A Philosophical Dictionary in Ten Volumes

Vol. VIII: Money—Privilege

By

Voltaire

MONEY.

A word made use of to express gold. "Sir, will you lend me a hundred louis d'or?" "Sir, I would with all my heart, but I have no money; I am out of ready money." The Italian will say to you: "Signore, non ha di danari"—"I have no deniers."

Harpagon asks Maître Jacques: "Wilt thou make a good entertainment?" "Yes, if you will give me plenty of money."

We continually inquire which of the countries of Europe is the richest in money? By that we mean, which is the people who circulate the most metals representative of objects of commerce? In the same manner we ask, which is the poorest? and thirty contending nations present themselves—the Westphalian, Limousin, Basque, Tyrolese, Valois, Grison, Istrian, Scotch, and Irish, the Swiss of a small canton, and above all the subjects of the pope.

In deciding which has most, we hesitate at present between France, Spain, and Holland, which had none in 1600.

Formerly, in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, the province of the papal treasury had no doubt the most ready money, and therefore the greatest trade. How do you sell that? would be asked of a theological merchant, who replied, For as much as the people are fools enough to give me.

All Europe then sent its money to the Roman court, who gave in change consecrated beads, agnuses, indulgences plenary and limited, dispensations, confirmations, exemptions, benedictions, and even excommunications against those whom the subscriber chose, and who had not sufficient faith in the court of Rome.

The Venetians sold nothing of all this, but they traded with all the West by Alexandria, and it was through them only that we had pepper and cinnamon. The money which went not to the papal treasury came to them, excepting a little to the Tuscans and Genoese. All the other kingdoms of Europe were so poor in ready money that Charles VIII. was obliged to borrow the jewels of the duchess of Savoy and put them in pawn, to raise funds to conquer Naples, which he soon lost again. The Venetians supported stronger armies than his. A noble Venetian had more gold in his coffers, and more vessels of silver on his table, than the emperor Maximilian surnamed "Pochi danari."

Things changed when the Portuguese traded with India as conquerors, and the Spaniards subjugated Mexico and Peru with six or seven hundred men. We know that then the commerce of Venice, and the other towns of Italy all fell to the ground. Philip II., the master of Spain, Portugal, the Low Countries, the

Two Sicilies, and the Milanese, of fifteen hundred leagues of coast in Asia, and mines of gold and silver in America, was the only rich, and consequently the only powerful prince in Europe. The spies whom he gained in France kissed on their knees the Catholic doubloons, and the small number of angels and caroluses which circulated in that country had not much credit. It is pretended that America and Asia brought him in nearly ten million ducats of revenue. He would have really bought Europe with his money, but for the iron of Henry IV. and the fleets of Queen Elizabeth.

The "Dictionnaire Encyclopédique," in the article on "Argent," quotes the "Spirits of Laws," in which it is said: "I have heard deplored a thousand times, the blindness of the council of Francis I., who rejected the proposal of Christopher Columbus for the discovery of the Indies—perhaps this imprudence has turned out a very wise thing."

We see by the enormous power of Philip that the pretended council of Francis I. could not have done such a wise thing. But let us content ourselves with remarking that Francis I. was not born when it is pretended that he refused the offers of Christopher Columbus. The Genoese captain landed in America in 1492, and Francis I. was born in 1497, and did not ascend the throne until 1515. Let us here compare the revenues of Henry III., Henry IV., and Queen Elizabeth, with those of Philip II. The ordinary income of Elizabeth was only one hundred thousand pound sterling, and with extras it was, one year with another, four hundred thousand; but she required this surplus to defend herself from Philip II. Without extreme economy she would have been lost, and England with her.

The revenue of Henry III. indeed increased to thirty millions of livres of his time; this, to the sum that Philip drew from the Indies, was as three to ten; but not more than a third of this money entered into the coffers of Henry III., who was very prodigal, greatly robbed, and consequently very poor. We find that Philip II. in one article was ten times richer than Henry.

As to Henry IV., it is not worth while to compare his treasures with those of Philip II. Until the Peace of Vervins, he had only what he could borrow or win at the point of his sword; and he lived as a knight-errant, until the time in which he became the first king in Europe. England had always been so poor that King Edward III. was the first king who coined money of gold.

Would we know what became of the money which flowed continually from Mexico and Peru into Spain? It entered the pockets of the French, English and Dutch, who traded with Cadiz under Spanish names; and who sent to America the productions of their manufactories. A great part of this money goes to the East Indies to pay for spices, cotton, saltpetre, sugar, candy, tea, cloths, diamonds, and monkeys.

We may afterwards demand, what is become of all the treasures of the Indies? I answer that Shah Thamas Kouli-Khan or Shah Nadir had carried away all those of the great Mogul, together with his jewels. You would know where those jewels are, and this money that Shah Nadir carried with him into Persia? A part was hidden in the earth during the civil wars; predatory leaders made use of the rest to raise troops against one another; for, as Cæsar very well remarks: "With money we get soldiers, and with soldiers we steal money."

Your curiosity is not yet satisfied; you are troubled to know what have become of the treasures of Sesostris, of Crœ, Cyrus, Nebuchadnezzar, and above all of Solomon, who, it is said, had to his own share equal to twenty millions and more of our pounds in his coffers.

I will tell you. It is spread all over the world. Things find their level in time. Be sure, that in the time of Cyrus, the Gauls, Germany, Denmark, Poland, and Russia, had not a crown. Besides, that which is lost in gilding, which is fooled away upon our Lady of Loretto, and other places, and which has been swallowed up by the avaricious sea must be counted.

How did the Romans under their great Romulus, the son of Mars, and a vestal, and under the devout Numa Pompilius? They had a Jupiter of oak; rudely carved huts for palaces; a handful of hay at the end of a stick for a standard; and not a piece of money of twelve sous value in their pockets. Our coachmen have gold watches that the seven kings of Rome, the Camilluses, Manliuses, and Fabiuses, could not have paid for.

If by chance the wife of a receiver-general of finances was to have this chapter read at her toilette by the bel-esprit of the house, she would have a strange contempt for the Romans of the three first centuries, and would not allow a Manlius, Curius, or Fabius to enter her antechamber, should he come on foot, and not have wherewithal to take his part at play.

Their ready money was of brass. It served at once for arms and money. They fought and reckoned with brass. Three or four pounds of brass, of twelve ounces weight, paid for an ox. They bought necessaries at market, as we buy them at present; and men had, as in all times, food, clothing, and habitations. The Romans, poorer than their neighbors, conquered them, and continually augmented their territory for the space of five hundred years, before they coined silver money.

The soldiers of Gustavus Adolphus in Sweden had nothing but copper money for their pay, before the time that they made conquests out of their own country.

Provided we have a pledge of exchange for the necessary things of life,

commerce will continually go on. It signifies not whether this pledge be of shells or paper. Gold and silver have prevailed everywhere, only because they have been the most rare.

It was in Asia that the first manufactures of money of these two metals commenced, because Asia was the cradle of all the arts.

There certainly was no money in the Trojan war. Gold and silver passed by weight; Agamemnon might have had a treasure, but certainly no money.

What has made several hardy scholars suspect that the "Pentateuch" was not written until the time in which the Hebrews began to procure coins from their neighbors is that in more than one passage mention is made of shekels. It is there said that Abraham, who was a stranger and had not an inch of land in the country of Canaan, bought there a field and a cave in which to bury his wife, for four hundred shekels of silver current money. The judicious Dom Calmet values this sum at four hundred and forty-eight livres, six sous, nine deniers, according to the ancient calculation adopted at random, in which the silver mark was of six-and-twenty livres value. As the silver mark has, however, increased by half the sum, the present value would be eight hundred and ninety-six livres.

Now, as in that time there was no coined money answering to the word "pecunia," that would make a little difficulty, from which it is not easy to extricate ourselves.

Another difficulty is, that in one place it is said that Abraham bought this field in Hebron, and in another at Sichem. On that point consult the venerable Bede, Raban, Maure, and Emanuel Sa.

We will now speak of the riches which David left to Solomon in coined money. Some make it amount to twenty-one or twenty-two millions of French livres, others to five-and-twenty. There is no keeper of the royal treasure, nor tefterdan of the grand Turk's, who can exactly compute the treasure of King Solomon; but the young bachelors of Oxford and the Sorbonne make out the amount without difficulty.

I will not speak of the innumerable adventures which have happened to money since it has been stamped, marked, valued, altered, increased, buried, and stolen, having through all its transformations constantly remained the idol of mankind. It is so much loved that among all Christian princes there still exists an old law which is not to allow gold and silver to go out of their kingdoms. This law implies one of two things—either that these princes reign over fools who lavish their money in a foreign country for their pleasure, or that we must not pay our debts to foreigners. It is, however, clear that no person is foolish enough to give his money without reason, and that, when we

are in debt to a foreigner, we should pay him either in bills of exchange, commodities, or legitimate coin. Thus this law has not been executed since we began to open our eyes—which is not long ago.

There are many things to be said on coined money; as on the unjust and ridiculous augmentation of specie, which suddenly loses considerable sums to a state on the melting down again; on the re-stamping, with an augmentation of ideal value, which augmentation invites all your neighbors and all your enemies to re-coin your money and gain at your expense; in short, on twenty other equally ruinous expedients. Several new books are full of judicious remarks upon this subject. It is more easy to write on money than to obtain it; and those who gain it, jest much at those who only know how to write about it.

In general, the art of government consists in taking as much money as possible from one part of the citizens to give to the other.

It is demanded, if it be possible radically to ruin a kingdom of which the soil in general is fertile. We answer that the thing is not practicable, since from the war of 1689 till the end of 1769, in which we write, everything has continually been done which could ruin France and leave it without resource, and yet it never could be brought about. It is a sound body which has had a fever of eighty years with relapses, and which has been in the hands of quacks, but which will survive.

MONSTERS.

The definition of monsters is more difficult than is generally imagined. Are we to apply the term to animals of enormous size; to a fish, or a serpent fifteen feet long, for instance? There are some, however, that are twenty or even thirty feet long, in comparison with which of course the others, instead of enormous or monstrous, would appear small.

There are monsters through defect. But, if a generally well-made and handsome man were destitute from his birth of the little toes and little fingers, would he be a monster? Teeth are more necessary to a man; I have seen a man who never had a tooth. He was in other respects pleasing in his person. Being destitute of the organs of generation, still more necessary in the system of nature, would not constitute the person thus defective a monster.

There are monsters by excess as well as by defect. But those who have six fingers, or three testicles, or two perforations instead of one, or the spine elongated in the form of a small tail, are not considered monsters.

The third kind consists of those which have members of other animals; as,

for example, a lion with the wings of an ostrich, or a serpent with the wings of an eagle, like the griffin and ixion of the Jews. But all bats have wings, and flying fish have them, without being monsters.

Let us, then, reserve the name for animals whose deformities strike us with horror.

Yet the first negro, upon this idea, was a monster to white women; and the most admirable of European beauties was a monster in the eyes of negroes.

If Polyphemus and the Cyclops had really existed, people who carried an eye on each side of the root of the nose, would, in the island of Lipari, and the neighborhood of Mount Ætna, have been pronounced monsters.

I once saw, at a fair, a young woman with four nipples, or rather dugs, and what resembled the tail of a cow hanging down between them. She was decidedly a monster when she displayed her neck, but was rather an agreeable woman in appearance when she concealed it.

Centaurs and Minotaurs would have been monsters, but beautiful monsters. The well-proportioned body of a horse serving as a base or support to the upper part of a man would have been a masterpiece of nature's workmanship on earth; just as we draw the masterpieces of heaven—those spirits which we call angels, and which we paint and sculpture in our churches—adorned sometimes with two wings, sometimes with four, and sometimes even with six.

We have already asked, with the judicious Locke, what is the boundary of distinction between the human and merely animal figure; what is the point of monstrosity at which it would be proper to take your stand against baptizing an infant, against admitting it as a member of the human species, against according to it the possession of a soul? We have seen that this boundary is as difficult to be settled as it is difficult to ascertain what a soul is; for there certainly are none who know what it is but theologians.

Why should the satyrs which St. Jerome saw, the offspring of women and baboons, have been reputed monsters? Might it not be thought, on the contrary, that their lot was in reality happier than ours? Must they not have possessed more strength and more agility? and would they not have laughed at us as an unfortunate race, to whom nature had refused both tails and clothing? A mule, the offspring of two different species; a jumart, the offspring of a bull and a mare; a tarin, the offspring, we are told, of a canary bird and hen linnet —are not monsters.

But how is it that mules, jumarts, and tarins, which are thus produced in nature, do not themselves reproduce? And how do the seminists, ovists, or animalculists, explain, upon their respective theories, the formation of these

mongrel productions?

I will tell you plainly, that they do not explain it at all. The seminists never discovered how it is that the ass communicates to his mule offspring a resemblance only in the ears and crupper; the ovists neither inform us, nor understand how a mare should contain in her egg anything but an animal of her own species. And the animalculists cannot perceive how a minute embryo of an ass could introduce its ears into the matrix of a mare.

The theorist who, in a work entitled the "Philosophy of Venus," maintained that all animals and all monsters are formed by attraction, was still less successful than those just mentioned, in accounting for phenomena so common and yet so surprising.

Alas! my good friends! you none of you know how you originate your own offspring; you are ignorant of the secrets of nature in your own species, and yet vainly attempt to develop them in the mule!

It may, however, be confidently presumed, in reference to a monster by defect, that the whole seminal matter did not reach its destined appropriation; or, perhaps, that the small spermatic worm had lost a portion of its substance; or, perhaps that the egg was crazed and injured. With respect to a monster by excess, you may imagine that some portions of the seminal matter superabounded; that of two spermatic worms united, one could only animate a single member of the animal, and that that member remains in supererogation; that two eggs have blended together, and that one of them has produced but a single member, which was joined to the body of the other.

But what would you say of so many monstrosities arising from the addition of parts of animals of a totally different species? How would you explain a crab on the neck of a girl? or the tail of a rat upon the thigh? or, above all, the four dugs and tail of a cow, which was exhibited at the fair at St. Germain? You would be reduced to the supposition that the unfortunate woman's mother belonged to the very extraordinary family of Pasiphæ.

Let each of us boldly and honestly say, How little is it that I really know.

MORALITY.

Babblers, preachers, extravagant controversialists! endeavor to remember that your master never announced that the sacrament was the visible sign of an invisible thing; He has nowhere admitted four cardinal virtues, and three divine ones. He has never decided whether His mother came into the world maculate or immaculate. Cease, therefore, to repeat things which never

entered into His mind. He has said, in conformity with a truth as ancient as the world—Love God and your neighbor. Abide by that precept, miserable cavillers! Preach morality and nothing more. Observe it, and let the tribunals no longer echo with your prosecutions; snatch no longer, by the claw of an attorney, their morsel of bread from the widow and the orphan. Dispute not concerning some petty benefice with the same fury as the papacy was disputed in the great schism of the West. Monks! place not to the utmost of your power, the universe under contribution, and we may then be able to believe you. I have just read these words in a piece of declamation in fourteen volumes, entitled, "The History of the Lower Empire"; "The Christians had a morality, but the Pagans had none."

Oh, M. Le Beau! author of these fourteen volumes, where did you pick up this absurdity? What becomes of the morality of Socrates, of Zaleucus, of Charondas, of Cicero, of Epictetus, and of Marcus Aurelius?

There is but one morality, M. Le Beau, as there is but one geometry. But you will tell me that the greater part of mankind are ignorant of geometry. True; but if they apply a little to the study of it, all men draw the same conclusions. Agriculturists, manufacturers, artisans, do not go through a regular course of morality; they read neither the "De Finibus" of Cicero, nor the "Ethics" of Aristotle; but as soon as they reflect, they are, without knowing it, disciples of Cicero. The Indian dyer, the Tartarian shepherd, and the English seaman, are acquainted with justice and injustice. Confucius did not invent a system of morals, as men construct physical systems. He found his in the hearts of all mankind.

This morality existed in the bosom of the prætor Festus, when the Jews pressed him to put Paul to death for having taken strangers into their temple. "Learn," said he, "that the Romans never condemn any one unheard."

If the Jews were deficient in a moral sense, the Romans were not, and paid it homage.

There is no morality in superstition; it exists not in ceremonies, and has nothing to do with dogmas. We cannot repeat too frequently that dogmas differ, but that morality is the same among all men who make use of their reason. Morality proceeds from God, like light; our superstitions are only darkness. Reflect, reader; pursue the truth, and draw the consequences.

MOSES.

Section I.

Philosophy, of which we sometimes pass the boundaries, researches of antiquity, and the spirit of discussion and criticism, have been carried so far that several learned men have finally doubted if there ever was a Moses, and whether this man was not an imaginary being, such as were Perseus, Bacchus, Atlas, Penthesilea, Vesta, Rhea Silvia, Isis, Sammonocodom, Fo, Mercury, Trismegistus, Odin, Merlin, Francus, Robert the Devil, and so many other heroes of romance whose lives and prowess have been recorded.

It is not very likely, say the incredulous, that a man ever existed whose life is a continual prodigy.

It is not very likely that he worked so many stupendous miracles in Egypt, Arabia, and Syria, without their being known throughout the world.

It is not likely that no Egyptian or Greek writer should have transmitted these miracles to posterity. They are mentioned by the Jews alone; and in the time that this history was written by them, they were not known to any nation —not indeed until towards the second century. The first author who expressly quotes the Book of Moses is Longinus, minister of Queen Zenobia, in the time of the emperor Aurelian.

It is to be remarked that the author of the "Mercury Trismegistus," who certainly was an Egyptian, says not a single word about this Moses.

If a single ancient author had related a single one of these miracles, Eusebius would no doubt have triumphed in this evidence, either in his "History" or in his "Evangelical Preparation."

It is true, he mentions authors who have quoted his name, but none who have cited his prodigies. Before him, the Jews, Josephus and Philo, who have so much celebrated their own nation, sought all the writers in which the name of Moses is found, but there was not a single one who made the least mention of the marvellous actions attributed to him.

In this silence of the whole world, the incredulous reason with a temerity which refutes itself.

The Jews are the only people who possessed the Pentateuch, which they attribute to Moses. It is said, even in their books, that this Pentateuch was not known until the reign of their king Josiah, thirty-six years before the destruction and captivity of Jerusalem; and they then only possessed a single copy, which the priest Hilkiah found at the bottom of a strong box, while counting money. The priest sent it to the king by his scribe Shaphan. All this, say they, necessarily obscures the authenticity of the Pentateuch.

In short, if the Pentateuch was known to all the Jews, would Solomon—the wise Solomon, inspired by God Himself to build a temple—have ornamented

this temple with so many statues, contrary to the express order of Moses?

All the Jewish prophets, who prophesied in the name of the Lord from the time of Moses till that of King Josiah, would they not have been supported in all their prophecies by the laws of Moses? Would they not a thousand times have quoted his own words? Would they not have commented upon them? None of them, however, quote two lines—no one follows the text of Moses—they even oppose them in several places.

According to these unbelievers, the books attributed to Moses were only written among the Babylonians during the captivity, or immediately afterwards by Esdras. Indeed, we see only Persian and Chaldæan terminations in the Jewish writings: "Babel," gate of God; "Phegor-beel," or "Beel-phegor," god of the precipices; "Zebuth-beel," or "Beel-zebuth," god of insects; "Bethel," house of God; "Daniel," judgment of God; "Gabriel," man of God; "Jahel," afflicted of God; "Jael," the life of God; "Israel," seeing God; "Oviel," strength of God; "Raphael," help of God; "Uriel," fire of God.

Thus, all is foreign in the Jewish nation, a stranger itself in Palestine; circumcision, ceremonies, sacrifices, the ark, the cherubim, the goat Hazazel, baptism of justice, simple baptism, proofs, divination, interpretation of dreams, enchantment of serpents—nothing originated among these people, nothing was invented by them.

The celebrated Lord Bolingbroke believed not that Moses ever existed; he thought he saw in the Pentateuch a crowd of contradictions and puzzling chronological and geographical faults; names of towns not then built, precepts given to kings at a time when not only the Jews had no kings, but in which it is probable there were none, since they lived in deserts, in tents, in the manner of the Bedouin Arabs.

What appears to him above all the most palpable contradiction is the gift of forty-eight cities with their suburbs, made to the Levites in a country in which there was not a single village; and it is principally on these forty-eight cities that he refutes Abbadie, and even has the cruelty to treat him with the aversion and contempt of a lord of the Upper Chamber, or a minister of state towards a petty foreign priest who would be so impertinent as to reason with him.

I will take the liberty of representing to Viscount Bolingbroke, and to all those who think with him, not only that the Jewish nation has always believed in the existence of Moses, and in that of his books, but that even Jesus Christ has acknowledged him. The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, recognize him. St. Matthew says expressly, that Moses and Elias appeared to Jesus Christ on the mountain during the night of the transfiguration, and St. Luke says the same.

Jesus Christ declares in St. Matthew that he is not come to abolish this law, but to accomplish it. In the New Testament, we are often referred to the law of Moses and to the prophets. The whole Church has always believed the Pentateuch written by Moses; and further, of five hundred different societies, which have been so long established in Christendom, none have ever doubted the existence of this great prophet. We must, therefore, submit our reason, as so many men have done before us.

I know very well that I shall gain nothing in the mind of the viscount, or of those of his opinion. They are too well persuaded that the Jewish books were not written until very late, and during the captivity of the two tribes which remained. But we shall possess the consolation of having the Church with us.

Section II.

If you would be instructed and amused with antiquity, read the life of Moses in the article on "Apocrypha."

In vain have several scholars believed that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses. They say that it is affirmed even by the Scripture, that the first known copy was found in the time of King Josiah, and that this single copy was brought to the king by the secretary Shaphan. Now, between the time of Moses and this adventure of the secretary Shaphan, there were one thousand one hundred and sixty-seven years, by the Hebrew computation. For God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, in the year of the world 2213, and the secretary Shaphan published the book of the law in the year of the world 3380. This book found under Josiah, was unknown until the return from the Babylonish captivity; and it is said that it was Esdras, inspired by God, who brought the Holy Scriptures to light.

But whether it was Esdras or another who digested this book is absolutely indifferent, since it is inspired. It is not said in the Pentateuch, that Moses was the author; we might, therefore, be permitted to attribute it to the declaration of some other divine mind, if the Church had not decided that the book is by Moses.

Some opposers add, that no prophet has quoted the books of the Pentateuch, that there is no mention of it either in the Psalms or in the books attributed to Solomon, in Jeremiah or Isaiah, or, in short, in any canonical book of the Jews. Words answering to those of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, are not found in any other language recognized by them as authentic. Others, still more bold, have put the following questions:

1. In what language could Moses have written in a savage desert? It could only be in Egyptian; for by this same book we are told that Moses and all his people were born in Egypt. It is therefore probable that they spoke no other

language. The Egyptians had yet made no use of papyrus; they engraved hieroglyphics on tables of wood or marble. It is even said, that the tables of the commandments were engraved on polished stones, which required prodigious time and labor.

2. Is it likely, that in a desert where the Jewish people had neither shoemaker nor tailor—in which the God of the universe was obliged to work a continual miracle to preserve the old dresses and shoes of the Jews—men could be found clever enough to engrave the five books of the Pentateuch on marble or wood? You will say, that they found laborers who made a golden calf in one night, and who afterwards reduced the gold into powder—an operation impracticable to common chemistry, which was not yet discovered. Who constructed the tabernacle? Who ornamented thirty columns of brass with capitals of silver? Who wove and embroidered veils of linen with hyacinth, purple, and scarlet? An account that supports the opinion of the contradictors. They answer, that it was not possible that in a desert, where they were in want of everything, for them to perform works so intricate; that they must have begun by making shoes and tunics; that those who wanted necessaries could not indulge in luxuries; and that it is an evident contradiction to say, that they had founders, engravers, and embroiderers, when they had neither clothes nor bread.

3. If Moses had written the first chapter of Genesis, would all young people have been forbidden to read the first chapter? Would so little respect have been paid to the legislator? If it was Moses who said that God punished the iniquity of the fathers to the fourth generation, would Ezekiel have dared to say the contrary?

4. If Moses wrote Leviticus, could he have contradicted it in Deuteronomy? Leviticus forbids a woman to marry her brother, Deuteronomy commands it.

5. Could Moses have spoken of towns which existed not in his time? Would he have said that towns which, in regard to him, were on the east of the Jordan were on the west?

6. Would he have assigned forty-eight cities to the Levites, in a country in which there were never ten, and in a desert in which he had always wandered without habitation?

7. Would he have prescribed rules for the Jewish kings, when not only there were no kings among this people, but they were held in horror, and it was not probable they would ever have any? What! would Moses have given precepts for the conduct of kings who came not until five hundred years after him, and have said nothing in relation to the judges and priests who succeeded him? Does not this religion lead us to believe that the Pentateuch was

composed in the time of kings, and that the ceremonies instituted by Moses were only traditional.

8. Suppose he had said to the Jews: I have made you depart to the number of six hundred thousand combatants from the land of Egypt under the protection of your God? Would not the Jews have answered him: You must have been very timid not to lead us against Pharaoh of Egypt; he could not have opposed to us an army of two hundred thousand men. There never was such an army on foot in Egypt; we should have conquered them easily; we should have been the masters of their country. What! has the God, who talks to you, to please us slain all the first-born of Egypt, which, if there were in this country three hundred thousand families, makes three hundred thousand men destroyed in one night, simply to avenge us, and yet you have not seconded your God and given us that fertile country which nothing could withhold from us. On the contrary you have made us depart from Egypt as thieves and cowards, to perish in deserts between mountains and precipices. You might, at least, have conducted us by the direct road to this land of Canaan, to which we have no right, but which you have promised us, and on which we have not yet been able to enter.

It was natural that, from the land of Goshen, we should march towards Tyre and Sidon, along the Mediterranean; but you made us entirely pass the Isthmus of Suez, and re-enter Egypt, proceed as far as Memphis, when we find ourselves at Beel-Sephor on the borders of the Red Sea, turning our backs on the land of Canaan, having journeyed eighty leagues in this Egypt which we wished to avoid, so as at last to nearly perish between the sea and the army of Pharaoh!

If you had wished to deliver us to our enemies, you could not have taken a different route and other measures. God has saved us by a miracle, you say; the sea opened to let us pass; but after such a favor, should He let us die of hunger and fatigue in the horrible deserts of Kadesh-barnea, Mara, Elim, Horeb, and Sinai? All our fathers perished in these frightful solitudes; and you tell us, at the end of forty years, that God took particular care of them.

This is what these murmuring Jews, these unjust children of the vagabonds who died in the desert, might have said to Moses, if he had read Exodus and Genesis to them. And what might they not have said and done on the article of the golden calf? What! you dare to tell us that your brother made a calf for our fathers, when you were with God on the mountain? You, who sometimes tell us that you have spoken to God face to face, and sometimes that you could only see His back! But no matter, you were with this God, and your brother cast a golden calf in one day, and gave it to us to adore it; and instead of punishing your unworthy brother, you make him our chief priest, and order your Levites to slay twenty-three thousand men of your people. Would our

fathers have suffered this? Would they have allowed themselves to be sacrificed like so many victims by sanguinary priests? You tell us that, not content with this incredible butchery, you have further massacred twenty-four thousand of our poor followers because one of them slept with a Midianitish woman, whilst you yourself espoused a Midianite; and yet you add, that you are the mildest of men! A few more instances of this mildness, and not a soul would have remained.

No; if you have been capable of all this cruelty, if you can have exercised it, you would be the most barbarous of men, and no punishment would suffice to expiate so great a crime.

These are nearly the objections which all scholars make to those who think that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch. But we answer them, that the ways of God are not those of men; that God has proved, conducted, and abandoned His people by a wisdom which is unknown to us; that the Jews themselves, for more than two thousand years, have believed that Moses is the author of these books; that the Church, which has succeeded the synagogue, and which is equally infallible, has decided this point of controversy; and that scholars should remain silent when the Church pronounces.

Section III.

We cannot doubt that there was a Moses, a legislator of the Jews. We will here examine his history, following merely the rules of criticism; the Divine is not submitted to similar examination. We must confine ourselves to the probable; men can only judge as men. It is very natural and very probable that an Arab nation dwelt on the confines of Egypt, on the side of Arabia Deserta; that it was tributary or slave to the Egyptian kings, and that afterwards it sought to establish itself elsewhere; but that which reason alone cannot admit is, that this nation, composed of seventy persons at most in the time of Joseph, increased in two hundred and fifteen years, from Joseph to Moses, to the number of six hundred thousand combatants, according to the Book of Exodus, which six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms imply a multitude of about two millions, counting old men, women, and children. It is not certainly in the course of nature for a colony of seventy persons, as many males as females, to produce in two centuries two millions of inhabitants. The calculations made on this progression by men very little versed in the things of this world, are falsified by the experience of all nations and all times. Children are not made by a stroke of the pen. Reflect well that at this rate a population of ten thousand persons in two hundred years would produce more inhabitants than the globe of the earth could sustain.

Is it any more probable, that these six hundred thousand combatants, favored by the Author of nature who worked for them so many prodigies, were

forced to wander in the deserts in which they died, instead of seeking to possess themselves of fertile Egypt?

By these rules of an established and reasonable human criticism, we must agree that it is very likely that Moses conducted a small people from the confines of Egypt. There was among the Egyptians an ancient tradition, related by Plutarch in his "Treatise on Isis and Osiris," that Tiphon, the father of Jerosselaim and Juddecus, fled from Egypt on an ass. It is clear from this passage that the ancestors of the Jews, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, were supposed to have been fugitives from Egypt. A tradition, no less ancient and more general is, that the Jews were driven from Egypt, either as a troop of unruly brigands, or a people infected with leprosy. This double accusation carries its probability even from the land of Goshen, which they had inhabited, a neighboring land of the vagabond Arabs, and where the disease of leprosy, peculiar to the Arabs, might be common. It appears even by the Scripture that this people went from Egypt against their will. The seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy forbids kings to think of leading the Jews back to Egypt.

The conformity of several Egyptian and Jewish customs still more strengthens the opinion that this people was an Egyptian colony, and what gives it a new degree of probability is the feast of the Passover; that is to say, of the flight or passage instituted in memory of their evasion. This feast alone would be no proof; for among all peoples there are solemnities established to celebrate fabulous and incredible events; such were most of the feasts of the Greeks and Romans; but a flight from one country to another is nothing uncommon, and calls for belief. The proof drawn from this feast of the Passover receives a still greater force by that of the Tabernacles, in memory of the time in which the Jews inhabited the desert on their departure from Egypt. These similitudes, united with so many others, prove that a colony really went from Egypt, and finally established itself for some time at Palestine.

Almost all the rest is of a kind so marvellous that human sagacity cannot digest it. All that we can do is to seek the time in which the history of this flight—that is to say, the Book of Exodus—can have been written, and to examine the opinions which then prevailed; opinions, of which the proof is in the book itself, compared with the ancient customs of nations.

With regard to the books attributed to Moses, the most common rules of criticism permit us not to believe that he can be the author of them.

1. It is not likely that he spoke of the places by names which were not given to them until long afterwards. In this book mention is made of the cities of Jair, and every one agrees that they were not so named until long after the death of Moses. It also speaks of the country of Dan, and the tribe of Dan had not given its name to the country of which it was not yet the master.

2. How could Moses have quoted the book of the wars of the Lord, when these wars and this book were after his time?

3. How could Moses speak of the pretended defeat of a giant named Og, king of Bashan, vanquished in the desert in the last year of his government? And how could he add, that he further saw his bed of iron of nine cubits long in Rabath? This city of Rabath was the capital of the Ammonites, into whose country the Hebrews had not yet penetrated. Is it not apparent, that such a passage is the production of a posterior writer, which his inadvertence betrays? As an evidence of the victory gained over the giant, he brings forward the bed said to be still at Rabath, forgetting that it is Moses whom he makes speak, who was dead long before.

4. How could Moses have called cities beyond the Jordan, which, with regard to him, were on this side? Is it not palpable, that the book attributed to him was written a long time after the Israelites had crossed this little river Jordan, which they never passed under his conduct?

5. Is it likely that Moses told his people, that in the last year of his government he took, in the little province of Argob—a sterile and frightful country of Arabia Petræa—sixty great towns surrounded with high fortified walls, independent of an infinite number of open cities? Is it not much more probable that these exaggerations were afterwards written by a man who wished to flatter a stupid nation?

6. It is still less likely, that Moses related the miracles with which this history is filled.

It is easy to persuade a happy and victorious people that God has fought for them; but it is not in human nature that a people should believe a hundred miracles in their favor, when all these prodigies ended only in making them perish in a desert. Let us examine some of the miracles related in Exodus.

7. It appears contradictory and injurious to the divine essence to suppose that God, having formed a people to be the sole depository of His laws, and to reign over all nations, should send a man of this people to demand of the king, their oppressor, permission to go into the desert to sacrifice to his God, that this people might escape under the pretence of this sacrifice. Our common ideas cannot forbear attaching an idea of baseness and knavery to this management, far from recognizing the majesty and power of the Supreme Being.

When, immediately after, we read that Moses changed his rod into a serpent, before the king, and turned all the waters of the kingdom into blood; that he caused frogs to be produced which covered the surface of the earth; that he changed all the dust into lice, and filled the air with venomous winged

insects; that he afflicted all the men and animals of the country with frightful ulcers; that he called hail, tempests, and thunder, to ruin all the country; that he covered it with locusts; that he plunged it in fearful darkness for three days; that, finally, an exterminating angel struck with death all the first-born of men and animals in Egypt, commencing with the son of the king; again, when we afterwards see his people walking across the Red Sea, the waves suspended in mountains to the right and left, and later falling on the army of Pharaoh, which they swallowed up—when, I say, we read all these miracles, the first idea which comes into our minds is, that this people, for whom God performed such astonishing things, no doubt became the masters of the universe. But, no! the fruit of so many wonders was, that they suffered want and hunger in arid sands; and—prodigy upon prodigy—all died without seeing the little corner of earth in which their descendants afterwards, for some years, established themselves! It is no doubt pardonable if we disbelieve this crowd of prodigies, at the least of which reason so decidedly revolts.

This reason, left to itself, cannot be persuaded that Moses wrote such strange things. How can we make a generation believe so many miracles uselessly wrought for it, and all of which, it is said, were performed in the desert? What being, enjoying divine power, would employ it in preserving the clothes and shoes of these people, after having armed all nature in their favor?

It is therefore very natural to think that all this prodigious history was written a long time after Moses, as the romances of Charlemagne were forged three centuries after him; and as the origins of all nations have not been written until they were out of sight, the imagination has been left at liberty to invent. The more coarse and unfortunate a people are, the more they seek to exalt their ancient history; and what people have been longer miserable, or more barbarous, than the Jews?

It is not to be believed that, when they had not wherewithal to make shoes in their deserts, under the government of Moses, there were any cunning enough to write. We should presume, that the poor creatures born in these deserts did not receive a very brilliant education; and that the nation only began to read and write when it had some commerce with Phœnicia. It was probably in the commencement of monarchy that the Jews, feeling they had some genius, wrote the Pentateuch, and adjusted their traditions. Would they have made Moses recommend kings to read and write his law in a time in which there were no kings? Is it not probable, that the seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy was composed to moderate the power of royalty; and that it was written by priests in the time of Saul?

It is most likely at this epoch that we must place the digest of the Pentateuch. The frequent slaveries to which this people were subject seem badly calculated to establish literature in a nation, and to render books very

common; and the more rare these books were in the commencement, the more the authors ventured to fill them with miracles.

The Pentateuch, attributed to Moses, is, no doubt, very ancient; if it was put in order in the time of Saul and Solomon, it was about the time of the Trojan war, and is one of the most curious monuments of the manner of thinking of that time. We see that all known nations, in proportion to their ignorance, were fond of prodigies. All was then performed by celestial ministry in Egypt, Phrygia, Greece, and Asia.

The authors of the Pentateuch give us to understand that every nation has its gods, and that these gods have all nearly an equal power.

If Moses, in the name of God, changed his rod into a serpent, the priests of Pharaoh did as much; if he changed all the waters of Egypt into blood, even to that which was in the vases, the priests immediately performed the same prodigy, without our being able to conceive on what waters they performed this metamorphosis; at least, unless they expressly created new waters for the purpose. The Jewish writers prefer being reduced to this absurdity, rather than allow us to suspect that the gods of Egypt had not the power of changing water into blood as well as the God of Jacob.

But when the latter fills the land of Egypt with lice, changing all the dust into them, His entire superiority appears; the magi cannot imitate it, and they make the God of the Jews speak thus: "Pharaoh shall know that nothing is equal to me." These words put into his mouth, merely mark a being who believes himself more powerful than his rivals; he was equalled in the metamorphosis of a rod into a serpent, and in that of the waters into blood; but he gains the victory in the article of the lice and the following miracles.

This idea of the supernatural power of priests of all countries is displayed in several places of Scripture. When Balaam, the priest of the little state of a petty king, named Balak, in the midst of deserts, is near cursing the Jews, their God appears to him to prevent him. It seems that the malediction of Balaam was much to be feared. To restrain this priest, it is not enough that God speaks to him, he sends before him an angel with a sword, and speaks Himself again by the mouth of his ass. All these precautions certainly prove the opinion which then prevailed, that the malediction of a priest, whatever it was, drew fatal consequences after it.

This idea of a God superior to other gods, though He made heaven and earth, was so rooted in all minds, that Solomon in his last prayer cries: "Oh, my God! there is no other god like thee in earth or heaven." It is this opinion which rendered the Jews so credulous respecting the sorceries and enchantments of other nations.

It is this which gave rise to the story of the Witch of Endor, who had the power of invoking the shade of Saul. Every people had their prodigies and oracles, and it never even came into the minds of any nations to doubt the miracles and prophecies of others. They were contented with opposing similar arms; it seems as if the priests, in denying the prodigies of other nations, feared to discredit their own. This kind of theology prevailed a long time over all the earth.

It is not for us to enter here on the detail of all that is written on Moses. We speak of his laws in more than one place in this work. We will here confine ourselves to remarking how much we are astonished to see a legislator inspired by God; a prophet, through whom God Himself speaks, proposing to us no future life. There is not a single word in Leviticus, which can lead us to suspect the immortality of the soul. The reply to this overwhelming difficulty is, that God proportioned Himself to the ignorance of the Jews. What a miserable answer! It was for God to elevate the Jews to necessary knowledge —not to lower Himself to them. If the soul is immortal, if there are rewards and punishments in another life, it is necessary for men to be informed of it. If God spoke, He must have informed them of this fundamental dogma. What legislator, what god but this, proposes to his people wine, oil, and milk alone! What god but this always encourages his believers, as a chief of robbers encourages his troops, with the hope of plunder only! Once more; it is very pardonable for mere human reason simply to see, in such a history, the barbarous stupidity of the first ages of a savage people. Man, whatever he does, cannot reason otherwise; but if God really is the author of the Pentateuch, we must submit without reasoning.

MOTION.

A philosopher, in the neighborhood of Mount Krapak, argued with me that motion is essential to matter.

"Everything moves," says he; "the sun continually revolves on its own axis; the planets do the same, and every planet has many different motions; everything is a sieve; everything passes through a sieve; the hardest metal is pierced with an infinity of pores, by which escapes a constant torrent of vapors that circulate in space. The universe is nothing but motion; motion, therefore, is essential to matter."

"But, sir," said I to him, "might not any one say, in answer to what you have advanced: This block of marble, this cannon, this house, this motion, are not in motion; therefore motion is not essential?"

"They do move," he replied; "they move in space together with the earth by the common motion, and they move so incontestably—although insensibly—by their own peculiar motion, that, at the expiration of an indefinite number of centuries, there will remain not a single atom of the masses which now constitute them, from which particles are detaching themselves every passing moment."

"But, my good sir, I can conceive matter to be in a state of rest; motion, therefore, cannot be considered essential to it."

"Why, certainly, it must be of vast consequence whether you conceive it to be, or conceive it not to be, in a state of rest. I still repeat, that it is impossible for it to be so."

"This is a bold assertion; but what, let me ask you, will you say to chaos?"

"Oh, chaos! If we were inclined to talk about chaos, I should tell you that all was necessarily in motion, and that 'the breath of God moved upon the waters'; that the element of water was recognized in existence, and that the other elements existed also; that, consequently, fire existed; that there cannot be fire without motion, that motion is essential to fire. You will not succeed much with chaos."

"Alas! who can succeed with all these subjects of dispute? But, as you are so very fully acquainted with these things, I must request you to inform me why one body impels another: whether it is because matter is impenetrable, or because two bodies cannot be together in one place; or because, in every case of every description, the weak is driven before the strong?"

"Your last reason is rather more facetious than philosophical. No person has hitherto been able to discover the cause of the communication of motion."

"That, however, does not prevent its being essential to matter. No one has ever been able to discover the cause of sensation in animals; yet this sensation is so essential to them, that, if you exclude the idea of it, you no longer have the idea of an animal."

"Well, I will concede to you, for a moment, that motion is essential to matter—just for a moment, let it be remembered, for I am not much inclined to embroil myself with the theologians—and now, after this admission, tell me how one ball produces motion in another?"

"You are very curious and inquisitive; you wish me to inform you of what no philosopher ever knew."

"It appears rather curious, and even ludicrous, that we should know the laws of motion, and yet be profoundly ignorant of the principle of the communication of motion!"

"It is the same with everything else; we know the laws of reasoning, but we know not what it is in us that reasons. The ducts through which our blood and other animal fluids pass are very well known to us, but we know not what forms that blood and those fluids. We are in life, but we know not in what the vital principle consists."

"Inform me, however, at least, whether, if motion be essential to matter, there has not always existed the same quantity of motion in the world?"

"That is an old chimera of Epicurus revived by Descartes. I do not, for my own part, see that this equality of motion in the world is more necessary than an equality of triangles. It is essential that a triangle should have three angles and three sides, but it is not essential that the number of triangles on this globe should be always equal."

"But is there not always an equality of forces, as other philosophers express it?"

"That is a similar chimera. We must, upon such a principle, suppose that there is always an equal number of men, and animals, and moving beings, which is absurd."

By the way, what, let me ask, is the force of a body in motion? It is the product of its quantity multiplied by its velocity in a given time. Calling the quantity of a body four, and its velocity four, the force of its impulse will be equal to sixteen. Another quantity we will assume to be two, and its velocity two; the force with which that impels is as four. This is the grand principle of mechanics. Leibnitz decidedly and pompously pronounced the principle defective. He maintained that it was necessary to measure that force, that product, by the quantity multiplied by the square of the velocity. But this was mere captious sophistry and chicanery, an ambiguity unworthy of a philosopher, founded on an abuse of the discovery of the great Galileo, that the spaces traversed with a motion uniformly accelerated were, to each other, as the squares of the times and velocities.

Leibnitz did not consider the time which he should have considered. No English mathematician adopted his system. It was received for a while by a small number of geometricians in France. It pervaded some books, and even the philosophical institutions of a person of great celebrity. Maupertuis is very abusive of Mairan, in a little work entitled "A, B, C"; as if he thought it necessary to teach the a, b, c, of science to any man who followed the old and, in fact, the true system of calculation. Mairan was, however, in the right. He adhered to the ancient measurement, that of the quantity multiplied by the velocity. He gradually prevailed over his antagonists, and his system recovered its former station; the scandal of mathematics disappeared, and the quackery of the square of the velocity was dismissed at last to the extramundane spaces,

to the limbo of vanity, together with the monads which Leibnitz supposed to constitute the concentric mirror of nature, and also with his elaborate and fanciful system of "pre-established harmony."

MOUNTAIN.

The fable of the mountain which, after alarming the whole neighborhood with its outcries in labor, was ridiculed by all present when it became delivered of a mouse, is at once ancient and universal. The company, however, who thus gave way to ridicule were not a company of philosophers. Those who mocked should in reality have admired. A mountain's being delivered of a mouse was an event as extraordinary, and as worthy of admiration, as a mouse's being delivered of a mountain. A rock's producing a rat is a case absolutely prodigious, and the world never beheld anything approaching to such a miracle. All the worlds in the universe could not originate a fly. Thus, in cases where the vulgar mock, the philosopher admires; and where the vulgar strain their eyes in stupid astonishment, he often smiles.

NAIL.

We only ask here from the censors of books, permission to transcribe from that which the Dominican missionary Labat, proveditor of the holy office, has written concerning the nails of the cross, into which it is more than probable no nails were ever driven.

"The Italian priest who conducted us had sufficient interest to get us, among other things, a sight of the nails with which our Saviour was fastened to the cross. They appeared to me very different from those which the Benedictines show at St. Denis. Possibly those belonging to St. Denis served for the feet, and the others for the hands. It was necessary that those for the hands should be sufficiently large and strong to support all the weight of the body. However, the Jews must either have made use of more than four nails, or some of those which are shown to the faithful are not genuine. History relates that St. Helena threw one of them into the sea, to appease a furious tempest which assailed the ship in which she had embarked. Constantine made use of another, to make a bit for the bridle of his horse. One is shown entire at St. Denis in France; another also entire at the Holy Cross of Jerusalem at Rome. A very celebrated Roman author of our day asserts that the iron crown with which they crown the emperors in Italy was made out of one of these nails. We

are shown at Rome and at Carpentras two bridle bits also made of these nails, not to mention more at other places. To be sure, several of them are discreet enough to say, that it is the head or point only of these nails which they exhibit."

The missionary speaks in the same tone of all the relics. He observes in the same passage, that when the body of the first deacon, St. Stephen, was brought from Jerusalem to Rome, in 557, and placed in the tomb of the deacon of St. Lawrence: "St. Lawrence made way of himself to give the right hand to his predecessor; an action which procured him the name of the civil Spaniard."

Upon this passage we venture only one reflection, which is, that if some philosopher had said as much, in the "Encyclopædia", as the Dominican Labat, a crowd of Pantouillets, Nonnottes, Chiniacs, Chaumeix, and other knaves, would have exclaimed—Deist, atheist, and geometrician! According to circumstances things change their names.

Selon ce que l'on peut être

Les choses changent de nom.

—Amphytrion, Prologue.

NATURE.

Dialogue Between The Philosopher And Nature.

PHILOSOPHER.

What are you, Nature? I live in you? but I have been searching for you for fifty years, and have never yet been able to find you.

NATURE.

The ancient Egyptians, whose lives it is said extended to twelve hundred years, attached the same reproach to me. They called me Isis; they placed a thick veil over my head; and they said that no one could ever raise it.

PHILOSOPHER.

It is on that account that I apply directly to yourself. I have been able to measure some of your globes, to ascertain their courses, and to point out the laws of motion; but I have never been able to ascertain what you are yourself.

Are you always active? Are you always passive? Do your elements arrange themselves, as water places itself over sand, oil over water, and air over oil? Have you a mind which directs all your operations—as councils are inspired

as soon as they meet, although the individual members composing them are often ignorant? Explain to me, I entreat, the enigma in which you are enveloped.

NATURE.

I am the great universal system. I know nothing farther. I am no mathematician, and yet everything in and about me is arranged agreeably to mathematical laws. Conjecture, if you can, how all this is effected.

PHILOSOPHER.

Certainly, since your great universal system knows nothing of mathematics, and yet the laws by which you are regulated are those of the most profound geometry, there must necessarily be an eternal geometrician, who directs you, and presides over your operations.

NATURE.

You are perfectly right; I am water, earth, fire, air, metal, mineral, stone, vegetable, and animal. I clearly perceive that there is an intelligence in me: you possess an intelligence, although you see it not. Neither do I see mine; I feel this invisible power; I am unable to know it: why should you, who are only a very minute portion of myself, be anxious to know what I myself am ignorant of?

PHILOSOPHER.

We are curious. I should be pleased to learn how it is, that while so rough and coarse in your mountains, and deserts, and seas, you are at the same time so ingenious and finished in your animals and vegetables?

NATURE.

My poor child, shall I tell you the real truth? I have had bestowed upon me a name that does not at all suit me: I am called nature, while I am all art.

PHILOSOPHER.

That word deranges all my ideas. What! is it possible that nature should be nothing but art.

NATURE.

It is undoubtedly the case. Do you not know that there is infinite art in those seas and mountains which you represent as so rough and so coarse? Do you not know that all those waters gravitate towards the centre of the earth, and are raised only by immutable laws; and that those mountains which crown the earth are immense reservoirs of eternal snows, incessantly producing the fountains, lakes, and rivers, without which my animal and vegetable off-spring

would inevitably perish? And, with respect to what are denominated my animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, constituting thus only three kingdoms, be assured that I have in fact millions of them. But if you consider the formation of an insect, of an ear of corn, of gold, or of copper, all will exhibit to you prodigies of art.

PHILOSOPHER.

It is undoubtedly true. The more I reflect on the subject, the more clearly I perceive that you are only the art of some Great Being, extremely powerful and skilful, who conceals Himself and exhibits you. All the reasoners, from the time of Thales, and probably long before him, have been playing at hide and seek with you. They have said, "I have hold of you"; and they in fact held nothing. We all resemble Ixion: he thought he embraced Juno, when he embraced only a cloud.

NATURE.

Since I am the whole that exists, how is it possible for a being like you, so small a portion of myself, to comprehend me? Be contented, my dear little atomic children, with seeing a few particles that surround you, with drinking a few drops of my milk, with vegetating for a few moments in my bosom, and at last dying without any knowledge of your mother and your nurse.

PHILOSOPHER.

My beloved mother, pray tell me a little why you exist—why anything has existed?

NATURE.

I will answer you in the language in which I always have answered, for so long a series of ages, those who have interrogated me on the subject of first principles: "I know nothing at all about the matter."

PHILOSOPHER.

Nothing itself, would it not be preferable to that multitude of existences formed to be continually dissolved; those tribes of animals born and reproduced to devour others, and devoured in their turn; those numberless beings endued with sensation, and formed to experience so many sensations of pain; and those other tribes of reasoning beings which never, or at least only rarely, listen to reason? For what purpose, Nature, was all this?

NATURE.

Oh! pray go and inquire of Him who made me.

NECESSARY—NECESSITY.

OSMIN.

Do you not assert that everything is necessary?

SELIM.

If all be not necessary, it follows that God does unnecessary things.

OSMIN.

That is to say, it was necessary for the Divine Nature to do what it has done.

SELIM.

I believe, or at least I suspect so. There are men who think differently. I do not understand them; but possibly they are right. I fear to dispute on this subject.

OSMIN.

It is, however, necessary for me to talk to you upon it.

SELIM.

In what manner? Would you speak of what is necessary to sustain life, or the evil to which people are reduced who cannot procure it?

OSMIN.

No; for that which is necessary to one is not always necessary to another. It is necessary for an Indian to possess rice, for an Englishman to eat animal food, as Russians must wear furs, and Africans gauze. One man believes that he has need of a dozen coach-horses, another limits himself to a pair of shoes, and a third walks gayly on his bare feet. I wish to speak to you of that which is necessary to all men.

SELIM.

It appears to me that God has given us all that is necessary in this sense: eyes to see, feet to walk, a mouth to eat, a gullet to swallow, a stomach to digest, a brain to reason, and organs to produce our kind.

OSMIN.

How happens it then that men are sometimes born who are deprived of a part of these necessary faculties?

SELIM.

Because the general laws of nature are liable to accidents which produce monsters; but in general man is provided with all things necessary to his existence in society.

OSMIN.

Are there not notions common to all men necessary to this purpose?

SELIM.

Yes; I have travelled with Paul Lucas, and wherever I went I saw that man respected his father and mother; that he thought himself bound to keep his promise; that he pitied oppressed innocence; that he detested persecution; that he regarded freedom of thinking as a right of nature, and the enemies of that freedom as the enemies of the human race. They who think differently appear to me to be badly organized, and monsters, like those who are born without eyes or heads.

OSMIN.

These necessary things—are they necessary in all times, and in all places?

SELIM.

Yes: otherwise they would not be necessary to human kind.

OSMIN.

Therefore, a new creed is not necessary to mankind. Men could live in society, and perform all their duties towards God, before they believed that Mahomet had frequent conversations with the angel Gabriel.

SELIM.

Nothing is more evident; it would be ridiculous to think that man could not perform his duties until Mahomet came into the world. It was no way necessary for men to believe the Koran. The world went on before the appearance of Mahomet, precisely as at present. If Mahometanism was necessary to the world, it would exist everywhere. God, who has given us two eyes to see the sun, would have bestowed upon us some means of discovering the truths of the Mahometan religion. That sect therefore resembles the arbitrary laws which change according to times and places, like fashions or the theories of physicians, which displace and succeed one another. The Mahometan religion cannot therefore be essentially necessary to man.

OSMIN.

But since it exists, God has permitted it.

SELIM.

Yes, as He permits all the world to abound in absurdities, errors, and calamities. This is not saying that men were absolutely created in order to be foolish and unhappy. God permits some men to be eaten by serpents, but we ought not to say that God made man to be eaten by serpents.

OSMIN.

What do you mean by saying that God permits? Can anything happen but by His orders? To permit and to will—are they not with Him the same thing?

SELIM.

He permits crime, but does not commit it.

OSMIN.

To commit a crime is to act against Divine justice—to disobey God. Therefore, as God cannot disobey Himself, He cannot commit crime; but He has so made man that man commits it frequently. How does that arise?

SELIM.

Some men can tell, but I am not one of them. All that I know is, that the Koran is ridiculous, although possessing here and there things which are passable. The Koran, however, is certainly not necessary to man—that I maintain. I perceive clearly that which is false, but know very little of that which is true.

OSMIN.

I thought that you would instruct me, but you teach me nothing.

SELIM.

Is it not something to know the men who deceive you, and the gross and dangerous errors they promulgate?

OSMIN.

I should have cause to complain of a physician who made me acquainted with poisonous plants, without instructing me in regard to such as are salutary.

SELIM.

I am no physician, nor are you a sick man; and it appears to me that I give you a very useful prescription, when I say to you: Distrust the inventions of charlatans; worship God; be an honest man; and believe that two and two make four.

NEW—NOVELTIES.

It seems as if the first words of Ovid's "Metamorphoses"—"In nova fert animus"—were the emblem of mankind. No one is touched with the admirable spectacle of the sun which rises or seems to rise every day; but everybody runs at the smallest meteor which appears for a moment in the map of vapors which surround the earth, and which we call heaven. We despise whatever is common, or which has been long known:

Vilia sunt nobis quæcumque prioribus annis

Vidimus, et sordet quidquid spectavimus olim.

A hawker will not burden himself with a "Virgil" or a "Horace," but with a new book, were it ever so detestable. He draws you aside and says to you: "Sir, will you have some books from Holland?"

From the commencement of the world, women have complained of the infidelities done to them in favor of the first new object which presents itself, and which has often this novelty for its only merit. Several ladies—we must confess it, notwithstanding the infinite respect which we have for them—have treated men as they complain that the men have treated them; and the story of Jocondo is much more ancient than Ariosto.

Perhaps this universal taste for novelty is a benefit of nature. We are told: Content yourselves with what you have; desire nothing beyond your situation; subdue the restlessness of your mind. These are very good maxims; but if we had followed them, we should still live upon acorns and sleep under the stars, and we should have had neither Corneille, Racine, Molière, Poussin, Le Brun, Lemoine, nor Pigal.

NUDITY.

Why do we shut up a man or a woman whom we find naked in the streets? and why is no one offended at entirely naked statues, and with certain paintings of Jesus and of Magdalen which are to be seen in some of the churches? It is very likely that human beings existed for a considerable time without clothing. In more than one island and on the continent of America, people are still found who are ignorant of clothing.

The most civilized of them conceal the organs of generation by leaves, by interlaced rushes or mats, and by feathers. Whence this latter modesty? Is it the instinct of nature to provoke desire by the concealment of that which we are inclined to discover? Is it true that among nations somewhat more polished than the Jews and demi-Jews, there are entire sects who, when they worship God, deprive themselves of clothing. Such have been, it is said, the Adamites and the Abelians. They assembled, naked, to sing the praises of God. St. Epiphanius and St. Augustine say this, who, it is true, were not contemporaries, and who lived very distant from their country. But after all, this folly is possible, and is not more extraordinary or insane than a hundred other follies which have made the tour of the world, one after another.

We have seen, in the article "Emblem", that the Mahometans still possess

saints who are mad, and who go about naked as apes. It is very possible that crazy people have existed, who thought that it was more proper to present ourselves before the Deity in the state in which He has formed us, than under any disguise of our own invention. It is possible that these persons exposed themselves out of pure devotion. There are so few well-made people of either sex, that nudity may have inspired chastity, or rather disgust, instead of augmenting desire.

It is moreover asserted that the Abelians renounced marriage. If they abounded in youthful gallants and amorous maidens, they were the less comparable with St. Adhelm and the happy Robert D'Arbriselle, who lay with the most beautiful women, only in order to prove the strength of their continence. I confess, however, that it must be pleasant to witness a hundred naked Helens and Parises singing anthems, giving one another the kiss of peace, and performing the ceremonies of the agapæ.

All this proves that there is nothing so singular, so extravagant, or so superstitious, which has not been conceived by the head of man. Happy it is, when these follies do not trouble society, and make of it a scene of hate, of discord, and of fury. It is doubtless better to pray to God stark naked, than to soil His altars and the public places with human blood.

NUMBER.

Was Euclid right in defining number to be a collection of unities of the same kind? When Newton says that number is an abstract relation of one quantity to another of the same kind, does he not understand by that the use of numbers in arithmetic and geometry? Wolfe says, number is that which has the same relation with unity as one right line has with another. Is not this rather a property attributed to a number, than a definition? If I dared, I would simply define numbers the idea of several unities.

I see white—I have a sensation, an idea of white. It signifies not whether these two things are or are not of the same species; I can reckon two ideas. I see four men and four horses—I have the idea of eight; in like manner, three stones and six trees will give me the idea of nine.

That I add, multiply, subtract, and divide these, are operations of the faculty of thought which I have received from the master of nature; but they are not properties inherent to number. I can square three and cube it, but there is not certainly in nature any number which can be squared or cubed. I very well conceive what an odd or even number is, but I can never conceive either a

perfect or an imperfect one.

Numbers can have nothing by themselves. What properties, what virtue, can ten flints, ten trees, ten ideas, possess because they are ten? What superiority will one number divisible in three even parts have over another divisible in two?

Pythagoras was the first, it is said, who discovered divine virtue in numbers. I doubt whether he was the first; for he had travelled in Egypt, Babylon, and India, and must have related much of their arts and knowledge. The Indians particularly, the inventors of the combined and complicated game of chess, and of ciphers, so convenient that the Arabs learned of them, through whom they have been communicated to us after so many ages—these same Indians, I say, joined strange chimeras to their sciences. The Chaldæans had still more, and the Egyptians more still. We know that self-delusion is in our nature. Happy is he who can preserve himself from it! Happy is he who, after having some access of this fever of the mind, can recover tolerable health.

Porphyrius, in the "Life of Pythagoras," says that the number 2 is fatal. We might say, on the contrary, that it is the most favorable of all. Woe to him that is always single! Woe to nature, if the human species and that of animals were not often two and two!

If 2 was of bad augury, 3, by way of recompense, was admirable, and 4 was divine; but the Pythagoreans and their imitators forgot that this mysterious 4, so divine, was composed of twice that diabolical number 2! Six had its merit, because the first statuaries divided their figures into six modules. We have seen that, according to the Chaldæans, God created the world in six gahambars; but 7 was the most marvellous number; for there were at first but seven planets, each planet had its heaven, and that made seven heavens, without anyone knowing what was meant by the word heaven.

All Asia reckoned seven days for a week. We divide the life of man into seven ages. How many reasons have we in favor of this number!

The Jews in time collected some scraps of this philosophy. It passed among the first Christians of Alexandria with the dogmas of Plato. It is principally displayed in the "Apocalypse of Cerinthus," attributed to John the Apostle.

We see a striking example of it in the number of the beast: "That no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six."

We know what great pains all the great scholars have taken to divine the solution of this enigma. This number, composed of three times two at each

figure, does it signify three times fatal to the third power? There were two beasts, and we know not yet of which the author would speak.

We have seen that Bossuet, less happy in arithmetic than in funeral orations, has demonstrated that Diocletian is the beast, because we find the Roman figures 666 in the letters of his name, by cutting off those which would spoil this operation. But in making use of Roman figures, he does not remember that the Apocalypse was written in Greek. An eloquent man may fall into this mistake. The power of numbers was much more respected among us when we knew nothing about them.

You may observe, my dear reader, in the article on "Figure," some fine allegories that Augustine, bishop of Hippo, extracted from numbers.

This taste subsisted so long, that it triumphed at the Council of Trent. We preserve its mysteries, called "Sacraments" in the Latin church, because the Dominicans, with Soto at their head, allege that there are seven things which contribute to life, seven planets, seven virtues, seven mortal sins, six days of creation and one of repose, which make seven; further, seven plagues of Egypt, seven beatitudes; but unfortunately the fathers forget that Exodus reckons ten plagues, and that the beatitudes are to the number of eight in St. Matthew and four in St. Luke. But scholars have overcome this difficulty; by retrenching from St. Matthew the four beatitudes of St. Luke, there remain six, and add unity to these six, and you will have seven. Consult Fra Paolo Sarpi, in the second book of his history of the County of Trent.

NUMBERING.

Section I.

The most ancient numberings that history has left us are those of the Israelites, which are indubitable, since they are extracted from the Jewish books. We believe that we must not reckon as a numbering the flight of the Israelites to the number of six hundred thousand men on foot, because the text specifies them not tribe by tribe; it adds, that an innumerable troop of people gathered together and joined them. This is only a relation.

The first circumstantial numbering is that which we see in the book of the "Viedaber," which we call Numbers. By the reckoning which Moses and Aaron made of the people in the desert, we find, in counting all the tribes except that of Levi, six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men capable of bearing arms; and if we add the tribe of Levi, supposing it equal in number to the others, the strong with the weak, we shall have six hundred and

fifty-three thousand nine hundred and thirty-five men, to which we must add an equal number of old women and children, which will compose two millions six hundred and fifteen thousand seven hundred and forty-two persons, who departed from Egypt.

When David, after the example of Moses, ordered the numbering of all the people, he found eight hundred thousand warriors of the tribes of Israel, and five hundred thousand of that of Judah, according to the Book of Kings; but according to Chronicles they reckoned eleven hundred thousand warriors in Israel; and less than five hundred thousand in Judah.

The Book of Kings formally excludes Levi and Benjamin, and counts them not. If therefore we join these two tribes to the others in their proportion, the total of the warriors will amount to nineteen hundred and twenty thousand. This is a great number for the little country of Judæa, the half of which is composed of frightful rocks and caverns: but it was a miracle.

It is not for us to enter into the reasons for which the Sovereign Arbiter of kings and people punished David for an operation which he himself commanded to Moses. It still less becomes us to seek why God, being irritated against David, punished the people for being numbered. The prophet Gad ordered the king on the part of God to choose war, famine, or pestilence. David accepted the pestilence, and seventy thousand Jews died of it in three days.

St. Ambrosius, in his book of "Repentance," and St. Augustine in his book against Faustus, acknowledged that pride and ambition led David to make this calculation. Their opinion is of great weight, and we can certainly submit to their decision by extinguishing all the deceitful lights of our own minds.

Scripture relates a new numbering in the time of Esdras, when the Jewish nation returned from captivity. "All this multitude (say equally Esdras and Nehemiah, being as one man) amounted to forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty persons." They were all named by families, and they counted the number of Jews of each family, and the number of priests. But in these two authors there are not only differences between the numbers and the names of families, but we further see an error of calculation in both. By the calculation of Esdras, instead of forty-two thousand men, after computation we find but twenty-nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen; and by that of Nehemiah we find thirty-one thousand and eighty-nine.

We must consult the commentators on this apparent mistake, particularly Dom Calmet, who adding to one of these calculations what is wanting to the other, and further adding what is wanted to both of them, solves all the difficulty. To the computations of Esdras and Nehemiah, as reckoned by Calmet, are wanting ten thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven persons;

but we find them in families which could not give their genealogy; besides, if there were any fault of the copyist, it could not destroy the veracity of the divinely inspired text.

It is to be believed that the great neighboring kings of Palestine made numberings of their people as frequently as possible. Herodotus gives us the amount of all those who followed Xerxes, without including his naval forces. He reckons seventeen hundred thousand men, and he pretends, that to arrive at this computation, they were sent in divisions of ten thousand into a place which would only hold this number of men closely crowded. This method is very faulty, for by crowding a little less, each division of ten thousand might easily contain only from eight to nine. Further, this method is not at all soldier-like, and it would have been much more easy to have counted the whole by making the soldiers march in rank and file.

It should further be observed, how difficult it was to support seventeen hundred thousand men in the country of Greece, which they went to conquer. We may very well doubt of this number, and the manner of reckoning it; of the whipping given to the Hellespont; and of the sacrifice of a thousand oxen made to Minerva by a Persian king, who knew her not, and who adored the sun alone as the only emblem of the Divinity. Besides, the numbering of seventeen hundred thousand men is not complete, even by the confession of Herodotus, since Xerxes further carried with him all the people of Thrace and Macedonia, whom he forced, he says, to follow him, apparently the sooner to starve his army. We should therefore do here what all wise men do in reading ancient, and even modern histories—suspend our judgment and doubt much.

The first numbering which we have of a profane nation is that made by Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome. He found, says Titus Livius, eighty thousand combatants, all Roman citizens: that implies three hundred and twenty thousand citizens at least, as many old people, women and children, to which we must add at least twenty thousand domestics, slaves and freemen.

Now we may reasonably doubt whether the little Roman state contained this number. Romulus only reigned (if we may call him king) over about three thousand bandits, assembled in a little town between the mountains. This town was the worst land of Italy. The circuit of all his country was not three thousand paces. Servius was the sixth chief or king of this rising people. The rule of Newton, which is indubitable for elective kingdoms, gives twenty-one years' reign to each king, and by that contradicts all the ancient historians, who have never observed the order of time, nor given any precise date. The five kings of Rome must have reigned about a hundred years.

It is certainly not in the order of nature that an ungrateful soil, which was not five leagues in length or three in breadth, and which must have lost many

of its inhabitants in its almost continual little wars, could be peopled with three hundred and forty thousand souls. There is not half the number in the same territory at present, when Rome is the metropolis of the Christian world; when the affluence of foreigners and the ambassadors of so many nations must serve to people the towns; when gold flows from Poland, Hungary, half of Germany, Spain, and France, by a thousand channels into the purse of the treasury, and must further facilitate population, if other causes intercept it.

As the history of Rome was not written until more than five hundred years after its foundation, it would not be at all surprising if the historians had liberally given Servius Tullius eighty thousand warriors instead of eight thousand, through false zeal for their country. Their zeal would have been much more judicious if they had confessed the weak commencement of their republic. It is much more noble to be raised from so poor an origin to so much greatness, than to have had double the soldiers of Alexander to conquer about fifteen leagues of country in four hundred years.

The census was never taken except of Roman citizens. It is pretended that under Augustus it amounted to four millions one hundred and thirty-seven thousand in the year 29 before our vulgar era, according to Tillemont, who is very exact, and Dion Cassius, who is no less so.

Lawrence Echard admits but one numbering, of four millions one hundred and thirty-seven thousand men, in the year 14 of our era. The same Echard speaks of a general numbering of the empire for the first year of the same era; but he quotes no Roman author, nor specifies any calculation of the number of citizens. Tillemont does not speak in any way of this numbering.

We have quoted Tacitus and Suetonius, but to very little purpose. The census of which Suetonius speaks is not a numbering of citizens; it is only a list of those to whom the public furnished corn. Tacitus only speaks, in book ii., of a census established among the Gauls, for the purpose of raising more tribute on each head. Augustus never made a calculation of the other subjects of his empire, because they paid not the poll-tax, which he wished to establish in Gaul.

Tacitus says that Augustus had a memoir, written in his own hand, which contained the revenues of the empire, the fleets and contributary kingdoms. He speaks not of any numbering. Dion Cassius speaks of a census, but he specifies no number.

Josephus, in his "Antiquities," says that in the year 759 of Rome—the time answering to the eleventh year of our era—Cyrenius, then constituted governor of Syria, caused a list to be made of all the property of the Jews, which caused a revolt. This has no relation to a general numbering, and merely proves that this Cyrenius was not governor of Judæa—which was then a little

province of Syria—until ten years after, and not at the birth of our Saviour.

These seem to me to be all the principal passages that we can collect in profane histories, touching the numberings attributed to Augustus. If we refer to them, Jesus Christ would be born under the government of Varus, and not under that of Cyrenius; and there could have been no universal numbering. But St. Luke, whose authority should prevail over that of Josephus, Suetonius, Tacitus, Dion Cassius, and all the writers of Rome—St. Luke affirms positively that there was a universal numbering of all the earth, and that Cyrenius was governor of Judæa. We must therefore refer solely to him, without even seeking to reconcile him with Flavius Josephus, or with any other historian. As to the rest, neither the New nor the Old Testament has been given to us to enlighten points of history, but to announce salutary truths, before which all events and opinions should vanish. It is thus that we always reply to the false calculations, contradictions, absurdities, enormous faults of geography, chronology, physics, and even common sense, with which philosophers tell us the Holy Scripture is filled; we cease not to reply that there is here no question of reason, but of faith and piety.

Section II.

With regard to the numbers of the moderns, kings fear not at present that a doctor Gad should propose to them on the part of God, either famine, war, or pestilence, to punish them for wishing to know the amount of their subjects. None of them know it. We conjecture and guess, and always possibly within a few millions of men.

I have carried the number of inhabitants which compose the empire of Russia to twenty-four millions, in the statements which have been sent to me; but I have not guaranteed this valuation, because I know very little about it. I believe that Germany possessed as many people, reckoning the Hungarians. If I am deceived by one or two millions, we know it is a trifle in such a case.

I beg pardon of the King of Spain, if I have only awarded him seven millions of subjects in our continent. It is a very small number; but Don Ustaris, employed in the ministry, gives him no more. We reckon from about nine to ten millions of free beings in the three kingdoms of Great Britain. In France we count between sixteen and twenty millions. This is a proof that Doctor Gad has nothing wherewith to reproach the ministry of France.

As to the capital towns, opinions are further divided. According to some calculators, Paris has seven hundred thousand inhabitants, and according to others five hundred thousand. It is thus with London, Constantinople, and Grand Cairo.

As to the subjects of the pope, they will make a crowd in paradise, but the

multitude is moderate on earth. Why so?—because they are subjects of the pope. Would Cato the Censor have ever believed the Romans would come to that pass?

OCCULT QUALITIES.

Occult qualities have for a very long time been much derided; it would be more proper to deride those who do not believe in them. Let us for the hundredth time repeat that every principle, every primitive source of any of the works which come from the hand of the demiourgos, is occult, and eternally hidden from mortals.

What is the centripetal force, the force of gravitation, which acts without contact at such immense distances? What causes our hearts to beat sixty times a minute? What other power changes this grass into milk in the udder of a cow? and this bread into the flesh, blood, and bone of that child, who grows proportionally while he eats it, until he arrives at the height determined by nature, after which there is no art which can add a line to it.

Vegetables, minerals, animals, where is your originating principle? In the hands of Him who turns the sun on its axis, and who has clothed it with light. This lead will never become silver, nor this silver gold; this gold will never become diamond, nor this straw be transformed into lemons and bananas. What corpuscular system of physics, what atoms, determine their nature? You know nothing about it, and the cause will be eternally occult to you. All that surrounds us, all within us, is an enigma which it is not in the power of man to divine.

The furred ignoramus ought to have been aware of this truth when he said that beasts possess a vegetative and sensitive soul, and man a soul which is vegetative, sensitive, and intellectual. Poor man, kneaded up of pride, who has pronounced only words—have you ever seen a soul? Know you how it is made? We have spoken much of the soul in these inquiries, but have always confessed our ignorance. I now repeat this confession still more emphatically, since the more I read, the more I meditate, and the more I acquire, the more am I enabled to affirm that I know nothing.

OFFENCES (LOCAL).

If we travel throughout the whole earth, we still find that theft, murder,

adultery, calumny, etc., are regarded as offences which society condemns and represses; but that which is approved in England and condemned in Italy, ought it to be punished in Italy, as if it were one of the crimes against general humanity? That which is a crime only in the precincts of some mountains, or between two rivers, demands it not from judges more indulgence than those outrages which are regarded with horror in all countries? Ought not the judge to say to himself, I should not dare to punish in Ragusa what I punish at Loretto? Should not this reflection soften his heart, and moderate the hardness which it is too apt to contract in the long exercise of his employment? The "Kermesses" of Flanders are well known; they were carried in the last century to a degree of indecency, revolting to the eyes of all persons who were not accustomed to such spectacles.

The following is the manner in which Christmas is celebrated in some countries. In the first place appears a young man half-naked, with wings on his shoulders; he repeats the Ave Maria to a young girl, who replies "fiat," and the angel kisses her on the mouth; after which a child, shut up in a great cock of pasteboard, imitates the crowing of the cock. "Puer natus est nobis." A great ox bellows out "ubi"; a sheep baas out "Bethlehem"; an ass brays "hihanus", to signify "eamus"; and a long procession, preceded by four fools with bells and baubles, brings up the rear. There still remain some traces of this popular devotion, which among a civilized and educated people would be taken for profanation. A Swiss, out of patience, and possibly more intoxicated than the performers of the ox and the ass, took the liberty of remonstrating with them at Louvain, and was rewarded with no small number of blows; they would indeed have hanged him, and he escaped with great difficulty.

The same man had a dangerous quarrel at The Hague for violently taking the part of Barnevelt against an outrageous Gomarist. He was imprisoned at Amsterdam for saying that priests were the scourge of humanity, and the source of all our misfortunes. "How!" said he, "if we maintain that good works are necessary to salvation, we are sent to a dungeon; and if we laugh at a cock and an ass we risk hanging!" Ridiculous as this adventure was, it is sufficient to convince us that we may be criminal in one or two points in our hemisphere, and innocent in all the rest of the world.

ONAN.

The race of Onan exhibits great singularities. The patriarch Judah, his father, lay with his daughter-in-law, Tamar the Phœnician, in the highroad; Jacob, the father of Judah, was at the same time married to two sisters, the

daughters of an idolater; and deluded both his father and father-in-law. Lot, the granduncle of Jacob, lay with his two daughters. Saleum, one of the descendants of Jacob and of Judah, espoused Rahab the Canaanite, a prostitute. Boaz, son of Saleum and Rahab, received into his bed Ruth the Midianite; and was great grandfather of David. David took away Bathsheba from the warrior Uriah, her husband, and caused him to be slain, that he might be unrestrained in his amour. Lastly, in the two genealogies of Christ, which differ in so many points, but agree in this, we discover that he descended from this tissue of fornication, adultery, and incest.

Nothing is more proper to confound human prudence; to humble our limited minds; and to convince us that the ways of Providence are not like our ways. The reverend father Dom Calmet makes this reflection, in alluding to the incest of Judah with Tamar, and to the sin of Onan, spoken of in the 38th chapter of "Genesis": "Scripture," he observes, "gives us the details of a history, which on the first perusal strikes our minds as not of a nature for edification; but the hidden sense which is shut up in it is as elevated as that of the mere letter appears low to carnal eyes. It is not without good reasons that the Holy Spirit has allowed the histories of Tamar, of Rahab, of Ruth, and of Bathsheba, to form a part of the genealogy of Jesus Christ."

It might have been well if Dom Calmet had explained these sound reasons, by which we might have cleared up the doubts and appeased the scruples of all the honest and timorous souls who are anxious to comprehend how this Supreme Being, the Creator of worlds, could be born in a Jewish village, of a race of plunderers and of prostitutes. This mystery, which is not less inconceivable than other mysteries, was assuredly worthy the explanation of so able a commentator—but to return to our subject.

We perfectly understand the crime of the patriarch Judah, and of the patriarchs Simeon and Levi, his brothers, at Sichem; but it is more difficult to understand the sin of Onan. Judah had married his eldest son Er to the Phœnician, Tamar. Er died in consequence of his wickedness, and the patriarch wished his second son to espouse the widow, according to an ancient law of the Egyptians and Phœnicians, their neighbors, which was called raising up seed for his brother. The first child of this second marriage bore the name of the deceased, and this Onan objected to. He hated the memory of his brother, or to produce a child to bear the name of Er; and to avoid it took the means which are detailed in the chapter of "Genesis" already mentioned, and which are practised by no species of animals but apes and human beings.

An English physician wrote a small volume on this vice, which he called after the name of the patriarch who was guilty of it. M. Tissot, the celebrated physician of Lausanne, also wrote on this subject, in a work much more profound and methodical than the English one. These two works detail the

consequences of this unhappy habit—loss of strength, impotence, weakness of the stomach and intestines, tremblings, vertigo, lethargy, and often premature death.

M. Tissot, however, to console us for this evil, relates as many examples of the mischiefs of repletion in both sexes. There cannot be a stronger argument against rash vows of chastity. From the examples afforded, it is impossible to avoid being convinced of the enormous folly of condemning ourselves to these turpitudes in order to renounce a connection which has been expressly commanded by God Himself. In this manner think the Protestants, the Jews, the Mahometans, and many other nations; the Catholics offer other reasons in favor of converts. I shall merely say of the Catholics what Dom Calmet says of the Holy Ghost—That their reasons are doubtless good, could we understand them.

OPINION.

What is the opinion of all the nations of the north of America, and those which border the Straits of Sunda, on the best of governments, and best of religions; on public ecclesiastical rights; on the manner of writing history; on the nature of tragedy, comedy, opera, eclogue, epic poetry; on innate ideas, concomitant grace, and the miracles of Deacon Paris? It is clear that all these people have no opinions on things of which they have no ideas.

They have a confused feeling of their customs, and go not beyond this instinct. Such are the people who inhabit the shores of the Frozen Sea for the space of fifteen hundred leagues. Such are the inhabitants of the three parts of Africa, and those of nearly all the isles of Asia; of twenty hordes of Tartars, and almost all men solely occupied with the painful and continual care of providing their subsistence. Such are, at two steps from us, most of the Morlachians, many of the Savoyards, and some citizens of Paris.

When a nation begins to be civilized, it has some opinions which are quite false. It believes in spirits, sorcerers, the enchantment of serpents and their immortality; in possessions of the devil, exorcisms, and soothsayers. It is persuaded that seeds must grow rotten in the earth to spring up again, and that the quarters of the moon are the causes of accesses of fever.

A Talapoin persuades his followers that the god Sammonocodom sojourned some time at Siam, and that he cut down all the trees in a forest which prevented him from flying his kite at his ease, which was his favorite amusement. This idea takes root in their heads; and finally, an honest man who

might doubt this adventure of Sammonocodom, would run the risk of being stoned. It requires ages to destroy a popular opinion. Opinion is called the queen of the world; it is so; for when reason opposes it, it is condemned to death. It must rise twenty times from its ashes to gradually drive away the usurper.

OPTIMISM.

I beg of you, gentlemen, to explain to me how everything is for the best; for I do not understand it. Does it signify that everything is arranged and ordered according to the laws of the impelling power? That I comprehend and acknowledge. Do you mean that every one is well and possesses the means of living—that nobody suffers? You know that such is not the case. Are you of the opinion that the lamentable calamities which afflict the earth are good in reference to God; and that He takes pleasure in them? I credit not this horrible doctrine; neither do you.

Have the goodness to explain how all is for the best. Plato, the dialectician, condescended to allow to God the liberty of making five worlds; because, said he, there are five regular solids in geometry, the tetrahedron, the cube, the hexahedron, the dodecahedron, and the icosahedron. But why thus restrict divine power? Why not permit the sphere, which is still more regular, and even the cone, the pyramid of many sides, the cylinder, etc.?

God, according to Plato, necessarily chose the best of all possible worlds; and this system has been embraced by many Christian philosophers, although it appears repugnant to the doctrine of original sin. After this transgression, our globe was no more the best of all possible worlds. If it was ever so, it might be so still; but many people believe it to be the worst of worlds instead of the best.

Leibnitz takes the part of Plato; more readers than one complain of their inability to understand either the one or the other; and for ourselves, having read both of them more than once, we avow our ignorance according to custom; and since the gospel has revealed nothing on the subject, we remain in darkness without remorse.

Leibnitz, who speaks of everything, has treated of original sin; and as every man of systems introduces into his plan something contradictory, he imagined that the disobedience towards God, with the frightful misfortunes which followed it, were integral parts of the best of worlds, and necessary ingredients of all possible felicity: "Calla, calla, senor don Carlos; todo che se

haze es por su ben."

What! to be chased from a delicious place, where we might have lived for ever only for the eating of an apple? What! to produce in misery wretched children, who will suffer everything, and in return produce others to suffer after them? What! to experience all maladies, feel all vexations, die in the midst of grief, and by way of recompense be burned to all eternity—is this lot the best possible? It certainly is not good for us, and in what manner can it be so for God? Leibnitz felt that nothing could be said to these objections, but nevertheless made great books, in which he did not even understand himself.

Lucullus, in good health, partaking of a good dinner with his friends and his mistress in the hall of Apollo, may jocosely deny the existence of evil; but let him put his head out of the window and he will behold wretches in abundance; let him be seized with a fever, and he will be one himself.

I do not like to quote; it is ordinarily a thorny proceeding. What precedes and what follows the passage quoted is too frequently neglected; and thus a thousand objections may rise. I must, notwithstanding, quote Lactantius, one of the fathers, who, in the thirteenth chapter on the anger of God, makes Epicurus speak as follows: "God can either take away evil from the world and will not; or being willing to do so, cannot; or He neither can nor will; or, lastly, He is both able and willing. If He is willing to remove evil and cannot, then is He not omnipotent. If He can, but will not remove it, then is He not benevolent; if He is neither able nor willing, then is He neither powerful nor benevolent; lastly, if both able and willing to annihilate evil, how does it exist?"

The argument is weighty, and Lactantius replies to it very poorly by saying that God wills evil, but has given us wisdom to secure the good. It must be confessed that this answer is very weak in comparison with the objection; for it implies that God could bestow wisdom only by allowing evil—a pleasant wisdom truly! The origin of evil has always been an abyss, the depth of which no one has been able to sound. It was this difficulty which reduced so many ancient philosophers and legislators to have recourse to two principles—the one good, the other wicked. Typhon was the evil principle among the Egyptians, Arimanes among the Persians. The Manichæans, it is said, adopted this theory; but as these people have never spoken either of a good or of a bad principle, we have nothing to prove it but the assertion.

Among the absurdities abounding in this world, and which may be placed among the number of our evils, that is not the least which presumes the existence of two all-powerful beings, combating which shall prevail most in this world, and making a treaty like the two physicians in Molière: "Allow me the emetic, and I resign to you the lancet."

Basilides pretended, with the platonists of the first century of the church, that God gave the making of our world to His inferior angels, and these, being inexpert, have constructed it as we perceive. This theological fable is laid prostrate by the overwhelming objection that it is not in the nature of a deity all-powerful and all-wise to intrust the construction of a world to incompetent architects.

Simon, who felt the force of this objection, obviates it by saying that the angel who presided over the workmen is damned for having done his business so slovenly, but the roasting of this angel amends nothing. The adventure of Pandora among the Greeks scarcely meets the objection better. The box in which every evil is enclosed, and at the bottom of which remains Hope, is indeed a charming allegory; but this Pandora was made by Vulcan, only to avenge himself on Prometheus, who had stolen fire to inform a man of clay.

The Indians have succeeded no better. God having created man, gave him a drug which would insure him permanent health of body. The man loaded his ass with the drug, and the ass being thirsty, the serpent directed him to a fountain, and while the ass was drinking, purloined the drug.

The Syrians pretended that man and woman having been created in the fourth heaven, they resolved to eat a cake in lieu of ambrosia, their natural food. Ambrosia exhaled by the pores; but after eating cake, they were obliged to relieve themselves in the usual manner. The man and the woman requested an angel to direct them to a water-closet. Behold, said the angel, that petty globe which is almost of no size at all; it is situated about sixty millions of leagues from this place, and is the privy of the universe—go there as quickly as you can. The man and woman obeyed the angel and came here, where they have ever since remained; since which time the world has been what we now find it. The Syrians will eternally be asked why God allowed man to eat the cake and experience such a crowd of formidable ills?

I pass with speed from the fourth heaven to Lord Bolingbroke. This writer, who doubtless was a great genius, gave to the celebrated Pope his plan of "all for the best," as it is found word for word in the posthumous works of Lord Bolingbroke, and recorded by Lord Shaftesbury in his "Characteristics." Read in Shaftesbury's chapter of the "Moralists" the following passage:

"Much may be replied to these complaints of the defects of nature—How came it so powerless and defective from the hands of a perfect Being?—But I deny that it is defective. Beauty is the result of contrast, and universal concord springs out of a perpetual conflict.... It is necessary that everything be sacrificed to other things—vegetables to animals, and animals to the earth.... The laws of the central power of gravitation, which give to the celestial bodies their weight and motion, are not to be deranged in consideration of a pitiful

animal, who, protected as he is by the same laws, will soon be reduced to dust."

Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, and Pope, their working artisan, resolve their general question no better than the rest. Their "all for the best" says no more than that all is governed by immutable laws; and who did not know that? We learn nothing when we remark, after the manner of little children, that flies are created to be eaten by spiders, spiders by swallows, swallows by hawks, hawks by eagles, eagles by men, men by one another, to afford food for worms; and at last, at the rate of about a thousand to one, to be the prey of devils everlastingly.

There is a constant and regular order established among animals of all kinds—a universal order. When a stone is formed in my bladder, the mechanical process is admirable; sandy particles pass by small degrees into my blood; they are filtered by the veins; and passing the urethra, deposit themselves in my bladder; where, uniting agreeably to the Newtonian attraction, a stone is formed, which gradually increases, and I suffer pains a thousand times worse than death by the finest arrangement in the world. A surgeon, perfect in the art of Tubal-Cain, thrusts into me a sharp instrument; and cutting into the perineum, seizes the stone with his pincers, which breaks during the endeavors, by the necessary laws of mechanism; and owing to the same mechanism, I die in frightful torments. All this is "for the best", being the evident result of unalterable physical principles, agreeably to which I know as well as you that I perish.

If we were insensitive, there would be nothing to say against this system of physics; but this is not the point on which we treat. We ask if there are not physical evils, and whence do they originate? There is no absolute evil, says Pope in his "Essay on Man"; or if there are particular evils, they compose a general good. It is a singular general good which is composed of the stone and the gout—of all sorts of crime and sufferings, and of death and damnation.

The fall of man is our plaister for all these particular maladies of body and soul, which you call "the general health"; but Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke have attacked original sin. Pope says nothing about it; but it is clear that their system saps the foundations of the Christian religion, and explains nothing at all.

In the meantime, this system has been since approved by many theologians, who willingly embrace contradictions. Be it so; we ought to leave to everybody the privilege of reasoning in their own way upon the deluge of ills which overwhelm us. It would be as reasonable to prevent incurable patients from eating what they please. "God," says Pope, "beholds, with an equal eye, a hero perish or a sparrow fall; the destruction of an atom, or the

ruin of a thousand planets; the bursting of a bubble, or the dissolution of a world."

This, I must confess, is a pleasant consolation. Who does not find a comfort in the declaration of Lord Shaftesbury, who asserts, "that God will not derange His general system for so miserable an animal as man?" It must be confessed at least that this pitiful creature has a right to cry out humbly, and to endeavor, while bemoaning himself, to understand why these eternal laws do not comprehend the good of every individual.

This system of "all for the best" represents the Author of Nature as a powerful and malevolent monarch, who cares not for the destruction of four or five hundred thousand men, nor of the many more who in consequence spend the rest of their days in penury and tears, provided He succeeds in His designs.

Far therefore from the doctrine—that this is the best of all possible worlds—being consolatory, it is a hopeless one to the philosophers who embrace it. The question of good and evil remains in irremediable chaos for those who seek to fathom it in reality. It is a mere mental sport to the disputants, who are captives that play with their chains. As to unreasoning people, they resemble the fish which are transported from a river to a reservoir, with no more suspicion that they are to be eaten during the approaching Lent, than we have ourselves of the facts which originate our destiny.

Let us place at the end of every chapter of metaphysics the two letters used by the Roman judges when they did not understand a pleading. N.L. non liquet—it is not clear. Let us, above all, silence the knaves who, overloaded like ourselves with the weight of human calamities, add the mischief of their calumny; let us refute their execrable imposture by having recourse to faith and Providence.

Some reasoners are of opinion that it agrees not with the nature of the Great Being of Beings for things to be otherwise than they are. It is a rough system, and I am too ignorant to venture to examine it.

ORACLES.

Section I.

After the sect of the Pharisees among the Jews had become acquainted with the devil, some reasoners among them began to entertain the idea that the devil and his companions inspired, among all other nations, the priests and statues that delivered oracles. The Sadducees had no belief in such beings. They admitted neither angels nor demons. It appears that they were more

philosophic than the Pharisees, and consequently less calculated to obtain influence and credit with the people.

The devil was the great agent with the Jewish populace in the time of Gamaliel, John the Baptist, James Oblia, and Jesus his brother, who was our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Accordingly, we perceive that the devil transports Jesus sometimes into the wilderness, sometimes to the pinnacle of the temple, and sometimes to a neighboring hill, from which might be discovered all the kingdoms of the world; the devil takes possession, when he pleases, of the persons of boys, girls, and animals.

The Christians, although mortal enemies of the Pharisees, adopted all that the Pharisees had imagined of the devil; as the Jews had long before introduced among themselves the customs and ceremonies of the Egyptians. Nothing is so common as to imitate the practices of enemies, and to use their weapons.

In a short time the fathers of the church ascribed to the devil all the religions which divided the earth, all pretended prodigies, all great events, comets, plagues, epilepsies, scrofula, etc. The poor devil, who was supposed to be roasting in a hole under the earth, was perfectly astonished to find himself master of the world. His power afterwards increased wonderfully from the institution of monks.

The motto or device of all these newcomers was, "Give me money and I will deliver you from the devil." But both the celestial and terrestrial power of these gentry received at length a terrible check from the hand of one of their own brotherhood, Luther, who, quarreling with them about some beggarly trifle, disclosed to the world all the trick and villainy of their mysteries. Hondorf, an eye-witness, tells us that the reformed party having expelled the monks from a convent at Eisenach in Thuringia, found in it a statue of the Virgin Mary and the Infant Jesus, contrived with such art that, when offerings were placed upon the altar, the Virgin and Child bent their heads in sign of grateful acknowledgment, but turned their backs on those who presented themselves with empty hands.

In England the case was much worse. When by order of Henry VIII., a judicial visitation took place of all the convents, half of the nuns were found in a state of pregnancy; and this, at least it may be supposed, was not by the operation of the devil. Bishop Burnet relates that in a hundred and forty-four convents the depositions taken by the king's commissioners attested abominations which those of Sodom and Gomorrah did not even approach. In fact, the English monks might naturally be expected to be more dissolute than the inhabitants of Sodom, as they were richer. They were in possession of the best lands in the kingdom. The territory of Sodom and Gomorrah, on the

contrary, produced neither grain, fruit, nor pulse; and being moreover deficient even in water fit to drink, could be neither more nor less than a frightful desert, inhabited by miserable wretches too much occupied in satisfying their absolute necessities to have much time to devote to pleasures.

In short, these superb asylums of laziness having been suppressed by act of parliament, all the instruments of their pious frauds were exposed in the public places; the famous crucifix of Brocksley, which moved and marched like a puppet; phials of a red liquid which was passed off for blood shed by the statues of saints when they were dissatisfied with the court; candlesticks of tinned iron, in which the lighted candles were carefully placed so as to make the people believe they were the same candles that were always burning; speaking tubes—sarbacans—which communicated between the sacristy and the roof of the church, and by which celestial voices were occasionally heard by apparently devotees, who were paid for hearing them; in short, everything that was ever invented by knavery to impose upon imbecility.

Many sensible persons who lived at this period, being perfectly convinced that the monks, and not the devils, had employed all these pious stratagems, began to entertain the idea that the case had been very similar with the religions of antiquity; that all the oracles and all the miracles so highly vaunted by ancient times had been merely the tricks of charlatans; that the devil had never had anything to do with such matters; and that the simple fact was, that the Greek, Roman, Syrian, and Egyptian priests had been still more expert than our modern monks.

The devil, therefore, thus lost much of his credit; insomuch that at length the honest Bekker, whose article you may consult, wrote his tiresome book against the devil, and proved by a hundred arguments that he had no existence. The devil himself made no answer to him, but the ministers of the holy gospel, as you have already seen, did answer him; they punished the honest author for having divulged their secret, and took away his living; so that Bekker fell a victim to the nullity of Beelzebub.

It was the lot of Holland to produce the most formidable enemies of the devil. The physician Van Dale—a humane philosopher, a man of profound learning, a most charitable citizen, and one whose naturally bold mind became proportionately bolder, in consequence of his intrepidity being founded on virtue—undertook at length the task of enlightening mankind, always enslaved by ancient errors, and always spreading the bandage that covers their eyes, until at last some powerful flash of light discovers to them a corner of truth of which the greater number are completely unworthy. He proved, in a work abounding in the most recondite learning, that the devils had never delivered a single oracle, had never performed a single prodigy, and had never mingled in human affairs at all; and that there never had in reality been any demons but

those impostors who had deceived their fellow men. The devil should never ridicule or despise a sensible physician. Those who know something of nature are very formidable enemies to all juggling performers of prodigies. If the devil would be advised by me, he would always address himself to the faculty of theology, and never to the faculty of medicine.

Van Dale proved, then, by numberless authorities, not merely that the Pagan oracles were mere tricks of the priests, but that these knaveries, consecrated all over the world, had not ceased at the time of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, as was piously and generally thought to be the case. Nothing was more true, more clear, more decidedly demonstrated, than this doctrine announced by the physician Van Dale; and there is no man of education and respectability who now calls it in question.

The work of Van Dale is not, perhaps, very methodical, but it is one of the most curious works that ever came from the press. For, from the gross forgeries of the pretended Histape and the Sibyls; from the apocryphal history of the voyage of Simon Barjonas to Rome, and the compliments which Simon the magician sent him through the medium of his dog; from the miracles of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, and especially the letter which that saint wrote to the devil, and which was safely delivered according to its address, down to the miracles of the reverend fathers, the Jesuits, and the reverend fathers, the Capuchins, nothing is forgotten. The empire of imposture and stupidity is completely developed before the eyes of all who can read; but they, alas! are only a small number.

Far indeed was that empire, at that period, from being destroyed in Italy, France, Spain, the states of Austria, and more especially in Poland, where the Jesuits then bore absolute sway. Diabolical possessions and false miracles still inundated one-half of besotted and barbarized Europe. The following account is given by Van Dale of a singular oracle that was delivered in his time at Terni, in the States of the Pope, about the year 1650; and the narrative of which was printed at Venice by order of the government:

A hermit of the name of Pasquale, having heard that Jacovello, a citizen of Terni, was very covetous and rich, came to Terni to offer up his devotions in the church frequented by the opulent miser, soon formed an acquaintance with him, flattered him in his ruling passion, and persuaded him that it was a service highly acceptable to God to take as much care as possible of money; it was indeed expressly enjoined in the gospel, as the negligent servant who had not put out his lord's money to interest at five hundred per cent was thrown into outer darkness.

In the conversations which the hermit had with Jacovello, he frequently entertained him with plausible discourses held by crucifixes and by a quantity

of Italian Virgin Marys. Jacovello agreed that the statues of saints sometimes spoke to men, and told him that he should believe himself one of the elect if ever he could have the happiness to hear the image of a saint speak.

The friendly Pasquale replied that he had some hope he might be able to give him that satisfaction in a very little time; that he expected every day from Rome a death's head, which the pope had presented to one of his brother hermits; and that this head spoke quite as distinctly and sensibly as the trees of Dodona, or even the ass of Balaam. He showed him the identical head, in fact, four days after this conversation. He requested of Jacovello the key of a small cave and an inner chamber, that no person might possibly be a witness of the awful mystery. The hermit, having introduced a tube from this cave into the head, and made every other suitable arrangement, went to prayer with his friend Jacovello, and the head at that moment uttered the following words: "Jacovello, I will recompense thy zeal. I announce to thee a treasure of a hundred thousand crowns under a yew tree in thy garden. But thou shalt die by a sudden death if thou makest any attempt to obtain this treasure until thou hast produced before me a pot containing coin amounting to ten gold marks."

Jacovello ran speedily to his coffers and placed before the oracle a pot containing the ten marks. The good hermit had had the precaution to procure a similar vessel which he had filled with sand, and he dexterously substituted that for the pot of Jacovello, on his turning his back, and then left the pious miser with one death's head more, and ten gold marks less, than he had before. Nearly such is the way in which all oracles have been delivered, beginning with those of Jupiter Ammon, and ending with that of Trophonius.

One of the secrets of the priests of antiquity, as it is of our own, was confession in the mysteries. It was by this that they gained correct and particular information about the affairs of families, and qualified themselves in a great measure to give pertinent and suitable replies to those who came to consult them. To this subject applies the anecdote which Plutarch has rendered so celebrated. A priest once urging an initiated person to confession, that person said: "To whom should I confess?" "To God," replied the priest. "Begone then, man," said the desired penitent; "begone, and leave me alone with God."

It would be almost endless to recount all the interesting facts and narratives with which Van Dale has enriched his book. Fontenelle did not translate it. But he extracted from it what he thought would be most suitable to his countrymen, who love sprightly anecdote and observation better than profound knowledge. He was eagerly read by what in France is called good company; and Van Dale, who had written in Latin and Greek, had been read only by the learned. The rough diamond of Van Dale shone with exquisite brilliancy after the cutting and polish of Fontenelle: the success of the work was such that the

fanatics became alarmed. Notwithstanding all Fontenelle's endeavors to soften down the expressions of Van Dale, and his explaining himself sometimes with the license of a Norman, he was too well understood by the monks, who never like to be told that their brethren have been impostors.

A certain Jesuit of the name of Baltus, born near Messina, one of that description of learned persons who know how to consult old books, and to falsify and cite them, although after all nothing to the purpose, took the part of the devil against Van Dale and Fontenelle. The devil could not have chosen a more tiresome and wretched advocate; his name is now known solely from the honor he had of writing against two celebrated men who advocated a good cause.

Baltus likewise, in his capacity of Jesuit, caballed with no little perseverance and bitterness on the occasion, in union with his brethren, who at that time were as high in credit and influence as they have since been plunged deep in ignominy. The Jansenists, on their part, more impassionate and exasperated than even the Jesuits, clamored in a still louder tone than they did. In short, all the fanatics were convinced that it would be all over with the Christian religion, if the devil were not supported in his rights.

In the course of time the books of Jansenists and Jesuits have all sunk into oblivion. That of Van Dale still remains for men of learning, and that of Fontenelle for men of wit. With respect to the devil, he resembles both Jesuits and Jansenists, and is losing credit from day to day.

Section II.

Some curious and surprising histories of oracles, which it was thought could be ascribed only to the power of genii, made the Christians think they were delivered by demons, and that they had ceased at the coming of Christ. They were thus enabled to save the time and trouble that would have been required by an investigation of the facts; and they thought to strengthen the religion which informed them of the existence of demons by referring to those beings such events.

The histories however that were circulated on the subject of oracles are exceedingly suspicious. That of Thamus, to which Eusebius gives credit, and which Plutarch alone relates, is followed in the same history by another story so ridiculous, that that would be sufficient to throw discredit upon it; but it is, besides, incapable of any reasonable interpretation. If this great Pan were a demon, can we suppose the demons incapable of communicating the event of his death to one another without employing Thamus about it? If the great Pan were Jesus Christ, how came it that not a single Pagan was undeceived with respect to his religion, and converted to the belief that this same Pan was in fact Jesus Christ who died in Judæa, if God Himself compelled the demons to

announce this death to the pagans?

The history of Thulis, whose oracle is clear and positive on the subject of the Trinity, is related only by Suidas. This Thulis, king of Egypt, was not certainly one of the Ptolemies. What becomes of the whole oracle of Serapis, when it is ascertained that Herodotus does not speak of that god, while Tacitus relates at length how and why one of the Ptolemies brought the god Serapis from Pontus, where he had only until then been known?

The oracle delivered to Augustus about the Hebrew infant who should be obeyed by all the gods, is absolutely inadmissible. Cedrenus quotes it from Eusebius, but it is not now to be found in him. It certainly is not impossible that Cedrenus quotes it from Eusebius, but it is not now to be found in him. It certainly is not impossible that Cedrenus may have made a false quotation, or have quoted a work falsely ascribed to Eusebius; but how is it to be accounted for, that all the early apologists for Christianity should have preserved complete silence with respect to an oracle so favorable to their religion?

The oracles which Eusebius relates from Porphyry, who was attached to paganism, are not of a more embarrassing nature than those just noticed. He gives them to us stripped of all the accompanying circumstances that attended them in the writings of Porphyry. How do we know whether that pagan did not refute them. For the interest of his cause it would naturally have been an object for him to do so; and if he did not do it, most assuredly it was from some concealed motive, such, for instance, as presenting them to the Christians only for an occasion to prove and deride their credulity, if they should really receive them as true and rest their religion on such weak foundations.

Besides, some of the ancient Christians reproached the pagans with being the dupes of their priests. Observe how Clement of Alexandria speaks of them: "Boast as long as you please of your childish and impertinent oracles, whether of Claros or the Pythian Apollo, of Dindymus or Amphilocus; and add to these your augurs and interpreters of dreams and prodigies. Bring forward also those clever gentry who, in the presence of the mighty Pythian Apollo, effect their divinations through the medium of meal or barley, and those also who, by a certain talent of ventriloquism, have obtained such high reputation. Let the secrets of the Egyptian temples, and the necromancy of the Etruscans, remain in darkness; all these things are most certainly nothing more than decided impostures, as completely tricks as those of a juggler with his cups and balls. The goats carefully trained for the divination, the ravens elaborately instructed to deliver the oracles, are—if we may use the expression—merely accomplices of the charlatans by whom the whole world has thus been cheated."

Eusebius, in his turn, displays a number of excellent reasons to prove that oracles could be nothing but impostures; and if he attributes them to demons, it is the result of deplorable prejudices or of an affected respect for general opinion. The pagans would never admit that their oracles were merely the artifices of their priests; it was imagined therefore, by rather an awkward process of reasoning, that a little was gained in the dispute by admitting the possibility, that there might be something supernatural in their oracles, and insisting at the same time, that if there were, it was the operation, not of the deity, but of demons.

It is no longer necessary now, in order to expose the finesse and stratagems of priests, to resort to means which might themselves appear too strongly marked by those qualities. A time has already been when they were completely exhibited to the eyes of the whole world—the time, I mean when the Christian religion proudly triumphed over paganism under Christian emperors.

Theodoret says that Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, exhibited to the inhabitants of that city the hollow statues into which the priests entered, from secret passages, to deliver the oracles. When, by Constantine's order, the temple of Æsculapius at Ægea, in Cilicia, was pulled down, there was driven out of it, says Eusebius in his life of that emperor, not a god, nor a demon, but the human impostor who had so long duped the credulity of nations. To this he adds the general observation that, in the statues of the gods that were thrown down, not the slightest appearance was found of gods, or demons, or even any wretched and gloomy spectres, but only hay, straw, or the bones of the dead.

The greatest difficulty respecting oracles is surmounted, when it is ascertained and admitted, that demons had no concern with them. There is no longer any reason why they should cease precisely at the coming of Jesus Christ. And moreover, there are many proofs that oracles continued more than four hundred years after Jesus Christ, and that they were not totally silenced but by the total destruction of paganism.

Suetonius, in the life of Nero, says the oracle of Delphi warned that emperor to be aware of seventy-three years, and that Nero concluded he was to die at that age, never thinking upon old Galba, who, at the age of seventy-three, deprived him of the empire.

Philostratus, in his life of Apollonius of Tyana, who saw Domitian, informs us that Apollonius visited all the oracles of Greece, and that of Dodona, and that of Delphos; and that of Amphiaraus. Plutarch, who lived under Trajan, tells us that the oracles of Delphos still subsisted, although there was then only one priestess, instead of two or three. Under Adrian, Dion Chrysostom relates that he consulted the oracle of Delphos; he obtained from

it an answer which appeared to him not a little perplexed, and which in fact was so.

Under the Antonines, Lucian asserts that a priest of Tyana went to inquire of the false prophet Alexander, whether the oracles which were then delivered at Dindymus, Claros, and Delphos, were really answers of Apollo, or impostures? Alexander had some fellow-feeling for these oracles, which were of a similar description to his own, and replied to the priest, that that was not permitted to be known; but when the same wise inquirer asked what he should be after his death, he was boldly answered, "You will be a camel, then a horse, afterwards a philosopher, and at length a prophet as great as Alexander."

After the Antonines, three emperors contended for the empire. The oracle of Delphos was consulted, says Spartian, to ascertain which of the three the republic might expect as its head. The oracle answered in a single verse to the following purport: The black is better; the African is good; the white is the worst. By the black was understood Pescennius Niger; by the African, Severus Septimus, who was from Africa; and by the white, Claudius Albinus.

Dion, who did not conclude his history before the eighth year of Alexander Severus, that is, the year 230, relates that in his time Amphilocus still delivered oracles in dreams. He informs us also, that there was in the city of Apollonia an oracle which declared future events by the manner in which the fire caught and consumed the incense thrown upon an altar.

Under Aurelian, about the year 272, the people of Palmyra, having revolted, consulted an oracle of Sarpedonian Apollo in Cilicia; they again consulted that of the Aphacian Venus. Licinus, according to the account of Sozomen, designing to renew the war against Constantine, consulted the oracle of Apollo of Dindymus, and received from it in answer two verses of Homer, of which the sense is—Unhappy old man, it becomes not you to combat with the young! you have no strength, and are sinking under the weight of age.

A certain god, scarcely if at all known, of the name of Besa, if we may credit Ammianus Marcellinus, still delivered oracles on billets at Abydos, in the extremity of the Thebais, under the reign of Constantius. Finally, Macrobius, who lived under Arcadius and Honorius, sons of Theodosius, speaks of the god of Heliopolis of Syria and his oracle, and of the fortunes of Antium, in terms which distinctly imply that they all still subsisted in his time.

We may observe that it is not of the slightest consequence whether these histories are true or whether the oracles in fact delivered the answers attributed to them; it is completely sufficient for the purpose that false answers could be attributed only to oracles which were in fact known still to subsist; and the histories which so many authors have published clearly prove that they did not

cease but with the cessation of paganism itself.

Constantine pulled down but few temples, nor indeed could he venture to pull them down but on a pretext of crimes committed in them. It was on this ground that he ordered the demolition of those of the Aphacian Venus, and of Æsculapius which was at Ægea in Cilicia, both of them temples in which oracles were delivered. But he forbade sacrifices to the gods, and by that edict began to render temples useless.

Many oracles still subsisted when Julian assumed the reins of empire. He re-established some that were in a state of ruin; and he was even desirous of being the prophet of that of Dindymus. Jovian, his successor, began his reign with great zeal for the destruction of paganism; but in the short space of seven months, which comprised the whole time he reigned, he was unable to make any great progress. Theodosius, in order to attain the same object, ordered all the temples of the pagans to be shut up. At last, the exercise of that religion was prohibited under pain of death by an edict of the emperors Valentinian and Marcian, in the year 451 of the vulgar era; and the destruction of paganism necessarily involved that of oracles.

This conclusion has nothing in it surprising or extraordinary: it is the natural consequence of the establishment of a new worship. Miraculous facts, or rather what it is desired should be considered as such, diminish in a false religion, either in proportion as it becomes firmly established and has no longer occasion for them, or in proportion as it gradually becomes weaker and weaker, because they no longer obtain credit. The ardent but useless desire to pry into futurity gave birth to oracles; imposture encouraged and sanctioned them; and fanaticism set the seal; for an infallible method of making fanatics is to persuade before you instruct. The poverty of the people, who had no longer anything left them to give; the imposture detected in many oracles, and thence naturally concluded to exist in all; and finally the edicts of the Christian emperors; such are the real causes of the establishment, and of the cessation, of this species of imposture. The introduction of an opposite state of circumstances into human affairs made it completely disappear; and oracles thus became involved in the vicissitudes accompanying all human institutions.

Some limit themselves to observing that the birth of Jesus Christ is the first epoch of the cessation of oracles. But why, on such an occasion, should some demons have fled, while others remained? Besides, ancient history proves decidedly that many oracles had been destroyed before this birth. All the distinguished oracles of Greece no longer existed, or scarcely existed, and the oracle was occasionally interrupted by the silence of an honest priest who would not consent to deceive the people. "The oracle of Delphi," says Lucian, "remains dumb since princes have become afraid of futurity; they have prohibited the gods from speaking, and the gods have obeyed them."

ORDEAL.

It might be imagined that all the absurdities which degrade human nature were destined to come to us from Asia, the source at the same time of all the sciences and arts! It was in Asia and in Egypt that mankind first dared to make the life or death of a person accused, dependent on the throw of a die, or something equally unconnected with reason and decided by chance—on cold water or hot water, on red hot iron, or a bit of barley bread. Similar superstition, we are assured by travellers, still exists in the Indies, on the coast of Malabar, and in Japan.

This superstition passed from Egypt into Greece. There was a very celebrated temple at Trezène in which every man who perjured himself died instantly of apoplexy. Hippolytus, in the tragedy of "Phædra," in the first scene of the fifth act, addresses the following lines to his mistress Aricia:

Aux portes de Trezène, et parmi ces tombeaux,

Des princes de ma race antiques sepultures,

Est un temple sacré formidable aux parjures.

C'est là que les mortels n'osent jurer en vain;

Le perfide y reçoit un châtiment soudain;

Et, craignant d'y trouver la mort inévitable,

Le mensonge n'a point de frem plus redoubtable.

At Trezène's gates, amidst the ancient tombs

In which repose the princes of my race,

A sacred temple stands, the perjurer's dread.

No daring mortal there may falsely swear,

For swift the vengeance which pursues his crime,

Inevitable death his instant lot;

Nowhere has falsehood a more awful curb.

The learned commentator of the great Racine makes the following remark on these Trezenian proofs or ordeals:

"M. de la Motte has remarked that Hippolytus should have proposed to his father to come and hear his justification in this temple, where no one dared

venture on swearing to a falsehood. It is certain, that in such a case Theseus could not have doubted the innocence of that young prince; but he had received too convincing evidence against the virtue of Phædra, and Hippolytus was not inclined to make the experiment. M. de la Motte would have done well to have distrusted his own good taste, when he suspected that of Racine, who appears to have foreseen the objection here made. In fact, Theseus is so prejudiced against Hippolytus that he will not even permit him to justify himself by an oath."

I should observe that the criticism of La Motte was originally made by the deceased marquis de Lassai. He delivered it at M. de la Faye's, at a dinner party at which I was present together with the late M. de la Motte, who promised to make use of it; and, in fact, in his "Discourses upon Tragedy," he gives the honor of the criticism to the marquis de Lassai. The remark appeared to me particularly judicious, as well as to M. de la Faye and to all the guests present, who—of course excepting myself—were the most able critics in Paris. But we all agreed that Aricia was the person who should have called upon Theseus to try the accused by the ordeal of the Trezenian temple; and so much the more so, as Theseus immediately after talks for a long time together to that princess, who forgets the only thing that could clear up the doubts of the father and vindicate the son. The commentator in vain objects that Theseus has declared to his son he will not believe his oaths:

Toujours les scélérats ont recours au parjure.

—Phedra. Act iv., scene 2.

The wicked always have recourse to oaths.

There is a prodigious difference between an oath taken in a common apartment, and an oath taken in a temple where the perjured are punished by sudden death. Had Aricia said but a single word on the subject, Theseus could have had no excuse for not conducting Hippolytus to this temple; but, in that case, what would have become of the catastrophe?

Hippolytus, then, should not have mentioned at all the appalling power of the temple of Trezene to his beloved Aricia; he had no need whatever to take an oath of his love to her, for of that she was already most fully persuaded. In short, his doing so is an inadvertence, a small fault, which escaped the most ingenious, elegant, and impassioned tragedian that we ever had.

From this digression, I return to the barbarous madness of ordeals. They were not admitted in the Roman republic. We cannot consider as of one of these ordeals, the usage by which the most important enterprises were made to depend upon the manner in which the sacred pullets ate their vetches. We are here considering only ordeals applied to ascertain the guilt or innocence of

men. It was never proposed to the Manliuses, Camilluses, or Scipios, to prove their innocence by plunging their hands into boiling water without its scalding them.

These suggestions of folly and barbarism were not admitted under the emperors. But the Tartars who came to destroy the empire—for the greater part of these plunderers issued originally from Tartary—filled our quarter of the world with their ridiculous and cruel jurisprudence, which they derived from the Persians. It was not known in the Eastern Empire till the time of Justinian, notwithstanding the detestable superstition which prevailed in it. But from that time the ordeals we are speaking of were received. This manner of trying men is so ancient that we find it established among the Jews in all periods of their history.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram dispute the pontificate with the high priest Aaron in the wilderness; Moses commands them to bring him two hundred and fifty censors, and says to them: Let God choose between their censors and that of Aaron. Scarcely had the revolted made their appearance in order to submit to this ordeal, before they were swallowed up by the earth, and fire from heaven struck two hundred and fifty of their principal adherents; after which, the Lord destroyed fourteen thousand seven hundred more men of that party. The quarrel however for the priesthood still continued between the chiefs of Israel and Aaron. The ordeal of rods was then employed; each man presented his rod, and that of Aaron was the only one which budded.

Although the people of God had levelled the walls of Jericho by the sound of trumpets, they were overcome by the inhabitants of Ai. This defeat did not appear at all natural to Joshua; he consulted the Lord, who answered that Israel had sinned; that some one had appropriated to his own use a part of the plunder that had been taken at Jericho, and there devoted as accursed. In fact, all ought to have been burned, together with the men and women, children and cattle, and whoever had preserved and carried off any part was to be exterminated. Joshua, in order to discover the offender, subjected all the tribes to the trial by lot. The lot first fell on the tribe of Judah, then on the family of Zarah, then on the house of Zabdi, and finally on the grandson of Zabdi, whose name was Acham.

Scripture does not explain how it was that these wandering tribes came to have houses; neither does it inform us what kind of lots were made use of on the occasion; but it is clear from the text, that Acham, being convicted of stealing a small wedge of gold, a scarlet mantle, and two hundred shekels of silver, was burned to death in the valley of Achor, together with his sons, his sheep, his oxen, and his asses; and even his very tent was burned with him.

The promised land was divided by lot; lots were drawn respecting the two

goats of expiation which should be sacrificed to the Lord, and which should go for a scapegoat into the wilderness. When Saul was to be chosen king, lots were consulted, and the lot fell on the tribe of Benjamin, on the family of Metri belonging to that tribe, and finally on Saul, the son of Kish, in the family of Metri.

The lot fell on Jonathan to be punished for having eaten some honey at the end of a rod. The sailors of Joppa drew lots to learn from God what was the cause of the tempest. The lot informed them that it was Jonah; and they threw him into the sea.

All these ordeals by lot, which among other nations were merely profane superstitions, were the voice of God Himself when employed by His cherished and beloved people; and so completely and decidedly the voice of God that even the apostles filled the place of the apostle Judas by lot. The two candidates for the succession were Matthias and Barnabas. Providence declared in favor of St. Matthias.

Pope Honorius, the third of that name, forbade by a decretal from that time forward the method of choosing bishops by lot. Deciding by lots was a very common practice, and was called by the pagans, "sortilegium." Cato, in the "Pharsalia," says, "Sortilegis egeant dubil...."

There were other ordeals among the Jews in the name of the Lord; as, for example, the waters of jealousy. A woman suspected of adultery was obliged to drink of that water mixed with ashes, and consecrated by the high priest. If she was guilty she instantly swelled and died. It is upon the foundation of this law that the whole Christian world in the West established oracles for persons under juridical accusation, not considering that what was ordained even by God Himself in the Old Testament was nothing more or less than an absurd superstition in the New.

Duel by wager of battle was one of those ordeals, and lasted down to the sixteenth century. He who killed his adversary was always in the right. The most dreadful of all these curious and barbarous ordeals, was that of a man's carrying a bar of red-hot iron to the distance of nine paces without burning himself. Accordingly, the history of the middle ages, fabulous as it is, does not record any instance of this ordeal, nor of that which consisted in walking over nine burning ploughshares. All the others might be doubted, or the deceptions and tricks employed in relation to them to deceive the judges might be easily explained. It was very easy, for example, to appear to pass through the trial of boiling water without injury; a vessel might be produced half full of cold water, into which the judicial boiling water might be put; and the accused might safely plunge his arm up to the elbow in the lukewarm mixture, and take up from the bottom the sacred blessed ring that had been thrown into it for that

purpose.

Oil might be made to boil with water; the oil begins to rise and appears to boil when the water begins to simmer, and the oil at that time has acquired but a small degree of heat. In such circumstances, a man seems to plunge his hand into boiling water; but, in fact, moistens it with the harmless oil, which preserves it from contact with and injury by the water.

A champion may easily, by degrees, harden and habituate himself to holding, for a few seconds, a ring that has been thrown into the fire, without any very striking or painful marks of burning. To pass between two fires without being scorched is no very extraordinary proof of skill or address, when the movement is made with great rapidity and the face and hands are well rubbed with ointment. It is thus that the formidable Peter Aldobrandini, or "The Fiery Peter," as he was called, used to manage—if there is any truth in his history—when he passed between two blazing fires at Florence, in order to demonstrate, with God's help, that his archbishop was a knave and debauchee. O, charlatans! charlatans! henceforth disappear forever from the pages of history!

There existed a rather ludicrous ordeal, which consisted in making an accused person try to swallow a piece of barley bread, which it was believed would certainly choke him if he were guilty. I am not, however, so much diverted with this case as with the conduct of Harlequin, when the judge interrogated him concerning a robbery of which Dr. Balouard accused him. The judge was sitting at table, and drinking some excellent wine at the time, when Harlequin was brought in; perceiving which, the latter takes up the bottle, and, pouring the whole of its contents into a glass, swallows it at a draught, saying to the doctor: "If I am guilty of what you accuse me, sir, I hope this wine will prove poison to me."

ORDINATION.

If a soldier, charged by the king of France with the honor of conferring the order of St. Louis upon another soldier, had not, when presenting the latter with the cross, the intention of making him a knight of that order, would the receiver of the badge be on that account the less a member of the order than if such intention had existed? Certainly not.

How was it, then, that many priests thought it necessary to be re-ordained after the death of the celebrated Lavardin, bishop of Mans? That singular prelate, who had instituted the order of "Good Fellows"—Des Coteaux—

bethought himself on his deathbed of a singular trick, in the way of revenge, on a class of persons who had much annoyed him. He was well known as one of the most daring freethinkers of the age of Louis XIV., and had been publicly upbraided with his infidel sentiments, by many of those on whom he had conferred orders of priesthood. It is natural at the approach of death, for a sensitive and apprehensive soul to revert to the religion of its early years. Decency alone would have required of the bishop, that at least at his death he should give an example of edification to the flock to which he had given so much scandal by his life. But he was so deeply exasperated against his clergy, as to declare, that not a single individual of those whom he had himself ordained was really and truly a priest; that all their acts in the capacity of priests were null and void; and that he never entertained the intention of conferring any sacrament.

Such reasoning seems certainly characteristic, and just such as might be expected from a drunken man; the priests of Mans might have replied to him, "It is not your intention that is of any consequence, but ours. We had an ardent and determined desire to be priests; we did all in our power to become such. We are perfectly ingenuous and sincere; if you are not so, that is nothing at all to us." The maxim applicable to the occasion is, "quic quid accipitur ad modum recipientis accipitur," and not "ad modum dantis." "When our wine merchant has sold us a half a hogshead of wine, we drink it, although he might have a secret intention to hinder us from drinking it; we shall still be priests in spite of your testament."

Those reasons were sound and satisfactory. However, the greater number of those who had been ordained by that bishop did not consider themselves as real and authorized priests, and subjected themselves to ordination a second time. Mascaron, a man of moderate talents, but of great celebrity as a preacher, persuaded them, both by his discourses and example, to have the ceremony repeated. The affair occasioned great scandal at Mans, and Paris, and Versailles; but like everything else was soon forgotten.

ORIGINAL SIN.

Section I.

This is a subject on which the Socinians or Unitarians take occasion to exult and triumph. They denominate this foundation of Christianity its "original sin." It is an insult to God, they say; it is accusing Him of the most absurd barbarity to have the hardihood to assert, that He formed all the successive generations of mankind to deliver them over to eternal tortures,

under the pretext of their original ancestor having eaten of a particular fruit in a garden. This sacrilegious imputation is so much the more inexcusable among Christians, as there is not a single word respecting this same invention of original sin, either in the Pentateuch, or in the prophets, or the gospels, whether apocryphal or canonical, or in any of the writers who are called the "first fathers of the Church."

It is not even related in the Book of Genesis that God condemned Adam to death for eating an apple. God says to him, indeed, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But the very same Book of Genesis makes Adam live nine hundred and thirty years after indulging in this criminal repast. The animals, the plants, which had not partaken of this fruit, died at the respective periods prescribed for them by nature. Man is evidently born to die, like all the rest.

Moreover, the punishment of Adam was never, in any way, introduced into the Jewish law. Adam was no more a Jew than he was a Persian or Chaldæan. The first chapters of Genesis—at whatever period they were composed—were regarded by all the learned Jews as an allegory, and even as a fable not a little dangerous, since that book was forbidden to be read by any before they had attained the age of twenty-one.

In a word, the Jews knew no more about original sin than they did about the Chinese ceremonies; and, although divines generally discover in the Scripture everything they wish to find there, either "totidem verbis," or "totidem literis," we may safely assert that no reasonable divine will ever discover in it this surprising and overwhelming mystery.

We admit that St. Augustine was the first who brought this strange notion into credit; a notion worthy of the warm and romantic brain of an African debauchee and penitent, Manichæan and Christian, tolerant and persecuting—who passed his life in perpetual self-contradiction.

What an abomination, exclaim the strict Unitarians, so atrociously to calumniate the Author of Nature as even to impute to Him perpetual miracles, in order that He may damn to all eternity the unhappy race of mankind, whom he introduces into the present life only for so short a span! Either He created souls from all eternity, upon which system, as they must be infinitely more ancient than the sin of Adam, they can have no possible connection with it; or these souls are formed whenever man and woman sexually associate; in which case the Supreme Being must be supposed continually watching for all the various associations of this nature that take place, to create spirits that He will render eternally miserable; or, finally, God is Himself the soul of all mankind, and upon this system damns Himself. Which of these three suppositions is the most absurd and abominable? There is no fourth. For the opinion that God

waits six weeks before He creates a damned soul in a fœtus is, in fact, no other than that which creates it at the moment of sexual connection: the difference of six weeks cannot be of the slightest consequence in the argument. I have merely related the opinion of the Unitarians; but men have now attained such a degree of superstition that I can scarcely relate it without trembling.

Section II.

It must be acknowledged that we are not acquainted with any father of the Church before St. Augustine and St. Jerome, who taught the doctrine of original sin. St. Clement of Alexandria, notwithstanding his profound knowledge of antiquity, far from speaking in any one passage of his works of that corruption which has infected the whole human race, and rendered it guilty from its birth, says in express words, "What evil can a new-born infant commit? How could it possibly prevaricate? How could such a being, which has, in fact, as yet done no one thing, fall under the curse of Adam?"

And it is worth observing that he does not employ this language in order to combat the rigid opinion of original sin, which was not at that time developed, but merely to show that the passions, which are capable of corrupting all mankind, have, as yet, taken no hold of this innocent infant. He does not say: This creature of a day would not be damned if it should now die, for no one had yet conjectured that it would be damned. St. Clement could not combat a system absolutely unknown.

The great Origen is still more decisive than St. Clement of Alexandria. He admits, indeed, in his exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, that sin entered into the world by Adam, but he maintains that it is the inclination to sin that thus entered; that it is very easy to commit evil, but that it is not on that account said, man will always commit evil, and is guilty even as soon as he is born.

In short, original sin, in the time of Origen, consisted only in the misfortune of resembling the first man by being liable to sin like him. Baptism was a necessary ordinance; it was the seal of Christianity; it washed away all sins; but no man had yet said, that it washed away those which the subject of it had not committed. No one yet asserted that an infant would be damned, and burned in everlasting flames, in consequence of its dying within two minutes of its birth. And an unanswerable proof on this point is, that a long period passed away before the practice of baptizing infants became prevalent. Tertullian was averse to their being baptized; but, on the persuasion that original sin—of which these poor innocents could not possibly be guilty—would affect their reprobation, and expose them to suffer boundless and endless torture, for a deed of which it was impossible for them to have the slightest knowledge: to refuse them the consecrated bath of baptism, would be

wilfully consigning them to eternal damnation. The souls of all the executioners in the world, condensed into the very essence of ingenious cruelty, could not have suggested a more execrable abomination.

In a word, it is an incontestable fact that Christians did not for a certain period baptize their infants, and it is therefore equally incontestable that they were very far from damning them.

This, however, is not all; Jesus Christ never said: "The infant that is not baptized will be damned." He came on the contrary to expiate all sins, to redeem mankind by His blood; therefore, infants could not be damned. Infants would, of course, a fortiori, and, preferably, enjoy this privilege. Our divine Saviour never baptized any person. Paul circumcised his disciple Timothy, but is nowhere said to have baptized him.

In a word, during the two first centuries, the baptism of infants was not customary; it was not believed, therefore, that infants would become victims of the fault of Adam. At the end of four hundred years their salvation was considered in danger, and great uncertainty and apprehension existed on the subject.

In the fifth century appears Pelagius. He treated the opinion of original sin as monstrous. According to him, this dogma, like all others, was founded upon a mere ambiguity. God had said to Adam in the garden: "In the day in which thou shalt eat of the tree of knowledge, thou shalt die." But, he did not die; and God pardoned him. Why, then, should He not spare His race to the thousandth generation? Why should He consign to infinite and eternal torments the innocent infants whose father He received back into forgiveness and favor?

Pelagius considered God, not merely as an absolute master, but as a parent, who left His children at perfect liberty, and rewarded them beyond their merits, and punished them less than their faults deserved. The language used by him and his disciples was: "If all men are born objects of the eternal wrath of that Being who confers on them life; if they can possibly be guilty before they can even think, it is then a fearful and execrable offence to give them being, and marriage is the most atrocious of crimes. Marriage, on this system, is nothing more or less than an emanation from the Manichæan principle of evil; and those who engage in it, instead of adoring God, adore the devil."

Pelagius and his partisans propagated this doctrine in Africa, where the reputation and influence of St. Augustine were unbounded. He had been a Manichæan, and seemed to think himself called upon to enter the lists against Pelagius. The latter was ill able to resist either Augustine or Jerome; various points, however, were contested, and the dispute proceeded so far that Augustine pronounced his sentence of damnation upon all children born, or to be born, throughout the world, in the following terms: "The Catholic faith

teaches that all men are born so guilty that even infants are certainly damned when they die without having been regenerated in Jesus."

It would be but a wretched compliment of condolence to offer to a queen of China, or Japan, or India, Scythia, or Gothia, who had just lost her infant son to say: "Be comforted, madam; his highness the prince royal is now in the clutches of five hundred devils, who turn him round and round in a great furnace to all eternity, while his body rests embalmed and in peace within the precincts of your palace."

The astonished and terrified queen inquires why these devils should eternally roast her dear son, the prince royal. She is answered that the reason of it is that his great-grandfather formerly ate of the fruit of knowledge, in a garden. Form an idea, if possible, of the looks and thoughts of the king, the queen, the whole council, and all the beautiful ladies of the court!

The sentence of the African bishop appeared to some divines—for there are some good souls to be found in every place and class—rather severe, and was therefore mitigated by one Peter Chrysologus, or Peter Golden-tongue, who invented a suburb to hell, called "limbo", where all the little boys and girls that died before baptism might be disposed of. It is a place in which these innocents vegetate without sensation; the abode of apathy; the place that has been called "The paradise of fools." We find this very expression in Milton. He places this paradise somewhere near the moon!

Explication Of Original Sin.

The difficulty is the same with respect to this substituted limbo as with respect to hell. Why should these poor little wretches be placed in this limbo? what had they done? how could their souls, which they had not in their possession a single day, be guilty of a gormandizing that merited a punishment of six thousand years?

St. Augustine, who damns them, assigns as a reason, that the souls of all men being comprised in that of Adam, it is probable that they were all accomplices. But, as the Church subsequently decided that souls are not made before the bodies which they are to inhabit are originated, that system falls to the ground, notwithstanding the celebrity of its author.

Others said that original sin was transmitted from soul to soul, in the way of emanation, and that one soul, derived from another, came into the world with all the corruption of the mother-soul. This opinion was condemned.

After the divines had done with the question, the philosophers tried at it. Leibnitz, while sporting with his monads, amused himself with collecting together in Adam all the human monads with their little bodies of monads. This was going further than St. Augustine. But this idea, which was worthy of

Cyrano de Bergerac, met with very few to adopt and defend it. Malebranche explains the matter by the influence of the imagination on mothers. Eve's brain was so strongly inflamed with the desire of eating the fruit that her children had the same desire; just like the irresistibly authenticated case of the woman who, after having seen a man racked, was brought to bed of a dislocated infant.

Nicole reduced the affair to "a certain inclination, a certain tendency to concupiscence, which we have derived from our mothers. This inclination is not an act; but it will one day become such." Well said, Nicole; bravo! But, in the meantime, why am I to be damned? Nicole does not even touch the difficulty, which consists in ascertaining how our own souls, which have but recently been formed, can be fairly made responsible for the fault of another soul that lived some thousands of years ago.

What, my good friends, ought to be said upon the subject? Nothing. Accordingly, I do not give my explication of the difficulty: I say not a single word.

OVID.

Scholars have not failed to write volumes to inform us exactly to what corner of the earth Ovidius Naso was banished by Octavius Cepias, surnamed Augustus. All that we know of it is, that, born at Sulmo and brought up at Rome, he passed ten years on the right shore of the Danube, in the neighborhood of the Black Sea. Though he calls this land barbarous, we must not fancy that it was a land of savages. There were verses made there; Cotis, the petty king of a part of Thrace, made Getic verses for Ovid. The Latin poet learned Getic, and also composed lines in this language. It seems as if Greek poetry should have been understood in the ancient country of Orpheus, but this country was then peopled by nations from the North, who probably spoke a Tartar dialect, a language approaching to the ancient Slavonian. Ovid seemed not destined to make Tartar verses. The country of the Tomites, to which he was banished, was a part of Mysia, a Roman province, between Mount Hemus and the Danube. It is situated in forty-four and a half degrees north latitude, like one of the finest climates of France; but the mountains which are at the south, and the winds of the north and east, which blow from the Euxine, the cold and dampness of the forests, and of the Danube, rendered this country insupportable to a man born in Italy. Thus Ovid did not live long, but died there at the age of sixty. He complains in his "Elegies" of the climate, and not of the inhabitants. "Quos ego, cum loca sim vestra perosus, amo."

These people crowned him with laurel, and gave him privileges, which prevented him not from regretting Rome. It was a great instance of the slavery of the Romans and of the extinction of all laws, when a man born of an equestrian family, like Octavius, exiled a man of another equestrian family, and when one citizen of Rome with one word sent another among the Scythians. Before this time, it required a "plebiscitum", a law of the nation, to deprive a Roman of his country. Cicero, although banished by a cabal, had at least been exiled with the forms of law.

The crime of Ovid was incontestably that of having seen something shameful in the family of Octavius:

Cur aliquid vidi, cur noxia lumina feci?

Why saw I aught, or why discover crime?

The learned have not decided whether he had seen Augustus with a prettier boy than Mannius, whom he said he would not have because he was too ugly; whether he saw some page in the arms of the empress Livia, whom this Augustus had espoused, while pregnant by another; whether he had seen the said Augustus occupied with his daughter or granddaughter; or, finally, whether he saw him doing something still worse, "torva tu entibus hircis?" It is most probable that Ovid detected an incestuous correspondence, as an author, almost contemporary, named Minutionus Apuleius, says: "Pulsum quoque in exilium quod Augusti incestum vidisset."

Octavius made a pretext of the innocent book of the "Art of Love," a book very decently written, and in which there is not an obscene word, to send a Roman knight to the Black Sea. The pretence was ridiculous. How could Augustus, of whom we have still verses filled with obscenities, banish Ovid for having several years before given to his friends some copies of the "Art of Love"? How could he impudently reproach Ovid for a work written with decorum, while he approved of Horace, who lavishes allusions and phrases on the most infamous prostitution, and who proposed girls and boys, maid servants and valets indiscriminately? It is nothing less than impudence to blame Ovid and tolerate Horace. It is clear that Octavius alleged a very insufficient reason, because he dared not allude to the real one. One proof that it related to some secret adventure of the sacred imperial family is that the goat of Caprea—Tiberius, immortalized by medals for his debaucheries; Tiberius, that monster of lust and dissimulation—did not recall Ovid, who, rather than demand the favor from the author of the proscriptions and the poisoner of Germanicus, remained on the shores of the Danube.

If a Dutch, Polish, Swedish, English, or Venetian gentleman had by chance seen a stadtholder, or a king of Great Britain, Sweden, or Poland, or a doge of Venice, commit some great sin, even if it was not by chance that he saw it; if

he had even sought the occasion, and was so indiscreet as to speak of it, this stadtholder, king, or doge could not legally banish him.

We can reproach Ovid almost as much as Augustus and Tiberius for having praised them. The eulogiums which he lavishes on them are so extravagant that at present they would excite indignation if he had even given them to legitimate princes, his benefactors, instead of to tyrants, and to his tyrants in particular. You may be pardoned for praising a little too much a prince who caresses you; but not for treating as a god one who persecutes you. It would have been a hundred times better for him to have embarked on the Black Sea and retired into Persia by the Palus Mæotis, than to have written his "Tristia." He would have learned Persian as easily as Getic, and might have forgotten the master of Rome near the master of Ecbatana. Some strong minds will say that there was still another part to take, which was to go secretly to Rome, address himself to some relations of Brutus and Cassius, and get up a twelfth conspiracy against Octavius; but that was not in elegiac taste.

Poetical panegyrics are strange things! It is very clear that Ovid wished with all his heart, that some Brutus would deliver Rome from that Augustus, to whom in his verses he wished immortality. I reproach Ovid with his "Tristia" alone. Bayle forms his system on the philosophy of chaos so ably exhibited in the commencement of the "Metamorphoses":

Ante mare et terras, et quod tegit omnia cœlum,

Unus erat toto naturæ vultus in orbe.

Bayle thus translates these first lines: "Before there was a heaven, an earth, and a sea, nature was all homogeneous." In Ovid it is, "The face of nature was the same throughout the universe," which means not that all was homogeneous, but heterogeneous—this assemblage of different things appeared the same; "unus vultus." Bayle criticises chaos throughout. Ovid, who in his verses is only the poet of the ancient philosophy, says that things hard and soft, light and heavy, were mixed together:

Mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus.

—OVID'S Met., b. i., l. 20.

And this is the manner in which Bayle reasons against him: "There is nothing more absurd than to suppose a chaos which had been homogeneous from all eternity, though it had the elementary qualities, at least those which we call alteratives, which are heat, cold, humidity, and dryness, as those which we call matrices, which are lightness and weight, the former the cause of upper motion, the latter of lower. Matter of this nature cannot be homogeneous, and must necessarily contain all sorts of heterogeneousness. Heat and cold, humidity and dryness, cannot exist together, unless their action

and reaction temper and convert them into other qualities which assume the form of mixed bodies; and as this temperament can be made according to innumerable diversities of combinations, chaos must contain an incredible number of compound species. The only manner of conceiving matter homogeneous is by saying that the alterative qualities of the elements modify all the molecules of matter in the same degree in such a way, that throughout there is the same warmth, the same softness, the same odor, etc. But this would be to destroy with one hand that which has been built up with the other; it would be by a contradiction in terms to call chaos the most regular, the most marvellous for its symmetry, and the most admirable in its proportions that it is possible to conceive. I allow that the taste of man approves of a diversified rather than of a regular work; but our reason teaches us that the harmony of contrary qualities, uniformly preserved throughout the universe, would be as admirable a perfection as the unequal division of them which has succeeded chaos. What knowledge and power would not the diffusion of this uniform harmony throughout nature demand! It would not be sufficient to place in any compound an equal quantity of all the four ingredients; of one there must be more and of another less, according as their force is greater or less for action or resistance; for we know that philosophers bestow action and reaction in a different degree on the elementary qualities. All would amount to an opinion that the power which metamorphosed chaos has withdrawn it, not from a state of strife and confusion as is pretended, but from a state of the most admirable harmony, which by the adjustment of the equilibrium of contrary forces, retained it in a repose equivalent to peace. It is certain, therefore, that if the poets will insist on the homogeneity of chaos, they must erase all which they have added concerning the wild confusion of contrary seeds, of the undigested mass, and of the perpetual combat of conflicting principles.

"Passing over this contradiction we shall find sufficient subject for opposing them in other particulars. Let us recommence the attack on eternity. There is nothing more absurd than to admit, for an infinite time, the mixture of the insensible particles of four elements; for as soon as you suppose in them the activity of heat, the action and reaction of the four primary qualities, and besides these, motion towards the centre in the elements of earth and water, and towards the circumference in those of fire and air, you establish a principle which necessarily separates these four kinds of bodies, the one from the other, and for which a definite period alone is necessary. Consider a little, that which is denominated "the vial of the four elements". There are put into it some small metallic particles, and then three liquids, the one much lighter than the other. Shake these well together, and you no longer discern any of these component parts singly; each is confounded with the other. But leave your vial at rest for a short time, and you will find every one of them resume its pristine situation. The metallic particles will reassemble at the bottom of the vial, the

lightest liquid will rise to the top, and the others take their stations according to their respective degrees of gravity. Thus a very short time will suffice to restore them to the same relative situation which they occupied before the vial was shaken. In this vial you behold the laws which nature has given in this world to the four elements, and, comparing the universe to this vial, we may conclude, that if the earth reduced to powder had been mingled with the matter of the stars, and with that of air and of water, in such a way as that the compound exhibited none of the elements by themselves, all would have immediately operated to disengage themselves, and at the end of a certain time, the particles of earth would form one mass, those of fire another; and thus of the others in proportion to the lightness or heaviness of each of them."

I deny to Bayle, that the experiment of the vial infers a definite period for the duration of chaos. I inform him, that by heavy and light things, Ovid and the philosophers intended those which became so after God had placed His hand on them. I say to him: "You take for granted that nature arranged all, and bestowed weight upon herself. You must begin by proving to me that gravity is an essential quality of matter, a position which has never been proved." Descartes, in his romance has pretended that body never became heavy until his vortices of subtle matter began to push them from the centre. Newton, in his correct philosophy, never says that gravitation or attraction is a quality essential to matter. If Ovid had been able to divine the "Principia" of Newton, he would have said: "Matter was neither heavy nor in motion in my chaos; it was God who endowed it with these properties; my chaos includes not the forces you imagine"—"nec quidquam nisi pondus iners;" it was a powerless mass; "pondus" here signifies not weight but mass.

Nothing could possess weight, before God bestowed on matter the principle of gravitation. In whatever degree one body is impelled towards the centre of another, would it be drawn or impelled by another, if the Supreme Power had not bestowed upon it this inexplicable virtue? Therefore Ovid will not only turn out a good philosopher but a passable theologian.

You say: "A scholastic theologian will admit without difficulty, that if the four elements had existed independently of God, with all the properties which they now possess, they would have formed of themselves the machine of the world, and have maintained it in the state which we now behold. There are therefore two great faults in the doctrine of chaos; the first of which is, that it takes away from God the creation of matter, and the production of the qualities proper to air, fire, earth, and water; the other, that after taking God away, He is made to appear unnecessarily on the theatre of the world, in order to assign their places to the four elements. Our modern philosophers, who have rejected the faculties and the qualities of the peripatetician physics, will find the same defects in the description of the chaos of Ovid; for that which they call general

laws of motion, mechanical principles, modifications of matter, the form, situation, and arrangement of atoms, comprehends nothing beyond the active and passive virtue of nature, which the peripatetics understand by the alterative and formative qualities of the four elements. Seeing, therefore, that, according to the doctrine of this school, these four bodies, separated according to their natural heaviness and lightness, form a principle which suffices for all generation, the Cartesians, Gassendists, and other modern philosophers, ought to maintain that the motion, situation, and form of the particles of matter, are sufficient for the production of all natural effects, without excepting even the general arrangement which has placed the earth, the air, the water, and the stars where we see them. Thus, the true cause of the world, and of the effect which it produces, is not different from the cause which has bestowed motion on particles of matter—whether at the same time that it assigned to each atom a determinate figure, as the Gassendists assert, or that it has only given to particles entirely cubic, an impulsion which, by the duration of the motion according to certain laws, makes it ultimately take all sorts of forms—which is the hypothesis of the Cartesians. Both the one and the other consequently agree, that if matter had been, before the generation of the present world, as Ovid describes, it would have been capable of withdrawing itself from chaos by its own necessary operation, without the assistance of God. Ovid may therefore be accused of two oversights—having supposed, in the first place, that without the assistance of the Divinity, matter possessed the seeds of every compound, heat, motion, etc.; and in the second, that without the same assistance it could extricate itself from confusion. This is to give at once too much and too little to both God and matter; it is to pass over assistance when most needed, and to demand it when no longer necessary."

Ovid may still reply: "You are wrong in supposing that my elements originally possessed all the qualities which they possess at present. They had no qualities; matter existed naked, unformed, and powerless; and when I say, that in my chaos, heat was mingled with cold, and dryness with humidity, I only employ these expressions to signify that there was neither cold, nor heat, nor wet, nor dry, which are qualities that God has placed in our sensations, and not in matter. I have not made the mistakes of which you accuse me. Your Cartesians and your Gassendists commit oversights with their atoms and their cubic particles; and their imaginations deal as little in truth as my "Metamorphoses". I prefer Daphne changed into a laurel, and Narcissus into a flower, to subtile matter changed into suns, and denser matter transformed into earth and water. I have given you fables for fables, and your philosophers have given you fables for truth."

PARADISE.

There is no word whose meaning is more remote from its etymology. It is well known that it originally meant a place planted with fruit trees; and afterwards, the name was given to gardens planted with trees for shade. Such, in distant antiquity, were those of Saana, near Eden, in Arabia Felix, known long before the hordes of the Hebrews had invaded a part of the territory of Palestine.

This word "paradise" is not celebrated among the Jews, except in the Book of Genesis. Some Jewish canonical writers speak of gardens; but not one of them has mentioned a word about the garden denominated the "earthly paradise". How could it happen that no Jewish writer, no Jewish prophet, or Jewish psalmodist, should have once cited that terrestrial paradise which we are talking of every day of our lives? This is almost incomprehensible. It has induced many daring critics to believe that Genesis was not written till a very late period.

The Jews never took this orchard or plantation of trees—this garden, whether of plants or flowers—for heaven. St. Luke is the first who uses the word "paradise," as signifying heaven, when Jesus Christ says to the good thief: "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise."

The ancients gave the name of "heaven" to the clouds. That name would not have been exactly appropriate, as the clouds actually touch the earth by the vapors of which they are formed, and as heaven is a vague word signifying an immense space in which exist innumerable suns, planets, and comets, which has certainly but little resemblance to an orchard.

St. Thomas says that there are three paradises—the terrestrial, the celestial, and the spiritual. I do not, I acknowledge, perfectly understand the difference between the spiritual and celestial. The spiritual orchard is according to him, the beatific vision. But it is precisely that which constitutes the celestial paradise, it is the enjoyment of God Himself. I do not presume to dispute against the "angel of the schools." I merely say—Happy must he be who always resides in one of these three paradises!

Some curious critics have thought the paradise of the Hesperides, guarded by a dragon, was an imitation of the garden of Eden, kept by a winged ox or a cherub. Others, more rash, have ventured to assert that the ox was a bad copy of the dragon, and that the Jews were always gross plagiarists; but this will be admitted to be blasphemy, and that idea is insupportable.

Why has the name of paradise been applied to the square courts in the front of a church? Why has the third row of boxes at the theatre or opera house been

called paradise? Is it because, as these places are less dear than others, it was thought they were intended for the poor, and because it is pretended that in the other paradise there are far more poor persons than rich? Is it because these boxes are so high that they have obtained a name which also signifies heaven? There is, however, some difference between ascending to heaven, and ascending to the third row of boxes. What would a stranger think on his arrival at Paris, when asked: "Are you inclined to go to paradise to see Pourceaugnac?"

What incongruities and equivoques are to be found in all languages! How strongly is human weakness manifested in every object that is presented around us! See the article "Paradise" in the great Encyclopædia. It is certainly better than this. We conclude with the Abbé de St. Pierre's favorite sentiment —"Paradise to the beneficent."

PASSIONS.

Their Influence Upon The Body, And That Of The Body Upon Them.

Pray inform me, doctor—I do not mean a doctor of medicine, who really possesses some degree of knowledge, who has long examined the sinuosities of the brain, who has investigated whether there is a circulating fluid in the nerves, who has repeatedly and assiduously dissected the human matrix in vain, to discover something of the formation of thinking beings, and who, in short, knows all of our machine that can be known; alas! I mean a very different person, a doctor of theology—I adjure you, by that reason at the very name of which you shudder, tell me why it is, that in consequence of your young and handsome housekeeper saying a few loving words, and giving herself a few coquettish airs, your blood becomes instantly agitated, and your whole frame thrown into a tumult of desire, which speedily leads to pleasures, of which neither herself nor you can explain the cause, but which terminate with the introduction into the world of a thinking being encrusted all over with original sin. Inform me, I entreat you, how the action tends to or is connected with the result? You may read and re-read Sanchez and Thomas Aquinas, and Scot and Bonaventure, but you will never in consequence know an iota the more of that incomprehensible mechanism by which the eternal architect directs your ideas and your actions, and originates the little bastard of a priest predestined to damnation from all eternity.

On the following morning, when taking your chocolate, your memory retraces the image of pleasure which you experienced the evening before, and the scene and rapture are repeated. Have you any idea, my great automaton

friend, what this same memory, which you possess in common with every species of animals, really is? Do you know what fibres recall your ideas, and paint in your brain the joys of the evening by a continuous sentiment, a consciousness, a personal identity which slept with you, and awoke with you? The doctor replies, in the language of Thomas Aquinas, that all this is the work of his vegetative soul, his sensitive soul, and his intellectual soul, all three of which compose a soul which, although without extension itself, evidently acts on a body possessed of extension in course.

I perceived by his embarrassed manner, that he has been stammering out words without a single idea; and I at length say to him: If you feel, doctor, that, however reluctantly, you must in your own mind admit that you do not know what a soul is, and that you have been talking all your life without any distinct meaning, why not acknowledge it like an honest man? Why do you not conclude the same as must be concluded from the physical promotion of Doctor Bourssier, and from certain passages of Malebranche, and, above all, from the acute and judicious Locke, so far superior to Malebranche—why do you not, I say, conclude that your soul is a faculty which God has bestowed on you without disclosing to you the secret of His process, as He has bestowed on you various others? Be assured, that many men of deep reflection maintain that, properly speaking, the unknown power of the Divine Artificer, and His unknown laws, alone perform everything in us: and that, to speak more correctly still, we shall never know in fact anything at all about the matter.

The doctor at this becomes agitated and irritated; the blood rushes into his face; if he had been stronger than myself, and had not been restrained by a sense of decency, he would certainly have struck me. His heart swells; the systole and diastole are interrupted in their regular operation; his brain is compressed; and he falls down in a fit of apoplexy. What connection could there be between this blood, and heart, and brain, and an old opinion of the doctor contrary to my own? Does a pure intellectual spirit fall into syncope when another is of a different opinion? I have uttered certain sounds; he has uttered certain sounds; and behold! he falls down in apoplexy—he drops dead!

I am sitting at table, "prima mensis," in the first of the month, myself and my soul, at the Sorbonne, with five or six doctors, "socii Sorbonnici," fellows of the institution. We are served with bad and adulterated wine; at first our souls are elevated and maddened; half an hour afterwards our souls are stupefied, and as it were annihilated; and on the ensuing morning these same worthy doctors issue a grand decree, deciding that the soul, although occupying no place, let it be remembered, and absolutely immaterial—is lodged in the "corpus callosum" of the brain, in order to pay their court to surgeon La Peyronie.

A guest is sitting at table full of conversation and gayety. A letter is

brought him that overwhelms him with astonishment, grief, and apprehension. Instantly the muscles of his abdomen contract and relax with extraordinary violence, the peristaltic motion of the intestines is augmented, the sphincter of the rectum is opened by the convulsions which agitate his frame, and the unfortunate gentleman, instead of finishing his dinner in comfort, produces a copious evacuation. Tell me, then, what secret connection nature has established between an idea and a water-closet.

Of all those persons who have undergone the operation of trepanning, a great proportion always remain imbecile. Of course, therefore, the thinking fibres of their brain have been injured; but where are these thinking fibres? Oh, Sanchez! Oh, Masters de Grillandis, Tamponet, Riballier! Oh, Cogé-Pecus, second regent and rector of the university, do give me a clear, decisive, and satisfactory explanation of all this, if you possibly can!

While I was writing this article at Mount Krapak for my own private improvement, a book was brought to me called "The Medicine of the Mind," by Doctor Camus, professor of medicine in the University of Paris. I was in hopes of finding in this book a solution of all my difficulties. But what was it that I found in fact? Just nothing at all. Ah, Master Camus! you have not displayed much mind in preparing your "Medicine of the Mind." This person strongly recommends the blood of an ass, drawn from behind the ear, as a specific against madness. "The virtue of the blood of an ass," he says, "re-establishes the soul in its functions." He maintains, also, that madmen are cured by giving them the itch. He asserts, likewise, that in order to gain or strengthen a memory, the meat of capons, leverets, and larks, is of eminent service, and that onions and butter ought to be avoided above all things. This was printed in 1769 with the king's approbation and privilege; and there really were people who consigned their health to the keeping of Master Camus, professor of medicine! Why was he not made first physician to the king?

Poor puppets of the Eternal Artificer, who know neither why nor how an invisible hand moves all the springs of our machine, and at length packs us away in our wooden box! We constantly see more and more reason for repeating, with Aristotle, All is occult, all is secret.

PAUL.

Section I.

Questions Concerning Paul.

Was Paul a Roman citizen, as he boasted? If he was a native of Tarsus in

Cilicia, Tarsus was not a Roman colony until a hundred years after his death; upon this point all antiquaries are agreed. If he belonged to the little town or village of Gescala, as St. Jerome believed, this town was in Galilee, and certainly the Galileans were not Roman citizens.

Is it true, that St. Paul entered into the rising society of Christians, who at that time were demi-Jews, only because Gamaliel, whose disciple he was, refused him his daughter in marriage? It appears that this accusation is to be found exclusively in the Acts of the Apostles, which are received by the Ebionites, and refuted by the Bishop Epiphanius in his thirtieth chapter.

Is it true, that St. Thecla sought St. Paul in the disguise of a man, and are the acts of St. Thecla admissible? Tertullian, in the thirteenth chapter of his book on "Baptism," maintains that this history was composed by a priest attached to Paul. Jerome and Cyprian, in refuting the story of the lion baptized by St. Thecla, affirm the genuineness of these acts, in which we find that singular portrait of St. Paul, which we have already recorded. "He was fat, short, and broad shouldered; his dark eyebrows united across his aquiline nose; his legs were crooked, his head bald, and he was full of the grace of the Lord." This is pretty nearly his portrait in the "Philopatris" of Lucian, with the exception of "the grace of God," with which Lucian unfortunately had no acquaintance.

Is Paul to be reprehended for his reproof of the Judaizing of St. Peter, who himself Judaized for eight days together in the temple of Jerusalem? When Paul was traduced before the governor of Judæa for having introduced strangers into the temple, was it proper for him to say to the governor, that he was prosecuted on account of his teaching the resurrection of the dead, whilst of the resurrection of the dead nothing was said at all.

Did Paul do right in circumcising his disciple Timothy, after having written to the Galatians, that if they were circumcised Jesus would not profit them? Was it well to write to the Corinthians, chap. ix.: Have we not power to eat and drink at your expense? "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife?" etc. Was it proper to write in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, that he will pardon none of them, neither those who have sinned nor others? What should we think at present of a man who pretended to live at our expense, himself, and his wife; and to judge and to punish us, confounding the innocent with the guilty? What are we to understand by the ascension of Paul into the third heaven?—what is the third heaven? Which is the most probable—humanly speaking? Did St. Paul become a Christian in consequence of being thrown from a horse by the appearance of a great light at noon day, from which a celestial voice exclaimed: Saul, "Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" or was it in consequence of being irritated against the Pharisees, either by the refusal of Gamaliel to give him his daughter, or by some other cause?

In all other history, the refusal of Gamaliel would appear more probable than the celestial voice; especially if, moreover, we were not obliged to believe in this miracle. I only ask these questions in order to be instructed; and I request all those who are willing to instruct me to speak reasonably.

Section II.

The Epistles of St. Paul are so sublime, it is often difficult to understand them. Many young bachelors demand the precise signification of the following words: "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head." What does he mean by the words: "I have learned from the Lord, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread?"

How could he learn anything from that Jesus Christ to Whom he had never spoken, and to Whom he had been a most cruel enemy, without ever having seen Him? Was it by inspiration, or by the recital of the apostles? or did he learn it when the celestial light caused him to fall from his horse? He does not inform us on this point.

The following again: "The woman shall be saved in child-bearing." This is certainly to encourage population: it appears not that St. Paul founded convents. He speaks of seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; of those whose consciences are seared up with a red-hot iron, who forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats. This is very strong. It appears that he abjured monks, nuns, and fast-days. Explain this contradiction; deliver me from this cruel embarrassment.

What is to be said of the passage in which he recommends the bishops to have one wife?—"Unius uxoris virum." This is positive. He permits the bishops to have but one wife, whilst the Jewish pontiffs might have several. He says unequivocally, that the last judgment will happen during his own time, that Jesus will descend from on high, as described by St. Luke, and that St. Paul and the righteous inhabitants of Thessalonica will be caught up to Him in the air, etc.

Has this occurred? or is it an allegory, a figure? Did he actually believe that he should make this journey, or that he had been caught up into the third heaven? Which is the third heaven? How will he ascend into the air? Has he been there? "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom." Is this acknowledging Jesus to be the same God as the Father? He has manifested His power over Jesus "when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand." Does this constitute the divinity of Jesus?

"Thou madest him (Jesus) a little lower than angels; thou crownedst him

with glory." If He is inferior to angels—is He God?

"For if by one man's offence death reigneth, much more they who receive of the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ." Almost man and never God, except in a single passage contested by Erasmus, Grotius, Le Clerc, etc.

"Children of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." Is not this constantly regarding Jesus as one of us, although superior by the grace of God? "To God, alone wise, honor and glory, through Jesus Christ." How are we to understand these passages literally, without fearing to offend Jesus Christ; or, in a more extended sense, without the risk of offending God the Father?

There are many more passages of this kind, which exercise the sagacity of the learned. The commentators differ, and we pretend not to possess any light which can remove the obscurity. We submit with heart and mouth to the decision of the Church. We have also taken some trouble to penetrate into the meaning of the following passages:

"For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keepest the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." "Now we know, that whatever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.... Seeing that it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law, through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." "For if Abraham was justified by his works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God."

We fear that even the ingenuous and profound Dom Calmet himself gives us not, upon these somewhat obscure passages, a light which dissipates all our darkness. It is without doubt our own fault that we do not understand the commentators, and are deprived of that complete conception of the text, which is given only to privileged souls. As soon, however, as an explanation shall come from the chair of truth, we shall comprehend the whole perfectly.

Section III.

Let us add this little supplement to the article "Paul." It is better to edify ourselves with the Epistles of this apostle, than to weaken our piety by calumniating the times and persons for which they were written. The learned search in vain for the year and the day in which St. Paul assisted to stone St. Stephen, and to guard the mantles of his executioners.

They dispute on the year in which he was thrown from his horse by a miraculous light at noonday, and on the epoch of his being borne away into the

third heaven. They can agree neither upon the year in which he was conducted to Rome, nor that in which he died. They are unacquainted with the date of any of his letters. St. Jerome, in his commentary on the "Epistle to Philemon" says that Paul might signify the embouchure of a flute.

The letters of St. Paul to Seneca, and from Seneca to St. Paul, were accounted as authentic in the primitive ages of the Church, as all the rest of the Christian writings. St. Jerome asserts their authenticity, and quotes passages from these letters in his catalogue. St. Augustine doubts them not in his 153d letter to Macedonius. We have thirty letters of these two great men, Paul and Seneca, who, it is pretended, were linked together by a strict friendship in the court of Nero. The seventh letter from Paul to Seneca is very curious. He tells him that the Jews and the Christians were often burned as incendiaries at Rome:

"Christiani et Judæi tanquam machinatores incendii supplicio affici solent." It is in fact probable, that the Jews and the Christians, whose mutual enmity was extremely violent, reciprocally accused each other of setting the city on fire; and that the scorn and horror felt towards the Jews, with whom the Christians were usually confounded, rendered them equally the objects of public suspicion and vengeance.

We are obliged to acknowledge, that the epistolary correspondence of Seneca and Paul is in a ridiculous and barbarous Latin; that the subjects of these letters are as inconsistent as the style; and that at present they are regarded as forgeries. But, then, may we venture to contradict the testimony of St. Jerome and St. Augustine? If writings, attested by them, are nothing but vile impostures, how shall we be certain of the authenticity of others more respectable? Such is the important objection of many learned persons. If we are unworthily deceived, say they, in relation to the letters of Paul and Seneca on the Apostolical Institutes, and the Acts of St. Peter, why may we not be equally imposed upon by the Acts of the Apostles? The decision of the Church and faith are unequivocal answers to all these researches of science and suggestions of the understanding.

It is not known upon what foundation Abdias, first bishop of Babylon, says, in his "History of the Apostles," that St. Paul caused St. James the Less to be stoned by the people. Before he was converted, however, he might as readily persecute St. James as St. Stephen. He was certainly very violent, because it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, that he "breathed threatenings and slaughter". Abdias has also taken care to observe, that the mover of the sedition in which St. James was so cruelly treated, was the same Paul whom God had since called to the apostleship.

This book, attributed to Abdias, is not admitted into the canon; but Julius

Africanus, who has translated it into Latin, believes it to be authentic. Since, however, the church has not admitted it, we must not admit it. Let us content ourselves with adoring Providence, and wishing that all persecutors were transformed into charitable and compassionate apostles.

PERSECUTION.

I will not call Diocletian a persecutor, for he protected the Christians for eighteen years; and if, during his latter days, he did not save them from the resentment of Galerius, he only furnished the example of a prince seduced, like many others, by intrigue and cabal, into a conduct unworthy of his character. I will still less give the name of persecutor to Trajan or Antonius. I should regard myself as uttering blasphemy.

What is a persecutor? He whose wounded pride and fanaticism irritate princes and magistrates into fury against innocent men, whose only crime is that of being of a different opinion. Impudent man! you have worshipped God; you have preached and practised virtue; you have served and assisted man; you have protected the orphan, have succored the poor; you have changed deserts, in which slaves dragged on a miserable existence, into fertile districts peopled with happy families; but I have discovered that you despise me, and have never read my controversial work. I will, therefore, seek the confessor of the prime minister, or the magistrate; I will show them, with outstretched neck and twisted mouth, that you hold an erroneous opinion in relation to the cells in which the Septuagint was studied; that you have even spoken disrespectfully for these ten years past of Tobit's dog, which you assert to have been a spaniel, whilst I maintain that it was a greyhound. I will denounce you as the enemy of God and man! Such is the language of the persecutor; and if these words do not precisely issue from his lips, they are engraven on his heart with the graver of fanaticism steeped in the gall of envy.

It was thus that the Jesuit Letellier dared to persecute Cardinal de Noailles, and that Jurieu persecuted Bayle. When the persecution of the Protestants commenced in France, it was not Francis I., nor Henry II., nor Francis II., who sought out these unfortunate people, who hardened themselves against them with reflective bitterness, and who delivered them to the flames in the spirit of vengeance. Francis I. was too much engaged with the Duchess d'Étampes; Henry II., with his ancient Diana, and Francis II. was too much a child. Who, then, commenced these persecutions? Jealous priests, who enlisted in their service the prejudices of magistrates and the policy of ministers.

If these monarchs had not been deceived, if they had foreseen that these

persecutions would produce half a century of civil war, and that the two parts of the nation would mutually exterminate each other, they would have extinguished with their tears the first piles which they allowed to be lighted. Oh, God of mercy! if any man can resemble that malignant being who is described as actually employed in the destruction of Your works, is it not the persecutor?

PETER (SAINT).

Why have the successors of St. Peter possessed so much power in the West and none in the East? This is just the same as to ask why the bishops of Würzburg and Salzburg obtained for themselves regal prerogatives in a period of anarchy, while the Greek bishops always remained subjects. Time, opportunity, the ambition of some, and the weakness of others, have done and will do everything in the world. We always except what relates to religion. To this anarchy, must be added opinion; and opinion is the queen of mankind. Not that, in fact, they have any very clear and definite opinion of their own, but words answer the same end with them.

"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The zealous partisans of the bishop of Rome contended, about the eleventh century, that whoever gives the greater gives the less; that heaven surrounded the earth; and that, as Peter had the keys of the container, he had also the keys of what was contained. If by heaven we understand all the stars and planets, it is evident, according to Tomasius, that the keys given to Simon Barjonas, surnamed Peter, were a universal passport. If we understand by heaven the clouds, the atmosphere, the ether, and the space in which the planets revolve, no smith in the world, as Meursius observes, could ever make a key for such gates as these. Railleries, however, are not reasons.

Keys in Palestine were wooden latches with strings to them. Jesus says to Barjonas, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." The pope's clergy concluded from these words, that the popes had received authority to bind and unbind the people's oath of fidelity to their kings, and to dispose of kingdoms at their pleasure. This certainly was concluding magnificently. The Commons in the states-general of France, in 1302, say, in their memorial to the king, that "Boniface VIII. was a b—— for believing that God bound and imprisoned in heaven what Boniface bound on earth." A famous German Lutheran—the great Melancthon—could not endure the idea of Jesus having said to Simon Barjonas, Cepha or Cephas, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my assembly, my church." He could not conceive

that God would use such a play of words, and that the power of the pope could have been established on a pun. Such a doubt, however, can be indulged only by a Protestant.

Peter has been considered as having been bishop of Rome; but it is well known that, in the apostolic age, and long after, there was no particular and appropriate bishopric. The society of Christians did not assume a regular form until about the middle of the second century. It may be true that Peter went to Rome, and even that he was crucified with his head downwards, although that was not the usual mode of crucifixion; but we have no proof whatever of all this. We have a letter under his name, in which he says that he is at Babylon: acute and shrewd canonists have contended that, by Babylon, we ought to understand Rome; and on the same principle, if he had dated at Rome, we might have concluded that the letter had been written at Babylon. Men have long been in the habit of drawing such reasonable and judicious inferences as these; and it is in this manner that the world has been governed.

There was once a clergyman who, after having been made to pay extortionately for a benefice at Rome—an offence known by the name of simony—happened to be asked, some time afterwards, whether he thought Simon Peter had ever been in that city? He replied, "I do not think that Peter was ever there, but I am sure Simon was."

With respect to the personal character and behavior of St. Peter, it must be acknowledged that Paul is not the only one who was scandalized at his conduct. He was often "withstood to the face," as well as his successors. St. Paul vehemently reproached him with eating forbidden meats: that is, pork, blood-pudding, hare, eels, the ixion, and the griffin; Peter vindicated himself by saying that he had seen heaven opened about the sixth hour, and as it were a great sheet descending from the four corners of it, which was filled with creeping things, quadrupeds, and birds, while the voice of an angel called out to him, saying, "Kill and eat." This, says Woolston, seems to have been the same voice which has called out to so many pontiffs since, "Kill everything; eat up the substance of the people." But this reproach is much too strong.

Casaubon cannot by any means bring himself to approve the manner in which St. Peter treated Ananias and Sapphira, his wife. "By what right," says Casaubon, "did a Jew slave of the Romans order or permit that all those who believed in Jesus should sell their inheritance, and lay down the price paid for it at his feet?" If an Anabaptist at London was to order all the money belonging to his brethren to be brought and laid at his feet, would he not be apprehended as a seditious seducer, as a thief who would certainly be hanged at Tyburn? Was it not abominable to kill Ananias, because, after having sold his property and delivered over the bulk of the produce to Peter, he had retained for himself and his wife a few crowns for any case of necessity,

without mentioning it? Scarcely, moreover, has Ananias expired, before his wife arrives. Peter, instead of warning her charitably that he had just destroyed her husband by apoplexy for having kept back a few oboli, and cautioning her therefore to look well to herself, leads her as it were intentionally into the snare. He asks her if her husband has given all his money to the saints; the poor woman replies in the affirmative, and dies instantly. This is certainly rather severe.

Corringius asks, why Peter, who thus killed the persons that had given him alms and showed him kindness, did not rather go and destroy all the learned doctors who had brought Jesus Christ to the cross, and who more than once brought a scourging on himself. "Oh, Peter!" says Corringius, "you put to death two Christians who bestowed alms on you, and at the same time suffer those to live who crucified your God!"

In the reigns of Henry IV., and Louis XIII., we had an advocate-general of the parliament of Provence, a man of quality, called d'Oraison de Torame, who, in a book respecting the church militant, dedicated to Henry IV., has appropriated a whole chapter to the sentences pronounced by St. Peter in criminal causes. He says, that the sentence pronounced by Peter on Ananias and Sapphira was executed by God Himself, "in the very terms and forms of spiritual jurisdiction." His whole book is in the same strain; but Corringius, as we perceive, is of a different opinion from that of our sagacious and liberal provincial advocate. It is pretty evident that Corringius was not in the country of the Inquisition when he published his bold remarks.

Erasmus, in relation to St. Peter, remarked a somewhat curious circumstance, which is, that the chief of the Christian religion began his apostleship with denying Jesus Christ, and that the first pontiff of the Jews commenced his ministry by making a golden calf and worshipping it.

However that may be, Peter is described as a poor man instructing the poor. He resembles those founders of orders who lived in indigence, and whose successors have become great lords and even princes.

The pope, the successor of Peter, has sometimes gained and sometimes lost; but there are still about fifty millions of persons in the world submitting in many points to his laws, besides his own immediate subjects.

To obtain a master three or four hundred leagues from home; to suspend your own opinion and wait for what he puts forth as his; not to dare to give a final decision on a cause relating to certain of our fellow-citizens, but through commissioners appointed by this stranger; not to dare to take possession of certain fields and vineyards granted by our own sovereign, without paying a considerable sum to this foreign master; to violate the laws of our country, which prohibit a man's marriage with his niece, and marry her legitimately by

giving this foreign master a sum still more considerable than the former one; not to dare to cultivate one's field on the day this stranger is inclined to celebrate the memory of some unknown person whom he has chosen to introduce into heaven by his own sole authority; such are a part only of the conveniences and comforts of admitting the jurisdiction of a pope; such, if we may believe Marsais, are the liberties of the Gallican Church.

There are some other nations that carry their submission further. We have, in our own time, actually known a sovereign request permission of the pope to try in his own courts certain monks accused of parricide, and able neither to obtain this permission nor to venture on such trial without it!

It is well known that, formerly, the power of the popes extended further. They were far above the gods of antiquity; for the latter were merely supposed to dispose of empires, but the popes disposed of them in fact. Sturbinus says, that we may pardon those who entertain doubts of the divinity and infallibility of the pope, when we reflect: that forty schisms have profaned the chair of St. Peter, twenty-seven of which have been marked by blood; that Stephen VII., the son of a priest, disinterred the corpse of Formosus, his predecessor, and had the head of it cut off; that Sergius III., convicted of assassinations, had a son by Marozia, who inherited the popedom; that John X., the paramour of Theodora, was strangled in her bed; that John XI., son of Sergius III., was known only by his gross intemperance; that John XII. was assassinated in the apartments of his mistress; that Benedict IX. both bought and sold the pontificate; that Gregory VII. was the author of five hundred years of civil war, carried on by his successors; that, finally, among so many ambitious, sanguinary, and debauched popes, there was an Alexander VI., whose name is pronounced with the same horror as those of Nero and Caligula.

It is, we are told, a proof of the divinity of their character, that it has subsisted in connection with so many crimes; but according to this, if the caliphs had displayed still more atrocious and abominable conduct, they would have been still more divine. This argument, inferring their divinity from their wickedness, is urged by Dermius. He has been properly answered; but the best reply is to be found in the mitigated authority which the bishops of Rome at present exercise with discretion; in the long possession which the emperors permit them to enjoy, because in fact they are unable to deprive them of it; and in the system of the balance of power, which is watched with jealousy by every court in Europe.

It has been contended, and very lately, that there are only two nations which could invade Italy and crush Rome. These are the Turks and Russians; but they are necessarily enemies; and, besides, I cannot distinctly anticipate misfortunes so distant.

Je ne sais point prévoir les malheurs de si loin.

—RACINE, Andromache, act. i, scene 2.

PETER THE GREAT AND J.J. ROUSSEAU.

Section I.

"The Czar Peter ... had not true genius—that which creates and makes all of nothing. Some things which he did were good; the greater part were misplaced. He saw that his people were barbarous; he has not seen that they were not prepared for polishing; he would civilize them when they only wanted training. He wished at once to make Germans and English when he should have commenced by making Russians. He prevented his subjects from becoming what they might be, by persuading them that they were what they are not. It is thus that a French preceptor forms his pupil to shine for a moment in his childhood, and never afterwards to be anything. The empire of Russia would subjugate Europe, and will be subjugated itself. The Tartars, its subjects or neighbors, will become its masters and ours. This revolution appears to me unavoidable: all the kings of Europe labor together to accelerate it." (Contrat Social, livre ii. chap. viii.) These words are extracted from a pamphlet entitled the "Contrat Social," or "unsocial," of the very unsociable Jean Jacques Rousseau. It is not astonishing, that having performed miracles at Venice he should prophesy on Moscow; but as he well knows that the good time of miracles and prophecies has passed away, he ought to believe, that his prediction against Russia is not so infallible as it appeared to him in his first fit of divination. It is pleasant to announce the fall of great empires; it consoles us for our littleness. It will be a fine gain for philosophy, when we shall constantly behold the Nogais Tartars—who can, I believe, bring twelve thousand men into the field—coming to subjugate Russia, Germany, Italy, and France. But I flatter myself, that the Emperor of China will not suffer it; he has already acceded to perpetual peace, and as he has no more Jesuits about him, he will not trouble Europe. Jean Jacques, who possesses, as he himself believes, true genius, finds that Peter the Great had it not.

A Russian lord, a man of much wit, who sometimes amuses himself with reading pamphlets, while reading this, remembered some lines of Molière, implying, that three miserable authors took it into their heads, that it was only necessary to be printed and bound in calf, to become important personages and dispose of empires:

Il semble à trois gredins, dans leur petit cerveau,

Que pour être imprimés et reliés en veau,

Les voilà dans l'état d'importantes personnes,

Qu'avec leur plume ils font le destin des couronnes.

The Russians, says Jean Jacques, were never polished. I have seen some at least very polite, and who had just, delicate, agreeable, cultivated, and even logical minds, which Jean Jacques will find very extraordinary. As he is very gallant, he will not fail to say, that they are formed at the court of the empress of Russia, that her example has influenced them: but that prevents not the correctness of his prophecy—that this empire will soon be destroyed.

This good little man assures us, in one of his modest works, that a statue should be erected to him. It will not probably be either at Moscow or St. Petersburg, that anyone will trouble himself to sculpture Jean Jacques.

I wish, in general, that when people judge of nations from their garrets, they would be more honest and circumspect. Every poor devil can say what he pleases of the Romans, Athenians, and ancient Persians. He can deceive himself with impunity on the tribunes, comitia, and dictatorships. He can govern in idea two or three thousand leagues of country, whilst he is incapable of governing his servant girl. In a romance, he can receive "an acrid kiss" from his Julia, and advise a prince to espouse the daughter of a hangman. These are follies without consequence—there are others which may have disastrous effects.

Court fools were very discreet; they insulted the weak alone by their buffooneries, and respected the powerful: country fools are at present more bold. It will be answered, that Diogenes and Aretin were tolerated. Granted; but a fly one day seeing a swallow wing away with a spider's web, would do the same thing, and was taken.

Section II.

May we not say of these legislators who govern the universe at two sous the sheet, and who from their garrets give orders to all kings, what Homer said to Calchas?:

Os ede ta conta, taere essomena, pro theonta.

He knew the past, present, and future.

It is a pity that the author of the little paragraph which we are going to quote, knew nothing of the three times of which Homer speaks. "Peter the Great," says he, "had not the genius which makes all of nothing." Truly, Jean Jacques, I can easily believe it; for it is said that God alone has this prerogative. "He has not seen that his people were not prepared for polishing."

In this case, it was admirable of the czar to prepare them. It appears to me, that it is Jean Jacques who had not seen that he must make use of the Germans and English to form Russians.

"He has prevented his subjects from ever becoming what they might be," etc. Yet these same Russians have become the conquerors of the Turks and Tartars, the conquerors and legislators of the Crimea, and twenty different nations. Their sovereign has given laws to nations of which even the names were unknown in Europe.

As to the prophecy of Jean Jacques, he may have exalted his soul sufficiently to read the future. He has all the requisites of a prophet; but as to the past and the present, it must be confessed that he knows nothing about them. I doubt whether antiquity has anything comparable to the boldness of sending four squadrons from the extremity of the Baltic into the seas of Greece—of reigning at once over the Ægean and the Euxine Seas—of carrying terror into Colchis, and to the Dardanelles—of subjugating Taurida, and forcing the vizier Azem to fly from the shores of the Danube to the gates of Adrianople.

If Jean Jacques considers so many great actions which astonished the attentive world as nothing, he must at least confess, that there was some generosity in one Count Orloff, who having taken a vessel which contained all the family and treasures of a pasha, sent him back both his family and treasures. If the Russians were not prepared for polishing in the time of Peter the Great, let us agree that they are now prepared for greatness of soul; and that Jean Jacques is not quite prepared for truth and reasoning. With regard to the future, we shall know it when we have Ezekiels, Isaiahs, Habakkuks, and Micahs; but their time has passed away; and if we dare say so much, it is to be feared that it will never return.

I confess that these lies, printed in relation to present times, always astonish me. If these liberties are allowed in an age in which a thousand volumes, a thousand newspapers and journals, are constantly correcting each other, what faith can we have in those histories of ancient times, which collected all vague rumors without consulting any archives, which put into writing all that they had heard told by their grandmothers in their childhood, very sure that no critic would discover their errors?

We had for a long time nine muses: wholesome criticism is the tenth, which has appeared very lately. She existed not in the time of Cecrops, of the first Bacchus, or of Sanchoniathon, Thaut, Bramah, etc. People then wrote all they liked with impunity. At present we must be a little more careful.

PHILOSOPHER.

Section I.

Philosopher, "lover of wisdom," that is, "of truth." All philosophers have possessed this two-fold character; there is not one among those of antiquity who did not give examples of virtue to mankind, and lessons of moral truth. They might be mistaken, and undoubtedly were so, on subjects of natural philosophy; but that is of comparatively so little importance to the conduct of life, that philosophers had then no need of it. Ages were required to discover a part of the laws of nature. A single day is sufficient to enable a sage to become acquainted with the duties of man.

The philosopher is no enthusiast; he does not set himself up for a prophet; he does not represent himself as inspired by the gods. I shall not therefore place in the rank of philosophers the ancient Zoroaster, or Hermes, or Orpheus, or any of those legislators in whom the countries of Chaldæa, Persia, Syria, Egypt, and Greece made their boast. Those who called themselves the sons of gods were the fathers of imposture; and if they employed falsehood to inculcate truths, they were unworthy of inculcating them; they were not philosophers; they were at best only prudent liars.

By what fatality, disgraceful perhaps to the nations of the West, has it happened that we are obliged to travel to the extremity of the East, in order to find a sage of simple manners and character, without arrogance and without imposture, who taught men how to live happy six hundred years before our era, at a period when the whole of the North was ignorant of the use of letters, and when the Greeks had scarcely begun to distinguish themselves by wisdom? That sage is Confucius, who deemed too highly of his character as a legislator for mankind, to stoop to deceive them. What finer rule of conduct has ever been given since his time, throughout the earth?

"Rule a state as you rule a family; a man cannot govern his family well without giving a good example; virtue should be common to the laborer and the monarch; be active in preventing crimes, that you may lessen the trouble of punishing them.

"Under the good kings Yao and Xu, the Chinese were good; under the bad kings Kie and Chu, they were wicked.

"Do to another as to thyself; love mankind in general, but cherish those who are good; forget injuries, but never benefits."

I have seen men incapable of the sciences, but never any incapable of virtue. Let us acknowledge that no legislator ever announced to the world more useful truths.

A multitude of Greek philosophers taught afterwards a morality equally pure. Had they distinguished themselves only by their vain systems of natural philosophy, their names would be mentioned at the present day only in derision. If they are still respected, it is because they were just, and because they taught mankind to be so.

It is impossible to read certain passages of Plato, and particularly the admirable exordium of the laws of Zaleucus, without experiencing an ardent love of honorable and generous actions. The Romans have their Cicero who alone is perhaps more valuable than all the philosophers of Greece. After him come men more respectable still, but whom we may almost despair of imitating; these are Epictetus in slavery, and the Antonines and Julian upon a throne.

Where is the citizen to be found among us who would deprive himself, like Julian, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius, of all the refined accommodations of our delicate and luxurious modes of living? Who would, like them, sleep on the bare ground? Who would restrict himself to their frugal habits? Who would, like them, march bareheaded and barefooted at the head of the armies, exposed sometimes to the burning sun, and at other times to the freezing blast? Who would, like them, keep perfect mastery of all his passions? We have among us devotees, but where are the sages? where are the souls just and tolerant, serene and undaunted?

There have been some philosophers of the closet in France; and all of them, with the exception of Montaigne, have been persecuted. It seems to me the last degree of malignity that our nature can exhibit, to attempt to oppress those who devote their best endeavors to correct and improve it.

I can easily conceive of the fanatics of one sect slaughtering those of another sect; that the Franciscans should hate the Dominicans, and that a bad artist should cabal and intrigue for the destruction of an artist that surpasses him; but that the sage Charron should have been menaced with the loss of life; that the learned and noble-minded Ramus should have been actually assassinated; that Descartes should have been obliged to withdraw to Holland in order to escape the rage of ignorance; that Gassendi should have been often compelled to retire to Digne, far distant from the calumnies of Paris, are events that load a nation with eternal opprobrium.

One of the philosophers who were most persecuted, was the immortal Bayle, the honor of human nature. I shall be told that the name of Jurieu, his slanderer and persecutor, is become execrable; I acknowledge that it is so; that of the Jesuit Letellier is become so likewise; but is it the less true that the great men whom he oppressed ended their days in exile and penury?

One of the pretexts made use of for reducing Bayle to poverty, was his

article on David, in his valuable dictionary. He was reproached with not praising actions which were in themselves unjust, sanguinary, atrocious, contrary to good faith, or grossly offensive to decency.

Bayle certainly has not praised David for having, according to the Hebrew historian, collected six hundred vagabonds overwhelmed with debts and crimes; for having pillaged his countrymen at the head of these banditti; for having resolved to destroy Nabal and his whole family, because he refused paying contributions to him; for having hired out his services to King Achish, the enemy of his country; for having afterwards betrayed Achish, notwithstanding his kindness to him; for having sacked the villages in alliance with that king; for having massacred in these villages every human being, including even infants at the breast, that no one might be found on a future day to give testimony of his depredations, as if an infant could have possibly disclosed his villainy; for having destroyed all the inhabitants of some other villages under saws, and harrows, and axes, and in brick-kilns; for having wrested the throne from Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, by an act of perfidy; for having despoiled of his property and afterwards put to death Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul, and son of his own peculiar friend and generous protector, Jonathan; or for having delivered up to the Gibeonites two other sons of Saul, and five of his grandsons who perished by the gallows.

I do not notice the extreme incontinence of David, his numerous concubines, his adultery with Bathsheba, or his murder of Uriah.

What then! is it possible that the enemies of Bayle should have expected or wished him to eulogize all these cruelties and crimes? Ought he to have said: Go, ye princes of the earth, and imitate the man after God's own heart; massacre without pity the allies of your benefactor; destroy or deliver over to destruction the whole family of your king; appropriate to your own pleasures all the women, while you are pouring out the blood of the men; and you will thus exhibit models of human virtue, especially if, in addition to all the rest, you do but compose a book of psalms?

Was not Bayle perfectly correct in his observation, that if David was the man after God's own heart, it must have been by his penitence, and not by his crimes? Did not Bayle perform a service to the human race when he said, that God, who undoubtedly dictated the Jewish history, has not consecrated all the crimes recorded in that history?

However, Bayle was in fact persecuted, and by whom? By the very men who had been elsewhere persecuted themselves; by refugees who in their own country would have been delivered over to the flames; and these refugees were opposed by other refugees called Jansenists, who had been driven from their own country by the Jesuits; who have at length been themselves driven from it

in their turn.

Thus all the persecutors declare against each other mortal war, while the philosopher, oppressed by them all, contents himself with pitying them.

It is not generally known, that Fontenelle, in 1718, was on the point of losing his pensions, place, and liberty, for having published in France, twenty years before, what may be called an abridgement of the learned Van Dale's "Treatise on Oracles", in which he had taken particular care to retrench and modify the original work, so as to give no unnecessary offence to fanaticism. A Jesuit had written against Fontenelle, and he had not deigned to make him any reply; and that was enough to induce the Jesuit Letellier, confessor to Louis XIV., to accuse Fontenelle to the king of atheism.

But for the fortunate mediation of M. d'Argenson, the son of a forging solicitor of Vire—a son worthy of such a father, as he was detected in forgery himself—would have proscribed, in his old age, the nephew of the great Corneille.

It is so easy for a confessor to seduce his penitent, that we ought to bless God that Letellier did no more harm than is justly imputed to him. There are two situations in which seduction and calumny cannot easily be resisted—the bed and the confessional.

We have always seen philosophers persecuted by fanatics. But can it be really possible, that men of letters should be seen mixed up in a business so odious; and that they should often be observed sharpening the weapons against their brethren, by which they are themselves almost universally destroyed or wounded in their turn. Unhappy men of letters, does it become you to turn informers? Did the Romans ever find a Garasse, a Chaumeix, or a Hayet, to accuse a Lucretius, a Posidonius, a Varro, or a Pliny?

How inexpressible is the meanness of being a hypocrite! how horrible is it to be a mischievous and malignant hypocrite! There were no hypocrites in ancient Rome, which reckoned us a small portion of its innumerable subjects. There were impostors, I admit, but not religious hypocrites, which are the most profligate and cruel species of all. Why is it that we see none such in England, and whence does it arise that there still are such in France? Philosophers, you will solve this problem with ease.

Section II.

This brilliant and beautiful name has been sometimes honored, and sometimes disgraced; like that of poet, mathematician, monk, priest, and everything dependent on opinion. Domitian banished the philosophers, and Lucian derided them. But what sort of philosophers and mathematicians were they whom the monster Domitian exiled? They were jugglers with their cups

and balls; the calculators of horoscopes, fortune-tellers, miserable peddling Jews, who composed philtres and talismans; gentry who had special and sovereign power over evil spirits, who evoked them from their infernal habitations, made them take possession of the bodies of men and women by certain words or signs, and dislodged them by other words or signs.

And what were the philosophers that Lucian held up to public ridicule? They were the dregs of the human race. They were a set of profligate beggars incapable of applying to any useful profession or occupation; men perfectly resembling the "Poor Devil," who has been described to us with so much both of truth and humor; men who are undecided whether to wear a livery, or to write the almanac of the "Annus Mirabilis," the marvellous year; whether to work on reviews, or on roads; whether to turn soldiers or priests; who in the meantime frequent the coffee-houses, to give their opinion upon the last new piece, upon God, upon being in general, and the various modes of being; who will then borrow your money, and immediately go away and write a libel against you in conjunction with the barrister Marchand, or the creature called Chaudon, or the equally despicable wretch called Bonneval.

It was not from such a school that the Ciceros, the Atticuses, the Epictetuses, the Trajans, Adrians, Antonines, and Julians proceeded. It was not such a school that formed a king of Prussia, who has composed as many philosophical treatises as he has gained battles, and who has levelled with the dust as many prejudices as enemies.

A victorious empress, at whose name the Ottomans tremble, and who so gloriously rules an empire more extensive than that of Rome, would never have been a great legistratrix, had she not been a philosopher. Every northern prince is so, and the North puts the South to absolute shame. If the confederates of Poland had only a very small share of philosophy, they would not expose their country, their estates, and their houses, to pillage; they would not drench their territory in blood; they would not obstinately and wantonly reduce themselves to being the most miserable of mankind; they would listen to the voice of their philosophic king, who has given so many noble proofs and so many admirable lessons of moderation and prudence in vain.

The great Julian was a philosopher when he wrote to his ministers and pontiffs his exquisite letters abounding in clemency and wisdom, which all men of judgment and feeling highly admire, even at the present day, however sincerely they may condemn his errors.

Constantine was not a philosopher when he assassinated his relations, his son and his wife, and when, reeking with the blood of his family, he swore that God had sent to him the "Labarum" in the clouds. It is a long bound that carries us from Constantine to Charles IX., and Henry III., kings of one of the

fifty great provinces of the Roman Empire. But if these kings had been philosophers, one would not have been guilty of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the other would not have made scandalous processions, nor have been reduced to the necessity of assassinating the duke of Guise and the cardinal, his brother, and at length have been assassinated himself by a young Jacobin, for the love of God and of the holy church.

If Louis the Just, the thirteenth monarch of that name, had been a philosopher, he would not have permitted the virtuous de Thou and the innocent Marshal de Marillac to have been dragged to the scaffold; he would not have suffered his mother to perish with hunger at Cologne; and his reign would not have been an uninterrupted succession of intestine discords and calamities.

Compare with those princes, thus ignorant, superstitious, cruel, and enslaved by their own passions or those of their ministers, such a man as Montaigne, or Charron, or the Chancellor de l'Hôpital, or the historian de Thou, or la Mothe Le Vayer, or a Locke, a Shaftesbury, a Sidney, or a Herbert; and say whether you would rather be governed by those sovereigns or by these sages.

When I speak of philosophers I do not mean the coarse and brutal cynics who appear desirous of being apes of Diogenes, but the men who imitate Plato and Cicero. As for you, voluptuous courtiers, and you also, men of petty minds, invested with a petty employment which confers on you a petty authority in a petty country, who uniformly exclaim against and abuse philosophy, proceed as long as you please with your invective railing. I consider you as the Nomentanuses inveighing against Horace; and the Cotins attempting to cry down Boileau.

Section III.

The stiff Lutheran, the savage Calvinist, the proud Anglican high churchman, the fanatical Jansenist, the Jesuit always aiming at dominion, even in exile and at the very gallows, the Sorbonnist who deems himself one of the fathers of a council; these, and some imbecile beings under their respective guidance, inveigh incessantly and bitterly against philosophy. They are all different species of the canine race, snarling and howling in their peculiar ways against a beautiful horse that is pasturing in a verdant meadow, and who never enters into contest with them about any of the carrion carcasses upon which they feed, and for which they are perpetually fighting with one another.

They every day produce from the press their trash of philosophic theology, their philosophico-theological dictionaries; their old and battered arguments, as common as the streets, which they denominate "demonstrations"; and their ten thousand times repeated and ridiculous assertions which they call

"lemmas," and "corollaries"; as false coiners cover a lead crown with a plating of silver.

They perceive that they are despised by all persons of reflection, and that they can no longer deceive any but a few weak old women. This state is far more humiliating and mortifying than even being expelled from France and Spain and Naples. Everything can be supported except contempt. We are told that when the devil was conquered by Raphael—as it is clearly proved he was—that haughty compound of body and spirit at first easily consoled himself with the idea of the chances of war. But when he understood that Raphael laughed at him, he roundly swore that he would never forgive him. Accordingly, the Jesuits never forgave Pascal; accordingly, Jerieu went on calumniating Bayle even to the grave; and just in the same manner all the Tartuffes, all the hypocrites, in Molière's time, inveighed against that author to his dying day. In their rage they resort to calumnies, as in their folly they publish arguments.

One of the most determined slanderers, as well as one of the most contemptible reasoners that we have among us, is an ex-Jesuit of the name of Paulian, who published a theologico-philosophical rhapsody in the city of Avignon, formerly a papal city, and perhaps destined to be so again. This person accuses the authors of the "Encyclopædia" of having said:

"That as man is by his nature open only to the pleasures of the senses, these pleasures are consequently the sole objects of his desires; that man in himself has neither vice nor virtue, neither good nor bad morals, neither justice nor injustice; that the pleasures of the senses produce all the virtues; that in order to be happy, men must extinguish remorse, etc."

In what articles of the "Encyclopædia," of which five new editions have lately commenced, are these horrible propositions to be found? You are bound actually to produce them. Have you carried the insolence of your pride and the madness of your character to such an extent as to imagine that you will be believed on your bare word? These ridiculous absurdities may be found perhaps in the works of your own casuists, or those of the Porter of the Chartreux, but they are certainly not to be found in the articles of the "Encyclopædia" composed by M. Diderot, M. d'Alembert, the chevalier Jaucourt, or M. de Voltaire. You have never seen them in the articles of the Count de Tressan, nor in those of Messrs. Blondel, Boucher-d'Argis, Marmontel, Venel, Tronchin, d'Aubenton, d'Argenville, and various others, who generously devoted their time and labors to enrich the "Encyclopædic Dictionary," and thereby conferred an everlasting benefit on Europe. Most assuredly, not one of them is chargeable with the abominations you impute to them. Only yourself, and Abraham Chaumeix, the vinegar merchant and crucified convulsionary, could be capable of broaching so infamous a

calumny.

You confound error with truth, because you have not sense sufficient to distinguish between them. You wish to stigmatize as impious the maxim adopted by all publicists, "That every man is free to choose his country."

What! you contemptible preacher of slavery, was not Queen Christina free to travel to France and reside at Rome? Were not Casimir and Stanislaus authorized to end their days in France? Was it necessary, because they were Poles, that they should die in Poland? Did Goldoni, Vanloo, and Cassini give offense to God by settling at Paris? Have all the Irish, who have established themselves in fame and fortune in France, committed by so doing a mortal sin?

And you have the stupidity to print such extravagance and absurdity as this, and Riballier has stupidity enough to approve and sanction you; and you range in one and the same class Bayle, Montesquieu, and the madman de La Mettrie; and it may be added, you have found the French nation too humane and indulgent, notwithstanding all your slander and malignity, to deliver you over to anything but scorn!

What! do you dare to calumniate your country—if indeed a Jesuit can be said to have a country? Do you dare to assert "that philosophers alone in France attribute to chance the union and disunion of the atoms which constitute the soul of man?" "Mentiris impudentissime!" I defy you to produce a single book, published within the last thirty years, in which anything at all is attributed to chance, which is merely a word without a meaning.

Do you dare to accuse the sagacious and judicious Locke of having said "that it is possible the soul may be a spirit, but that he is not perfectly sure it is so; and that we are unable to decide what it may be able or unable to acquire?"

"Mentiris impudentissime!" Locke, the truly respectable and venerable Locke, says expressly, in his answer to the cavilling and sophistical Stillingfleet, "I am strongly persuaded, although it cannot be shown, by mere reason, that the soul is immaterial, because the veracity of God is a demonstration of the truth of all that He has revealed, and the absence of another demonstration can never throw any doubt upon what is already demonstrated."

See, moreover, under the article "Soul," how Locke expresses himself on the bounds of human knowledge, and the immensity of the power of the Supreme Being. The great philosopher Bolingbroke declares that the opinion opposite to Locke's is blasphemy. All the fathers, during the first three ages of the church, regarded the soul as a light, attenuated species of matter, but did not the less, in consequence, regard it as immortal. But now, forsooth, even your college drudges consequentially put themselves forward and denounce as

"atheists" those who, with the fathers of the Christian church, think that God is able to bestow and to preserve the immortality of the soul, whatever may be the substance it consists of.

You carry your audacity so far as to discover atheism in the following words, Who produces motion in nature? God. "Who produces vegetation in plants? God. Who produces motion in animals? God. Who produces thought in man? God."

We cannot so properly say on this occasion, "Mentiris impudentissime"; but we should rather say you impudently blaspheme the truth. We conclude with observing that the hero of the ex-Jesuit Paulian is the ex-Jesuit Patouillet, the author of a bishop's mandate in which all the parliaments of the kingdom are insulted. This mandate was burned by the hands of the executioner. Nothing after this was wanting but for the ex-Jesuit Paulian to elevate the ex-Jesuit Nonnotte to be a father of the church, and to canonize the Jesuits Malagrida, Guignard, Garnet, and Oldham, and all other Jesuits to whom God has granted the grace of being hanged or quartered; they were all of them great metaphysicians, great philosophico-theologians.

Section IV.

People who never think frequently inquire of those who do think, what has been the use of philosophy? To destroy in England the religious rage which brought Charles I. to the scaffold; to deprive an archbishop in Sweden of the power, with a papal bull in his hand, of shedding the blood of the nobility; to preserve in Germany religious peace, by holding up theological disputes to ridicule; finally, to extinguish in Spain the hideous and devouring flames of the Inquisition.

Gauls! unfortunate Gauls! it prevents stormy and factious times from producing among you a second "Fronde," and a second "Damiens." Priests of Rome! it compels you to suppress your bull In cœna domini, that monument of impudence and stupidity. Nations! it humanizes your manners. Kings, it gives you instruction!

Section V.

The philosopher is the lover of wisdom and truth; to be a sage is to avoid the senseless and the depraved. The philosopher, therefore, should live only among philosophers.

I will suppose that there are still some sages among the Jews; if one of these, when dining in company with some rabbis, should help himself to a plate of eels or hare, or if he cannot refrain from a hearty laugh at some superstitious and ridiculous observations made by them in the course of conversation, he is forever ruined in the synagogue; the like remark may be

made of a Mussulman, a Gueber, or a Banian.

I know it is contended by many that the sage should never develop his opinions to the vulgar; that he should be a madman with the mad, and foolish among fools; no one, however, has yet ventured to say that he should be a knave among knaves. But if it be required that a sage should always join in opinion with the deluders of mankind, is not this clearly the same as requiring that he should not be an honest man? Would any one require that a respectable physician should always be of the same opinion as charlatans?

The sage is a physician of souls. He ought to bestow his remedies on those who ask them of him, and avoid the company of quacks, who will infallibly persecute him. If, therefore, a madman of Asia Minor, or a madman of India, says to the sage: My good friend, I think you do not believe in the mare Borac, or in the metamorphoses of Vishnu; I will denounce you, I will hinder you from being bostanji, I will destroy your credit; I will persecute you—the sage ought to pity him and be silent.

If ignorant persons, but at the same time persons of good understanding and dispositions, and willing to receive instruction, should ask him: Are we bound to believe that the distance between the moon and Venus is only five hundred leagues, and that between Mercury and the sun the same, as the principal fathers of the Mussulman religion insist, in opposition to all the most learned astronomers?—the sage may reply to them that the fathers may possibly be mistaken. He should at all times inculcate upon them that a hundred abstract dogmas are not of the value of a single good action, and that it is better to relieve one individual in distress than to be profoundly acquainted with the abolishing and abolished. When a rustic sees a serpent ready to dart at him, he will kill it; when a sage perceives a bigot and a fanatic, what will he do? He will prevent them from biting.

PHILOSOPHY.

Section I.

Write filosophy or philosophy as you please, but agree that as soon as it appears it is persecuted. Dogs to whom you present an aliment for which they have no taste, bite you. You will say that I repeat myself; but we must a hundred times remind mankind that the holy conclave condemned Galileo; and that the pedants who declared all the good citizens excommunicated who should submit to the great Henry IV., were the same who condemned the only truths which could be found in the works of Descartes.

All the spaniels of the theological kennel bark at one another, and all together at de Thou, la Mothe, Le Vayer, and Bayle. What nonsense has been written by little Celtic scholars against the wise Locke!

These Celts say that Cæsar, Cicero, Seneca, Pliny, and Marcus Aurelius, might be philosophers, but that philosophy is not permitted among the Celts. We answer that it is permitted and very useful among the French; that nothing has done more good to the English; and that it is time to exterminate barbarity. You reply that that will never come to pass. No; with the uninformed and foolish it will not; but with honest people the affair is soon concluded.

Section II.

One of the great misfortunes, as also one of the great follies, of mankind, is that in all countries which we call polished, except, perhaps, China, priests concern themselves with what belongs only to philosophers. These priests interfered with regulating the year; it was, they say, their right; for it was necessary that the people should know their holy days. Thus the Chaldæan, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman priests, believed themselves mathematicians and astronomers; but what mathematics and astronomy! Whoever makes a trade of quackery cannot have a just and enlightened mind. They were astrologers, and never astronomers.

The Greek priests themselves first made the year to consist only of three hundred and sixty days. Their geometricians must have informed them that they were deceived by five days and more. They, therefore, corrected their year. Other geometricians further showed them that they were deceived by six hours. Iphitus obliged them to change their Greek almanac. They added one day in four years to their faulty year; Iphitus celebrated this change by the institution of the Olympiads.

They were finally obliged to have recourse to the philosopher Meton, who, combining the year of the moon with that of the sun, composed his cycle of nineteen years, at the end of which the sun and moon returned to the same point within an hour and a half. This cycle was graven in gold in the public place of Athens; and it is of this famous golden number that we still make use, with the necessary corrections.

We well know what ridiculous confusion the Roman priests introduced in their computation of the year. Their blunders were so great that their summer holidays arrived in winter. Cæsar, the universal Cæsar, was obliged to bring the philosopher Sosigenes from Alexandria to repair the enormous errors of the pontiffs. When it was necessary to correct the calendar of Julius Cæsar, under the pontificate of Gregory XIII., to whom did they address themselves? Was it to some inquisitor? It was to a philosopher and physician named Lilio.

When the almanac was given to Professor Cogé, rector of the university, to compose, he knew not even the subject. They were obliged to apply to M. de Lalande, of the Academy of Sciences, who was burdened with this very painful task, too poorly recompensed. The rhetorician Cogé, therefore, made a great mistake when he proposed for the prize of the university this subject so strangely expressed:

"Non magis Deo quam regibus infensa est ista quæ vocatur hodie philosophia."—"That which we now call philosophy, is not more the enemy of God than of kings." He would say less the enemy. He has taken magis for minus. And the poor man ought to know that our academies are not enemies either to the king or God.

Section III.

If philosophy has done so much honor to France in the "Encyclopædia," it must also be confessed that the ignorance and envy which have dared to condemn this work would have covered France with opprobrium, if twelve or fifteen convulsionaries, who formed a cabal, could be regarded as the organs of France; they were really only the ministers of fanaticism and sedition; those who forced the king to dissolve the body which they had seduced. Their fanatical credulity for convulsions and the miserable impostures of St. Médard, was so strong, that they obliged a magistrate, elsewhere wise and respectable, to say in full parliament that the miracles of the Catholic church always existed. By these miracles, we can only understand those of convulsions, for assuredly it never performed any others; at least, if we believe not in the little children resuscitated by St. Ovid. The time of miracles is passed; the triumphant church has no longer occasion for them. Seriously, was there one of the persecutors of the Encyclopædia who understood one word of the articles Astronomy, Dynamics, Geometry, Metaphysics, Botany, Medicine, or Anatomy, of which this book, become so necessary, treats in every volume. What a crowd of absurd imputations and gross calumnies have they accumulated against this treasure of all the sciences! They should be reprinted at the end of the "Encyclopædia," to eternize their shame. See what it is to judge a work which they were not even fit to study. The fools! they have exclaimed that philosophy ruined Catholicism. What, then, in twenty millions of people, has one been found who has vexed the least officer of the parish! one who has failed in respect to the churches! one who has publicly proffered against our ceremonies a single word which approached the virulence with which these railers have expressed themselves against the regal authority! Let us repeat that philosophy never did evil to the state, and that fanaticism, joined to the esprit du corps, has done much in all times.

Section IV.

Substance Of Ancient Philosophy.

I have consumed about forty years of my pilgrimage in two or three corners of the world, seeking the philosopher's stone called truth. I have consulted all the adepts of antiquity, Epicurus and Augustine, Plato and Malebranche, and I still remain in ignorance. In all the crucibles of philosophers, there are perhaps two or three ounces of gold, but all the rest is caput mortuum, insipid mire, from which nothing can be extracted.

It seems to me that the Greeks, our masters, wrote much more to show their intellect, than they made use of their intellect to instruct themselves. I see not a single author of antiquity who has a consistent, methodical, clear system, going from consequence to consequence.

All that I have been able to obtain by comparing and combining the systems of Plato, of the tutor of Alexander, Pythagoras, and the Orientals, is this: Chance is a word void of sense; nothing can exist without a cause. The world is arranged according to mathematical laws; therefore, it is arranged by an intelligence.

It is not an intelligent being like myself who presided at the formation of the world; for I cannot form a miserable worm; therefore, the world is the work of an intelligence prodigiously superior. Does this being, who possesses intelligence and power in so high a degree, necessarily exist? It must be so, for he must either have received being from another, or through his own nature. If he has received his being from another, which is very difficult to conceive, I must look up to this other, which will in that case be the first cause. On whichever side I turn, I must admit a first cause, powerful and intelligent, who by his own nature is necessarily so.

Has this first cause created things out of nothing? We cannot conceive that to create out of nothing is to change nothing into something. I cannot admit such a creation, at least until I find invincible reasons which force me to admit what my mind can never comprehend. All that exists appears to exist necessarily, since it exists; for if to-day there is a reason for the existence of things, there was one yesterday; there has been one in all times; and this cause must always have had its effect, without which it would have been a useless cause during eternity.

But how can things have always existed, being visibly under the hand of the first cause? This power must always have acted in like manner. There is no sun without light, there is no motion without a being passing from one point of space to another.

There is, therefore, a powerful and intelligent being who has always acted; and if this being had not acted, of what use to him would have been his

existence? All things are, therefore, emanations from this first cause. But how can we imagine that stone and clay may be emanations of the eternal, intelligent, and puissant being? Of two things, one must be; either that the matter of this stone and mine necessarily exists of itself, or that it exists necessarily by this first cause; there is no medium.

Thus, therefore, there are but two parts to take; either to admit matter eternal of itself, or matter eternally proceeding from a powerful, intelligent, eternal being. But existing of its own nature, or emanating from a producing being, it exists from all eternity, because it exists; and there is no reason that it might not have always existed.

If matter is eternally necessary, it is in consequence impossible—it is contradictory, that it should not exist; but what man can assure you that it is impossible, that it is contradictory, that this fly and this flint have not always existed? We are, however, obliged to swallow this difficulty, which more astonishes the imagination than contradicts the principles of reasoning.

Indeed, as soon as we have conceived that all has emanated from the supreme and intelligent being; that nothing has emanated from him without reason; that this being, always existing, must always have acted; that, consequently, all things must have eternally proceeded from the bosom of his existence—we should no more be deterred from believing the matter of which this fly and flint are formed is eternal, than we are deterred from conceiving light to be an emanation of the all-powerful being.

Since I am an extended and thinking being, my extent and thought are the necessary productions of this being. It is evident to me that I cannot give myself extent or thought. I have, therefore, received both from this necessary being.

Can he have given me what he has not? I have intelligence; I am in space; therefore, he is intelligent and is in space. To say that the Eternal Being, the All-Powerful God, has from all time necessarily filled the universe with His productions, is not taking from Him His free-will; but on the contrary, for free-will is but the power of acting. God has always fully acted; therefore God has always used the plenitude of His liberty.

The liberty which we call indifference is a word without an idea—an absurdity; for this would be to determine without reason; it would be an effect without a cause. Therefore God cannot have this pretended free-will, which is a contradiction in terms. He has, therefore, always acted by the same necessity which causes His existence. It is, therefore, impossible for the world to exist without God; it is impossible for God to exist without the world. This world is filled with beings who succeed each other; therefore, God has always produced beings in succession.

These preliminary assertions are the basis of the ancient eastern philosophy, and of that of the Greeks. We must except Democritus and Epicurus, whose corpuscular philosophy has combated these dogmas. But let us remark that the Epicureans were founded on an entirely erroneous philosophy, and that the metaphysical system of all the other philosophy subsisted with all the physical systems. All nature, except the void, contradicts Epicurus, and no phenomenon contradicts the philosophy which I explain. Now, a philosophy which agrees with all which passes in nature, and which contents the most attentive mind, is it not superior to all other unrevealed systems?

After the assertions of the most ancient philosophers, which I have approached as nearly as possible, what remains to us? A chaos of doubts and chimeras. I believe that there never was a philosopher of a system who did not confess at the end of his life that he had lost his time. It must be confessed that the inventors of the mechanical arts have been much more useful to men than the inventors of syllogisms. He who imagined a ship, towers much above him who imagined innate ideas.

PHYSICIANS.

Regimen is superior to medicine, especially as, from time immemorial, out of every hundred physicians, ninety-eight are charlatans. Molière was right in laughing at them; for nothing is more ridiculous than to witness an infinite number of silly women, and men no less than women, when they have eaten, drunk, sported, or abstained from repose too much, call in a physician for the headache, invoke him like a god, and request him to work the miracle of producing an alliance between health and intemperance, not omitting to fee the said god, who laughs at their folly.

It is not, however, the less true that an able physician may preserve life on a hundred occasions, and restore to us the use of our limbs. When a man falls into an apoplexy, it is neither a captain of infantry nor a sergeant at law who will cure him. If cataracts are formed on my eyes, it is not my neighbor who will relieve me. I distinguish not between physicians and surgeons, these professions being so intimately connected.

Men who are occupied in the restoration of health to other men, by the joint exertion of skill and humanity, are above all the great of the earth. They even partake of divinity, since to preserve and renew is almost as noble as to create. The Roman people had no physicians for more than five hundred years. This people, whose sole occupation was slaughter, in particular cultivated not

the art of prolonging life. What, therefore, happened at Rome to those who had a putrid fever, a fistula, a gangrene, or an inflammation of the stomach? They died. The small number of great physicians introduced into Rome were only slaves. A physician among the great Roman patricians was a species of luxury, like a cook. Every rich man had his perfumers, his bathers, his harpers, and his physician. The celebrated Musa, the physician of Augustus, was a slave; he was freed and made a Roman knight; after which physicians became persons of consideration.

When Christianity was so fully established as to bestow on us the felicity of possessing monks, they were expressly forbidden, by many councils, from practising medicine. They should have prescribed a precisely contrary line of conduct, if it were desirable to render them useful to mankind.

How beneficial to society were monks obliged to study medicine and to cure our ailments for God's sake! Having nothing to gain but heaven, they would never be charlatans; they would equally instruct themselves in our diseases and their remedies, one of the finest of occupations, and the only one forbidden them. It has been objected that they would poison the impious; but even that would be advantageous to the church. Had this been the case, Luther would never have stolen one-half of Catholic Europe from our holy father, the pope; for in the first fever which might have seized the Augustine Luther, a Dominican would have prepared his pills. You will tell me that he would not have taken them; but with a little address this might have been managed. But to proceed:

Towards the year 1517 lived a citizen, animated with a Christian zeal, named John; I do not mean John Calvin, but John, surnamed of God, who instituted the Brothers of Charity. This body, instituted for the redemption of captives, is composed of the only useful monks, although not accounted among the orders. The Dominicans, Bernardines, Norbertins, and Benedictines, acknowledge not the Brothers of Charity. They are simply adverted to in the continuation of the "Ecclesiastical History" of Fleury. Why? Because they have performed cures instead of miracles—have been useful and not caballed—cured poor women without either directing or seducing them. Lastly, their institution being charitable, it is proper that other monks should despise them.

Medicine, having then become a mercenary profession in the world, as the administration of justice is in many places, it has become liable to strange abuses. But nothing is more estimable than a physician who, having studied nature from his youth, knows the properties of the human body, the diseases which assail it, the remedies which will benefit it, exercises his art with caution, and pays equal attention to the rich and the poor. Such a man is very superior to the general of the Capuchins, however respectable this general may

be.

PIRATES OR BUCCANEERS.

In the time of Cardinal Richelieu, when the Spaniards and French detested each other, because Ferdinand the Catholic laughed at Louis XII., and Francis I. was taken at the battle of Pavia by an army of Charles V.—while this hatred was so strong that the false author of the political romance, and political piece of tediousness, called the "Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu," feared not to call the Spaniards "an insatiable nation, who rendered the Indies tributaries of hell"; when, in short, we were leagued in 1635 with Holland against Spain; when France had nothing in America, and the Spaniards covered the seas with their galleys—then buccaneers began to appear. They were at first French adventurers, whose quality was at most that of corsairs.

One of them, named Legrande, a native of Dieppe, associated himself with fifty determined men, and went to tempt fortune in a bark which had not even a cannon. Towards the Isle of Hispaniola (St. Domingo), he perceived a galley strayed from the great Spanish fleet; he approached it as a captain wishing to sell provisions; he mounted, attended by his people; he entered the chamber of the captain, who was playing at cards, threw him down, made him prisoner with his cargo, and returned to Dieppe with his vessel laden with immense riches. This adventure was the signal for forty years' unheard-of exploits.

French, English, and Dutch buccaneers associated together in the caverns of St. Domingo, of the little islands of St. Christopher and Tortola. They chose a chief for each expedition, which was the first origin of kings. Agriculturists would never have wished for a king; they had no need of one to sow, thrash, and sell corn.

When the buccaneers took a great prize, they bought with it a little vessel and cannon. One happy chance produced twenty others. If they were a hundred in number they were believed to be a thousand; it was difficult to escape them, still more so to follow them. They were birds of prey who established themselves on all sides, and who retired into inaccessible places; sometimes they ravaged from four to five hundred leagues of coast; sometimes they advanced on foot, or horseback, two hundred leagues up the countries. They surprised and pillaged the rich towns of Chagra, Maracaybo, Vera Cruz, Panama, Porto Rico, Campeachy, the island of St. Catherine, and the suburbs of Cartagena.

One of these pirates, named Olonois, penetrated to the gates of Havana,

followed by twenty men only. Having afterwards retired into his boat, the governor sent against him a ship of war with soldiers and an executioner. Olonois rendered himself master of the vessel, cut off the heads of the Spanish soldiers, whom he had taken himself, and sent back the executioner to the governor. Such astonishing actions were never performed by the Romans, or by other robbers. The warlike voyage of Admiral Anson round the world is only an agreeable promenade in comparison with the passage of the buccaneers in the South Sea, and with what they endured on terra firma.

Had their policy been equal to their invincible courage, they would have founded a great empire in America. They wanted females; but instead of ravishing and marrying Sabines, like the Romans, they procured them from the brothels of Paris, which sufficed not to produce a second generation.

They were more cruel towards the Spaniards than the Israelites ever were to the Canaanites. A Dutchman is spoken of, named Roc, who put several Spaniards on a spit and caused them to be eaten by his comrades. Their expeditions were tours of thieves, and never campaigns of conquerors; thus, in all the West Indies, they were never called anything but los ladrones. When they surprised and entered the house of a father of a family, they put him to the torture to discover his treasures. That sufficiently proves what we say in the article "Question," that torture was invented by robbers.

What rendered their exploits useless was, that they lavished in debauches, as foolish as monstrous, all that they acquired by rapine and murder. Finally, there remains nothing more of them than their name, and scarcely that. Such were the buccaneers.

But what people in Europe have not been pirates? The Goths, Alans, Vandals, and Huns, were they anything else? What were Rollo, who established himself in Normandy, and William Fier-a-bras, but the most able pirates? Was not Clovis a pirate, who came from the borders of the Rhine into Gaul?

PLAGIARISM.

It is said that this word is derived from the Latin word plaga, and that it signifies the condemnation to the scourge of those who sold freemen for slaves. This has nothing in common with the plagiarism of authors, who sell not men either enslaved or free. They only for a little money occasionally sell themselves.

When an author sells the thoughts of another man for his own, the larceny

is called plagiarism. All the makers of dictionaries, all compilers who do nothing else than repeat backwards and forwards the opinions, the errors, the impostures, and the truths already printed, we may term plagiarists, but honest plagiarists, who arrogate not the merit of invention. They pretend not even to have collected from the ancients the materials which they get together; they only copy the laborious compilers of the sixteenth century. They will sell you in quarto that which already exists in folio. Call them if you please bookmakers, not authors; range them rather among second-hand dealers than plagiarists.

The true plagiarist is he who gives the works of another for his own, who inserts in his rhapsodies long passages from a good book a little modified. The enlightened reader, seeing this patch of cloth of gold upon a blanket, soon detects the bungling purloiner.

Ramsay, who after having been a Presbyterian in his native Scotland, an Anglican in London, then a Quaker, and who finally persuaded Fénelon that he was a Catholic, and even pretended a penchant for celestial love—Ramsay, I say, compiled the "Travels of Cyrus," because his master made his Telemachus travel. So far he only imitated; but in these travels he copies from an old English author, who introduces a young solitary dissecting his dead goat, and arriving at a knowledge of the Deity by the process, which is very much like plagiarism. On conducting Cyrus into Egypt, in describing that singular country, he employs the same expressions as Bossuet, whom he copies word for word without citing; this is plagiarism complete. One of my friends reproached him with this one day; Ramsay replied that he was not aware of it, and that it was not surprising he should think like Fénelon and write like Bossuet. This was making out the adage, "Proud as a Scotsman."

The most singular of all plagiarism is possibly that of Father Barre, author of a large history of Germany in ten volumes. The history of Charles XII. had just been printed, and he inserted more than two hundred pages of it in his work; making a duke of Lorraine say precisely that which was said by Charles XII.

He attributes to the emperor Arnold that which happened to the Swedish monarch. He relates of the emperor Rudolph that which was said of King Stanislaus. Waldemar, king of Denmark, acts precisely like Charles at Bender, etc.

The most pleasant part of the story is, that a journalist, perceiving this extraordinary resemblance between the two works, failed not to impute the plagiarism to the author of the history of Charles XII., who had composed his work twenty years before the appearance of that of Father Barre. It is chiefly in poetry that plagiarism is allowed to pass; and certainly, of all larcenies, it is

that which is least dangerous to society.

PLATO.

Section I.

Of The Timæus Of Plato And Some Other Things.

The fathers of the Church, of the first four centuries, were all Greeks and Platonists: you find not one Roman who wrote for Christianity, or who had the slightest tincture of philosophy. I will here observe, by the way, that it is strange enough, the great Church of Rome, which contributed in nothing to this establishment, has alone reaped all the advantage. It has been with this revolution, as with all those produced by civil wars: the first who trouble a state, always unknowingly labor for others rather than for themselves.

The school of Alexandria, founded by one named Mark, to whom succeeded Athenagoras, Clement, and Origen, was the centre of the Christian philosophy. Plato was regarded by all the Greeks of Alexandria as the master of wisdom, the interpreter of the divinity. If the first Christians had not embraced the dogmas of Plato, they would never have had any philosophers, any man of mind in their party. I set aside inspiration and grace which are above all philosophy, and speak only of the ordinary course of human events.

It is said that it was principally in the "Timæus" of Plato that the Greek fathers were instructed. This "Timæus" passes for the most sublime work of all ancient philosophy. It is almost the only one which Dacier has not translated, and I think the reason is, because he did not understand it, and that he feared to discover to clear-sighted readers the face of this Greek divinity, who is only adored because he is veiled.

Plato, in this fine dialogue, commences by introducing an Egyptian priest, who teaches Solon the ancient history of the city of Athens, which was preserved faithfully for nine thousand years in the archives of Egypt.

Athens, says the priest, was once the finest city of Greece, and the most renowned in the world for the arts of war and peace. She alone resisted the warriors of the famous island Atlantis, who came in innumerable vessels to subjugate a great part of Europe and Asia. Athens had the glory of freeing so many vanquished people, and of preserving Egypt from the servitude which menaced us. But after this illustrious victory and service rendered to mankind, a frightful earthquake in twenty-four hours swallowed the territory of Athens, and all the great island of Atlantis. This island is now only a vast sea, which the ruins of this ancient world and the slime mixed with its waters rendered

unnavigable.

This is what the priest relates to Solon: and such is the manner in which Plato prepares to explain to us subsequently, the formation of the soul, the operations of the "Word," and his trinity. It is not physically impossible that there might be an island Atlantis, which had not existed for nine thousand years, and which perished by an earthquake, like Herculaneum and so many other cities; but our priest, in adding that the sea which washes Mount Atlas is inaccessible to vessels, renders the history a little suspicious.

It may be, after all, that since Solon—that is to say, in the course of three thousand years—vessels have dispersed the slime of the ancient island Atlantis and rendered the sea navigable; but it is still surprising that he should prepare by this island to speak of the "Word."

Perhaps in telling this priest's or old woman's story, Plato wished to insinuate something contrary to the vicissitudes which have so often changed the face of the globe. Perhaps he would merely say what Pythagoras and Timæus of Locris have said so long before him, and what our eyes tell us every day—that everything in nature perishes and is renewed. The history of Deucalion and Pyrrha, the fall of Phæthon, are fables: but inundations and conflagrations are truths.

Plato departs from his imaginary island, to speak of things which the best of philosophers of our days would not disavow. "That which is produced has necessarily a cause, an author. It is difficult to discover the author of this world; and when he is found it is dangerous to speak of him to the people."

Nothing is more true, even now, than that if a sage, in passing by our Lady of Loretto, said to another sage, his friend, that our Lady of Loretto, with her little black face, governs not the entire universe, and a good woman overheard these words, and related them to other good women of the march of Ancona, the sage would be stoned like Orpheus. This is precisely the situation in which the first Christians were believed to be, who spoke not well of Cybele and Diana, which alone should attach them to Plato. The unintelligible things which he afterwards treats of, ought not to disgust us with him.

I will not reproach Plato with saying, in his "Timæus," that the world is an animal; for he no doubt understands that the elements in motion animate the world; and he means not, by animal, a dog or a man, who walks, feels, eats, sleeps, and engenders. An author should always be explained in the most favorable sense; and it is not while we accuse people, or when we denounce their books, that it is right to interpret malignantly and poison all their words; nor is it thus that I shall treat Plato.

According to him there is a kind of trinity which is the soul of matter.

These are his words: "From the indivisible substance, always similar to itself, and the divisible substance, a third substance is composed, which partakes of the same and of others."

Afterwards came the Pythagorean number, which renders the thing still more unintelligible, and consequently more respectable. What ammunition for people commencing a paper war! Friend reader, a little patience and attention, if you please: "When God had formed the soul of the world of these three substances, the soul shot itself into the midst of the universe, to the extremities of being; spreading itself everywhere, and reacting upon itself, it formed at all times a divine origin of eternal wisdom."

And some lines afterwards: "Thus the nature of the immense animal which we call the world, is eternal." Plato, following the example of his predecessors, then introduces the Supreme Being, the Creator of the world, forming this world before time; so that God could not exist without the world, nor the world without God; as the sun cannot exist without shedding light into space, nor this light steal into space without the sun.

I pass in silence many Greek, or rather Oriental ideas; as for example—that there are four sorts of animals—celestial gods, birds of the air, fishes, and terrestrial animals, to which last we have the honor to belong.

I hasten to arrive at a second trinity: "the being engendered, the being who engenders, and the being which resembles the engendered and the engenderer." This trinity is formal enough, and the fathers have found their account in it.

This trinity is followed by a rather singular theory of the four elements. The earth is founded on an equilateral triangle, water on a right-angled triangle, air on a scalene, and fire on an isosceles triangle. After which he demonstratively proves that there can be but five worlds, because there are but five regular solid bodies, and yet that there is but one world which is round.

I confess that no philosopher in Bedlam has ever reasoned so powerfully. Rouse yourself, friend reader, to hear me speak of the other famous trinity of Plato, which his commentators have so much vaunted: it is the Eternal Being, the Eternal Creator of the world; His word, intelligence, or idea; and the good which results from it. I assure you that I have sought for it diligently in this "Timæus," and I have never found it there; it may be there "totidem literis," but it is not "totidem verbis," or I am much mistaken.

After reading all Plato with great reluctance, I perceived some shadow of the trinity for which he is so much honored. It is in the sixth book of his "Chimerical Republic," in which he says: "Let us speak of the Son, the wonderful production of good, and His perfect image." But unfortunately he

discovers this perfect image of God to be the sun. It was therefore the physical sun, which with the Word and the Father composed the platonic trinity. In the "Epinomis" of Plato there are very curious absurdities, one of which I translate as reasonably as I can, for the convenience of the reader:

"Know that there are eight virtues in heaven: I have observed them, which is easy to all the world. The sun is one of its virtues, the moon another; the third is the assemblage of stars; and the five planets, with these three virtues, make the number eight. Be careful of thinking that these virtues, or those which they contain, and which animate them, either move of themselves or are carried in vehicles; be careful, I say, of believing that some may be gods and others not; that some may be adorable, and others such as we should neither adore or invoke. They are all brothers; each has his share; we owe them all the same honors; they fill all the situations which the Word assigned to them, when it formed the visible universe."

Here is the Word already found: we must now find the three persons. They are in the second letter from Plato to Dionysius, which letters assuredly are not forged; the style is the same as that of his dialogues. He often says to Dionysius and Dion things very difficult to comprehend, and which we might believe to be written in numbers, but he also tells us very clear ones, which have been found true a long time after him. For example, he expresses himself thus in his seventh letter to Dion:

"I have been convinced that all states are very badly governed; there is scarcely any good institution or administration. We see, as it were, day after day, that all follow the path of fortune rather than that of wisdom." After this short digression on temporal affairs, let us return to spiritual ones, to the Trinity. Plato says to Dionysius:

"The King of the universe is surrounded by His works: all is the effect of His grace. The finest of things have their first cause in Him; the second in perfection have in Him their second cause, and He is further the third cause of works of the third degree."

The Trinity, such as we acknowledge, could not be recognized in this letter; but it was a great point to have in a Greek author a guaranty of the dogmas of the dawning Church. Every Greek church was therefore Platonic, as every Latin church was peripatetic, from the commencement of the third century. Thus two Greeks whom we have never understood, were the masters of our opinions until the time in which men at the end of two thousand years were obliged to think for themselves.

Section II.

Questions On Plato And Some Other Trifles.

Plato, in saying to the Greeks what so many philosophers of other nations have said before him, in assuring them that there is a Supreme Intelligence which arranged the universe—did he think that this Supreme Intelligence resided in a single place, like a king of the East in his seraglio? Or rather did he believe that this Powerful Intelligence spread itself everywhere like light, or a being still more delicate, prompt, active, and penetrating than light? The God of Plato, in a word, is he in matter, or is he separated from it? Oh, you who have read Plato attentively, that is to say, seven or eight fantastical dreams hidden in some garret in Europe, if ever these questions reach you, I implore you to answer them.

The barbarous island of Cassite rides, in which men lived in the woods in the time of Plato, has finally produced philosophers who are as much beyond him as Plato was beyond those of his contemporaries who reasoned not at all. Among these philosophers, Clarke is perhaps altogether the clearest, the most profound, the most methodical, and the strongest of all those who have spoken of the Supreme Being.

When he gave his excellent book to the public he found a young gentleman of the county of Gloucester who candidly advanced objections as strong as his demonstrations. We can see them at the end of the first volume of Clarke; it was not on the necessary existence of the Supreme Being that he reasoned; it was on His infinity and immensity.

It appears not indeed, that Clarke has proved that there is a being who penetrates intimately all which exists, and that this being whose properties we cannot conceive has the property of extending Himself to the greatest imaginable distance.

The great Newton has demonstrated that there is a void in nature; but what philosopher could demonstrate to me that God is in this void; that He touches it; that He fills it? How, bounded as we are, can we attain to the knowledge of these mysteries? Does it not suffice, that it proves to us that a Supreme Master exists? It is not given to us to know what He is nor how He is.

It seems as if Locke and Clarke had the keys of the intelligible world. Locke has opened all the apartments which can be entered; but has not Clarke wished to penetrate a little above the edifice? How could a philosopher like Samuel Clarke, after so admirable a work on the existence of God, write so pitiable a one on matters of fact?

How could Benedict Spinoza, who had as much profundity of mind as Samuel Clarke, after raising himself to the most sublime metaphysics, how could he not perceive that a Supreme Intelligence presides over works visibly arranged with a supreme intelligence—if it is true after all that such is the system of Spinoza?

How could Newton, the greatest of men, comment upon the Apocalypse, as we have already remarked? How could Locke, after having so well developed the human understanding, degrade his own in another work? I fancy I see eagles, who after darting into a cloud go to rest on a dunghill.

POETS.

A young man on leaving college deliberates whether he shall be an advocate, a physician, a theologian, or a poet—whether he shall take care of our body, our soul, or our entertainment. We have already spoken of advocates and physicians; we will now speak of the prodigious fortune which is sometimes made by the theologian.

The theologian becomes pope, and has not only his theological valets, cooks, singers, chamberlains, physicians, surgeons, sweepers, agnus dei makers, confectioners, and preachers, but also his poet. I know not what inspired personage was the poet of Leo X., as David was for some time the poet of Saul.

It is surely of all the employments in a great house, that which is the most useless. The kings of England, who have preserved in their island many of the ancient usages which are lost on the continent, have their official poet. He is obliged once a year to make an ode in praise of St. Cecilia, who played so marvellously on the organ or psalterium that an angel descended from the ninth heaven to listen to her more conveniently—the harmony of the psaltery, in ascending from this place to the land of angels, necessarily losing a small portion of its volume.

Moses is the first poet that we know of; but it is thought that before him the Chaldæans, the Syrians, and the Indians practised poetry, since they possessed music. Nevertheless, the fine canticle which Moses chanted with his sister Miriam, when they came out of the Red Sea, is the most ancient poetical monument in hexameter verse that we possess. I am not of the opinion of those impious and ignorant rogues, Newton, Le Clerc, and others, who prove that all this was written about eight hundred years after the event, and who insolently maintain that Moses could not write in Hebrew, since Hebrew is only a comparatively modern dialect of the Phœnician, of which Moses could know nothing at all. I examine not with the learned Huet how Moses was able to sing so well, who stammered and could not speak.

If we listened to many of these authors, Moses would be less ancient than Orpheus, Musæus, Homer, and Hesiod. We perceive at the first glance the

absurdity of this opinion; as if a Greek could be an ancient as a Jew!

Neither will I reply to those impertinent persons who suspect that Moses is only an imaginary personage, a fabulous imitation of the fable of the ancient Bacchus; and that all the prodigies of Bacchus, since attributed to Moses, were sung in orgies before it was known that Jews existed in the world. This idea refutes itself; it is obvious to good sense that it is impossible that Bacchus could have existed before Moses.

We have still, however, an excellent Jewish poet undeniably anterior to Horace—King David; and we know well how infinitely superior the "Miserere," is to the "Justum ac tenacem propositi virum." But what is most astonishing, legislators and kings have been our earliest poets. We find even at present people so good as to become poets for kings. Virgil indeed had not the office of poet to Augustus, nor Lucan that of poet to Nero; but I confess that it would have debased the profession not a little to make gods of either the one or the other.

It is asked, why poetry, being so unnecessary to the world, occupies so high a rank among the fine arts? The same question may be put with regard to music. Poetry is the music of the soul, and above all of great and of feeling souls. One merit of poetry few persons will deny; it says more and in fewer words than prose. Who was ever able to translate the following Latin words with the brevity with which they came from the brain of the poet: "Vive memor lethi, fugit hora, hoc quod loquor inde est?"

I speak not of the other charms of poetry, as they are well known; but I insist upon the grand precept of Horace, "Sapere est principium et fons." There can be no great poetry without great wisdom; but how connect this wisdom with enthusiasm, like Cæsar, who formed his plan of battle with circumspection, and fought with all possible ardor?

There have no doubt been ignorant poets, but then they have been bad poets. A man acquainted only with dactyls and spondees, and with a head full of rhymes, is rarely a man of sense; but Virgil is endowed with superior reason.

Lucretius, in common with all the ancients, was miserably ignorant of physical laws, a knowledge of which is not to be acquired by wit. It is a knowledge which is only to be obtained by instruments, which in his time had not been invented. Glasses are necessary—microscopes, pneumatic machines, barometers, etc., to have even a distant idea of the operations of nature.

Descartes knew little more than Lucretius, when his keys opened the sanctuary; and an hundred times more of the path has been trodden from the time of Galileo, who was better instructed physically than Descartes, to the

present day, than from the first Hermes to Lucretius.

All ancient physics are absurd: it was not thus with the philosophy of mind, and that good sense which, assisted by strength of intellect, can acutely balance between doubts and appearances. This is the chief merit of Lucretius; his third book is a masterpiece of reasoning. He argues like Cicero, and expresses himself like Virgil; and it must be confessed that when our illustrious Polignac attacked his third book, he refuted it only like a cardinal.

When I say, that Lucretius reasons in his third book like an able metaphysician, I do not say that he was right. We may argue very soundly, and deceive ourselves, if not instructed by revelation. Lucretius was not a Jew, and we know that Jews alone were in the right in the days of Cicero, of Posidonius, of Cæsar, and of Cato. Lastly, under Tiberius, the Jews were no longer in the right, and common sense was possessed by the Christians exclusively.

Thus it was impossible that Lucretius, Cicero, and Cæsar could be anything but imbecile, in comparison with the Jews and ourselves; but it must be allowed that in the eyes of the rest of the world they were very great men. I allow that Lucretius killed himself, as also did Cato, Cassius, and Brutus, but they might very well kill themselves, and still reason like men of intellect during their lives.

In every author let us distinguish the man from his works. Racine wrote like Virgil, but he became Jansenist through weakness, and he died in consequence of weakness equally great—because a man in passing through a gallery did not bestow a look upon him. I am very sorry for all this; but the part of Phædra is not therefore the less admirable.

POISONINGS.

Let us often repeat useful truths. There have always been fewer poisonings than have been spoken of: it is almost with them as with parricides; the accusations have been very common, and the crimes very rare. One proof is, that we have a long time taken for poison that which is not so. How many princes have got rid of those who were suspected by them by making them drink bullock's blood! How many other princes have swallowed it themselves to avoid falling into the hands of their enemies! All ancient historians, and even Plutarch, attest it.

I was so infatuated with these tales in my childhood that I bled one of my bulls, in the idea that his blood belonged to me, since he was born in my stable

—an ancient pretension of which I will not here dispute the validity. I drank this blood, like Atreus and Mademoiselle de Vergi, and it did me no more harm than horse's blood does to the Tartars, or pudding does to us every day, if it be not too rich.

Why should the blood of a bull be a poison, when that of a goat is considered a remedy? The peasants of my province swallow the blood of a cow, which they call fricassée, every day; that of a bull is not more dangerous. Be sure, dear reader, that Themistocles died not of it.

Some speculators of the court of Louis XIV. believed they discovered that his sister-in-law, Henrietta of England, was poisoned with powder of diamonds, which was put into a bowl of strawberries, instead of grated sugar; but neither the impalpable powder of glass or diamonds, nor that of any production of nature which was not in itself venomous, could be hurtful.

They are only sharp-cutting active points which can become violent. The exact observer, Mead, a celebrated English physician, saw through a microscope the liquor shot from the gums of irritated vipers. He pretends that he has always found them strewn with these cutting, pointed blades, the immense number of which tear and pierce the internal membranes.

The cantarella, of which it is pretended that Pope Alexander VI. and his bastard, the duke of Borgia, made great use, was, it is said, the foam of a hog rendered furious by suspending him by the feet with his head downwards, in which situation he was beaten to death; it was a poison as prompt and violent as that of the viper. A great apothecary assures me that Madame la Tofana, that celebrated poisoner of Naples, principally made use of this receipt; all which is perhaps untrue. This science is one of those of which we should be ignorant.

Poisons which coagulate the blood, instead of tearing the membranes, are opium, hemlock, henbane, aconite, and several others. The Athenians became so refined as to cause their countrymen, condemned to death, to die by poisons reputed cold; an apothecary was the executioner of the republic. It is said that Socrates died very peacefully, and as if he slept: I can scarcely believe it.

I made one remark on the Jewish books, which is, that among this people we see no one who was poisoned. A crowd of kings and priests perished by assassination; the history of the nation is the history of murders and robberies; but a single instance only is mentioned of a man who was poisoned, and this man was not a Jew—he was a Syrian named Lysias, general of the armies of Antiochus Epiphanes. The second Book of Maccabees says that he poisoned himself—"veneno vitam finivit;" but these Books of Maccabees are very suspicious. My dear reader, I have already desired you to believe nothing lightly.

What astonishes me most in the history of the manners of the ancient Romans is the conspiracy of the Roman women to cause to perish by poison, not only their husbands, but the principal citizens in general. "It was," says Titus Livius, "in the year 423 from the foundation of Rome, and therefore in the time of the most austere virtue; it was before there was any mention of divorce, though divorce was authorized; it was when women drank no wine, and scarcely ever went out of their houses, except to the temples." How can we imagine, that they suddenly applied themselves to the knowledge of poisons; that they assembled to compose them; and, without any apparent interest, thus administered death to the first men in Rome?

Lawrence Echard, in his abridged compilation, contents himself with saying, that "the virtue of the Roman ladies was strangely belied; that one hundred and seventy who meddled with the art of making poisons, and of reducing this art into precepts, were all at once accused, convicted, and punished." Titus Livius assuredly does not say that they reduced this art into rules. That would signify that they held a school of poisons, that they professed it as a science; which is ridiculous. He says nothing about a hundred and seventy professors in corrosive sublimate and verdigris. Finally, he does not affirm that there were poisoners among the wives of the senators and knights.

The people were extremely foolish, and reasoned at Rome as elsewhere. These are the words of Titus Livius: "The year 423 was of the number of unfortunate ones; there was a mortality caused by the temperature of the air or by human malice. I wish that we could affirm with some author that the corruption of the air caused this epidemic, rather than attribute the death of so many Romans to poison, as many historians have falsely written, to decry this year."

They have therefore written falsely, according to Titus Livius, who believes not that the ladies of Rome were poisoners: but what interest had authors in decrying this year? I know not.

"I relate the fact," continues he, "as it was related before me." This is not the speech of a satisfied man; besides, the alleged fact much resembles a fable. A slave accuses about seventy women, among whom are several of the patrician rank, of causing the plague in Rome by preparing poisons. Some of the accused demand permission to swallow their drugs, and expire on the spot; and their accomplices are condemned to death without the manner of their punishment being specified.

I suspect that this story to which Titus Livius gives no credit, deserves to be banished to the place in which the vessel is preserved which a vestal drew to shore with a girdle; where Jupiter in person stopped the flight of the

Romans; where Castor and Pollux came to combat on horseback in their behalf; where a flint was cut with a razor; and where Simon Barjonas, surnamed Peter, disputed miracles with Simon the magician.

There is scarcely any poison of which we cannot prevent the consequences by combating it immediately. There is no medicine which is not a poison when taken in too strong a dose. All indigestion is a poison. An ignorant physician, and even a learned but inattentive one, is often a poisoner. A good cook is a certain slow poisoner, if you are not temperate.

One day the marquis d'Argenson, minister of state for the foreign department, whilst his brother was minister of war, received from London a letter from a fool—as ministers do by every post; this fool proposed an infallible means of poisoning all the inhabitants of the capital of England. "This does not concern me," said the marquis d'Argenson to us; "it is a packet to my brother."

POLICY.

The policy of man consists, at first, in endeavoring to arrive at a state equal to that of animals, whom nature has furnished with food, clothing, and shelter. To attain this state is a matter of no little time and difficulty. How to procure for himself subsistence and accommodation, and protect himself from evil, comprises the whole object and business of man.

This evil exists everywhere; the four elements of nature conspire to form it. The barrenness of one-quarter part of the world, the numberless diseases to which we are subject, the multitude of strong and hostile animals by which we are surrounded, oblige us to be constantly on the alert in body and in mind, to guard against the various forms of evil.

No man, by his own individual care and exertion, can secure himself from evil; he requires assistance. Society therefore is as ancient as the world. This society consists sometimes of too many, and sometimes of too few. The vicissitudes of the world have often destroyed whole races of men and other animals, in many countries, and have multiplied them in others.

To enable a species to multiply, a tolerable climate and soil are necessary; and even with these advantages, men may be under the necessity of going unclothed, of suffering hunger, of being destitute of everything, and of perishing in misery.

Men are not like beavers, or bees, or silk-worms; they have no sure and infallible instinct which procures for them necessaries. Among a hundred men,

there is scarcely one that possesses genius; and among women, scarcely one among five hundred.

It is only by means of genius that those arts are invented, which eventually furnish something of that accommodation which is the great object of all policy.

To attempt these arts with success, the assistance of others is requisite; hands to aid you, and minds sufficiently acute and unprejudiced to comprehend you, and sufficiently docile to obey you. Before, however, all this can be discovered and brought together, thousands of years roll on in ignorance and barbarism; thousands of efforts for improvement terminate only in abortion. At length, the outlines of an art are formed, but thousands of ages are still requisite to carry it to perfection.

Foreign Policy.

When any one nation has become acquainted with metallurgy, it will certainly beat its neighbors and make slaves of them. You possess arrows and sabres, and were born in a climate that has rendered you robust. We are weak, and have only clubs and stones. You kill us, or if you permit us to live, it is that we may till your fields and build your houses. We sing some rustic ditty to dissipate your spleen or animate your languor, if we have any voice; or we blow on some pipes, in order to obtain from you clothing and bread. If our wives and daughters are handsome, you appropriate them without scruple to yourselves. The young gentleman, your son, not only takes advantage of the established policy, but adds new discoveries to this growing art. His servants proceed, by his orders, to emasculate my unfortunate boys, whom he then honors with the guardianship of his wives and mistresses. Such has been policy, the great art of making mankind contribute to individual advantage and enjoyment; and such is still policy throughout the largest portion of Asia.

Some nations, or rather hordes, having thus by superior strength and skill brought into subjection others, begin afterwards to fight with one another for the division of the spoil. Each petty nation maintains and pays soldiers. To encourage, and at the same time to control these soldiers, each possesses its gods, its oracles, and prophecies; each maintains and pays its soothsayers and slaughtering priests. These soothsayers or augurs begin with prophesying in favor of the heads of the nation; they afterwards prophesy for themselves and obtain a share in the government. The most powerful and shrewd prevail at last over the others, after ages of carnage which excite our horror, and of impostures which excite our laughter. Such is the regular course and completion of policy.

While these scenes of ravage and fraud are carried on in one portion of the globe, other nations, or rather clans, retire to mountain caverns, or districts

surrounded by inaccessible swamps, marshes, or some verdant and solitary spot in the midst of vast deserts of burning sand, or some peninsular and consequently easily protected territory, to secure themselves against the tyrants of the continent. At length all become armed with nearly the same description of weapons; and blood flows from one extremity of the world to the other.

Men, however, cannot forever go on killing one another; and peace is consequently made, till either party thinks itself sufficiently strong to recommence the war. Those who can write draw up these treaties of peace; and the chiefs of every nation, with a view more successfully to impose upon their enemies, invoke the gods to attest with what sincerity they bind themselves to the observance of these compacts. Oaths of the most solemn character are invented and employed, and one party engages in the name of the great Somonocodom, and the other in that of Jupiter the Avenger, to live forever in peace and amity; while in the same names of Somonocodom and Jupiter, they take the first opportunity of cutting one another's throats.

In times of the greatest civilization and refinement, the lion of *Æ*sop made a treaty with three animals, who were his neighbors. The object was to divide the common spoil into four equal parts. The lion, for certain incontestable and satisfactory reasons which he did not then deem it necessary to detail, but which he would be always ready to give in due time and place, first takes three parts out of the four for himself, and then threatens instant strangulation to whoever shall dare to touch the fourth. This is the true sublime of policy.

Internal Policy.

The object here is to accumulate for our own country the greatest quantity of power, honor, and enjoyment possible. To attain these in any extraordinary degree, much money is indispensable. In a democracy it is very difficult to accomplish this object. Every citizen is your rival; a democracy can never subsist but in a small territory. You may have wealth almost equal to your wishes through your own mercantile dealings, or transmitted in patrimony from your industrious and opulent grandfather; your fortune will excite jealousy and envy, but will purchase little real co-operation and service. If an affluent family ever bears sway in a democracy, it is not for a long time.

In an aristocracy, honors, pleasures, power, and money, are more easily obtainable. Great discretion, however, is necessary. If abuse is flagrant, revolution will be the consequence. Thus in a democracy all the citizens are equal. This species of government is at present rare, and appears to but little advantage, although it is in itself natural and wise. In aristocracy, inequality or superiority makes itself sensibly felt; but the less arrogant its demeanor, the more secure and successful will be its course.

Monarchy remains to be mentioned. In this, all mankind are made for one

individual: he accumulates all honors with which he chooses to decorate himself, tastes all pleasures to which he feels an inclination, and exercises a power absolutely without control; provided, let it be remembered, that he has plenty of money. If he is deficient in that, he will be unsuccessful at home as well as abroad, and will soon be left destitute of power, pleasures, honors, and perhaps even of life.

While this personage has money, not only is he successful and happy himself, but his relations and principal servants are flourishing in full enjoyment also; and an immense multitude of hirelings labor for them the whole year round, in the vain hope that they shall themselves, some time or other, enjoy in their cottages the leisure and comfort which their sultans and pashas enjoy in their harems. Observe, however, what will probably happen.

A jolly, full-fed farmer was formerly in possession of a vast estate, consisting of fields, meadows, vineyards, orchards, and forests. A hundred laborers worked for him, while he dined with his family, drank his wine, and went to sleep. His principal domestics, who plundered him, dined next, and ate up nearly everything. Then came the laborers, for whom there was left only a very meagre and insufficient meal. They at first murmured, then openly complained, speedily lost all patience, and at last ate up the dinner prepared for their master, and turned him out of his house. The master said they were a set of scoundrels, a pack of undutiful and rebellious children who assaulted and abused their own father. The laborers replied that they had only obeyed the sacred law of nature, which he had violated. The dispute was finally referred to a soothsayer in the neighborhood, who was thought to be actually inspired. The holy man takes the farm into his own hands, and nearly famishes both the laborers and the master; till at length their feelings counteract their superstition, and the saint is in the end expelled in his turn. This is domestic policy.

There have been more examples than one of this description; and some consequences of this species of policy still subsist in all their strength. We may hope that in the course of ten or twelve thousand ages, when mankind become more enlightened, the great proprietors of estates, grown also more wise, will on the one hand treat their laborers rather better, and on the other take care not to be duped by soothsayers.

POLYPUS.

In quality of a doubter, I have a long time filled my vocation. I have doubted when they would persuade me, that the glossopetres which I have

seen formed in my fields, were originally the tongues of sea-dogs, that the lime used in my barn was composed of shells only, that corals were the production of the excrement of certain little fishes, that the sea by its currents has formed Mount Cenis and Mount Taurus, and that Niobe was formerly changed into marble.

It is not that I love not the extraordinary, the marvellous, as well as any traveller or man of system; but to believe firmly, I would see with my own eyes, touch with my own hands, and that several times. Even that is not enough; I would still be aided by the eyes and hands of others.

Two of my companions, who, like myself, form questions on the "Encyclopædia," have for some time amused themselves with me in studying the nature of several of the little films which grow in ditches by the side of water lentils. These light herbs, which we call polypi of soft water, have several roots, from which circumstance we have given them the name of polypi. These little parasite plants were merely plants, until the commencement of the age in which we live. Leuenhoeck raises them to the rank of animals. We know not if they have gained much by it.

We think that, to be considered as an animal, it is necessary to be endowed with sensation. They therefore commence by showing us, that these soft water polypi have feeling, in order that we should present them with our right of citizenship.

We have not dared to grant it the dignity of sensation, though it appeared to have the greatest pretensions to it. Why should we give it to a species of small rush? Is it because it appears to bud? This property is common to all trees growing by the water-side; to willows, poplars, aspens, etc. It is so light, that it changes place at the least motion of the drop of water which bears it; thence it has been concluded that it walked. In like manner, we may suppose that the little, floating, marshy islands of St. Omer are animals, for they often change their place.

It is said its roots are its feet, its stalk its body, its branches are its arms; the pipe which composes its stalk is pierced at the top—it is its mouth. In this pipe there is a light white pith, of which some almost imperceptible animalcules are very greedy; they enter the hollow of this little pipe by making it bend, and eat this light paste;—it is the polypus who captures these animals with his snout, though it has not the least appearance of head, mouth, or stomach.

We have examined this sport of nature with all the attention of which we are capable. It appeared to us that the production called polypus resembled an animal much less than a carrot or asparagus. In vain we have opposed to our eyes all the reasonings which we formerly read; the evidence of our eyes has overthrown them. It is a pity to lose an illusion. We know how pleasant it

would be to have an animal which could reproduce itself by offshoots, and which, having all the appearances of a plant, could join the animal to the vegetable kingdom.

It would be much more natural to give the rank of an animal to the newly-discovered plant of Anglo-America, to which the pleasant name of Venus' fly-trap has been given. It is a kind of prickly sensitive-plant, the leaves of which fold of themselves; the flies are taken in these leaves and perish there more certainly than in the web of a spider. If any of our physicians would call this plant an animal, he would have partisans.

But if you would have something more extraordinary, more worthy of the observation of philosophers, observe the snail, which lives one and two whole months after its head is cut off, and which afterwards has a second head, containing all the organs possessed by the first. This truth, to which all children can be witnesses, is more worthy than the illusion of polypi of soft water. What becomes of its sensorium, its magazine of ideas, and soul, when its head is cut off? How do all these return? A soul which is renewed is a very curious phenomenon; not that it is more strange than a soul begotten, a soul which sleeps and awakes, or a condemned soul.

POLYTHEISM.

The plurality of gods is the great reproach at present cast upon the Greeks and Romans: but let any man show me, if he can, a single fact in the whole of their histories, or a single word in the whole of their books, from which it may be fairly inferred that they believed in many supreme gods; and if neither that fact nor word can be found, if, on the contrary, all antiquity is full of monuments and records which attest one sovereign God, superior to all other gods, let us candidly admit that we have judged the ancients as harshly as we too often judge our contemporaries.

We read in numberless passages that Zeus, Jupiter, is the master of gods and men. "Jovis omnia plena."—"All things are full of Jupiter." And St. Paul gives this testimony in favor of the ancients: "In ipso vivimus, movemur, et sumus, ut quidam vestrorum poetarum dixit."—"In God we live, and move, and have our being, as one of your own poets has said." After such an acknowledgment as this, how can we dare to accuse our instructors of not having recognized a supreme God?

We have no occasion whatever to examine upon this subject, whether there was formerly a Jupiter who was king of Crete, and who may possibly have

been considered and ranked as a god; or whether the Egyptians had twelve superior gods, or eight, among whom the deity called Jupiter by the Latins might be one. The single point to be investigated and ascertained here is, whether the Greeks and Romans acknowledged one celestial being as the master or sovereign of other celestial beings. They constantly tell us that they do; and we ought therefore to believe them.

The admirable letter of the philosopher Maximus of Madaura to St. Augustine is completely to our purpose: "There is a God," says he, "without any beginning, the common Father of all, but who never produced a being like Himself. What man is so stupid and besotted as to doubt it?" Such is the testimony of a pagan of the fourth century on behalf of all antiquity.

Were I inclined to lift the veil that conceals the mysteries of Egypt, I should find the deity adored under the name of Knef, who produced all things and presides over all the other deities; I should discover also a Mithra among the Persians, and a Brahma among the Indians, and could perhaps show, that every civilized nation admitted one supreme being, together with a multitude of dependent divinities. I do not speak of the Chinese, whose government, more respectable than all the rest, has acknowledged one God only for a period of more than four thousand years. Let us here confine ourselves to the Greeks and Romans, who are the objects of our immediate researches. They had among them innumerable superstitions—it is impossible to doubt it; they adopted fables absolutely ridiculous—everybody knows it; and I may safely add, that they were themselves sufficiently disposed to ridicule them. After all, however, the foundation of their theology was conformable to reason.

In the first place, with respect to the Greeks placing heroes in heaven as a reward for their virtues, it was one of the most wise and useful of religious institutions. What nobler recompense could possibly be bestowed upon them; what more animating and inspiring hope could be held out to them? Is it becoming that we, above all others, should censure such a practice—we who, enlightened by the truth, have piously consecrated the very usage which the ancients imagined? We have a far greater number of the blessed in honor of whom we have created altars, than the Greeks and Romans had of heroes and demi-gods; the difference is, that they granted the apotheosis to the most illustrious and resplendent actions, and we grant it to the most meek and retired virtues. But their deified heroes never shared the throne of Jupiter, the great architect, the eternal sovereign of the universe; they were admitted to his court and enjoyed his favors. What is there unreasonable in this? Is it not a faint shadow and resemblance of the celestial hierarchy presented to us by our religion? Nothing can be of a more salutary moral tendency than such an idea; and the reality is not physically impossible in itself. We have surely, upon this subject, no fair ground for ridiculing nations to whom we are indebted even

for our alphabet.

The second object of our reproaches, is the multitude of gods admitted to the government of the world; Neptune presiding over the sea, Juno over the air, Æolus over the winds, and Pluto or Vesta over the earth, and Mars over armies. We set aside the genealogies of all these divinities, which are as false as those which are every day fabricated and printed respecting individuals among ourselves; we pass sentence of condemnation on all their light and loose adventures, worthy of being recorded in the pages of the "Thousand and One Nights," and which never constituted the foundation or essence of the Greek and Roman faith; but let us at the same time candidly ask, where is the folly and stupidity of having adopted beings of a secondary order, who, whatever they may be in relation to the great supreme, have at least some power over our very differently-constituted race, which, instead of belonging to the second, belongs perhaps to the hundred thousandth order of existence? Does this doctrine necessarily imply either bad metaphysics or bad natural philosophy? Have we not ourselves nine choirs of celestial spirits, more ancient than mankind? Has not each of these choirs a peculiar name? Did not the Jews take the greater number of these names from the Persians? Have not many angels their peculiar functions assigned them? There was an exterminating angel, who fought for the Jews, and the angel of travellers, who conducted Tobit. Michael was the particular angel of the Hebrews; and, according to Daniel, he fights against the angel of the Persians, and speaks to the angel of the Greeks. An angel of inferior rank gives an account to Michael, in the book of Zachariah, of the state in which he had found the country. Every nation possessed its angel; the version of the Seventy Days, in Deuteronomy, that the Lord allotted the nations according to the number of angels. St. Paul, in the Acts of the Apostles, talks to the angel of Macedonia. These celestial spirits are frequently called gods in Scripture, Eloim. For among all nations, the word that corresponds with that of Theos, Deus, Dieu, God, by no means universally signifies the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth; it frequently signifies a celestial being, a being superior to man, but dependent upon the great Sovereign of Nature; and it is sometimes bestowed even on princes and judges.

Since to us it is a matter of truth and reality, that celestial substances actually exist, who are intrusted with the care of men and empires, the people who have admitted this truth without the light of revelation are more worthy of our esteem than our contempt.

The ridicule, therefore, does not attach to polytheism itself, but to the abuse of it; to the popular fables of superstition; to the multitude of absurd divinities which have been supposed to exist and to the number of which every individual might add at his pleasure.

The goddess of nipples, "dea Rumilia"; the goddess of conjugal union, "dea Pertunda"; the god of the water-closet, "deus Stercutius"; the god of flatulence, "deus Crepitus"; are certainly not calculated to attract the highest degree of veneration. These ridiculous absurdities, the amusement of the old women and children of Rome, merely prove that the word deus had acceptations of a widely different nature. Nothing can be more certain or obvious, than that the god of flatulence, "deus Crepitus," could never excite the same idea as deus divûm et hominum sator, the source of gods and men. The Roman pontiffs did not admit the little burlesque and baboon-looking deities which silly women introduced into their cabinets. The Roman religion was in fact, in its intrinsic character, both serious and austere. Oaths were inviolable; war could not be commenced before the college of heralds had declared it just; and a vestal convicted of having violated her vow of virginity, was condemned to death. These circumstances announce a people inclined to austerities, rather than a people volatile, frivolous, and addicted to ridicule.

I confine myself here to showing that the senate did not reason absurdly in adopting polytheism. It is asked, how that senate, to two or three deputies from which we were indebted both for chains and laws, could permit so many extravagances among the people, and authorize so many fables among the pontiffs? It would be by no means difficult to answer this question. The wise have in every age made use of fools. They freely leave to the people their lupercals and their saturnalia, if they only continue loyal and obedient; and the sacred pullets that promised victory to the armies, are judiciously secured against the sacrilege of being slaughtered for the table. Let us never be surprised at seeing, that the most enlightened governments have permitted customs and fables of the most senseless character. These customs and fables existed before government was formed; and no one would pull down an immense city, however irregular in its buildings, to erect it precisely according to line and level.

How can it arise, we are asked, that on one side we see so much philosophy and science, and on the other so much fanaticism? The reason is, that science and philosophy were scarcely born before Cicero, and that fanaticism reigned for centuries. Policy, in such circumstances, says to philosophy and fanaticism: Let us all three live together as well as we can.

POPERY.

PAPIST.—His highness has within his principality Lutherans, Calvinists, Quakers, Anabaptists, and even Jews; and you wish that he would admit

Unitarians?

TREASURER.—Certainly, if these Unitarians bring with them wealth and industry. You will only be the better paid your wages.

PAPIST.—I must confess that a diminution of my wages would be more disagreeable to me than the admission of these persons; but, then, they do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

TREASURER.—What does that signify to you, provided that you are permitted to believe it, and are well lodged, well clothed, and well fed? The Jews are far from believing that He is the Son of God, and yet you are very easy with the Jews, with whom you deposit your money at six per cent. St. Paul himself has never spoken of the divinity of Jesus Christ, who is undisguisedly called a man. Death, says he, entered into the world by the sin of one man ... and by one man, Jesus Christ, the gift of grace hath abounded unto many, etc. All the early fathers of the Church thought like Paul. It is evident that, for three hundred years, Jesus was content with His humanity; imagine yourself a Christian of one of the first three centuries.

PAPIST.—Yes, sir; but neither do they believe in eternal punishments.

TREASURER.—Nor I either; be you damned eternally if you please; for my own part, I do not look for that advantage.

PAPIST.—Ah, sir! it is very hard not to be able to damn at pleasure all the heretics in the world; but the rage which the Unitarian displays for rendering everybody finally happy is not my only complaint. Know, that these monsters believe the resurrection of the body no more than the Sadducees. They say, that we are all anthropophagi, and that the particles which compose our grandfathers and great-grandfathers, having been necessarily dispersed in the atmosphere, become carrots and asparagus, and that it is possible we may have devoured a portion of our ancestors.

TREASURER.—Be it so; our children will do as much by us; it is but repayment, and Papists will be as much benefited as others. This is no reason for driving you from the states of his highness; and why any more so for ejecting the Unitarians? Rise again, if you are able; it matters little whether the Unitarians rise again or no, provided they are useful during their lives.

PAPIST.—And what, sir, do you say to original sin, which they boldly deny? Are you not scandalized by their assertion, that the Pentateuch says not a word about it, that the bishop of Hippo, St. Augustine, is the first who decidedly taught this dogma, although it is evidently indicated by St. Paul?

TREASURER.—Truly, if the Pentateuch does not mention it, that is not my fault. Why not add a text or two about original sin to the Old Testament, as

it is said you have added on other subjects? I know nothing of these subtleties; it is my business only to pay you your stipend, when I have the money to do so.

POPULATION.

Section I.

There were very few caterpillars in my canton last year, and we killed nearly the whole of them. God has rendered them this year more numerous than the leaves. Is it not nearly thus with other animals, and above all with mankind? Famine, pestilence, death, and the two sister diseases which have visited us from Arabia and America, destroy the inhabitants of a province, and we are surprised at finding it abound with people a hundred years afterwards.

I admit that it is a sacred duty to people this world, and that all animals are stimulated by pleasure to fulfil this intention of the great Demiourgos. Why this inhabiting of the earth? and to what purpose form so many beings to devour one another, and the animal man to cut the throat of his fellow, from one end of the earth to the other? I am assured that I shall one day be in the possession of this secret, and in my character of an inquisitive man I exceedingly desire it.

It is clear that we ought to people the earth as much as we are able; even our health renders it necessary. The wise Arabians, the robbers of the desert, in the treaties which they made with travellers, always stipulated for girls. When they conquered Spain, they imposed a tribute of girls. The country of Media pays the Turks in girls. The buccaneers brought girls from Paris to the little island of which they took possession; and it is related that, at the fine spectacle with which Romulus entertained the Sabines, he stole from them three hundred girls.

I cannot conceive why the Jews, whom moreover I revere, killed everybody in Jericho, even to the girls; and why they say in the Psalms, that it will be sweet to massacre the infants at the mother's breast, without excepting even girls. All other people, whether Tartars, Cannibals, Teutons, or Celts, have always held girls in great request.

Owing to this happy instinct, it seems that the earth may one day be covered with animals of our own kind. Father Petau makes the inhabitants of the earth seven hundred millions, two hundred and eighty years after the deluge. It is not, however, at the end of the "Arabian Nights" that he has printed this pleasant enumeration.

I reckon at present on our globe about nine hundred millions of contemporaries, and an equal number of each sex. Wallace makes them a thousand millions. Am I in error, or is he? Possibly both of us; but a tenth is a small matter; the arithmetic of historians is usually much more erroneous.

I am somewhat surprised that the arithmetician Wallace, who extends the number of people at present existing to a thousand millions, should pretend in the same page, that in the year 966, after the creation, our forefathers amounted to sixteen hundred and ten millions.

In the first place, I wish the epoch of the creation to be clearly established; and as, in our western world, we have no less than eighty theories of this event, there will be some difficulty to hit on the correct one. In the second place, the Egyptians, the Chaldæans, the Persians, the Indians, and the Chinese, have all different calculations; and it is still more difficult to agree with them. Thirdly, why, in the nine hundred and sixty-sixth year of the world, should there be more people than there are at present?

To explain this absurdity, we are told that matters occurred otherwise than at present; that nature, being more vigorous, was better concocted and more prolific; and, moreover, that people lived longer. Why do they not add, that the sun was warmer, and the moon more beautiful.

We are told, that in the time of Cæsar, although men had begun to greatly degenerate, the world was like an ants' nest of bipeds; but that at present it is a desert. Montesquieu, who always exaggerates, and who sacrifices anything to an itching desire of displaying his wit, ventures to believe, and in his "Persian Letters" would have others believe, that there were thirty times as many people in the world in the days of Cæsar as at present.

Wallace acknowledges that this calculation made at random is too much; but for what reason? Because, before the days of Cæsar, the world possessed more inhabitants than during the most brilliant period of the Roman republic. He then ascends to the time of Semiramis, and if possible exaggerates more than Montesquieu.

Lastly, in conformity with the taste which is always attributed to the Holy Spirit for hyperbole, they fail not to instance the eleven hundred and sixty thousand men, who marched so fiercely under the standards of the great monarch, Josophat, or Jehosophat, king of the province of Judah. Enough, enough, Mr. Wallace; the Holy Spirit cannot deceive; but its agents and copyists have badly calculated and numbered. All your Scotland would not furnish eleven hundred thousand men to attend your sermons, and the kingdom of Judah was not a twentieth part of Scotland. See, again, what St. Jerome says of this poor Holy Land, in which he so long resided. Have you well calculated the quantity of money the great King Jehosophat must have

possessed, to pay, feed, clothe, and arm eleven hundred thousand chosen men? But thus is history written.

Mr. Wallace returns from Jehosophat to Cæsar, and concludes, that since the time of this dictator of short duration, the world has visibly decreased in the number of its inhabitants. Behold, said he, the Swiss: according to the relation of Cæsar, they amounted to three hundred and sixty-eight thousand, when they so wisely quitted their country to seek their fortunes, like the Cimbri.

I wish by this example to recall those partisans into a little due consideration, who gift the ancients with such wonders in the way of generation, at the expense of the moderns. The canton of Berne alone, according to an accurate census, possesses a greater number of inhabitants than quitted the whole of Helvetia in the time of Cæsar. The human species is, therefore, doubled in Helvetia since that expedition.

I likewise believe, that Germany, France, and England are much better peopled now than at that time; and for this reason: I adduce the vast clearance of forests, the number of great towns built and increased during the last eight hundred years, and the number of arts which have originated in proportion. This I regard as a sufficient answer to the brazen declamation, repeated every day in books, in which truth is sacrificed to sallies, and which are rendered useless by their abundant wit.

"L'Ami des Hommes" says, that in the time of Cæsar fifty-two millions of men were assigned to Spain, which Strabo observes has always been badly peopled, owing to the interior being so deficient in water. Strabo is apparently right, and "L'Ami des Hommes" erroneous. But they scare us by asking what has become of the prodigious quantity of Huns, Alans, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, and Lombards, who spread like a torrent over Europe in the fifth century.

I distrust these multitudes, and suspect that twenty or thirty thousand ferocious animals, more or less, were sufficient to overwhelm with fright the whole Roman Empire, governed by a Pulcheria, by eunuchs, and by monks. It was enough for ten thousand barbarians to pass the Danube; for every parish rumor, or homily, to make them more numerous than the locusts in the plains of Egypt; and call them a scourge from God, in order to inspire penitence, and produce gifts of money to the convents. Fear seized all the inhabitants, and they fled in crowds. Behold precisely the fright which a wolf caused in the district of Gevanden in the year 1766.

Mandarin the robber, at the head of fifty vagabonds, put an entire town under contribution. As soon as he entered at one gate, it was said at the other, that he brought with him four thousand men and artillery. If Attila, followed

by fifty thousand hungry assassins, ravaged province after province, report would call them five hundred thousand.

The millions of men who followed Xerxes, Cyrus, Tomyris, the thirty or forty-four millions of Egyptians, Thebes with her hundred gates—"Et quicquid Grecia mendax audet in historia"—resemble the five hundred thousand men of Attila, which company of pleasant travellers it would have been difficult to find on the journey.

These Huns came from Siberia, and thence I conclude that they came in very small numbers. Siberia was certainly not more fertile than in our own days. I doubt whether in the reign of Tomyris a town existed equal to Tobolsk, or that these frightful deserts can feed a great number of inhabitants.

India, China, Persia, and Asia Minor were thickly peopled; this I can credit without difficulty; and possibly they are not less so at present, notwithstanding the destructive prevalence of invasions and wars. Throughout, Nature has clothed them with pasturage; the bull freely unites with the heifer, the ram with the sheep, and man with woman.

The deserts of Barca, of Arabia, and of Oreb, of Sinai, of Jerusalem, of Gobi, etc., were never peopled, are not peopled at present, and never will be peopled; at least, until some natural revolution happens to transform these plains of sand and flint into fertile land.

The land of France is tolerably good, and it is sufficiently inhabited by consumers, since of all kinds there are more than are well supplied; since there are two hundred thousand impostors, who beg from one end of the country to the other, and sustain their despicable lives at the expense of the rich; and lastly, since France supports more than eighty thousand monks, of which not a single one assists to produce an ear of corn.

Section II.

I believe that England, Protestant Germany, and Holland are better peopled in proportion than France. The reason is evident; those countries harbor not monks who vow to God to be useless to man. In these countries, the clergy, having little else to do, occupy themselves with study and propagation. They give birth to robust children, and give them a better education than that which is bestowed on the offspring of French and Italian marquises.

Rome, on the contrary, would be a desert without cardinals, ambassadors, and travellers. It would be only an illustrious monument, like the temple of Jupiter Ammon. In the time of the first Cæsar, it was computed that this sterile territory, rendered fertile by manure and the labor of slaves, contained some millions of men. It was an exception to the general law, that population is ordinarily in proportion to fertility of soil.

Conquest rendered this barren country fertile and populous. A form of government as strange and contradictory as any which ever astonished mankind, has restored to the territory of Romulus its primitive character. The whole country is depopulated from Orvieto to Terracina. Rome, reduced to its own citizens, would be to London only as one to twelve; and in respect to money and commerce, would be to the towns of Amsterdam and London as one to a thousand.

That which Rome has lost, Europe has not only regained, but the population has almost tripled since the days of Charlemagne. I say tripled, which is much; for propagation is not in geometrical progression. All the calculations made on the idea of this pretended multiplication, amount only to absurd chimeras.

If a family of human beings or of apes multiplied in this manner, at the end of two hundred years the earth would not be able to contain them. Nature has taken care at once to preserve and restrain the various species. She resembles the fates, who spin and cut threads continually. She is occupied with birth and destruction alone.

If she has given to man more ideas and memory than to other animals; if she has rendered him capable of generalizing his ideas and combining them; if he has the advantage of the gift of speech, she has not bestowed on him that of multiplication equal to insects. There are more ants in a square league of heath, than of men in the world, counting all that have ever existed.

When a country possesses a great number of idlers, be sure that it is well peopled; since these idlers are lodged, clothed, fed, amused, and respected by those who labor. The principal object, however, is not to possess a superfluity of men, but to render such as we have as little unhappy as possible.

Let us thank nature for placing us in the temperate zone, peopled almost throughout by a more than sufficient number of inhabitants, who cultivate all the arts; and let us endeavor not to lessen this advantage by our absurdities.

Section III.

It must be confessed, that we ordinarily people and depopulate the world a little at random; and everybody acts in this manner. We are little adapted to obtain an accurate notion of things; the nearly is our only guide, and it often leads us astray.

It is still worse when we wish to calculate precisely. We go and see farces and laugh at them; but should we laugh less in our closets when we read grave authors deciding exactly how many men existed on the earth two hundred and eighty-five years after the general deluge. We find, according to Father Petau, that the family of Noah had produced one thousand two hundred and twenty-

four millions seven hundred and seventeen thousand inhabitants, in three hundred years. The good priest Petau evidently knew little about getting children and rearing them, if we are to judge by this statement.

According to Cumberland, this family increased to three thousand three hundred and thirty millions, in three hundred and forty years; and according to Whiston, about three hundred years after the Deluge, they amounted only to sixty-five millions four hundred and thirty-six.

It is difficult to reconcile and to estimate these accounts, such is the extravagance when people seek to make things accord which are repugnant, and to explain what is inexplicable. This unhappy endeavor has deranged heads which in other pursuits might have made discoveries beneficial to society.

The authors of the English "Universal History" observe, it is generally agreed that the present inhabitants of the earth amount to about four thousand millions. It is to be remarked, that these gentlemen do not include in this number the natives of America, which comprehends nearly half of the globe. For my own part, if, instead of a common romance, I wished to amuse myself by reckoning up the number of brethren I have on this unhappy little planet, I would proceed as follows: I would first endeavor to estimate pretty nearly the number of inhabited square leagues this earth contains on its surface; I should then say: The surface of the globe contains twenty-seven millions of square leagues; take away two-thirds at least for seas, rivers, lakes, deserts, mountains, and all that is uninhabited; this calculation, which is very moderate, leaves us nine millions of square leagues to account for.

In France and Germany, there are said to be six hundred persons to a square league; in Spain, one hundred and fifty; in Russia, fifteen; and Tartary, ten. Take the mean number at a hundred, and you will have about nine hundred millions of brethren, including mulattoes, negroes, the brown, the copper-colored, the fair, the bearded, and the unbearded. It is not thought, indeed, that the number is so great as this; and if eunuchs continue to be made, monks to multiply, and wars to be waged on the most trifling pretexts, it is easy to perceive that we shall not very soon be able to muster the four thousand millions, with which the English authors of the "Universal History" have so liberally favored us; but, then, of what consequence is it, whether the number of men on the earth be great or small? The chief thing is to discover the means of rendering our miserable species as little unhappy as possible.

Section IV.

Of The Population Of America.

The discovery of America—that field of so much avarice and so much

ambition—has also become an object of philosophical curiosity. A great number of writers have endeavored to prove that America was a colony of the ancient world. Some modest mathematicians, on the contrary, have said, that the same power which has caused the grass to grow in American soil, was able to place man there; but this simple and naked system has not been attended to.

When the great Columbus suspected the existence of this new world, it was held to be impossible; and Columbus was taken for a visionary. When it was really discovered, it was then found out that it had been known long before.

It was pretended that Martin Behem, a native of Nuremberg, quitted Flanders about the year 1460, in search of this unknown world; that he made his way even to the Straits of Magellan, of which he left unknown charts. As, however, it is certain that Martin Behem did not people America, it must certainly have been one of the later grandchildren of Noah, who took this trouble. All antiquity is then ransacked for accounts of long voyages, to which they apply the discovery of this fourth quarter of the globe. They make the ships of Solomon proceed to Mexico, and it is thence that he drew the gold of Ophir, to procure which he borrowed them from King Hiram. They find out America in Plato, give the honor of it to the Carthaginians, and quote this anecdote from a book of Aristotle which he never wrote.

Hornius pretends to discover some conformity between the Hebrew language and that of the Caribs. Father Lafiteau, the Jesuit, has not failed to follow up so fine an opening. The Mexicans, when greatly afflicted, tore their garments; certain people of Asia formerly did the same, and of course they are the ancestors of the Mexicans. It might be added, that the natives of Languedoc are very fond of dancing; and that, as in their rejoicings the Hurons dance also, the Languedocians are descended from the Hurons, or the Hurons from the Languedocians.

The authors of a tremendous "Universal History" pretend that all the Americans are descended from the Tartars. They assure us that this opinion is general among the learned, but they do not say whether it is so among the learned who reflect. According to them, some descendants of Noah could find nothing better to do, than to go and settle in the delicious country of Kamchatka, in the north of Siberia. This family being destitute of occupation, resolved to visit Canada either by means of ships, or by marching pleasantly across some slip of connecting land, which has not been discovered in our own times. They then began to busy themselves in propagation, until the fine country of Canada soon becoming inadequate to the support of so numerous a population, they went to people Mexico, Peru, Chile; while certain of their great-granddaughters were in due time brought to bed of giants in the Straits of Magellan.

As ferocious animals are found in some of the warm countries of America, these authors pretend, that the Christopher Columbuses of Kamchatka took them into Canada for their amusement, and carefully confined themselves to those kinds which are no longer to be found in the ancient hemisphere.

But the Kamchatkans have not alone peopled the new world; they have been charitably assisted by the Mantchou Tartars, by the Huns, by the Chinese, and by the inhabitants of Japan. The Mantchou Tartars are incontestably the ancestors of the Peruvians, for Mango Capac was the first inca of Peru. Mango resembles Manco; Manco sounds like Mancu; Mancu approaches Mantchu, and Mantchou is very close to the latter. Nothing can be better demonstrated. As for the Huns, they built in Hungary a town called Cunadi. Now, changing Cu into Ca, we have Canadi, from which Canada manifestly derives its name.

A plant resembling the ginseng of the Chinese, grows in Canada, which the Chinese transplanted into the latter even before they were masters of the part of Tartary where it is indigenous. Moreover, the Chinese are such great navigators, they formerly sent fleets to America without maintaining the least correspondence with their colonies.

With respect to the Japanese, they are the nearest neighbors of America, which, as they are distant only about twelve hundred leagues, they have doubtless visited in their time, although latterly they have neglected repeating the voyage. Thus is history written in our own days. What shall we say to these, and many other systems which resemble them? Nothing.

POSSESSED.

Of all those who boast of having leagues with the devil, to the possessed alone it is of no use to reply. If a man says to you, "I am possessed," you should believe it on his word. They are not obliged to do very extraordinary things; and when they do them, it is more than can fairly be demanded. What can we answer to a man who rolls his eyes, twists his mouth, and tells you that he has the devil within him? Everyone feels what he feels; and as the world was formerly full of possessed persons, we may still meet with them. If they take measures to conquer the world, we give them property and they become more moderate; but for a poor demoniac, who is content with a few convulsions, and does no harm to anyone, it is not right to make him injurious. If you dispute with him, you will infallibly have the worst of it. He will tell you, "The devil entered me to-day under such a form; from that time I have had a supernatural colic, which all the apothecaries in the world cannot assuage." There is certainly no other plan to be taken with this man, than to

exorcise or abandon him to the devil.

It is a great pity that there are no longer possessed magicians or astrologers. We can conceive the cause of all these mysteries. A hundred years ago all the nobility lived in their castles; the winter evenings are long, and they would have died of ennui without these noble amusements. There was scarcely a castle which a fairy did not visit on certain marked days, like the fairy Melusina at the castle of Lusignan. The great hunter, a tall black man, hunted with a pack of black dogs in the forest of Fontainebleau. The devil twisted Marshal Fabert's neck. Every village had its sorcerer or sorceress; every prince had his astrologer; all the ladies had their fortunes told; the possessed ran about the fields; it was who had seen the devil or could see him; all these things were inexhaustible subjects of conversation which kept minds in exercise. In the present day we insipidly play at cards, and we have lost by being undeceived.

POST.

Formerly, if you had one friend at Constantinople and another at Moscow, you would have been obliged to wait for their return before you could obtain any intelligence concerning them. At present, without either of you leaving your apartments, you may familiarly converse through the medium of a sheet of paper. You may even despatch to them by the post, one of Arnaults sovereign remedies for apoplexy, which would be received much more infallibly, probably, than it would cure.

If one of your friends has occasion for a supply of money at St. Petersburg, and the other at Smyrna, the post will completely and rapidly effect your business. Your mistress is at Bordeaux, while you are with your regiment before Prague; she gives you regular accounts of the constancy of her affections; you know from her all the news of the city, except her own infidelities. In short, the post is the grand connecting link of all transactions, of all negotiations. Those who are absent, by its means become present; it is the consolation of life.

France, where this beautiful invention was revived, even in our period of barbarism, has hereby conferred the most important service on all Europe. She has also never in any instance herself marred and tainted so valuable a benefit, and never has any minister who superintended the department of the post opened the letters of any individual, except when it was absolutely necessary that he should know their contents. It is not thus, we are told, in other countries. It is asserted, that in Germany private letters, passing through the

territories of five or six different governments, have been read just that number of times, and that at last the seal has been so nearly destroyed that it became necessary to substitute a new one.

Mr. Craggs, secretary of state in England, would never permit any person in his office to open private letters; he said that to do so was a breach of public faith, and that no man ought to possess himself of a secret that was not voluntarily confided to him; that it is often a greater crime to steal a man's thoughts than his gold; and that such treachery is proportionally more disgraceful, as it may be committed without danger, and without even the possibility of conviction.

To bewilder the eagerness of curiosity and defeat the vigilance of malice, a method was at first invented of writing a part of the contents of letters in ciphers; but the part written in the ordinary hand in this case sometimes served as a key to the rest. This inconvenience led to perfecting the art of ciphers, which is called "stenography."

Against these enigmatical productions was brought the art of deciphering; but this art was exceedingly defective and inefficient. The only advantage derived from it was exciting the belief in weak and ill-formed minds, that their letters had been deciphered, and all the pleasure it afforded consisted in giving such persons pain. According to the law of probabilities, in a well-constructed cipher there would be two, three, or even four hundred chances against one, that in each mark the decipherer would not discover the syllable of which it was the representative.

The number of chances increases in proportion to the complication of the ciphers; and deciphering is utterly impossible when the system is arranged with any ingenuity. Those who boast that they can decipher a letter, without being at all acquainted with the subject of which it treats, and without any preliminary assistance, are greater charlatans than those who boast, if any such are to be found, of understanding a language which they never learned.

With respect to those who in a free and easy way send you by post a tragedy, in good round hand, with blank leaves, on which you are requested kindly to make your observations, or who in the same way regale you with a first volume of metaphysical researches, to be speedily followed by a second, we may just whisper in their ear that a little more discretion would do no harm, and even that there are some countries where they would run some risk by thus informing the administration of the day that there are such things in the world as bad poets and bad metaphysicians.

POWER—OMNIPOTENCE.

I presume every reader of this article to be convinced that the world is formed with intelligence, and that a slight knowledge of astronomy and anatomy is sufficient to produce admiration of that universal and supreme intelligence. Once more I repeat "mens agitat molem."

Can the reader of himself ascertain that this intelligence is omnipotent, that is to say, infinitely powerful? Has he the slightest notion of infinity, to enable him to comprehend the meaning and extent of almighty power?

The celebrated philosophic historian, David Hume, says, "A weight of ten ounces is raised in a balance by another weight; this other weight therefore is more than ten ounces; but no one can rationally infer that it must necessarily be a hundred weight."

We may fairly and judiciously apply here the same argument. You acknowledge a supreme intelligence sufficiently powerful to form yourself, to preserve you for a limited time in life, to reward you and to punish you. Are you sufficiently acquainted with it to be able to demonstrate that it can do more than this? How can you prove by your reason that a being can do more than it has actually done?

The life of all animals is short. Could he make it longer? All animals are food for one another without exception; everything is born to be devoured. Could he form without destroying? You know not what his nature is. It is impossible, therefore, that you should know whether his nature may not have compelled him to do only the very things which he has done.

The globe on which we live is one vast field of destruction and carnage. Either the Supreme Being was able to make of it an eternal mode of enjoyment for all beings possessed of sensation, or He was not. If He was able and yet did not do it, you will undoubtedly tremble to pronounce or consider Him a maleficent being; but if He was unable to do so, do not tremble to regard Him as a power of very great extent indeed, but nevertheless circumscribed by His nature within certain limits.

Whether it be infinite or not, is not of any consequence to you. It is perfectly indifferent to a subject whether his sovereign possesses five hundred leagues of territory or five thousand; he is in either case neither more nor less a subject. Which would reflect most strongly on this great and ineffable Being: to say He made miserable beings because it was indispensable to do so; or that He made them merely because it was His will and pleasure?

Many sects represent Him as cruel; others, through fear of admitting the existence of a wicked Deity, are daring enough to deny His existence at all. Would it not be far preferable to say that probably the necessity of His own

nature and that of things have determined everything?

The world is the theatre of moral and natural evil; this is too decidedly found and felt to be the case; and the "all is for the best" of Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and Pope, is nothing but the effusion of a mind devoted to eccentricity and paradox; in short, nothing but a dull jest.

The two principles of Zoroaster and Manes, so minutely investigated by Bayle, are a duller jest still. They are, as we have already observed, the two physicians of Molière, one of whom says to the other: "You excuse my emetics, and I will excuse your bleedings." Manichæism is absurd; and that circumstance will account for its having had so many partisans.

I acknowledge that I have not had my mind enlightened by all that Bayle has said about the Manichæans and Paulicians. It is all controversy; what I wanted was pure philosophy. Why speak about our mysteries to Zoroaster? As soon as ever we have the temerity to discuss the critical subject of our mysteries, we open to our view the most tremendous precipices.

The trash of our own scholastic theology has nothing to do with the trash of Zoroaster's reveries. Why discuss with Zoroaster the subject of original sin? That subject did not become a matter of dispute until the time of St. Augustine. Neither Zoroaster nor any other legislator of antiquity ever heard it mentioned. If you dispute with Zoroaster, lock up your Old and New Testament, with which he had not the slightest acquaintance, and which it is our duty to revere without attempting to explain.

What I should myself have said to Zoroaster would have been this: My reason opposes the admission of two gods in conflict with each other; such an idea is allowable only in a poem in which Minerva quarrels with Mars. My weak understanding much more readily acquiesces in the notion of only one Great Being, than in that of two great beings, of whom one is constantly counteracting and spoiling the operations of the other. Your evil principle, Arimanes, has not been able to derange a single astronomical and physical law established by the good principle of Oromazes; everything proceeds, among the numberless worlds which constitute what we call the heavens, with perfect regularity and harmony; how comes it that the malignant Arimanes has power only over this little globe of earth?

Had I been Arimanes, I should have assailed Oromazes in his immense and noble provinces, comprehending numbers of suns and stars. I should never have been content to confine the war to an insignificant and miserable village. There certainly is a great deal of misery in this same village; but how can we possibly ascertain that it is not absolutely inevitable?

You are compelled to admit an intelligence diffused through the universe.

But in the first place, do you absolutely know that this intelligence comprises a knowledge of the future? You have asserted a thousand times that it does; but you have never been able to prove it to me, or to comprehend it yourself. You cannot have any idea how any being can see what does not exist; well, the future does not exist, therefore no being can see it. You are reduced to the necessity of saying that he foresees it; but to foresee is only to conjecture.

Now a god who, according to your system, conjectures may be mistaken. He is, on your principles, really mistaken; for if he had foreseen that his enemy would poison all his works in this lower world, he would never have produced them; he would not have been accessory to the disgrace he sustains in being perpetually vanquished.

Secondly, is he not much more honored upon my hypothesis, which maintains that he does everything by the necessity of his own nature, than upon yours, which raises up against him an enemy, disfiguring, polluting, and destroying all his works of wisdom and kindness throughout the world!

In the third place, it by no means implies a mean and unworthy idea of God to say that, after forming millions of worlds, in which death and evil may have no residence, it might be necessary that death and evil should reside in this.

Fourth, it is not deprecating God to say that He could not form man without bestowing on him self-love; that this self-love could not be his guide without almost always leading him astray; that his passions are necessary, but at the same time noxious; that the continuation of the species cannot be accomplished without desires; that these desires cannot operate without exciting quarrels; and that these quarrels necessarily bring on wars, etc.

Fifth, on observing a part of the combinations of the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms, and the porous nature of the earth, in every part so minutely pierced and drilled like a sieve, and from which exhalations constantly rise in immense profusion, what philosopher will be bold enough, what schoolman will be weak enough, decidedly to maintain that nature could possibly prevent the ravages of volcanoes, the intemperature of seasons, the rage of tempests, the poison of pestilence, or, in short, any of those scourages which afflict the world?

Sixth, a very great degree of power and skill are required to form lions who devour bulls, and to produce men who invent arms which destroy, by a single blow, not merely the life of bulls and lions, but—melancholy as the idea is—the life of one another. Great power is necessary to produce the spiders which spread their exquisitely fine threads and net-work to catch flies; but this power amounts not to omnipotence—it is not boundless power.

In the seventh place, if the Supreme Being had been infinitely powerful, no reason can be assigned why He should not have made creatures endowed with sensation infinitely happy; He has not in fact done so; therefore we ought to conclude that He could not do so.

Eighth, all the different sects of philosophers have struck on the rock of physical and moral evil. The only conclusion that can be securely reached is, that God, acting always for the best, has done the best that He was able to do.

Ninth, this necessity cuts off all difficulties and terminates all disputes. We have not the hardihood to say: "All is good"; we say: "There is no more evil than was absolutely inevitable."

Tenth, why do some infants die at the mother's breast? Why are others, after experiencing the first misfortune of being born, reserved for tormentes as lasting as their lives, which are at length ended by an appalling death? Why has the source of life been poisoned throughout the world since the discovery of America? Why, since the seventh century of the Christian era, has the smallpox swept away an eighth portion of the human species? Why, in every age of the world, have human bladders been liable to be converted into stone quarries? Why pestilence, and war, and famine, and the Inquisition? Consider the subject as carefully, as profoundly, as the powers of the mind will absolutely permit, you will find no other possible solution than that all is necessary.

I address myself here solely to philosophers, and not to divines. We know that faith is the clue to guide us through the labyrinth. We know full well that the fall of Adam and Eve, original sin, the vast power communicated to devils, the predilection entertained by the Supreme Being for the Jewish people, and the ceremony of baptism substituted for that of circumcision, are answers that clear up every difficulty. We have been here arguing only against Zoroaster, and not against the University of Coimbra, to whose decisions and doctrines, in all the articles of our work, we submit with all possible deference and faith. See the letters of Memmius to Cicero; and answer them if you can.

POWER.

The Two Powers.

Section I.

Whoever holds both the sceptre and the censer has his hands completely occupied. If he governs a people possessed of common sense he may be considered as a very able man; but if his subjects have no more mind than

children or savages, he may be compared to Bernier's coachman, who was one day suddenly surprised by his master in one of the public places of Delhi, haranguing the populace, and distributing among them his quack medicines. "What! Lapierre," says Bernier to him, "have you turned physician?" "Yes, sir," replied the coachman; "like people, like doctor."

The dairo of the Japanese, or the grand lama of Thibet, might make just the same remark. Even Numa Pompilius, with his Egeria, would have answered Bernier in the same manner. Melchizedek was probably in a similar situation, as well as the Anius whom Virgil introduces in the following two lines of the third book of his "Æneid":

Rex Anius, rex idem hominum Phœbique sacerdos,

Vittis et sacra redimitus tempora lauro.—VIRGIL.

Anius, the priest and king, with laurel crowned

His hoary locks with purple fillets bound.—DRYDEN.

This charlatan Anius was merely king of the isle of Delos, a very paltry kingdom, which, next to those of Melchizedek and Yvetot, was one of the least considerable in the world; but the worship of Apollo had conferred on it a high reputation; a single saint is enough to raise any country into credit and consequence.

Three of the German electors are more powerful than Anius, and, like him, unite the rights of the mitre with those of the crown; although in subordination, at least apparently so, to the Roman emperor, who is no other than the emperor of Germany. But of all the countries in which the plenitude of ecclesiastical and the plenitude of royal claims combine to form the most full and complete power that can be imagined, modern Rome is the chief.

The pope is regarded in the Catholic part of Europe as the first of kings and the first of priests. It was the same in what was called "pagan" Rome; Julius Cæsar was at once chief pontiff, dictator, warrior, and conqueror; distinguished also both for eloquence and gallantry; in every respect the first of mankind; and with whom no modern, except in a dedication, could ever be compared.

The king of England, being the head also of the Church, possesses nearly the same dignities as the pope. The empress of Russia is likewise absolute mistress over her clergy, in the largest empire existing upon earth. The notion that two powers may exist, in opposition to each other, in the same state, is there regarded even by the clergy themselves as a chimera equally absurd and pernicious.

In this connection I cannot help introducing a letter which the empress of

Russia, Catherine II., did me the honor to write to me at Mount Krapak, on Aug. 22, 1765, and which she permitted me to make use of as I might see occasion:

"The Capuchins who are tolerated at Moscow (for toleration is general throughout the Russian empire, and the Jesuits alone are not suffered to remain in it), having, in the course of the last winter, obstinately refused to inter a Frenchman who died suddenly, under a pretence that he had not received the sacraments, Abraham Chaumeix drew up a factum, or statement, against them, in order to prove to them that it was obligatory upon them to bury the dead. But neither this factum, nor two requisitions of the governor, could prevail on these fathers to obey. At last they were authoritatively told that they must either bury the Frenchman or remove beyond the frontiers. They actually removed accordingly; and I sent some Augustins from this place, who were somewhat more tractable, and who, perceiving that no trifling or delay would be permitted, did all that was desired on the occasion. Thus Abraham Chaumeix has in Russia become a reasonable man; he absolutely is an enemy to persecution; were he also to become a man of wit and intellect, he would make the most incredulous believe in miracles; but all the miracles in the world will not blot out the disgrace of having been the denouncer of the 'Encyclopædia.'

"The subjects of the Church, having suffered many, and frequently tyrannical, grievances, which the frequent change of masters very considerably increased, towards the end of the reign of the empress Elizabeth, rose in actual rebellion; and at my accession to the throne there were more than a hundred thousand men in arms. This occasioned me, in 1762, to execute the project of changing entirely the administration of the property of the clergy, and to settle on them fixed revenues. Arsenius, bishop of Rostow, strenuously opposed this, urged on by some of his brother clergy, who did not feel it perfectly convenient to put themselves forward by name. He sent in two memorials, in which he attempted to establish the absurd principle of two powers. He had made the like attempt before, in the time of the empress Elizabeth, when he had been simply enjoined silence; but his insolence and folly redoubling, he was now tried by the metropolitan of Novgorod and the whole synod, condemned as a fanatic, found guilty of attempts contrary to the orthodox faith, as well as to the supreme power, deprived of his dignity and priesthood, and delivered over to the secular arm. I acted leniently towards him; and after reducing him to the situation of a monk, extended his punishment no farther."

Such are the very words of the empress; and the inference from the whole case is that she well knows both how to support the Church and how to restrain it; that she respects humanity as well as religion; that she protects the

laborer as well as the priest; and that all orders in the state ought both to admire and bless her.

I shall hope to be excused for the further indiscretion of transcribing here a passage contained in another of her letters, written on November 28, 1765:

"Toleration is established among us; it constitutes a law of the state; persecution is prohibited. We have indeed fanatics who, as they are not persecuted by others, burn themselves; but if those of other countries also did the same, no great harm could result; the world, in consequence of such a system, would have been more tranquil, and Calas would not have been racked to death."

Do not imagine that she writes in this style from a feeling of transient and vain enthusiasm, contradicted afterwards in her practice, nor even from a laudable desire of obtaining throughout Europe the suffrages and applause of those who think, and teach others the way to think. She lays down these principles as the basis of her government. She wrote with her own hand, in the "Council of Legislations," the following words, which should be engraved on the gates of every city in the world:

"In a great empire, extending its sway over as many different nations as there are different creeds among mankind, the most pernicious fault would be intolerance."

It is to be observed that she does not hesitate to put intolerance in the rank of faults—I had nearly said offences. Thus does an absolute empress, in the depths of the North, put an end to persecution and slavery—while in the South —.

Judge for yourself, sir, after this, whether there will be found a man in Europe who will not be ready to sign the eulogium you propose. Not only is this princess tolerant, but she is desirous that her neighbors should be so likewise. This is the first instance in which supreme power has been exercised in establishing liberty of conscience. It constitutes the grandest epoch with which I am acquainted in modern history.

The case of the ancient Persians forbidding the Carthaginians to offer human sacrifices is a somewhat similar instance. Would to God, that instead of the barbarians who formerly poured from the plains of Scythia, and the mountains of Imaus and Caucasus, towards the Alps and Pyrenees, carrying with them ravage and desolation, armies might be seen at the present day descending to subvert the tribunal of the Inquisition—a tribunal more horrible than even the sacrifices of human beings which constitute the eternal reproach of our forefathers.

In short, this superior genius wishes to convince her neighbors of what

Europe is now beginning to comprehend, that metaphysical unintelligible opinions, which are the daughters of absurdity, are the mothers of discord; and that the Church, instead of saying: "I come to bring, not peace, but the sword," should exclaim aloud: "I bring peace, and not the sword." Accordingly the empress is unwilling to draw the sword against any but those who wish to crush the dissidents.

Section II.

Conversation Between The Reverend Father Bouvet, Missionary Of The Company Of Jesus, And The Emperor Camhi, In The Presence Of Brother Attiret, A Jesuit; Extracted From The Private Memoirs Of The Mission, In 1772.

FATHER BOUVET.

Yes, may it please your sacred majesty, as soon as you will have had the happiness of being baptized by me, which I hope will be the case, you will be relieved of one-half of the immense burden which now oppresses you. I have mentioned to you the fable of Atlas, who supported the heavens on his shoulders. Hercules relieved him and carried away the heavens. You are Atlas, and Hercules is the pope. There will be two powers in your empire. Our excellent Clement will be the first. Upon this plan you will enjoy the greatest of all advantages; those of being at leisure while you live, and of being saved when you die.

THE EMPEROR.

I am exceedingly obliged to my dear friend, the pope, for condescending to take so much trouble; but how will he be able to govern my empire at the distance of six thousand leagues?

FATHER BOUVET.

Nothing, may it please your Imperial Majesty, can be more easy. We are his vicars apostolic, and he is the vicar of God; you will therefore be governed by God Himself.

THE EMPEROR.

How delightful that will be! I am not, however, quite easy on the subject. Will your vice-god share the imperial revenues with myself? For all labor ought to be paid for.

FATHER BOUVET.

Our vice-god is so kind and good that in general he will not take, at most, more than a quarter, except in cases of disobedience. Our emoluments will not exceed fifty million ounces of pure silver, which is surely a trifling object in

comparison with heavenly advantages.

THE EMPEROR.

Yes, it is certainly, as you say, giving them almost for nothing. I suppose your celebrated and benevolent city derives just about the same sum from each of my three neighbors—the Great Mogul, the Emperor of Japan, and the Empress of Russia; and also from the Persian and the Turkish empires?

FATHER BOUVET.

I cannot exactly say that is yet the case; but, with Gods help and our own, I have no doubt it will be so.

THE EMPEROR.

And how are you, who are the vicars apostolic, to be paid?

FATHER BOUVET.

We have no regular wages; but we are somewhat like the principal female character in a comedy written by one Count Caylus, a countryman of mine; all that I ... is for myself.

THE EMPEROR.

But pray inform me whether your Christian princes in Europe pay your Italian friend or patron in proportion to the assessment laid on me.

FATHER BOUVET.

No, they do not! One-half of Europe has separated from him and pays him nothing; and the other pays him no more than it is obliged to pay.

THE EMPEROR.

You told me some time since that he was sovereign of a very fine and fertile territory.

FATHER BOUVET.

Yes; but it produces very little to him; it lies mostly uncultivated.

THE EMPEROR.

Poor man! he does not know how to cultivate his own territory, and yet pretends to govern mine.

FATHER BOUVET.

Formerly, in one of our councils—that is, in one of our assemblies of priests, which was held in a city called Constance—our holy father caused a proposition to be made for a new tax for the support of his dignity. The assembly replied that any necessity for that would be perfectly precluded by

his attending to the cultivation of his own lands. This, however, he took effectual care not to do. He preferred living on the produce of those who labor in other kingdoms. He appeared to think that this manner of living had an air of greater grandeur.

THE EMPEROR.

Well, go and tell him from me, that I not only make those about me labor, but that I also labor myself; and I doubt much whether it will be for him.

FATHER BOUVET.

Holy Virgin! I am absolutely taken for a fool!

THE EMPEROR.

Begone, this instant! I have been too indulgent.

BROTHER ATTIRET TO FATHER BOUVET.

I was right, you see, when I told you that the emperor, with all his excellence of heart, had also more understanding than both of us together.

PRAYER (PUBLIC), THANKSGIVING, ETC.

Very few forms of public prayers used by the ancients still remain. We have only Horace's beautiful hymn for the secular games of the ancient Romans. This prayer is in the rhythm and measure which the other Romans long after imitated in the hymn, "Ut queat laxis resonare fibris."

The Pervigilium Veneris is written in a quaint and affected taste, and seems unworthy of the noble simplicity of the reign of Augustus. It is possible that this hymn to Venus may have been chanted in the festivals celebrated in honor of that goddess; but it cannot be doubted that the poem of Horace was chanted with much greater solemnity.

It must be allowed that this secular poem of Horace is one of the finest productions of antiquity; and that the hymn, "Ut queat laxis," is one of the most flat and vapid pieces that appeared during the barbarous period of the decline of the Latin language. The Catholic Church in those times paid little attention to eloquence and poetry. We all know very well that God prefers bad verses recited with a pure heart, to the finest verses possible chanted by the wicked. Good verses, however, never yet did any harm, and—all other things being equal—must deserve a preference.

Nothing among us ever approached the secular games, which were

celebrated at the expiration of every hundred and ten years. Our jubilee is only a faint and feeble copy of it. Three magnificent altars were erected on the banks of the Tiber. All Rome was illuminated for three successive nights; and fifteen priests distributed the lustral water and wax tapers among the men and women of the city who were appointed to chant the prayers. A sacrifice was first offered to Jupiter as the great god, the sovereign master of the gods; and afterwards to Juno, Apollo, Latona, Diana, Pluto, Proserpine, and the Fates, as to inferior powers. All these divinities had their own peculiar hymns and ceremonies. There were two choirs, one of twenty-seven boys, and the other of twenty-seven girls, for each of the divinities. Finally, on the last day, the boys and girls, crowned with flowers, chanted the ode of Horace.

It is true that in private houses his other odes, for Ligurinus and Liciscus and other contemptible characters, were heard at table; performances which undoubtedly were not calculated to excite the finest feelings of devotion; but there is a time for all things, "pictoribus atque poetis." Caraccio, who drew the figures of Aretin, painted saints also; and in all our colleges we have excused in Horace what the masters of the Roman Empire excused in him without any difficulty.

As to forms of prayer, we have only a few slight fragments of that which was recited at the mysteries of Isis. We have quoted it elsewhere, but we will repeat it here, because it is at once short and beautiful:

"The celestial powers obey thee; hell is in subjection to thee; the universe revolves under thy moving hand; thy feet tread on Tartarus; the stars are responsive to thy voice; the seasons return at thy command; the elements are obedient to thy will."

We repeat also the form supposed to have been used in the worship of the ancient Orpheus, which we think superior even to the above respecting Isis:

"Walk in the path of justice; adore the sole Master of the Universe; He is One Alone, and self-existent; all other beings owe their existence to Him; He acts both in them and by them; He sees all, but has never been Himself seen by mortal eyes."

It is not a little extraordinary that in the Leviticus and Deuteronomy of the Jews, there is not a single public prayer, not one single formula of public worship. It seems as if the Levites were fully employed in dividing among themselves the viands that were offered to them. We do not even see a single prayer instituted for their great festivals of the Passover, the Pentecost, the trumpets, the tabernacles, the general expiation, or the new moon.

The learned are almost unanimously agreed that there were no regular prayers among the Jews, except when, during their captivity at Babylon, they

adopted somewhat of the manners, and acquired something of the sciences, of that civilized and powerful people. They borrowed all from the Chaldaic Persians, even to their very language, characters, and numerals; and joining some new customs to their old Egyptian rites, they became a new people, so much the more superstitious than before, in consequence of their being, after the conclusion of a long captivity, still always dependent upon their neighbors.

... In rebus acerbis

Arcius advertunt animos ad religionem.

—LUCRETIUS, book iii., 52, 53.

... The common rout,

When cares and dangers press, grow more devout.

—CREECH.

With respect to the ten other tribes who had been previously dispersed, we may reasonably believe that they were as destitute of public forms of prayer as the two others, and that they had not, even up to the period of their dispersion, any fixed and well-defined religion, as they abandoned that which they professed with so much facility, and forgot even their own name, which cannot be said of the small number of unfortunate beings who returned to rebuild Jerusalem.

It is, therefore, at that period that the two tribes, or rather the two tribes and a half, seemed to have first attached themselves to certain invariable rites, to have written books, and used regular prayers. It is not before that time that we begin to see among them forms of prayer. Esdras ordained two prayers for every day, and added a third for the Sabbath; it is even said that he instituted eighteen prayers, that there might be room for selection, and also to afford variety in the service. The first of these begins in the following manner:

"Blessed be Thou, O Lord God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the great God, the powerful, the terrible, the most high, the liberal distributor of good things, the former and possessor of the world, who rememberest good actions, and sendest a Redeemer to their descendants for Thy name's sake. O King, our help and Saviour, our buckler, blessed be Thou, O Lord, the buckler of our father Abraham."

It is asserted that Gamaliel, who lived in the time of Jesus Christ, and who had such violent quarrels with St. Paul, ordered a nineteenth prayer, which is as follows:

"Grant peace, benefits, blessing, favor, kindness, and piety to us, and to Thy people Israel. Bless us, O our Father! bless us altogether with the light of Thy countenance; for by the light of Thy countenance Thou hast given us, O

Lord our God, the law of life, love, kindness, equity, blessing, piety, and peace. May it please Thee to bless, through all time, and at every moment, Thy people Israel, by giving them peace. Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who blessest Thy people Israel by giving them peace. Amen."

There is one circumstance deserving of remark with regard to many prayers, which is, that every nation has prayed for the direct contrary events to those prayed for by their neighbors.

The Jews, for example, prayed that God would exterminate the Syrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians; and these prayed that God would exterminate the Jews; and, accordingly, they may be said to have been so, with respect to the ten tribes, who have been confounded and mixed up with so many nations; and the remaining two tribes were more unfortunate still; for, as they obstinately persevered in remaining separate from all other nations in the midst of whom they dwelt, they were deprived of the grand advantages of human society.

In our own times, in the course of the wars that we so frequently undertake for the sake of particular cities, or even perhaps villages, the Germans and Spaniards, when they happened to be the enemies of the French, prayed to the Holy Virgin, from the bottom of their hearts, that she would completely defeat the Gauls and the Gavaches, who in their turn supplicated her, with equal importunity, to destroy the Maranes and the Teutons.

In England advocates of the red rose offered up to St. George the most ardent prayers to prevail upon him to sink all the partisans of the white rose to the bottom of the sea. The white rose was equally devout and importunate for the very opposite event. We can all of us have some idea of the embarrassment which this must have caused St. George; and if Henry VII. had not come to his assistance, St. George would never have been able to get extricated from it.

Section II.

We know of no religion without prayers; even the Jews had them, although there was no public form of prayer among them before the time when they sang their canticles in their synagogues, which did not take place until a late period.

The people of all nations, whether actuated by desires or fears, have invoked the assistance of the Divinity. Philosophers, however, more respectful to the Supreme Being, and rising more above human weakness, have been habituated to substitute, for prayer, resignation. This, in fact, is all that appears proper and suitable between creature and Creator. But philosophy is not adapted to the great mass of mankind; it soars too high above the vulgar; it speaks a language they are unable to comprehend. To propose philosophy to them would be just as weak as to propose the study of conic sections to

peasants or fish-women.

Among the philosophers themselves, I know of no one besides Maximus Tyrius who has treated of this subject. The following is the substance of his ideas upon it: "The designs of God exist from all eternity. If the object prayed for be conformable to His immutable will, it must be perfectly useless to request of Him the very thing which He has determined to do. If He is prayed to for the reverse of what He has determined to do, He is prayed to be weak, fickle, and inconstant; such a prayer implies that this is thought to be His character, and is nothing better than ridicule or mockery of Him. You either request of Him what is just and right, in which case He ought to do it, and it will be actually done without any solicitation, which in fact shows distrust of His rectitude; or what you request is unjust, and then you insult Him. You are either worthy or unworthy of the favor you implore: if worthy, He knows it better than you do yourself; if unworthy, you commit an additional crime in requesting that which you do not merit."

In a word, we offer up prayers to God only because we have made Him after our own image. We treat Him like a pasha, or a sultan, who is capable of being exasperated and appeased. In short, all nations pray to God: the sage is resigned, and obeys Him. Let us pray with the people, and let us be resigned to Him with the sage.

We have already spoken of the public prayers of many nations, and of those of the Jews. That people have had one from time immemorial, which deserves all our attention, from its resemblance to the prayer taught us by Jesus Christ Himself. This Jewish prayer is called the Kadish, and begins with these words: "O, God! let Thy name be magnified and sanctified; make Thy kingdom to prevail; let redemption flourish, and the Messiah come quickly!"

As this Kadish is recited in Chaldee it has induced the belief that it is as ancient as the captivity, and that it was at that period that the Jews began to hope for a Messiah, a Liberator, or Redeemer, whom they have since prayed for in the seasons of their calamities.

The circumstance of this word "Messiah" being found in this ancient prayer has occasioned much controversy on the subject of the history of this people. If the prayer originated during the Babylonish captivity, it is evident that the Jews at that time must have hoped for and expected a Redeemer. But whence does it arise, that in times more dreadfully calamitous still, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, neither Josephus nor Philo ever mentioned any expectation of a Messiah? There are obscurities in the history of every people; but those of the Jews form an absolute and perpetual chaos. It is unfortunate for those who are desirous of information, that the Chaldæans and Egyptians have lost their archives, while the Jews have preserved theirs.

PREJUDICE.

Prejudice is an opinion without judgment. Thus, throughout the world, children are inspired with opinions before they can judge. There are universal and necessary prejudices, and these even constitute virtue. In all countries, children are taught to acknowledge a rewarding and punishing God; to respect and love their fathers and mothers; to regard theft as a crime, and interested lying as a vice, before they can tell what is a virtue or a vice. Prejudice may, therefore, be very useful, and such as judgment will ratify when we reason.

Sentiment is not simply prejudice, it is something much stronger. A mother loves not her son because she is told that she must love him; she fortunately cherishes him in spite of herself. It is not through prejudice that you run to the aid of an unknown child nearly falling down a precipice, or being devoured by a beast.

But it is through prejudice that you will respect a man dressed in certain clothes, walking gravely, and talking at the same time. Your parents have told you that you must bend to this man; you respect him before you know whether he merits your respect; you grow in age and knowledge; you perceive that this man is a quack, made up of pride, interest, and artifice; you despise that which you revered, and prejudice yields to judgment. Through prejudice, you have believed the fables with which your infancy was lulled: you are told that the Titans made war against the gods, that Venus was amorous of Adonis; at twelve years of age you take these fables for truth; at twenty, you regard them as ingenious allegories.

Let us examine, in a few words, the different kinds of prejudices, in order to arrange our ideas. We shall perhaps be like those who, in the time of the scheme of Law, perceived that they had calculated upon imaginary riches.

Prejudices Of The Senses.

Is it not an amusing thing, that our eyes always deceive us, even when we see very well, and that on the contrary our ears do not? When your properly-formed ear hears: "You are beautiful; I love you," it is very certain that the words are not: I hate you; you are ugly; but you see a smooth mirror—it is demonstrated that you are deceived; it is a very rough surface. You see the sun about two feet in diameter; it is demonstrated that it is a million times larger than the earth.

It seems that God has put truth into your ears, and error into your eyes; but study optics, and you will perceive that God has not deceived you, and that it

was impossible for objects to appear to you otherwise than you see them in the present state of things.

Physical Prejudices.

The sun rises, the moon also, the earth is immovable; these are natural physical prejudices. But that crabs are good for the blood, because when boiled they are of the same color; that eels cure paralysis, because they frisk about; that the moon influences our diseases, because an invalid was one day observed to have an increase of fever during the wane of the moon: these ideas and a thousand others were the errors of ancient charlatans, who judged without reason, and who, being themselves deceived, deceived others.

Historical Prejudices.

The greater part of historians have believed without examining, and this confidence is a prejudice. Fabius Pictor relates, that, several ages before him, a vestal of the town of Alba, going to draw water in her pitcher, was violated, that she was delivered of Romulus and Remus, that they were nourished by a she-wolf. The Roman people believed this fable; they examined not whether at that time there were vestals in Latium; whether it was likely that the daughter of a king should go out of her convent with a pitcher, or whether it was probable that a she-wolf should suckle two children, instead of eating them: prejudice established it.

A monk writes that Clovis, being in great danger at the battle of Tolbiac, made a vow to become a Christian if he escaped; but is it natural that he should address a strange god on such an occasion? Would not the religion in which he was born have acted the most powerfully? Where is the Christian who, in a battle against the Turks, would not rather address himself to the holy Virgin Mary, than to Mahomet? He adds, that a pigeon brought the vial in his beak to anoint Clovis, and that an angel brought the oriflamme to conduct him: the prejudiced believed all the stories of this kind. Those who are acquainted with human nature well know, that the usurper Clovis, and the usurper Rollo, or Rol, became Christians to govern the Christians more securely; as the Turkish usurpers became Mussulmans to govern the Mussulmans more securely.

Religious Prejudices.

If your nurse has told you, that Ceres presides over corn, or that Vishnu and Xaca became men several times, or that Sammonocodom cut down a forest, or that Odin expects you in his hall near Jutland, or that Mahomet, or some other, made a journey to heaven; finally, if your preceptor afterwards thrusts into your brain what your nurse has engraven on it, you will possess it for life. If your judgment would rise above these prejudices, your neighbors,

and above all, the ladies, exclaim "impiety!" and frighten you; your dervish, fearing to see his revenue diminished, accuses you before the cadi; and this cadi, if he can, causes you to be impaled, because he would command fools, and he believes that fools obey better than others; which state of things will last until your neighbors and the dervish and cadi begin to comprehend that folly is good for nothing, and that persecution is abominable.

PRESBYTERIAN.

The Anglican religion is predominant only in England and Ireland; Presbyterianism is the established religion of Scotland. This Presbyterianism is nothing more than pure Calvinism, such as once existed in France, and still exists at Geneva.

In comparison with a young and lively French bachelor in divinity, brawling during the morning in the schools of theology, and singing with the ladies in the evening, a Church-of-England divine is a Cato; but this Cato is himself a gallant in presence of the Scottish Presbyterians. The latter affect a solemn walk, a serious demeanor, a large hat, a long robe beneath a short one, and preach through the nose. All churches in which the ecclesiastics are so happy as to receive an annual income of fifty thousand livres, and to be addressed by the people as "my lord," "your grace," or "your eminence," they denominate the whore of Babylon. These gentlemen have also several churches in England, where they maintain the same manners and gravity as in Scotland. It is to them chiefly that the English are indebted for the strict sanctification of Sunday throughout the three kingdoms. They are forbidden either to labor or to amuse themselves. No opera, no concert, no comedy, in London on a Sunday. Even cards are expressly forbidden; and there are only certain people of quality, who are deemed open souls, who play on that day. The rest of the nation attend sermons, taverns, and their small affairs of love.

Although Episcopacy and Presbyterianism predominate in Great Britain, all other opinions are welcome and live tolerably well together, although the various preachers reciprocally detest one another with nearly the same cordiality as a Jansenist damns a Jesuit.

Enter into the Royal Exchange of London, a place more respectable than many courts, in which deputies from all nations assemble for the advantage of mankind. There the Jew, the Mahometan, and the Christian bargain with one another as if they were of the same religion, and bestow the name of infidel on bankrupts only. There the Presbyterian gives credit to the Anabaptist, and the votary of the establishment accepts the promise of the Quaker. On the

separation of these free and pacific assemblies, some visit the synagogue, others repair to the tavern. Here one proceeds to baptize his son in a great tub, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; there another deprives his boy of a small portion of his foreskin, and mutters over the child some Hebrew words which he cannot understand; a third kind hasten to their chapels to wait for the inspiration of the Lord with their hats on; and all are content.

Was there in London but one religion, despotism might be apprehended; if two only, they would seek to cut each others throats; but as there are at least thirty, they live together in peace and happiness.

PRETENSIONS.

There is not a single prince in Europe who does not assume the title of sovereign of a country possessed by his neighbor. This political madness is unknown in the rest of the world. The king of Boutan never called himself emperor of China; nor did the sovereign of Tartary ever assume the title of king of Egypt.

The most splendid and comprehensive pretensions have always been those of the popes; two keys, saltier, gave them clear and decided possession of the kingdom of heaven. They bound and unbound everything on earth. This ligature made them masters of the continent; and St. Peter's nets gave them the dominion of the seas.

Many learned theologians thought, that when these gods were assailed by the Titans, called Lutherans, Anglicans, and Calvinists, etc., they themselves reduced some articles of their pretensions. It is certain that many of them became more modest, and that their celestial court attended more to propriety and decency; but their pretensions were renewed on every opportunity that offered. No other proof is necessary than the conduct of Aldobrandini, Clement VIII., to the great Henry IV., when it was deemed necessary to give him an absolution that he had no occasion for, on account of his being already absolved by the bishops of his own kingdom, and also on account of his being victorious.

Aldobrandini at first resisted for a whole year, and refused to acknowledge the duke of Nemours as the ambassador of France. At last he consented to open to Henry the gate of the kingdom of heaven, on the following conditions:

1. That Henry should ask pardon for having made the sub-porters—that is, the bishops—open the gate to him, instead of applying to the grand porter.

2. That he should acknowledge himself to have forfeited the throne of

France till Aldobrandini, by the plenitude of his power, reinstated him on it.

3. That he should be a second time consecrated and crowned; the first coronation having been null and void, as it was performed without the express order of Aldobrandini.

4. That he should expel all the Protestants from his kingdom; which would have been neither honorable nor possible. It would not have been honorable, because the Protestants had profusely shed their blood to establish him as king of France; and it would not have been possible, as the number of these dissidents amounted to two millions.

5. That he should immediately make war on the Grand Turk, which would not have been more honorable or possible than the last condition, as the Grand Turk had recognized him as king of France at a time when Rome refused to do so, and as Henry had neither troops, nor money, nor ships, to engage in such an insane war with his faithful ally.

6. That he should receive in an attitude of complete prostration the absolution of the pope's legate, according to the usual form in which it is administered; that is in fact, that he should be actually scourged by the legate.

7. That he should recall the Jesuits, who had been expelled from his kingdom by the parliament for the attempt made to assassinate him by Jean Châtel, their scholar.

I omit many other minor pretensions. Henry obtained a mitigation of a number of them. In particular, he obtained the concession, although with a great deal of difficulty, that the scourging should be inflicted only by proxy, and by the hand of Aldobrandini himself.

You will perhaps tell me, that his holiness was obliged to require those extravagant conditions by that old and inveterate demon of the South, Philip II., who was more powerful at Rome than the pope himself. You compare Aldobrandini to a contemptible poltroon of a soldier whom his colonel forces forward to the trenches by caning him.

To this I answer, that Clement VIII. was indeed afraid of Philip II., but that he was not less attached to the rights of the tiara; and that it was so exquisite a gratification for the grandson of a banker to scourge a king of France, that Aldobrandini would not altogether have conceded this point for the world.

You will reply, that should a pope at present renew such pretensions, should he now attempt to apply the scourge to a king of France, or Spain, or Naples, or to a duke of Parma, for having driven the reverend fathers, the Jesuits, from their dominions, he would be in imminent danger of incurring the same treatment as Clement VII. did from Charles V., and even of experiencing

still greater humiliations; that it is necessary to sacrifice pretensions to interests; that men must yield to times and circumstances; and that the sheriff of Mecca must proclaim Ali Bey king of Egypt, if he is successful and firm upon the throne. To this I answer, that you are perfectly right.

Pretensions Of The Empire; Extracted From Glafey And Schwedar.

Upon Rome (none). Even Charles V., after he had taken Rome, claimed no right of actual domain.

Upon the patrimony of St. Peter, from Viterbo to Civita Castellana, the estates of the countess Mathilda, but solemnly ceded by Rudolph of Hapsburg.

Upon Parma and Placentia, the supreme dominion as part of Lombardy, invaded by Julius II., granted by Paul III., to his bastard Farnese: homage always paid for them to the pope from that time; the sovereignty always claimed by the seigneurs of Lombardy; the right of sovereignty completely ceded to the emperor by the treaties of Cambray and of London, at the peace of 1737.

Upon Tuscany, right of sovereignty exercised by Charles V.; an estate of the empire, belonging now to the emperor's brother.

Upon the republic of Lucca, erected into a duchy by Louis of Bavaria, in 1328; the senators declared afterwards vicars of the empire by Charles IV. The Emperor Charles VI., however, in the war of 1701, exercised in it his right of sovereignty by levying upon it a large contribution.

Upon the duchy of Milan, ceded by the Emperor Wincenslaus to Galeas Visconti, but considered as a fief of the empire.

Upon the duchy of Mirandola, reunited to the house of Austria in 1711 by Joseph I.

Upon the duchy of Mantua, erected into a duchy by Charles V.; reunited in like manner in 1708.

Upon Guastalla, Novellara, Bozzolo, and Castiglione, also fiefs of the empire, detached from the duchy of Mantua.

Upon the whole of Montferrat, of which the duke of Savoy received the investiture at Vienna in 1708.

Upon Piedmont, the investiture of which was bestowed by the emperor Sigismund on the duke of Savoy, Amadeus VIII.

Upon the county of Asti, bestowed by Charles V., on the house of Savoy: the dukes of Savoy always vicars in Italy from the time of the emperor Sigismund.

Upon Genoa, formerly part of the domain of the Lombard kings. Frederick Barbarossa granted to it in fief the coast from Monaco to Portovenere; it is free under Charles V., in 1529; but the words of the instrument are In civitate nostra Genoa, et salvis Romani imperii juribus.

Upon the fiefs of Langues, of which the dukes of Savoy have the direct domain.

Upon Padua, Vicenza, and Verona, rights fallen into neglect.

Upon Naples and Sicily, rights still more fallen into neglect. Almost all the states of Italy are or have been in vassalage to the empire.

Upon Pomerania and Mecklenburg, the fiefs of which were granted by Frederick Barbarossa.

Upon Denmark, formerly a fief of the empire; Otho I. granted the investiture of it.

Upon Poland, for the territory on the banks of the Vistula.

Upon Bohemia and Silesia, united to the empire by Charles IV., in 1355.

Upon Prussia, from the time of Henry VII.; the grand master of Prussia acknowledged a member of the empire in 1500.

Upon Livonia, from the time of the knights of the sword. Upon Hungary, from the time of Henry II.

Upon Lorraine, by the treaty of 1542; acknowledged an estate of the empire, paying taxes to support the war against the Turks.

Upon the duchy of Bar down to the year 1311, when Philip the Fair, who conquered it, did homage for it.

Upon the duchy of Burgundy, by virtue of the rights of Mary of Burgundy.

Upon the kingdom of Arles and Burgundy on the other side of the Jura, which Conrad the Salian, possessed in chief by his wife.

Upon Dauphiny, as part of the kingdom of Arles; the emperor Charles IV. having caused himself to be crowned at Arles in 1365, and created the dauphin of France his viceroy.

Upon Provence, as a member of the kingdom of Arles, for which Charles of Anjou did homage to the empire.

Upon the principality of Orange, as an arrière-fief of the empire.

Upon Avignon, for the same reason.

Upon Sardinia, which Frederick II. erected into a kingdom.

Upon Switzerland, as a member of the kingdoms of Arles and Burgundy.

Upon Dalmatia, a great part of which belongs at present wholly to the Venetians, and the rest to Hungary.

PRIDE.

Cicero, in one of his letters, says familiarly to his friend: "Send to me the persons to whom you wish me to give the Gauls." In another, he complains of being fatigued with letters from I know not what princes, who thank him for causing their provinces to be erected into kingdoms; and he adds that he does not even know where these kingdoms are situated.

It is probable that Cicero, who often saw the Roman people, the sovereign people, applaud and obey him, and who was thanked by kings whom he knew not, had some emotions of pride and vanity.

Though the sentiment is not at all consistent in so pitiful an animal as man, yet we can pardon it in a Cicero, a Cæsar, or a Scipio; but when in the extremity of one of our half barbarous provinces, a man who may have bought a small situation, and printed poor verses, takes it into his head to be proud, it is very laughable.

PRIESTS.

Priests in a state approach nearly to what preceptors are in private families: it is their province to teach, pray, and supply example. They ought to have no authority over the masters of the house; at least until it can be proved that he who gives the wages ought to obey him who receives them. Of all religions the one which most positively excludes the priesthood from civil authority, is that of Jesus. "Give unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's."—"Among you there is neither first nor last."—"My kingdom is not of this world."

The quarrels between the empires and the priesthood, which have bedewed Europe with blood for more than six centuries, have therefore been, on the part of the priests, nothing but rebellion at once against God and man, and a continual sin against the Holy Ghost.

From the time of Calchas, who assassinated the daughter of Agamemnon, until Gregory XII., and Sixtus V., two bishops who would have deprived Henry IV., of the kingdom of France, sacerdotal power has been injurious to

the world.

Prayer is not dominion, nor exhortation despotism. A good priest ought to be a physician to the soul. If Hippocrates had ordered his patients to take hellebore under pain of being hanged, he would have been more insane and barbarous than Phalaris, and would have had little practice. When a priest says: Worship God; be just, indulgent, and compassionate; he is then a good physician; when he says: Believe me, or you shall be burned; he is an assassin.

The magistrate ought to support and restrain the priest in the same manner as the father of a family insures respect to the preceptor, and prevents him from abusing it. The agreement of Church and State is of all systems the most monstrous, for it necessarily implies division, and the existence of two contracting parties. We ought to say the protection given by government to the priesthood or church.

But what is to be said and done in respect to countries in which the priesthood have obtained dominion, as in Salem, where Melchizedek was priest and king; in Japan, where the dairo has been for a long time emperor? I answer, that the successors of Melchizedek and the dairos have been set aside.

The Turks are wise in this; they religiously make a pilgrimage to Mecca; but they will not permit the xerif of Mecca to excommunicate the sultan. Neither will they purchase from Mecca permission not to observe the ramadan, or the liberty of espousing their cousins or their nieces. They are not judged by imans, whom the xerif delegates; nor do they pay the first year's revenue to the xerif. What is to be said of all that? Reader, speak for yourself.

PRIESTS OF THE PAGANS.

Father Navarette, in one of his letters to Don John of Austria, relates the following speech of the dalai-lama to his privy council: "My venerable brothers, you and I know very well that I am not immortal; but it is proper that the people should think so. The Tartars of great and little Thibet are people with stiff necks and little information, who require a heavy yoke and gross inventions. Convince them of my immortality, and the glory will reflect on you, and you will procure honors and riches.

"When the time shall come in which the Tartars will be more enlightened, we may then confess that the grand lamas are not now immortal, but that their predecessors were so; and that what is necessary for the erection of a grand edifice, is no longer so when it is established on an immovable foundation.

"I hesitated at first to distribute the agremens of my water-closet, properly

inclosed in crystals ornamented with gilded copper, to the vassals of my empire; but these relics have been received with so much respect, that the usage must be continued, which after all exhibits nothing repugnant to sound morals, and brings much money into our sacred treasury.

"If any impious reasoner should ever endeavor to persuade the people that one end of our sacred person is not so divine as the other—should they protest against our relics, you will maintain their value and importance to the utmost of your power.

"And if you are finally obliged to give up the sanctity of our nether end, you must take care to preserve in the minds of the reasoners the most profound respect for our understanding, just as in a treaty with the Moguls, we have ceded a poor province, in order to secure our peaceable possession of the remainder.

"So long as our Tartars of great and little Thibet are unable to read and write, they will remain ignorant and devout; you may therefore boldly take their money, intrigue with their wives and their daughters, and threaten them with the anger of the god Fo if they complain.

"When the time of correct reasoning shall arrive—for it will arrive some day or other—you will then take a totally opposite course, and say directly the contrary of what your predecessors have said, for you ought to change the nature of your curb in proportion as the horses become more difficult to govern. Your exterior must be more grave, your intrigues more mysterious, your secrets better guarded, your sophistry more dazzling, and your policy more refined. You will then be the pilots of a vessel which is leaky on all sides. Have under you subalterns continually employed at the pumps, and as caulkers to stop all the holes. You will navigate with difficulty, but you will still proceed, and be enabled to cast into the fire or the water, as may be most convenient, all those who would examine whether you have properly refitted the vessel.

"If among the unbelievers is a prince of Calkas, a chief of the Kalmucks, a prince of Kasan, or any other powerful prince, who has unhappily too much wit, take great care not to quarrel with him. Respect him, and continually observe that you hope he will return to the holy path. As to simple citizens, spare them not, and the better men they are, the more you ought to labor to exterminate them; for being men of honor they are the most dangerous of all to you. You will exhibit the simplicity of the dove, the prudence of the serpent, and the paw of the lion, according to circumstances."

The dalai-lama had scarcely pronounced these words when the earth trembled; lightnings sparkled in the firmament from one pole to the other; thunders rolled, and a celestial voice was heard to exclaim, "Adore God and

not the grand lama."

All the inferior lamas insisted that the voice said, "Adore God and the grand lama;" and they were believed for a long time in the kingdom of Thibet; but they are now believed no longer.

PRIOR, BUTLER, AND SWIFT.

It was not known to France that Prior, who was deputed by Queen Anne to adjust the treaty of Utrecht with Louis XIV., was a poet. France has since repaid England in the same coin, for Cardinal Dubois sent our Destouches to London, where he passed as little for a poet as Prior in France. Prior was originally an attendant at a tavern kept by his uncle, when the earl of Dorset, a good poet himself and a lover of the bottle, one day surprised him reading Horace; in the same manner as Lord Ailsa found his gardener reading Newton. Ailsa made his gardener a good geometrician, and Dorset made a very agreeable poet of his vintner.

It was Prior who wrote the history of the soul under the title of "Alma," and it is the most natural which has hitherto been composed on an existence so much felt, and so little known. The soul, according to "Alma," resides at first, in the extremities; in the feet and hands of children, and from thence gradually ascends to the centre of the body at the age of puberty. Its next step is to the heart, in which it engenders sentiments of love and heroism; thence it mounts to the head at a mature age, where it reasons as well as it is able; and in old age it is not known what becomes of it; it is the sap of an aged tree which evaporates, and is not renewed again. This work is probably too long, for all pleasantry should be short; and it might even be as well were the serious short also.

Prior made a small poem on the battle of Hochstädt. It is not equal to his "Alma"; there is, however, one good apostrophe to Boileau, who is called a satirical flatterer for taking so much pains to sing that Louis did not pass the Rhine. Our plenipotentiary finished by paraphrasing, in fifteen hundred verses, the words attributed to Solomon, that "all is vanity". Fifteen thousand verses might be written on this subject; but woe to him who says all which can be said upon it!

At length Queen Anne dying, the ministry changed, and the peace adjusted by Prior being altogether unpopular, he had nothing to depend upon except an edition of his works; which were subscribed for by his party: after which he died like a philosopher, which is the usual mode of dying of all respectable

Englishmen.

Hudibras.

There is an English poem which it is very difficult to make foreigners understand, entitled "Hudibras." It is a very humorous work, although the subject is the civil war of the time of Cromwell. A struggle which cost so much blood and so many tears, originated a poem which obliges the most serious reader to smile. An example of this contrast is found in our "Satire of Menippus." Certainly the Romans would not have made a burlesque poem on the wars of Pompey and Cæsar, or the proscription of Antony and Octavius. How then is it that the frightful evils of the League in France, and of the wars between the king and parliament in England, have proved sources of pleasantry? because at bottom there is something ridiculous hid beneath these fatal quarrels. The citizens of Paris, at the head of the faction of Sixteen, mingled impertinence with the miseries of faction. The intrigues of women, of the legates and of the monks, presented a comic aspect, notwithstanding the calamities which they produced. The theological disputes and enthusiasm of the Puritans in England, were also very open to raillery; and this fund of the ridiculous, well managed, might pleasantly enough aid in dispersing the tragical horrors which abound on the surface. If the bull Unigenitus caused the shedding of blood, the little poem "Philotanus" was no less suitable to the subject; and it is only to be complained of for not being so gay, so pleasant, and so various as it might have been; and for not fulfilling in the course of the work the promise held out by its commencement.

The poem of "Hudibras" of which I speak, seems to be a composition of the satire of "Menippus" and of "Don Quixote." It surpasses them in the advantage of verse and also in wit; the former indeed does not come near it; being a very middling production; but notwithstanding his wit, the author of "Hudibras" is much beneath "Don Quixote." Taste, vivacity, the art of narrating and of introducing adventures, with the faculty of never being tedious, go farther than wit; and moreover, "Don Quixote" is read by all nations, and "Hudibras" by the English alone.

Butler, the author of this extraordinary poem, was contemporary with Milton, and enjoyed infinitely more temporary popularity than the latter, because his work was humorous, and that of Milton melancholy. Butler turned the enemies of King Charles II. into ridicule, and all the recompense he received was the frequent quotation of his verses by that monarch. The combats of the knight Hudibras were much better known than the battles between the good and bad angels in "Paradise Lost"; but the court of England treated Butler no better than the celestial court treated Milton; both the one and the other died in want, or very near it.

A man whose imagination was impregnated with a tenth part of the comic spirit, good or bad, which pervades this work, could not but be very pleasant; but he must take care how he translates "Hudibras." It is difficult to make foreign readers laugh at pleasantries which are almost forgotten by the nation which has produced them. Dante is little read in Europe, because we are ignorant of so much of his allusion; and it is the same with "Hudibras." The greater part of the humor of this poem being expended on the theology and theologians of its own time, a commentary is eternally necessary. Pleasantry requiring explanation ceases to be pleasantry; and a commentator on bon mots is seldom capable of conveying them.

Of Dean Swift.

How is it that in France so little is understood of the works of the ingenious Doctor Swift, who is called the Rabelais of England? He has the honor, like the latter, of being a churchman and an universal joker; but Rabelais was not above his age, and Swift is much above Rabelais.

Our curate of Meudon, in his extravagant and unintelligible book, has exhibited extreme gayety and equally great impertinence. He has lavished at once erudition, coarseness and ennui. A good story of two pages is purchased by a volume of absurdities. There are only some persons of an eccentric taste who pique themselves upon understanding and valuing the whole of this work. The rest of the nation laugh at the humor of Rabelais, and despise the work; regarding him only as the first of buffoons. We regret that a man who possessed so much wit, should have made so miserable a use of it. He is a drunken philosopher, who wrote only in the moments of his intoxication.

Dr. Swift is Rabelais sober, and living in good company. He has not indeed the gayety of the former, but he has all the finesse, sense, discrimination, which is wanted by our curate of Meudon. His verse is in a singular taste, and almost inimitable. He exhibits a fine vein of humor, both in prose and in verse; but in order to understand it, it is necessary to visit his country.

In this country, which appears so extraordinary to other parts of Europe, it has excited little surprise that Doctor Swift, dean of a cathedral, should make merry in his "Tale of a Tub" with Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism; his own defence is that he has not meddled with Christianity. He pretends to respect the parent, while he scourges the children. Certain fastidious persons are of opinion that his lashes are so long they have even reached the father.

This famous "Tale of a Tub" is the ancient story of the three invisible rings which a father bequeathed to his three children. These three rings were the Jewish, the Christian, and the Mahometan religions. It is still more an imitation of the history of Mero and Enégu by Fontenelle. Mero is the anagram of Rome; Enégu of Geneva, and they are two sisters who aspire to

the succession of the kingdom of their father. Mero reigns the first, and Fontenelle represents her as a sorceress, who plays tricks with bread and effects conjuration with dead bodies. This is precisely the Lord Peter of Swift, who presents a piece of bread to his two brothers, and says to them, "Here is some excellent Burgundy, my friends; this partridge is of a delicious flavor." Lord Peter in Swift performs the same part with the Mero of Fontenelle.

Thus almost all is imitation. The idea of the "Persian Letters" was taken from that of the "Turkish Spy." Boyardo imitated Pulci; Ariosto, Boyardo; the most original wits borrow from one another. Cervantes makes a madman of his Don Quixote, but is Orlando anything else? It would be difficult to decide by which of the two knight-errantry is more ridiculed, the grotesque portraiture of Cervantes, or the fertile imagination of Ariosto. Metastasia has borrowed the greater part of his operas from our French tragedies; and many English authors have copied us and said nothing about it. It is with books as with the fires in our grates; everybody borrows a light from his neighbor to kindle his own, which in its turn is communicated to others, and each partakes of all.

PRIVILEGE—PRIVILEGED CASES.

Custom, which almost always prevails against reason, would have the offences of ecclesiastics and monks against civil orders, which are very frequent, called privileged offences; and those offences common which regard only ecclesiastical discipline, cases that are abandoned to the sacerdotal hierarchy, and with which the civil power does not interfere.

The Church having no jurisdiction but that which sovereigns have granted it, and the judges of the Church being thus only judges privileged by the sovereign, those cases should be called privileged which it is their province to judge, and those common offences which are punishable by the prince's officers. But the canonists, who are very rarely exact in their expressions, particularly when treating of regal jurisprudence, having regarded a priest called the official, as being of right the sole judge of the clergy, they have entitled that privilege, which in common law belongs to lay tribunals, and the ordinances of the monarch have adopted this expression in France.

To conform himself to this custom, the judge of the Church takes cognizance only of common crime; in respect to privileged cases he can act only concurrently with the regal judge, who repairs to the episcopal court, where, however, he is but the assessor of the judge of the Church. Both are assisted by their register; each separately, but in one another's presence, takes

notes of the course of the proceedings. The official who presides alone interrogates the accused; and if the royal judge has questions to put to him, he must have permission of the ecclesiastical judge to propose them.

This procedure is composed of formalities, and produces delays which should not be admitted in criminal jurisprudence. Judges of the Church who have not made a study of laws and formalities are seldom able to conduct criminal proceedings without giving place to appeals, which ruin the accused in expense, make him languish in chains, or retard his punishment if he is guilty.

Besides, the French have no precise law to determine which are privileged cases. A criminal often groans in a dungeon for a whole year, without knowing what tribunal will judge him. Priests and monks are in the state and subjects of it. It is very strange that when they trouble society they are not to be judged, like other citizens, by the officers of the sovereign.

Among the Jews, even the high priest had not the privilege which our laws grant to simple parish priests. Solomon deposed the high priest Abiathar, without referring him to the synagogue to take his trial. Jesus Christ, accused before a secular and pagan judge, challenged not his jurisdiction. St. Paul, translated to the tribunal of Felix and Festus, declined not their judgment. The Emperor Constantine first granted this privilege to bishops. Honorius and Theodosius the younger extended it to all the clergy, and Justinian confirmed it.

In digesting the criminal code of 1670, the counsellor of state, Pussort, and the president of Novion, wished to abolish the conjoint proceeding, and to give to royal judges alone the right of judging the clergy accused of privileged cases; but this so reasonable desire was combated by the first president De Lamoignon, and the advocate-general Talon, and a law which was made to reform our abuses confirmed the most ridiculous of them.

A declaration of the king on April 26, 1657, forbids the Parliament of Paris to continue the proceeding commenced against Cardinal Retz, accused of high treason. The same declaration desires that the suits of cardinals, archbishops, and bishops of the kingdom, accused of the crime of high treason, are to be conducted and judged by ecclesiastical judges, as ordered by the canons.

But this declaration, contrary to the customs of the kingdoms, has not been registered in any parliament, and would not be followed. Our books relate several sentences which have doomed cardinals, archbishops, and bishops to imprisonment, deposition, confiscation, and other punishments. These punishments were pronounced against the bishop of Nantes, by sentence of June 25, 1455; against Jean de la Balue, cardinal and bishop of Angers, by sentence dated July 29, 1469; Jean Hebert, bishop of Constance, in 1480;

Louis de Rochechouart, bishop of Nantes, in 1481; Geoffroi de Pompadour, bishop of Périgueux, and George d'Amboise, bishop of Montauban, in 1488; Geoffroi Dintiville, bishop of Auxerre, in 1531; Bernard Lordat, bishop of Pumiers, in 1537; Cardinal de Châtillon, bishop of Beauvais, the 19th of March, 1569; Geoffroi de La Martonie, bishop of Amiens, the 9th of July, 1594; Gilbert Génébrard, archbishop of Aix, the 26th of January, 1596; William Rose, bishop of Senlis, September 5, 1598; Cardinal de Sourdis, archbishop of Bordeaux, November 17, 1615.

The parliament sentenced Cardinal de Bouillon to be imprisoned, and seized his property on June 20, 1710.

Cardinal de Mailly, archbishop of Rheims, in 1717, made a law tending to destroy the ecclesiastical peace established by the government. The hangman publicly burned the law by sentence of parliament.

The sieur Languet, bishop of Soissons, having maintained that he could not be judged by the justice of the king even for the crime of high treason, was condemned to pay a fine of ten thousand livres.

In the shameful troubles excited by the refusal of sacraments, the simple presidial of Nantes condemned the bishop of that city to pay a fine of six thousand francs for having refused the communion to those who demanded it.

In 1764, the archbishop of Auch, of the name of Montillet, was fined, and his command, regarded as a defamatory libel, was burned by the executioner at Bordeaux.

These examples have been very frequent. The maxim, that ecclesiastics are entirely amenable to the justice of the king, like other citizens, has prevailed throughout the kingdom. There is no express law which commands it; but the opinion of all lawyers, the unanimous cry of the nation, and the good of the state, are in themselves a law.