; he sets the forest on fire; he massacres without mercy every thing that breathes; every where he degrades the Earth, which could do very well without him.

The harmony of this Globe would be partially destroyed, perhaps entirely so, were but the smallest, and, seemingly, most insignificant, genus of plants to be suppressed; for its annihilation would leave a certain space of ground



destitute of verdure, and thereby rob of its nourishment the species of insect which there found the support of life. The destruction of the insect, again, would involve that of the species of bird, which in these alone finds the food proper for their young; and so on to infinity. The total ruin of the vegetable and animal kingdoms might take its rise from the failure of a single moss, as we may see that of an edifice commence in a small crevice. But if the Human Race existed not, it would be impossible to suppose that any thing had been deranged: Every brook, every plant, every animal, would always be in its place. Indolent and haughty Philosopher, who presumest to demand of Nature, wherefore there should be a God, why demandest thou not rather wherefore there should be men?

All his Works speak of their AUTHOR. The plain which gradually escapes from my eye, and the capacious vault of Heaven which incompasses me on every side, convey to me an idea of his immensity; the fruits suspended on the bough within reach of my hand, announce his providential care; the voice of the tempest proclaims his power; the constant revolution of the seasons displays his wisdom; the variety of provision which his bounty makes, in every climate, for the wants of every thing that lives, the stately port of the forests, the soft verdure of the meadow, the grouping of plants, the perfume and enamel of flowers, an infinite multitude of harmonies, known and unknown, are the magnificent languages which speak of HIM to all men, in a thousand and a thousand different dialects.

Nay, the very order of Nature is superfluous: GOD is the only Being whom disorder invokes, and whom human weakness announces. In order to attain the knowledge of his attributes, we need only to have a feeling of our own imperfections. Oh! how sublime is that prayer,\*

\* See *Flacourt's History of the Island of Madagascar*, chap. xlv. page 182. You will there find this prayer, embarrassed with many circumlocutions, but conveying the meaning which I have expressed. It is wonderful-



how congenial to the heart of Man, and still in use among People whom we presume to call Savages! "O Eternal! Have mercy upon me, because I am passing away: O Infinite! because I am but a speck: O Most Mighty! because I am weak: O Source of Life! because I draw nigh to the grave: O Omniscient! because I am in darkness: O All bounteous! because I am poor: O All sufficient! because I am nothing."

Man has given nothing to himself: He has received all. And "He who planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who formed the eye, shall He not see? He who teacheth Man knowledge, shall not he know?" I should consider myself as offering an insult to the understanding of my Reader, and should derange the plan of my Work, were I to insist longer on the proofs of the existence of GOD. It remains that I reply to the objections raised against his goodness.

It needs must be, we are told, that the God of Nature should differ from the God of Religion, for their Laws are contradictory. This is just the same thing with saying, that there is one God of metals, another God of plants, and another of animals, because all these beings are subjected to laws peculiar to themselves. Nay, in all the kingdoms of Nature, the *genera* and the *species* have other Laws besides, which are particular to them, and which, in many cases, are in opposition among themselves; but those different Laws constitute the happiness of each species in particular; and they concur, in one grand combination, in a most admirable manner, to promote the general felicity.

The Laws which govern Man are derived from the same plan of Wisdom which has constructed the Universe.

ly strange that Negroes should have discovered all the attributes of Deity in the imperfections of Man. It is with just reason that the Divine Wisdom has said of itself, that it rested on all nations: *Et in omni terra steti, & in omni populo; & in omni populo primatum habui.* In every land among every people, I fixed my station; and obtained the chief place amidst the Nations. ECCLES, chap. xxiv.



Man is not a being of nature perfectly simple. Virtue, which ought to be the great object of his pursuit on the Earth, is an effort which he makes over himself, for the good of Mankind, in the view of pleasing GOD only. It proposes to him, on the one hand, the Divine Wisdom as a model; and presents to him, on the other, the most secure and unerring path to his own happiness. Study Nature, and you will perceive that nothing can be more adapted to the felicity of Man and that Virtue carries her reward in her bosom, even in this world. A man's continency and temperance secure his health; contempt of riches and glory, his repose: And confidence in GOD, his fortitude. What can be more adapted to the condition of a creature exposed to so much misery, than modesty and humility. Whatever the revolutions of life may be, he has no farther fear of falling, when he has taken his seat on the lowest step.

Let us not complain that GOD has made an unfair distribution of his gifts, when we see the abundance and the state in which some bad men live. Whatever is on the Earth most useful, most beautiful, and the best, in every kind of thing, is within the reach of every man. Obscurity is much better than glory, and virtue than talents. The Sun, a little field, a wife and children, are sufficient to supply a constant succession of pleasures to him. Must he have luxuries too? A flower presents him colours more lovely than the pearl dragged from the abysses of the Ocean; and a burning coal on his hearth has a brighter lustre, and, beyond all dispute, is infinitely more useful, than the famous gem which glitters on the head of the Grand Mogul.

After all, What did GOD owe to every man? Water from the fountain, a little fruit, wool to clothe him, as much land as he is able to cultivate with his own hands. So much for the wants of his body. As to those of the soul, it is sufficient for him to possess, in infancy, the love of his parents; in maturity, that of his wife; in old



age, the gratitude of his children ; at all seasons, the good will of his neighbours, the number of whom is restricted to four or five, according to the extent and form of his domain ; so much knowledge of the Globe as he can acquire by rambling, half a day, so as to get home to his own bed at night, or, at most, to the extremity of his domestic horizon ; such a sense of Providence as Nature bestows on all men, and which will spring up in his heart fully as well after he has made the circuit of his field, as after returning from a voyage round the World.

With corporeal enjoyments, and mental gratifications like these, he ought to be content ; whatever he desires beyond these, is above his wants, and inconsistent with the distributions of Nature. It is impossible for him to acquire superfluity but by the sacrifice of some necessary ; public consideration he must purchase at the price of domestic happiness ; and a name in the world of Science, by renouncing his repose. Besides, those honours, those attendants, those riches, that submission which men so eagerly hunt after, are desired unjustly. A man cannot obtain them but by plundering and enslaving his fellow citizens. The acquisition of them exposes to incredible labour and anxiety, the possession is disturbed by incessant care, and privation tears the heart with regret. By pretended blessings such as these, health, reason, conscience, all is depraved and lost. They are as fatal to Empires as to families : It was neither by labour, nor indigence ; no, not even by wars, that the Roman Empire fell into ruin ; but by the accumulated pleasures, knowledge, and luxury of the whole Earth.

Virtuous persons, in truth, are sometimes destitute not only of the blessings of Society, but of those of Nature. To this I answer, that their calamities frequently are productive of unspeakable benefit to them. When persecuted by the world, they are frequently, they are usually, incited to engage in some illustrious career. Affliction is the path of great talents, or, at least, that of great virtues,



which are infinitely preferable. "It is not in your power," said *Marcus Aurelius*, "to be a Naturalist, a Poet, an Orator, a Mathematician; but it is in your power to be a virtuous man, which is the best of all."

I have remarked, besides, that no tyranny starts up, of whatever kind, respecting either facts or opinions, but a rival tyranny instantly starts up in opposition, which counterbalances it; so that virtue finds a protection from the very efforts made by vice to oppress and crush it. The good man frequently suffers: It is admitted; but if Providence were to interpose for his relief, as soon as he needed it, Providence would be at his disposal; in other words, Man would have the direction of his MAKER. Besides, virtue, in this case, would merit no praise: But rarely does it happen that the virtuous man does not sooner or later behold the downfall of his tyrant. Or supposing the worst that can happen, that he falls a victim to tyranny, the boundary of all his woes is death. GOD could owe Man nothing. He called him from nonexistence into life; in withdrawing life, He only resumes what He gave: We have nothing whereof to complain.

An entire resignation to the will of GOD ought, in every situation, to soothe the soul to peace. But if the illusions of a vain world should chance to ruffle our spirit, let me suggest a consideration which may go far toward restoring our tranquillity. When any thing in the order of Nature bears hard upon us, and inspires mistrust of its AUTHOR, let us suppose an order of things contrary to that which galls us, and we shall find a multitude of consequences resulting from this hypothesis, which would involve much greater evils than those whereof we complain. We may employ the contrary method, when some imaginary plan of human perfection would attempt to seduce us. We have but to suppose its existence, in order to see innumerable absurd consequences spring up out of it. This twofold method, employed frequently by *Socrates*,



rendered him victorious over all the sophists of his time, and may still be successfully employed to confute those of the age in which we live. It is at once a rampart which defends our feeble reason, and a battery which levels with the dust all the delusion of human opinions. If you wish to justify the order of Nature, it is sufficient to deviate from it; and, in order to refute all human systems, nothing more is necessary than to admit them.

For example, complaints are made of death: But if men were not to die, what would become of their posterity? Long before now there would not have been room for them on the face of the Earth. Death, therefore, is a benefit. Men complain of the necessity of labouring: But unless they laboured, how could they pass their time? The reputedly happy of the age, those who have nothing to do, are at a loss how to employ it. Labour, therefore, is a benefit. Men envy the beasts the instinct which guides them: But if, from their birth, they knew, like them, all that they ever are to know, what should they do in the World? They would faunter through it without interest, and without curiosity. Ignorance, therefore, is a benefit.

The other ills of Nature are equally necessary. Pain of body, and vexation of spirit, which so frequently cross the path of life, are barriers erected by the hand of Nature, to prevent our deviating from her Laws. But for pain, bodies would be broken to pieces on the slightest shock: But for chagrin, so frequently the companion of our enjoyments, the mind would become the victim of every sickly appetite. Diseases are the efforts of temperament to purge off some noxious humour. Nature employs disease not to destroy the body, but to preserve it. In every case, it is the consequence of some violation of her Laws, physical or moral. The remedy is frequently obtained by leaving her to act in her own way. The regimen of aliments restores our health of body, and that of men, tranquillity of mind. Whatever may be the opinions which disturb our repose in society, they almost al-



ways vanish into air in solitude. Sleep itself simply dispels our chagrin more gently, and more infallibly, than a book of morals. If our distresses are immovable, and such as break our rest, they may be mitigated by having recourse to GOD. Here is the central point toward which all the paths of human life converge. Prosperity, at all seasons, invites us to his presence, but adversity leaves us no choice. It is the means which GOD employs to force us to take refuge in Himself alone. But for this voice, which addresses itself to every one of us, we should soon forget Him, especially in the tumult of great cities, where so many fleeting interests clash with those which are eternal, and where so many second causes swallow up all attention to the FIRST.

As to the evils of Society, they are no part of the plan of Nature; but those very evils demonstrate the existence of another order of things: For is it natural to imagine, that the BEING good and just, who has disposed every thing on the Earth to promote the happiness of Man, will permit him to be deprived of it, without punishing the wretch who dared to counteract his gracious designs? Will He do nothing in behalf of the virtuous, but unfortunate, man, whose constant study was to please Him, when He has loaded with blessings so many miscreants who abuse them? After having displayed a bounty which has met with no return, will He fail in executing necessary justice?

“But,” we are told, “every thing dies with us. Here we ought to believe our own experience; we were nothing before our birth, and we shall be nothing after death.” I adopt the analogy; but if I take my point of comparison from the moment when I was nothing, and when I came into existence, What becomes of this argument? Is not one positive proof better than all the negative proofs in the world? You conclude from an unknown past to an unknown future, to perpetuate the nothingness of Man; and I, for my part, deduce my consequence



from the present, which I know, to the future, which I do not know, as an assurance of this future existence. I proceed on the presumption of a goodness and a justice to come, from the instances of goodness and justice which I actually see diffused over the Universe.

Besides, if we have, in our present state, the desire and the presentiment only of a life to come; and if no one ever returned thence to give us information concerning it, the reason is, a proof more sensible would be inconsistent with the nature of our present life on the Earth. Evidence on this point must involve the same inconveniences with that of the existence of GOD. Were we assured by some sensible demonstration, that a world to come was prepared for us, I have the fullest conviction that all the pursuits of this world would from that instant be abandoned. This perspective of a divine felicity, here below, would throw us into a lethargic rapture.

I recollect that on my return to France, in a vessel which had been on a voyage to India, as soon as the sailors had perfectly distinguished the land of their native country, they became, in a great measure, incapable of attending to the business of the ship. Some looked at it wistfully, without the power of minding any other object; others dressed themselves in their best clothes, as if they had been going that moment to disembark; some talked to themselves, and others wept. As we approached, the disorder of their minds increased. As they had been absent several years, there was no end to their admiration of the verdure of the hills, of the foliage of the trees, and even of the rocks which skirted the shore, covered over with seaweeds and mosses; as if all these objects had been perfectly new to them. The church spires of the villages where they were born, which they distinguished at a distance up the country, and which they named one after another, filled them with transports of delight. But when the vessel entered the port, and when they saw on the quays, their friends, their fathers, their mothers, their



wives and their children, stretching out their arms to them with tears of joy, and calling them by their names, it was no longer possible to retain a single man on board; they all sprung ashore, and it became necessary, according to the custom of the port, to employ another set of mariners to bring the vessel to her moorings.

What, then, would be the case, were we indulged with a sensible discovery of that Heavenly Country, inhabited by those who are most dear to us, and who alone are most worthy of our sublime affections? All the laborious and vain sollicitudes of a present life would come to an end. The passage from the one world to the other being in every man's power, the gulf would be quickly shot: But Nature has involved it in obscurity, and has planted doubt and apprehension to guard the passage.

It would appear, we are told by some, that the idea of the immortality of the soul, could arise only from the speculations of men of genius, who, considering the combination of this Universe, and the connexion which present scenes have with those which preceded them, must have thence concluded, that they had a necessary connexion with futurity; or else, that this idea of immortality was introduced by Legislators, in a state of polished society, as furnishing a distant hope, tending to console Mankind under the pressure of their political injustice. But, if this were the case, how could it have found its way into the deserts, and entered the head of a Negro, of a Caraïb, of a Patagonian, of a Tartar? How could it have been diffused, at once, over the islands of the South Seas, and over Lapland; over the voluptuous regions of Asia, and the rude Climates of North America; among the inhabitants of Paris, and those of the new Hebrides? How is it possible that so many Nations, separated by vast Oceans, so different in manners and in language, should have unanimously adopted one opinion; Nations which frequently affect, from national animosity, a deviation from the most trivial customs of their neighbours?



All believe in the immortality of the soul. Whence could they have derived a belief so flatly contradicted by their daily experience? They every day see their friends die; but the day never comes when any one reappears. In vain do they carry victuals to their tombs; in vain do they suspend, with tears, on the boughs of the adjoining trees, the objects which in life were most dear to them; neither these testimonies of an inconsolable friendship, nor the vows of conjugal affection, challenged by their drooping mates, nor the lamentations of their dear children, poured out over the earth which covers their remains, can bring them back from the land of shadows. What do they expect for themselves, from a life to come, who express all this unavailing regret over the ashes of their departed favourites? There is no prospect so inimical to the interests of most men; for some, having lived a life of fraud, or of violence, have reason to apprehend a state of punishment; others, having been oppressed in this world, might justly fear, that the life to come was to be regulated conformably to the same destiny which presided over that which they are going to leave.

Shall we be told, It is pride which cherishes this fond opinion in their breasts? What, is it pride that induces a wretched Negro, in the West Indies, to hang himself, in the hope of returning to his own country, where a second state of slavery awaits him? Other Nations, such as the islanders of Taiti, restrict the hope of this immortality, to a renovation of precisely the same life which they are going to leave. Ah! the passions present to Man far different plans of felicity; and the miseries of his existence, and the illumination of his reason, would long ago have destroyed the life that is, had not the hope of a life to come been, in the human breast, the result of a supernatural feeling.

But wherefore is man the only one of all animals subjected to other evils than those of Nature? Wherefore should he have been abandoned to himself, disposed as he



is to go astray? He is, therefore, the victim of some malignant Being.

It is the province of Religion to take us up where Philosophy leaves us. The nature of the ills which we endure, unfolds their origin. If man renders himself unhappy, it is because he would, himself, be the arbiter of his own felicity. Man is a god in exile. The reign of *Saturn*, the Golden Age, *Pandora's* box, from which issued every evil, and at the bottom of which hope alone remained; a thousand similar allegories, diffused over all Nations, attest the felicity, and the fall, of a first Man.

But there is no need to have recourse to foreign testimonies. We carry the most unquestionable evidence in ourselves. The beauties of Nature bear witness to the existence of GOD, and the miseries of Man confirm the truths of Religion. There exists not a single animal but what is lodged, clothed, fed, by the hand of Nature, without care, and almost without labour. Man alone, from his birth upward, is overwhelmed with calamity. First, he is born naked; and possessed of so little instinct, that if the mother who bare him, were not to rear him for several years, he would perish of hunger, of heat, or of cold. He knows nothing but from the experience of his parents. They are under the necessity of finding him a place where to lodge, of weaving garments for him, of providing his food for eight or ten years. Whatever encomiums may have been passed on certain countries for their fertility, and the mildness of their climate, I know of no one in which subsistence of the simplest kind does not cost Man both sollicitude and labour. In India, he must have a roof over his head to shelter him from the heat, from the rains, and from the insects. There, too, he must cultivate rice, weed it, thresh it, shell it, dress it. The banana, the most useful of all the vegetables of those countries, stands in need of being watered, and of being hedged round, to secure it from the attacks of the wild beasts by night. Magazines must likewise be provided,



for the preservation of provisions during those seasons when the Earth produces nothing. When Man has thus collected around him every thing necessary to a quiet and comfortable life, ambition, jealousy, avarice, gluttony, incontinency, or languor, take possession of his heart. He perishes almost always the victim of his own passions. Undoubtedly, to have sunk thus below the level of the beasts, Man must have aspired at an equality with the DEITY.

Wretched mortals! Seek your happiness in virtue, and you will have no ground of complaint against Nature. Despise that useless knowledge, and those unreasonable prejudices, which have corrupted the Earth, and which every age subverts in its turn. Love those Laws which are eternal. Your destiny is not abandoned to chance, nor to mischievous demons. Recal those times, the recollection of which is still fresh among all Nations. The brute creation every where found the means of supporting life; Man alone had neither aliment, nor clothing, nor instinct.

Divine wisdom left Man to himself, in order to bring him back to GOD. She scattered her blessings over the whole Earth that, in order to gather them, he might explore every different region of it; that he might expand his reason by the inspection of her works, and that he might become enamoured of her from a sense of her benefits. She placed between herself and him, harmless pleasures, rapturous discoveries, pure delights and endless hopes, in order to lead him to herself, step by step, through the path of knowledge and happiness. She fenced his way on both sides, by fear, by languor, by remorse, by pain, by all the ills of life, as boundaries destined to prevent him from wandering and losing himself. The mother, thus, scatters fruit along the ground to induce her child to learn to walk; she keeps at a little distance; smiles to him, calls him, stretches out her arms towards



him : But if he happens to fall, she flies to his assistance, she wipes away his tears, and comforts him.

Thus Providence interposes for the relief of Man, supplying his wants in a thousand extraordinary ways. What would have become of him in the earliest ages, had he been abandoned to his own reason, still unaided by experience ? Where found he corn, which at this day constitutes a principal part of the food of so many Nations, and which the Earth, while it spontaneously produces all sorts of plants, no where exhibits ? Who taught him agriculture, an art so simple, that the most stupid of Mankind is capable of learning it, and yet so sublime, that the most intelligent of animals never can pretend to practise it ? There is scarcely an animal but what supports its life by vegetables, but what has daily experience of their reproduction, and which does not employ, in quest of those that suit them, many more combinations than would have been necessary for resowing them.

But, On what did Man himself subsist, till an *Isis* or a *Ceres* revealed to him this blessing of the skies ? Who shewed him, in the first ages of the World, the original fruits of the orchard, scattered over the forests, and the alimentary roots concealed in the bosom of the Earth ? Must he not, a thousand times, have died of hunger, before he had collected a sufficiency to support life, or of poison, before he had learned to select, or of fatigue and restlessness, before he had formed round his habitation grass plots and arbours ? This art, the image of creation, was reserved for that Being alone who bare the impression of the Divinity.

If Providence had abandoned Man to himself, on proceeding from the hands of the Creator, What would have become of him ? Could he have said to the plains, Ye unknown forests, shew me the fruits which are my inheritance ? Earth, open, and disclose, in the roots buried under thy surface, my destined aliment ? Ye plants, on which my life depends, manifest to me your qualities, and



supply the instinct which Nature has denied? Could he have had recourse, in his distress to the compassion of the beasts, and, ready to perish with hunger, have said to the cow, Take me into the number of thy children, and let me share, with thy offspring, the produce of one of thy superfluous teats? When the breath of the North wind made him shiver with cold, Would the wild goat and timid sheep have run at his call to warm him with their fleeces? Wandering, without a protector, and without an asylum, when he heard by night the howlings of ferocious animals demanding their prey, Could he have made supplication to the generous dog, and said to him, Be thou my defender, and I will make thee my slave? Who could have subjected to his authority so many animals which stood in no need of him, which surpassed him in cunning, in speed, in strength, unless the hand which, notwithstanding his fall, destined him still to empire, had humbled their heads to the obedience of his will?

How was it possible for him, with a reason less infallible than their instinct, to raise himself up to the very Heavens, to measure the course of the stars, to cross the Ocean, to call down the thunder, to imitate most of the Works and appearances of Nature? We are struck with astonishment at these things now; but I am much rather astonished, that a sense of Deity should have spoken to his heart, long before a comprehension of the Works of Nature had perfected his understanding. View him in the state of nature, engaged in perpetual war with the elements, with beasts of prey, with his fellow creatures, with himself; frequently reduced to situations of subjection which no other animal could possibly support; and he is the only being who discovers, in the very depth of misery, the character of infinity, and the restlessness of immortality. He erects trophies; he engraves the record of his achievements on the bark of trees; he celebrates his funeral obsequies, and puts reverence on the ashes of



his forefathers, from whom he has received an inheritance so fatal.

He is incessantly agitated by the rage of love or of vengeance. When he is not the victim of his fellow men, he is their tyrant : And he alone knows that Justice and Goodness govern the World, and that Virtue exalts Man to Heaven. He receives, from his cradle, none of the presents of Nature, no soft fleece, no plumage, no defensive armour, no tool, for a life so painful and so laborious ; and he is the only being who invites the Gods to his birth, to his nuptials, and to his funeral obsequies.

However far he may have been misled by extravagant opinions, whenever he is struck by unexpected bursts of joy or grief, his soul, by an involuntary movement, takes refuge in the bosom of Deity. He cries out : Ah, my GOD ! He raises to Heaven suppliant hands, and eyes bathed with tears, in hope of there finding a Father. Ah ! the wants of Man bear witness to the providence of a Supreme Being. He has made Man feeble and ignorant, only that he may stay himself on his strength, and illuminate himself by his light ; and so far is it from being true, that chance, or malignant spirits, domineer over a World, where every thing concurred to destroy a creature so wretched, his preservation, his enjoyments, and his empire, demonstrate, that, at all times, a beneficent GOD has been the friend, and the protector of human life.



## STUDY NINTH.

## OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE METHODS OF OUR REASON, AND THE PRINCIPLES OF OUR SCIENCES.

I HAVE displayed, from the beginning of this Work, the immensity of the study of Nature. I there proposed new plans, to assist us in forming an idea of the order which she has established in all her various kingdoms: But, checked by my own incapacity, all that I could presume to promise was, to trace a slight sketch of what exists in the vegetable order. However, before I proceeded to lay down new principles on this subject, I thought myself called upon to refute the prejudices which the World, and our Sciences themselves, might have diffused over Nature, in the minds of my Readers. I have, accordingly, exhibited a faint representation of the goodness of Providence to the age in which we live, and the objections which have been raised against it. I have replied to those objections, in the same order in which I had stated them, pointing out, as I went along, the wonderful harmony which prevails in the distribution of the Globe abandoned, as some would have it, to the simple Laws of motion and of chance.

I have presented a new theory of the courses of the Tides, of the motion of the Earth in the Ecliptic, and of the Universal Deluge: And I am now going to attack, in my turn, the methods of our Reason, and the Elements of our Sciences, before I proceed to lay down some princi-



ples, which may indicate to us a certain path to the discovery of Truth.

But let it be understood, that if, in the course of this Work, and particularly in this article, I have combated our natural Sciences, it is only so far as system is concerned : I give them full credit on the side of observation. Besides, I highly respect the persons who devote themselves to the pursuit of Science. I know nothing in the world more estimable, next to the virtuous man, than the man of real knowledge, if, however, it be possible to separate the Sciences from Virtue. What sacrifices and privations does not the cultivation of them demand ! While the herd of Mankind is growing rich and renowned by agriculture, commerce, navigation and the arts, it has been frequently seen, that those who cleared the way for all the rest, lived in indigence themselves, unknown to, and disregarded by, their contemporaries. The man of Science, like the torch, illuminates all around him, and remains himself in obscurity.

I have attacked, then, neither the Learned, whom I honour, nor the Sciences, which have been my consolation through life ; but had time permitted, I would have disputed every inch of ground with our methods and our systems. They have thrown us into such a variety of absurd opinions, in every branch of scientific research, that, I do not hesitate to affirm, our Libraries, at this day, contain more of error than of information. Nay, I could venture to wager, that were you to introduce a blind man\* into the King's Library, and let him take out any book

\* The word in the original is, a *Quinze vingt*. The *Quinze vingt* at Paris is a royal foundation of Saint *Louis*, for the relief of *fifteen score*, that is, three hundred blind persons : Hence, in the Parisian phrase, any one, in general, afflicted with the want of sight, is denominated a *Quinze vingt*.

The *King's Library* is another establishment, which reflects the highest honour on the French Government. It was founded by the famous Cardinal *de Richlieu* ; who, however, transferred the credit of it to the Prince. The building is erected in the very centre of the Metropolis, and contains a most magnificent collection of books and manuscripts, in all languages, and



at a venture, the first page of that book on which he may chance to lay his hand, shall contain an error. How many probabilities should I have in my favour, among romance writers, poets, mythologists, historians, panegyrist, moralists, naturalists of ages past, and metaphysicians of all ages and of all countries? There is, in truth, a very simple method to check the mischief which their opinions might produce; it is to arrange all the books which contradict themselves, by the side of each other; as these are, in every walk of literature, almost infinite in number, the result of human knowledge, as far as they convey it, will be reduced almost to nothing.

By our very methods of acquiring knowledge, we are deluded into error. First, to succeed in the search of Truth, we ought to be entirely exempted from the influence of passion; and yet, from our earliest infancy, the passions are wilfully set afloat, and thus reason receives an improper bias from the very first. This maxim is laid down as the fundamental basis of all conduct, and of all opinion, *Make your fortune*. The effect of this is, we no longer prize any thing but what has some relation to this appetite. Even natural truths vanish out of sight, because we no longer contemplate Nature, except in machines or books.

In order to our believing in GOD, some person of consequence must assure us there is one. If *Fenelon* says it is so, we admit it, because *Fenelon* was preceptor to the Duke of *Burgundy*, an Archbishop, a man of quality, and addressed by the title of My Lord. We are fully convinced of the existence of GOD by the arguments of *Fenelon*, because his credit reflects some upon ourselves. I do not mean to affirm, however, that his virtue contrib-

relative to every art and science; of drawings, models, mathematical instruments, &c. It is opened on certain days of the week, and for a considerable part of the day, for the inspection and use of strangers as well as natives. And, even in Paris, I saw no petty officer, on duty at the Library, hold out his hand for a fee.

H. H.



tuted nothing to the force of his reasoning: But no farther than as it stands in connexion with his reputation and his fortune; for were we to meet this same virtue in a water porter, its lustre would fade in our eyes. To no purpose would such a one furnish proofs of the existence of a GOD, more unanswerable than all the speculations of Philosophy, in a life labouring under contempt, hard, poor, laborious, exhibiting uniform probity and fortitude, and passed in perfect resignation to the will of the Supreme: These testimonies so positive, are of no consideration at all with us; we estimate their importance from the celebrity which they have acquired. Let some Emperor be disposed to adopt the Philosophy of this obscure man, his maxims will be immediately extolled in every book that is published, and quoted in every academical thesis; engraved portraits of the Author would decorate every pannel, and his bust in plaster of Paris grace every chimney, he should be an *Epicletus*, a *Socrates*, a *John James Rousseau*.

But should a period come, in which arose men, of as high reputation as these, in favour with powerful Princes, whose interest it might be, that there should be no GOD, and who, in order to make their court to such Princes, denied his existence; from the same effect of our education, which engaged us to believe in GOD, on the faith of *Fenelon*, *Epicletus*, *Socrates* and *John James Rousseau*, we would renounce our belief, on the credit of the others, being men of such high consideration, and, besides, so much nearer to us. It is thus our education warps us: It disposes us indifferently to preach the Gospel or the Alcoran, according as our interest is concerned in the one or in the other.

Hence arose this maxim so universal and so pernicious, *Primó vivere, deinde philosophari*—"To live first, and seek wisdom afterward." The man who is not ready to give his life in exchange for wisdom, is unworthy of



knowing her. *Juvenal's* sentiment is much more rational, and deserves rather to be adopted :

Summum crede nefas vitam præferre pudori :  
Et propter vitam, vivendi perdere causas.\*

“ The blackest of crimes, believe it, is to prefer life to  
“ honour ; and for the sake of a few paltry years of mere  
“ existence, to sacrifice that which alone makes life desir-  
“ able.”

I say nothing of other prejudices which oppose themselves to the investigation of truth, such as those of ambition, which stimulate every one among us to distinguish himself ; and this can hardly be done except in two ways ; either by subverting maxims the most undoubted, and the most firmly established, in order to substitute our own in their place ; or by making an effort to please all parties, from uniting opinions the most contradictory ; and this, taking the two cases together, multiplies the ramifications of error to infinity. Truth has, farther, to encounter a multitude of other obstacles on the part of powerful men, who can make an advantage of error. I shall confine myself to those which are to be imputed to the weakness of our reason, and shall examine their influence on our acquirements in natural knowledge.

It is easy to perceive, that most of the Laws which we have presumed to assign to Nature, have been deduced sometimes from our weakness, sometimes from our pride. I shall take a few instances, as they happen to occur to my thoughts, and which are considered as most indubitably certain. For example, we have settled it, that the Sun must be in the centre of the planets, in order to regulate

\* Imitated thus :

The worst of crimes, believe it, generous youth,  
Is to buy life, by selling sacred truth :  
Virtue's the gem of life, the Sage's store ;  
But life is death, when honour is no more.



their motion, because we are under the necessity of placing ourselves in the centre of our personal concerns, for the purpose of keeping an eye over them. But if, in the case of the celestial spheres, the centre naturally belongs to the most considerable bodies, How comes it about that *Saturn* and *Jupiter*, which greatly exceed our Globe in magnitude, should be at the extremity of our vortex ?

As the shortest road is that which fatigues us least, we have taken upon us to conclude, that, in like manner, this must be the plan of Nature. Consequently, in order to spare the Sun a journey of about ninety millions of leagues, which he must every day perform, in giving us light, we set the Earth a spinning round its own axis. It may be so ; but if the Earth revolves round itself, there must be a great difference in the space passed through by two cannon balls, shot off at the same instant, the one toward the East, and the other toward the West ; for the first goes along with the motion of the Earth, and the second goes in the opposite direction. While both are flying in the air, and removing the one from the other, each proceeding at the rate of six thousand fathoms in a minute, the Earth, during that same minute, is outflying the first, and removing from the second, with a velocity which carries it along at the rate of sixteen thousand fathoms ; this ought to put the point of departure twentytwo thousand fathom behind the ball which is flying to the West, and ten thousand fathom before that which is flying to the East.

I once proposed this difficulty to a very able Astronomer, who considered it as almost an insult. He replied, as the custom of our Doctors is, that the objection had been made long before, and resolved. At length, as I entreated him to have compassion on my ignorance, and to give me the solution, he retailed to me the pretended experiment of a ball dropped from the top of a ship's mast, when under sail, and which falls on deck close to the mast, notwithstanding the ship's progressive motion. " The



“ Earth,” said he, “ carries along, in like manner, the rotation of the two balls, in its own movement. Were they to be shot off in a perpendicular direction, they would fall back precisely on the point from whence they were emitted.” As axioms are not very expensive, and serve to cut short all difficulties, he subjoined this as one: “ The motion of a great body absorbs that of a small.” If this axiom be founded in truth, replied I, the ball dropped from the top of the mast of a ship under sail, ought not to fall back close to the bottom of the mast; its motion ought to be absorbed, not by that of the vessel, but by that of the Earth, which is far the greater body. It ought to obey only the direction of gravity; and, for the same reason, the Earth ought to absorb the motion of the bullet which is going along with it toward the East, and force it back into the cannon from which it issued.

I was unwilling to push this difficulty any farther; but I remained, as has frequently happened to me, after the most luminous solutions of our schools, still more *perplexed* than I was before. I began to call in question the truth of not only a system and of an experiment, but what is worse, of an axiom. Not that I reject our planetary system, such as it is given us; but I admit it for the same reason which at first suggested it. It is from its being the best adapted to the weakness of my body, and of my mind. I find, in fact, that the rotation of the Earth, every day, saves the Sun a prodigious journey; but, in other respects, I by no means believe that this system is that of Nature, and that she has disclosed the causes of motion to men, who are incapable of accounting for the movement of their own fingers.

I beg leave to suggest some farther probabilities in favour of the Sun's motion round the Earth. “ The Astronomers of Greenwich, having discovered that a star of Taurus has a declination of two minutes, every twentyfour hours; that this star not being dim, and



“ having no train, cannot be considered as a comet, communicated their observations to the astronomers of Paris, who found them accurate. M. *Messier* was appointed to make a report of this to the Academy of Sciences, at their next meeting.\*”

If the Stars are Suns, here then is a Sun in motion, and that motion is a presumption, at least, that ours may move.

The stability of the Earth may be presumed, on the other hand, from this circumstance, that the distance of the Stars never changes with respect to us, which must perceptibly take place, if we performed every year, as is alleged, a round of sixtyfour millions of leagues in diameter through the Heavens; for in a space so vast, we must, of necessity, draw nigher to some, and remove from others.

Sixtyfour millions of leagues, we are told, dwindle to a point in the Heavens, compared to the distance of the Stars. I am much in doubt as to the truth of this. The Sun, which is a million of times greater than the Earth, presents an apparent diameter of only six inches, at the distance of thirtytwo millions of leagues from us. If this distance reduces to a diameter so small, a body so immense, it is impossible to doubt, that double the distance, namely, sixtyfour millions of leagues, would diminish it still much more, and reduce it, perhaps, to the apparent magnitude of a Star; and it is far from being impossible, that, on being thus diminished, and on our still removing sixtyfour millions of leagues farther, he would entirely disappear. How comes it to pass, then, that when the Earth approaches, or removes to this distance from the Stars in the Firmament, in performing its annual circle, no one of those Stars increases or diminishes in magnitude with respect to us.

I submit some farther observations, tending to prove, that the Stars have, at least, motions peculiar to them-

\* Extract from the *Courier de l'Europe*, Friday, 4th May, 1781.



selves. The ancient Astronomers have observed, in the Neck of the Whale, a Star which presented much variety in its appearances, sometimes it appeared for three months together, sometimes during a longer interval; sometimes its apparent magnitude was greater, sometimes smaller. The time of its appearances was irregular. The same Astronomers, report, that they had observed a new Star in the Heart of the Swan, which from time to time disappeared. In the year 1600, it was equal to a Star of the first magnitude; it gradually diminished, and at length disappeared. M. *Cassini* perceived it in 1655. It increased for five years successively; it then began to decrease, and reappeared no more. In 1670 a new Star was observed near the head of the Swan. Father *Anselm*, a Carthusian friar, and several other Astronomers, made the observation. It disappeared, and became again visible in 1672. from that period, it was seen no more till 1709, and in 1713 it totally disappeared.

These examples demonstrate, that the Stars not only have motions, but that they describe curves very different from the circles and the ellipses which we have assigned to the heavenly bodies. I am fully persuaded, that there is among these the same variety of motion, as between those of many terrestrial bodies; and that there are Stars which describe cycloïds, spirals, and many other curves, of which we have not so much as an idea.

I must proceed no farther on this ground, for fear of appearing better informed respecting the affairs of Heaven, than those which are much nearer to us. All that I intended was to expose my doubts and my ignorance. If Stars are Suns, then there must be Stars in motion; and, surely, ours may be in motion as well as they are.\*

\* I now leave the Reader to reflect on the total disappearance of those Stars. The ancients had observed seven Stars in the Pleiades. Six only are now perceptible. The seventh disappeared at the siege of Troy. *Ovid* says, it was so affected by the fate of that unfortunate city, as, from grief, to cover its face with its hand. I find, in the book of *Job*, a curious pas-



It is thus that our general maxims become the sources of error; for we never fail to charge with disorder whatever seems to recede from our pretended order. That which I formerly quoted, namely, that Nature, in her operations, takes always the shortest road, has filled our Physics with false views innumerable. There is nothing however, more flatly contradicted by experience. Nature makes the waters of the rivers to meander through the Land, in their progress to the Sea, instead of transmitting them in a straight line. She causes the veins to perform a winding course through the human body; nay, she has perforated certain bones expressly, in order to afford a passage to some of the principal veins into the interior of the stronger limbs, to prevent their being exposed to injury by external concussions. In a word, she expands a mushroom in one night, but takes a century to bring an oak to perfection. Nature very seldom takes the nearest road, but she always takes that which is best adapted to the purpose.

This rage for generalizing has dictated to us, in every branch of Science, an infinite number of maxims, sentences, adages, which are incessantly contradicting themselves. It is one of our maxims, that a man of genius catches every thing at a glance, and executes all by one single Law. For my own part, I consider this sublime method of observing and executing, as one of the strongest proofs of the weakness of the human mind. Man never can proceed with confidence but in one single path.

sage, which seems to presage this disappearance: It is chap. xxxviii. ver. 31. *Numquid conjungere valebis micantes stellas pleiadas, aut gyrum arcturi poteris dissipare?* "Will it be in thy power to unite the brilliant Stars, the Pleiades; and to turn aside the great Bear from its course?" This is the import of the translation of M. le Maitre de Sacy. However, if I might venture to give an opinion after that learned man, I would put a different sense on the conclusion of the passage. *Gyrum arcturi dissipare*, means, in my opinion, "to dissipate the attraction of the arctic pole." I here repeat what I have already observed, that the Book of Job is replenished with most profound knowledge of Nature.



As soon as a variety present themselves, he becomes perplexed, and goes astray; he is at a loss to ascertain which he ought to pursue: That he may make sure of not deviating, he admits only one to be right; and, once engaged, right or wrong, pride stimulates him forward. The AUTHOR of Nature, on the contrary, embracing in his infinite intelligence, all the spheres of all beings, proceeds to their production by Laws as various as his own inexhaustible conceptions, in order to the attainment of one single end, which is their general good. Whatever contempt Philosophers may express for final causes, they are the only causes which he permits us to know. All the rest He is pleased to conceal from us; and it is well worthy of being remarked, that the only end which He discloses to our understanding, is also the same with that which he proposes to our virtues.

One of our most ordinary methods, when we catch some effect in Nature, is to dwell upon it, at first, from weakness, and afterwards, to deduce from it an universal principle, out of vanity. If after this we can find means, and it is no difficult matter to apply to it a geometrical theorem, a triangle, an equation, were it but an  $a+b$ , this is sufficient to render it for ever venerable. It was thus, that, in the last age, every thing was explained on the principles of the corpuscular philosophy, because it was perceived that some bodies were formed by intus susception, or an aggregation of parts. A seasoning of Algebra, which they found means to add to it, had invested it with so much the more dignity, that most of the reasoners of those times understood nothing of the matter. But being indifferently endowed, its reign was of short duration. At this day, we do not so much as mention the names of a long list of learned and illustrious gentlemen, whom all Europe then concurred in covering with laurels.

Others having found out that air pressed, set to work with every species of machinery to demonstrate that air



possessed gravity. Our books referred every thing to the gravity of the air; vegetation, the human temperament, digestion, the circulation of the blood, the phenomena, the ascension of fluids. They found themselves somewhat embarrassed, it is true, by capillary tubes, in which the fluid ascends, independently of the action of the air. But a solution was found for this likewise; and *woe betide* those, in the phrase of certain Writers, who do not comprehend it! Others applied themselves to the investigation of its elasticity, and have explained, equally well, all the operations of Nature, by this quality of the air. The universal cry was, Now the veil is removed; we have caught her in the fact. But did not the Savage know, when he walked against the wind, that air had both gravity and elasticity? Did he not employ both those qualities in managing his canoe when under sail? I do not object to investigation, if natural effects are applied, after exact calculation, and unequivocal experiment, to the necessities of human life; but they are, for the most part, introduced for the purpose of regulating the operations of Nature, and not our own.

Others find it still more commodious to explain the system of the Universe, without deducing any consequence from it. They ascribe to it Laws which have so much accuracy and precision, that they leave to the divine Providence nothing more to do. They represent the Supreme Being as a Geometrician, or a Mechanist, who amuses himself with making spheres, merely for the pleasure of setting them a spinning round. They pay no regard to harmonies, and other moral causes. Though the exactness of their observations may do them honour, their results are by no means satisfactory. Their manner of reasoning on Nature resembles that of a Savage, who, on observing, in one of our cities, the motion of the indexes of a public clock, and seeing, that on their pointing in a certain direction upon the hour plate, the turrets fell a shaking, crowds issued into the streets, and a considerable



part of the inhabitants were put in motion, should thence conclude, that a clock was the principle of all European occupations. This is the defect to be imputed to most of the Sciences, which, without consulting the end of the operations of Nature, perplex themselves in an unprofitable investigation of the means. The Astronomer considers only the course of the Stars, without paying the slightest attention to the relations which they have with the seasons. Chemistry, having discovered in the aggregation of bodies only saline particles, which mutually assimilate, sees nothing but salt as the principle and the object. Algebra having been invented, in order to facilitate calculation, has degenerated into a Science which calculates only imaginary magnitudes, and which proposes to itself theorems only, totally inapplicable to the demands of human life.

From all this results an infinity of disorders, far beyond what I am able to express. The view of Nature, which suggests to nations the most savage, not only the idea of a GOD, but that of an infinity of Gods, presents to the Philosophers of the day only the idea of furnaces, of spheres, of stills, and of crystalizations.

The Naiads, the Sylvans, Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, impressed upon the Ancients some respect, at least, for the Works of Creation, and attached them still farther to their Country by a sentiment of religion. But our machinery destroys the harmonies of Nature and of Society. The first is to us nothing but a gloomy theatre, composed of levers, pulleys, weights, and springs; and the second merely a school for disputation. Those systems, we are told, give exercise to the mental faculties. It may be so; but, May they not likewise mislead the understanding? But the heart is in no less danger of being depraved. While the head is laying down principles, the heart is frequently deducing consequences. If every thing is the production of unintelligent powers, of attractions, of fermentations, the play of fibres, of masses, we



then are subjected to their laws, as all other bodies are. Women and children deduce these consequences. What, in the mean time, becomes of virtue? You must submit, say these ingenious gentlemen, to the Laws of Nature. So then, we must obey the power of gravity; sit down, and walk no more. Nature speaks to us by a hundred thousand voices. Which of these is now founding in our ears? What, will you adopt as the rule of your life, the example of fishes, of quadrupeds, of plants, or even of the heavenly bodies?

There are Metaphysicians, on the contrary, who, without paying regard to any one Law of Physics, explain to you the whole system of the Universe, by means of abstract ideas. But this is a proof that their system is not the system of Nature, namely, that with their materials and their method, it would be an easy matter to subvert their order, and to frame another totally different from it, provided one were disposed to take the small trouble which it requires. Nay, a reflection arises out of this, which levels a mortal blow at the pride of human understanding; it is this, that all these efforts of the genius of Man, so far from being able to construct a World, are incapable of so much as putting a grain of sand in motion.

There are others, who consider the state in which we live as a state of progressive ruin and of punishment. They proceed on the supposition, conformably to the authority of the Sacred Writings, that this Earth once existed with other harmonies. I readily admit what Scripture says on this subject, but I object to the explanations of Commentators. Such is the weakness of our intellectual powers, that we are incapable of conceiving or imagining any thing beyond what Nature actually exhibits to us. They are grossly mistaken, accordingly, when they affirm, for instance, that, when the Earth was in a state of perfection, the Sun was constantly in the Equator; that the days and nights were perpetually equal; that there



was an eternal Spring; that the whole face of the ground was smooth and level, and so on.

Were the Sun constantly in the Equator, I question whether a single spot of the Globe would be habitable. First, the Torrid Zone would be burnt up by his fervent heat, as has been already demonstrated; the two icy Zones would extend much farther than they do at present; the temperate Zones would be at least as cold toward their middle, as they are with us at the vernal Equinox; and this temperature would prevent the greatest part of fruits from coming to maturity. I know not where the perpetual Spring would be; but, if it could any where exist, never could Autumn there exist likewise. The case would be still worse were there neither rocks nor mountains on the surface of the Globe, for not one river, nay not a brook of water would flow over the whole Earth. There would be neither shelter nor reflex, to the North, to cherish the germination of plants, and there would be neither shade nor moisture, to the South, to preserve them from the heat. These wonderful arrangements actually exist in Finland, in Sweden, at Spitzbergen, and over the whole northern regions, which become loaded with rocks in proportion as the latitude increases; and they rise, in like manner, in the Antilles, in the Isle of France, and in all the other islands and districts comprehended between the Tropics, where the face of the ground is covered over with rocks, especially toward the Line; in Ethiopia, the territory of which Nature has overspread with vast and lofty rocks, almost perpendicular, which form all around them deep valleys, delightfully shady and cool. Thus, as was before observed, in order to refute our pretended plans of perfection, it is sufficient to admit them.

There is another class of Literati, on the contrary, who never deviate from their track, and who abstain from looking at any thing beyond it, however rich in facts they may be; such are the Botanists. They have observed the



sexual parts in plants, and employ themselves entirely in collecting and arranging them, conformably to the number of those parts, without troubling themselves about knowing any thing farther of them. When they have classed them in their heads and in their herbals, into umbellated, into rose formed, or into tubulous, with the number of their stamina; if to this they are able to affix a parcel of Greek terms, they are possessed, as they imagine, of the complete system of vegetation.

Others of them, to do them justice, go somewhat farther. They study the principles of plants; and in order to attain their object, pound them in mortars, or dissolve them in their alembics. The process being completed, they exhibit salts, oils, earths; and tell you gravely, these are the principles of such and such a plant. For my own part, I no more believe that any one can shew me the principles of a plant in a phial, than he can display those of a wolf, or of a sheep, in a kettle. I respect the mysterious operations of Chemistry; but whenever they act on vegetables, the process destroys them. Permit me to quote the decision which an eminent Physician has pronounced on his own experiments. I mean Doctor *J. B. Chomel*, in the preliminary discourse to his useful Abridgment of the History of common Plants.\* “Two thousand analyses nearly,” says he, “of different plants, made by the Chemists of the Royal Academy of Sciences, have afforded us no farther information than this, that from all vegetables may be extracted a certain quantity of an acid liquor, more or less of essential or fetid oil, of salt fixed, volatile, or concrete, of insipid phlegm and of earth; and, in many cases, almost the same principles, and in the same quantities, from plants whose virtues are extremely different. This very tedious, and very painful pursuit, accordingly, has turned out a merely useless attempt toward a discovery of the effects of

\* Vol. i. page 37.



“ plants ; and has served only to undeceive us, respecting  
“ the prejudices which might have been entertained in  
“ favour of such an analysis.” He adds, that the celebrated  
Chemist *Homborg*, having sown the seeds of the same  
plants in two frames, filled with earth, impregnated with  
a strong lye, the one of which was afterwards watered  
with common water, and the other with water in which  
nitre had been dissolved, these plants reproduced very  
nearly the same principles. Here, then, is our systematic  
Science completely overturned ; for it can discover the  
essential qualities of plants, neither by their composition  
nor their decomposition.

Many other errors have been adopted respecting the  
Laws of the expansion and the fecundation of plants.  
The Ancients had distinguished, in many plants, males  
and females ; and a fecundation, by means of emanations  
of the feminal powder, such as in the datebearing palm  
tree. We have applied this Law to the whole vegetable  
kingdom. It embraces, no doubt, a very extensive field ;  
but how many vegetables, besides, propagate themselves  
by suckers, by slips, by knittings, by the extremities of  
their branches ! Here are, then, in the same kingdom, va-  
rious methods of reproduction. Nevertheless, when we  
perceive no longer in Nature, the Law which has once  
been adopted in our books of Science, we are weak e-  
nough to imagine that she has gone astray. We have on-  
ly one thread, and when it snaps, we conclude, that the  
system of the Universe must be on the point of dissolu-  
tion. The Supreme Intelligence disappears from before  
our eyes, the moment that our own happens to be a little  
disturbed. I entertain no doubt, however, that the AU-  
THOR of Nature has established Laws for the vegetable  
World, now so generally studied, which are still to us en-  
tirely unknown. I take the liberty to subjoin on this sub-  
ject, an observation which I submit to the experience of  
my Readers.



Having transplanted, in the month of February of the year 1783, some simple violet plants, which had begun to push out small flower buds; this transplantation checked their expansion in a manner very extraordinary. These small buds never came into flower, but their ovary having swelled, attained the usual size, and changed into a capsula filled with seeds, without displaying, outwardly or inwardly, either petal, or anthera, or stigma, or any part whatever of the flower. All these buds presented successively the same phenomena in the months of May, of June and of July, but no one of those violet plants presented the least semblance of a flower. I only perceived in the shooting buds which I opened, the parts which should have composed the flower withered within the calix. I sowed again their seeds which had not been fecundated, and hitherto they have not sprung up. This experiment so far is favourable to the Linnæan system; but it is in another respect a deviation, as it demonstrates the possibility of a plant's producing fruit without having flowered.

It may be here proper to remark, once for all, that physical Laws are subordinate to the Laws of utility, that is, to give an instance, the Laws of vegetation are adapted to the preservation of sensible beings, for whose use they were designed. Accordingly, though the flowering of my violet may have been interrupted, this prevented not the production of its seeds, which were destined to be the subsistence of some animal, whose natural food it is. For this reason, too, the most useful plants, such as the gramineous, are those which have the greatest variety of methods to reproduce themselves. If Nature, with respect to them, had confined herself rigidly to the Law of florification, they could not multiply, when pastured upon by animals which continually browse on their summits. The same thing takes place with regard to such as grow along the water courses, as reeds and the aquatic trees; willows, alders, poplars, osiers, mangliers, when the wa-



ters swell, and bury them in sand, or totally subvert them, as is frequently the case. The shores would remain destitute of verdure, if the vegetables, which are native there, had not the faculty of reproduction by means of their own shoots. But the case is different with respect to the vegetable inhabitants of the mountains, as palm trees, firs, cedars, larches, pines, which are not exposed to similar accidents, and which cannot be propagated by slips. Nay, if you crop off the summit of the palm tree, it dies.

We likewise find these same laws of adaptation and utility in the generation of animals, to which we ascribe uncertainty, as soon as we perceive variety; or when we apprehend an approximation to the vegetable kingdom by means of imaginary relations, suggested by the perception of effects common to both. Thus, for example, if some of our more delicate plant insects are viviparous in Summer, it is because their young find, at that season, the temperature and the food which are adapted to them on coming into the world; and if they are oviparous in Autumn, it is because the posterity of creatures so delicate could not have survived the Winter, without having been shut up in eggs. For similar reasons, if you tear off a claw from a live crab or lobster, it pushes out another, which springs out of its body, as a branch out of a tree. Not that this animal reproduction is the effect of any mechanical analogy between the two kingdoms: But those animals being destined to live on the shores, among the rocks, where they are exposed to the agitation of the waves, Nature has bestowed on them the faculty of reproducing the limbs exposed to be bruised, or broken off, by the rolling about of rocky substances, as she has given to vegetables, which grow by the waters, the power of reproduction by shoots, because they are exposed to the danger of being overwhelmed by inundations.

Medicine has deduced a multitude of errors from those apparent analogies of the vegetable and animal kingdoms. It is sufficient to examine the train of her studies, to be



satisfied that they are liable to strong suspicions. She pursues the operations of the soul through the structure of a corpse, and the functions of life in the lethargy of death. If she happens to perceive some valuable property in a vegetable, she exalts it into an universal remedy. Listen to her aphorisms. Plants are useful to human life: Hence she concludes, that a vegetable diet will make a man live for several ages. Who is able to enumerate the books, the treatises, the panegyrics, which have been composed on the virtues of plants! Multitudes of patients die, notwithstanding, with their stomachs full of those wonderful simples. Not that I undervalue their qualities when judiciously applied; but I absolutely reject the reasonings which attempt to connect the duration of human life with the use of a vegetable regimen.

The life of Man is the result of all the moral adaptations, and depends much more on sobriety, on temperance, and the other virtues, than on the nature of aliments. The animals which live entirely on plants, Do they attain even so much as the age of Man? The deer and wild goats, which feed on the admirable vulnerary herbs of Switzerland ought never to die; nevertheless, they are very short lived. The bees which suck the nectar of their flowers, likewise die, and several of their species, in the space of one year. There is a limited term fixed for the life of every kind of animal, and a regimen peculiar to it; that of Man alone extends to every variety of aliment. The Tartar lives on raw horse flesh, the Dutchman on fish, another nation on roots, another on milk diet; and in all countries you meet with old people. Vice alone, and mental uneasiness, shorten human life; and I am persuaded, that the moral affections are of such extensive influence, with respect to Man, that there is not one in the whole catalogue of diseases but what owes its origin to them.

Hear what *Socrates* thought of the systematic Philosophy of his age; for in all ages, she has abandoned herself



to the same extravagancies. "He did not amuse himself," says *Xenophon*,\* "with researches into the mysteries of Nature; or with enquiring in what manner, that which the Sophists call the World was created; nor what irresistible, elastic force governs all celestial things: On the contrary, he exposed the folly of those who addict themselves to such contemplations, and demanded, if it was after having acquired a perfect knowledge of human things, that they undertook the investigation of those which are divine; or whether they considered it as a character of true wisdom, to neglect what was within their reach, in order to grasp at objects far above them. He expressed still farther astonishment, that they did not discern the impossibility of Man's comprehending all those wonders, considering that the persons who had the reputation of being most profoundly skilled in such matters, maintained opinions contradictory to each other, and quarrelled like madmen. For as among madmen, there are some undaunted at the approach of the most formidable calamities, and others affrighted where there is no appearance of danger; in like manner, among those Philosophers, some have maintained, that there is no action which may not be performed in public, nor a word which may not be freely spoken in the presence of the whole World; others, on the contrary, have taught, that all intercourse with men ought to be broken off, and perpetual solitude preferred to society: Some have poured contempt on temples and altars, and decried the worship of the Gods; others are such slaves to superstition, as to adore wood, and stone, and irrational animals. And as to the Science of natural things, some have acknowledged but one single being; others have admitted an infinite number: Some insist, that all things are in a state of perpetual motion; others, that there is no such

\* *Xenophon's Memorable Things of Socrates*, book i.



“ thing as motion : Some tell you that the World is fill-  
 “ ed with incessant generations and dissolutions ; and  
 “ others assure you that nothing is generated or destroyed.  
 “ He said farther, that he would be gladly informed by  
 “ those ingenious gentlemen, whether they entertained  
 “ the hope of some time or other reducing to practice  
 “ what they taught, as persons instructed in any art, have  
 “ it in their power to exercise it at pleasure, either for  
 “ their own private emolument, or for the benefit of their  
 “ friends ; and whether they likewise imagined, after  
 “ they had discovered the causes of every thing that comes  
 “ to pass, that they should be able to dispense winds and  
 “ rains, and dispose of times and seasons, in subserviency  
 “ to their necessities ; or if they satisfied themselves with  
 “ the bare knowledge of those things, without any ex-  
 “ pectation of advantage from them.”

Not that *Socrates* was unacquainted with Nature, for  
 he had studied her thoroughly ; but he had relinquished  
 the investigation of the causes, entirely in the view of ris-  
 ing into admiration at the results. No one ever had col-  
 lected more observations on this subject than he had done.  
 He made frequent use of these in his conversations on the  
 divine Providence.

Nature presents to us, on every side, nothing but har-  
 monies, and adaptations to our necessities ; and we will  
 obstinately persist in vain efforts to trace her up to the  
 causes which she employs ; as if we meant to extort from  
 her the secrets of her power. We do not so much as  
 know the most common principles which she sets a work-  
 ing in our hands, and in our feet. Earth, water, air and  
 fire, are elements, as we say. But under what form must  
 Earth appear, in order to be an element ? That stratum  
 called *humus*, which almost every where covers it, and  
 which serves as a basis to the vegetable kingdom, is a re-  
 fuse of all sorts of substances, of marl, of sand, of clay, of  
 vegetables.



Is it the sand which constitutes its elementary part? But sand appears to be a secretion from the rock. Is it the rock, then, which is an element? But it has the appearance in its turn, of being an aggregation of sand, as we see it to be in masses of free stone. Whether of the two, sand or rock, was the principle of the other? and, Which took the precedence in the formation of the Globe? Supposing us possessed of authentic information as to this particular, What ground have we gained? There are rocks formed of aggregations of all sorts. Granite is composed of grains; marbles and calcareous stones, of the paste of shells and madrépores. There are likewise banks of sand, composed of the wreck of all these stones: I have seen the sand of crystal.

Shell fish, which seem to give us some light respecting the nature of calcareous stone, by no means indicate to us the primitive origin of that substance; for they themselves form their shells of the refuse that swims in the Seas. The difficulties increase as you attempt to explain the formation of so many various bodies issuing out of the Earth, and nourished by it. In vain you call to your assistance analogies, assimilations, homogeneities, and heterogeneities. Is it not strange, that thousands of species of resinous, oily, elastic, soft and combustible vegetables, should differ so entirely from the rugged and stony soil which produces them?

The Siamese Philosophers easily get rid of all embarrassment on the subject, for they admit, in Nature, a fifth element, which is wood. But this supplement is incapable of carrying them very far; for it is still more astonishing, that animal substance should be formed of vegetable, than that this last should be formed of fossil. Which way does it become sensible, living and impassioned? They admit, I grant, the interposition of the Sun's action. But how is it possible that the Sun should be, in animals, the cause of any moral affection; or, if you like the phrase better, of any passion, when we do not see it exercising a dispos-



ing influence even on the component parts of plants ? For example, its general effect is to dry that which is humid. How comes it to pass, then, that in a peach exposed to its action, the pulp externally should be meltingly plump, and the nut within extremely hard ; whereas the contrary takes place in the fruit of the cocoa tree, which is replenished with milk inwardly, and clothed externally with a shell as hard as a stone ?

Neither has the Sun more influence on the mechanical construction of animals : Their interior parts, which are most constantly moistened with humours, with blood and marrow, are frequently the hardest, such as the teeth and the bones ; and the parts most exposed to the action of his heat are often very soft, as hair, feathers, the flesh and the eyes. Once more, How comes it to pass, that there is so little analogy between plants tender, ligneous, liable to putrefaction, and the Earth which produces them ; and between the corals and the madrépores of stone, which form banks so extensive between the Tropics, and the sea water in which they are formed ? To all appearance, the contrary ought to happen : The water ought to have produced soft plants, and the earth solid plants. If things exist thus, there must, undoubtedly, be more than one good reason for it ; I think I have a glimpse of a very tolerable one : It is this, that if these analogies actually took place, the two elements would in a short time become uninhabitable ; they would soon be overwhelmed by their own vegetation. The Sea would be incapable of breaking madrépores of wood, and the air of dissolving forests of stone.

The same doubts might be started, respecting the nature of Water. This element, we allege, is formed of small globules, which roll one over another ; that it is to the spherical form of its elementary particles we ought to ascribe its fluidity. But if these are globules, there must be between them intervals and vacuities, without which they could not be susceptible of motion. How comes it



to pass, then, that water is incompressible? If you apply to it a strong compressing power in a tube, it will force its way through the pores of that tube, though it be of gold; and will burst it, if of iron. Employ what efforts you please, you will find it impossible to reduce it to a smaller size. But so far from knowing the form of its component parts, we cannot so much as determine that of the combined whole. Does it consist in being expanded into invisible vapours in the air, as the dew, or collected into mist in the clouds, or consolidated into masses in the ice, or finally, in a fluid state, as in the rivers, Fluidity, it is said, forms one of its principal characters. Yes, because we drink it in that state, and because, under this relation, it interests us the most. We determine its principal character, as we do that of all the objects of Nature, for the reason which I have already suggested, from our own most craving necessity; but this very character appears foreign to it: For it owes its fluidity only to the action of the heat; if you deprive it of this, it changes into ice. It would be very singular, should it be made to appear, after all our fundamental definitions, that the natural state of water was to be solid, and that the natural state of earth was to be fluid: Now this must actually be the case, if water owes its fluidity only to heat, and if earth is nothing but an aggregation of sands united by different glues, and attracted to a common centre, by the general action of gravity.

The elementary qualities of air, are not of more easy determination. Air, we say, is an elastic body: When it is shut up in the grains of gunpowder, the action of fire dilates it to such a degree, as to communicate to it the power of hurling a globe of iron to a prodigious distance. But how could it have been, with all this elasticity, compressed into the grains of a crumbling powder? If you put even any liquid substance into a state of fermentation in a flask, a thousand times more air will be separated from it, than you could force into the vessel without



breaking it. How could this air be confined in a substance soft and fluid, without disengaging itself by its own action ?

The air, when loaded with vapours, we farther say, is refrangible. The farther we advance to the North, the more elevated does the Sun appear over the Horizon, above the place which he actually occupies in the Heavens. The Dutch mariners, who passed the Winter of 1597, in Nova Zembla, after a night of several months, saw the Sun reappear fifteen days sooner than they expected his return. All this is very well. But if vapours render the air refrangible, Why is there no Aurora, nor twilight, nor any durable refraction of light whatever, between the Tropics, not even on the Sea, where so many vapours are exhaled by the constant action of the Sun, that the Horizon is sometimes quite involved in mist by them ?

The light is not refracted, says another Philosopher, by the vapours, but by the cold ; for the refraction of the Atmosphere is not so great at the end of Summer, as at the end of Winter, at the autumnal Equinox, as at the vernal.

I admit the truth of this observation ; however, after very hot days in Summer, there is refraction to the North, as well as in our temperate Climates, and there is none between the Tropics : The cold, therefore, does not appear to me to be the mechanical cause of refraction, but it is the final cause of it. This wonderful multiplication of light, which increases in the Atmosphere, in proportion to the intenseness of the cold, is, in my apprehension, a consequence of the same Law which transmits the Moon into the northern signs, in proportion as the Sun forsakes them, and which causes her to illuminate the long nights of our Pole, while the Sun is under the Horizon ; for light, be of what sort it may, is warm. These wonderful harmonies are not in the nature of the Elements, but in the will of HIM who has established them in subordination to the necessities of beings endowed with sensibility.



Fire presents to us phenomena still more incomprehensible. First of all, Is fire matter? Matter, according to the definitions of Philosophy, is that which is divisible in length, breadth and depth. Fire is divisible only in perpendicular length. Never will you divide a flame, or a ray of the Sun, in its horizontal breadth. Here, then, is matter divisible only in two dimensions. Besides, it has no gravity, for it continually ascends; nor levity, for it descends, and penetrates bodies ever so much below it. Fire, we are told, is contained in all bodies. But, being of a consuming nature, How does it not devour them? How can it remain in water without being extinguished?

These difficulties, and several others, induced *Newton* to believe that fire was not an element, but certain subtile matter put in motion. Friction, it is true, and collision, elicit fire from several bodies. But how comes it, that air and water, though agitated ever so much, never catch fire? Nay, How comes it that water even gets cold by motion, though its fluidity is entirely owing to its being impregnated by fire? Contrary to the nature of all other motions, Wherefore does that of fire go on in a constant state of propagation, instead of meeting a check. All bodies lose their motion by communicating it. If you strike several billiard balls with one, the motion is communicated among them, it is divided and lost. But a single spark of fire disengages, from a piece of wood, the igneous particles, or the subtile matter, if you will, which are contained in it, and the whole together increase their rapidity to such a degree, as to make one vast conflagration of a whole forest.

We are not better acquainted with the negative qualities. Cold, they tell us, is produced by the absence of heat: But if cold is merely a negative quality, How is it capable of producing positive effects? If you put into water a bottle of iced wine, as I have seen done in Russia, oftener than once, you see, in a short time, ice of an inch in thickness cover the outside of the bottle. A block of ice dis-



fuses cold all over the surrounding atmosphere. Dark-ness, nevertheless, which is a privation of light, diffuses no obscurity over surrounding light. If you open, in a day of Summer, a grotto at once dark and cool, the surrounding light will not be in the least impaired by the darkness which it contained; but the heat of the adjacent air will be perceptibly diminished by the cold air which issues from it. I am aware of the reply; it will be said, if there is no perceptible obscuration in the first case, it is owing to the extreme rapidity of light, which replaces the darkness; but this would be increasing the difficulty, instead of removing it, by supposing that darkness, too, has positive effects, which we have not time now to animadvert upon.

It is, however, on such pretended fundamental principles, that most of our systems of Physics are reared. If we are in an error, or in a state of ignorance, at the point of departure, it cannot be long before we go astray on the road; and it is really incredible with what facility, after having laid down our principles so slightly, we repay ourselves in consequences, in vague terms, and in contradictory ideas.

I have seen, for example, the formation of thunder explained in highly celebrated physical tracts. Some demonstrate to you, that it is produced by the collision of two clouds, as if clouds, or foggy vapours, ever could produce a collision! Others gravely tell you, that it is the effect of the air dilated by the sudden inflammation of the sulphur and of the nitre which float in the air. But, in order to its being capable of producing its tremendous explosions, we are under the necessity of supposing, that the air was confined in a body which made some resistance. If you set fire to a great mass of gun powder in an unconfined situation, no explosion follows. I know very well that the detonation of thunder has been imitated, in the experiment of fulminating powder; but the materials employed in the composition of it have a sort of tenacity.



They undergo, on the part of the iron ladle which contains them, a resistance against which they sometimes act with so much violence as to perforate it. After all, to imitate a phenomenon is not to explain it. The other effects of thunder are explained with similar levity. As the air is found to be cooler after a thunder storm, the nitre, we are told, which is diffused through the Atmosphere, is the cause of it ; but, Was not that nitre there before the explosion, when we were almost suffocated with heat ? Does nitre cool only when it is set on fire ? According to this mode of reckoning, our batteries of cannon ought to become glaciers in the midst of a battle, for a world of nitre is kindled into flame on such occasions ; they are under the necessity, however, of cooling the cannon with vinegar ; for, after having been fired off twenty times, in quick succession, it is impossible to apply your hand to the piece. The flame of the nitre, though instantaneous, powerfully penetrates the metal, notwithstanding its thickness and solidity.

The heat, it is true, may likewise be occasioned by the interior vibration of the parts. Whatever may be in this, the cooling of the air, after a thunder storm, proceeds, in my opinion, from that stratum of frozen air which surrounds us, to the height of from twelve to fifteen hundred fathoms ; and which, being divided and dilated at its base, by the fire of the stormy clouds, flows hastily into our Atmosphere. Its motion determines the fire of the thunder, to direct itself, contrary to its nature, toward the Earth. It produces still farther effects, which neither time nor place permit me at present to unfold.

It was affirmed, in the last age, that the Earth was drawn out at the Poles ; and we are now positively told, that it is flattened there. I shall not at present enter into an examination of the principles from which this last conclusion has been deduced, and the observations on which it has been supported. The flattening of the Earth at the Poles has been accounted for from a centrifugal force, to which



likewise its motion through the Heavens has been ascribed; though this pretended force, which has increased the diameter of the Earth at the Equator, has not the power of raising so much as a straw into the air.

The flattening of the Poles, they tell us, has been ascertained, by the measurement of two terrestrial degrees, made at a vast expence, the one in Peru, near the Equator, and the other in Lapland, bordering upon the polar Circle.\* Those experiments were made, undoubtedly, by men of very great capacity and reputation. But persons of at least equal capacity, and of a name as high in the republic of Science, had demonstrated, upon other principles, and by other experiments, that the Earth was lengthened at the Poles. *Cassini* estimates at fifty leagues, the length by which the axis of the Earth exceeds its diameters, which gives to each of the Poles twentyfive leagues of elevation over the circumference of the Globe. We shall certainly enlist under the banner of this illustrious Astronomer, if we consider the testimony of the eye as of any weight; for the shade of the Earth appears oval over its Poles, in central eclipses of the Moon, as was observed by *Tycho Brhaé* and *Kepler*. These names are a host in themselves.

But without considering any name as an authority, where natural truths are concerned, we may conclude, from simple analogies, the elongation of the axis of the Earth. If we consider, as has been already said, the two Hemispheres as two mountains, whose bases are at the Equator, the summits at the Poles, and the Ocean, which alternately flows from one of these summits, as a great river descending from a mountain, we shall have, under this point of view, objects of comparison which may assist us in determining the point of elevation from which the Ocean takes its rise, by the distance of the place where

\* It is evident, that the conclusion, from those very measurements, ought to have been, that the Earth is lengthened at the Poles. See the Explanation of the Plates.



its course terminates. Thus the summit of Chimboraco, the most elevated of the Andes of Peru, out of which the river of the Amazons issues, having a league and one third nearly of elevation, above the mouth of that river, which is distant from it, in a straight line, about twenty-six degrees, or six hundred and fifty leagues, it may be thence concluded, that the summit of the Pole must be elevated above the circumference of the Earth nearly five leagues, in order to have a height proportioned to the course of the Ocean, which extends as far as the Line, ninety degrees distant, that is to say, two thousand, two hundred and fifty leagues, in a straight line.

If we farther consider, that the course of the Ocean does not terminate at the Line, but that when it descends in Summer from our Pole, it extends beyond the Cape of Good Hope, as far as to the eastern extremities of Asia, where it forms the current known by the name of the westerly Monsoon, which almost encompasses the Globe, under the Equator, we shall be under the necessity of assigning to the Pole, from which it takes its departure, an elevation proportioned to the course which it is destined to perform, and of tripling, at least, that elevation, in order to give its waters a sufficient declivity. I put it down, then, at fifteen leagues : And if to this height we add that of the ices which are there accumulated, the enormous pyramids of which over icy mountains, have sometimes an elevation of one third above the heights which support them, we shall find that the Pole can hardly have less than an elevation of the twentyfive leagues above the circumference which *Cassini* assigned to it.

Obelisks of ice, ten leagues high, are not disproportioned to the centre of cupolas of ice two thousand leagues in diameter, which, in Winter, cover our northern Hemisphere ; and which have likewise, in the southern Hemisphere, in the month of February, that is, in the very Midsummer of that Hemisphere, prominent borders, elevated like promontories, and three thousand leagues, at



least, in circumference, according to the relation of Captain *Cook*, who coasted round them in the years 1773 and 1774.

The analogy which I establish between the two Hemispheres of the Earth, the Poles, and the Ocean which flows from them, and two mountains, their peaks, and the rivers which there have their sources, is in the order of the harmonies of the Globe, which exhibits a great number of similar harmonies on a smaller scale in the Continents, and in most islands, which are Continents in miniature.

It would appear, that Philosophy has, in all ages, affected to find out very obscure causes, in order to explain the most common effects, in the view of attracting the admiration of the vulgar, who, in fact, scarcely ever admire any thing, but what they do not comprehend. She has not failed to take the advantage of this weakness of mankind, by infolding herself in a pomposity of words, or in the mysteries of Geometry, the better to carry on the deception. For how many ages did she ring, in our schools, the horror of a *vacuum* which she ascribed to Nature? How many sagacious pretended demonstrations of this have been given, which were to crown their authors with never fading laurels, but which are now gone to the land of forgetfulness?

She disdains, on the other hand, to dwell on simple observations, which bring down to the level of every capacity, the harmonies which unite all the kingdoms of Nature. For example, the Philosophy of our day refuses to the Moon all influence over vegetables and over animals. It is, nevertheless, certain, that the most considerable growth of plants takes place in the night time; nay, that there are several vegetables which flower only during that season; that numerous classes of insects, birds, quadrupeds, and fishes, regulate their loves, their hunting matches, and their peregrinations according to the different phases of the orb of night. But what, degrade Philosophers to



the experience of gardeners and fishermen! What, condescend to think and talk like such groundlings!

If Philosophy denies the influence of the Moon over the minuter objects of the Earth, she makes it up amply, by conferring on her a very extensive power over the Globe itself, without being over scrupulous about the self-contradiction. She affirms, that the Moon, in passing over the Ocean, presses upon it, and thus occasions the flux of the tides on its shores. But how is it possible that the Moon should compress our atmosphere, which only extends, they say, to a score of leagues, at most, from us? Or, admitting a subtile matter, and possessed of great elasticity, which should extend from our Seas as far as to the globe of the Moon, How could this matter be compressed by it, unless you suppose it confined in a channel? Must it not, in its actual state, extend to the right and to the left, while the action of the planet found it impossible to make itself felt on any one determinate point of the circumference of our Globe?

Besides, Why does not the moon act on lakes, and seas of small extent, where there are no tides? Their smallness ought no more to exempt them from the influence of her gravitation, than deprive them of the benefit of her light. Why are tides almost imperceptible in the Mediterranean? Wherefore do they undergo, in many places, intermittent movements, and retardations of two or three days? Wherefore, in a word, toward the North, do they come from the North, from the East, or from the West, and not from the South, as was observed, with surprize, by *Martens, Barents, Linschotten* and *Ellis*, who expected to see them come from the Equator, as on the coasts of Europe?

The principal movements of the Sea, it must be allowed, take place, in our Hemisphere, at the same times with the principal phases of the Moon; but we ought not from thence to conclude their necessary dependance, and still less explain it by Laws which are not demonstrated,



The Currents and the Tides of the Ocean proceed, as I think I have proved, from the effusion of the ices of the Poles; which depend, in their turn, on the variety of the course of the Sun, as he approaches less or more toward either Pole: And as the phases of the Moon are themselves regulated by the course of the Orb of Day, this is the reason why both take place at the same time.

Farther, the Moon when full has, as we have already observed, an effective and evaporating warmth: She must act, therefore, on the polar ices, especially when at the full.\* The Academy of Sciences formerly maintained that her light did not warm, after experiments made on her rays, and on the ball of a thermometer, with a burning mirror. But this is not the first error into which we have been betrayed by our books, and our machinery, as we shall see when we come to speak of the decomposition of the solar ray by the prism. Neither is it the first time that an assembly of Literati have, without examination, adopted an opinion on the authority of persons who made experiments with much formality and stateliness. And this is the way that errors get into vogue. The one in question has, however, been completely refuted, first at Rome, and afterward at Paris, by a very simple experiment. Some one took a fancy to expose a vessel full of water to the light of the Moon, and to place one similar to it in the shade. The water in the first vessel was evaporated much sooner than that in the second.

To no purpose do we exert all our industry and ingenuity; we can lay hold of nothing in Nature, except results and harmonies: First principles universally escape us. And, what is worst of all, the methods of our Sciences have exercised a pernicious influence on our morals and on religion. It is very easy to mislead men with respect to an intelligence which governs all things, when

\* This observation was made more than sixteen hundred years ago.  
 "The Moon produces thaw; dissolving all ices and frosts by the humidity of her influence." *Pliny's Natural History, Book ii. chap. 101.*



nothing is presented to them as first causes but mechanical means. Alas! it is not by these that we shall be able to find our way toward that Heaven, which we pretend to know so well. The greatest of Mankind have cast an eye thitherward as their last asylum. *Cicero* flattered himself with the hope of being, after death, an inhabitant of the Stars; and *Cesar*, from that elevation, to preside over the destiny of Rome. An infinite number of other men have limited their future happiness to a superintendence of mausoleums, groves, fountains; and others to a reunion with the objects of their loves. As for us, What are we now hoping for from Earth and from Heaven, where we see nothing beyond the levers of our pitiful machines?

How! as the reward of our virtues, is our destination to mount no higher than this, to be confounded with the elements! What, thy soul, O sublime *Fenelon*! to be exhaled in inflammable air; and to have had on the Earth the sentiment of an order which did not exist even in the Heavens! How, among those Stars so luminous, is there nothing but material Globes; and in their motions, so constant and so varied, nothing but blind attractions? How! Every thing around us insensible matter and no more; and intelligence given to Man, who could give himself nothing, only to render him miserable! How! and can we have been deceived by the involuntary sentiment which makes us raise our eyes to Heaven, in the agony of sorrow, there to solicit relief! The animal, on the point of closing his career, abandons himself to his natural instincts. The stag at bay seeks refuge in the most sequestered spot of the forests, content to yield up the roving spirit which animates him, under their hospitable shades. The dying bee forsakes the flowers, returns to expire at the door of her hive, and to bequeath her social instinct to her beloved Republic. And Man, following the bent of his reasoning powers, can he no where find, in the widely extended universe, any thing worthy of re-



ceiving his departing sighs; not even inconstant friends, nor selfish kindred, nor an ungrateful Country, nor a foil stubborn to all his labours, nor a Heaven indifferent to to crimes and to virtue?

Ah! it is not thus that Nature has apportioned her gifts. We bewilder ourselves with our vain Sciences. By driving the researches of our understanding up to the very principles of Nature, nay, of DEITY, we have stifled, in the heart, all feeling of both the one and the other. The same thing has befallen us which once befel a peasant who was living happily in a little valley in the heart of the Alps. A brook, which descended from those mountains, fertilized his garden. For a long time he adored, in tranquillity, the beneficent Naiad who kept his stream perpetually flowing; and who increased its quantity and its coolness as the Summer's heat increased. One day a fancy struck him, that he would go and discover the place where she concealed her inexhaustible urn. To prevent his going astray, he begins with pursuing upward the track of his rivulet. By little and little he rises upon the mountain. Every step he takes, in ascending, discovers to him, a thousand new objects; plains, forests, rivers, kingdoms, boundless Oceans. Transported with delight, he proceeds in flattering hope of speedily reaching the blessed abode where the Gods preside over the destiny of this World. But, after a painful scramble, he arrives at the bottom of a tremendous glacier. He no longer sees any thing around him but mists, rocks, torrents, precipices. All, all has vanished. Sweet and tranquil valley, humble roof, beneficent Naiad! His patrimony is now reduced to a cloud, and his divinity to an enormous mass of ice.

It is thus that Science has conducted us through seductive paths, to a termination so fearful. She drags after her, in the train of her ambitious researches, that ancient malediction pronounced against the first man who should



dare to eat the fruit of her forbidden tree,\* “ Behold, the  
 “ man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.”  
 He shall not, therefore, “ put forth his hand, and take  
 “ also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.” What  
 literary, political, and religious squabbles have our pre-  
 tended Sciences excited! How many men has she pre-  
 vented from living even a single day!

The sublime genius and the pure spirit of *Newton*, as-  
 suredly, could not have stood still at the boundary pre-  
 scribed to a vulgar mind. On observing the clouds re-  
 sorting from every quarter to the mountains which sep-  
 arated Italy from the rest of Europe, he would have in-  
 ferred the attraction of their summits, and the direction  
 of their chains, conformably to the basins of the Seas,  
 and to the courses of the winds: He would thence have  
 inferred equivalent dispositions for the different summits  
 of the Continent and of the Islands: He would have seen  
 the vapours arising out of the bosom of the Seas of Amer-  
 ica, and conveying, through the air, fecundity to the cen-  
 tre of Europe, fixing themselves in solid ice on the lofty  
 pinnacles of the rocks, in order to cool the Atmosphere  
 of hot countries; undergoing new combinations, to pro-  
 duce new effects: And returning, in a fluid state, to wash  
 their former shores, diffusing, in their mysterious prog-  
 ress, unlimited abundance, in a thousand different chan-  
 nels. He would have observed, with admiration, the  
 constant impulsion communicated to so many various  
 movements, by the action of one single luminary, the Sun,  
 placed at the distance of thirtytwo millions of leagues:  
 And, instead of fruitlessly rambling after the habitation of  
 a Naiad, at the summit of the Alps, he would have pro-  
 strated himself before that GOD whose providence em-  
 braces the concerns of a whole Universe.

In order to study Nature with understanding, and to  
 advantage, all the parts must be viewed in their harmony

\* Genesis, chap. iii, ver. 22.



and connexion. For my part, I, who do not pretend to be a *Newton*, am determined never to leave the borders of my rivulet; I shall set up my rest in my humble valley, and employ myself in culling some herbs and flowers; happy if I am able to form of them some garlands to decorate the entrance of that rustic Temple, which my feeble hands have presumed to rear to the Majesty of Nature!\*

\* The system of the harmonics of Nature, which I am proceeding to unfold, is, in my opinion, the only one which is within the reach of Man. It was first displayed by *Pythagoras* of Samos, who was the father of Philosophy, and the founder of that sect of Philosophers who have been transmitted to us by the name of Pythagoreans. Never did a succession of men arise so enlightened, as those Sages were, in the natural Sciences; and none whose discoveries reflect higher honour on the human understanding. There existed, at that time, Philosophers, who maintained that water, fire, air, atoms, were the principles of things. *Pythagoras* insisted, in opposition to this doctrine, that the principles of things were the adaptations and the proportions of which the harmonics were composed, and that goodness and intelligence constituted the nature of GOD.

He was the first who gave to the Universe the epithet of κόσμος, *mundus*, because of its order. He maintained that it was governed by a Providence; a sentiment perfectly conformable to the tenor of our Sacred Books, and to experience. He invented the five Zones, and the obliquity of the Zodiac. He taught that the Torrid Zone was habitable. He ascribed earthquakes to the water. In fact, their focuses, as well as those of volcanoes, as we have already indicated, are always in the vicinity of the Sea, or of some great lake. He believed that each of the Stars was a World, containing an Earth, an Air, and a Heaven; and even in his time, this had been an anciently received opinion; for it is to be found in the verses of *Orpheus*. Finally, he discovered the square of the hypotenuse, which has served as a basis to an infinite number of geometrical theorems and solutions.

*Philolaus*, of Crotona, one of his disciples, maintained, that the Sun received the fire diffused over the Universe, and reverberated it, which affords a better explanation of his nature than the perpetual emanations of light and heat which we ascribe to him, without reparation, and without exhaustion. He held that Comets were Stars, which reappeared after a certain revolution. *Æetes*, another Pythagorean, maintained the existence of two Continents, that which we inhabit, and one opposite to it; an idea applicable only to America.

These Philosophers believed, that the soul of Man was a harmony composed of two parts; the one reasonable, the other irrational. They placed the first in the head, and the other round the heart. They contended for its immortality; and taught, that at the death of the man, his soul returned



to the Soul of the Universe. They approved of divination by dreams and augury, and condemned that which is performed by means of sacrifices. They had such a strong sense of humanity, that they abstained from shedding the blood even of animals, and from eating their flesh.

Nature rewarded their virtues, and the gentleness of their manners, by innumerable discoveries, and bestowed on them the glory of having as followers, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Archytas* of Tarentum, who invented the screw, *Xenophon*, *Epaminondas*, who was educated by *Lyfis* the Pythagorean, and the good King *Numa*, who taught the Tuscan priests to conjure down the thunder: In a word, she conferred on them all the lustre that Philosophy, Literature, the Military Art, or Royalty itself, can communicate to the most favoured of mortals.

*Pythagoras* has been calumniated, as having given encouragement to certain unmeaning superstitions; among others, abstinence from the use of beans, &c. But, as truth is frequently under the necessity of presenting herself to men under a veil, the great Philosopher, under this allegory, conveyed to his disciples an advice to abstain from public employments, because it was then the custom to make use of beans, in voting at the election of Magistrates.

A very celebrated Writer, of modern times, who seems to look with an evil eye on every man of illustrious reputation, has presumed to attack the character of *Xenophon*, in whom were united almost all the eminent qualities which can dignify human nature; piety, purity of manners, military skill and valour, and eloquence. His style is so sweetly flowing, that the Greeks bestowed on him the appellation of the Athenian Bee. This great man has been lately censured, on the ground of that celebrated retreat, by which he brought back ten thousand Greeks into their own Country, from the very extremity of Persia, having performed a march of eleven hundred leagues through a hostile country, and amidst foes innumerable.

It has been asserted, by a man of great learning, that the retreat of this renowned General, was an effect of the good nature, or the piety, of *Artaxerxes*; and he has, of consequence, treated the route which *Xenophon* pursued, by the north of Persia, as a superfluous precaution.—But is it credible that the King of Persia, intentionally, shewed indulgence to the Greeks, when we know, that, by a perfidious piece of cruelty, he had put to death twentyfive of their chief men? How was it possible for those Greeks to have returned by the same road which they went, considering that every thing in this track had been put in motion to intercept them, and that the Persians had, through its whole extent, destroyed the villages? *Xenophon* defeated all their precautions, by directing his march through a track of which they had no foresight.

For my own part, I consider this military expedition as the most illustrious that ever was achieved; not only from the innumerable conflicts, crossings of rivers, forced marches over mountains, in the face of myriads upon myriads of enemies, through which it was accomplished: But, because it was not sullied by a single act of injustice, and had no other object in view



but the preservation of citizens. All that are held in high renown among the Warriors of Antiquity, have considered the retreat of the ten thousand as a master piece in the military art. There is a single expression transmitted to us, which will forever cover it with glory, uttered in an age, and among a People, by which the Science of War was carried to the height of perfection, and in a situation which admitted not of dissimulation: I mean an expression of *Anthony*, when entangled in the country of the Parthians. That General, who possessed great military talents, and had at that time the command of an army of a hundred and thirteen thousand men, of whom sixty thousand were actually Roman citizens, obliged, as *Xenophon* was, to make a retreat in the face of the Parthians, and twenty times on the point of failing in his attempt, frequently exclaimed, with a sigh! *O the ten thousand.*

[See PLUTARCH.]

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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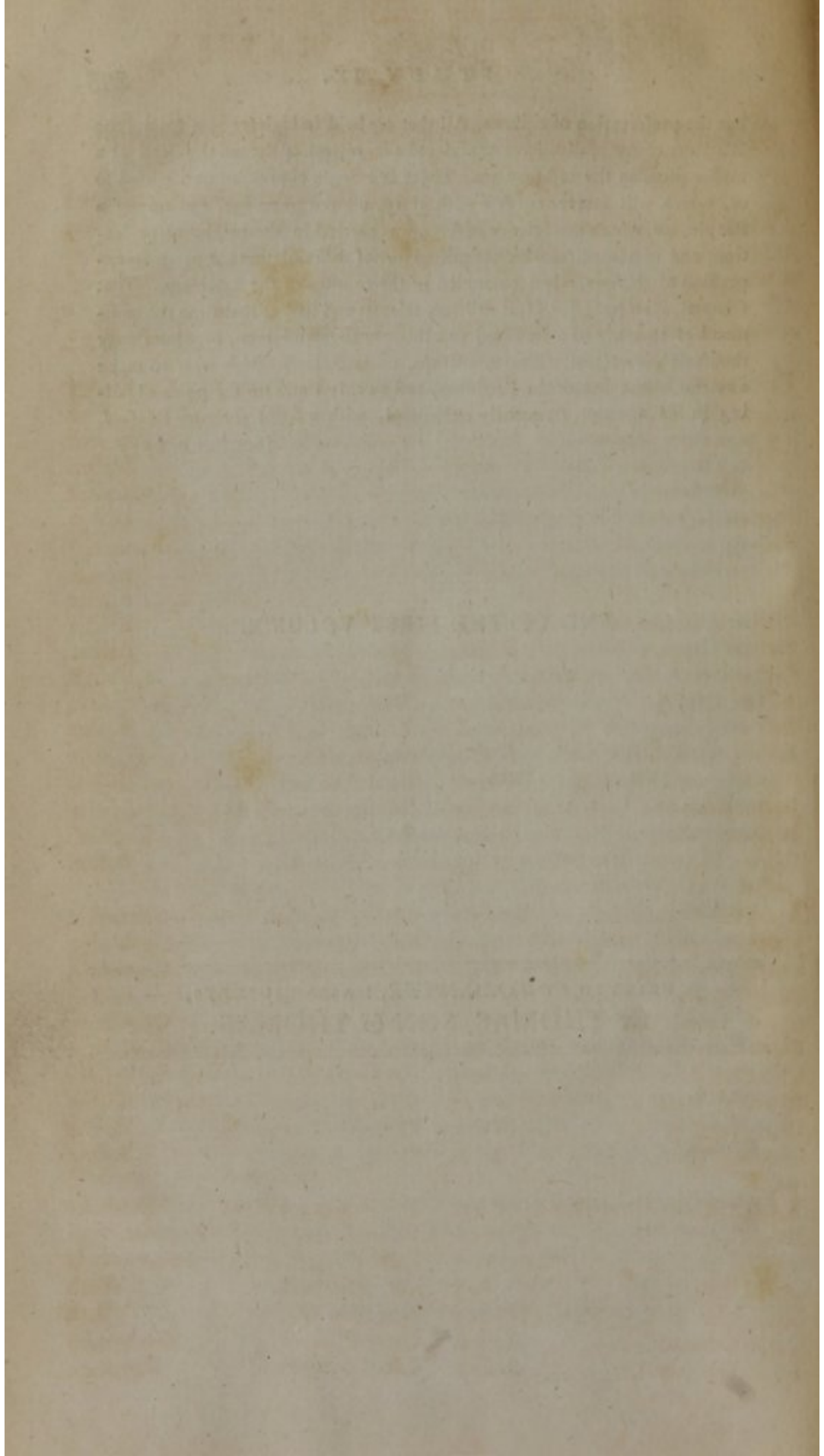
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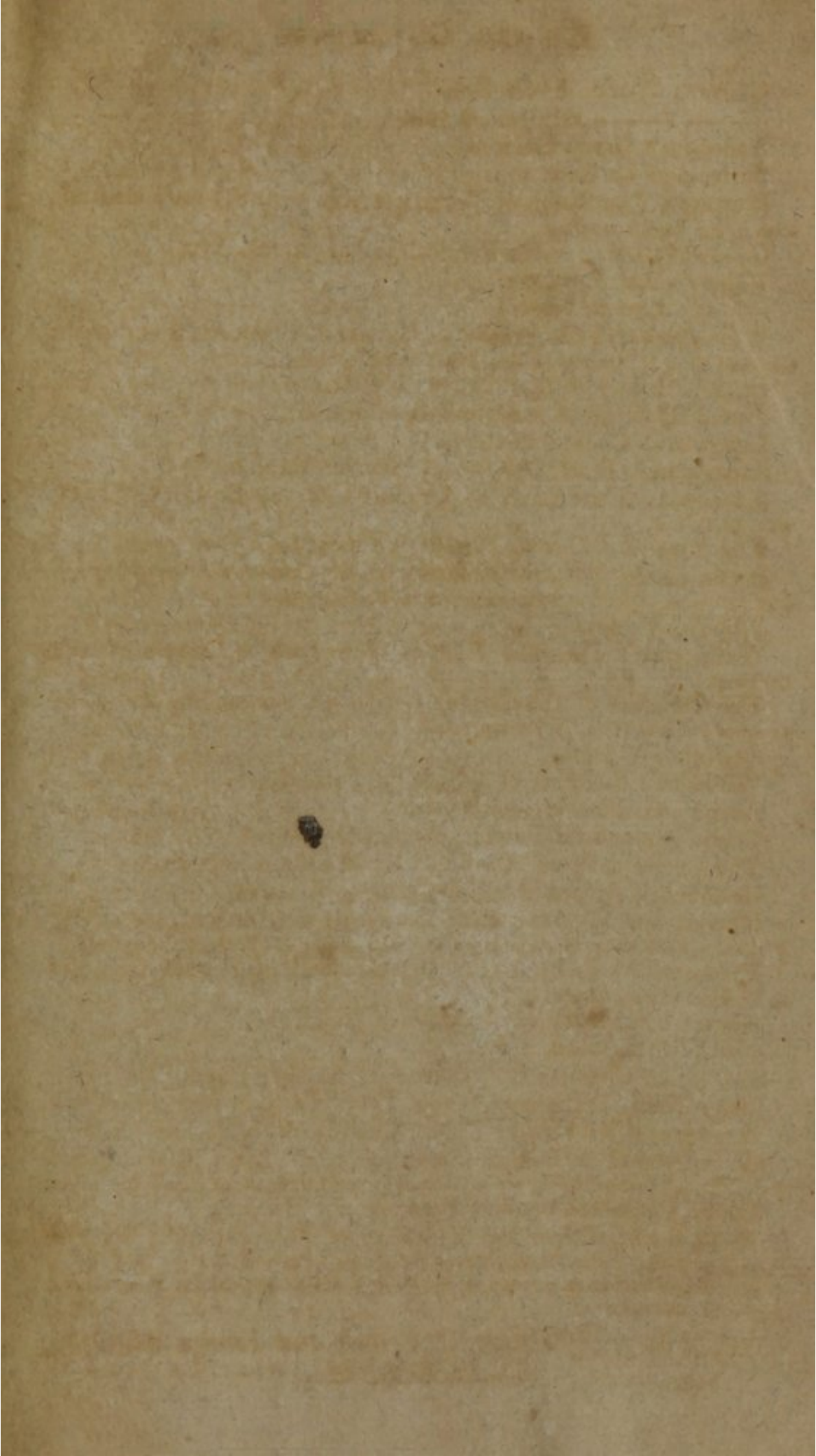
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