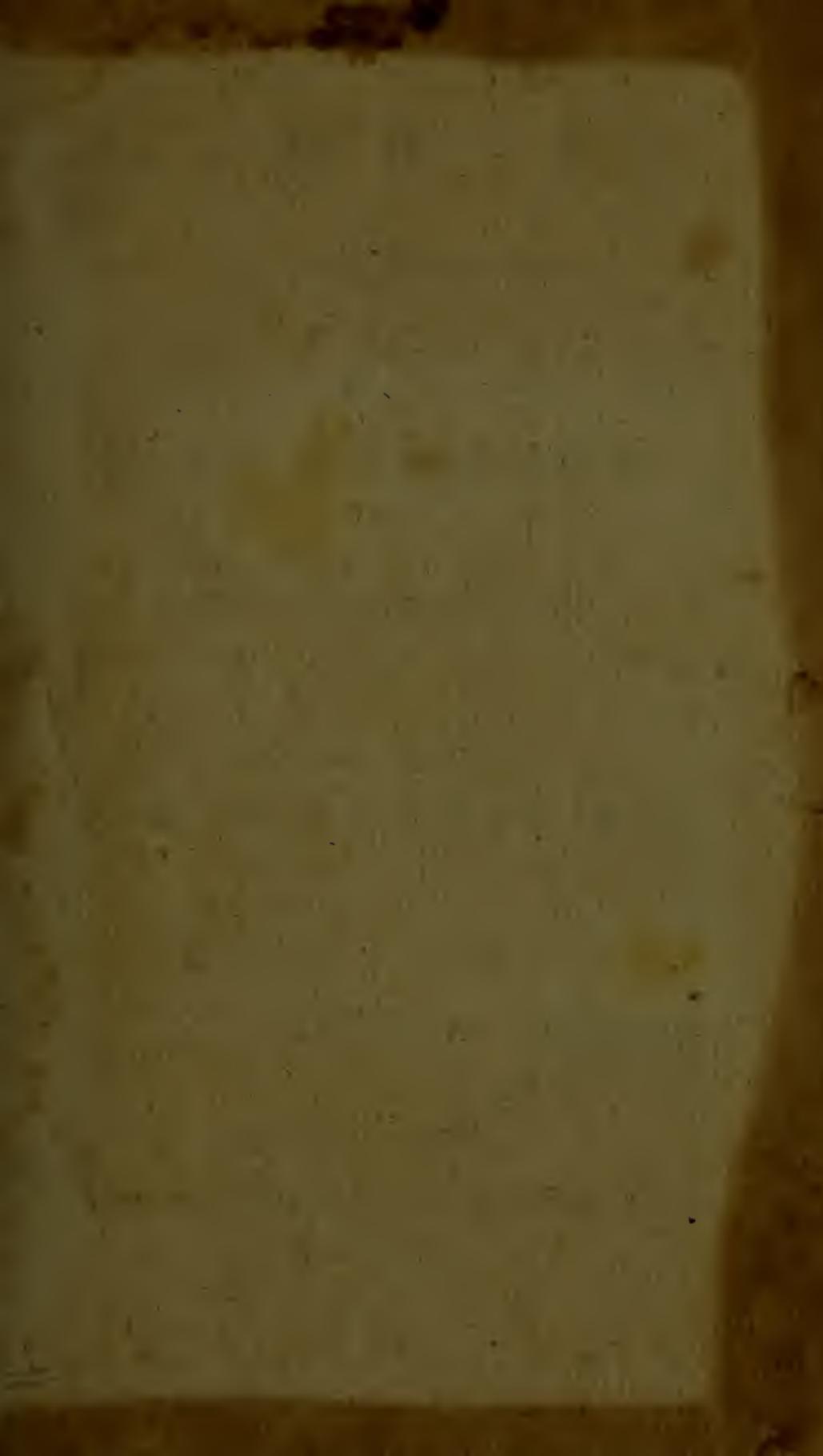


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M E M O I R S

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T W O T H O U S A N D F I V E H U N D R E D.

Le Temps présent est gros de l'Avenir.

LEIBNITZ.

Translated from the French

By W. H O O P - E R, M. D.

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

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L O N D O N,

Printed for G. ROBINSON, in Pater-noster-Row.

MDCCLXXII.

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LONDON
 Printed by J. B. R. at the ...
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E R R A T A.

Page 40. note, line 1. for *Promotheus* read *Prometheus*.
 Page 65. note, line 4. for *contestible* read *incontestible*. Page
 80. note, line 8. for *faculty* read *faculties*. Page 233, line
 6. for 867 read 1867,

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M E M O I R S

O F T H E Y E A R

Two Thousand Five Hundred.

C H A P. I.

The King's Library.

AN unlucky door, placed near to my pillow, by creaking on its hinges, totally disconcerted my ideas. I lost sight of my guide, and of the city ; but as the mind is continually agitated by the scene that has once made a strong impression, I happily returned to my dream. I was now quite alone ; it was broad day ; and by a natural propensity I found myself in the king's library ; but more than once was I under the necessity of assuring myself that it was so.

IN the room of those four galleries of an immense length, and which contained many thousands of volumes, I could find only one small closet, in which were several books that seemed to me far from voluminous. Surprised at so great a change, I ventured to ask if some fatal conflagration had not devoured that rich collection?—"Yes," they replied; "it was a conflagration; but by our own hands was it designedly allumined."

PERHAPS I have forgot to tell you, that these are the most affable people in the world; that they shew a very particular regard for age; and that they do not reply to inquiries, in the manner of the French, by answering with a question. The librarian, who was a man of real learning, presented himself to me; and, well considering all the objections, as well as reproaches, that I made, he gave me the following account.

"CONVINCED, by the most strict observation, that the mind is embarrassed by a thousand extrinsic difficulties, we were sensible that a numerous library was the feat of the greatest

extravagancies and the most idle chimeras. In your time, to the disgrace of reason, men first wrote and then thought. We follow the opposite course; and have therefore destroyed all those authors who buried their thoughts under a monstrous heap of words or phrases.

“NOTHING leads the mind farther astray than bad books; for the first notions being adopted without attention, the second become precipitate conclusions; and men thus go on from prejudice to prejudice, and from error to error. What remained for us to do, but to rebuild the structure of human knowledge? This project appeared of infinite labour; but, in fact, we found it only necessary to destroy those useless fabrics that hid from us the true point of view; as the Louvre became a new building by sweeping away the ruins that surrounded it. The sciences, amidst this labyrinth of books, were in a perpetual circulation, returning incessantly to the same point; and the exaggerated idea of their riches served only to conceal their real indigence.

“ IN fact, what did that multitude of volumes contain? For the most part, nothing more than perpetual repetitions of the same thing. Philosophy presented itself to us under the image of a statue, always celebrated, always copied, but never embellished; it appeared still more perfect in the original. It seemed to degenerate in all the copies of silver and gold that have since been made of it; doubtless, it was more beautiful when carved in wood by a hand almost savage, than when covered with extrinsic ornaments. Since men, from a wretched indolence, have given themselves up to the opinion of others, they have necessarily become servile imitators, destitute of invention and originality. What immense projects, what sublime speculations, have been extinguished by the breath of opinion! Time has brought down to us nothing but those empty, glaring notions that have been applauded by the multitude, while it has swallowed up those strong and bold thoughts, which were too simple to please the vulgar.

“ As our days are short, and ought not to be consumed in a puerile philosophy, we have
given

given a decisive stroke to the miserable controversies of the schools."—What have you done? Proceed, if you please.—“ By an unanimous consent, we brought together, on a vast plain, all those books which we judged either frivolous, useless, or dangerous; of these we formed a pyramid, that resembled, in height and bulk, an enormous tower; it was certainly another Babel. Journals crowned this strange edifice; and it was covered, on all sides, with ordinances of bishops, remonstrances of parliaments, petitions, and funeral orations; it was composed of five or six hundred thousand commentators, of eight hundred thousand volumes of law, of fifty thousand dictionaries, of a hundred thousand poems, of sixteen hundred thousand voyages and travels, and of a milliard (a) of romances. This tremendous mass we set on fire, and offered it as an expiatory sacrifice to veracity, to good sense, and true taste. The flames greedily devoured the follies of mankind, as well ancient as modern; the fire continued long. Some authors saw themselves burning alive; their cries, however, could not extin-

(a) *A thousand millions.*

guish the flames. We found, notwithstanding, amidst the embers, some pages of the works of P——, of De la H——, of the abbé A——; for they were so extremely frigid, that the fire could have no effect on them.

“ WE have therefore done from an enlightened zeal, what the barbarians once did from one that was blind: however, as we are neither unjust, nor like the Sarrazins, who heated their baths with the chef d’œuvres of literature, we have made an election; those of the greatest judgment amongst us have extracted the substance of thousands of volumes, which they have included in a small duodecimo; not unlike those skilful chemists, who concenter the virtues of many plants in a small phial, and cast aside the refuse (*a*).

“ WE

(*a*) On this globe, all is revolution: the minds of men vary to an infinity the national character, alter books, and make them no longer to be known. Is there any one author, if he reflects, that can reasonably indulge himself in the hope of not being despised by the next generation? Do we not deride our ancestors? Can we say what progress our children may make? Have we any idea of the secrets that may suddenly spring from out of the bosom of nature?

“ We have abridged what seemed of most importance; the best have been reprinted; and the whole corrected according to the true principles of morality. Our composers are a set of men estimable and dear to the nation; to knowledge they have added taste; and as they are capable of producing, they have made a judicious selection. We have remarked, to speak justly, that it appertains to the ages of philosophy only, to produce a small number of works. In yours, when real knowledge was not sufficiently established, it was necessary to bring together a great number of materials. The labourer must work before the architect.

“ AT the beginning, each science is treated in parts; every one applies his attention to that portion which has fallen to his lot. By this method the smallest details are observed; nothing

nature? Do we completely know the extent of the human understanding? Where is the work that is founded on a real knowledge of the human heart, on the nature of things, on right reason? Does not our physics present us an ocean with whose coasts we are yet scarce acquainted? How ridiculous, therefore, is that pride, which ignorantly pretends to prescribe the bounds of any art.

can escape. It was necessary for you to make an innumerable quantity of books ; it is our business to collect the scattered parts. The ignorant babble eternally ; the learned and sagacious speak little, but well.

“ THIS closet, that you see, contains those books that have escaped the flames. Their number is small ; but by their merit they have obtained the approbation of our age.”

I APPROACHED with curiosity ; and, on examining the first division, I found, that of the Greeks, they had preserved Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Demosthenes, Plato, and particularly our friend Plutarch ; but they had burned Heroditus, Sappho, Anacreon, and the vile Aristophanes. I would have defended, in some degree, the cause of Anacreon ; but I was answered by the best reasons in the world, though such as I shall not here mention, because they would not be intelligible to the present age.

IN the second division, appropriated to the Latin authors, I found Virgil, Pliny, and Titus
Livy,

Livy (*a*) entire; but they had burned Lucretius, except some poetic passages, because his physics they found false, and his morals dangerous. They had destroyed the tedious pleadings of Cicero, an able rhetor rather than a man of eloquence; but they had preserved his philosophic works, one of the most precious productions of antiquity. Sallust also remained. Ovid and Horace (*b*) were purged; the Odes of the latter appeared far inferior to his Epistles. Seneca was reduced to one fourth part. Tacitus was preserved; but, as his writings breathe a dark vapour that blackens the human race, and

(*a*) I have lately read this historian again; and I am convinced, that the virtue of the Romans consisted in sacrificing the human race on the altar of their country. As citizens, they are to be applauded; as men, to be abhorred.

(*b*) This writer had all the delicacy, all the flowers of wit, every possible urbanity; he has, nevertheless, been too much admired in every age. His muse inspires a voluptuous repose, a lethargic slumber, a pliant and dangerous indifference; it, therefore, must please the courtier and every effeminate mind, whose whole morality is confined to the present moment, and to the enjoyment of soft and solitary pleasures.

as we ought not to nourish a base idea of mankind, for tyrants are not of their number; the reading of this profound author was permitted to those only whose hearts were well formed. Catullus and Petronius had vanished in smoke. Quintilian was reduced to a volume of the smallest size.

THE third division contained the English authors, and here I found the greatest number of volumes. Here I saw all those philosophers that warlike, commerciant, and politic isle hath produced; Milton, Shakespeare, Pope, Young (*a*), and Richardson, here still enjoyed their

(*a*) M. Tournèbr has published a translation of this poet, which has had the greatest and most determined success. Every one has read this moral work; (*the author must here allude to the Night Thoughts,*) every one admires that sublime language, which elevates, cheers, and captivates the soul; because it is founded on great truths, presents great objects only, and derives all its dignity from their real grandeur. For my own part, I have never read any thing so original, so new, nor even so interesting. I admire that profound sentiment, which, though always the same, yet has an infinity of connexions and diversities; it is a stream by which I am borne down; I am pleased with those strong and lively images whose boldness

cor-

their full renown; their creative genius knew no restraint, while we are obliged to measure all our

correspond with the subject to which they are applied. We there see, moreover, the most demonstrative proofs of the immortality of the soul; in no part is the mind so much struck as in this; the poet attacks the heart, subdues it, and deprives it of all power of contradiction; such is the magic of expression, the force of eloquence, that it leaves a poignant sensation in the mind.

Young is in the right, in my judgment, (though, in the translator's note, censure has extorted a different opinion) when he asserts, that, without the prospect of eternity and future rewards, virtue would be but a name, a chimera: *Aut virtus nomen inane est, aut decus et pretium recte petit experiens vir.* What is that good from which there results no good, either in this world or in the other? What good results, in this world, from virtue to suffering innocence? Ask of a dying Brutus, a Cato, a Socrates. You there see stoicism at its last proof, and there it fairly discovers the vanity of the sect. I remember, and ever shall remember, a striking expression of J. J. Rousseau to a friend of mine. He was speaking of a proposition made to him of making his fortune by a means that was disgraceful, but of a nature to be kept secret. "Sir," he said, "thank God, I am not a materialist; if I were, I should not be worth more than all of them are. I know of no reward, but that which is attached to virtue."

I freely confess, that I am not more worthy than Rousseau; and would to God, that I were as worthy! but, if

our words ; the fruitful energy of those free souls was the admiration of a difficult age. That futile reproach we make them, of their want of taste, was disregarded by men, who, charmed with just and strong ideas, could read with assiduity, and knew how to meditate on

I thought myself altogether mortal, I would instantly become my own deity ; I would make all things subservient to my divinity, that is, to myself ; I would practise what they call virtue, when it promoted my pleasure ; and, in like manner, vice. I would rob to day, to give to my friend or mistress ; quarrel with, and rob them to-morrow, to gratify some trifling pleasure ; and in all this I should act very consequentially, because I should always do that which is agreeable to my divinity ; whereas, by loving virtue for the sake of a reward, and that reward not being attached to arbitrary actions, I am obliged to govern myself, not by my momentary inclination, but by that invariable rule which the Eternal Legislator and Remunerator has prescribed. It will therefore frequently happen, that I must do what I ought, though not what I please ; and, if my liberty decides for that which is right, in opposition to a contrary inclination, then I do that which I would, not that with which I am pleased. If it had been the will of God to direct us by a love for goodness only, he would have given us a rational mind, without having added the sensibility of the heart ; but he guides us by the prospect of rewards, because he has made us liable to passions and affections.

what

what they had read. They had, however, cut off from the philosophers those dangerous sceptics who would have shaken the foundations of morality; that virtuous people, influenced by what they felt, disdained such vain subtilties; for no argument could convince them that virtue was a chimera.

IN the fourth division were the Italian authors. The *Jerusalem Delivered*, that most beautiful of all poems, was at the head of them. They had, however, burned a whole library of criticisms against that enchanting poem. The celebrated *Treatise on Crimes and Punishments* had received all the perfection of which that important work was susceptible. I was agreeably surprised to see a number of judicious and philosophic works, which had arose from out the bosom of that nation. They had broke that talisman which seemed to promise a perpetuity of ignorance and superstition amongst them.

AT last, I came to the French writers. I hastily seized the first three volumes; they were Descartes, Montaigne, and Charron.

Mon-

Montaigne had suffered some retrenchment ; but as he is the philosopher, who of all others was the best acquainted with human nature, his writings were preserved, though all his ideas are not absolutely irreproachable. The visionary Malebranche, the gloomy Nicole, the un pitying Arnauld, and the cruel Eourdaloue, they had burned. All that related to scholastic disputes was so completely destroyed, that when I spoke of the Provençal Letters and the destruction of the Jesuits, the learned librarian made a very great anachronism, of which I informed him, and received a candid acknowledgment. I could never meet with those Provençal Letters, nor the most modern history of that grand affair ; they talked of the Jesuits, as we at this day do of the Druids.

INTO an oblivion, from whence they should never come forth, were cast that crowd of theologians called fathers of the church, writers the most sophistic, the most whimsical, obscure, and irrational, that were ever diametrically opposed to Locke or Clark. “ They seem,” said the librarian, “ to have set bounds to human insanity.”

I SEARCHED

I SEARCHED for, I examined the authors of my acquaintance. Heavens! what destruction! what mighty works evaporated in smoke! Where is that famous Bouffet, who, in my time, figured in fourteen quarto volumes? I was answered, "They are all vanished."—What! that eagle who soared to the highest regions of the air, that genius——"What, in conscience, could we preserve? That he had genius we allow (*a*); but to a wretched use did he apply it. We have adopted the maxim of Montaigne: *Let us not inquire who is the most learned, but who is the best learned.* The universal history of that Bouffet was nothing more than a miserable skeleton of chronology (*b*). It had

(*a*) What benefit might not human reason have received from such men as Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Erasmus, Bouffet, Paschal, Arnauld, Nicole, &c. if they had employed their genius in attacking the errors of the human mind, in improving morality, legislation, and physics, instead of opposing or establishing ridiculous dogmas!

(*b*) To give an air of truth to chronology, they have formed certain epochs; and on this delusive foundation they have erected that imaginary science, which has been entirely directed by caprice. They know not to what period

had beside, a turn so affected, and there were so many reflections of immoderate length, that accompanied that meagre production, that we can scarce think it was read for more than half a century."—But, at least, his Funeral Orations—
 “ We are highly incensed against them ; they breathe the miserable language of servitude and adulation. Shall a minister of the God of peace, of the God of truth, mount the pulpit to extol a gloomy politician, an avaricious statesman, a mean woman, a blood-thirsty hero ; and agitated like a poet with the description of a battle, never utter one sigh when thinking on that horrid scourge that desolates the earth. At that moment, he has no thought of maintaining the laws of humanity, of declaring to an ambitious monarch, by the sacred voice of religion, strong and terrible truths ; he rather wishes to hear it said, *That man talks well ; he makes the encomiums of the dead, while their ashes*

period they should refer the principal revolutions of the world, and yet they would fix the age in which each king reigned. The greatest errors rest secure by means of chronological calculations. They set out, for example, from the foundation of Rome ; and that foundation is supported by probabilities, or rather suppositions.

are yet warm. With much better reason would be give a good dose of incense to monarchs that are still living.

“ WE are no friends to Bouffet ; for he was not only a man proud and obdurate, a courtier fawning and ambitious, but to him also we owe those funeral orations, which have since multiplied like funeral torches, and which, like them, exhale a noxious vapour as they pass. This species of flattery appears to us the most odious, futile, and dangerous of all others ; for it is at once false, stupid, and shameless, and constantly contradicts the public voice, which echoes against those walls where the orator, whilst pompously declaiming, inwardly laughs at those false colours with which he has dressed out his idol.

“ BEHOLD his rival, his gentle and modest conqueror, the amiable, the pathetic Fenelon. His Telemachus and other works we have carefully preserved, because in them we find a rare and happy agreement between reason and sensibility (a). To have composed the Tele-
machus

(a) The French academy have proposed his eulogy as
the

machus at the court of Lewis XIV. appears to us as an admirable, astonishing virtue. Certainly that monarch did not comprehend the book; and that is the most favourable supposition we can make for his honour. Doubtless, that work required a more extensive knowledge, a more profound penetration; but, with all its simplicity, what force, what truth, what dignity, is there displayed! We have placed next to his, the works of the good abbé St. Pierre, whose pen was weak, but his heart sublime. Seven ages have given to his great and beautiful ideas a just maturity. His cotemporaries regarded him as a visionary. his dreams, however, have become realities."

AMONG the French poets, I found Corneille, Racine, and Moliere; but their com-

the next prize for eloquence; but if the work be what it ought to be, the academy cannot crown the discourse. Why give subjects that cannot be treated in their full extent? I admire, however, this species of writing, where, by investigating the genius of a great man. the art itself is investigated and exemplified. We have had excellent works of this kind, and especially those of M. Thomas, which is the most instructive book we can put into the hands of a young man, and from which he may draw at once useful knowledge and a rational love for glory.

mentators

mentators were burned (*a*). I asked a question of the librarian, that will probably be asked seven centuries hence, To which of the three do you give the preference?—"We understand but little of Moliere," he replied; "the manners that he painted are past; he seems to us to have attacked ridicule more than vice, and you had more vicious than ridiculous qualities (*b*). For the two tragedians, whose colours are more durable, I know not how a man of your age can

(*a*) They are the works of envy or ignorance. These commentators, with their zeal for the laws of grammar, excite my pity. The worst destiny that can attend any man of genius, either living or dead, is to be judged by pedantism, which sees nothing, and feels nothing. These wretched critics, who creep from word to word, resemble those purblind mortals, who miserably pore over every stroke of a picture of Le Seuer or Poussin, instead of embracing the whole at one view.

(*b*) It is not true, as advanced in the eulogy on Moliere, that the cure of the ridiculous is more easy than that of the vicious. But, if it were, to which disorder of the human heart should we first apply remedies? Shall the poet become an accomplice in the general perversity, and be the first to adopt those miserable compacts, which bad men make the better to disguise their villainy? Unhappy is he who does not see the full effect that an excellent drama can produce, who is ignorant of the sublimity of that science which can unite all hearts in one.

ask the question. He who excelled all others in painting the human heart, who elevated and enlarged the mind to the greatest degree; he who was the best acquainted with the shocks of passion and the depths of policy, had doubtless more genius than his harmonious rival (*a*), who, with a style more correct and flowing, had less of force and concision, who had not the piercing view, nor the elevation, nor the fire, nor the argument, nor the amazing diversity of characters, of the other. Add to this the moral aim, constantly marked in Corneille, and which drove mankind towards the element of every virtue, towards liberty. Racine, after effeminating his heroes, effeminated the spectators (*b*). Taste

(*a*) Corneille has frequently an original air of freedom and simplicity, and even something more natural than Racine.

(*b*) Racine and Boileau were two dastardly courtiers, who approached their monarch with the awe of two tradesmen of the Rue St. Dennis. It was not so that Horace frequented Augustus. Nothing can be more mean than the letters of these two poets, in raptures to find themselves at the court. It is difficult to conceive of more miserable productions. Racine at last died of chagrin, because Lewis XIV. cast a contemptuous look at him in the public walks.

is the art of elevating low subjects; and in this Corneille was inferior to Racine. Time, that sovereign judge, who equally destroys both eulogies and censures, time has declared, and has placed a wide distance between them; the one is a genius of the first order; the other, some few passages borrowed from the Greek excepted, is nothing more than a fine writer, as was observed in his own age. In your time, men had no longer the same energy; they required finished works, and the great has ever a certain roughness attending it; style was then become the principal merit, as is constantly the case with those nations that are enfeebled and corrupted.

I HERE found the terrible Crebillon, who has painted crimes in all those frightful colours by which they are characterised. This people sometimes read his works, but never suffer them to be acted.

It is easy to be imagined, that I recollected my friend Fontaine, equally beloved and constantly

stantly read (*a*). Moliere, that just judge of merit, presented this first of moral poets with immortality. Fable, it is true, is the allegorical language of a slave, who dares not talk to his master; but, at the same time, as it moderates that severity which there may be in truth, it must constantly be highly valuable in a world exposed to all sorts of tyrants. Satire is, perhaps, the weapon of despair alone.

How far has this age placed that inimitable fabulist above Boileau (*b*), who (as the abbé Costard says) made himself the dictator of Par-

(*a*) Fontaine was the confidant of nature, and merited, by pre-eminence, the title of poet. I am surprised at the audacity of those who have since wrote fables with the presumption of imitating him.

(*b*) The critic who only endeavours to depreciate an author, instead of explaining him, discovers his own vanity, ignorance, and jealousy. His malignity will not let him clearly discern the good and bad parts of a book. Criticism belongs to them only whose judgment and candour are not, in any degree, infected by personal interest. Critic, know thyself; and if thou wouldst form a right judgment of any work, remember, that depending on thy own lights only, thou canst judge of nothing.

nassus,

nassus, and who, void of invention, force, grace, and sentiment, was nothing more than a tame and scrupulous versifier. They had preserved several other fables, among which were some by La Motte, and those of Nivernois (*a*).

THE poet Rousseau made a diminutive figure: they had preserved some of his odes and cantatas, but all his gloomy epistles, his tedious and dry allegories, his Mandragora, his epigrams, the work of a depraved heart, had all, it is easy to imagine, perished in those flames they had long deserved. I cannot here enumerate all the salutary mutilations that had been made in many works otherwise justly renowned. I saw none of those frivolous poets, who flattered themselves that the taste of their age, which diffused over the most serious subjects that false varnish of wit which debases reason, would have preserved them (*b*). All those

(*a*) Seven hundred years hence, it will not be remembered, perhaps, that this charming fabulist was a duke, and wore a blue ribband, but doubtless that he was a sprightly philosopher.

(*b*) When Hercules saw the statue of his favourite Adonis,

these fallies of a light and giddy imagination, reduced to their just value, were evaporated, like those sparks that shine with the greater lustre only to be the sooner extinguished. All those writers of romances, whether historic, moral, or political, where scattered truths are only met with by chance ; and those in which the object is not considered in all its different points of view ; and lastly, those who led astray by a prejudice for a particular system, had followed their own ideas only ; all these authors, I say, deluded by the absence or presence of genius, had disappeared, or had undergone the pruning-knife of a judicious critic, which is far from being a fatal instrument (a). Sagacity and a love of order had presided over this new structure ; as in those thick forests where the branches, intertwined with each other, conceal all the paths, and where there reigns an eternal

nis, in the temple of Venus, he cried out, " There is no divinity in thee." The same may be said of all those polished, delicate, ingenious, and effeminate works.

(a) It would be a work worthy of a man of sound judgment, to form a rational and comprehensive catalogue of the best books in every science, and to point out the manner of reading them, and those passages that are most worthy of attention.

and

and noxious shade ; if the industry of man bears the hatchet and the flame, the genial rays of the sun enter, the flowery paths recreate the sight, and we traverse each route without fear or disgust. I perceived in a corner a curious book which seemed to me judiciously composed, and was intitled, *Usurped Reputations*. It contained the reasons that determined the extinction of many books, and of the contempt that was cast on the pen of certain writers, who were nevertheless admired in their own age. The same book redressed the wrongs of the cotemporaries of great men, when their adversaries were unjust, jealous, or blinded by some other passion (a). I chanced to lay my hand on a Voltaire, O heavens ! I cried, to what a size is he shrunk ! Where are those twenty-six quarto volumes that flowed from his brilliant, exhaustless pen ? If that celebrated writer could come again upon the earth, how would he be asto-

(a) There still remains a good book to be wrote, though already done ; *Great Events from little Causes*. But, where is the man who can discover the real clue ; I will mention another, very proper for the present age, *The Placemen who become Persecutors to serve the Baseness of those they despise* ; and one more, *The Crimes of Sovereigns*.

nished!—"We have been obliged to burn a large portion," was replied. "You know that fine genius paid a tribute, somewhat too large, to human frailty. He precipitated his ideas, he gave them not time to ripen. He preferred whatever had the character of boldness, to a slow discussion of the truth. Rarely had his writings any depth. He was a rapid swallow that glanced with grace and ease along the surface of a large river, where he drank, and dipped his wings as he skimmed along. He was at once a man of genius and of wit. We cannot refuse him the first, the most noble and amiable of virtues, the love of humanity. He has combated with ardour for the interest of man. He not only detested, but rendered detestable, persecution and tyranny of every kind. He brought a rational and affecting morality on the stage. He has painted heroism in its proper colours. In a word, he was the greatest poet of the French nation. We have preserved his *Epopææ*; for, though the plan be trifling, yet the name of Henry IV. has rendered it immortal. We are, above all, captivated with his beautiful tragedies, in which there shines a pencil so facile,

facile, so various, and so just. We have also preserved all his prose pieces, where he is not ridiculous, too severe, or improperly satyrical; it is there he is truly original (a). But you know, that toward the fifteen last years of his life, he had only a few remaining ideas,

(a) I am charmed with the painter of nature, who lets his pencil run freely over the cloth, who prefers a certain easy and bold liberty, that gives a lustre to his colours; to that frigid precision, that tame regularity, which constantly reminds me of the art, and its subterfuges. O, how brilliant is the writer who gives himself up entirely to his genius! Who indulges in voluntary negligencies, and shews, with a light hand, happy and variegated touches. Who deigns to have foibles, is pleased with a certain irregularity, and never so engaging as when in disorder. Behold the man of superlative genius. A tedious symmetry can please none but fops. Every man of a lively imagination, wishes that we would aid him with our wings. It is to this happy vivacity, which rouses the minds, that we owe the crowd of readers. Like the elementary fire, the writer should be forever in action. But this secret is communicated only to the few. The numbers labour, sweat, make a thousand efforts to obtain a gelid perfection. He who is born to write in a bold, rapid, brilliant style, above all rules, with the same stroke of his pen expresses his idea, and imprints it with pleasure on the heart of his reader. Behold Voltaire, who, like a stag, bounds over the plains of literature, while some pretended imitator, some congealed copyists, such as La H***, comes like a tortoise, creeping after.

which he represented under a hundred different faces. He perpetually retailed the same subject. He engaged in controversies with those he ought to have despised. He had the misfortune to write insipid and gross reflections against J. J. Rousseau; a furious jealousy so far transported him, that he even wrote without judgment. We were obliged to burn those wretched performances, which would have dishonoured him to the most distant posterity; still more jealous of his glory than he was himself, we have been obliged to destroy one moiety of that great man to preserve the other."

I am charmed, I cried, to find, that you have preserved J. J. Rousseau entire. What a work is the *Emelius* (a)! What a sensibility of soul is diffused over that beautiful romance, the new *Eloisa*! What bold, comprehensive, and penetrative ideas in his letters to *De la Montagne*! What vigor, what fire in his other works! With what thought does he inspire his

(a) What insipidities have been printed against this immortal work! How can a man dare to write when he knows not even how to read.

reader!

reader! Every particular appears to me worthy to be read.—“So we have judged,” replied the librarian. “There must have been a very mean and cruel pride in your age. In fact, you must not have understood him; your trifling disposition would not permit you to pursue his arguments. He had reason to despise you. Your philosophers themselves were of the vulgar people. But I think we are agreed concerning this philosopher, it is therefore needless to say more.

IN turning over the books of the last division, I saw with pleasure many works formerly dear to my nation. *L'Esprit des Loix*; *L'Histoire Naturelle*; the book *De l'Esprit* commented in some parts (*a*). Nor had they excluded the friend of man, the *Belisarius*; the works of *Linguet*; the eloquent harangues of *Thomas* (*b*) *St. Servan*, *Dupaty*, *Le Tourneur*;

(*a*) The spider draws poison from the same rose whence the bee extracts honey; so a bad man frequently nourishes his malignity from the same book whence a good man derives the greatest consolation.

(*b*) There is at present no tribune for harangues; eloquence however is not dead. It still speaks, sometimes

neur, and the discourses of Phocion. I distinguished the numerous and philosophic works that the age of Louis XV. had produced (a). The Encyclopedia was formed on a new and more happy plan. Instead of that wretched practice of reducing all things to a dictionary, that is, of mincing the several sciences, they had preserved each art entire. With a single glance of the eye you saw all their different parts. This work contained vast and exact drafts that followed each other in regular order, and were connected in a simple and pleasing manner. All that had been wrote against the Christian religion was burned, as books that were become absolutely useless.

I INQUIRED for the historians, and the librarian said, "We assign that province in part to our painters. Facts have a philosophical thunders; and though it cannot rouse us to virtuous sentiments, yet, at least, it confounds us with shame.

(a) The philosopher who is employed in examining the nature of man, of policy and manners, diffuses useful lights over the community; his detractors are either fools, or malignant citizens.

phical

phical certainty, which is to be expressed by the pencil. What is history? In reality nothing more than the knowledge of facts. The reflections and inferences appertain to the historian, and not to the science itself. The facts however are innumerable. What popular reports; what superannuated fables; what endless details! The transactions of each age are the most interesting of all others for the cotemporaries; and of all ages, those of the present only are not to be investigated. They have wrote laboriously of ancient and foreign history, but have turned their attention from present facts (a). The spirit of conjecture is displayed at the expence of accuracy. Many have so little known their own weakness, that several single pens have attempted an universal history, more romantic than the good Indians, who allowed at least four elephants to support the world. In a word, history has been so disfigured, so stuffed with falsehoods and puerile reflections, that a romance, to every judicious mind, is more

(a) *This is natural enough in France, where there is so much danger in writing on recent facts; but, to our good fortune, it is not so here.*

elegant than those collections of facts, where, as on a boundless ocean, we sail without a compass (*a*).

“ WE have made a slight extract, painting each age in strong characters, and describing those persons only who have had a real influence on the destiny of empires (*b*). We have omitted those reigns where there were nothing to be seen but wars and cruelties. They ought to be concealed; for nothing should be presented that will not do honour to humani-

(*a*) When we reflect on the nature of the human mind, we must be convinced of the impossibility of a real ancient history. The modern is more probable; but between probability and truth there is almost as great a distance, as between truth and falsehood. Moreover, we learn nothing from modern histories. Each historian accommodates the facts to his ideas, almost in the same manner as a cook does the dishes to his palate; we must dine in the taste of the cook; we must read in the humour of the historian.

(*b*) To say the reign of Charles VI. or Louis XIII. is a misnomer, and must mislead the unattentive reader. A monarch, who has no influence on the age in which he lives, as is frequently the case, should be ranked in the class of common men, and we should say, for example, after the death of Henry IV. *we shall now describe the age of Richelieu, &c.*

ty.

ty. It is perhaps dangerous to preserve all the excesses to which vice has been extended. The number of the guilty seems to palliate the crime; and the fewer outrages we see, the less we are tempted to commit them. We have treated human nature like that son who revered his father, and covered with a veil the disorders of ebriety."

I approached the librarian, and asked, in a low voice, for the *Age of Louis XV.* which might serve as a continuation to that of *Louis XIV.* by Voltaire. I found that it had been composed in the twentieth century. Never have I read any thing more curious, more singular and astonishing. The historian, from a regard to the extravagance of the circumstances, had not sacrificed any detail. My curiosity, my astonishment redoubled at every page. I was taught to reform many of my ideas; and to know, that the age in which we live, is, of all others, the most distant from us. I laughed, I admired greatly; but I wept at least as much. I can say no more here; the

events of the present day are like fruit that should not be tasted till it is ripe (a).

C H A P. II.

The Men of Letters.

AS I went out of the library, a stranger accosted me, and we entered into conversation. It was concerning men of letters. I have known but few in my time, I said, but those I have known were gentle, modest, friendly, and full of probity. If they had defects, they redeemed them by so many valuable properties, that a man must be incapable of friendship who had not an attachment to them. Envy, ignorance, and calumny have disfigured the characters of authors; for every public man is exposed to the brutal discourse of the vulgar, who, however ignorant

(a) Time produces all things. Those secrets which are thought to be completely concealed will offer themselves to the public, as the rivers run into the sea. To our children all will be known.

they

they may be, pronounce boldly (*a*). The great, as destitute, for the most part, of talents as of virtue, are jealous of their attracting the regard of the nation, and pretend to despise them (*b*). Writers have also frequently, to
combat

(*a*) A man of this class who is incapable of writing a single line, but has a talent for verbal satire, in consequence of ridiculing authors, and gratifying malignity, becomes at last persuaded, that he is himself a man of taste and ingenuity; but he is miserably deceived, both in judging of himself and of others.

(*b*) It is not to the most powerful monarchs, nor to the most opulent princes, nor to the chief rulers of a nation, that most states owe their splendor, force and glory. It is private persons, who have made the most astonishing improvements in the arts, in sciences, and even in the art of government. Who measured the earth? Who discovered the system of the heavens? Who invented those curious manufactures with which we are clothed? Who has laid open the secrets of natural history? Who has explored the intricacies of chemistry, anatomy, and botany? Certainly private persons; who, in the eye of the wise man, must eclipse the pretenders to greatness, those proud dwarfs, who cherish nothing but their own vanity. In effect, it is not kings, ministers, persons invested with authority that govern the world. No, it is those men of superior genius, who cry to their cotemporaries, with a bold and irresistible voice, *Banish those wretched prejudices; pursue more elevated*

combat with the contemptible taste of the public, who, the more it is enriched by their works, becomes the more sparing of its applause, and sometimes abandoning works of genius, run gaping after some wretched buffoonery. In a word, they have need of the greatest fortitude to support themselves in a career where the pride of mankind offers them a thousand indignities. They have, however, braved both the insolence and disdain of the great, and the ignorant attacks of the vulgar. A just renown, by blasting their enemies, has crowned their noble efforts with success.

“ I ACKNOWLEDGE this portrait to be just,” my interlocutor politely replied. “ Men of letters are become the most respectable of citizens. Everyone feels how desirable it is to be dissolved in tenderness ; it is the most lively pleasure the mind can enjoy. It is to them, therefore, that the state has confided the care of developing

ed thoughts, despise what thou hast foolishly respected, and respect that which, through ignorance, thou hast despised ; profit by thy past follies, and learn better to distinguish the rights of mankind ; adopt the ideas that I have set before thee. Thy route is clearly traced, march ! And I will answer for thy success.

this

this principle of virtue. By exhibiting majestic, terrible, and tender pictures, and by improving the sensibility of mankind, they dispose them to all those great qualities that proceed from it. We find," he continued, "that the writers of your age, as to what concerns morality, and grand and useful pursuits, have far surpassed those of the age of Lewis XIV. They have freely painted the faults of kings, the misfortunes of the people, the ravages of the passions, the efforts of virtue, and even the success of vice; faithful to their vocation (*a*), they have

(*a*) The famous Locusta, skilful in the art of preparing subtle poisons, was lodged by Nero in his palace; and so desirous was he of preserving a woman so useful to his designs, that he appointed guards to attend her. It was she who composed the cup by which Britannicus perished. When the poison had blackened the visage of that unfortunate prince, Nero caused it to be spread over with white paint, so that it appeared with the paleness of a natural death; but, as they bore it to the tomb, a sudden and copious shower of rain washed off the paint, and exposed what the tyrant thought he had safely concealed. I find in this fact an allegory sufficiently just. Princes fondly caress faithful monsters; and either from stupidity, or contempt of the laws, or a confidence in their own power, they think to conceal their real qualities from the public; but soon history, the sudden shower, washes off the false colours, and all their vices stand full exposed to view.

had

had the intrepidity to insult those bloody trophies which fervility and error had consecrated to tyranny. Never was the cause of humanity more strongly pleaded ; and though they have lost it by an inconceivable fatality, yet these dauntless advocates remain not the less covered with glory.

“ ALL the streams of light that have issued from these vigorous and undaunted souls, are preserved and transmitted from age to age (a) : like a seed that for a long time is trod under foot, but being suddenly transported, by a favourable wind to some place of shelter, it springs up, increases, becomes a tree, whose spreading branches present both ornament and refuge.

“ If, better informed of the nature of true greatness, we despise the pomp and ostentation of power ; if we turn our eyes towards those objects that are worthy the research of men ; we

(a) Men of common capacities, and they who have not fathomed the depths of government beyond a certain point, are very far from being able to discover the connections of speculation and science with the riches and happiness of a nation.

shall

shall find that it is to letters we owe it (a). Our writers have still surpassed yours in courage; if a prince deviates from the laws, they revive the renowned tribunal of the Chinese; they engrave his name on a dreadful plate of brass, by which his disgrace is eternally recorded. History in their hands is the rock to false glory, the sentence passed on illustrious criminals, the crucible from which the hero exhales, if he has not been a man.

“How ought the princes of the earth, who complain that all who approach them are affected by constraint and dissimulation, to be confounded! Have they not always with them those dumb, but independent and intrepid ora-

(a) We may assert, with a degree of certainty, that the new lights, which are every day discovered, descending by degrees in almost every state, will, by a sure method, annihilate the present capricious jumble of laws, and substitute others more natural and more just; the judgment of the public will have a powerful and penetrating voice that will change the face of nations; it will be printing that will render this great service to humanity. Let us therefore continue to print; and let every one, from the highest to the lowest, read; but, at the same time, let us print that only which is true and useful; and let us well meditate before we write,

tors, who can, without offence, instruct them, and who, from their thrones, have neither favours to expect nor disgrace to fear (a)? We ought to render that justice to those noble writers, to acknowledge that there is no race of men who have better fulfilled their destination. Some have overthrown superstition, others supported the rights of the people. These have dug the fruitful mine of morality, those displayed virtue under the figure of an indulgent sensibility (a). We have have forgot the foibles which

(a) The Prometheus of Eschylus contains a beautiful and clear allegory. It is that of an arbitrary monarch crushing a man of genius; for having brought down fire from heaven, with which he enlightened mankind, he is fixed to the summit of a rock; being slowly scorched by the sun's rays, the colour of his body is changed; the nymphs of the woods and fields surround him with lamentations, but are unable to assist him; the Furies load him with irons that eat into his flesh; but a remorse for having been virtuous can never enter his heart.

(a) How great the recompense to an author who is the friend of truth and virtue, when, as we read, we drop the burning tear upon his book, and, at the same moment, draw from the bottom of the heart the struggling sigh; then close the book, and, lifting our eyes to heaven, form ardent virtuous resolutions! This, doubtless, is the most brilliant reward that any writer ought to wish. What, to
this

which they might have as private persons ; we see that mass of light only which they have formed and aggrandised, that moral sun, which can never be extinguished but with the grand luminary of the universe."

How glad should I be to enjoy the presence of those great men ! for I have ever had a strong attraction towards writers of real merit ; I love to see them, but still more to hear their discourse. — "It happens right luckily ; to-day they open the academy, in order to receive a man of letters."—In the room, doubtless, of one that deceased.—"What say you? Must merit wait till death has destroyed his fellow, that he may supply his place? No ; the number of our academicians is not fixed ; every talent receives the crown of its reward ; there are sufficient to recompense them all (a).

this, are the discordant shouts of applause, as empty as they are transitory, as envied as they are uncertain.

(a) An author, who is not much influenced by personal motives, will not give himself great concern to think that he is a writer of merit in an ignorant age ; if he be more desirous of the progress of human knowledge, than of gratifying his own vanity, instead of being afflicted, he will rejoice that he cannot launch forth from his obscurity.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

The Academy of Science.

WE advanced toward the academy. It still preserved that name; but how different its situation from that where it was formerly held! It no longer made a part of the palace of a king. How wonderful are the revolutions of ages! A pope now sits in the place of the Cæsars! ignorance and superstition inhabit Athens! the fine arts have flown to Russia! Would it have been believed in my time, that a mountain marked with ridicule for merely affording nurture to a few asses by its thistles, should become the just image of the ancient Parnassus, the seat of genius, the habitation of renowned writers? They would have abolished the name of Montmartre (*a*), but from a complaisance to received prejudices.

THIS august spot, cloathed on all sides by venerable woods, is consecrated to solitude;

(*a*) *The hill Montmartre is on the north side of Paris, and almost adjoining to it. They say, that on its summit there was once a temple dedicated to Mars, from which it took its name.*

an exprefs law forbids the approach of all difcordant noife. The earth has produced fresh beds of ftone to form the foundations of this noble afylum. On this mount, bleffed with the moft genial rays of the fun, are nourifhed fair trees, whofe towering fummits fometimes embrace each other, and fometimes at diftance keep, to afford the exploring eye a profpect of the face of heaven.

As I mounted with my guide, I obferved, here and there, elegant hermitages, diftinct from each other. I asked who inhabited thofe flowery fpofts, half concealed by the woods, and half expofed to view, whofe afpect appeared fo engaging.—“ You fhall foon know,” was replied; “ let us now haften; the hour approaches.” In fact, I faw a great number of perfons arrive from every fide, not in coaches, but on foot. Their converfation feemed to be highly pleafing and animated. We entered an edifice fufficiently large, but decorated with great fimplicity. I obferved no Swifs, armed with a heavy halberd, at the door of the tranquil fanctuary of the Mufes; there was nothing

thing to forbid entrance amidst a crowd of worthy men (a).

THE hall was remarkably sonorous ; so that the most feeble academic voice might be heard at the greatest distance. The order that there reigned was not less remarkable ; several rows of benches surrounded the hall ; for they knew that they ear should be at its ease in an academy, as the eye in the fallon of a painter. I considered every object at my leisure. The number of academics seats was not ridiculously fixed ; but what seemed most singular was, that, on the back of every chair, a scroll was displayed, on which were distinctly wrote the titles of that academician who chose it for his seat ; every one might place himself in an armed chair without any other previous ceremony than that of displaying the scroll that contained the title of his works. It is easy to conceive,

(a) I have ever been highly curious to see a man of genius, and have thought that I discovered in his port, his actions, the air of his head, his countenance, and aspect, something that distinguished him from the common race of men. The science of physiognomy still remains to be properly investigated.

that

that no one offered to display a charte blanche, as was done in my day, by bishops, marshals, and preceptors (*a*); still less would they dare to expose to the severe public eye the title of a work of mean merit, or a servile imitation; it must be a work that points out some new discovery in the arts, or, at least, that excels all others on the same subject (*b*).

My guide pulled me by the sleeve—"You seem astonished; let me increase your wonder. Those charming habitations which you observed on ascending the mountain, form the retreats of those who are struck by an unknown power

(*a*) We have seen on the Boulevards, (*the old ramparts of Paris, which now serve for recreation,*) an automaton that articulated sounds, and the people flock to admire it. How many automata, with human faces, do we see at court, at the bar, in the academies, who owe their speech to the breath of invisible agents; when they cease, the machines remain dumb.

(*b*) There are no longer any means left to distinguish ourselves, they say. Wretches! that hunt after smoke, the path of virtue still lies before you; there you will find but few competitors; but that is not the sort of glory that you seek. I understand you; you would become the subject of popular discourse. I sigh for you, and for the human race.

that commands them to write. Our academicians are Carthusians (*a*) ; it is in solitude that genius displays its powers, forsakes the beaten path, and discovers unknown regions. When does enthusiasm spring forth? When the author descends into himself, when he investigates his own soul, that profound mine, of whose value the possessor is not unfrequently ignorant. What inspirers are retreat and friendship (*a*) ! What more is necessary to those who search for nature and truth? Where do we hear their sublime voice? In the tumult of cities, amidst that crowd of low pursuits, that, unknown to ourselves, besiege the heart? No ; it is amidst the rural scenes that the soul rejuvenates ; it is there that it contemplates the majesty of the universe, that majesty eloquent and all-gracious ; the thought strikes, the expression glows ; the image and its splen-

(*a*) Let him who would acquire a strength of mind, assiduously exert its powers ; the greatest sluggard is ever the greatest slave.

(*a*) Man has much longer time to live with the mind than with the senses ; he would therefore act wisely to depend for his pleasures on the former rather than on the latter.

horizon become widely extended, like the horizon that furrounds us.

“ In your day, the men of letters frequented the circles to amuse the coquettes, and obtain an equivocal smile ; they sacrificed all that was bold and manly to the superstitious empire of fashion ; they divested the soul of its real nature, to please the age. Instead of looking forward to an august series of ages, they rendered themselves slaves to a momentary taste. In a word, they pursued ingenious falsehoods ; they stifled that inward voice which cries, *Be severe as the time that flies ; be inexorable as posterity.*

“ THESE academics, moreover, here enjoy that happy mediocrity (*a*), which, amongst us, constitutes sovereign wealth. We do not offer to interrupt them, either with a desire to discover the least movements of their minds, or from a vanity of being admitted to their company. We revere their time, as we do the hallowed

(*a*) The great man is modest ; the man of mediocrity displays his indifferent advantages ; so the majestic river glides silently along, while the rivulet runs chattering over the rugged pebbles.

bread

bread of the indigent ; but attentive to their desires, at the least signal they find them gratified.”—If that be the case, you must have sufficient employment. Are there not those who assume the rank to cover their idleness or real weakness?—“ No ; this region is so strongly illuminated, that the least spot is easily discovered. Imposture dare not here intrude ; it can never bear the look of a man of genius, whose piercing eye nought can deceive. For those whom presumption may bring hither (*a*), there are persons of a benign temper, who effectually dissuade them from a project that cannot redound to their honour. In a word, the law enjoins”—Our conversation was interrupted by a sudden general silence in the assembly. My whole soul flew to my ear, when I beheld one of the academicians prepare to read a manuscript which he held in his hand, and with a grace by no means insignificant.

O UNGRATEFUL memory, how could I reproach thee ! Why didst thou desert me ?

(*a*) There is no object that may not be viewed from a hundred different stations ; but there is only one from whence it can be justly beheld ; and if that is not chosen, genius and labour become useless.

Would

Would that I could repeat the persuasive discourse pronounced by that academic! The force, the method, the flowing periods have escaped me; but the impression on my mind can never be effaced. No; never was I so enraptured. The visage of each auditor reflected those sentiments with which I was agitated; it was one of the most delicious enjoyments my heart ever felt. What depths! what images! what truths! what a noble flame! how sublime a tone! The orator declaimed against envy (*a*), described the sources of that fatal passion, its horrible effects, the infamy it has cast on the laurels that have crowned many great men; all its vile, unjust, detestable qualities were so strongly painted, that while we deplored the fate of its blind, unhappy victims, we trembled lest our own hearts should be infected by its poison. The mirror was so properly presented before

(*a*) How I pity the envious and jealous mind, that glances over the valuable parts of a work, and knows not how to enjoy them. By analogy it dwells on those parts only that are imperfect. The man of letters who by an habitual exercise of reason and taste, improves the one and the other, and incessantly creates to himself new joys, is of all men the most happy—if he can divest himself of jealousy or of an over sensibility.

each particular character, their meanness exposed in such various and ridiculous lights, the human heart displayed in a manner so new, so refined, so striking, that it was impossible not to know them; and when knowing, not to form the design of abjuring that miserable weakness. The fear of bearing some resemblance to that frightful monster, envy, produced a happy effect. I saw, O instructive sight! O moment unheard of in the annals of literature! I saw the members of that assembly regard each other with a tender and sympathizing look; I saw them mutually open their arms, embrace, and cry with joy; their bosoms resting and panting against each other; I saw (will it be believed?) the authors dispersed about the room imitate the affectionate transports of the academicians, and convinced of the talents of their brethren, swear an unalterable, eternal friendship; I saw the tears of affection and benevolence flow from every eye. They were a company of brothers, who substituted that honourable applause in the room of our stupid clapping of hands (*a*).

AFTER

(*a*) When, at the theatre or the academy, an affecting or sublime passage strikes the assembly, instead of that sigh
from

AFTER the full enjoyment of those delicious moments; after each one had expressed the various sensations that he had felt, and those strokes by which he was most strongly affected; and after frequently repeating the vows of endless friendship, another member of this august society arose with a smiling air; an applauding murmur ran through the hall, for he was esteemed a Socratic railer (*a*). He raised his voice, and said,

‘ GENTLEMEN,

‘ MANY reasons have induced me to offer
‘ you to-day a short, but, I think, curious ex-
‘ tract of what our academy was in its infancy,
‘ that is, about the eighteenth century. The
‘ cardinal who was our founder (*b*), and whom

from the bottom of the heart, and the silent emotions, I hear those clappings redoubled till they shake the roof, I say to myself, these people have no feeling; they are men of wood that strike two boards together.

(*a*) As a malignant raillery is the fruit of an iniquitous disposition, so an ingenious pleasantry is the fruit of wisdom. A sprightly temper and graceful manner were the most triumphant arms of Socrates.

(*b*) *Cardinal Richelieu.*

‘ our predecessors have so extravagantly extoll-
 ‘ ed, and to whom they attributed, in our estab-
 ‘ lishment, the most profound designs, would
 ‘ never have formed this institution, (let us
 ‘ confess it) if he had not himself made wretch-
 ‘ ed verses which he idolized, and which he
 ‘ was desirous that we should celebrate. That
 ‘ cardinal, I say, at the time he invited the au-
 ‘ thors to form one body, discovered his de-
 ‘ spotic temper when he made them subject to
 ‘ rules ever unknown to genius. Our founder
 ‘ had so imperfect an idea of what such a so-
 ‘ ciety ought to be, that he limited the num-
 ‘ ber of members to forty; so that Corneille
 ‘ and Montesquieu might have waited at the
 ‘ door to the end of their days. This cardinal
 ‘ imagined, moreover, that genius would na-
 ‘ turally remain in obscurity, if titles and dig-
 ‘ nities did not rouse it from its inanity. When
 ‘ he formed this strange judgment, surely, he
 ‘ could think of such rhimers only as Colletet
 ‘ and his colleagues, whom he supported out
 ‘ of mere vanity.

‘ FROM thence it became an established cus-
 ‘ tom, that they who had money in the room
 ‘ of

‘ of merit, and titles instead of genius, seated
‘ themselves by those whose names had been
‘ celebrated by fame throughout all Europe.
‘ He was himself the first example, and he was
‘ but too well imitated. When those great
‘ men who drew the attention of their own age,
‘ and whose regards were fixed on that of pos-
‘ terity, had covered with glory the place
‘ where they held their assemblies, the gilt and
‘ titled idiots besieged the door ; nay, almost
‘ presumed to declare, that they reflected ho-
‘ nour on the society by their paltry ribbons,
‘ and, in fact, believed, or pretended to be-
‘ lieve, that, by seating themselves by men of
‘ genius, they actually resembled them.

• THEN were seen marshals, as well victo-
‘ rious as beaten, mitred heads that had never
‘ made a mandate, men of the long robe, pre-
‘ ceptors, and financiers, who pretended to the
‘ title of men of genius ; and though they were
‘ nothing more than the decorations of the
‘ theatre, really believed themselves to be ca-
‘ pital performers. Some eight or ten among
‘ the forty shone by their own lustre ; the rest
‘ had only a borrowed light ; yet it was neces-

‘ sary to wait for the death of an academician
‘ in order to fill his place, and which, never-
‘ theless, for the most part, still remained
‘ empty.

‘ WHAT could be more ludicrous than to
‘ see that academy, whose renown was spread
‘ over all the capital, hold its assemblies in a
‘ small, close, mean room? There, in several
‘ armed chairs, that were formerly red, were
‘ seen, from time to time, a number of indolent
‘ wretches, carelessly seated, weighing of syllab-
‘ les, or carefully culling the words out of
‘ some piece of prose or poetry, in order, at last,
‘ to applaud the most unmeaning among them.
‘ But, on the other hand, pray remark it, gen-
‘ tlemen, they never erred in calculating the
‘ number of counters that each gained by the
‘ absence of his brethren. Can you believe
‘ that they gave the conqueror a gold medal in
‘ the room of a branch of oak, and that on it
‘ there was engraved this ridiculous inscrip-
‘ tion: *À l’immortalité?* Alas! that immortality
‘ passed the next day into the goldsmith’s cru-
‘ cible; and that was the most real advantage the
‘ victorious champion obtained.

‘ COULD

‘ COULD you imagine, that those little victo-
‘ ries sometimes turned the conquerors brains,
‘ so great was their ridiculous vanity (a) ? and
‘ that the judges exercised scarce any other
‘ function than that of distributing those useles
‘ prizes, about which no one even ever made
‘ inquiry ?

‘ THE place of their assembly was open to
‘ none but authors ; and they were admitted by
‘ tickets only. In the morning was performed
‘ a musical mass ; then a trembling priest pro-
‘ nounced the panegyric of Lewis IX. (I
‘ know not very well why) extolling him for

(a) Except the university prizes, which give rise to a foolish pride in childish heads, I know of nothing more pernicious than the medals of our literary academies. The conqueror really thinks himself a person of consequence, and is ruined for the remainder of his days ; he disdains every one who has not been crowned with so rare and illustrious a laurel. See in the *Mercure de France*, for the month of September, 1769, page 184, an instance of the most ridiculous egotism. A very diminutive author informs the public, that when he was at college, he performed his theme better than his colleagues ; he glories in it, and imagines that he maintains the same rank in the republic of letters.—*Risum teneatis, amici ?*

‘ more than an hour, though he was certainly
 ‘ a bad sovereign (*a*). Then the orator declaim-
 ‘ ed on the croisades, which highly inflamed
 ‘ the archbishop’s bile, who interdicted the
 ‘ priestly orator, for his temerity in displaying
 ‘ good sense. In the evening was another eu-
 ‘ logy ; but as that was on a profane subject
 ‘ the archbishop happily did not concern him-
 ‘ self with the doctrine it contained.

‘ IT is proper to remark, that the place where
 ‘ they displayed their wit was guarded by fusi-
 ‘ leers and gigantic Swifs, who understood no
 ‘ French. Nothing was more comic than the
 ‘ contrast between the meagre figure of the man
 ‘ of letters, and the enormous blustering stature
 ‘ of the Swifs. This was called *a public assembly*.
 ‘ The public, it is true, were there ; but it
 ‘ was at the door ; a poor acknowledgement
 ‘ for their complaisance. In the mean time,
 ‘ the sole liberty that remained to the nation
 ‘ was to pronounce absolutely on prose or verse,

(*a*) The first penal edict against particular sentiments or
 opinions was denounced by Lewis IX, vulgarly called St.
 Lewis.

‘ to condemn one author, applaud another,
‘ and sometimes laugh at them all.

‘ The academic rage, however, possessed
‘ every brain; every one would be a royal
‘ cenfor (*a*), and then an academician. They
‘ calculated the lives of all the members of the
‘ academy, remarked the degree of vigour that
‘ their stomachs discovered at table; death
‘ seemed to the candidates to be flow in his ap-
‘ proach; the cry was, They are immortal!
‘ When a new member was chosen, some one
‘ muttered softly, Ah! when shall I make thy
‘ eulogy at the bottom of the long table, stand-
‘ ing with my hat on, and declare thee to be a
‘ great man, as well as Lewis XIV. and the
‘ chancellor Seguier, while you sleep profound-
‘ ly under your tomb-stone decorated with a
‘ curious epitaph.

‘ THE men of money at last so far prevailed
‘ in a golden age, that they completely banish-

(*a*) Royal cenfor! I never hear that word without
laughter. We Frenchmen know not how ridiculous we
are, nor what right we give posterity to regard us with
pity.

‘ ed the men of letters ; so that in the follow-
 ‘ ing generation, messieurs the farmers-gene-
 ‘ ral, were in possession of the forty armed
 ‘ chairs, were they snored as much at their ease
 ‘ as their predecessors ; and were still more dex-
 ‘ trous in dividing the counters. From thence
 ‘ it was that the old proverb arose, *There is no*
 ‘ *entering the academy without an equipage.*

‘ THE men of letters, unable to regain their
 ‘ usurped dominion, and drove to despair, con-
 ‘ spired in form. They had recourse to their
 ‘ usual weapons, epigrams, songs, and vaude-
 ‘ villes (*a*) ; they exhausted all the arrows from
 ‘ the quiver of satire ; but, alas ! all their at-
 ‘ tacks were fruitless ; the hearts of their ad-
 ‘ versaries were become so callous as to be
 ‘ no longer penetrable, even by the piercing
 ‘ strokes of ridicule ; all the bon mots of mes-
 ‘ sieurs the authors would have been thrown
 ‘ away but for the aid of a violent indigestion,
 ‘ that surpris'd the academicians on a certain
 ‘ day, when assembled at a splendid feast.

(*a*) Poor arms ! which even are now prohibited, and
 which the insolent pride of the great at once seeks after
 and dreads.

‘ Those

‘ Those three divinities, Apollo, Pluto, and
‘ the god of the digestive faculty, quarrelled
‘ with each other ; Indigestion attacking them
‘ under the double title of financiers and aca-
‘ demics, destroyed them almost all ; the men
‘ of letters again entered their ancient domi-
‘ nion, and the academy was saved”

THERE was an universal burst of laughter in the assembly. Some of them asked me, in a low voice, if the account was just. Yes, I replied, for the most part ; but when we look down on past times from the summit of seven hundred years, it is doubtless easy to give a ridiculous turn to what then existed. For the rest, the academy agreed, even in my time, that each member who composed it was of more worth than the institution itself. Nothing can be added to that confession. The misfortune is, that when men meet in assemblies, their heads contract, as Montesquieu said, who ought to know.

I PASSED into an apartment that contained the portraits of the academicians, as well an-

cient as modern ; I took particular notice of those that succeeded the academics now living ; but, to avoid offence, I shall not name them.

Helas ! la verité si souvent est cruelle,

On l'aime, et les humains sont malheureux par elle.

VOLT.

Alas ! the truth we love, though oft we find

Her cruel, and a foe to human kind.

I CANNOT, however, refrain from relating a fact that will certainly give great pleasure to every generous mind, that loves justice and detests tyranny ; which is, that the portrait of the abbé St. Pierre was reinstated in its rank with all the honours due to such exemplary virtue. They had effaced the turpitude of which the academy had rendered itself culpable, while it bowed the neck to a yoke of a servitude it ought never to have known. They had placed this estimable and virtuous writer between Fenelon and Montesquieu. I gave the praises due to this noble equity. I saw no portrait of Riche-

Richelieu, nor of Christina, nor of ———, nor ———, nor ———, which, though but paintings, had been for ever discarded.

As I descended the mountain, I cast my eyes many times on those lovely groves where dwelt the men of brilliant genius, who, in silence, and in the contemplation of nature, laboured to form the hearts of their countrymen to virtue, to the love of the true and beautiful; when softly I said: Would that I could render myself worthy of this academy!

C H A P. IV.

The King's Cabinet.

NOT far from this enchanting spot, I beheld a vast temple that struck me with awe and admiration. On its frontispiece was wrote, *An abridgment of the universe*. “You see,” said my guide, “the king’s cabinet, though the edifice belongs not to him, but to the

the state. We give it that title merely as a mark of the respect we bear his person. Our sovereign, moreover, after the manner of the ancient kings, exercises medicine, surgery, and the arts. The happy time is returned when men in power, who are provided with the necessary means for performing experiments, are charmed with the glory of making discoveries of importance to mankind, and are anxious to carry the sciences to that degree of perfection which attends their influence and their zeal. The most considerable persons in the nation employ their opulence in discovering the secrets of nature; and gold, formerly the source of vice and the wages of sloth, rewards those labours that are subservient to humanity.

ON entering, I was struck with a pleasing surprize. This temple was the animated palace of nature; all her productions were here collected with a profusion that was completely regular. The temple consisted of four wings of an immense extent, in the center of which was the most capacious dome my eyes ever beheld.

IN

IN different parts were placed marble statues, with these inscriptions : To the inventor of the saw, To the inventor of the plane, the screw, the pulley, the capstane, the crane, &c. &c. All the different sorts of animals, vegetables, and minerals were placed under the four wings, and were visible by one glance of the eye. What an immense and astonishing assemblage !

UNDER the first wing, were seen all from the cedar to the hyssop.

UNDER the second, from the eagle to the fly.

UNDER the third, from the elephant to the ant.

UNDER the fourth, from the whale to the gudgeon.

IN the middle of the dome were the sports of nature. Monsters of every kind. Productions enormous, unknown, singular in their gender. For Nature, the moment she abandons her ordinary laws, discovers an intelligence still more profound than when she adheres strictly to them. On the sides were seen
complete

complete portions of matter, taken from the mines which presented the secret laboratories, where nature prepares those metals that man has rendered sometimes useful, sometimes dangerous. Long beds of matter skilfully taken up, and artfully placed, showed the interior face of the earth, and the order observed in the different strata of stone, clays, and loam, there deposited (a).

How

(a) What follows was wrote me by a friend. "I have now a greater taste than ever for the quarries. "I think it will make me dwell among the minerals and petrifications, and, perhaps, prepare me a tomb in the bowels of the earth. I have descended near nine hundred feet into her bosom, hard by ****, much concerned that I could go no far her, I would have printed my footsteps on her kernel, and have there enquired concerning the different nations that had sojourned on her surface; would have asked, if among the infinite number of her children, any one had ever acknowledged, her benefactions? If at the spot where I meditate, far from the light of day, she had ever produced nourishing fruits? And if a people or a throne had been there; and how many beds, formed of the ruins of mankind, she concealed from the depth of this abyss to the last point of her diameter? I would have entreated her to let me read all the catastrophes that she had suffered; and I should have

How great was my astonishment, when, instead of a parcel of dry bones, I saw the complete

“ have bathed them with my tears, when I had learnt
“ all the disasters from which she had not been able to
“ defend her numerous family ; disasters engraved on
“ contestible medals, but whose remembrance is utterly
“ effaced ; disasters that will again return when she
“ shall bury in her sides the present generation, who shall
“ in their turn be trod under foot by generations with-
“ out number, who perhaps will have no other resem-
“ blance to them, than the participation of the same
“ misfortunes. Then, in the midst of my grief, as just
“ as humane, I should have formed cruel and charitable
“ vows ; I should have wished that she would have swal-
“ lowed up every animal existence ; that she would have
“ snatched every being endowed with sensibility, from the
“ light of the sun ; all of whose favours are insufficient
“ to repair the oppression of tyrants, who divide and
“ consume her amongst them.

“ This globe, which now bears so many wretches,
“ would then roll in a universal and happy silence ; it
“ would present to the sun's rays no unfortunate being
“ compelled to curse it. No cry of lamentation would
“ arise from this planet ; it would then traverse the hea-
“ vens with a tranquil majesty. Her children, sleeping
“ in one common tomb, would suffer her to obey the
“ laws of the creation, while they were no longer the
“ victims of destructive laws, that fall on the head of
“ man as on the meanest grain of sand ; and death sur-
“ rounding

complete whale, the monstrous hippopotamus, the terrible crocodile, &c. They had followed the arrangement, the degradations and varieties that nature has observed in her productions.

“ rounding this double hemisphere with his peaceful
 “ shadow, would perhaps present an appearance more
 “ striking than the blustering reign of this vain-glorious
 “ life, that draws after it a long series of crimes, an in-
 “ undation of misfortunes, and a terror even of its very
 “ dissolution.”

I replied to this friend, that I did not join with him in the last wish; that physical evils were of all others the most supportable; that they were transient, and beside, inevitable; and we had nothing to do but submit; but that it was in a man's own power to defend himself from those unhappy passions, that torment and disgrace him. I answered him in conformity to the principles that are sufficiently explained in the course of this work. I thought it but just, however, to preserve this extract, as it abounds with a strong sensibility*.

* *That there is a considerable degree of sensibility, and some ingenuity in this extract, cannot be denied; but, at the same time, it has certainly the air of a philosophic rant. The writer seems to have not believed, or at least not sufficiently regarded, the doctrine of a future state. Would it have been unworthy the wisdom and goodness of God, to have created this earth for the existence of one man only, if, after a short duration here, he were to inherit a glorious immortality?*

The eye thus traced without labour the chain of beings, from the greatest to the least. We there saw the lion, the tyger, the panther, in the fierce attitudes by which they are characterised; the voracious animals were represented as darting on their prey; even the energy of their motion seemed in a manner to be preserved, as well as the creative breath by which they were animated. The more gentle, or more subtle, had lost nothing of their physiognomy. Labour, cunning, and patience, art had closely imitated. The natural history of each animal was engraved under it, and the attendants explained verbally, what would have been too long to be read.

THAT scale of beings, so contested in our day, and which many philosophers had judiciously supposed, was here confirmed by the clearest evidence. We saw distinctly that the several species touch; that they run, so to speak, into each other; that by the delicate and sensible connections between the mere stone and the plant, the plant and the animal, the animal and man, there remained no interstices.

restices. That their growth, duration, and destruction, were determined by the same causes. It was moreover remarked, that nature in all her operations, tended with energy to the formation of man; and that labouring patiently, and even at a distance, that important work, she endeavoured, by various essays, to arrive at the gradual term of his perfection, which seemed to be the utmost effort of her power.

THIS cabinet was by no means a chaos, an undigested mass, where the objects, either widely scattered, or heaped together, afforded no determinate idea. The gradations were skilfully disposed and preserved. But what most of all favoured the arrangement, was, that they had discovered a preparation, which preserved the several subjects from those insects that spring from corruption.

I FOUND myself oppressed by the weight of so many miracles. My eye embraced all the luxury of nature. How at that moment did I reverence its Author! What homage did I render to his power, his wisdom, and what is
even

even still more precious, his goodness! How important a being does man appear, when ranging amongst these wonders, collected by his hands; and which seem created for him, as he alone has the power of discerning their various properties. That line so justly proportioned, those connections, those seeming vacuities, but constantly filled; that gradual order, that plan which admits of no intermediate; after surveying the heavens, what sight is more magnificent on the earth, which itself, at the same time, is but an atom (a)?

By

(a) It must be confessed, that the history of nature is nothing more than that of our own weakness. The little that we know discovers the extent of our ignorance. Physics are to us, what an occult science was to the ancients. We cannot contest some parts of it, but we can deny the whole. What axiom is there peculiar to it? The project of a natural history is highly commendable, but it is somewhat fastidious. A man spends his whole life in discovering the least property of a mineral, and dies before he has exhausted the subject. The immensity of objects, animals, trees, and plants, is sufficient to awe the capacity of a single man. But ought it to discourage him? No; it is here that audacity is virtue, obstinacy wisdom, and presumption utility. We should watch nature so closely, that she may at last, by surprise, discover her secret; to find it out seems not impossible to the human mind, provided

By what wonderful perseverance, I said, have you been able to perform so great a work?

“IT is the work of many kings,” they replied; “All jealous of honouring the title of an intelligent being; a sublime and generous passion, supported by a constant ardor, has inspired them with the curiosity of plucking off the veil from the bosom of nature. Instead of counting battles gained, towns taken by assault, injustice, and bloody conquests; they say of our kings, “He made such a discovery in the ocean of beings; he accomplished such a project for the good of mankind. They no longer spend a hundred million of livres for the destruction of their brethren in one campaign; but employ it in augmenting their real riches; in the encouragement of genius and industry, and by encreasing their force, complete the general happiness.”

THERE have been secrets discovered in all ages, by men in appearance the most stupid.

vided the chain of observations be not interrupted, and that each philosopher be more anxious for the perfection of science than for his own glory; a rare, but necessary sacrifice, and one that points out the real friend to man.

Many of them have like lightning shone for a moment only. We are sensible however that nothing is lost we wish to save. All is laid up in the bosom of nature; we need but search; it is vast, it presents a thousand resources. Nothing is annihilated in the order of beings. By perpetually agitating the mass of ideas, the most unexpected rencounters arise (a).

Fully

(a) When we regard the point from which men have set out in their philosophical inquiries, and that to which they are now arrived, it must be confessed, that with all our machines, we do not sufficiently extend the force of the human mind. Man, left to himself, seems more strong, than with all those foreign helps. The more we acquire, the more indolent we become. The infinite number of experiments has served scarce any other purpose than to consecrate error. Content with seeing, we have thought that we touched the extremity, and have disdained to seek further. Our philosophers glide over a thousand important objects, of which they ought to give the solution. Experimental philosophy is become an exhibition, a sort of public legerdemain. If the experiment that has been promised is tardy or disobedient, the operator frequently corrects it with a touch of his finger. What do we now see? Unconnected, useless discoveries; dogmatical philosophers, who sacrifice all to their systems; retailers of words, who confound the vulgar, and excite pity on the man who can take the polished

Fully convinced of the possibility of the most astonishing discoveries, we have not lingered in the pursuit.

WE leave nothing to chance; that word, totally void of meaning, is banished from our language. Chance is a synonymous term for ignorance. Sagacity, labour, and patience, are the instruments by which nature is compelled to discover her most hidden treasures. Men have learnt to derive every possible advantage from the gifts they have received. By perceiving the degree to which they could ascend, they have been stimulated by glory to pursue the boundless career that is set before them. The life of a single man, it is said is too short; it is true; and what have we done?

polished covering from off their jargon. The memoirs of the academy of sciences present a multitude of facts, of surprising observations; but all those observations resemble a relation of some unknown people, where one man only has been, and where no one can go again. We must believe the traveller and the philosopher, even though they should have deceived themselves; nor can we draw any utility from their relations, on account of the distance of the country, and the difficulty of applying their observations to any real objects.

We

we have united the force of each individual ; they have acquired an immense empire ; the one finished what the other began. The chain was never interrupted, but each link closely connected with that which went before ; thus it has been extended through several centuries, and this chain of ideas and of successive labour, may one day surround and embrace the universe. It is not merely a personal glory, but the interest of the human race, scarce thought of in your day, that supports the most difficult enterprises.

“ WE no longer amuse ourselves with vain systems (*a*). Thanks to heaven (and to your folly) they are all exhausted. The torch of experience alone directs our steps. Our end is to know the secret causes of each appearance, and to extend the dominion of man, by providing him with the means of executing

(*a*) Let the fabricators of systems, physical and metaphysical, explain to me the following incident. Father Maillon was, in his younger days, an idiot. When he was six and twenty, he fell with his head against a stone stair-case. He was trepaned, and became a new man ; endowed with a lively imagination, an amazing memory, and a zeal for study rarely equalled.

all those labours that can aggrandise his existence.

“ WE have certain hermits, (of one order only) who live in the forests; but it is to herbalife, which they do by choice, and from a natural propensity. On certain stated days they repair hither, to communicate their valuable discoveries.

“ WE have erected towers on the summits of several mountains, where they make observations that are continually encreasing, and that confirm each other. We have formed artificial torrents and cataracts, by which is acquired a force sufficient to produce the greatest effects by motion (*a*). We have established aromatic baths, to rejuvenate the bo-

(*a*) The most brilliant and expensive undertakings are not the most to be admired, if they are erected merely for ostentation. The machine that raises the water which supplies the gardens of Marley, is not, in the eyes of a wise man, of so much consequence as a single wheel, turned by a rivulet, that grinds the corn for several villages, or aids the labour of the manufacturer. Genius may be powerful, but it is only great when useful to mankind.

dies

dies of those who are grown rigid by age; for God has not created so many salutary plants, and given the knowledge of their virtues to man, but to consign to his vigilance the care of preserving his health, and extending the fragile and precious thread of his days.

“OUR public walks, which among you seemed calculated for pleasure only, pay us a useful tribute. They are formed of fruit-trees, that delight the view, and embalm the air with their odours. They have taken place of the lime, the barren chestnut, and the stunted elm. We engraft, and render prolific, wild trees, that our labours may correspond with the blissful liberality of nature, who only waits for that master's hand, to whom the Creator, so to say, has submitted them.

“WE have menageries of large extent, for all sorts of animals; and have found in the depths of the forests, several species that were altogether unknown to you. We mix these tribes to see the effects they will produce. The discoveries we have here made are asto-

nishing, and highly useful, for the species has sometimes encreased to twice the common size. To conclude, we have remarked, that our pains bestowed on nature, have rarely been ineffectual.

“ WE have also recovered many secrets that were lost to you, merely for want of perseverance in the search; for you were more solicitous to heap up a great number of words in the form of a book, than to recover, by dint of application, extraordinary inventions. We now possess, as did the ancients, malleable glass; the transparent stone; the Tyrean purple, with which the imperial robes were dyed; the mirror of Archimides (*a*); the Ægyptian art of embalming; the machine by which they erected their obelisks; the cloth in which their bodies were consumed on the funeral pile; the art of liquifying stones; the extinguishable lamps, and even the Appian fauce.

“ WALK into these gardens, where botany has received all the perfection of which it was

(a) If the moderns have not precisely this mirror, they have something very like it.

suscepti-

susceptible (a). Your blind philosophers complained that the earth was replete with poisons, we have discovered, that they are the most efficacious remedies that can be employed. Providence has here been justified, as it would be in every instance, but for the weakness of our knowledge. We now no longer hear complaints upon the earth; no mournful voice cries out, "All is evil!" We say, that in the sight of God, "All is good!" Even the effects of these poisons we not only foresee, but know how to prevent.

"WE have extracted from plants certain penetrating and benign juices, which, by insinuating themselves into the pores of the skin, mix with our fluids, establish the temperament, and render the body more healthful, more supple and robust. We have discovered the fe-

(a) Thou, who wanderest over the fields, while thinking on the vessel that plows the waves, and bears thy treasure; stop, short-sighted wretch! Thou treadest upon an obscure, but salutary herb, that would communicate health and joy to thy heart; a treasure far more valuable than all thy ship contains. After having pursued a thousand chimeras, end thy labours like J. J. Rousseau, by herbalising.

cret of dissolving the stone without burning the entrails. We now cure the phthisis, and every other disorder formerly deemed incurable (a). But the most excellent of all our enterprises was, the exterminating that dreadful hydra, that cruel and shameful plague, which attacked the source of life and pleasure. The human race was on the brink of destruction when we discovered that happy specific, which has preserved its being and its pleasure, still more precious (a). In the course of our walk, the Buffon of that age joined demonstration to words, by pointing out to me the objects of nature, and adding his own reflections."

(a) It is shameful for a man to declare that he has a secret useful to the human race, and reserve it for the advantage of himself and his family. Alas! What recompense would he have? Wretch! Thou mayst pass through the midst of thy brethren, and say to thyself, "These beings are indebted to me for a part of their health and felicity!" But thou art not possessed of that noble pride, not affected by that benevolent idea! Go, get gold, thou miserant! and debar thy soul of that enjoyment. Thou executest justice, thou punishest thyself.

(b) I am concerned when I hear any one jest on this terrible scourge. We should never mention it without tears, and not, in this instance, imitate the buffoon Voltaire.

BUT

BUT what most of all surpris'd me, was an optical cabinet, where they had assembled all the properties of light. It was a perpetual scene of magic. They caus'd to pass before my eyes landscapes, prospects, palaces, rainbows, meteors, luminous cyphers, imaginary seas; and which were more striking than even the realities; it was the region of enchantment. The prospect of creation rising out of inanity could not have given me a sensation more exquisite and astonishing.

THEY presented me with a microscope, by the aid of which, I perceived new beings that had escap'd the piercing sight of our observers. So simple and wonderful was the art, that the eye was never fatigued. Every advance they made, satisfi'd the most ardent curiosity; the stronger avidity it appear'd to have, the more numerous were the objects that present'd themselves. O! How great does man here appear? I more than once exclaim'd, and how pitiful, comparatively, were they, whom, in my time, they call'd great (*a*).

WHAT

(*a*) A voluminous work might be compil'd of the several questions, natural, moral, and metaphysical, that

WHAT related to acoustics was not less miraculous. They had acquired the art of imitating all the articulations of the human voice, of the cries of animals, and the various notes of birds. By touching certain springs we seemed to be instantly transported to some wild forest; where we heard the roarings of the lyon, the tyger, and the bear, who seemed to be in conflict with each other. The noise rent the ear. You would have said that the echo, still more terrible, repeated at a distance those horrid and barbarous cries. But soon the songs of nightingales succeeded to those discordant sounds. By their harmonious organs each particle of air became melodious; the ear discerned even the tremblings of their amorous wings, and those tender

present themselves in crowds to the mind, and about which the man of genius knows no more than the fool; and we might reply in one word to all these metaphysical, moral, and natural questions; but it should be that of the profound logogriph or enigma, which surrounds us. I do not despair but that they will one day discover it. I expect every thing from the human mind, when it shall know its own faculty, and unite them; and when it shall regard its intelligence as a power that ought to penetrate all that is, and subject all that it contemplates.

and

and enchanting sounds which the voice of man can never perfectly imitate. To the intoxication of pleasure was joined the sweet surprize, and the voluptuous sensation that arose from this happy union, seized every heart.

THIS people, who had constantly a moral aim even in the prodigies of art, had happily deduced an advantage from this surprising invention. When a young prince talked of combats, or discovered a warlike disposition (*a*), they conducted him to a room, which they properly named, the Hell. The artist immediately put the springs in motion, and saluted his ear with all the horrors of a battle, the cries of rage and of grief; the lamentations of the dying; the sounds of terror; the bel-

(*a*) Ye mighty potentates, who divide the globe among you, and are furnished with cannons, mortars, and numerous weapons, which are displayed by the dazzling ranks of those armies you send to conquer a province or exterminate a kingdom, I know not how it is, but amidst all your waving ensigns, you appear to me mean and wretched. The Romans, in their public games, diverted themselves with the pigmies, whom they made to combat each other, but little thought that they were in the eye of a wise man, what the dwarfs appeared to them.

lowing of that hideous thunder which is the signal of destruction and bears the execrable sound of death. If nature did not then prevail on his mind, if he did not send forth a cry of horror, if his countenance remained unmoved and placid, he was confined to that room for the remainder of his days. Every morning, however, they repeated a piece of this music, that he might be satisfied without the destruction of the human race.

THE director of this cabinet, to my great surprise, exhibited all his infernal opera, without acquainting me of his intention. O heavens! mercy! mercy! I cried with all my strength, stopping my ears. O spare me, spare me! He stopped the exhibition.—“How!” he said, “does not this please you?”—None but a demon, I replied, can be pleased with such an horrid uproar.—“This, however, was in your time a very common diversion, which the kings and princes of Europe all enjoyed, as they did the chace (a), which, as has been very
justly

(a) Among the many calamities that now oppress Europe, that which I find the most advantageous is the depopu-

justly remarked, is the true picture of war (*b*).
Your poets moreover extolled them for having
fright-

population. Since men must be miserable, there are the
fewer to suffer. If this reflection be cruel, let it fall on
them from whom it proceeds.

(*b*) How strange and deplorable is the constitution of
our political world ! Eight or ten crowned heads hold the
human race in chains ; they correspond, they afford each
other mutual aid, they keep them in their royal hands to
gripe them at their pleasure, even till they produce con-
vulsive motions. This conspiracy is not covered with a
veil, but is open, public, and conducted by ambassadors.
Our complaints no longer reach their lofty ears. Look
around through Europe ; it is no other than a vast arsenal,
where thousands of barrels of powder want only a single
spark of fire to set them in combustion. Frequently it is the
hand of a hare-brained minister that puts them in explo-
sion ; he sets fire at once to the north and the south, to
the two extremities of the earth. What an immense quan-
tity of cannons, mortars, muskets, balls, bullets, swords,
balloons, &c. of murdering slaves, obedient to the whip
of discipline, attend the orders of a cabinet, to display its
bloody parade ! Geometry itself has profaned its divine
attributes by assisting the fury sometimes of ambitious, and
sometimes capricious sovereigns. With what precision
do they destroy an army, bombard a camp, besiege or burn
a city ! I have seen academicians in cool blood consult on
the charging a cannon. Alas ! gentlemen, stay till you
have at least a principality. What imports it you whose
name governs in any particular country ? Your patriot-

frightened all the birds from the sky for ten leagues round, and for sagaciously providing provender for the ravens; but, above all things, those poets were extremely fond of de-

ism is a false virtue, and dangerous to humanity. Let us examine a little into the signification of the word *patriot*. To have an attachment to any state, it is necessary to be a member of that state. Now, if you except two or three republics, there is, properly speaking, no such thing as a country. Why should the Englishman be my enemy? I am connected to him by commerce, by the arts, and by every other relation possible; there is no natural antipathy between us. Why, therefore, would you, that by passing certain limits, I should separate my interest from that of other men? What we call patriotism is a phantasy invented by kings, and destructive to mankind; for, if my nation were three times less than it is, I should have three times as many more to hate; my affections therefore must depend on the variable limits of dominions; in the course of the same year, I must destroy my neighbour, and be friends with him that I endeavoured to massacre the day before; so that, in fact, I only maintain the rights of a capricious master, who would hold my soul in subjection. No; in my judgment, Europe should form but one vast state; and I dare to wish that it may be united under one government. All things properly considered, it would be highly advantageous. Then I could be in reality a patriot; but, at the present day, what is it we call liberty? "Nothing more" (says a certain writer) "than the heroism of slavery."

scribing

scribing a battle."—Oh ! I intreat you, speak no more of the epidemic disease which then afflicted the human race. Alas ! they were all seized with the symptoms of rage and folly ; cowardly kings, from their fastuous thrones, gave the word for murder ; and the passive herd, guarded by one dog only, ran chearfully to the slaughter. How was it possible to reclaim them at that time of illusion ? how break the magic talisman ? A little club, a ribband red or blue, a small enamelled cross, communicated every where a spirit of intoxication and fury. Others became possessed by the mere sight of a cockade, or a few doits. The cure necessarily required time ; but I was fully convinced, that, sooner or later, the lenient balm of philosophy would cicatrise all those shameful wounds (*a*).

(*a*) What a sight ! two hundred thousand men spread over a vast country, and only wait for the signal to cut each other's throat, to massacre one another in the face of the sun and amidst the flowers of the spring. It is not hatred that excites them : No ; they are commanded by kings to murder each other. If this cruel event had never happened but once, would not they who had not been witnesses to it have had a just right to doubt its veracity ? This thought is M. Gaillard's.

THEY

THEY conducted me to the cabinet of the mathematics. It appeared richly stored, and in the most perfect order. They had banished from this science all that resembled the sport of children, all that was merely dry and trifling speculation, or that surpassed the bounds of the human capacity. I saw machines of every kind that were proper to assist the arm of man, and such as contained much greater powers than are known to us; they were adapted to all sorts of motions; and by the aid of these, the heaviest weights were managed with facility.—“ You have seen,” they said, “ those obelisks, those triumphal arches, those palaces, and other stately buildings that astonish the sight. They are not the produce of mere strength, of numbers, or dexterity: it is by the aid of finished machines, that they have been constructed.” In a word, I here found the greatest variety of the most accurate instruments, for the use of geometry, astronomy, and the other sciences.

ALL they who had attempted experiments that were new, bold, masterly, and that promised great utility, even though they did not succeed (for instruction may be gained from dis-

disappointment) had their busts erected, and decorated with their proper attributes.

THEY whispered, moreover, that many remarkable, and even wonderful secrets, were confided to the care of a small number of their sages; for there are matters, good in themselves, that may be abused in their application (*a*). The human mind, in their opinion, was not yet sufficiently strong to make use of the most rare or most powerful discoveries without danger (*b*).

(*a*) King Ezechias (as the Scripture informs us) suppressed a book that treated of the virtues of plants, for fear that, by making a wrong use of it, they should even create diseases. The fact is curious, and affords matter for much reflection.

(*b*) What a horrible day was that for the human race, when a monk formed of salt-petre a murdering powder! Ariosto tells us, that the devil having invented a carbine, touched by pity, threw it into a river. Alas! there is no longer any asylum upon the earth; courage now is useless; the artillery is in the hands of a small number of men, and renders them absolute masters of our existence.

C H A P.

C H A P. V.

The Academy of Painting.

AS the arts among this people are connected not only in a figurative, but in a real sense ; before I had gone many steps I found myself at the academy of painting. I entered several large salons, adorned with the works of the greatest masters, each of which afforded a moral and instructive treatise. There was no longer seen that perpetual mythology, a thousand times repeated, which though ingenious in the infancy of the art, was now become disgustful. The most pleasing objects lose at last their charms : repetition is the language of a dunce. Thus it had happened to all those gross flatteries, with which the fawning painters had deify'd Lewis XIV. Time, like truth, had devoured all the lying canvas ; as it had sent to their proper place the insipid verses of Boileau, and the prologues of Quinault, the arts were forbid to falsify (a).

There

(a) When I see, in the gallery of Versailles, Lewis XIV. with a thunderbolt in his hand, seated upon the azure clouds,

There, moreover, no longer existed any of that order of men they called connoisseurs, who directed the artist with a golden ingot in their hands. Genius was free, followed its own laws and no longer debased itself.

AMONG these moral paintings there were seen no brutal battles, no shameful debaucheries of the fabulous gods, much less sovereigns surrounded by virtues of which they were remarkably deficient. Such subjects only as were proper to inspire sentiments of dignity and virtue were here exhibited. All the pagan divinities, equally absurd and scandalous, were avoided by the precious pencil, now destined to commemo-

clouds, like an avenging deity, the disdainful pity I feel for the pencil of le Brun is almost reflected on the art: but when I consider that the painting survives both the thundering god, and the artist who created him, I smile.

The first time Lewis XIV. saw a Teniers, he turned away his head with an air of disdain, and ordered it to be removed from the apartment, If that monarch was disgusted with those good folks that dance and sing; if he preferred the furious trooper scowring through the dust and smoke of a camp, the complexion of his mind is manifest.

rate the most important actions ; by which he meant those that give a noble idea of man ; such as clemency, generosity, perseverance, courage, and a disdain of luxury.

I found that they had exhibited all those important subjects that deserve to pass down to posterity : the greatness of soul conspicuous in certain sovereigns was in particular immortalized. I saw Henry IV. nourishing the city he besieged ; Sully slowly counting out a sum of money, that was destined for his master's pleasures ; Lewis XIV. on his death-bed, crying out, " I now find I have been too fond of war ;" Trajan tearing his vestment to bind up the wounds of an unhappy man ; Marcus Aurelius descending from his horse, during a hasty enterprize, to receive the petition of a poor woman. Titus distributing food and remedies to the sick. St. Hilaire stretching out his arm, and showing his son, who wept, Turenne seated amidst the dust ; the generous Fabius putting on the chains of a galley slave in the room of his father, &c. I saw no gloomy or cruel subjects. No beggarly courtiers here said, with a sneer, " Even the painters now preach !" Every one acknow-
ledged

ledged their merit, in having selected the most sublime objects in human nature, that is, grand representations of the subjects of history. They had wisely determined that nothing was more important. All the arts had made, so to say, a wonderful association in favour of humanity. This happy agreement had thrown a greater lustre on the sacred effigy of virtue; it was become more adorable, and its aspect, always charming, afforded a public instruction, as just as it was striking. Alas! how is it possible to resist the power of the fine arts, when with one voice they extoll and dignify the free and noble citizen?

All these pictures attracted the eye, as well by the execution as by the design. These painters had united the Flemish colouring with the Italian drawing; or rather they had, by a profound study, surpassed them. Honours, the only riches of the great man, at once animated and rewarded his labours. Nature seemed to appear as in a mirror. The friend of virtue was unable to contemplate these beautiful painting without the tender sigh of pleasure. The guilty dared not to look upon them; they feared lest these

these animated figures should assume a voice, accuse, and confound them.

THEY told me that these pictures were exhibited to the people; strangers were also admitted; for they practised not that mean tyranny which excludes all who come from beyond a certain limit. Every year they proposed four subjects, that the artist might have time to give his work a due degree of perfection. The most finished easily obtained the suffrage of the people; for attention was paid to the general voice, which is commonly that of equity itself. The others, however, were sure to receive their due portion of praise. They were far from the injustice of discouraging the scholar. The established masters were void of that unworthy and base jealousy, which banished Poussin far from his country, and caused Le Seur to perish in the flower of his days. They had divested themselves of that dangerous and fatal prejudice, which, in my time, permitted no scholar to follow any other manner than that of his master. They did not make insipid copyists of those who, directed by good precepts, and then left to themselves, would have attained the

the

the height of their profession. The disciple, in a word, did not bend under a yoke that rendered him spiritless ; nor pace, with slow and trembling steps, after a capricious master, and one too whom he was obliged to flatter. If he proved to be a man of genius, he went before him, and his preceptor was the first to glory in his advancement.

THERE were several academies of drawing, painting, sculpture, and practical geometry. These arts, dangerous in my age, because they encouraged luxury, pride, cupidity, and debauchery, were now become highly useful, as they were only employed to inspire sentiments of virtue, and to give to the city that majesty, those charms, that noble and simple taste, which by a secret connection elevates the minds of the people.

THESE schools were open to the public. The disciples worked under its auspices. Every one was permitted to declare his opinion. This did not, however, prevent the authorised directors from making a proper inspection. But no scholar was considered as dependent on any particular

cular master, but as related to them all in general. By avoiding the appearance of a despotic power, so fatal to a masterly and free genius, they were enabled to produce artists who had surpassed the chef-d'œuvres of antiquity. Their paintings were so highly finished, that the remains of Raphael and Rubens were no longer sought after, but by some obstinate and opinionated antiquaries.

IT is needless to say that all the arts and professions were equally free. It is only in a weak, barbarous, and tyrannic age, that fetters are given to industry; that a sum of money is required of him who would labour in any profession, instead of affording him a recompense. All those little ludicrous corporations serve no other purpose, by collecting a number of people together, but to ferment their passions to a more violent degree. A multitude of indeterminate incidents arise from that bondage, which necessarily render them enemies to each other. So in a prison, men, when chained together, communicate their rancour and their vices. By endeavouring to prevent private interests, they have rendered it more active,

which is just the contrary to what a wise legislature should pursue. A thousand disorders proceed from this perpetual constraint, by which men are prevented from exercising their particular talents. From hence spring idleness and fraud. The misfortune arises from the impotence of those who would relieve themselves from that deplorable state, in which they are held by an arm of brass, and which nothing but gold can relax. The monarch, to enjoy a trifling tribute, has destroyed the most sacred liberty, and choaked up all the sources of spirit and industry.

AMONG these people, well instructed in the rights of mankind, each one followed that particular employ to which his genius led him; the sure pledge of success. They who had no propensity to the fine arts, applied themselves to more attainable professions; for no mediocrity is allowable in works of genius. The glory of the nation appears to be affected by those talents, which distinguish not only men, but empires.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Emblematic Paintings.

I ENTERED a separate apartment, where they had represented the several ages. To each of them was given, besides its natural physiognomy, those features by which it was distinguished from its brethren. The age of ignorance was clothed in a black and mournful robe. Her eyes were red and gloomy, and in her hand she bore a torch. At a distance was seen a funeral pile, before which stood priests covered with a long veil, and human victims, their eyes concealed by bandages, who were devoted to the flames.

FURTHER ON I saw a wild enthusiast, without any other merit than that of a heated imagination, with which he fired those of his fellow citizens, not less inflammable; and by thundering forth the name of the deity, he drew after him a crowd of people, as a docile herd run after the voice of the shepherd. Even kings quitted their thrones, abandoned their depopulated

lated states, and believing they heard a voice from heaven, sacrificed themselves, their crowns, and their subjects, in the midst of vast deserts. In the back ground was seen Superstition striding over the heads of mankind, and shaking her murdering torch. Gigantic monster! her feet touched the two extremities of the earth, and her arm, holding the palm of martyrdom, was extended to the clouds.

ANOTHER, less ardent, but more contemplative, was devoted to mystery and allegory, and wrapt up in the marvellous; was constantly surrounded by enigmas, and endeavouring to thicken the shades by which he was enveloped. There were seen the Platonic years, the numbers of Pythagoras, the verses of the Sybils, the powerful charms of magic, and those prestiges, sometimes ingenious and sometimes insipid, that the mind of man has created.

ANOTHER held in his hand an astrolabe, attentively regarded the calendar, and calculated the hours fortunate and unfortunate. A cold and silent gravity was imprinted on his protracted visage. He turned pale at the con-

junction of two stars. The present hour was nothing to him, and the future was his executioner. His religion was directed by the ridiculous jargon of astrology, and he embraced that phantom as an immoveable column.

THEN appeared a figure covered with armour; his head was enclosed in a brazen helmet, and in his hand he bore a lance. He breathed nothing but single combat. The soul of this hero was more hardened than the steel that covered him. It was by arms alone that right, opinion, justice, and truth, were to be decided. In the back ground were seen the field of combat, judges and heralds supported the vanquished, or rather the guilty.

IN another part was seen a figure totally burlesque. A Gothic architect, erecting columns that had no proportion to the weight they supported, and which were charged with ridiculous ornaments; and those he thought a refinement in building, unknown to the Greeks or Romans. The same irregularity was conspicuous in his logic, which consisted of abstract ideas, and perpetual chicanery. At a distance
were

were seen a sort of sleep-walkers, who talked and acted with their eyes open, but, plunged in a long dream, never connected two ideas, unless by chance.

THUS every age successively presented itself; but the detail would be here too long. I stood for some time regarding the eighteenth century, induced by my ancient connection with it. It was represented by the painter under the figure of a woman. A number of borrowed and costly ornaments loaded her proud and delicate head. Her neck, her arms, and breast, were covered with pearls and diamonds. Her eyes were bright and sparkling, but a somewhat affected smile gave an air of grimace to her mouth. Her cheeks were covered with a flaming red. Art appeared to be mixed with her words, as with her looks; they were alluring, but not true. She held in each hand a long rose-coloured ribband, which seemed ornaments, but concealed two iron chains, by which she was strongly bound. She had, however, liberty enough to gesticulate, to prance, and gambol, and this she did to excess, in order, (as it should seem) to disguise her slavery, or at least to make it more easy and pleasing.

I examined her figure with attention, and tracing the drapery of her vestment, I perceived that her pompous robe was at the bottom in tatters, and covered with dirt. Her naked feet were plunged in a kind of bog; her lower extremities were as hideous as her head was brilliant. She appeared in this dress not much unlike one of those strumpets who walk the streets at the beginning of the night. I discovered behind her a number of children, with meagre livid aspects, who cried to their mother while they devoured a morsel of black bread. She endeavoured to hide them with her robe, but between the tatters those wretched infants still appeared. At a distance in the picture were seen superb palaces, buildings of marble, parterres artfully laid out, vast forests peopled with deer, where the horn resounded from afar. But the country, half uncultivated, was filled with wretched peasants, who harrassed by fatigue, sunk under their burthens: then appeared men who forced away part of them to the wars, and took from the rest their beds and their kettles (*a*).

THE

(*a*) Tyranny is a dangerous tree, which should be rooted out as soon as planted. The beauty of this tree is deceitful.

THE characters of the different nations were expressed with equal fidelity. By colours variegated with a thousand mixtures, by a gloomy and melancholy countenance, was distinguished the jealous and vindictive Italian. In the same picture his thoughtful looks disappeared in the midst of a concert; the painter had seized, with remarkable address, that crisis to make him become supple in an instant. The back ground contained a representation of the droll jests of pantomimes.

THE Englishman, in an attitude rather haughty than majestic, standing upon the point ceitful. While young it appears crowned with flowers and laurels, but is secretly nourished by blood. It soon grows, spreads its branches, and lifts its lofty head. It covers all that surrounds it with a fastuous and deadly shade. The neighbouring fruits and flowers perish, deprived of the beneficent rays of the sun, which it intercepts. It compels the earth to nourish none but itself. It at last becomes like that venomous tree, whose sweet fruit is poison, and that changes the drops of rain which distil from its leaves into a corrosive fluid, that give the weary traveller at once sleep and death. In the mean time its trunk becomes knotty, its sap is changed into hard wood, and the branches of its brazen root are extended; the ax of liberty becomes blunt, and can make no impression on it.

of a rock, commanded the ocean, and gave to a vessel the signal to visit the new world, and bring him back its treasures. His bold looks declared that his private liberty was equal to that of the public. Contending fleets, growling under the strokes of the tempest, afforded his ear sweet harmony. His hand was constantly ready to seize the sword of civil war, and with a smile he looked stedfast at a scaffold, on which fell a head and a crown.

THE German, under a sky that flashed with lightning, was deaf to the roaring of the elements: it was hard to say whether he braved them, or was insensible. His eagles tore each other by his side, which to him it was mere diversion. Wrapped up in himself he beheld his destiny with a philosophic or insensible eye.

The Frenchman, full of noble and elevated graces, presented a refined aspect. His figure was not original, but his manner was great. Imagination and judgment were expressed in his countenance; he smiled with an address that seemed to approach deceit. There ran through the whole of his figure much uniformity.

mity. His colours were pleasing, but there was nothing of that boldness, nor of that fine effect of lights, which were admired in the other pictures. The sight was fatigued by a multiplicity of details, that reciprocally injured each other. An innumerable crowd bore little drums, which they were continually beating, and thought they imitated the roaring of cannon: It was a passion as busy and boisterous, as it was weak and transient.

C H A P. VII.

Sculpture and Engraving.

SCULPTURE, not less pleasing than her elder sister, displayed in turn all the wonders of her art, which was no longer prostituted to those impudent sons of wealth, who debased it by executing representations of their venal figures, or some other subject equally despicable. The artist, provided for by the government, consecrated his talent to merit and virtue only. There was not here seen, as in our apartments,

by the side of the king's bust, the vile tax-gatherer who deceived and defrauded him, presenting without shame his base physiognomy. Does a man, by advancing himself in a career of memorable actions become worthy of the regard of posterity? Does another perform some great and valiant exploit? The animated artist then charges himself with the public acknowledgment; he meditates in private one of the most masterly performances of his days, and, without adding the portrait of the author, he presently produces his work and obtains permission to immortalise himself with the hero; his labour strikes every eye, and has no need of a frigid commentary. The sculptor was expressly forbid those subjects that did not speak to the mind, and consequently the fine marble, or other matters equally valuable, were no longer wasted.

ALL those licentious subjects that loaded our chimney pieces were strictly prohibited. Men of merit had no conception of our legislation, when they read in history that in an age which so frequently pronounced the words Religion and Morality, the father of a family should exhibit

exhibit scenes of debauchery to the eyes of his children, under pretence that they were master-pieces of art ; that they should expose objects capable of heating the most tranquil imagination, and of filling young minds, open to every impresson, with disorderly ideas ; they were grieved at this public and criminal practice of depraving the mind before it was completely formed (*a*).

AN

(*a*) Among other public abuses proposed to be redressed, may be ranked those licentious shews that offend not only against sound morals but good sense, equally respectable. When speaking of the theatres, we forget to mention the tumblers and rope dancers ; but the disposition of a work is of no great moment, provided the author there includes all his ideas. I shall, like Montaigne, turn back upon every occasion ; I disregard the censure of the critics ; I flatter myself, that, at least, I shall not be, like them, disgustful. To return then to the tumblers and rope-dancers, so common and so shocking ; should they be tolerated by humane magistrates ? After having employed all their time in exercises equally astonishing and frivolous, they risk their lives in public, and tell a thousand spectators, that the death of a man is a matter of very little consequence. The attitudes of these performers are beside indecent, and offend both the eye and the heart. They perhaps also accustom minds not yet formed to find no pleasure but in that which is attended with danger, and to think that the life of a man may make part of our diver-

AN artist, to whom I applied for information, carefully explained to me all these great changes. He told me, that in the nineteenth century there was a great scarcity of marble, so that they were obliged to have recourse to the heap of financiers, tax-gatherers, and secretaries busts, which were so many blocks in part ready prepared; they were therefore easily reformed, and became finished pieces.

I PASSED into the last gallery, not less curious than the others for the multiplicity of pieces it contained. There was assembled an universal collection of drawings and engravings. Notwithstanding the great improvements in the last art, they had preserved the works of the preceding ages; for it is not with prints as with books; a book must be either good or bad, whereas a print, which presents itself to the eye only, may always serve as an object of comparison.

sions. It will be said, that this is moralising on very trifling subjects; but I have remarked that these wretched performances have much more influence on the multitude than all those arts that have some appearance of rationality.

THIS

THIS gallery, which owed its origin to the age of Lewis XV. was now very differently disposed. It was no longer a small room, in the midst of which was a table that could scarce contain a dozen artists, and where you might go ten times before you found a vacant place. That closet, moreover, was open only on certain days, in the whole scarce a tenth part of the year, and which small portion was liable to be abridged at any time by the caprice of the director. These galleries were open every day, and committed to the care of polite assistants, who were punctually paid, that they might serve the public with the same punctuality. In this spacious room, you were sure to find a print of each painting and sculpture contained in the other galleries; it presented an abridgment of those chef-d'œuvres which they had laboured to immortalise, and to diffuse to the greatest degree possible.

ENGRAVING is as fruitful and happy as printing; it has the advantage of multiplying its impression, as printing does its copies; and by that mean every private person, every stranger, may procure a rival copy of a painting. All

the inhabitants decorate, without jealousy, their walls with these interesting subjects, which represent examples of virtue and heroism. We no longer see those pretended connoisseurs, no less futile than ignorant, who pursue an imaginary perfection at the expence of their ease and their wealth, constantly liable to be duped, and to which they were remarkably disposed.

I RAN over with avidity those voluminous works in which the engraver had described, with so much facility and precision, not only the contours, but the colours of nature; all the paintings were expressed to perfection; but what had most engaged their attention were those objects that relate to the arts and sciences. The plates of the Encyclopedia had been entirely regrav'd, and they had more carefully attended to that rigorous precision which is their chief merit, as the least error is of the highest consequence. I observed a magnificent course of natural philosophy treated in the same manner; and as that science is, in a peculiar manner, the object of the senses, it is by the figures relative to it, that, perhaps, we attain just ideas of all its parts. An art that affords
so

so many useful subjects is deserving of high esteem, and they had here given it fresh marks of consideration.

I OBSERVED, that all was executed in true taste; that they followed the manner of Gerard Audran, and which they had improved by carrying it to the highest degree of perfection possible. The flourishes in books were no longer called cochins; and many other like miserable phrases were abolished (*a*).

THE engravers had desisted from the use of that pernicious glass, which destroyed their sight entirely. The connoisseurs of this age were no admirers of those little points in which all the merit of modern engraving consists; they preferred large, free, regular strokes, that expressed every thing with certain touches that were just and nobly designed. The engraver readily consulted the painter, who, in his turn, avoided affecting the caprice of a master. They esteemed one another, they lived together as friends and equals, and were far from reflecting

(*a*) M. Voltaire should be satisfied before-hand; he, who has so long pleaded for this important reformation.

the faults of any work on each other. Engraving was, moreover, become of great advantage to the state, by the commerce of prints with foreigners, so that of these artists it may be said, that under their propitious hands copper becomes gold.

C H A P. VIII.

The Hall of Audience.

I COULD not quit these rich galleries without the greatest regret; but my insatiable curiosity, that would leave nothing unseen, carried me into the center of the city. I saw a great multitude, composed of each sex, and of every age, that flocked with precipitation toward a portal that was magnificently decorated. I heard from different parts, "Let us make haste! our good king has, perhaps, already mounted his throne; we shall scarce see him ascend it to-day."—I followed the crowd, but was much astonished to find that there were no ferocious guards to beat back the thronging people.

people. I came to a most spacious hall, supported by many columns ; I advanced, and at last came near to the monarch's throne. No ; it is impossible to conceive an idea of royal majesty more pleasing, more august, more graceful and engaging. I was melted, even to tears. I saw no thundering Jupiter, no terrible apparatus, no instruments of vengeance. Four figures of white marble, representing fortitude, temperance, justice, and clemency, supported a plain armed chair of white ivory, which was elevated merely to extend the voice. The chair was crowned with a canopy, supported by a hand, the arm of which seemed to come out of the vaulted roof. On each side of the throne there were two tables ; on one side was engraved the law of the state, and the limits of the royal authority ; and on the other, the duties of kings and of subjects. In front was a woman suckling a child ; a faithful emblem of royalty. The first step to the throne, was in form of a tomb. Upon it was wrote in large characters, ETERNITY. Under this step reposed the embalmed body of the last monarch, there to remain till displaced by his son. From thence he cried to his heirs, that they were all

mor-

mortal ; that the dream of royalty was near finished ; that then nothing would remain to them but their renown.

THIS vast place was already filled with people, when I saw the monarch approach, clothed in a blue mantle that gracefully flowed behind him ; his forehead was bound with a branch of olive, that was his diadem ; he never appeared in public without this respectable ornament, which was revered by others and by himself. There were loud acclamations when he mounted the throne, and he did not appear insensible to the cries of joy. Scarce was he seated, when an awful silence was spread over the whole assembly. I listened with attention. His ministers read to him, with a loud voice, an account of every thing remarkable that had passed since the last audience. If the truth had been disguised, the people were there to confound the detractor. Their demands were not forgot. An account was rendered of the execution of orders before given. This reading always concluded with the daily price of provisions and merchandise. The monarch hears, and approves by a nod, or refers the matter to a more minute examination :

nation. But if from the bottom of the hall there should be heard a voice complaining, or condemning any one article; though it were that of the meanest citizen, he is brought forward to a little circle formed before the throne; there he explains his ideas (*a*); and if he appear to be right, he is attended to, applauded, and thanked; the sovereign regards him with a favourable aspect; but if, on the contrary, he advances nothing to the purpose, or what appears plainly to be founded on private advantage, he is dismissed with disgrace, and the hoots of the people follow him to the door. Every man may present himself without any other apprehension than that of incurring the public derision, if what he propose be unjust or self-interested.

(*a*) It is one of the greatest misfortunes in France, that the police and administration of all affairs is directed entirely by the magistrates, by men invested with a place and a title, who never deign to consult (at least on the part of the public) private persons that are frequently endowed with knowledge and sagacity to an eminent degree. The most worthy and accomplished citizen cannot display his useful talents and the dignity of his sentiments, unless possessed of a public employment; he must stifle his noble designs, be a witness to the most flagrant abuses, and be silent.

Two.

Two principal officers of the crown accompany the monarch in all public ceremonies, and walk by his side; the one carries, on the point of a spear, an ear of corn, and the other a branch of the vine (*a*), which serve constantly to remind him that they are the two supports of the state and the throne. He is followed by the pantler of the crown, bearing a basket of loaves, which he distributes to every one that asks. This basket is the sure thermometer of the public distress; and when it is found empty, the ministers are dismissed and punished; the basket, however, constantly remains full, and declares the public prosperity.

THIS august session is held every week, and lasts three hours. I went from the hall with a heart filled with complacency, and with the profoundest respect for this monarch, whom I loved as a father, and revered as a protecting divinity.

(*a*) The emperor Tai-sung walking in the country, and seeing a number of peasants at work, said to his son, who attended him, "Without the sweat and labour of these men, neither you nor I should have any empire."

I CONVERSED with several persons on all that I had seen and heard; they were surpris'd at my astonishment; all these things seem'd to them quite simple and natural.—“ Why,” said one of them, “ will you have the rashness to compare the present time to an extravagant and capricious age; that entertained false ideas of the most simple matters, when pride was greatness, when splendor and ostentation were all; and when virtue was regarded as a phantom; the mere imagination of dreaming philosophers (a).

(a) We should pay a respect to popular prejudices! is the language of narrow and pusillanimous souls, to whom the mere existence of a law is sufficient to make it sacred. Does the man of virtue, to whom alone it belongs to love or hate, acknowledge this criminal moderation? No; he charges himself with the public vengeance, his right is founded on his genius, and the justice of his cause on the acknowledgment of posterity.

C H A P. IX.

The Form of Government.

MAY I ask what is the present form of government? Is it monarchical, democratic, or aristocratic (*a*)?—"It is neither of them; it is rational, and made for man. Monarchy is no more. Monarchical governments, as you knew, though to little purpose, lose themselves in despotism, as the rivers are lost in the bosom of the ocean; and despotism soon sinks under its own weight (*b*). This has been

(*a*) The genius of a nation does not depend on the atmosphere that surrounds it; the climate is not the physical cause of its grandeur or debasement. Force and courage belong to all the people of the earth; but the causes that put them in motion and sustain them, are derived from certain circumstances, that are sometimes sudden, sometimes slow in their operations; but, sooner or later, they never fail to arrive. Happy are the people who, by information or by instinct, seize the crisis!

(*b*) Would you know what are the general principles that habitually prevail in the councils of a monarch? here follows the substance of what is there said, or rather of what is there done. Taxes of every kind should be multiplied,

been all literally accomplished, and never was there a more certain prophecy.

“WHEN

multiplied, for the prince can never be rich enough, considering that he is obliged to maintain armies and the officers of his household, who ought, by all means, to be extremely magnificent. If the people complain of these loads they do wrong, and must be curbed.

No injustice can be done them, for in reality they have nothing but what the good will of the prince gives them, and which he may take again whenever he shall think fit, especially if the interest or splendor of his crown require it. Beside, it is notorious, that a people at their ease, and in the midst of plenty, become less laborious, and may become insolent. We should therefore retrench their prosperity that we may add to their submission. The poverty of the subject is forever the strongest rampart of a monarch; and the poorer the individuals are, the more obedient the nation will be. Once taught to submit, they will perform it by habit, which is the most certain method of being obeyed. It is not sufficient that they merely submit, they should be taught to believe, that the spirit of wisdom here presides in the highest perfection, and submit accordingly, without daring to dispute about the decrees that proceed from our infallible knowledge.

If a philosopher should have access to this prince, and advancing to the midst of his council, should say to him, “Take heed how you give credit to these evil counsellors; you are surrounded by the enemies of your family: your grandeur and security are founded less on an
arbitrary

“WHEN we consider the lights that have been acquired, it would doubtless be a disgrace to the human race, to have measured the distance between the sun and the earth, to have weighed the heavenly orbs, and not to have discovered those simple and efficacious laws by which mankind should be governed. It is true, that pride, luxury, and self-interest produce a thousand obstacles; but how glorious is it to discover the means of making those private passions subservient to the general good! The vessel that plows the ocean commands the elements at the same moment that it is obedient to their empire; submissive to a double impulse, it inces-

arbitrary power, than on the love of your people. If they are unhappy, they will the more ardently wish for a revolution, and will shake either your throne, or that of your children. The people are immortal, but you must pass away. The majesty of the throne resides more in a truly paternal tenderness, than in an unlimited power; that power is violent, and contrary to the order of nature. By being more moderate, you will become more potent. Set an example of justice, and know that it is by morality alone that a prince becomes powerful and respectable.” This philosopher would certainly be taken for an enthusiast, and perhaps they would not even vouchsafe to punish him for his virtue.

stantly re-acts against them. You there see, perhaps, the most lively image of a state ; born up by tempestuous passions, it receives from them its movements, and at the same time resists the storm. “ The art of the pilot is all.” Your political light was nothing more than a crepuscule ; and you wretchedly complained of the Author of nature, at the same time that he had given you both intelligence and strength for government. There only wanted a loud voice to rouse the multitude from their lethargy. If oppression thundered on your heads, you ought to have accused your own weakness only. Liberty and happiness appertain to those who dare to seize them. All is revolution in this world ; the most happy of all has had its point of maturity, and we have gathered its fruits (*a*).

(*a*) In certain states it is an epoch that becomes necessary ; an epoch terrible and bloody, but the signal of liberty. It is of a civil war that I speak. It is that calls forth all the men of exalted genius, some to attack, and others to defend liberty. A civil war displays the most hidden talents. Men of wonderful abilities arise, and appear worthy to command the human race. It is a horrid remedy ! But in the stupor of a state, when the minds of men are plunged in a deep lethargy, it becomes necessary.

“ FREED

“FREED from oppression, we have taken care not to place all the strength and springs of government, all the rights and attributes of power, in the hands of one man (*a*). Instructed by the misfortunes of past ages, we are become less imprudent. If Socrates or Marcus Aurelius should again visit the earth, we should not confide to them, an arbitrary power; not from a mistrust, but from a fear of depreciating the sacred character of a free citizen. Is not the law the voice of the general will of the people? And how can we dare

(*a*) A despotic government is nothing more than a league between a sovereign and a small number of favourite subjects, in order to cheat and plunder the rest. In that case the monarch, or he that represents him, divides and destroys society, becomes a separate and central body, that lights up every passion as it lists, and sets them in motion for its personal interest. He creates justice and injustice, his humour becomes a law, and his favour the measure of public esteem. This system is too violent to be durable. Justice, on the contrary, is a barrier that equally protects the subject and the prince. Liberty alone can form animated citizens, the only citizens, in fact, among rational beings. A king is never powerful but at the head of a free and contented people. The nation once debased, the throne sinks.

to commit so important a deposit to a single man? Has he not his unguarded moments? And, even supposing him to be free from them, shall men resign that liberty which is their most valuable inheritance (a)?

“ WE have experienced how contrary an absolute sovereignty is to the true interest of a nation. The art of raising refined tributes, all the powers of that terrible machine progressively multiplied; the embarrassment of the laws, one opposing another; chicanery devouring the possessions of individuals; the cities crowded by privileged tyrants; the venality of offices; ministers and intendants treating the different parts of the kingdom as conquered countries; a subtle hardness of heart that justifies inhu-

(a) Liberty begets miracles, it triumphs over nature, it causes harvests to grow upon rocks; it gives a smiling air to the most doleful regions; it enlightens the peasant, and makes him more penetrative than the proud slaves of the most polished court. Other climates, the most finished works of the creation, delivered up to servitude, exhibit nothing but desolated lands, pale and dejected visages, that dare not lift their eyes to heaven. Choose then, man! be happy or miserable; if yet it be in thy power to choose: fear tyranny, detest slavery, arm thyself, live free, or die.

manity; royal officers, who are in no degree responsible to the people, and who insult them, instead of listening to their complaints; such was the effect of that vigilant despotism, which collected every intelligence, to employ it to a bad purpose; not unlike those burning glasses that collect the sun's rays, to destroy such objects as are presented to them. When we passed through France, that fine kingdom, which nature has favoured with her propitious regards, what did we behold? Districts desolated by tax-gatherers; cities become boroughs, and boroughs villages; the people pale and meagre; in a word, beggars instead of inhabitants. All these evils were known; but evident principles were avoided to embrace a system of dissipation (*a*), and the shadows that were raised, authorised the general depredation.

(*a*) An intendant of the province, desirous of giving the ***, who was going to Soissons, an idea of the abundance that reigned in France, caused the fruit-trees of the country round about to be dug up, and planted in the streets of the city, by digging up the pavement. These trees he decorated with garlands of gilt paper. This intendant was, without knowing it, a very great painter.

“ CAN

“ CAN you believe it? The revolution was effected without trouble, and by the heroism of one great man. A philosophic prince, worthy of a throne, because he regarded it with indifference; more solicitous for the happiness of mankind than for the phantom of power, distrusting posterity, and distrusting himself, offered to put the estates of the nation in possession of their ancient prerogatives; he was sensible, that in an extensive kingdom there should be an union of the different provinces, in order to its being well governed; as in the human body, beside the general circulation, each part has one that is peculiarly adapted to itself; so each province, while it obeys the general laws, modifies those that are peculiar to it, agreeable to its soil, its position, its commerce and respective interests. Hence all lives, all flourishes. The provinces are no longer devoted to serve the court, and ornament the capital (*a*). A blind order from the throne,

(*a*) From error and ignorance spring all the evils that oppress humanity. Man is wicked only because he mistakes his true interest. In speculative physics, in astronomy, and mathematics, we may err without any real

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detriment;

throne, does not carry troubles into those parts where the king's eye has never [penetrated]. Each province is the guardian of its own security and its own happiness; its principle of life is not far too distant from it; it is within itself, always ready to assist the whole,

detriment; but politics will not admit of the least error. There are vices in government more destructive than natural plagues. An error of this kind depopulates and impoverishes a kingdom. If the most severe, the most profound speculation is ever necessary, it is in those public and problematic cases, where reasons of equal weight hold the judgment in equilibrium. Nothing is then more dangerous than the tricks of office; they produce inconceivable errors; and the state is not sensible of its condition till arrived on the brink of ruin. We cannot, therefore, be too clear in the complicated art of government, as the least deviation is a line that constantly recedes as it increases, and produces an immense error. The laws have been hitherto nothing more than palliatives, that have been turned into general remedies; they are, as has been very justly said, the offspring of necessity, and not of philosophy; it belongs to the latter to correct their defects. But what courage, what zeal, what love of humanity must he have, who, from such a chaos, shall form a regular system! But, at the same time, where is the man that would be more dear to the human race? Let him remember, that it is of all objects the most important; that the happiness of mankind, and consequently their virtues, are therein highly interested.

and

and to remedy evils that may arise. The present succours are left to those who are intrusted in its welfare, and will not palliate the cure, much less will they rejoice at those incidents that may weaken their country.

“THE absolute sovereignty is now abolished; the chief magistrate preserves the name of king; but he does not foolishly attempt to bear all that burden which oppressed his ancestors. The legislative power of the kingdom is lodged in the states assembled. The administration of affairs, as well political as civil, is assigned to the senate; and the monarch, armed with the sword of justice, watches over the execution of the laws. He proposes every useful establishment. The senate is responsible to the king, and the king and senate are responsible to the states; which are assembled every two years. All is there decided by the majority of voices. The enacting of new laws, the filling of vacant posts, and the redressing of grievances, appertain to them; particular, or unforeseen cases are left to the wisdom of the monarch.

“ He is happy (*a*), and his throne is fixed upon a basis the more solid, as his crown is guaranteed by the liberty of the nation (*b*). Those souls, that would have been but mean, owe their virtue to that eternal source of greatness. The citizen is not separated from the state; he is incorporated with it (*c*), and, in return,

(*a*) M. d'Alembert says, that a king who does his duty is of all men the most miserable; and that he who does it not, is of all others the most to be pitied. But why is the king who does his duty the most miserable? Is it from the multiplicity of his labours? No; a happy labour is a real pleasure. Does he make no account of that inward satisfaction which arises from a consciousness of having promoted the happiness of mankind? Does he not believe that virtue is its own reward? Beloved by all, except the wicked, can the heart of such a king be insensible to pleasure? Who has not felt the satisfaction that results from doing good? The king who does not fulfil his duty is the most to be pitied. Nothing more true, especially if he be sensible to remorse and infamy; if he be not, he is still the more to be pitied. Nothing more just than this last proposition.

(*b*) It is good in every state, even in a republic, to have a limited chief. It is a sort of spectre that drives away all projects from the mind of the ambitious. Royalty in this case is like a scare-crow in a field, that prevents the birds from feeding upon the corn.

(*c*) They who have said, that in a monarchy, the
king

return, he shows with what zeal he exerts himself, in all that can interest its glory.

“EVERY act published by the senate, explains, in a few words, its origin and its design. We cannot conceive how it was possible in your age, that pretended so much discernment, for magistrates to dare, in their surly pride, to publish dogmatic arrets, like the decrees of the theologians. As if the law was not the public reason, or it was not necessary that the people should be instructed, in order to their more ready obedience. Those ancient magistrates, who called themselves the fathers of their country, must have been ignorant of the great art of persuasion; that art which acts so powerfully, and without labour; or rather, they must have had no fixed point of view, no determinate course, but sometimes riotous and seditious, and sometimes creeping slaves, they flattered or harrassed the

king is the depositary of the will of the people, have asserted an absurdity. There is, in fact, nothing more ridiculous, than for intelligent beings, like men, to say to one or more, “Will for us,” the people have always said to their monarch; “Act for us,” after you have clearly understood what is our will.

throne: by turns wrangling for trifles, and selling the people for a bribe.

“ YOU will readily believe that we have discarded those magistrates, accustomed from their youth to all that insensibility which is necessary coolly to despoise of the property, the honour, and lives of their fellow citizens. Bold in defence of their meanest privileges, careless of what concerned the public welfare, they sunk at last into a perpetual indolence, and even spared others the trouble of corrupting them. Very different are our magistrates; the title of fathers of their country, with which we honour them, they merit in the fullest ex-
of the term.

“ THE reins of government are now committed to wise and resolute hands, that pursue a regular plan. The laws reign, and no man is above them; which was a horrid evil in your Gothic government. The general good of the nation is founded on the security of each individual. No one fears man, but the laws; the sovereign himself is sensible
that

that they hang over his head (a). His vigilance renders the senators more attentive to their several duties; the confidence he reposes in them softens their labours, and his authority gives the necessary force and activity

(a) Every government where one man alone is above the laws, and can violate them with impunity, must be iniquitous and unhappy. In vain has a man of genius employed all his talents to make us acquiesce in the principles of an Asiatic government: they offer too great violence to human nature. Behold the proud vessel that plows the ocean, there needs but an imperceptible passage to admit the water, and cause her perdition. So one man that is above the law, may cause those acts of injustice and iniquity to enter a state, which, by an inevitable effect, will hasten its ruin. What matters it whether we perish by one or many? The misfortune is the same. What imports it whether tyranny have a hundred arms, or one only, that extends itself over the whole empire; if it fall on every individual, if it spring out fresh at the very instant it is cut off? Beside, it is not despotism that terrifies and confounds; it is its propagation. The viziers, the pachas, &c. imitate their masters; they devour others while they expect to be devoured. In the government of Europe, their shocks, the simultaneous re-action of their several bodies, affords moments of equilibrium, during which the people breathe; the limits of their respective powers, perpetually disordered, holds the place of liberty; and the phantom is, at least consolatory to those who cannot attain the reality.

to their decisions. Thus the scepter, which oppressed your kings, is light in the hands of our monarch. He is not a victim pompously decorated, and incessantly a sacrifice to the exigencies of the state; he bears that burthen only which is proportioned to the limited strength he has received from nature.

“ WE have a prince that fears the Almighty, that is pious and just, whose heart is devoted to God and his country, who dreads the divine vengeance, and the censure of posterity, and who regards a good conscience, and a spotless fame, as the highest degree of felicity. It is not so much great talents, or an extensive knowledge, that does good, as the sincere desire of an upright heart that loves it, and wishes to accomplish it. Frequently the boasted genius of a monarch, far from advancing the happiness of a kingdom, is exerted in destroying its liberties.

“ WE have conciliated what seemed almost incomptatible, the good of the nation with that of individuals. They even pretended that the general happiness of a state was necessarily distinct

tinct from that of some of its members. We have not espoused that barbarous policy, founded either on an ignorance of just laws, or on a contempt of the poorest, but most useful men in the state. There were cruel and detestable laws that supposed men to be wicked; but we are much disposed to believe that they have only become so since the institution of those laws. Arbitrary power has griped the human heart, and by its irritation has rendered it inflamed and ulcerated.

“OUR monarch has every necessary power and opportunity to do good, but is prevented from doing evil. We represent the nation to him always in a favourable light; we display its valour, its fidelity toward its prince, and its hatred of a foreign yoke.

“THERE are censors who have the right of expelling from about the prince all who are inclined to irreligion, to licentiousness, to falsehood, and to that baneful art of covering virtue with ridicule (*a*). We do not admit amongst us

(*a*) I am much inclined to believe that sovereigns are almost always the most honest men in their courts. The soul of Narcissus was still more foul than that of Nero.

that class of men, who, under the title of nobility (which, to render it completely ridiculous, was venal) crawled about the throne, and would follow no other profession than that of a foldier or a courtier; who lived in idleness, fed their pride with old parchments, and displayed a deplorable spectacle of equal vanity and misery. Your grenadiers shed their blood with as much intrepidity as the most noble among them, without rating it at so high a price. Such a denomination, moreover, in our republic would give offence to the other orders of the state. Our citizens are all equal; the only distinctions we know are those which naturally arise among men from their virtue, their genius, and industry (*a*).

“ BESIDES

(*a*) Why cannot the French suffer a republican government? Who in this kingdom is ignorant of the pre-eminence of the noblesse, founded on the institution itself, and confirmed by the custom of many ages? Yet when under the reign of John, the third estate rose from their abject condition, they took their seat in the assembly of the nation; that haughty and barbarous noblesse beheld it without commotion, associate with the orders of the kingdom, though the times were still filled with prejudices of the police of the fiefs, and the profession of arms. The
honour

“ BESIDES all those ramparts, those barriers, and precautions used to prevent the monarch from forgetting, in time of public calamities, what he owes to the poor, he observes every year a solemn fast, which continues for three days, during which time he suffers continual hunger and thirst, and sleeps upon the ground. This severe and salutary fast imprints on his heart the most tender commiseration towards the necessitous. Our sovereign, it is true, has no need of this penance to remind him; but it is a law of the state, a sacred law, constantly followed and respected. By the example of our monarch, every man who has any connection with government, makes it his duty to feel what is want; and is from thence more disposed to assist those who are obliged to submit to

honour of the French nation, a principle ever active, and superior to the wisest institutions, may therefore one day become the soul of a republic; especially when a taste for philosophy, a knowledge of political laws, and the experience of so many evils, shall have destroyed that levity, that indiscretion which blasts those brilliant qualities that would make the French the first people in the universe; if they would well consider, ripen, and support their projects.

the

the imperious and cruel law of extreme necessity (a).”

BUT

(a) In the front of a philosopher's hermitage there was a rich and lofty mountain, favoured with the most benign regards of the sun. It was covered with beautiful pastures, with golden grain, with cedars and aromatic plants. Birds, the most pleasing to the sight, and delicious to the taste, fanned the air in flocks with their wings, and filled it with their harmonious warblings. The bounding deer peopled the woods. Some genial lakes produced in their silver waters the trout, the perch, and dace. Three hundred families were spread over this mountain, and there found a blest abode, in the midst of peace and plenty, and in the bosom of those virtues they constantly practised: each morn and eve they sent their grateful thanks to heaven. But behold the indolent and voluptuous Osman mounts the throne, and all these families are presently ruined, driven from their abodes, and become vagabonds upon the earth. The beautiful mountain was seized by his vizier, a noble robber, who feasted his dogs, his concubines, and his flatterers, with the plunder of the unhappy people. Osman one day losing himself in the chace, met the philosopher, whose hut had escaped that torrent which had swept all else before it. The philosopher recollected the monarch, without his suspecting it: he treated him with a noble courtesy. They talked of the present times.—“Alas!” said the sage old man, we knew what pleasure was some ten years since; but now all suffers: extreme poverty has drove the poor from their habitations; wrings their souls,

and

BUT, I said that these changes must have been long, laborious, and difficult. What efforts you must have made!—The philosopher, with a pleasing smile, replied, “ Good is not more difficult than evil. The human passions are frightful obstacles ; but when the mind is once convinced of its true interest, the man becomes just and faithful. It seems to me that a single person might govern the world, if the hearts of men were disposed to toleration and equity. Notwithstanding the common inconsequence of those of your age, it was foreseen that reason would one day make a great progress; its effects have become visible, and the happy principles of a wise government have been the first fruits of its reformation.”

and each day sees them go drooping to the grave, oppressed by extreme misery.”—“ Pray tell me, said the monarch, what is that misery ?” The philosopher sighed, remained silent, and set the prince in the way to his palace.

C H A P. X.

The Heir to the Throne.

MORE inquisitive than was ever the bailiff of Huron (*a*), I continued to exercise the patience of my companions. I have seen the monarch on his throne, but I forgot to ask, Gentlemen, where was the king's son; whom in my time they called the dauphin. One of the most polite among them replied :

“ As we are convinced that it is on the education of the great that depends the happiness of the people, and that virtue is learned as vice is communicated, we watch with the greatest assiduity over the early years of our princes. The heir to the throne is not at court, where some flatterers would dare to persuade him that he is something more than other men, and that they are less than insects. His high destiny is carefully concealed from him. When he is born, a

(*a*) The Huron, or the Candid Man, a romance by Voltaire, and one of the best his pen has produced. The Huron confined in the Bastile with a Jansenist, is of all things in the world the most happily imagined,

royal

royal mark is imprinted on his shoulder, by which he is afterwards known. He is placed in the hands of those whose discrete fidelity has been as well proved as their probity. They take a solemn oath before the Supreme Being never to reveal to the prince that he is one day to be king : a tremendous oath, and which they never dare to violate.

“ As soon as he comes out of the hands of the women he is inured to exercise ; and regard is had to his natural education, which should always precede the moral. He is clothed like the son of a common peasant ; he is accustomed to the plainest meats ; and is early taught sobriety ; he will be the better able hereafter to teach œconomy by his own example, and to know that a false prodigality ruins a state, and dishonours those that promote it. He travels, successively, through all the provinces ; they explain to him the various labours of the husbandman, the different manufactures, and the productions of the several soils ; he sees all things with his own eyes ; he enters the hut of the ploughman, eats at his table, assists in his labours, and learns to respect him. He con-
verses

verfes freely with every man he meets; his character is fuffered to difplay itfelf freely, while he thinks himfelf as far diftant from the throne as he is near to it.

“MANY kings have become tyrants, not becaufe they had bad hearts, but becaufe they never knew the real ftate of the common people of their country (*a*). If we were to abandon a young prince to the flattering idea of a certain power, perhaps even with a virtuous mind, confidering the unhappy difpofition of the human heart, he would at laft endeavour to extend the limits of his authority (*b*). For in

(*a*) Prejudice constantly attends the throne, ready to pour its errors into the ears of kings. Timorous Truth is in doubt of obtaining a victory over them, and waits for the fignal to approach; but ſhe ſpeaks fo ftrange a language, that they turn to thofe deceitful phantoms that are mafters of the common dialect. Kings! learn the fevere philoſophic language of truth! It is in vain that you feek her, if you underftand her not.

(*b*) Men have a natural difpofition to arbitrary power, as nothing is more convenient than to be obeyed by merely moving the tongue. Every one has heard of that ſultan who commanded his attendants to amufe him with entertaining ſtories, on pain of being ſtrangled. Other monarchs hold pretty much the ſame language, when they ſay to the people, Divert me, and die with hunger.

that.

that it is that many princes unhappily make the royal grandeur to consist; and consequently their interest is always at variance with that of the people.

“WHEN the prince has attained the age of twenty years, or sooner, if his mind appears to be early formed, he is conducted to the hall of audience; he mixes with the crowd as a common spectator; all the orders of the state are then present, and all have received their instructions. On a sudden the king rises, and calls the young man three times by his name; the crowds of people open; astonished, he advances with timid steps toward the throne, and trembling mounts the steps; the king embraces him, and declares him in the sight of all the people to be his son. “Heaven,” he says with an affecting and majestic voice, “Heaven has “destined thee to bear the burden of royalty; “we have laboured for twenty years to render “thee worthy of it; do not frustrate the hopes “of this great people that you see before you. “My son I expect from you the same zeal that “I have shown for this nation.” What a crisis! what a crowd of ideas press upon his mind!

The

The monarch then shows him the tomb where rests the preceding king ; that tomb on which is graved in large characters, ETERNITY. He proceeds with the same awful voice ; “ My son, “ all has been done for this moment. You now “ stand on the ashes of your grandfather ; in “ you he is to revive ; swear to be just as he “ was, I shall soon descend to supply his place ; “ but remember, that I shall accuse you from “ this tomb if you abuse your power. Ah ! “ my dear son, the eyes of the Almighty and “ of this nation are upon you ; no one thought “ can be concealed. If any incitements to am- “ bition or pride reign at this moment in your “ heart, there is yet time to avoid their effects ; “ renounce the diadem, descend from the “ throne, and mix again with the people ; you “ will be greater and more respectable as a com- “ mon citizen, than as a vain and dastardly “ monarch. Let not the chimera of authority “ flatter your young heart, but the great and “ pleasing idea of being really useful to man- “ kind ; I promise you for recompense the “ love of this people that surrounds us ; of my “ affection, the esteem of the world, and the “ assistance of the Monarch of the universe ; it “ is

“ is he that is king, my son, we are only his
“ agents, that are sent upon the earth to accom-
“ plish his great designs (a).”

“ THE young prince is surpris'd and affected, his visage is covered with a modest shame; he dares not look upon that great assembly, whose regards are eagerly fixed on him. His tears begin to flow; he weeps at the prospect of his extensive duties; but soon an heroic spirit possesses him; he is taught that a great man ought to sacrifice himself for the good of mankind; and that as nature has not prepared for man a happiness without alloy, it is by that benign power which the nation has deposited with him, that he is enabled to do that for them which nature has refused. That noble idea penetrates, animates, inflames him; the oaths are admi-

(a) Garnier causes it to be said to Nabuchedonoser, puffed up with his power and his victories, “ Who is that God who commands the rain, the winds and the tempests? Over whom reigns he? Over the seas, the rocks, &c.” To which he replies, “ Insensible subjects! I command over men; I am the only God of this earth where we dwell.

*Insensibles sujets! moi je commande aux hommes;
Je suis l'unique Dieu de la terre ou nous sommes.*

nistered

nistered to him by his father; he calls the sacred ashes of his grandfather to witness his sincerity; he adores the Supreme Being; he is crowned. The orders of the state salute him, and the people with transports of joy cry out, "O thou that are taken from amongst us, whom we have so long and so nearly beheld, may the prestiges of greatness never make thee forget who thou art, and who we are (a)."

"HE cannot mount the throne till the age of two and twenty; for it is repugnant to common sense, that a nation should be governed by an infant king. For a like reason the king lays down the scepter at the age of seventy years, because the art of governing requires an activity of body, and a certain sensibility, which

(a) The Greeks and Romans experienced sensations far more poignant than ours. A religion altogether sensible; those frequent occurrences that concerned the grand interest of the republic; a state dignity that was awful without being fastuous; the acclamations of the people; the assemblies of the nation, and the public harangues; what an inexhaustible source of pleasures! When compared with those people, we seem but to languish, or scarce to exist.

unlucky age extinguishes in the human mind (*a*). Beside, we are fearful lest habit should produce in his mind that concentered ambition they call avarice, which is the last and most rueful passion that man has to encounter (*b*). The inheritance is in the line direct, and the septuagenary monarch still serves the state by his councils, or by the example of his past virtues. The time between the public acknowledgement of the prince, and the day of his majority, is still subject to new proofs. They constantly talk to him by strong and sensible images. If they would prove, that kings are not otherwise formed than common men; that they have not a hair more on their heads; that they are equally weak at their entrance

(*a*) How pleasing is it when years have whitened our heads, to be able to retire, and reflect on those actions of humanity and beneficence that we have performed in the course of our days! Of all that we now are, there will then nought remain but the sensation of having been virtuous, or the shame and torment of vice.

(*b*) Prodigality is equally to be feared. A young prince will sometimes refuse, because he has that in him which may atone for refusal; but the old man constantly consents, because he has nothing to supply the vacuity of the want of liberality.

into

into this world; equal in infirmities, and equal in the sight of God, and that the suffrage of the people is the sole basis of their grandeur; they introduce, by way of diversion, a young porter of his size and age, and they wrestle together; though the king's son be vigorous, he is commonly overcome; the other continues the attack, till the prince is forced to own the defeat. They raise him up, and say to him, "You see that no man by the law of nature ought to submit to another, that no man is born a slave; that monarchs are born men, and not kings; in a word, that the human race were not created for the pleasure of some particular families. That even the Almighty, according to the natural law, would not govern by force, but over the free-will. To endeavour therefore to make men slaves, is to act with temerity toward the supreme Being, and to exercise tyranny over the race of mankind." The young man who had conquered, then bows before him, and says, "I may be stronger than you, but there is neither right nor glory in that; true strength is equity, and true glory greatness of mind. I render you homage as my sovereign, and the depositary of
" the

“ the force of every individual ; when any one
“ would tyrannize over me, it is to you I must
“ fly for succour ; you will then hear and save
“ me from the unjust and powerful.”

“ IF the young prince commits any remarkable fault or imprudence, the next day he sees it in the public papers (*a*) ; he is sometimes astonished and offended. They answer him coolly,
“ It is a faithful and vigilant tribunal, that
“ records each day the actions of princes. Posterity will know and judge all that you have
“ said and done ; it depends on yourself to
“ make them speak honourably of you.” If the young prince reflect, and acknowledge his fault, then the papers of the next day declare that token of a happy character, and give to the noble action all the eulogy it deserves (*a*).

BUT

(*a*) I could wish that a prince had sometimes the curiosity to know what the people think of him ; he would learn enough in a quarter of an hour to afford him matter of reflection for the rest of his life.

(*b*) You say, “ I fear not the sword of man. I am brave.” But you deceive yourself. To be truly brave you must

“BUT what they most strongly recommend, and impress on him by multiplied images, is a horror of that vain pageantry, which has destroyed so many states, and dishonoured so many sovereigns (a). Those gilded palaces, say they, are like the decorations of a theatre, where paper appears to be massy gold. The child imagines that it beholds a real palace. Be not a child. Pomp and ostentation are abuses, introduced by pride and policy. They display that parade to inspire the greater respect and fear. By that means the subject contracts a servile disposition, and becomes accustomed to the yoke. But is a king ever debased by putting himself on a level with his subjects? What are those incessant empty shews, in comparison with that open and affable manner that attracts the affections of all the people to his person? The wants of a monarch

scarce enter into their thoughts. They do not fear neither their tongues nor their pens. But in this case, the greatest kings of the earth have ever been the greatest poltroons. The Gazette of Amsterdam prevented Louis XIV. from sleeping

(a) That luxury, which is the cause of the destruction of states, and that tramples under foot every virtue, takes its source from corrupted hearts, and which all others copy after.

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are not less than those of the meanest of his subjects. There is no difference between his stomach and that of a clown, says J. J. Rousseau. If he would taste the purest of all pleasures, let him taste that of being beloved, and let him render himself worthy of it (a).

“To conclude: their passës no day on which he is not reminded of the existence of a supreme Being, whose eye constantly surveys this world; of the duty that he owes him, of a reverence for his providence, and a confidence in his infinite wisdom. The most horrid of all beings is without doubt an atheistical king: I had far rather be in a vessel tossed by the tempest, and directed by a drunken

(a) Duke *** of Wirtemberg, the first of that name, was dining with a sovereign prince, his neighbour, and some other petty potentates, each of whom was talking of his forces and power. After hearing all their pretensions, the Duke said, “I do not envy any one of you that power which God has given you, but there is one thing of which I can boast, which is, that in my little state I can walk at all hours alone, and in security. I ramble among the woods, I lay me down to sleep under some tree, quite unconcerned, for I fear neither the sword of a robber, nor of an injured subject.

pilot; I should at least have a chance to be saved.

“It is not till the age of twenty-two that he is permitted to marry. He takes a native of our country to his throne. He does not send in quest of a foreign wife, who frequently brings from her country a disposition, which being widely different from the manners of our nation, bastardizes the blood of France, and causes us to be governed by Spaniards or Italians, rather than by the descendants of our brave ancestors. Our king does not offer that insult to a whole nation, to imagine that beauty and virtue are to be found in a foreign soil only. She who, in the course of his journies, has touched his heart, and has loved him without a diadem, mounts the throne with her lover, and becomes dear and respectable to the nation, as well from her own virtues, as for having been able to please a hero. Beside the advantage of inspiring all the young women with a love of wisdom and virtue, by setting before them a recompence worthy of their efforts, we hereby avoid all those family wars, that are absolutely foreign
to

to the interest of the state, and that have so often desolated Europe (a).

“ON the day of his marriage, instead of foolishly squandering money in pompous and tiresome feasts, in senseless and gaudy shews, in fire-works, and other expences equally extravagant and disgusting, the prince erects some public monument, as a bridge, an aqueduct, a public road, a canal, or a theatre. This monument bears his name. We remember his benefaction, while those irrational profusions are forgot, or only remembered by the horrid accidents they occasioned (b). The people,

(a) Most of our wars have proceeded, as every one knows, from those alliances that are pretended to be political. If indeed Europe and Africa could espouse Asia and America, well and good.

(b) Shall I here recall the horrible night of the 30th March, 1770? It will eternally accuse our police, that is favourable to the rich alone, and that protects the barbarous luxury of carriages*. If was by them that horrid disaster was occasioned. But if this dreadful accident has produced no strict ordinance by which the citizens

* *Carriages are far more dangerous in Paris than London, as they drive much faster, and there is no separate path for foot passengers.*

ple, satisfied with the generosity of their prince, are under no temptation to whisper to each other that ancient fable, in which the poor frog laments in his marsh the sight of the nuptials of the sun (a).”

may walk the streets without danger, what are we to expect of other evils that are more deeply rooted, and more difficult to remedy? Near eight hundred persons perished by being crowded together, and six weeks after it was not mentioned.

(a) I met, in a piece of poetry, with these verses :

*Ces rois enorgueillis de leur grandeur suprême,
Ce sont des mendiants que couvre un diadème.*

“ These puffed up monarchs, with their mighty grandeur, are nothing more than beggars covered with a crown.” In fact, they are craving incessantly : it is the people that pay for the robes of the pompous bride ; for the feasts, the fire works, the embroidery of the nuptial bed, &c. and when the royal babe is born, each one of its cries is metamorphosed into a new tax.

C H A P. XI.

T H E W O M E N.

MY affable and polite instructor continued in the same free manner.—“You should know that our women have no other portion than their virtue and their charms ; they are, therefore, interested in improving their moral faculties. By this stroke of legislation we have destroyed the hydra, Coquetry, so fruitful of contention, of vices and ridicule.”—How ! no portion? the women bring nothing with them? and who will marry them?—“Women have no portion, because they are by nature dependant on that sex from whom they derive their strength and glory ; and that nothing may withhold them from that legitimate empire, which is constantly less terrible than the yoke they give themselves in their fatal liberty. Besides, the consequence is the same ; a man who marries a wife without any fortune, is enabled to dispose of his daughters without emptying his purse. We never see a girl proud of her fortune, who seems to do her husband a

favour by accepting him (a). Every man is bound to provide for his wife; and she, depending entirely on her husband, is the better disposed to fidelity and obedience. The law being universal, no one can complain. The women have no other distinction than what is reflected on them by their husbands. Constantly submissive to the duties that their sex requires, their honour is to observe the strict laws that results from them, by which alone they can secure their happiness.

“ EVERY citizen that has not defamed himself, though he should be of the lowest class, may claim a daughter of the highest, provided she consent, and there be no seduction nor disproportion of age. Every one resumes the primitive equality of nature in forming a contract so pure, so free, and so necessary to our happiness, as is that of matrimony. There

(a) An Athenian lady asked a Lacedemonian, what portion she brought her husband? “ Chastity,” she replied. †

† It is no uncommon thing for a modern lady to bring her husband this portion, though she may chance to dispose of it afterwards for her own private emolument.

ends

ends the bounds of paternal power (*a*), and that of civil authority. Our marriages are fortunate, because interest, which corrupts all things, does not foil their amiable bands. You cannot easily imagine how many vices and foibles, such as slander, jealousy, idleness, the pride of excelling a rival, crimes of every kind, have been banished by this simple law (*b*). Women, instead of exercising

(*a*) How indecent, how monstrous is it, to see a father appeal to twenty tribunals, animated by a barbarous pride that will not let him give his daughter to a man, because he had secretly destined her for another. He dares, in this case, to cite civil ordinances, while he forgets the most sacred laws of nature, which forbids him to oppress an unfortunate daughter, over whom he has no legitimate authority, but what may conduce to her happiness. It is a remarkable and melancholy circumstance, that in this age the number of bad parents has exceeded that of unnatural children. Where is the source of this evil? Alas! in our laws.

(*b*) Nature has destined women to domestic employments, and to cares every where of the same kind. They have much less variety in their characters than have men; almost all women resemble each other; they have but one end, and which they manifest in every country by similar effects.

their vanity, have cultivated their minds ; and in lieu of riches, have furnished themselves with gentleness, modesty, and patience. Music and dancing no longer form their principal accomplishments ; they have vouchsafed to learn the arts of oeconomy, of pleasing their husbands, and educating their children. That extreme inequality of rank and fortune, the most destructive vice in every political society, is here no longer seen ; the meanest citizen has no reason to blush at his condition ; he associates with the highest, who disdains not his connection. The law has equalled mankind to the greatest degree in its power ; instead of creating those injurious distinctions, that produce nothing but pride on one side, and hatred on the other, it has been sollicitous to destroy all those obstacles that might divide the children of the same mother.

“ OUR wives are, what were those of the ancient Gauls, sincere and amiable companions, whom we respect and consult on all occasions. They do not affect that miserable jargon so much in vogue among you, and which
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they called wit (a). They do not busy themselves with assigning the rank due to the several sorts of genius ; they are content with good sense, a qualification far preferable to those artificial flashes that are the wretched amusements of idleness. Love, the fruitful source of the most excellent virtues, presides over, and guards the interest of our country. The more happiness we enjoy in her bosom, the more dear she becomes. Judge then what is our attachment to her. The women, doubtless, make a part of this felicity. Instead of those empty and fastidious pleasures, which they pursued from vanity, they now enjoy all our tenderness and esteem, and find a felicity more solid and more pure in the possession of our hearts, than in those transient pleasures, whose very pursuit was attended with anxiety. Charged with the care of superintending the first years of our children, they

(a) A woman shews very little discretion, who is desirous of shewing her wit upon every occasion. She ought, on the contrary, to use all her art to conceal it. In fact, what is it we men look after ? Innocence, candour, simplicity, truth, an interesting timidity. A woman that displays her wit seems to say to you, " Sir, address yourself to me ; I am a woman of wit ; I shall be more perfidious, perverse, and artful than another."

have no other preceptors ; for being more sagacious and vigilant than they were in your days, they are more sensible of the delicious pleasure of being mothers in the full extent of the term."

BUT, I said, notwithstanding all your improvements, man is still man, liable to weakness, humour, and disgust. If Discord, with her torch, should take the place of Hymen, what do you then ? Are divorces permitted (a) ?

(a) Nicholas I. erecting himself into the reformer of the laws divine, natural, and civil, abrogated divorces in the ninth century. They were then in use among all the people of the earth, authorised by the Jews and the Christians. How strange is the lot of human kind ! One man alone has deprived them of a precious liberty ; of a civil contract has made a sacred indissoluble chain, and for ever fomented domestic variance. Many past ages have given to that foolish and whimsical law an inviolable sanction ; and those intestine wars that distract the domestic oeconomy and promote the depopulation of states, are the fruits of the caprice of a pontif. It is evident, that were divorces permitted, marriages would be more happy *. We should be

* *There are no divorces permitted in France, not even in case of the most flagrant adultery. "They," says the lordly priest, "whom God," that is, I and my church, "has put together no man can put asunder." The only resource for the husband is*

—“ Doubtless, when they are founded on legitimate reasons ; as when both parties, for example, solicit a divorce at the same time ; an incompatibility of humours is sufficient to dissolve the band. People marry only to be happy.

be less fearful of forming a contract, when we knew that it could not bind us to misery. The wife would be more attentive and submissive. The durability of the band depending on the will of the parties bound, would become more strong. Population, moreover, being far below its true standard, it is to the indissolubility of marriages that we ought to attribute the secret cause of that evil which undermines the catholic monarchies. If it should be tolerated for any considerable time longer, and celibacy should continue to prevail among them, (the fruit of a wretched administration) together with the ecclesiastic celibacy, which seems to be of right divine, they will have none but enervated troops to oppose the numerous, healthful, and robust armies of those people who permit divorces. The fewer single people there are in a state, the more chaste, happy, and fruitful marriages will be. The diminution of the human race necessarily tends to the total ruin of an empire.

to petition the king ; and if, by great chance, he have interest sufficient, the wife is sent to a convent ; where she will pass her time disagreeably enough, if she be not able to bribe the Cerberus at the door ; which, they say, is not unfrequently done. I remember a lady of the first quality, who was sent to a monastery, and early the next morning, the good abbess came to her bed-side, and gave her a long lecture on the subject of incontinence.—The gallant all the while lay snug under the bed-cloaths.

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It is a contract of which peace and mutual regard should be the end. We are not so senseless as to force two people to live together, whose hearts are estranged from each other, and thereby to renew the punishment of the cruel Mezentius, who fastened a living body to a loathsome carcase. A divorce is the only eligible remedy, as it at least renders to society two persons that are lost by their connection with each other. But (would you believe it?) the greater the facility is, the more averse they are to profit by it, as there is a sort of dishonour in not being able to bear together the troubles of a transient life. Our women, virtuous by principle, are delighted with domestic pleasures. We are always happy when our duty coincides with our desires; nothing is then difficult, all things bear a pleasing aspect."

O HOW unfortunate I am to be so old! I exclaimed; I would immediately marry one of these amiable women. Ours were so haughty and insolent, and, for the most part, so faithless, so badly educated, that marriage was regarded as an egregious folly. Coquetry, with
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an immoderate love of pleasure, and an absolute unconcern for every thing but themselves, composed the character of a woman of my time. They derided all sort of sensibility, and had scarce any humanity but toward their gallants. Every taste but that of luxury was in a manner a stranger to their minds. I speak not of modesty, for that was esteemed ridiculous. Therefore, a prudent man being to choose of two evils, preferred celibacy as the least. The difficulty of bringing a child up, was an argument not less strong. Men avoided giving children to a state that would load them with distress. So the generous elephant, once made captive, refuses to indulge himself in the most pleasing instinct, that he may not entail slavery on his posterity. The husband himself, in the midst of his anxiety, watched an opportunity of getting rid of a child, as we endeavour to drive away a voracious animal. Human beings fled from each other, as their union necessarily redoubled their misery; the wretched virgins, fixed to the soil where they were born, languished like flowers, that scorched by the sun turn pale, and drop from their stalks; the greater part carried with them, even to the grave, the

desire of being wives ; disgust and anxiety embittered every moment of their days ; and they could not procure any atonement for that privation, but by the risk of their honour, and the loss of their health. In short, the number of single persons was become frightfully great ; and, to complete the misery, reason seemed to justify that outrage to humanity (a). But proceed, that you may comfort me by describing a pleasing picture of your manners ? How was you able to drive away that plague, which threatened to devour the human race ?

My guide raised his voice, and, with an animated dignity, said, lifting his eyes to heaven, “ O God, if man is unhappy, it is by

(a) A taste for celibacy will begin to prevail when a government is become as bad as it possibly can be. The citizen detached from the most pleasing connection, will insensibly detach himself from the love of life itself ; suicide will be frequent ; the art of living will become so painful, that existence itself will be a burden. Men can bear all the physical evils united ; but the political evils are a hundred times more horrible, because they are not necessary. Man curses that society which ought to alleviate his pains and break his fetters. They reckoned at Paris, in the year 1769, one hundred and forty-seven persons who put an end to their own lives.

his.

his own fault; it is because he shuns society, and confines all his cares to himself. Our industry is consumed on futile objects; and those that would enrich us we neglect. By forming man for society, Providence has placed by our misfortunes those aids that are destined to relieve them. What stronger obligation is there than mutually to assist each other? Is it not the general desire of mankind? Why then does he so frequently mistake his interest?

“ I REPEAT it; our women are wives and mothers; and from those two virtues all others are derived. They would dishonour themselves, were they to daub their faces with paint, or stuff their heads with snuff, or debauch their stomach with drams; if they were to sit up all night, or sing licentious songs, or practise the least indecency with men. They have more certain attractions; gentleness, modesty, the native graces, and that noble decency, which are their inheritance, and their true glory (a).

“ THEY

(a) While the women govern in France, while all things are made to conform to their taste, while they judge of the genius and merit of men, the French will never have that stability.

“ THEY suckle their own children without thinking it a labour ; and as it is done without affectation, their milk is pure and plentiful. The body of the child is early invigorated ; he is taught to swim, to hurl, and to carry burdens. The bodily education appears to us of importance ; we form his constitution before we exercise his mind, which should not be that of a parrot, but that of a man.

“ HIS mother watches over the morning of his rising thoughts ; she reflects on the method to be pursued in forming his mind to virtue ; how she shall turn his sensibility into humanity, his pride into greatness of soul, and his curiosity into a knowledge of sublime truths. She meditates on those engaging fables she shall use, not to conceal the truth, but to render it more amiable ; that its lustre may not dazzle the weakness of his inexperienced mind ; she carefully weighs all her words and actions, that no one of them may make a bad impression on his heart. Thus she preserves him from that breath

stability, that sage oeconomy, that gravity, nor that nervous character which becomes free men.

of vice, by which the flower of innocence is so suddenly withered.

“ EDUCATION differs among us according to the station the child is hereafter to hold in society; for though we are delivered from the yoke of pedantry, it would be still ridiculous to teach him what he must hereafter forget. Each art is unfathomable, and to excell in it requires our whole attention. The mind of man, notwithstanding all those aids recently discovered, miracles apart, is not able to embrace more than one object; it is sufficient for him to attach himself strongly to that, without attempting excursions that cannot but distract him. It was the ridicule of your age to endeavour to be universal; we regard it as a madness.

“ IN a more advanced age, when his mind is able to distinguish those connections by which he is united to society, then, instead of that futile knowledge with which the minds of youth are indiscriminately loaded, his mother, with that natural and tender eloquence peculiar to women, teaches him what are manners, decency,

cency, virtue. She makes choice of that season,
 when nature, dressed in all her splendor, speaks
 to the most insensible heart, when the genial
 breath of spring has decorated the groves, the
 fields, and forests, with all their ornaments.
 "My son," she says, pressing him to her mater-
 nal bosom (a), "behold these verdant fields, these
 " trees adorned with spreading branches; it is
 " not long since, that, deprived of all their orna-
 " ments, they were congealed by that cold
 " which pierces the inward parts of the earth;
 " but there is a gracious Being, who is our
 " common Parent, and who never abandons
 " his children; he dwells in heaven, and from
 " thence beholds, with the kindness of a father,
 " all his creatures. At the moment that he
 " smiles, the sun darts its rays, the trees flou-
 " rish, the earth is crowned with flowers, and
 " with herbs for the nourishment of those
 " beasts whose milk we drink. And why do
 " we so love the Lord? Hear, O my child!

(a) Cebes represents Imposture as sitting at the gate
 that leads to life, and obliging all who present themselves
 to drink of the cup of error. That cup is superstition.
 Happy are they who only taste it, and then throw the
 vessel away.

" it

“ it is because he is powerful and good ; all that
“ you see is the work of his hands, and all this
“ is nothing to what is concealed from you.
“ Eternity, for which every immortal soul was
“ created, will afford thee an endless procession
“ of joy and wonder. His power and goodness
“ know no bounds ; he loves us, because we
“ are his children ; from day to day he will
“ show us greater kindness, if we are virtuous,
“ that is, if we obey his laws. O ! my son,
“ how can we but adore and bless his name !”
At these words, the mother and the child fall
prostrate, and their united prayers ascend to-
gether to the throne of the Almighty.

“ IT is thus that she possesses him with the
idea of a God, that she nourishes his soul with
the milk of truth, and that she says to herself,
“ I will fulfil the will of the Creator, who has
“ committed him to my care. I will be severe
“ to those baneful passions that may injure his
“ happiness ; to the tenderness of a mother I will
“ unite the unwearied vigilance of a friend.”

“ You have seen at what age he is initiated
to the communion of the two infinites. Such

is our education ; it is, as you see, altogether sentimental ; we detest that jeering wit, which was the most terrible scourge of your age ; it dried up, it burned all it touched ; its buffooneries were the source of all your vices. But, if a frivolous disposition be so dangerous, what is reason itself without sentiment ? A meagre frame, without colour, without grace, and almost without life. What are new, and even profound ideas, if they have nothing animating and affecting ? What need have I of a cold truth that chills my blood ? It loses its force and its effect. It is in the heart that truth displays its charms and its power. We cherish that eloquence which abounds in lively and striking pictures ; it is that gives wings of fire to our thought ; it sees and strikes the object ; it becomes attached to it, because the pleasure of being affected is joined to that of being enlightened (*a*).

“OUR

(*a*) We reckon more on exterior manners, that is, upon custom, than on any thing else, for which reason it is that we neglect education. The ancients treated each subject in a manner altogether sentimental, and threw on the sciences I know not what allurements, the secret of which is lost to us. The genius of the moderns is constantly

“ OUR philosophy, therefore, is not severe ; and why should it be so ? Why not crown it with flowers ? Are disgustful or mournful ideas more honourable to virtue than those that are pleasing and salutary ? We think, that pleasure, proceeding from a beneficent hand, is not sent upon earth to make us shun its approach. Pleasure is not a monster ; it is, as Young says, virtue under a gayer title. Far from endeavouring to destroy the passions, the invisible movers of our being, we regard them as precious gifts that we should carefully economise. Happy is the man endowed with strong passions ; they form his glory, his grandeur, and his opulence. A wise man among us cultivates his mind, discards his prejudices, and acquires useful and agreeable sciences. All the arts that can extend his judgment and ren-

stantly defective for want of sentiment. The most happy talents are become callous under the serule of pedantry. Is there in the world a more ridiculous institution than that of our colleges, when we compare their dry and lifeless maxims with the public education the Greeks gave their youth, ornamenting wisdom with all those attractions which charm that tender age ? Our preceptors appear like savage masters ; it is no wonder, therefore, that their disciples are the first to avoid and fly from them.

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der it more discerning, are exercised and improved by his mind; that done, he attends to the voice of nature only, subject to the law of reason, and reason directs him to happiness (a).

(a) The warmth of the passions is not the cause of our irregularities; the furious, ungovernable courser, that runs away with the bad rider, that throws and tramples him under foot, is obedient to the bridle under the direction of a skillful master; and gains the prize in a glorious course. The weakness of passions discovers a poverty of nature. What, in fact, is that heavy, silent citizen, whose insipid soul is void of all sensibility; who is peaceful, because he is incapable of action; who vegetates, and suffers himself to be easily led by the magistrate, because he has no desires? Is he a man, or a statue? Place by him a man full of lively sentiments, who rides upon the impetuosity of his passions. He tears off the veil from the sciences; he will commit faults, and he will display genius. An enemy to repose, and thirsting after knowledge, he will draw from the commotions of the world a luminous and sublime spirit that will enlighten his country; he will afford, perhaps, occasion for censure; but he will have exerted all the energy of his soul; the spots in his character will disappear, because he will be greatly useful to mankind.

C H A P. XII.

THE TAXES (a).

TELL me, I beseech you, how are your public taxes levied? for let the legislature be as perfect as it may, taxes, I think, must always

(a) My friends hear this apologue. Toward the beginning of the world there was a vast forest of citron-trees, that bore the most beautiful, large, and pleasant fruit. The branches bent under their burthens, and the air far round was embalmed with their fragrant odour. The impetuous winds chanced to blow down several citrons, and to break some of the branches: certain travellers passing that way, quenched their thirst with the juice of the fruit, and cast away the rind. This accident induced the race of citron-trees to choose guardians, who were to drive away passengers, and to inclose the forest with high walls, to oppose the fury of the winds. These guardians appeared at first faithful and disinterested, but they soon found that such hard labour produced a violent thirst; they therefore made this proposition to the citrons: "Gentlemen, we are ready to perish by thirst in labouring for you; permit us to make a small incision in each of you, that we may have a drop of liquor to refresh our parched throats; you will not be poorer, and we and our children shall thereby acquire fresh strength for your service."

always be paid. As a full answer, the worthy man my conductor took me by the hand, and led me to a spacious place, formed by the termination of four streets. I observed a strong chest that was twelve feet high; it was supported on four wheels; there was a small opening at top, which was secured from the rain by a kind of awning; on this chest was wrote, *Tribute due to the king representing the state.* Hard by was another chest, of a smaller size, with

The credulous citrons thought this request not unreasonable, and submitted to the imperceptible contribution. But what was the consequence? When the incision was once made, the hands of messieurs, the guardians, pressed them every day more closely. They at last found that citron juice was necessary in all their food; they observed too that the closer they pressed the fruit, the more juice it yielded. The citrons seeing themselves thus profusely bled, thought to have reduced their contribution to the primitive stipulation; but the guardians, grown more strong, disregarding all their complaint, put them in the press; and when nothing else remained, they forced a juice from the rinds, by the aid of terrible machines. They at last bathed themselves in the juice of citrons. The beautiful forest was soon despoiled; the race of citrons became extinct; and their tyrants, habituated to that refreshing liquor, by their prodigality had totally deprived themselves of it. They all fell sick, and died of the putrid fever. Amen, so be it.

these

these words ; *Free gifts*. I saw several people with easy, chearful, contented looks, throw sealed packets into the chest, as in our days they threw letters into the post-office. I was so astonished at this easy manner of paying taxes, that I made a thousand ridiculous inquiries ; they therefore regarded me as a poor old man that was come from a far distant country ; yet their indulgent affability would never suffer me to wait for a reply. I confess that it is only in a dream a man can expect to meet with people so completely complaisant. O, what a loyal nation !

“ THAT large coffer you see, they said, is our receiver-general of the finances. It is there that every citizen deposits his contribution for the support of the state. We are there obliged to deposit the fiftieth part of our annual income. He that has no property, or what is only just sufficient for his maintenance, is exempt ; (a) for

(a) Hear what the labourer, the inhabitant of the country, in short, the people, should say to their sovereigns. “ We have raised you over us, we have engaged our lives and properties to support the splendor of your throne, and

for why should we take bread from him whose daily labour is but sufficient for his maintenance?

the security of your person. You have promised, in return, to procure us abundance, and to protect us from alarms. Who would have believed that, under your government, joy should have fled from us, and that our feasts should be turned into mourning; that fear and terror should have succeeded to a pleasing confidence! Formerly our verdant fields smiled upon us, and promised to repay our labours. Now the sweat of our brows produces fruit for strangers. Our villages, that once we were pleased with improving, now fall into ruins: our old men and children know not where to lay their heads. Our complaints are lost in the air, and each day a more cruel poverty succeeds to that we yesterday deplored. The appearance of humanity is scarce left us, and the animals that crop the grass are far less miserable.

The most heavy strokes have fell upon our heads. We are despised by the man in power, who will not allow us to have any sensation of honour; he comes to molest our huts, and to seduce the innocence of our daughters: he snatches them from us, and they become a prey to brutal lust. In vain do we implore the aid of justice; justice turns from us, it is deaf to our cries, and only ready to assist them that oppress us.

The parade of magnificence insults our misery, and renders it still more insupportable. They drink our blood, and forbid us to complain. The hardened wretch, surrounded by an insolent luxury, prides himself on the works
that

tenance? In the other coffer are the voluntary offerings, intended for useful designs, for the execution

that our hands have erected. While he thirsts for gold, our industry is forgot; he regards us as slaves, because we are not riotous nor revengeful.

Those incessant wants that surround us have corrupted the purity of our manners: perfidy and rapine have crept in amongst us; for the necessities of life commonly overcome virtue. But who has given us examples of rapine? Who has extinguished in our hearts that source of candour which made us dear to each other? Who has caused our misery, the mother of our vices? Many of our inhabitants have refused to give existence to children that must be a prey to famine in the cradle. Others, in their despair, have blasphemed against Providence. Who are the real authors of all our crimes?

May our complaints pierce through that vapour by which thrones are surrounded! May kings rouse from their lethargy, and remember that they might have been born in our station, and that their children may one day descend to it! Attached to our country, or rather forming the most essential part of it, we do not wish to be exempt from contributing to its support. All we wish is a man of equity, who will estimate the degree of our force, and not crush us by a burden, which, if proportioned to our strength, we should bear with pleasure. Then tranquil and rich in our œconomy, contented with our lot, we should behold the grandeur of others without repining at our humble station,

execution of such projects as have been approved by the public. This sometimes is richer than the other ; for we love liberality in our gifts, and no other motive is necessary to excite it than equity and a love for the state. Whenever our king sends forth an useful edict, that merits the public approbation, we run in crowds to the chest with our marks of acknowledgment ; he has but to propose, and we furnish him with the means of accomplishing every important project. There is a similar trunk in every quarter of the city, and in every city in the provinces ; which receives the contributions of the

More than the moiety of our days is already past. Our hearts are more than half delivered of their grief : we have but a little time to live. Our prayers are more for our country than for ourselves. It is we that support it : but if oppression shall continually increase, we must sink ; our country will be overthrown, and by its fall it will crush our tyrants. We do not wish for this fruitless and rueful vengeance. What solace can the miseries of others afford us, when surrounded by the grave ? We speak to you, O sovereigns ! If you be yet men, if your hearts be not totally hardened, you will yet remember that we know how to die ; and that the death by which we shall soon all be swallowed up, will one day be to you far more dreadful than to us.

This note is taken, in part, from a book intitled *Les Hommes*.

country,

country, that is, of the farmer at his ease, for the labourer whose property is in his arms and his hands, pays nothing. The beef and the hogs are likewise exempt from that odious tax, which was first laid on the head of the Jews (a), and which you paid without being sensible of your servile state."

How! I said, do you leave it to the good-will of the people to pay their taxes? there must be then a great number that pay nothing, without your knowing it.—“Not at all; your fears are vain. In the first place, we give with a free will; our tribute is not by compulsion, but founded on reason and equity. There is scarce a man amongst us who does not esteem it a point of honour to discharge the most sacred and most legitimate of all debts. Beside, if a man in condition to pay should dare to neglect it, you there see the table on which the name of

(a) *The Jews in France are at this day liable to pay a tax on entering a town, in the same manner as oxen and hogs; there seems something whimsical in connecting them with the last mentioned animals: it is however certainly far more infamous for a nation that pretends to humanity to impose a tax on any people on account of their religion, than it is for them to pay it when compelled.*

the head of every family is engraved, by which we should soon see who had not thrown in his packet, on which should be his seal. In that case he covers himself with an eternal infamy, and we regard him as you regard a thief; the appellation of a bad citizen follows him to the grave.

“EXAMPLES of this sort are very rare, for the free gifts frequently amount to more than the tribute. We know that by giving a part to the state, we render a benefit to ourselves, and that if we would enjoy certain conveniencies, we must make a previous advance. But what are words, when we can teach by example? You shall presently see much better than I can explain to you. It is to-day that there arrives from every part, the just tribute of a faithful people to a beneficent monarch, who considers himself merely as the depository of the gifts they offer.

“LET us repair to the king’s palace; the deputies of each province are by this time near arrived.”—In fact, we had gone but a short way before I saw men drawing small cars, on which
were

were placed chests covered with laurels. They broke the seals of those coffers, and put them in the balance, by which, allowing for the weight of the chest, they found the just quantity of silver that each contained ; and as all the payments were made in silver, they knew the exact produce of the whole, which was publicly declared by sound of trumpet. After the general examination, an account in writing was fixed up for public inspection, and by that each one knew the revenue of the state. The money was then placed in the royal treasury, under the care of the comptroller of the finances.

THIS was a day of rejoicing ; they wore garlands of flowers, and cried, “ Long live the king.” They came in procession before each car of tribute. The deputies of the several provinces saluted each other, and made reciprocal presents. They drank to the health of the monarch by the sound of cannon, which were answered by those of the capitol, as expressing the thanks of the sovereign. The whole people appeared on that day as one family. The king presented himself in the midst of this joyful people ; he replied to the acclamations of his

subjects by those tender and affable regards, that inspire confidence, and render love for love: he disdained the art of treating politically with a people whom he regarded as his children. His visits did not distress the citizens, as they cost them nothing but cries of joy (a),
the

(a) I once saw a prince make his public entry into a foreign city. The cannon proclaimed his approach. He was magnificently dressed, and drawn in a gilded car, loaded with pages and lacquies. The horses neighed and bounded as if they had drawn the chariot of felicity. All the windows were thrown up, the roofs were covered, and the streets crowded with the multitude. The cavalry brandished their sabres, and the infantry exercised their muskets. The air resounded with the echo of the trumpets. The poet strung his lyre, and the orator attended his descent from the chariot. The prince arrives; he is conducted to the palace, and his presence inspires an awful joy. I was at a window, and saw all that passed, which afforded me some singular reflections. Walking in the streets a few days after, I was surprised to meet this prince on foot, alone, and in disguise. No one took any notice of him, but treated him as a vulgar person. At that moment there arrived a mountebank, seated in a sort of chaise, drawn by a number of large dogs, with a monkey for their postilion. The windows were all thrown up, the people shouted, and all their looks were fixed on the mountebank: the prince himself, attracted by the crowd, became one of his admirers. I looked attentively

the most brilliant and most flattering of all receptions. They did not desist from their labours, on the contrary, every citizen was proud of appearing before his king in the occupation he had embraced.

AN intendant, invested with all the necessary marks of power, went into every province, received their petitions, examined himself the abuses, and bore directly to the foot of the throne the complaint of the subject. He visited indiscriminately every town, and where any abuse was abolished, they erected a pyramid in commemoration. What history more instructive than these moral monuments, which asserted that the sovereign really applied himself to the art of governing. These intendants set off and arrive incognito, they are perpetually disguised, and made their informations secretly; they at him, and methought I heard him say to himself, “The
“ empty acclamations of the multitude shall never more
“ dazzle my mind with a foolish pride. It is not this man
“ the people throng to see, but his strange equipage. It
“ was not I that attracted their regards, but my valets,
“ my horses, the richness of my dress, and the splendor
“ of my gilded chariot.”

are spies, but they acte for the good of their country (*a*).

BUT your comptroller of the finances, I said, must be a man of wonderful integrity (*b*). You remember the fable : the faithful dog, directed by temperance, carried his master's dinner, without every offering to touch it, but freely to eat his part at last, when invited by example. Your officer must have a double virtue constantly to defend, and never dare to touch it ! “ Be assured he builds no palace or villa. He does not advance his distant cousins, or ancient valets, to the first posts in the government. He does not scatter his wealth as if all the revenue of the kingdom was at his disposal (*c*). Beside,
all

(*a*) In Turkey, and at present in France, a governor is as much master as the most absolute monarch ; it is that which causes the misery of the people. This sort of civil administrations is of all others the most deplorable.

(*b*) Fouquet said, “ I have all the money, and the tarif of all the virtues of the kingdom.”

(*c*) After the ministers, the financiers, the monopolizers, have sacrificed their reputation for probity to a desire of enriching themselves ; after they have submitted to
become

all these in whose hands the public treasure is deposited cannot make use of money on any pretence whatever. It would be high treason to receive from them a single piece of coin. They pay some particular expences by notes signed with the king's own hand. The states provide for all their expences; but they have not the least property (*a*). They can neither buy, nor sell, nor build. Their lodgings, their tables, their diversions, are all charged to the state. They enter a draper's shop, order such cloth as they want, and depart; the trades-
become odious, they do not even thinking of making a good use of their plunder; they endeavour to cover their original meanness under a pompous appearance. They intoxicate themselves with dissipation in order to drown the remembrance of what they have been, and what they have done, even this is not the greatest evil, for by their ostentatious wealth they corrupt those who behold it with envy.

(*a*) The interior vices, that prepare the ruin of a state, are, that enormous dissipation of the public treasure; those extravagant gifts bestowed on subjects without merit; those fastuous prodigalities unknown to the most lawless usurpers. We may observe in history, that the most subtle tyrants have been the most prodigal. I have somewhere read, that Augustus, the master of the world, maintained an army of 40 legions for 12 millions per annum. This surely affords matter for reflection.

men

man enters in his book ; delivered such a day, to such a dēpositary of the state, so much ; the state pays it : and so of every other profession. You will easily imagine, that if a comptroller of the finances has any modesty, he will make a moderate use of this privilege ; and if he should even abuse it, we shall be still gainers, compared with what the comptrollers cost you. We have likewise suppressed the registers, which served only to screen the robberies of the nation, and to make them authentic by a method that may be called legitimate.”

AND who is your prime minister ? “ Can you ask it ? The king himself. Can royalty be transferred (a). The general, the judge, the statesman, may then act by their proxies. In case of sickness, or when on a journey, or engaged in some particular business, if the monarch charges any one with the accomplishment of his orders, it is perhaps his friend only ; there is no motive but that which can

(a) The general history of wars may be called, *The history of the private passions of ministers*. One of these, by his insidious negotiations, sets a distant and tranquil empire in flames, merely to revenge some trifling offence he has personally received.

induce

induce a man to charge himself voluntary with such a burden; and our esteem alone gives him the momentary power. Animated and recompensed by friendship, he knows, like Sully and Amboise, how to speak the truth to his master, and the more faithfully to serve him, sometimes to oppose him. He combats his passions. He loves the man while he has at heart the glory of the monarch (*a*). By bearing part in his labours, he acquires a share of the veneration of his country, doubtless the most honourable inheritance he can leave his descendants, and that alone of which he is jealous."

WHEN we talked of taxes, I forgot to ask, If you have periodical lotteries, where, in my time, the poor people deposited all their little hoards? "Certainly not. We do not so

(*a*) Fidelity does not consist in that servile obedience to the will of another, which is represented by the emblem of a dog, who every where follows, continually flatters, and implicitly obeys the orders of an unjust or tyrannic master. It seems to me, that true fidelity is an exact observance of the laws of reason and justice, rather than a servile submission. Sully appears to me faithful when he tore the promise of marriage that Henry IV, had made.

abuse

abuse the credulous hope of man; we do not levy on the indigent part of our people a tax so ingeniously cruel. The wretched, who weary of the present, lives on expectation only, carries the price of his labour and watchings to that fatal wheel, from whence he is in continual hope that Fortune will visit him; but is constantly deluded by that cruel goddess. The urgent desire of happiness prevents him from reasoning, and though the fraud be palpable, as the heart is dead to hope before life dies, every one imagines that at last he shall be successful. It is the savings of the indigent that have built those superb edifices, to which they go begging their bread. It is to them those altars owe their luxury, to which they are hardly admitted. Forever a stranger, forever repulsed, the poor are not permitted to sit on the stone they have paid for carving; pompous priests richly endowed, live under those roofs, that in equity, at least, ought to afford them an assylum."

C H A P. XIII.

O N C O M M E R C E.

IT seems, by what you have told me, that France has no longer any colonies in the new world ; that each part of America forms a separate kingdom, though united under one spirit of legislation ? “ We should be highly ridiculous to send our dear fellow citizens two thousand leagues from us. Why should we thus estrange ourselves from our brethren ? Our climate is at least as good as that of America. Every necessary production is here common, and by nature excellent. The colonies were to France what a country-house is to a private person : the house in the country, sooner or latter, ruins that in town.

“ WE have a commerce, but it consists merely in the exchange of superfluities among ourselves. We have prudently banished three natural poisons, of which you made perpetual use ; snuff, coffee, and tea. You stuffed your heads with a villanous powder, that deprived
you

you Frenchmen of what little memory you had. You burned your stomach with liquors that destroyed it by encreasing its action. Those nervous disorders so common among you, were owing to the effeminate liquor which carried off the nourishing juice of the animal life. We cultivate an interior commerce only, of which we find the good effects; founded principally on agriculture, it distributes the most necessary aliments; it satisfies the wants of man, but not his pride.

“ No man blushes to till his own ground, and to improve it to the highest degree possible. Our monarch himself has several acres which are cultivated under his own eye. We have not among us any of those titled gentry, whose only pursuit was idleness.

“ FOREIGN traffic was the real father of that destructive luxury, which produced in its turn, that horrid inequality of fortunes, which caused all the wealth of the nation to pass into a few hands. Because a woman could carry in her ears the patrimony of ten families, the peasant was forced to sell the land of his ancestors,

tors, and to fly, with tears, from that soil where he found nought but misery and disgrace: for those insatiable monsters, who had accumulated the gold, even derided the misfortunes of those they had plundered (a).

(a) I smile with indignant pity when I see so many fine projects offered for the improvement of agriculture and population, while the taxes continually increasing, rob the people of the sweat of their brow; and the price of corn is augmented by the monopoly of those who have all the money of the kingdom in their hands. Must we forever cry to those proud and obdurate ears, "Give us a full and unbounded liberty of commerce and navigation, and a diminution of taxes." These are the only means of nourishing the people, and preventing that depopulation which we see already begun. But, alas! Patriotism is a contraband virtue. The man who lives for himself alone, who thinks of nought but himself, who is silent, and turns away his eyes for fear of horror, he is the good citizen; they even praise his prudence and moderation. For my own part, I cannot remain silent, I must declare what I have seen. It is into most of the provinces of France that we must go to see the people completely miserable. It is now, in 1770, three winters together that we have seen bread dear. The last year one half of the peasants had need of public charity, and this winter will complete their ruin; for they who have lived till now selling their effects, have nothing left to sell. These poor people have a patience that makes me admire the force of the laws and of education.

We

We began by destroying those great companies that absorbed all the fortunes of individuals, annihilated the generous boldness of a nation, and gave as deadly a blow to morality as to the state.

“IT may be very agreeable to sip chocolate, to breathe the odour of spices, to eat sugar and ananas, to drink Barbadoes water, and to be clothed in the gaudy stuffs of India. But are these sensations sufficiently voluptuous to close our eyes against the crowd of unheard of evils that your luxury engendered in the two hemispheres? You violated the most sacred ties of blood and nature on the coast of Guinea. You armed the father against the son, while you pretended to the name of Christians and of men. Blind barbarians! You have been but too well convinced by a fatal experience. A thirst for gold extolled by every heart; amiable moderation banished by avidity; justice and virtue regarded as chimeras; avarice, pale and restless, plowing the waves, and peopling with carcases the depths of the ocean; a whole race of men bought and sold,
treated

treated as the vilest animals; kings become merchants, covering the seas with blood for the flag of a frigate: Gold, to conclude, flowing from the mines of Peru like a flaming river, and running into Europe, burned up every where in its course the roots of happiness, and was then forever lost on the eastern world, where superstition buried in the earth, on one side, what avarice had painfully drawn from it, on the other. Behold a faithful picture of the advantages that foreign commerce produced to the world.

“OUR vessels do not make the tour of the globe, to bring back cochineal and indigo. Know you where are our mines? Where is our Peru? In labour and assiduity. All that promotes ease and convenience, that directly tends to assist nature, is cultivated with the greatest care. All that belongs to pomp, to ostentation and vanity, to a puerile desire of an exclusive possession of what is merely the work of fancy, is severely prohibited. We have cast into the sea those deceitful diamonds, those dangerous pearls, and all those whimsical stones that rendered the heart, like them, impenetrable.

trable. You thought yourselves highly ingenious in the refinements of luxury, but your pursuits were merely after superfluities, after the shadow of greatness; you were not even voluptuous. Your futile and miserable inventions were confined to a day. You were nothing more than children fond of glaring objects, incapable of satisfying your real wants. Ignorant of the art of happiness, you fatigued yourselves, far from the object of your pursuits, and mistook, at every step, the image for the reality.

“ WHEN our vessels leave their harbours, they take not thunder with them, to seize on the vast extent of waters, a fugitive prey that forms a point scarce perceptible to the sight. The echo of the waves bears not to heaven the hideous cries of furious wretches that dispute, at the expence of life itself, a passage over the immense and vacant ocean. We visit distant nations, but instead of the productions of their lands, we bring home the most useful discoveries relative to their legislature, their physical life, and their manners. Our vessels serve to connect our astronomical knowledge; more than
than

than three hundred observatories erected on this globe are ready to mark the least alteration that occurs in the heavens. The earth is the post where watches the centinel of the firmament who never sleeps. Astronomy is become an important science, as it proclaims, with a majestic voice, the glory of the Creator, and the dignity of that thinking being who has proceeded from his hands. But now we talk of commerce, let us not forget the most extraordinary kind that ever existed. You ought to be very rich," he said, "for in your youth, doubtless, you placed out money on annuities, especially on survivorships, as did one half of Paris. An invention of wonderful ingenuity was that sort of lottery, where they played at life and death, and the winnings were to go to the longest liver! You should have a most plentiful annuity! They renounced father and mother, brother and sister, all friends and relations, to double their revenue. They made the king their heir, then slept in a profound indolence, and lived only for themselves.'—Ah! why do you tell me of these matters? Those rueful edicts that completed our corruption, and dissolved connections, till then held sacred; that barbarous refinement

ment which publicly consecrated self-love, that detached the citizens from each other, and made them solitary and lifeless beings, drew tears from my eyes, when I reflected on the future condition of the state. I saw private fortunes melt away, and the excessive mass of opulence swell by their dissolution; but the fatal blow that was given to morals affected me still more deeply; no longer any connection between hearts that ought to be devoted to each other; they gave to interest a keener sword; interest of itself already so formidable; the sovereign authority laid those barriers at its feet, that it would never have dared to attack of itself.—
“ Good old man,” said my guide, “ you have done well to sleep, or you would have seen the annuitants and the state punished for their mutual imprudence. Politics, since that period, has made no such solecism; it does not now ruin, but unite and enrich the citizens.”

C H A P. XIV.

T H E E V E N I N G.

TH E sun was going down. My guide invited me to go with him to the house of one of his friends, where he was to sup. I did not want much entreaty. I had not yet seen the inside of their houses, and that, in my judgment, is the most interesting sight in every city. In reading history, I pass over many passages, but am ever curious in examining the detail of domestic life : that once done, I have no need to learn the rest ; I can form a natural conjecture.

On entering, I found none of those petty apartments that seem to be cells for lunatics, whose walls are scarce six inches thick, and where they freeze in winter, and scorch in summer. The rooms were large and sonorous ; you might walk at your ease. A solid roof guarded them from the piercing cold and the burning rays of the sun ; these houses,

moreover, did not grow old with those that built them.

I ENTERED the saloon, and presently distinguished the master of the house. He saluted me without grimace or reserve (*a*). His wife and children behaved in his presence in a free but respectful manner; and monsieur, or the eldest son, did not give me a specimen of his wit by ridiculing his father; neither his mother, nor his grand-mother would have been charmed with such witticisms (*b*). His sisters were neither affectedly polite, nor totally insensible; they received us in a graceful manner, and resumed their several employments; they did not watch all my motions, nor did

(*a*) How false and and diminutive is our politeness! And how odious and insulting is that assumed by the great! It is a mask more hideous than the most ugly of all faces. All those reverences, those affected gesticulations, are insufferable to a real man. The false brilliancy of our manners is more disgusting than the grossest behaviour of a clown.

(*b*) There is a licentiousness of the mind which is far more dangerous than that of the senses; and it is at this time the principal vice that infects the youth of our capital.

my

my great age and broken voice make them once smile ; they displayed none of that unnatural complaisance, which is so contrary to true politeness. This room was not decorated with twenty brittle, tasteless bawbles. There was no gilding, varnishing, porcelain (*a*), or wretched figures. In their place was a lively tapestry, pleasing to the sight, and some finished prints ; a remarkable neatness graced this saloon, that of itself was elegant and light-some.

WE joined conversation, but there was no sporting with paradoxes (*b*) ; that execrable
wit,

(*a*) What a miserable luxury is that of porcelain ! A cat, a brush with the sleeve, may destroy in a moment more than the produce of twenty acres.

(*b*) Conversation animates the rencounter of ideas, brings forth the treasures of the mind, and is one of the greatest pleasures of life : it is moreover that of all others I most highly enjoy. But in the world, I have remarked, that instead of nourishing, strengthening, and elevating the mind, it enervates and degrades it. All things are now become problematical. By an abuse of reason, the very existence of objects is in a manner destroyed. We meet with panegyrics on the most enormous abuses.

wit, which was the plague of the age I lived in, did not give false colours to things that were by nature perfectly simple. No one maintained the direct contrary of what was asserted by another, merely to display his talents (a). These people talked from principle, and did not contradict themselves twenty times in a quarter of an hour. The spirit of this conversation was not directed by starts; and without being profuse or dull, they

All things are justified. They embrace, unknown to themselves, a thousand puerile and extravagant ideas. — There minds become distorted by the collision of opposite opinions. There is, I know not what poison, that insinuates itself, mounts to the head, and clouds your primitive ideas, which are commonly the most just. Avarice, ambition, and luxury, have so subtle a logic, that after hearing them, you have no longer your former abhorrence for those by whom they are practised; they all prove themselves to be innocent. We must quickly fly to solitude to regain a vigorous abhorrence of vice. The world makes us familiar with those crimes it applauds, and affects us with its delusive spirit. By too much frequenting men, we become less men; we receive from them a false light that leads us astray. It is by shutting the door that we recollect ourselves, that we perceive the pure light of truth, which never shines among the multitude.

(a) The decrees of idleness are as unjust as those of vanity.

did

did not pass, in the same breath, from the birth of a prince to the drowning of a dog.

THE young people did not affect a childish manner, a drawling or lisping language, nor a proud careless aspect and attitude (*a*). I heard no licentious proposal, nor did any one declaim in a gloomy, tedious, heavy manner, against those consolatory truths, that are the delight and comfort of sensible minds (*b*). The women did not affect a tone by turns languishing and imperious; they were decent, reserved, modest, and engaged in an easy and suitable employment; idleness had no charms for them; they did not rise at noon because they were to do nothing at night. I was highly pleased with their not proposing cards;

(*a*) A pretty fellow in France must be slender, weakly, and not have more than twelve ounces of flesh on his bones; he should likewise have a pain in his stomach, and a very poor state of health. A man that is strong and hearty is a hideous creature. It becomes the Swifs and porters only, to have a masculine figure and a florid state of health.

(*b*) Pyrrhonism supposes sometimes more prejudices than a natural disposition to receive the appearances of truth.

that insipid diversion, invented to amuse an idiot monarch, and which is constantly pleasing to the numerous herd of dunces, who are thereby enabled to conceal their profound ignorance, had disappeared from among a people who knew too well how to improve the moments of life to waste them in a practice at once so dull and fastidious (a). I saw none of those green tables, on which men ruin themselves unpitied. Avarice did not molest these honest citizens, even in the moments consecrated to leisure. They did not make a fatigue of what should be a mere relaxation (b).

(a) *With our author's leave, card-playing is not always a proper employment for dunces: for though cards are frequently, indeed commonly, introduced to supply a dearth of conversation, yet there are several games that require a strong exertion of all the faculties of the mind. No dunce, no man of indifferent capacity, ever played the game of piquet or ombre well.*

(b) I dread the approach of winter, not for the severity of the season, but because it brings with it a wretched thirst for gaming. That season is the most fatal to morals, and the most insupportable to philosophy. It is then those noisy and insipid assemblies start up; where all the futile passions exercise their ridiculous empire. The taste for trifles then dictates the mode. All the men, metamorphosed into effeminate slaves, are subordinate to the caprice of the women, for whom, at the very time, they have neither esteem nor affection.

If they played, it was at draughts, or chess, those ancient and studious games, that offer an infinite variety of combinations to the mind. There were also other games they called mathematical recreations, and with which even their children were acquainted.

I OBSERVED that each one followed his inclination, without being remarked by the rest of the company. There were no female spies, who, by censuring others, discharged themselves of that foul humour which rankles their souls, and which they frequently owe as much to their deformity as their folly. These conversed, those turned over a book of prints, one examined the pictures, and another amused himself with a book in a corner. They formed no circle to communicate a gaping that runs all round. In a room adjoining was a concert; it was that of sweet flutes united with the human voice. The clanging harpsicord, and the monotonous fiddle, here yielded to the enchanting powers of a fine woman; what instrument can have greater effect upon the heart? The improved harmonica, however, seemed to dispute the prize; it breathed the

most pure, full, and melodious sounds that can charm the ear. It was a ravishing and celestial music, that is far from being rivalled by the clamour of our operas, where the man of taste and sensibility seeks for the consonance of unity, but seeks in vain.

I WAS highly charmed. They did not remain continually seated, nailed to a chair, and obliged to maintain an eternal conversation about nothing, and that too with the utmost solemnity (a). The women were not continually wrangling about metaphysics; and if they spoke about poetry, of dramas, or authors, they constantly acknowledged themselves, notwithstanding their great abilities, unequal to the subject (b).

(a) In common conversation we meet with two circumstances equally disagreeable, to have nothing to say, and yet be forced to talk; or to have something to say when the conversation is over.

(b) A woman never thinks closely but when she meditates on the lessons of a favourite gallant*; and how many men are there like women?

*-This is certainly not just; our author, as a Frenchman, should have remembered the name of Dacier, and not have expressed himself in such unlimited terms.

THEY

THEY desired me to walk into an adjoining room, where supper was prepared. I looked at the clock with surprize, it was not yet seven. Come, Sir, said the master of the house, taking me by the hand, we do not pass our nights by the light of wax candles. We think the sun so beautiful, that it is to us a pleasure to see its first rays dart on the horizon. We do not go to bed with a loaded stomach, to experience broken slumbers, attended by fantastic dreams. We carefully guard our health, as on that the serenity of the mind depends (*a*). We are moreover fond of gay and pleasing dreams (*b*).

(*a*) Health is to happiness, what the dew of heaven is to the fruits of the earth.

(*b*) Happy are they who enjoy the sensation of health; that tranquil state of body, that equilibrium, that perfect agreement of all the humours, that happy disposition of all the organs, by which their strength and agility are supported. That general perfect health, is of itself a high enjoyment. It is not rapturous; granted: but as it alone surpasses all other pleasures, it gives that contentment to the mind, that internal and delicious calm, which makes existence dear to us, enables us to admire the face of nature, and render grateful thanks to the Author of our being. Not to be sick, is alone a soothing pleasure. I readily call him a philosopher, who;

THERE was a general silence. The father of the family blessed the food that was set before us. This graceful and holy custom was revived; and it appeared to me important, as perpetually reminding us of that gratitude we owe to God, who incessantly supplies us with subsistence. I was more busy in examining the table than in eating. I shall not dwell on the neatness and elegance that there prevailed. The domestics sat at the bottom of the table, and eat with their masters; they had therefore the more respect for them; they received by this mean lessons of probity, which they laid up in their hearts; they thereby became more enlightened, and were not coarse or insolent, as they were not longer regarded as base. Liberty, gaiety, a decent familiarity, dilated the heart and glowed in the front of every guest. Every one had his mess placed before him; no one crowded his neighbour; no one coveted a dish that was distant from him; he would have been reckoned a glutton, who was not content with his portion, for it was quite sufficient. Many sensible of the dangers, of excess, and the advantages of moderation, knows how to bridle his appetites, and live without pain: how important a secret!

people eat excessively more from habit than real appetite (*a*). They had learned to correct that fault without a sumptuary law.

NONE of the meats I tasted had any discernable seasoning, for which I was not sorry. I

(*a*) Anatomy demonstrates, that our organs of pleasure are covered with small pyramidical eminences. The less obtuse they are made by frequent use, the more sensible and elastic they remain, and the more ready to recover their tone. Nature, a tender and careful mother, has so constructed them, that they preserve their spring to an advanced age, when their requisite subtilty, their due asperity is not destroyed. It depends therefore on man to reserve pleasure for every age of life. But what does the intemperate wretch? He destroys this precious organism; he vitiates that delicate sensation, by making those parts flat and hard; he reduces a being almost celestial, and endowed with pleasures peculiar to himself, to the rank of a wretched automaton. What animal, in matters of enjoyment, has been more favoured than man? Who but he can contemplate the firmament, distinguish the pleasing forms and colours of the minutest bodies, breathe the most grateful odours, comprehend all the various inflections of the voice, receive rapturous pleasure from paintings, eloquence, and poetry, and plunge with the greatest delight into the depths of algebra and geometry, &c.? He who said that man was an abridgment of the universe, asserted a great and pleasing truth. Man appears to be connected with all that exists.

found a favour in them, a natural salt, which seemed to me delicious. I saw none of those refined dishes that pass through the hands of several sophisticators, of those ragouts, those inflammatory fauces, rarified in small, but costly dishes, which hasten the destruction of the human race, at the same time that they burn up the entrails. These were not a voracious people, who devour more than the magnificence of nature, with all her generative faculties, can produce. If ever luxury be odious, that of the table is the most detestable; for if the rich, by an abuse of their wealth, dissipate the nourishing fruits of the earth, the poor must necessarily pay the dearer for them, and, what is worse, frequently not have a competency (a).

THE herbs and fruits were all of the season; they knew not the secret of producing wretched cherries in the midst of the winter; they were not solicitous for the first produce, but left nature to ripen her fruits. The palate was thereby better pleased, and the body better nourished. They gave us a desert of some excellent

(a) The unfeeling man is precisely him whom the world calls a man of taste.

fruit,

fruit, and some old wine; but none of those coloured liquors distilled from brandy, so much in use in my time; they were as severely prohibited as arsenic. This people were sensible, that there was no pleasure in procuring a slow and cruel death.

THE master of the house said to me, with a smile, “ You must certainly think this a pitiful desert; here are neither trees, nor castles, nor wind-mills, nor any other figures of confectionary (a); that ridiculous extravagance, which could not produce the least real pleasure, was formerly the delight of those great children that were become dotards. Your magistrates, who, at least, ought to have given examples of frugality, and not authorised by their practice, an insolent and pitiful luxury; those

(a) O France! O my country! wouldst thou know wherein thy true glory now consists, thy real pre-eminence over other nations? Hear: thou excellest in the invention of fashions; they are adopted in the extremities of the North, in all the courts of Germany, even within the Seraglio; in a word, by all the four parts of the earth. Thy cooks, thy confectioners are the most excellent in the universe; and every nation of Europe admires thy dancers.

magi-

magistrates, they say, those fathers of the people, at the commencement of every parliament, were in extasies at the sight of grotesque figures made of sugar; from whence we may easily judge of the emulation of other ranks to excell the men of the long robe."—You can have but an imperfect idea of our industry, I replied; in my time, they exhibited, on a table ten feet wide, an opera of sweetmeats, with all its machines, decorations, orchestra, actors, and dancers, with the shifting of the scenes, in the same manner as at the theatre of the Palais-Royal. During the exhibition, the whole people besieged the door, to enjoy the great happiness of a glimpse of this superb desert, the whole expence of which they certainly paid. The poor people admired the wonderful magnificence of their princes, and thought themselves very insignificant, when compared with such greatness. . . . The whole company laughed heartily; we rose from table with gaiety; we rendered thanks to God; and no one complained of vapours or indigestion.

C H A P. XV.

T H E G A Z E T T E S.

ON returning to the former room, I saw lying on the table large sheets of paper, twice as long as the English news-papers. I eagerly seized these printed sheets, and found that they were intitled, News public and private. As nothing can equal the surprize I felt on reading every page, determined as I was never more to be surprized, I shall here transcribe those articles that struck me most, as near as my memory will permit.

* * *

From PEKIN, the

THEY represented before the emperor the tragedy of Cinna. The clemency of Augustus, with the beauty and dignity of the other characters, made a great impression on all the audience.

O WHAT an impudent lying gazette is here! I said to the person who stood next me. Read " Nay," he replied very coolly, " there
is

is nothing more likely. I myself have seen the Orphan of China represented at Pekin. You must know, that I am a uandarin, and that I love letters as much as justice. I have traversed the Royal Canal (a); I arrived here in about four months, and amused myself by the way. I was anxious to see that Paris, of which I had heard so much, and to inform myself of a thousand things, which it is absolutely necessary to see, clearly to comprehend. 'The French language has been common at Pekin for these two centuries past; and, on my return, I shall take with me several good books that I intend to translate.'—You do not then, Mr. Mandarin, still use your hieroglyphic language, and have abrogated that extraordinary law, which for-

(a) The Royal Canal divides China, from north to south, for the space of six hundred leagues. It is joined by lakes, rivers, &c. This empire abounds with like canals, many of which run ten leagues in a strait line; they supply most of the cities with provisions. Their bridges have a boldness and magnificence superior to any thing of the kind that Europe can produce. And we, weak, trifling, pitiful in all our public works, we employ our ingenuity, labour, and wonderful knowledge, in ornamenting objects of mere vanity, in erecting magnificent bawbles; almost all that we call master-pieces of art are nothing more than the sports of children.

bade

bade any one of you to leave the empire?—"It was quite necessary to change our language and adopt more simple characters, if we would maintain a correspondence with you. This was not more difficult than it is to learn algebra or geometry. Our emperor has repealed the law that forbade travelling, as he very rightly judged, that you did not all resemble those priests whom we named demi-diables, from their attempts to allumine the torch of discord even in our distant country. If I do not mistake the epoch, a more close and intimate connection was formed on account of certain copper-plates which you had engraved. That art was then new to us, and highly admired. We have since almost equalled you."—O, I understand you; the designs of those plates represented battles; they were sent to us by that poetic monarch to whom Voltaire addressed a beautiful ode; and our king having charged his best artists with their execution, sent them as a present to *The charming emperor of China*.—"Right. Since that time the intercourse has been established, and by degrees the sciences have passed from one country to the other, like bills of exchange. The opinions of one man have become

come

come those of the universe. It is printing, that noble invention, which has propagated this light. The tyrants of human reason, with their hundred hands, have not been able to stop its invincible course. Nothing can be more rapid than that salutary motion given to the moral world by the sun of arts; it has surrounded every object with a pure and durable splendor.

“THE bastinado is no longer practised in China; and the mandarins do not now resemble the heads of a college; the common people are not slothful and fraudulent, as the greatest pains has been taken to improve their minds; ignominious punishments no longer crush them to the earth; they have been inspired with notions of honour. We constantly venerate Confucius, who was almost cotemporary with your Socrates, and who, like him, did not subtilise on the Principal of Beings, but contented himself with declaring that nothing is hid from him, and that he will punish vice and reward virtue. Our Confucius had one advantage over the Grecian sage; he did not boldly attack those religious prejudices, which, for want of a more
noble

noble support, were the basis of the morals of the people; he waited patiently, till truth, without tumult and labour, should exert its own power. In short, it was he, who proved that a monarch must necessarily be a philosopher to govern his people justly. Our emperor still holds the plow; but it is not an act of vain oeconomy or puerile ostentation. . . .”

URGED by a desire to read and hear at the same time, while I listened on one side, my eye, not less curious, ran over the pages of this gazette. I read as follows.



JEDDO, the capital of Japan, the

THE descendants of the great Taico, who caused Dairi, to be regarded as an impotent, though revered idol, have just translated the Spirit of Laws, and the Treatise on Crimes and Punishments.

THE venerable Amida has been conducted through all the streets; but no one offered himself to be crushed by his chariot-wheels.

A FREE

A FREE entrance is granted at Japan ; and every one there eagerly profits by the arts of foreigners. Suicide is no longer a virtue among these people ; they have discovered that it was the consequence of despair, or of a foolish and criminal insensibility.



PERSIA, the

THE king of Persia has dined with his brothers, who have remarkable fine eyes. They assist in the government of the empire ; their principal employment is to read the dispatches. The sacred books of Zoroaster and Sadder are constantly read and respected ; but there is now no mention made of Omar, or of Ali.



MEXICO, the

THIS city has completely regained the ancient splendor it enjoyed under the august government of princes descended from the renowned Montezuma. Our emperor, on his advancement to the throne, rebuilt the palace in the form it had in the days of his ancestors. The Indians no longer go bare-foot and without linen. They have erected in the great square
the

the statue of Gatimozin, extended on the burning coals ; and under it are wrote these words,
And I, am I on a bed of roses?

PRAY tell me, I said to the mandarin, is it then forbid to name the empire of New Spain ? He replied, “ When the avenger of the New World had drove away the tyrants, (the talents of Mahomet and Cæsar united would not have nearly equalled those of that wonderful man) this formidable deliverer contented himself with being a legislator. He laid down the sword, to display to the nations the sacred code of the laws. You can form no idea of so transcendent a genius ; his powerful eloquence resembled the voice of the Divinity descended upon the earth. America was divided into two empires ; that of North America contains Mexico, Canada, the Antilles, Jamaica, and St. Domingo ; to that of South America belongs Peru, Paraguay, Chili, the land of Magellan, and the country of the Amazons ; but each of these kingdoms has a separate monarch, who is himself subject to a general law, almost in the same manner as, in your time, the flourishing empire of Germany,

while divided into various monarchies, formed but one body under one general sovereign.

“**T**HUS the blood of Montezuma, for a long time obscured and concealed, again mounted the throne. All these monarchs are patriot princes, who have no other object than the maintainance of public liberty. This great man, this renowned legislator, this negro, in whom nature had exerted all her force, has inspired them with his great and virtuous spirit. These vast states repose and flourish in a perfect concord, the slow, but infallible work of reason. The ravages of the ancient world, their cruel and childish wars, the rivers of blood idly wasted, and the shame for having caused them; in a word, the folly of ambition, plainly demonstrated, has been sufficient to induce the new continent to make peace the titular deity of their country. In our day, a war would dishonour a state, as robbery dishonours a private person.” I continued to read and listen.

PARAGUAY, from the city of the Assumption,
the

WE have just held a solemn feast, in memory of the abolition of that disgraceful slavery to which this nation had been reduced, under the despotic empire of the Jesuits. For six centuries past, we have regarded it as a special favour of Providence that enabled us to drive out those wolf-foxes from their last retreat. This nation, however, is not ingrate, for it acknowledges the advantage of being raised from wretchedness and instructed in agriculture and the arts by those Jesuits. Happy, if they had contented themselves with instructing mankind, and giving them sacred laws of morality.



FROM PHILADELPHIA, the capital of Pennsylvania, the

THIS province, where humanity, faith, liberty, concord, and equality, have taken refuge for more than eight hundred years, is covered with the most elegant and flourishing cities. Virtue has performed more here than has courage among other nations. Those generous
nerous

nerous quakers (a), the most virtuous of mankind, by affording to the world a people that are all brethren, have served as a model to hearts that have become humanized by their example. We know that they have been able, from the time of their origin, to give mankind a thousand examples of generosity and beneficence. It is well known that they were the first who refused to shed the blood of man ; and that they regard war as a weak and barbarous frenzy. It is they that have undeceived those nations who were the miserable victims of the quarrels of their kings. They have just published their

(a) How can the princes of the North refrain from covering themselves with immortal glory by banishing slavery from their dominions, by restoring to the labourer of the land at least his personal liberty ? How can they be deaf to the cry of humanity, which constantly excites them to that act of glorious beneficence ? By what motive can they be induced to hold in an odious servitude, and one that is contrary to their real interest, the most industrious part of their subjects, when they have before their eyes the example of those quakers who have given liberty to all their negro slaves ? How is it possible for them not to be sensible, that their subjects will be more faithful by being more free : and that they must cease to be slaves ere they can become men ?

annual exhortation, in which are contained those practical virtues, which set to their faith the seal of perfection.



MOROCCO, the

WE have discovered a comet that is going toward the sun. This is the three hundred and fifty-first that has been observed since the erecting of our observatory. The observations made in the interior parts of Africa, correspond exactly with ours.

THEY have put to death an inhabitant who had assaulted a Frenchman, in conformity to the ordinance of our sovereign, whose will it is that every stranger shall be regarded as a brother who is come to visit his intimate friends.



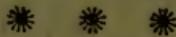
SIAM, the

OUR navigation makes a most astonishing progress. We have launched six vessels of three decks, which are destined for long voyages.

OUR king presents himself to all that desire to behold his august person. There is not a

more affable monarch existing, especially when he resorts to the pagod of the great Sommonacodom.

THE white elephant is kept at the menagery, but merely as an object of curiosity, as he is perfect in the exercise of the riding-school.



From the COAST of MALABAR, the . . .

THE widow . . . : who is young, handsome, and adorned with every accomplishment, has sincerely deplored the death of her husband, who was burned alone ; and after mourning, more in her heart than in her dress, has been re-married to a young, man by whom she is also tenderly beloved. This new connection has rendered her still more respectable to all her fellow-citizens.



From the LAND of MAGELLAN, the . . .

THE twenty fortunate islands, who lived, without knowing it, in all the innocence and happiness of the first age, are lately united ; they now form an association truly fraternal and reciprocally useful.

From the LAND of PĀPŌS (*a*), the . . .

As we advance into this fifth part of the world, our discoveries become every day more extensive and interesting. We are surpris'd at its riches, fertility, and its numerous inhabitants, who here live in continual peace. They may justly disdain our arts; their morality is still more admirable than their physics. The sun, in all these immense regions, more extensive than Asia and Africa united, beholds not one unfortunate being; while Europe, so diminutive, so poor, and divided into so many parts, has almost hardened her soil with human bones.

* * *

From the Island of TAITI, in the South Sea, the . . .

WHEN M. Bougainville discovered this happy island, where reign the manners of the golden age, he did not fail to take possession of it in the name of his master. He at last re-embarked, and took with him a Taitian, who in 1770 attracted the curiosity of Paris for a week. It was not then known that a French-

(*a*) The land of Papos is four thousand leagues distant from Paris.

man, induced by the beauty of the climate, the candour of its inhabitants, and still more by the misery which threatened that innocent people, concealed himself at the time his comrades embarked. The vessel had no sooner disappeared, than he presented himself to the people; he assembled them in a large plain, and made the following speech :

“ I have chose to remain among you for my
 “ own happiness, and for yours. Receive me as
 “ a brother ; you will see that I deserve that ti-
 “ tle, as I offer to save you from a most horrid
 “ calamity. O happy peop'le, who live in all
 “ the simplicity of nature ! little do you think
 “ of the miseries that threaten you ! These
 “ strangers you have entertained, and who
 “ seemed so polite, whom you have loaded with
 “ civilities and presents, and whom at this mo-
 “ ment I betray, if it be treachery to prevent the
 “ ruin of a virtuous people ; these strangers,
 “ my countrymen, will soon return, and bring
 “ with them all those plagues that afflict other
 “ countries ; they will infect you with poisons
 “ and maladies of which you have no concep-
 “ tion ;

“ tion ; they will load you with fetters ; and,
“ by their cruel arguments, they will prove it
“ to be for your advantage. Behold this pyra-
“ mid they have erected, which declares, that
“ this land is already dependent on them, and
“ marks you as the subjects of a monarch, of
“ whose very name you are ignorant. You are
“ all destined to obey new laws. They will
“ strip the harvest from your lands, will despoil
“ your trees of their fruit, and seize on your
“ persons. That happy equality which reigns
“ among you will be abolished. Perhaps, your
“ blood will bathe those flowers that now bend
“ under the weight of your innocent embraces.
“ Love is the god of this island ; it is consecrat-
“ ed, so to say, to his worship. Hatred and Ven-
“ geance will take his place. You are yet even
“ ignorant of the use of arms ; they will teach
“ you what is war, murder, and slavery. . .”

AT these words, the people turned pale, and remained fixed in astonishment. Thus a company of children, interrupted in the midst of their pleasing sports, will be seized with terror, when a dreadful voice shall tell them the world

is at an end, and make them sensible of calamities that their tranquil minds had never conceived.

THE orator continued, " People, whom I
 " love, and for whom my heart yearns! There is
 " yet a way to preserve your liberty and your
 " happiness. Let every stranger that lands on
 " your coast be sacrificed to the safety of your
 " country. The decree is cruel; but the love
 " of your children and of your posterity should
 " make you embrace it. You would be more
 " shocked, were I to relate to you the horrid
 " cruelties that the Europeans have exercised
 " toward people, who, like you, were weak and
 " innocent, Guard yourselves against the con-
 " tagious breath that proceeds from their lips;
 " even their very smiles are signals of the mis-
 " ries with which they intend to overwhelm
 " you."

THE heads of the nation assembled, and by an unanimous voice invested him with the chief authority who had been their general benefactor, by preserving them from such horrible calamities. The decree of death against every
 stranger

stranger was executed with a virtuous and patriotic rigour; as it was formerly in Taurida, by a people in appearance as innocent, but jealous of forming any connection with nations who were skillful in arts, but at the same time, cruel and tyrannic.

THEY write, that this law has been lately abolished, because, by repeated informations, they have learned that Europe is no longer the enemy of the other four parts of the globe; that it does not now attack the liberty of peaceful nations far distant from it; that it is not shamefully jealous of the power of its several sovereigns; that it is ambitious of forming friends, and not making slaves; that its vessels go in search of examples of simple and refined manners, and not of contemptible riches, &c. &c. &c.



PETERSBURGH, the

THE most noble of all titles is that of legislator. A sovereign then approaches nearest to the Divinity, when he gives sagacious and durable laws to a nation. We still repeat with

rapture the august name of Catherine II. We no longer talk of her conquests and her triumphs, but of her laws. Her ambition was to dissipate the darkness of ignorance, and to substitute, in the room of barbarous customs, laws dictated by humanity. More happy, more glorious than Peter the Great, because more humane, she applied herself, notwithstanding all opposite examples, to make her people flourishing and happy; which they were, in defiance of public and domestic storms that shook her throne. By her courage, she was enabled to fortify a crown that the universe beheld with pleasure on her brow. We must go very far back into antiquity to find a legislator of equal dignity and sagacity.—The chains that bound the labourers of the land were broken. She raised her front, and saw them with delight exalted to the rank of men. The fabricators of luxury no longer found their professions more lucrative or more honourable. The genius of humanity cried aloud to all the inhabitants of the North, *Men! be free; and remember future generations, that it is to a woman you owe all the happiness, you*

AT the last numbering of the inhabitants of all the Russias, they amounted to forty-five millions of people. In 1769, they counted only fourteen millions; but, by the sagacity of the legislator, her humane code of laws, and the throne of her successors being firmly established, by their generosity and affability, the population of this empire is become equal to its extent, which is greater than that of Augustus or Alexander. The constitution of government, moreover, is no longer military; the sovereign calls himself only autocrate, the universe in general is too enlightened to bear the former odious government (*a*).



WARSAW, the

AN anarchy the most absurd and injurious to the rights of man, who is born free, and the most oppressive to the people, no longer troubles Poland. The renowned Catherine II. had

(*a*) He who had said fourscore years since, that at Petersburgh they would, at this time, follow our modes, our perukes, our coifs, and comic operas, would certainly have passed for a madman. We must patiently consent to to be called fools, when we publish ideas that extend beyond the horizon of the vulgar. All things in Europe tend to a sudden revolution.

formerly a wonderful influence over the affairs of this kingdom ; and they still remember with gratitude, that it was she who gave to the peasant his personal liberty, and the property of his effects. The king died at six last night: his son mounted the throne in peace the same evening, and received the homage of all the palatine nobles.



CONSTANTINOPLE, the . . .

IT was a great happiness for the world when the Turk, in the eighteenth century, was driven out of Europe. Every friend to humanity rejoiced at the fall of that baneful empire, where the monster Despotism was caressed by the infamous bashaws, who only prostrated themselves before him, that they might exceed his horrid oppressions. The sons, a long time exiled, re-entered the possessions of their fathers, not dejected, but triumphant, robust, in a state to improve them. The usurpers of the throne of the Constantines sunk into the bogs of their ancient marshes ; and those barriers that Superstition, and its inseparable and dreadful colleague, Tyranny, had placed a-

gainst

gainst reason and the arts, from the rivers Save and the Danube, to the borders of the ancient Tanais, were broke down by a people of the North, with the iron hand that supported them. Philosophy again appeared in her original sanctuary, and the country of Themistocles and Miltiades again embraced the statue of Liberty: It rose as bold and noble as in those fair days when it shone in all its splendour, and with a power extended over all its original domain. There was no more seen a Sardanapalus sleeping, oppressed by the weight of barbarities, caused by a visier and a bow-string, while his vast dominions, despoiled and languishing, were plunged in the sleep of death.

THE animating breath of liberty now gives them fresh vigour. It has a creative spirit that produces prodigies unknown to slavish nations. The dominions of the Grand Signior were at first possessed by his neighbours; but two centuries after they formed a republic, that commerce renders flourishing and formidable.

THEY have given a grand masquerade, where formerly was the seraglio; the most delicious wines, and every other refreshment, was there provided, with a profusion that did not in the least interfere with the most refined delicacy. The following evening they represented the tragedy of Mahomet, in the theatre built on the ruins of the ancient mosque called St. Sophia.



ROME, the . . . (a):

THE emperor of Italy has received, at the Capitol, the visit of the bishop of Rome, who very

(a) How execrable is the name of Rome to my ears! How fatal has been that city to the universe! From its first foundation, owing to a handful of ruffians, how faithful has it been to its original institution. Where shall we find a more voracious, subtle, and inhuman ambition? It hath extended the chains of oppression over the whole known world. Neither strength, nor valour, nor the most heroic virtues, has been able to preserve mankind from slavery. What demon has presided over its conquests, and precipitated the flight of its eagles! O, fatal republic! What monstrous despotism has ever had such detestable effects! O Rome, how I hate thee! What a people are they who go about the earth destroying the liberties of others, and at last destroy their own! What
a people.

very respectfully offered up his prayers to heaven for the preservation of that monarch's days, and

a people were they, who, when surrounded by all the arts, could enjoy the entertainment of gladiators, fix a curious eye on the wretch whose blood gushed forth, and required the victim to assume an unconcern for death, to give the lie to nature in his last moments, by appearing delighted with the applause of myriads of barbarous hands! What a people were they, who, after having assumed an unjust dominion over the universe, could suffer, without complaining, so many emperors to rule them with a rod of iron, and who shewed a servility as base as their tyranny had been arrogant. But all this was trifling. A superstition, the most absurd and most ridiculous, assumed in its turn, the throne of despotic power, and had for her ministers Ignorance and Barbarity. After Rome had devoured mankind in the name of its country, it devoured them in the name of God. Then blood was shed for the chimerical service of heaven, a cruelty of which the world had produced no instance. Rome was the infectuous gulf, from whence exhaled those fatal opinions that divided mankind, and armed them against each other for phantoms. Soon it engendered, under the name of pontiffs, who called themselves the vicars of God, the most odious monsters. When compared with those tygers that bore the keys and the triple crown, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, were but vulgar villains. The people, as if struck by a petrifying rod, vegetated a thousand years under a despotic theocracy. The sacerdotal empire covered all, concealed all in its darkness. Human beings no longer existed

and the prosperity of his dominions (*l*). The bishop returned on foot, with all the humility existed but to obey the decrees of a deified mortal. He spoke, and his voice was the commanding thunder. There were seen cruises, a tribunal of inquisitors, proscriptions, anathemas, excommunications: invisible thunders, that were hurled to the ends of the earth. Those Christians, with faith and rancour in their hearts, were not able to satisfy themselves with murders: a new world, a world entire, was necessary to glut their rage. They would compel mankind by force to adopt their chimeras. It was the image of the cross that was the signal for those horrible devastations: wherever it appeared, blood flowed in torrents: and even at this day the same religion authorises the slavery of wretches, who search, in the entrails of the earth, that gold of which Rome is the most shameless idolater.

Thou city of seven hills! what swarms of calamities have issued from thine infernal womb! What art thou? Whence derivest thou thy power over this unhappy globe? Has the maleficent Arimanis, the origin of evil, fixed his seat within thy walls? Art thou the gate at which misfortunes enter? Do thy foundations touch the roof of hell? When will that fatal talisman be broken, which, though it has lost somewhat of its power, is still so baneful to mankind? O Rome, how I hate thee! May at least the memory of thy iniquities remain! may it constitute thy infamy, and never be effaced! and may every heart, burning with just indignation, be filled, like mine, with horror at thy name!

(*b*) The throne of despotic power is fixed on the altar, which only supports it to swallow it up,

of a true servant of God. All those beautiful antique monuments that were cast into the Tiber, where they have lain buried for so many years, have been lately taken up and placed in different parts of Rome. They have found means of recovering them without infecting the air with any dangerous exhalation.

THE bishop of Rome is continually employed in forming a code of rational and affecting morality. He has published the Catechism of human reason. He particularly applies himself in furnishing a new degree of evidence to those truths that are of real importance to man. He keeps a register of all generous, charitable, and illustrious actions; he makes them public, and characterises every species of virtue. Judge of kings and of nations, by virtue of his ardent love for humanity, he reigns by that invisible empire which invests him with the spirit of wisdom, of justice, and truth. He softens, he conciliates the differences of mankind. His bulls, wrote in all languages, announce not obscure, useless dogmas, or sentences of eternal divisions, but expatiate on the attributes of the Divinity,

vinity, of his universal presence, of the life to come, and the sublimity of virtue. The Chinese, the Japanese, the inhabitants of Surinam and Kamschatka, read them with edification.



NAPLES, the

OUR academy of belles lettres has given the prize to a candidate named —. The subject was, an exact determination of what cardinals were in the eighteenth century, the principles and manners of that extraordinary sort of men : what passed in the prison of the conclave, and the precise time when they became again what they were in the infancy of Christianity. The successful author has fully satisfied the inquiries of the academy. He has even given a description of the cap and red hat. This dissertation is not less entertaining than elaborate.

THEY have represented at a booth in the fair the farce of St. Januarius, which was formerly treated in so serious a manner. All the world knows that his blood was supposed to liquify every year. They have parodied this ridiculous story in a manner highly comic.

THE

THE treasures of our Lady of Lorretto (a), that used to be employed in feeding and clothing the poor, have been lately applied to the constructing an aqueduct, as there are no longer any poor. The riches of the ancient cathedral of Toledo, destroyed in the year 1867, ought to be applied to the same purpose. See on this subject the learned dissertations of——, printed in 1999.



MADRID, the . . .

ENACTED, that no person shall take the name of Dominic, as it is that of the barbarian

(a) For fifteen-centuries past we have seen scarce any other public buildings in all Europe than Gothic churches, with high-pointed steeples. The pictures we there see offer very few subjects but what are hideous and disgusting. But what monasteries richly endowed! What opulent universities! What asylums open to idleness and a theological jargon! It was, however, at the time the people were in the greatest poverty, that the secret was found of erecting these sumptuous cathedrals and monasteries. How flourishing would those nations have been, if they had employed in aqueducts and canals, those immense sums that were squandered away in enriching priests and nuns?

who.

who formerly established the inquisition (b). Enacted, that the name of Philip II. shall be erased from the list of the Spanish monarchs.

THE spirit of industry is every day more manifest, by the useful discoveries they make in all the arts. The academy of sciences have just given a new system of electricity, founded on more than twenty thousand separate experiments.



LONDON, the . . .

THIS city is three times as large as it was in the eighteenth century. The whole strength of the nation may reside, without any ill consequence, in the capital, as commerce is the soul of it, and the commerce of a republic.

(b) Every mind in which fanaticism has not stifled all sentiments of humanity, must be distracted with indignation and pity on the thought of those barbarities, those studied tortures that religious fury has incited men to invent. The stories of Canabals and Anthropophagi are less horrible. Torquemada, inquisitor of Spain, boasted of having destroyed, by fire and sword, more than fifty thousand heretics. We every where find bloody traces of that religious ferocity, Is that the divine law which calls itself the support of politics and morality !

lican.

lican people does not draw after it those fatal evils that attend a monarchy. England constantly maintains its ancient system. It is good, because it enriches, not the monarch, but the people; from whence arises that equality which prevents excessive opulence and excessive misery.

THE English are constantly the first people in Europe. They enjoy the ancient glory of having offered to their neighbours, an example of that form of government which becomes men jealous of their rights and their happiness.

THEY no longer regard the anniversary of the death of Charles I. They are more perfect in their politics. A new statute of Cromwell has been lately erected; the colours of the marble are so intimately blended, that it is hard to say whether it be black or white. The assemblies of the people will be hereafter held in the presence of this statue, as that

great

great man was the real author of their happy and immutable constitution (a) *.

THE Scotch and Irish have presented a petition to parliament, that the names of Scotland and Ireland may be abolished, and that they may make but one body, spirit, and name, with the English, as they are one by that patriotic spirit with which they are animated.

* * *

VIENNA, the . . .

AUSTRIA, who has ever provided Europe with a race of amiable princesses, announces, that she now has seven marriageable beauties, who will espouse those princes of the earth that have given the fairest proofs of tenderness for their people.

(a) J. J. Rousseau attributes the strength, the splendor, and liberty of England to the destruction of those wolves with which it was formerly infested. Happy nation! It has drove away wolves a thousand times more dangerous, and such as still desolate other countries.

* *Many objects look best at a distance; it would be happy for us if we could see our country from the same point of light with this foreigner.*

from



From the HAGUE, the . . .

THIS laborious people, who have made a garden of a soil the most marshy and barren, who have brought all the productions scattered over the earth to a spot that scarcely produces a flint, are incessantly exercising their surprising industry, and showing the world, what fortitude, patience, and perseverance can perform. An extreme thirst for gold no longer prevails among them. This republic has become more powerful by discovering those snares that were secretly intended to destroy it. They found that it was more easy to set bounds to the enraged ocean, than to resist an insidious metal; and they now defend themselves with as much resolution against luxury as against the assaults of the sea.



PARIS, the . . .

TWELVE vessels, of six hundred tons each, are arrived at this capital, and have brought plenty of provisions. We now eat fish without paying ten times the original value. The

new bed of the Seine, dug from Rouen to this city, requiring some reparations, they have assigned the sum of a million and a half of livres, to be taken from the public treasury. That sum will be sufficient, as they make no use of registers or undertakers.

A MOST devouring, insolent, puerile, capricious, and enormous luxury, no longer reigns on the borders of the Seine; but one that promotes industry, that creates new commodities, and adds to our conveniences; a useful and necessary luxury, so easy to be distinguished, and which ought never to be confounded with that of pride and ostentation, which insults the station of the common people, and tends to render it wretched by its effects and example (a).

THEY

(a) When shall we cease to see that monstrous inequality of fortunes, that excessive opulence, which produces so much extreme indigence, and is the source of all our crimes! When shall we cease to see the poor labourer, unable to relieve himself by his industry, from a misery in which he is held by the very laws of his country! Another stretching forth a trembling hand, fearful at once of the looks and the repulse of his fellow-mortal! When shall

THEY have repaired the statue of Voltaire, which the literati, the most distinguished by their talents and their probity, erected while he was yet living. His right foot is placed on the ignoble front of F***; but as the public contempt has much disfigured the face of that Zoilus, they would repair it in a manner that shall show all senseless critics the fate that will attend them. As they have not preserved the portrait of that scribler, who wrote a periodical work for bread; they want to know the head of what base, envious, and malignant animal they shall put in its stead?

THE Parisians have now just notions of their natural, civil, and political rights. They no longer stupidly imagine that they have assigned to another the property of their persons and

shall we cease to see those monsters, that turn away their heads, and refuse him a morsel of bread! When will those very men cease to furnish a city, by making the provisions as dear as in a town that is besieged! But the finances are exhausted, commerce in general sinks, the nation is harrassed with miseries; all suffers, and the manners of people consequently suffer a horrid depravation. Alas! alas!

effects:

effects. They are still fond of bon mots, of of songs and vaudevills ; but they have learned, at the same time, to give a solidity to those pleasantries.



I TURNED and returned these loose sheets ; I still sought something curious. I looked for the article Versailles, but my eager sight could never find it. The master of the house perceived my embarrassment, and asked me what I sought. The most interesting article in the world, I replied ; news from the place where the court commonly resides ; in short, the article of Versailles ; so particular, so various, and interesting in the French gazette (*a*). He smiled and said ; “ I know not what is become of the French gazette, ours is that of truth, and is never guilty of the sin of omission. Our monarch constantly resides in the capital. He is surrounded by the regards of the peo-

(*a*) How severe a scourge is printing, when it tells a whole nation, that, on such a day, such a man put on at court the habit of a slave ! That another dishonoured himself with all the pomp imaginable ! And that a third had at length obtained the reward of his infamous conduct ! What a collection of insipidities ! What a groveling wretched style ?

ple.

ple. His ear is constantly open to their cries. He does not hide himself in a sort of desert, surrounded by a herd of gilded slaves. He resides in the center of his dominions, as the sun in the center of the universe. That, moreover, is a bridle that holds him within the course of his duty. He has no other way to learn all that he ought to know, than by that universal voice which pierces directly to his throne. To check that voice would be to rebel against the laws; for the monarch is made for the people, and not the people for the monarch.

C H A P. XVI.

The Funeral Oration of a Peasant.

CURIOUS to see what was become of that Versailles, where I had formerly beheld on one side, the splendor of a king in the highest degree of ostentation; and on the other, a race of clerks, insolent scribblers, extending their impertinent idleness to the highest degree possible. I dreamt, that like Joshua, I stopped the course of the sun, as it

was hastily declining; it stood still at my prayer, as at that of the Jewish general; and my intention was, I think, less criminal than his.

I WAS on the road in a carriage, that was not a pot-de chambre (a). Passing by a village I saw a company of peasants, their eyes dejected and wet with tears, who were entering a temple. The sight struck me; I ordered the carriage to stop, and followed them in. I saw in the middle of the temple the corpse of an old man, in the habit of a peasant, whose white hairs hung down to the ground. The pastor of the village mounted a small eminence, and said;

“ My fellow countrymen,

“ THE man you here see was for ninety
 “ years a benefactor to mankind. He was the
 “ son of a husbandman, and in infancy his
 “ feeble hands attempted to guide the plough.
 “ As soon as his legs could support him, he
 “ followed his father in the furrows. When

(a) This is the name given to the hackney coaches that go between Paris and the court. They are commonly filled with valets, that go to Versailles in search of plunder, and may therefore properly be said to carry the dregs of France.

“ years had given him that strength for which
“ he long wished, he said to his father, Cease
“ from your labours: and from that time, each
“ rising sun has seen him till the ground,
“ sow, plant, and reap the harvest. He has
“ cultivated more than two thousand acres of
“ fresh land. He has planted the vine in all
“ the country round about; and to him you
“ owe those fruit-trees that nourish your village,
“ and afford you shelter from the sun. It was
“ not avarice that made him unwearied in his
“ labours; no, it was the love of industry for
“ which he was wont to say, man was born;
“ and the great and sacred belief that God
“ regarded him when cultivating his lands for
“ the nourishment of his children.

“ He married, and had twenty-five chil-
“ dren. He formed them all to labour and
“ to virtue, and they have all maintained an
“ unblemished character. He has taken care
“ to marry them properly, and led them, with
“ a smiling aspect, to the altar. All his grand-
“ children have been brought up in his house;
“ and you know what a pure, unalterable joy
“ dwells upon their countenances. All these

“ brethren love one another, because he loved
“ them, and made them see what pleasure he
“ found in loving them.

“ ON days of rejoicing, he was the first to
“ found the rural instruments; and his looks,
“ his voice, and gesture, you know, were the
“ signals for universal mirth. You cannot but
“ remember his gaiety, the lively effect of a
“ peaceful mind, and his speeches full of sense
“ and wit; for he had the gift of exercising
“ an ingenious raillery without giving offence.
“ He cherished order, from an internal sense
“ he had of virtue. Whom has he ever re-
“ fused to serve? When did he show him-
“ self unconcerned at public or private mis-
“ fortunes? When was he indifferent in his
“ country’s cause? His heart was devoted to
“ it; in his conversation he constantly wished
“ for its prosperity.

“ WHEN age had bent his body, and his
“ legs trembled under him, you have seen him
“ mount to the summit of a hill, and give les-
“ sons of experience to the young husbandmen.
“ His memory was the faithful depository
“ of observations made during the course of
“ four-

“ fourſcore ſucceſſive years, on the changes of
“ the ſeveral ſeaſons. Such a tree, planted by
“ his hand, in ſuch a year, recalled to his me-
“ mory the favour or the wrath of heaven. He
“ had by heart what other men forget, the
“ fruitful harveſts, the deaths and legacies to
“ the poor. He ſeemed to be endowed with
“ a prophetic ſpirit, and when he meditated
“ by the light of the moon, he knew with
“ what feeds to enrich his garden. The even-
“ ing before his death he ſaid, My children, I
“ am drawing nigh to that Being, who is the
“ Author of all good, whom I have always
“ adored, and in whom I truſt. To-morrow
“ prune your pear-trees, and at the ſetting of
“ the ſun, bury me at the head of my grounds.

“ You are now, children, going to place
“ him there, and ought to imitate his exam-
“ ple. But, before you inter theſe white
“ hairs, which have ſo long attracted reſpect,
“ behold with reverence his hardened hands ;
“ behold the honourable marks of his long la-
“ bours.”

THE orator then held up one of his cold hands. It had acquired twice the uſual ſize by continual labour, and ſeemed to be invulnerable

able to the point of the briar, or the edges of the flint. He then respectfully kissed the hand, and all the company followed his example.

His children bore him to the grave on three sheaves of corn, and buried him as he had desired, placing on his grave, his hedging-bill, his spade, and a plow-share.

OH! I cried, if those men celebrated by Bossuet, Flechier, Mascaron, and Neuville, had the hundredth part of the virtue of this villager, I would pardon them their pompous and futile eloquence.

C H A P. XVII.

V E R S A I L L E S.

I ARRIVED at Versailles, and looked round for that superb palace, from whence issued the destiny of many nations. What was my surprise! I could perceive nothing but ruins, gaping walls, and mutilated statues; some porticos, half demolished, afforded a confused idea of its ancient magnificence. As I walked over these ruins, I saw an old man sitting upon the capital of a column. Alas! I said to him, what is become of this vast palace?

—“ It

—“ It is fallen.”—How?—“ It was crushed
 “ by its own weight. A man in his impatient
 “ pride would have here forced nature. He
 “ hastily heaped buildings upon buildings;
 “ greedy of gratifying his capricious will, he
 “ harrassed his subjects; all the wealth of the
 “ nation was here swallowed up; here flowed
 “ a stream of tears to compose those reservoirs
 “ of which there are now no traces. Behold all
 “ that remains of that colossus which a million
 “ of hands erected with so much painful
 “ labour. The foundations of this palace were
 “ laid in iniquity; it was an image of the
 “ wretched greatness of him that built it (a).
 “ The kings, his successors, were obliged to

(a) We magnify those pompous spectacles given to the Roman people; and from them we would infer the grandeur of that empire; but it was wretched when it began to exhibit those fastuous shews, in which the fruits of their victories were dissipated with prodigality. Who built their circuses, their theatres, their baths? Who dug those artificial lakes, where a whole fleet was exercised as in open sea? Those crowned monsters, whose tyrannic pride crushed one half of the people to divert the other. The enormous boasted pyramids of Egypt are nothing more than monuments of despotism. Republics may construct aqueducts, canals, highways, and public places; but every palace that is erected by an arbitrary monarch, forms the foundation of an approaching calamity.

“ fly

“ fly from it, lest they should be crushed by
 “ its fall. O, may these ruins cry aloud to all
 “ sovereigns ; that they who abuse a momen-
 “ tary power, only discover their weakness to
 “ future generations ”—At these words, he
 shed a flood of tears, and turned his eyes to
 heaven with a mournful, repenting look. Why
 do you weep? I said. All the world is happy,
 and these ruins by no means declare any
 public calamity. He raised his voice and said :
 “ Oh, how wretched is my fate ! Know that I
 “ am Lewis XIV. who built this rueful palace.
 “ The Divine Justice has again allumined the
 “ torch of my days, to make me contemplate
 “ more nearly my deplorable enterprize. How
 “ transient are the moments of pride ! I must
 “ now and for ever weep. O, that I had but
 “ known (a)” I was going to ask him a
 question, when one of the adders, with which
 this place swarmed, darted from a broken co-
 lumn, stung me on the neck, and I waked.

(a) Placed in the middle of Europe, commanding the
 ocean, and by the long extent and winding of its coasts
 over the seas of Flanders, Spain, and Germany, communi-
 cating with the Mediterranean, &c. what a kingdom is
 France ! and what people seem to have more right to be
 happy !

T H E E N D.

