RAYNAL

HISTORY

OF THE

INDIES

2

D
22
.R33

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

1798

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1800

A

PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL

HISTORY

OF THE

SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE

OF THE

EUROPEANS

IN THE

EAST AND WEST INDIES.

REVISED, AUGMENTED, AND PUBLISHED,

IN TEN VOLUMES,

BY THE ABBÉ RAYNAL.

25.3
2361

NEWLY TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY J. O. JUSTAMOND, F. R. S.

WITH A

New Set of Maps adapted to the Work, and a copious Index.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

4
3061

VOL. II.

SECOND EDITION.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
CITY OF WASHINGTON

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR A. STRAHAN; AND T. CADELL, JUN. AND W. DAVIES, (SUCCESSORS TO MR. CADELL), IN THE STRAND; AND FOR J. MUNDELL & CO. EDINBURGH.

1798.

D22
R33

CONTENTS,

VOL. II.

BOOK IV.

Page.

VOYAGES, Settlements, Wars, and Trade of the French in the East Indies, - - - - 1

Ancient revolutions of commerce in France, - - 2
First voyages of the French to the East Indies, - 8
An East India Company is established in France. Encouragements given to this association, - - - 10
The French establish colonies at Madagascar. Description of that island, - - - - - 12
Conduct of the French at Madagascar. What they might, and ought to have done there, - - - 18
The French make Surat the centre of their trade, - 24
Account of the Guzarat, in which Surat is situated, - 25
Origin and progress of Surat, - - - 28
Manners of the inhabitants of Surat, - - 29
Description of the *Balliaderes*, more voluptuous at Surat, 35
Extent of the commerce of Surat. Revolutions it has experienced, - - - - - - 38
Enterprise of the French on the islands of Ceylon and St. Thomas. Their settlement at Pondicherry, - - 42
The French are invited to Siam. Description of that kingdom, - - - 43
Advantages which the French might have derived from Siam. The errors which occasioned the loss of them, - 48
Views of the French upon Tonquin and Cochin-china. Description of these countries, - - 50
The French lose and recover Pondicherry, their principal settlement, - - - 57
Decline of the French Company, and the cause of it, - 59
Revolutions which have happened in the finances of France since the earliest times of the monarchy, - 63
Methods contrived by Law to recover the finances of France from the state of confusion into which they were fallen. Part taken by the Company in the execution of his projects, - - - 76
Situation of the East India Company at the fall of the system, 90

Page.
Great ſucceſs of the Company; with an account of thoſe of its agents to whom it was owing, - - 91
Deſcription of Indoſtan, - - - 100
Means employed by the French to acquire large poſſeſſions in India, - - - 112
War between the Engliſh and French. The French loſe all their ſettlements, - - - 121
Cauſes of the misfortunes of the French, - 125
Meaſures taken by the French to re-eſtabliſh affairs in India, 127
The charter of the Company is ſuſpended. Their ſtate at that period, - - - 132
The Company loſe all hopes of reviving their trade, and cede all their effects to government, - - 139
Preſent ſtate of the French upon the coaſt of Malabar, 143
Preſent ſtate of the French at Bengal, - - 145
Preſent ſituation of the French upon the coaſt of Coromandel, 148
Preſent ſtate of the Iſle of Bourbon, - - 153
Preſent ſtate of the Iſle of France. Importance of this ſettlement. Account of what has already been done, and of what ſtill remains to be done for it, - - 155
Principles which the French ought to purſue in India, if they ſhould ever recover the conſideration and power they enjoyed there, - - - 166

BOOK V.

Trade of Denmark, Oſtend, Sweden, Pruſſia, Spain, and Ruſſia, to the Eaſt Indies. Some important Inquiries concerning the Connections of Europe with India, - - 171

Ancient revolutions in Denmark, - - 172
Denmark begins to carry on a trade with India, - 176
Changes the Daniſh trade has undergone in India, - 178
Preſent ſtate of the Danes in India, - - 183
Eſtabliſhment of an India Company at Oſtend, - 190
Cauſes of the deſtruction of the Company at Oſtend, - 193
Swediſh Eaſt India Company. Revolutions in the government of that nation, - - 196
The Swedes have a ſhare in the India trade. Manner in which they conduct it, - - 200
Preſent ſtate of Sweden, - - - 204
The king of Pruſſia forms an Eaſt India Company at Embden. Character of that prince. Fate of his eſtabliſhment, - - - 218
Settlement of the Spaniards in the Philippines. Deſcription of theſe iſlands, - - - 224
The Spaniards and Portugueſe diſpute the poſſeſſion of the Philippines, - - - 226

Page.
The Spaniards form ſettlements at the Philippines. Reaſons that have prevented the ſucceſs of them, - 228
Preſent ſtate of the Philippines, - - 230
Dangers to which the Philippines are expoſed, - 233
Advantages that might be made of the Philippines, 235
General idea of Tartary, - - 246
Contentions of the Ruſſians and Chineſe in Tartary, 250
The Ruſſians obtain leave to ſend a caravan to China; and make other openings for carrying on the trade to that kingdom, - - - 251
Extent, government, population, and revenues of Ruſſia, 258
General trade of Ruſſia, - - 261
Military ſtrength of Ruſſia, - - 264
Obſtacles which prevent the proſperity of Ruſſia. Meaſures that might be purſued to ſurmount them, - 268
The trade of China with the neighbouring countries, 275
The trade of the Europeans with China, - - 279
Account of the knowledge we have acquired concerning the tea which the Europeans purchaſe at China, - 280
Origin, nature, and properties of the porcelain which the Europeans purchaſe in China, - - 283
The Europeans buy ſilks in China. Their difference from our ſilks, - - - 293
The Europeans purchaſe lacquered ware and paper in China. Digreſſion upon the arts of this empire, - 297
China ſupplies the Europeans with rhubarb and other articles, 303
Account of the Europeans who have formed connections with China, - - - 306
Conjectures concerning the future ſtate of the trade of Europe in China, - - - 310
Whether Europe ſhould continue its trade with India, 312
Whether it be neceſſary that the Europeans ſhould have large eſtabliſhments in India, in order to carry on the trade, 321
Whether Europe ought to lay open the trade to India, or carry it on by excluſive charters, - - 336

BOOK VI.

Diſcovery of America. Conqueſt of Mexico; and Settlements of the Spaniards in that part of the New World, - 349
Parallel of ancient and modern hiſtory, - - ib.
Ancient revolutions of Spain, - - 351
Columbus forms the deſign of diſcovering America, - 355
Columbus ſails firſt towards the Canaries, - 356
Deſcription of theſe iſlands, - - 357
Arrival of Columbus in the New World, - - 360

Page.
The Spaniards make their firſt ſettlement in America at San Domingo. Manners of the inhabitants of this iſland, 361
Cruelties committed by the conquerors at San Domingo, and their effects, - - - 366
Voyages which led the Spaniards to the knowledge of Mexico, 374
The Spaniards land at Mexico. Their firſt engagements are againſt the republic of Tlaſcala, - - 378
The Spaniards, after having introduced themſelves into the capital of the empire, are obliged to evacuate it, after ſeveral extraordinary events, - - 385
The Spaniards employ other means for ſubduing Mexico, and are ſucceſsful, - - - 392
Idea we are to form of Mexico before it ſubmitted to Spain, 397
External and internal troubles with which Mexico has been agitated ſince it has become a Spaniſh poſſeſſion, - 410
Progreſs of Mexico under the government of Spain, - 423
Of the culture of jalap, - - - 426
Of the culture of the vanilla, - - 427
Of the culture of the indigo tree, - - 428
Of the culture of the cochineal, - - 433
Of the working of the mines, - - 440
What is the reaſon that Mexico hath not riſen to greater proſperity, - - - 445
Connections of Mexico with the Philippines, - 453
Deſcription of the Marianne Iſlands. Singularities that have been obſerved in them, - - 456
Ancient and modern ſtate of California, - - 464
Communication of Mexico with Peru and with Spain, by means of Guatimala, - - 473
Deſcription of Honduras, Jucatan, and Campeachy. Reaſons of the diſputes between Spain and England in thoſe parts, 479
It is chiefly by Vera Cruz that Mexico communicates with Spain. Maxims by which this trade hath been hitherto conducted, - - - 486

A

PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL

HISTORY

OF THE

SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE

OF THE

EUROPEANS

IN THE

EAST AND WEST INDIES.

BOOK IV.

Voyages, Settlements, Wars, and Trade of the French in the Eaſt Indies.

BOOK IV.

WHEN I began this work, I took an oath that I would adhere ſtrictly to truth; and hitherto I am able conſcientiouſly to declare, that I have not departed from it. May my hand wither, if it ſhould happen, that by a predilection, which is but too frequent, I ſhould either deceive myſelf or others with reſpect to the faults of the French nation. I will neither extenuate the good nor the evil which our anceſtors have done; and the Portugueſe, the Dutch, and even the Engliſh themſelves, are the people whom I will call upon to atteſt my impartiality. Let them read, and pronounce my ſentence. If they ſhould find that I have remitted in favour of the French that ſeverity with which I have treated them, I give them leave to claſs me among the number of

BOOK IV.

those flatterers, who for these two thousand years past, have poisoned the minds of the people, and of their sovereigns; let them add my volumes to the numerous monuments there are existing of the same kind of meanness; let them suspect me of having given way to the impressions of terrors, or of having been seduced by the allurement of hopes; let them treat me with the utmost contempt.

Ancient revolutions of commerce in France.

The ancient Gauls, almost always at war with each other, had no other intercourse but such as savage nations, whose wants are always few, can have with each other. Their connections abroad were still more circumscribed. Some navigators from Vannes carried earthen ware to Great Britain, where they bartered it for dogs, slaves, tin, and furs. Such of these articles as they could not dispose of at home, were conveyed to Marseilles, and exchanged for wines, stuffs, and spices, which were brought there by traders from Italy or Greece.

This kind of traffic was not carried on by all the Gauls. It appears from Cæsar's account, that the inhabitants of Belgia had prohibited the importation of all foreign commodities, as tending to corrupt their morals. They imagined that their own soil was sufficiently fruitful to answer all their wants. The Celtic and Acquitanian Gauls were not so strict. To enable them to pay for the commodities they might procure from the Mediterranean, and for which the demand was continually increasing, they had recourse to a kind of labour that had never before occurred to them: they collected with great care all the gold dust that was brought down with the sand along the stream of several of their rivers.

Although the Romans had neither a turn for trade, nor held it in any kind of estimation, it necessarily increased in Gaul, after they had subdued, and in some measure civilized it. Sea-ports were established at Arles, Narbonne, Bourdeaux, and other places. Magnificent roads were every where made, the ruins of which we still behold with astonishment. Every

navigable river had its company of merchants, to whom conſiderable privileges were granted. Theſe were called *Nautes*, and were the agents and ſprings of a general circulation.

This riſing ſpirit was checked by the inroads of the Franks and other barbarous nations; nor was it reſtored to its former activity, even when theſe robbers had eſtabliſhed themſelves in their conqueſts. To their ſavage fury ſucceeded an unbounded paſſion for wealth, to gratify which, they had recourſe to every kind of oppreſſion. Every boat that came to a town was to pay a duty for entrance, another for the ſalute, a third for the bridge, a fourth for approaching the ſhore, a fifth for anchorage, a ſixth for leave to unload, and a ſeventh for ſtore-room. Land carriages were not more favourably treated, and were expoſed to the inſufferable tyranny of cuſtom-houſe officers, who were diſperſed all over the country. Theſe exceſſes were carried ſo far, that ſometimes the goods brought to market did not produce enough to pay the expences incurred before the ſale of them. A total diſcouragement was the neceſſary conſequence of ſuch enormities.

Cloiſters ſoon became the only places where induſtry prevailed, and manufactures were carried on. The Monks were not then corrupted by idleneſs, intrigue, and debauchery. Uſeful labours filled up the vacancies of an edifying and retired life. The moſt humble and robuſt of them ſhared the toils of agriculture with their vaſſals. Thoſe to whom nature had imparted leſs ſtrength, or more underſtanding, applied themſelves to the cultivation of the neglected and abandoned arts. All of them in ſilence and retirement were engaged in the ſervice of their country, the ſubſtance of which their ſucceſſors have inceſſantly devoured, while they diſturbed its tranquillity.

If theſe recluſe perſons had not had recourſe to any of thoſe iniquitous meaſures that have led them to the degree of wealth to which we now ſee, not

BOOK IV.

without indignation, they have attained; they muſt neceſſarily have acquired in proceſs of time, as it was one of the immediate effects of their conſtitution. The founders of monaſteries had not the leaſt idea of the conſequence, though evident enough, of the auſterity they impoſed upon a monaſtic life. They were not aware of the accumulation of riches, the limits of which it is impoſſible to fix, whenever the annual revenue exceeds the annual expenditure. This expenditure being always the ſame, and ſubject to no variation, except that of the circumſtances which raiſe or lower the price of proviſions; and the overplus of the revenue being continually accumulating, muſt at length, however trifling we may ſuppoſe it, form a great maſs of wealth. The prohibiting ſtatutes enacted with reſpect to poſſeſſions in mortmain, may therefore retard, but can never put an entire ſtop to, the progreſs of monaſtic opulence. The caſe is not the ſame with the families of citizens which are not ſubſervient to any kind of rule. A prodigal ſon ſucceeds to an avaricious father, ſo that expences are never upon the ſame footing. The fortune is either diſſipated, or it is improved. Perſons who have laid down rules for religious ſocieties, have done it in the ſole view of making holy men; but their regulations have tended more directly and more effectually to make rich ones.

Dagobert excited the ſpirit of his countrymen in the ſeventh century. Fairs were opened, to which the Saxons flocked with tin and lead from England; the Jews with jewels and gold or ſilver plate; the Sclavonians with all the metals of the North; traders from Lombardy, Provence, and Spain, with the commodities of their reſpective countries, and thoſe they received from Africa, Egypt, and Syria; the merchants of every province in the kingdom, with whatever their ſoil and their induſtry afforded. Unfortunately, this proſperity was of a ſhort duration; it diſappeared under indolent kings, but revived under Charlemagne.

This prince, who might without flattery be ranked with the greateſt men recorded in hiſtory, had he not been ſometimes influenced by ſanguinary ſchemes of conqueſt, and ſullied with acts of perſecution and tyranny, ſeemed to follow the footſteps of thoſe firſt Romans, whoſe relaxations from the fatigues of war, were the labours of agriculture. He applied himſelf to the care of his vaſt domains, with that cloſeneſs and ſkill which would hardly be expected from the moſt aſſiduous man in a private ſtation. All the great men of the ſtate followed his example, and devoted themſelves to huſbandry, and to thoſe arts which attend, or are immediately connected with it. From that period the French had many of their own productions to barter, and could with great eaſe make them circulate throughout the immenſe empire which was then ſubject to their dominion.

So flouriſhing a ſituation preſented a freſh allurement to the Normans to indulge the inclination they had for piracy. Thoſe barbarians, accuſtomed to ſeek from plunder that wealth which their ſoil did not afford, poured forth in multitudes out of their inhoſpitable climate in queſt of booty. They attacked all the ſea-coaſts, but more eſpecially thoſe of France, which promiſed the richeſt ſpoil, with the greateſt avidity. The ravages they committed, the cruelties they exerciſed, the flames they kindled for a whole century in thoſe fertile provinces, cannot be remembered without horror. During that fatal period nothing was thought of but how to eſcape ſlavery or death. There was no intercourſe between the ſeveral parts of the kingdom, and conſequently no trade.

In the mean time the nobles, intruſted with the adminiſtration of the provinces, had inſenſibly made themſelves maſters of them, and had found means to make their authority hereditary. They had not, indeed, thrown off all dependence on the head of the empire; but, although they retained the humble appellation of vaſſals, they were not much leſs formidable to the ſtate than the kings in the neighbourhood

BOOK IV. of its frontiers. They were confirmed in their usurpations at the memorable era when the sceptre was removed from the family of Charlemagne to that of the Capets. From that time there were no national assemblies, no tribunals, no laws, no government. In that fatal confusion, the sword usurped the place of justice, and the free citizens were forced to embrace servitude, to purchase the protection of a chief who was able to defend them.

Commerce could not possibly flourish when loaded with the shackles of slavery, and in the midst of the continual disturbances occasioned by the most cruel anarchy. Industry is the child of peace; nothing depresses it so much as servitude. Genius languishes when it is not animated by hope and emulation; and neither of these can subsist where there is no property. Nothing is a stronger recommendation of liberty, or more fully proves the rights of mankind, than the impossibility of working successfully to enrich barbarous masters.

None of the kings of France had any conception of this important truth, till they became sensible of it, from experiencing the inconveniences of an authority exposed to perpetual restraint. They therefore endeavoured to limit the power of those subaltern tyrants, who, by ruining their unfortunate vassals, perpetuated the calamities of the monarchy. St. Lewis was the first who introduced trade into the system of government. Before his time it was only the work of chance and circumstances. He brought it under the regulation of stated laws; and he himself drew up statutes, which have served as a model for those that have since been enacted.

These first steps led the way to measures of greater importance. The old law, which forbade the exportation of all the productions of the kingdom, was still in force, and agriculture was discouraged by this absurd prohibition. The wise monarch removed these fatal impediments; expecting, not without reason, that a free exportation would restore to the nation those

treaſures which his imprudent expedition into Aſia had laviſhed. BOOK IV.

Some political events ſeconded theſe ſalutary views. Before the reign of St. Lewis, the kings of France had but few ports on the ocean, and none on the Mediterranean. The northern coaſts were divided between the counts of Flanders and the dukes of Burgundy, Normandy, and Britany: the reſt belonged to the Engliſh. The ſouthern coaſts were poſſeſſed by the counts of Toulouſe, and the kings of Majorca, Arragon, and Caſtile. By this arrangement, the inland provinces could not, without much difficulty, open a communication with the foreign markets. The union of the county of Toulouſe with the crown, removed this great obſtacle, at leaſt with reſpect to a part of the French territory.

Philip, the ſon of St. Lewis, in order to improve the advantages ariſing from this acquiſition, endeavoured to draw to Niſmes, a city under his juriſdiction, part of the trade carried on at Montpellier, which belonged to the king of Arragon. The privileges he granted produced the deſired effect: but it was ſoon found that this ſucceſs was not of much real advantage. The Italians filled the kingdom with ſpices, perfumes, ſilks, and all the rich ſtuffs of the Eaſt. The arts had not made ſufficient progreſs in France to admit of their productions being offered in exchange; and the returns of agriculture were inadequate to the expences of ſo many objects of luxury. A trade of ſuch valuable articles could not be carried on without money, and there was but little in the kingdom, eſpecially ſince the expeditions of the Cruſades; although France was then richer than moſt of the other European nations.

Philip, ſurnamed The Fair, was ſenſible of theſe truths; he found means to improve agriculture, ſo as to anſwer the demands of foreign importations; and theſe he reduced, by eſtabliſhing new manufactures, and improving the old ones. Under this reign the miniſtry firſt undertook to guide the hand of the

BOOK IV.

artiſt, and to direct his labours. The breadth, the quality, and the dreſſing of the cloths, were fixed; the exportation of wool, which the neighbouring nations came to purchaſe in order to mauufacture it, was prohibited. Theſe were the leaſt unreaſonable meaſures that could be purſued in thoſe times of ignorance.

Since that period, the progreſs of the arts was proportioned to the decline of feudal tyranny. The French, however, did not begin to form their taſte till the time of their expeditions into Italy. They were dazzled with a multitude of new objects that preſented themſelves at Genoa, Venice, and Florence. The ſtrictneſs obſerved by Anne of Bretagne, under the reigns of Charles VIII. and Lewis XII. at firſt reſtrained the conquerors from giving full ſcope to their propenſity for imitation; but no ſooner had Francis I. invited the women to court, no ſooner had Catherine of Medicis croſſed the Alps, than the great affected an elegance unknown before ſince the firſt foundation of the monarchy. The whole nation was ſeduced by this alluring example of luxury, and the improvement of the manufactures was the natural conſequence.

From Henry II. to Henry IV. the civil wars, the unhappy diviſions of religion, the ignorance of government, the ſpirit of finance which began to have its influence in the council: the barbarous and devouring avarice of men in buſineſs, encouraged by the protection they enjoyed; all theſe ſeveral cauſes retarded the progreſs of induſtry, but could never deſtroy it. It revived with freſh ſplendour under the frugal adminiſtration of Sully It was almoſt extinguiſhed under that of Richelieu and Mazarin, both governed by the farmers of the revenue; one wholly taken up with his ambition for empire and his ſpirit of revenge, the other with intrigue and plunder.

Firſt voyages of the French to the Eaſt Indies.

No king of France had ever ſeriouſly conſidered the advantages that might accrue from a trade to India, nor had the emulation of the French been ex-

cited by the luſtre which other nations derived from it. They conſumed more eaſtern productions than any other nation; they were as favourably ſituated for procuring them at the firſt hand; and yet they were content to pay to foreign induſtry what their own might as well have partaken of.

Some merchants of Rouen had ventured, indeed, in 1503, upon a ſmall expedition; but Gonneville, who commanded it, met with violent ſtorms at the Cape of Good Hope, was caſt upon unknown lands, and with much difficulty got back to Europe.

In 1601, a ſociety formed in Bretagne fitted out two ſhips, to endeavour to get a ſhare, if poſſible, of the riches of the Eaſt, which the Portugueſe, the Engliſh, and the Dutch, were contending for. Pyrard, who commanded theſe ſhips, arrived at the Maldives, and did not return to his own country till after an unfortunate navigation of ten years.

A new company, headed by one Girard, a native of Flanders, fitted out ſome ſhips from Normandy for the Iſland of Java, in 1616 and 1619. They returned with cargoes ſufficient to indemnify the adventurers, but not to encourage them to any freſh undertakings.

Captain Reginon, upon the expiration of this fruitleſs grant in 1633, prevailed upon ſome merchants of Dieppe, two years after, to enter upon a track which might be productive of great riches, if properly purſued. Fortune baffled the endeavours of the new adventurers. The only advantage gained by theſe repeated expeditions, was the high opinion that was conceived of Madagaſcar, which till that time had been neglected by the Portugueſe, the Dutch, and the Engliſh, who had not found there any of the objects which attracted them to the Eaſt.

The favourable impreſſion the French had received of this iſland, gave riſe to a Company in 1642, which intended to make a conſiderable ſettlement upon it, with a view of ſecuring to their ſhips the neceſſary refreſhments for ſailing further. The charter of this

BOOK IV.

Company was to laſt twenty years; but the cruelties committed by its agents, together with their many acts of perfidy and diſhoneſty, put an end to its exiſtence before the completion of that period. Its capital was conſumed; and in return for all its expences, it had nothing more than four or five hamlets, ſituated along the coaſt, conſtructed with planks, covered in with leaves, ſurrounded with ſtakes, and decorated with the pompous name of forts, becauſe there were a few batteries upon them. The defenders of theſe wretched huts were reduced to the number of one hundred robbers; whoſe tyranny daily increaſed the hatred that had been ſworn againſt their nation. A few ſmall diſtricts, abandoned by the natives, and ſome rather more extenſive, from which a tribute of proviſions was exacted by force; theſe were the only advantages that had been obtained.

The Marſhal de la Meilleraie ſeized upon theſe ruins, and conceived the project of reſtoring this ill-conducted undertaking for his own private emolument. He met with ſo little ſucceſs, that his property ſold but for 20,000 livres [833l. 6s. 8d.,] which was full as much as it was worth.

An Eaſt India Company is eſtabliſhed in France. Encouragements given to this aſſociation.

At length, in 1664, Colbert undertook to make France a ſharer in the Eaſt India trade. There were great inconveniencies attending this intercourſe with Aſia. It could ſcarce furniſh any thing but articles of luxury; it retarded the progreſs of the arts which the French were labouring with ſo much ſucceſs to eſtabliſh; it procured but very little vent for the national proviſions and manufactures; and neceſſarily occaſioned a great exportation of ſpecie. Conſiderations of ſo important a nature were calculated to excite ſuſpenſe in the mind of a miniſter, whoſe plans were purſued with no other view but to extend every branch of induſtry, and to add to the riches of the kingdom. But the French, in imitation of the other Europeans, diſplayed a determined taſte for the luxuries of the Eaſt. It was thought that it would be more advantageous, and at the ſame time more ho-

nourable, to go in ſearch of them acroſs an immenſe ocean, than to receive them from rivals, perhaps from enemies.

The mode of carrying this matter into execution, was already traced out. It was then a maxim ſo generally received, that ſuch nice and complicated operations could only be managed by an excluſive charter, that the boldeſt ſpeculator would not have called it in queſtion. An Eaſt India Company was therefore created, veſted with all the privileges enjoyed by thoſe of Holland and England. Colbert went ſtill further; and conſidering that for the purpoſe of carrying on great commercial undertakings, there is naturally a degree of confidence exiſting in republican governments, which cannot be expected in a monarchy, had recourſe to every expedient that could produce it.

A charter was granted for fifty years, that the Company might be encouraged to form great ſettlements, with a proſpect of reaping the fruits of them.

All foreigners advancing 20,000 livres [833l. 6s. 8d.] were to be deemed Frenchmen, without the privilege of naturalization.

On the like terms, officers, whatever corps they belonged to, were allowed leave of abſence, without forfeiting the rights of their poſt, or their pay.

Whatever was wanted for the building, equipment, or victualling of the ſhips, was to be exempted from all the duties of export or import, as well as from thoſe of the admiralty.

The government engaged to pay fifty livres [2l. 1s. 8d.] per ton for all goods exported from France to India, and ſeventy five livres [3l. 2s. 6d.] for every ton imported from thence.

It was agreed, that the ſettlements of the Company ſhould be defended with a ſufficient military force, and that their outward and homeward bound ſhips ſhould be furniſhed with as ſtrong a convoy as exigencies ſhould require.

The ruling paſſion of the nation was made ſubſer-

BOOK IV.

vient to this eſtabliſhment. Hereditary titles and honours were promiſed to ſuch as ſhould diſtinguiſh themſelves in the ſervice of the Company.

As trade was yet in its infancy in France, and was unable to furniſh the fiften millions [625,000l.], that were to conſtitute the ſtock of the new ſociety, the miniſtry engaged to lend as far as three millions [125,000l.]. The nobles, the magiſtrates, all orders of men, were invited to ſhare the reſt. The nation, proud to pleaſe their king, who had not yet cruſhed them with the weight of his falſe greatneſs, came into the propoſal with great eagerneſs,

Madagaſcar was again deſtined to be the nurſery of the new aſſociation. The repeated misfortunes experienced there, did not invalidate the idea of its being the beſt baſis for the vaſt edifice that was to be raiſed. In order to form a proper judgment of theſe views, we muſt endeavour to acquire as thorough a knowledge as poſſible of this celebrated iſland.

The French eſtabliſh colonies at Madagaſcar. Deſcription of that iſland.

Madagaſcar, which is ſeparated from the continent of Africa by the Mozambique channel, is ſituated at the entrance of the Indian ocean, between the twelfth and twenty-fifth degree of latitude, and between the ſixty-ſecond and ſeventieth degree of longitude. It is three hundred and thirty-ſix leagues in length, one hundred and twenty in its greateſt breadth, and about eight hundred in circumference.

The coaſts of this great iſland are in general unwholeſome; an evil ariſing from natural cauſes, and which might be remedied. The land which we inhabit has been rendered wholeſome merely by the labours of man. In its original ſtate, it was covered with foreſts and moraſſes, which corrupted the air. Such is the preſent ſtate of Madagaſcar. The rains, as in the other countries ſituated under the tropics, are periodical. They form rivers, which, in endeavouring to diſcharge themſelves into the ocean, find their mouths blocked up by ſands, which the motion of the ſea has driven there in the dry ſeaſon; that is

to ſay, when the volume or rapidity of the waters is not ſufficient to overcome this obſtacle. The waters ſtopped by this barrier, flow back again into the plain, where they become ſtagnant for a certain time, and fill the horizon with deſtructive exhalations, till at length, ſurmounting the impediment by which they were confined, they procure themſelves an outlet. We ſhall be convinced of this fact, if we conſider that the coaſts are unwholeſome only in the rainy ſeaſon; that the column of corrupted air never extends to any diſtance; that, in the inland parts, the atmoſphere is always pure; and the banks are always wholeſome in thoſe places where, from local circumſtances, the courſe of the rivers is uninterupted.

By whatever winds the navigator may arrive at Madagaſcar, he meets with nothing but a barren ſand. This ſterility terminates at the diſtance of a league or two. Throughout the reſt of the iſland, nature, in perpetual vegetation, produces ſpontaneouſly, both in the foreſts and in the open grounds, cotton, indigo, hemp, honey, white-pepper, ſago, bananas, the Amboyna cabbage, and the ravendſara, a kind of ſpice little known, with a multitude of other nutritious plants, foreign to our climates. The whole iſland is covered with palms, cacao, and orange trees, gum-plants and woods fit for conſtruction, and uſeful in all the arts. There is not, properly ſpeaking, any kind of culture, except that of rice. The ruſhes that grow in the moraſſes are pulled up, and the ſeed is careleſsly ſcattered on the ground. Cattle are afterwards made to paſs over it, which, by their trampling, puſh the grain into the ſoil: the reſt is left to chance. There is another ſpecies of rice cultivated upon the mountains in the rainy ſeaſon, and with as little care. Theſe regions are not fertilized by the ſweat of mens brows. The fruitfulneſs of the ſoil, increaſed by the prolific quality of the waters, muſt here be ſubſtituted to every kind of labour.

BOOK IV.

Oxen, ſheep, hogs, and goats, feed day and night in the meadows, inceſſantly ſpringing up afreſh, which narure has formed at Madagaſcar. Neither horſes nor buffaloes, nor camels, nor any kind of beaſt fit for burden or for the ſaddle, are to be met with here, though every thing ſeems to beſpeak that they would proſper.

It has been an opinion too lightly adopted, that gold and ſilver were the produce of this iſland. But it is an eſtabliſhed fact, that at no great diſtance from the bay of Antongil, there are copper mines that yield conſiderably, and mines of very pure iron in the inland parts.

The origin of the inhabitants of Madagaſcar, as that of moſt other people, is loſt in extravagant and and fabulous accounts. Whether they be natives of the iſland, or have been tranſplanted there, is a queſtion which, in all probability, will never be decided. We cannot, however, avoid thinking, that they are not all derived from one common ſtock, when we conſider the different forms by which they are diſtinguiſhed.

This variety certainly depends upon the general manner in which iſlands are formed. In times anterior to the origin of navigation, they have all been connected with ſome continent from which they have been ſeperated by thoſe natural commotions that are but too frequently renewed. If the iſland hath been ſuddenly broken off, we ſhall find only one race of men upon it. If the adjacent countries have been threatened with this ſeparation a long time before it has taken place, the imminent danger will have ſet all the different people in motion; and each of them will have flocked in crowds to the ſpot where they expected to be moſt ſecure. In the mean while, the dreadful phenomenon will have happened; and the portion of land that had been ſurrounded with water, will contain different races of men, having neither the ſame complexion nor the ſame ſtature, nor ſpeaking the ſame language.

We have every reaſon to think, that this has been the caſe with the iſland of Madagaſcar. In the Weſtern parts of the iſland, we find a people called *Quimos*, who are in general not more than four feet high, and who never grow beyond four feet four inches. It is ſuppoſed that they are now reduced to fifteen thouſand ſouls; though they muſt have been more numerous before the deſtructive and unfortunate war, which obliged them to quit the ſpot on which they had firſt ſettled. Being driven from their country, they took refuge in a very fertile valley, ſurrounded with ſteep rocks, where they live, without having any intercourſe with their neighbours. When their former conquerors unite to attack them in this fortunate ſituation, they drive a great number of oxen to the borders of theſe mountains. The enemy, who had no other ſpoil in view, ſeize upon the cattle, and lay down their arms, to take them up again, when they can ſucceed in forming another confederacy ſufficiently powerful to induce the *Quimos* to purchaſe peace anew.

This expedient, which is adapted to theſe weak and timid people, would by no means be ſuitable to a powerful nation. The puſillanimous ſovereign or miniſter who purchaſes peace, invites his enemy to make war, and ſtrengthens him for the purpoſe with all the money he gives, while he weakens himſelf in the ſame proportion. He is a bad politician, who conducts himſelf as if he had only a few years to live, and who is very little ſolicitous of the fate of the empire after his death.

Madagaſcar is divided into ſeveral colonies, more or leſs numerous, and independent of each other. Each of theſe feeble communities lives in a diſtrict that belongs to it, and is governed by its own laws. A conſiderable degree of authority is lodged in a chief, who is elective in ſome places, hereditary in others, and ſometimes a uſurper. He cannot, however, engage in war without the conſent of the principal mem-

BOOK IV.

bers of the ſtate, nor ſupport it without the voluntary contributions and exertions of his people.

The ſtripping of the cultivated lands, the ſtealing of cattle, and the carrying off of women and children, are the ordinary cauſe of their diviſions. Theſe ruſtic people are tormented with the rage of acquiring poſſeſſions by unjuſt and violent meaſures, as ſtrongly as the moſt civilized nations are. Their hoſtilities are not deſtructive; but the priſoners are always made ſlaves.

The people of Madagaſcar have not a very comprehenſive idea of the right of property, from whence an inclination for labour is derived, and which is the principle of defence and of ſubmiſſion to government. Reaſons of diſcontent, convenience, or neceſſity, eaſily prevail upon them to quit the ſpot they live on for another, which is either more fertile, or at a greater diſtance from their enemies. It frequently happens, even that an inhabitant of Madagaſcar leaves his country, merely from motives of caprice; and changes his reſidence again upon any new fancy, or when he is apprehenſive of puniſhment for ſome outrageous act, or for ſome theft. He is certain of finding lands to cultivate wherever he goes; for they are never parcelled out. The grounds are uſually ſown by the community, who afterwards ſhare the produce. Civil right is therefore of little conſequence in theſe regions; but political right is ſtill more confined.

Although the people of Madagaſcar admit the prevailing doctrine of the two principles, yet they have but a confuſed idea of it, nor have they any form of worſhip whatever. They have not the leaſt conception of the exiſtence of another life, and yet they believe in ghoſts: but we are not to expect ideas more connected among barbarians, than we meet with among the moſt enlightened nations. The moſt fatal of their prejudices is that which has ſettled lucky and unlucky days; by which children that are born under unfavourable auſpices are inhumanly put to

death. This is a cruel error, which hinders or destroys population. BOOK IV.

Few people bear pain and affliction with so much patience as the inhabitants of Madagascar. Even the approach of death, the consequence of which their education hath not taught them to fear, never disturbs them. They expect the instant of their dissolution, a period so distressing to us, with a degree of resignation which it is not easy to conceive. It is perhaps a comfort to them to be assured, that they shall not be forgotten, when they are no more. The inhabitants of these savage regions entertain a very high sense of the respect that is due to their ancestors. It is a common thing to see men of all ages go to weep over the grave of their fathers, and to ask advice of them in the most interesting actions of their life.

These robust, and rather well-made islanders, have not the same indifference for the present as they have for the future. As they are never restrained in their inclinations by the ties of morality or religion, or by that enlightened kind of police which puts a stop to the propensities of men, in order to establish the order of society, they are entirely devoted to their passions. They indulge with rapture in festivals, singing, dancing, and strong liquors, and are extravagantly addicted to women. Every instant of an idle sedentary life, free from the cravings of want, is dissipated in sensual pleasures, which are denied by nature to the savages of the north, who exhaust their powers in the search of food necessary for their miserable and precarious existence. Beside the wife whom they marry in ceremony, the inhabitants of Madagascar take as many concubines as they can get. Divorce is common among them, though nothing be so rare as jealousy. Most of them, indeed, esteem themselves honoured in having illegitimate children, when they are of a white race. The splendour of the origin compensates for the obliquity of the birth.

We may perceive a beginning of knowledge and

BOOK IV. induſtry among theſe people. With ſilk, cotton, and thread made of the barks of trees, they manufacture ſome ſtuffs. They are not entirely ignorant of the art of melting and forging iron. Their earthen ware is rather agreeable to the eye. In ſeveral diſtricts, they practiſe the mode of expreſſing their thoughts in writing. They have even books of hiſtory, phyſic, and aſtrology, committed to the care of their *Ombis*, who have been improperly conſidered as prieſts, and who, in fact, are impoſtors, who ſtyle themſelves, and perhaps believe themſelves to be, ſorcerers. This kind of knowledge, which is more diffuſed in the weſtern part than in the reſt of the iſland, has been brought by the Arabs, who have traded there from time immemorial.

A few diſtinct acts of anger and rage, committed in the height of ſome violent paſſion, have been ſufficient to calumniate the whole iſland of Madagaſcar, and ſtigmatize its inhabitants with the title of ferocious. On the contrary, they are naturally ſociable, lively, cheerful, vain, and even impreſſed with ſentiments of gratitude. All travellers, who have penetrated into the interior part of the iſland, have been kindly received there, aſſiſted in their wants, treated as men and brethren. Upon the coaſts, where miſtruſt is uſually more prevailing, the navigators have rarely experienced any acts of violence or perfidy. Four and twenty Arabian families, which, for a number of generations, had uſurped the empire in the province of Anoſſi, had enjoyed it for a long time unmoleſted, till they were deprived of it in 1771, without either expulſion, maſſacre, or oppreſſion. In a word, the language of theſe iſlanders readily adapts itſelf to expreſs ſentiments of the utmoſt tenderneſs; and this circumſtance alone is calculated to give us a very favourable impreſſion of the ſoftneſs of their manners, and of their ſocial turn

Conduct of the French at Madagaſcar.

Such was the ſtate of Madagaſcar, when four French veſſels arrived there, in 1665. The Company that had ſent them out was reſolved to form a ſolid eſta-

What they might and ought to have done there.

bliſhment on this iſland. The project was wiſe, and it did not appear that the execution of it would be expenſive.

All the colonies which the Europeans have eſtabliſhed in America, to obtain the produce of that part of the world; or all thoſe they have fixed at the Cape of Good Hope, and in the iſles of France, of Bourbon, and St. Helena, for the cultivation of their commerce to the Indies, have required enormous expences, a long ſpace of time, and conſiderable labours. Many of theſe countries were entirely deſert, and in others there were only found inhabitants, whom it was impoſſible to render uſeful. Madagaſcar, on the contrary, preſented a ſoil naturally fertile, and a numerous, tractable, and intelligent ſet of inhabitants, who wanted only inſtruction to enable them effectually to aſſiſt in any purpoſe that was intended.

Theſe iſlanders were haraſſed with the ſtate of war and anarchy in which they continually lived. They ardently wiſhed for a police which might make them enjoy peace and liberty. It was no matter of doubt, but that, with diſpoſitions ſo favourable, they would readily concur in any attempts made to civilize them.

Nothing was more eaſy than to have made this iſland of conſiderable utility. With proper attention, Madagaſcar might have produced a multitude of commodities fit for India, for Perſia, for Arabia, and for the continent of Africa. By inviting a few Indians and Chineſe to this ſpot, all the arts and cultures of Aſia would have been naturalized in the iſland. It was eaſy to conſtruct ſhips there, becauſe materials were to be found for this purpoſe of the beſt quality, and in plenty; and they might even have been readily equipped, becauſe the inhabitants diſplayed a turn for navigation, All theſe innovations would have acquired more ſolidity than the conqueſts of the Europeans in the Eaſt Indies can ever have; for the natives of thoſe regions will never adopt our laws, our manners, or our mode of worſhip; and con-

BOOK IV. fequently they will never have that kind of favourable difpofition, which attaches people to a new form of government.

It was impoffible that fo fortunate a revolution could have been effected by violence. A numerous, brave, and uncivilized people, would never have fubmitted to the chains with which a few barbarous foreigners might have wifhed to load them. It was by the foft mode of perfuafion; it was by the feducing profpect of happinefs; it was by the allurements of a quiet life; it was by the advantages of our police, by the enjoyments attending our induftry, and by the fuperiority of our talents, that the whole ifland was to be brought to concur in a plan equally advantageous to both nations.

The fyftem of legiflation which it would have been proper to give to thefe people, fhould have been adapted to their manners, their character, and their climate. It muft have been in every refpect the reverfe of the legiflation of Europe, corrupted and embarraffed by the barbarifm of feudal cuftoms. However fimple this fyftem might have been, the feveral parts could only have been propofed fucceffively, and in proportion as the underftanding of the people fhould have become enlightened and improved. Perhaps it might even have been proper to lay afide all thoughts of conciliating to it the minds of thofe men in whom age had ftrengthened the prejudices of cuftom; perhaps it might have been neceffary to endeavour to make partifans only of young men, who, formed by our inftitutions, would, in procefs of time, have become political miffionaries, and might have increafed the number of profelytes to the fyftem of government.

The grand fyftem of civilization would ftill have been promoted, by the intermarriage of the women of the ifland with the French colonifts. This tie, fo endearing, and of fo tender a nature, would have extinguifhed thofe odious diftinctions, which cherifh perpetual hatred and everlafting divifion, between

people who inhabit the ſame region, and live under the ſame laws.

It would have been repugnant to every ſyſtem of equity and policy, to ſeize arbitrarily upon any diſtrict of land, in order to fix new families upon it. The nation aſſembled ſhould have been aſked for thoſe lands which were unoccupied; and in order to give more ſolidity to the acquiſition, government might have given a price for them which would have been agreeable to theſe iſlanders. Theſe lands, thus legitimately acquired, would for the firſt time have been legally poſſeſſed; and the right of property would gradually have been eſtabliſhed from one perſon to another. In proceſs of time, the ſeveral colonies of Madagaſcar would readily have adopted an innovation, the advantages of which cannot be rendered leſs conſpicuous by the effect of any prejudice.

The more uſeful the colonies that might have been founded at Madagaſcar were like to prove, the more proper it was to chooſe ſituations well adapted to the purpoſe of cultivating, extending, encouraging, and preſerving theſe advantages. Excluſive of a ſettlement which it would, perhaps, have been expedient to form in the interior part of the iſland, in order to obtain the confidence of the inhabitants in the firſt inſtance; it was indiſpenſibly neceſſary to form four upon the coaſt. One at Saint Auſtin's Bay, which would have opened an eaſy communication with the continent of Africa; another at Luquez, where a conſiderable and a conſtant degree of heat would have made all the plants of India proſper; the third at Fort Dauphin, which, from its mild and wholeſome temperature, was well calculated for the cultivation of corn, and of moſt European productions; and laſtly, the fourth at Tametave, the moſt fertile, populous, and beſt cultivated diſtrict of the country. This laſt poſition deſerved even the preference of being made the capital of the colony; and for the following reaſons:—

There is no harbour known at Madagaſcar. It is

BOOK IV. a miſtake to ſuppoſe, that it would be poſſible to form one at Fort Dauphin, by raiſing a pier upon ſome ſhoals which advance into the ſea. The labour attending ſuch an enterpriſe would not only be immenſe, but the expence would alſo be uſeleſs. It would be impoſſible that ſhips which cannot be defended from the hurricanes by the mountains themſelves, ſhould ever be ſheltered by a pier. Beſides, this factitious port, open in part to the fury of the waves, would neceſſarily be of ſmall extent. The ſhips would have no ſea room; and if once looſened from their anchors, would all run aground; and they would periſh without reſource upon a coaſt where the ſea is conſtantly agitated, and where the ſands are in continual motion.

The ſituation at Tametave is different. The bay, when freed from that inconvenient bar, which extends along all the eaſtern coaſt of Madagaſcar, is very ſpacious. The anchorage is good, and the veſſels are ſheltered from the hardeſt winds. The landing is eaſy. If the bed of the great river that diſcharges itſelf into the bay, were to be digged for the ſpace of a league and a half, ſhips of the largeſt burden might then be brought up to the lake of Noſſe-Bé, where nature has formed an excellent harbour. In the midſt of it is an iſland, the air of which is very pure, and which might be eaſily defended. There is one fortunate circumſtance in this ſituation, which is, that with a few precautions, the entrance of it might be ſhut againſt an enemy's ſquadrons.

Such were the advantages which the French Company might have derived from Madagaſcar. The conduct of their agents unfortunately deſtroyed theſe brilliant expectations. Loſt to every ſenſe of ſhame, they ſecreted part of the funds entruſted to their management; they waſted ſtill more conſiderable ſums in uſeleſs and ridiculous expences; they made themſelves equally odious to the Europeans, whoſe labours they ought to have encouraged, as to the natives of the country, whom they ſhould have gained

over by gentleneſs and by favours. Acts of iniquity and misfortunes were multiplied to ſuch a degree, that in 1670 the members of the Company thought proper to reſign into the hands of government a poſſeſſion which they held from its gift. The change of adminiſtration did not produce better management. Moſt of the French who had remained in the iſland were maſſacred two years after. Thoſe who had eſcaped this memorable butchery, withdrew themſelves for ever from a ſoil which was leſs ſtained with their blood than with their crimes.

At different and diſtant intervals the court of Verſailles has had an eye upon Madagaſcar, but without ever being ſenſible of its real value. It was neceſſary that France ſhould loſe all her trade, and all her conſideration in India, in order to be thoroughly ſatisfied of the importance of an iſland, the poſſeſſion of which would probably have preſerved her from theſe calamities. Since this fatal period, the French have ſhown a deſire to form a ſettlement upon it. They ought not to be diſcouraged by the ill ſucceſs of the two attempts of 1770 and 1773, becauſe theſe were made without plan and without means; and that inſtead of employing in them the ſuperfluous inhabitants of Bourbon, a ſet of pacific and wiſe men, inured to the climate, none but vagabonds collected from the ſcum of Europe were ſent there. Meaſures more prudent and better concerted cannot fail of having the deſired effect. It is not from motives of policy alone that the French ſhould ſtrive againſt the difficulties inſeparable from ſuch an enterpriſe; the voice of humanity ſhould ſpeak louder, and with greater energy than that of intereſt.

What glory would it be for France to raiſe a numerous people from the horrors of barbariſm; to give them decent manners, a well regulated policy, wiſe laws, a beneficent religion; to introduce among them the agreeable, as well as the uſeful arts, and to raiſe them to the rank of enlightened and civilized nations! Stateſmen, may the wiſhes of philoſophy,

BOOK IV. may the wiſhes of a citizen, awaken your attention! If it be a glorious act to change the face of the univerſe, in order to increaſe general felicity; and if the honour that reſults from it belong to thoſe who hold the reins of empire; let me inform you that they are equally accountable to the preſent age, and to future generations, not only for all the miſchief they may do, but likewiſe for all the good which they might do, and have neglected. If you be deſirous of real glory among your cotemporaries, what more deſerved fame, than that which I propoſe can you be in purſuit of? If you wiſh to immortalize your name, conſider, that monuments of bronze are more or leſs rapidly deſtroyed by time. Intruſt the care of your reputation to beings who will perpetuate it by regeneration. The ſtatue is ſilent, but mankind will ſpeak. Let them, therefore, ſpeak of you with praiſe. If corruption ſhould afterwards inſinuate itſelf into the wiſe ſyſtem of legiſlation you have eſtabliſhed, then it is that you will be truly revered. The age in which you lived will be called to mind, and tears will be beſtowed upon your memory. Tears of admiration will be ſhed for you during your life, and tears of regret, many ages after your death.

The India Company had not ſuch elevated views, when in 1670 they thought proper to abandon Madagaſcar. At that period it was that their ſhips ſailed directly to India. By the intrigues of Marcara, a native of Iſpahan, but in the French intereſt, they obtained leave to eſtabliſh factories on ſeveral places on the coaſt of the peninſula. They even attempted to ſecure a ſhare of the Japan trade. Colbert offered to ſend none but proteſtants; but by the artifices of the Dutch, the French were denied an entrance into that empire, as the Engliſh had been before.

The French make Surat the centre of their trade.

Surat had been pitched upon for the centre of all the buſineſs which the Company was to carry on in theſe parts. It was from this capital of Guzarat that all orders were to be iſſued for the inferior ſettle-

ments: and there it was that the different merchandise destined for Europe was to be collected.

Account of the Guzarat in which this city is situated.

Guzarat forms a peninsula between the Indus and Malabar. It is about one hundred and sixty miles in length, and nearly the same in breadth. It is separated from the kingdom of Agra by the mountains of Arva. There is not a province in Indostan in which the soil is more fertile, better watered, or intersected by a greater number of rivers. It were to be wished, that the climate were not burnt up during three months in the year, by a most violent south wind. This country was already in possession of great advantages, when a foreign colony came to increase its prosperity.

In the seventh century, the last king of Persia, of the dynasty of the Sanasides, was dethroned by the Mohammedans. Several of his subjects, dissatisfied with the conqueror, took refuge in the province of Sabluſtan, from whence, a century after, they came to the island of Ormus. In a short time they set sail for India, and landed fortunately at Diu. Not contented still with this asylum, they reimbarked; and the waves drove them upon a pleasant shore between Daman and Bacaim. The prince who governed that district consented to receive them, on condition only that they should reveal the mysteries of their faith; that they should lay down their arms, that they should speak the language of the country, that their women should go abroad unveiled, and that they should celebrate their nuptials at the close of the evening, according to the custom of the country. As these stipulations contained nothing repugnant to their religious notions, the people who fled there for protection agreed to them. A piece of ground was allotted them, where they built a town, from whence they soon spread further up the country.

A habit of labour happily contracted by necessity made them prosper. Prudent enough not to interfere with affairs of government or war, they enjoyed a profound tranquillity in the midst of all the revolu-

BOOK IV.

tions that happened from time to time. In conſequence of this circumſpection, and of the affluence in which they lived, their number increaſed conſiderably. They always remained a ſeparate people, diſtinguiſhed by the name of Parſees, never intermarrying with the Indians, and adhering to the religious principles which had obliged them to quit their country. Their tenets were thoſe of Zoroaſter, ſomewhat altered by time, ignorance, and the rapaciouſneſs of the prieſts.

The induſtry and activity of the new inhabitants, communicated itſelf to the hoſpitable nation that had ſo wiſely given them an aſylum. Sugar, corn, indigo, and other productions, were naturalized upon a ſoil, which before had been principally covered with rice grounds. The fruits of the earth, and cattle, were multiplied, varied and brought to perfection. The fields of India diſplayed, for the firſt time, thoſe hedges, encloſures, and other uſeful and rural objects which embelliſh and enrich ſome of our regions. Manufactures made an equal progreſs with cultivation. Cotton aſſumed a more beautiful appearance, and ſilk was at length manufactered in the province. The increaſe of ſubſiſtence, of labour, and of population, extended, in proceſs of time, foreign connections.

The ſplendour of Guzarat excited the ambition of two formidable powers. While the Portugueſe annoyed it on the ſide of the ſea, by the ravages they committed, by the victories they gained, and by the conqueſt of Diu, juſtly eſteemed the bulwark of the kingdom; the Moguls, already maſters of the north of India, and eager to advance toward the ſouthern parts, where trade and riches were to be found, threatened it from the continent.

Badur, a Patan by birth, who then reigned over Guzarat, ſaw how impoſſible it would be for him at once to withſtand two ſuch enemies, equally bent upon his deſtruction. He thought he had leſs to fear from a people whoſe forces were ſeparated from his do-

minions by immenſe ſeas, than from a nation firmly ſettled on the frontiers of his provinces. This conſideration made him determine to be reconciled with the Portugueſe. The conceſſions he made induced them to join with him againſt Akbar, whoſe activity and courage they dreaded little leſs than he did.

This alliance diſconcerted men who thought they had only Indians to deal with. They could not think of engaging with Europeans, who were reputed invincible. The natives, not yet recovered from the conſternation into which theſe conquerors had thrown them, repreſented them to the Mogul ſoldiers as men come down from heaven, or riſen from the waters, of a ſpecies infinitely ſuperior to the Aſiatics, and far ſurpaſſing them in valour, genius, and knowledge. The army, ſeized with a panic, was urging the generals to march back to Delhi, when Akbar, convinced that a prince who undertakes a great conqueſt muſt command his own forces, haſtened to his camp. He did not heſitate to promiſe his troops that they ſhould ſubdue a people enervated by luxury, riches, pleaſures, and the heat of the climate; and that the glory of purging Aſia of that handful of banditti was reſerved for them. The army, thus encouraged, expreſſed their ſatisfaction, and marched on with confidence. They ſoon came to an engagement; the Portugueſe, ill ſeconded by their allies, were ſurrounded and cut to pieces; Badur fled, and never appeared again. All the cities of Guzarat haſtened to open their gates to the conqueror. This fine kingdom, in 1565, became a province of that vaſt empire which was ſoon to ſubdue all Indoſtan.

Under the Mogul government, which was then in its full glory, Guzarat enjoyed more tranquillity than before. This ſtate of ſecurity gave a new impulſe to every individual. All the powers of the mind were unfolded; and every ſpecies of induſtry acquired a degree of improvement before unknown. It became neceſſary to find a ſtaple where all theſe

BOOK IV. treasures were to be collected; and Surat came into possession of this valuable prerogative.

Origin and progress of Surat.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Surat was nothing more than a mean hamlet, consisting of some fishermen's huts, standing upon the river Tapti, at a few miles distance from the ocean. The advantage of its situation drew there some workmen and some merchants. They were plundered three or four times by pirates; and it was to put a stop to these destructive inroads, that a fortress was built in 1524. At this period, the place acquired a degree of importance which had considerably increased, when the Moguls made themselves masters of it. As this was the only maritime town which had then submitted to their yoke, they contracted the habit of providing themselves with all their articles of luxury from thence. On the other hand, the Europeans, who had not any of the great settlements they have since made at Bengal and on the coast of Coromandel, bought most of their Indian merchandise there. They were all collected at this spot, as the people of Surat had taken care to form a navy superior to that of their neighbours.

Their ships, which lasted for ages, were mostly of a thousand or twelve hundred tons burthen. They were built of a very strong wood called Teck. Instead of launching them with a costly apparatus and complicated engines, they let the tide into the dock, as we have done since, and thus set them afloat. The cordage was made of the outward bark of the cocoa tree; it was rougher and less pliable than ours, but at least as strong. If their cotton sails were neither so strong nor so lasting as our hempen ones, they were more easily folded, and less apt to be torn. Instead of pitch, they made use of the gum of a tree called Damar, which was as good or better. The skill of their officers, though but moderate, was sufficient for the seas and the seasons in which they sailed. With regard to their sailors, commonly call-

ed Lascars, the Europeans have found them serviceable in their voyages from one part of India to another. They have even been employed successfully in bringing home into our stormy latitudes such ships as had lost their crews.

When we hardly suspected that commerce was founded on any certain principles, we found that these principles were already known and practised in this part of Asia. Money was to be had there at a low price, and bills of exchange might be obtained for every market in India. Insurances for the most distant navigations were very common. Such was the honesty of these traders, that bags of money ticketed and sealed by the bankers, would circulate for years, without ever being counted or weighed. Fortunes were proportioned to the facility with which they were to be acquired by industry. Those of five or six millions [about 240,000l. on an average] were not uncommon, and some were even more considerable.

Manners of the inhabitants of Surat.

These fortunes were mostly possessed by the Banians, a set of traders noted for their honesty. A few moments were sufficient for them to complete the most important concerns. These were generally transacted in the public markets. The person who wished to sell, announced in few words, and in a low voice, the value of his merchandise. He was answered by another man taking hold of his hand in a concealed manner. The buyer used to signify, by the number of fingers which he bent, or extended, how much less than the price required he meant to give; and thus the bargain was most frequently concluded, without a single word having passed between the parties. In order to ratify it, the contractors used to take hold of each other's hand a second time; and an agreement made with this degree of simplicity was always inviolable. If difficulties arose, a circumstance which very rarely happened, these prudent men preserved, in the most complicated discussions, an evenness of temper, and a

BOOK IV. degree of politeneſs, which it would not be eaſy for us to form any conception of.

Their children, who aſſiſted at all bargains, were early trained to this gentleneſs of manners. Upon the firſt dawning of reaſon, they were initiated into all the myſteries of trade. It was a common thing to ſee a child, of ten or twelve years old, able to ſupply his father's place. What a contraſt, what a difference, between this and the education of our children; and yet, what a diſtance between the attainments of the Indians and the progreſs of our knowledge!

Such of the Banians as had Abyſſinian ſlaves, a circumſtance very uncommon among theſe good-natured men, treated them with a degree of humanity which muſt appear ſingular to us. They brought them up as if they had been of their own family, trained them to buſineſs, advanced them money to enable them to trade for themſelves, and not only ſuffered them to enjoy the profits, but even allowed them to diſpoſe of theſe advantages in favour of their deſcendents, if they had any.

The expences of the Banians were not proportioned to their fortunes. As they were reſtrained by the principles of their religion from eating meat, or drinking ſtrong liquors, they lived upon fruits, and a few plain diſhes. They never departed from this frugality, except upon the ſettlement of their children. On this ſingle occaſion, no expence was ſpared for the entertainment, the muſic, the dancing, and the fireworks. Their whole ambition was to tell how much the wedding had coſt. Sometimes it amounted to a hundred thouſand crowns [12,500l.].

Even their women had a taſte for this ſimplicity of manners; and all their ambition conſiſted in making themſelves agreeable to their huſbands. Perhaps the great veneration, in which they held the nuptial tie, aroſe from the cuſtom of marrying them in their earlieſt infancy. That ſentiment was, in their opi-

nion, the moſt ſacred part of their religion. They never allowed themſelves the leaſt converſation with ſtrangers. Leſs reſerve would not have ſatisfied their huſbands, who could not hear, without aſtoniſhment, of the familiarity that prevailed between the two ſexes in Europe. When they were told, that this freedom was attended with no ill conſequence, they were not convinced; but ſhook their heads, and anſwered by one of their proverbs, which ſignifies, *That if you bring butter too near the fire, you can hardly keep it from melting*.

With different cuſtoms, the Parſees had ſtill a more reſpectable character. They were robuſt, handſome, and indefatigable men, adapted to all kinds of labour, but excelling particularly in the building of ſhips, and in agriculture. Such was their mildneſs and upright conduct, that they were never called up before a magiſtrate for any act of violence, or any fraudulent contract. The ſerenity of their minds was painted on all their features, and in every look; and their converſations was animated by a temperate cheerfulneſs. They delighted in rhymes, and ſeldom ſpoke even about the moſt ſerious affairs, otherwiſe than in verſe. They had no fixed place of worſhip; but they uſed to aſſemble every morning and evening upon the high road, or near a fountain, to adore the riſing and the ſetting ſun. Even the ſight of the leaſt ſpark of fire interrupted all their occupations, and excited their ſenſibility, in the contemplation of that beneficent luminary. Inſtead of buruing the bodies of their dead, as the Indians did, they depoſited them in towers of an extreme height, where they ſerved as food to birds of prey. Their predilection for the followers of their religion, did not prevent them from being moved with the afflictions of all men, whom they aſſiſted with generoſity. Their pity extended itſelf even to animals. One of their moſt favourite inclinations was to buy ſlaves, to give them a good education, and to reſtore them afterwards to liberty. Their number, their union with

BOOK IV.

each other, and their riches, ſometimes rendered them ſuſpicious to government; but theſe prejudices never prevailed for any length of time, againſt the peaceable and regular conduct of theſe good people. The only thing they could be cenſured for, was, a diſguſting uncleanlineſs, under the appearance of the moſt refined neatneſs, and a too frequent uſe of an intoxicating kind of liquor, peculiar to themſelves. Such were the Parſees at their arrival in India; ſuch have they maintained themſelves in the midſt of the revolutions that have ſo frequently overturned the aſylum they had choſen; and ſuch do they ſtill remain.

How widely diſtant were the Moguls from theſe pure and auſtere manners! No ſooner had theſe Mohammedans acquired the poſſeſſion of Surat, than they embarked in multitudes to go to Mecca. Several of theſe pilgrims uſed to ſtop at the Port before their voyage; and a ſtill greater number at their return. The conveniences of life, which were more multiplied in this famous city than in the reſt of the empire, even induced many of the moſt opulent to fix their reſidence there. Their days were ſpent in indolence, or in pleaſure. One part of the morning was employed in taking pains to arch their eyebrows, to ſettle their beards, and to paint their nails, and the inſide of their hands. The reſt of the day was devoted to riding on horſeback, ſmoking, drinking coffee, or perfuming themſelves; or was ſpent in reclining upon beds of roſes, to hear fabulous ſtories recounted, and in cultivating the poppy, a kind of amuſement which had the moſt powerful attractions for them.

The entertainments in which theſe voluptuous men frequently indulged themſelves, in order to prevent the tædium of a too uniform kind of life, were begun by an aſtoniſhing profuſion of refreſhments, ſweetmeats, and the moſt exquiſite perfumes. Theſe quiet amuſements were followed by feats of ſtrength or agility uſually exerciſed by the natives of Bengal.

Theſe were ſucceeded by muſic, which might, perhaps, have been grating to a nice ear, although theſe orientaliſts delighted in it. The night was uſhered in by fireworks of a leſs glaring light than ours, and the reſt of it was exhauſted by ſucceſſive bands of dancers, more or leſs numerous according to the rank or opulence of thoſe in whoſe ſervice they were engaged. When a ſatiety of pleaſures invited to repoſe, a kind of violin was introduced, which, by ſoft, uniform, and frequently repeated ſounds, lulled them to ſleep. The moſt corrupt of them uſed to throw themſelves into the arms of ſome young Abyſſinian ſlave, and employed every artifice practiſed in theſe regions, to heighten this moſt infamous of all paſſions.

The women were never admitted to theſe diverſions, but they had alſo their dances to themſelves, and indulged in other amuſements. The preference which their huſbands generally gave to courtezans, ſtifled in their heart every ſentiment of affection to them, and conſequently of jealouſy among themſelves. Accordingly, they lived together in a tolerable ſtate of harmony. They even went ſo far as to rejoice when any new companion was announced to them, becauſe this was an increaſe of their ſociety. Nevertheleſs, they had a great influence in all important affairs, and a Mogul was almoſt always determined by the advice of his harem. Such of theſe wives as had no children, frequently went out to viſit relations of their own ſex. The reſt might have enjoyed the ſame liberty, had they not preferred the honour of their ſons, which is ſingularly made to depend upon the opinion entertained of the virtue of their mothers. They educated their children themſelves with much care and tenderneſs, and never parted from them, not even when they quitted their father's houſe.

If magnificence and conveniences could ſupply the place of love and ſentiment, a harem would have been a moſt delightful place of reſidence: every thing that could incite agreeable ſenſations, was la-

BOOK IV.

viſhed with profuſion in theſe retreats, impenetrable to man. The pride of the Moguls had even ordained, that the women who ſhould be admitted to viſit them, ſhould be preſented with very rich preſents the firſt time of their coming, and ſhould always meet with a reception agreeable to the voluptuous taſte of theſe climates. The European ladies, whoſe familiarity with the other ſex was revolting to Aſiatic prejudices, and who for that reaſon were thought to be of a very inferior tribe, were ſeldom allowed to penetrate into this kind of ſanctuary. One of them, well known in England by her talents, her graces, and her ſpirit of obſervation, was diſtinguiſhed from the reſt. The preference granted to Mrs. Draper enabled her to ſee and examine every thing. She did not find in theſe unhappy women, living in a ſtate of confinement, that air of diſdain or embarraſſment, which the little opportunity of exerting their faculties might have given them. Their manners appeared to her frank and eaſy; and their converſation was diſtinguiſhed by ſimplicity and ſoftneſs.

Although the other nations ſettled at Surat did not carry every ſpecies of voluptuouſneſs to exceſs, as the Moguls did, yet they were not without their pleaſures, in a city where the public edifices were generally deficient in taſte and ſymmetry. Private houſes had, indeed, no kind of appearance; but in all thoſe belonging to opulent perſons, gardens were ſeen filled with the moſt beautiful flowers; ſubterraneous dwellings contrived againſt the intenſe heats prevailing through part of the year; and ſaloons, where fountains were playing in baſons of marble, and which, by their freſhneſs and murmurings, invited them to ſoft repoſe.

One of the cuſtoms moſt univerſally adopted was bathing; and after the bath, the body was rubbed, or kneaded, as it were, like dough. This operation gave a ſpring to the different parts of the body, and an eaſy circulation to the fluids. The perſon who had undergone it thought himſelf almoſt a new be-

ing. The ſort of harmony which it re-eſtabliſhed throughout all the machine, led to a kind of intoxication, which excited an infinite variety of delightful ſenſations. This cuſtom was ſaid to be brought into India from China; and ſome epigrams of Martial, and declamations of Seneca, ſeem to hint, that it was not unknown to the Romans at the time when they refined upon every pleaſure, as the tyrants who enſlaved thoſe maſters of the world afterwards refined upon every torture.

Deſcription of the *Balliaderes*, more voluptuous at Surat.

There was another pleaſure, ſtill of a higher nature, perhaps, at Surat. This was derived from its female dancers, or *Balliaderes*, a name which the Europeans have always given them, from the Portugueſe.

Numbers of theſe are collected together in ſeminaries of pleaſure. The moſt accompliſhed of theſe ſocieties are devoted to the richeſt and moſt frequented Pagodas. Their deſtination is to dance in the temples on their great feſtivals, and to be ſubſervient to the pleaſures of the Bramins. Theſe prieſts, who have not taken the artful and deceitful vow of renouncing the enjoyment of all pleaſures, in order to have an opportunity of indulging in them more freely, chooſe rather to have women of their own, than at once to defile the ſtate of celibacy or wedlock. They do not invade another man's right by adultery, but are ſo highly jealous of the dancers, whoſe worſhip and vows they ſhare with the gods, that they never ſuffer them, without reluctance, to contribute to the amuſement even of kings and great men.

The riſe of this ſingular inſtitution is not known. Probably one Bramin, who had a concubine, or a wife, aſſociated with another Bramin, who had likewiſe his concubine, or his wife; and, in proceſs of time, the mixture of ſo many Bramins and women occaſioned ſo many acts of infidelity, that the women became common to all thoſe prieſts. Let but a number of ſingle perſons, of both ſexes, be collected

BOOK IV. in a cloiſter, and a commonalty of men and women will ſoon take place.

By this mutual intercourſe jealouſy was probably extinguiſhed; and the women were not uneaſy at the increaſe of their numbers, nor the Bramins at that of their order. It was rather a new conqueſt than a rivalſhip

It is no leſs probable, that, in order to palliate the infamy of this licentiouſneſs in the eyes of the people, all theſe women were conſecrated to the ſervice of the altar; and that the people readily conſented to this kind of ſuperſtition, as it inſured their wives and daughters from ſeduction, by confining the lawleſs deſires of theſe Monks to one particular ſpot.

The contrivance of ſtamping a ſacred character upon theſe courtezans, might poſſibly make parents the more willing to part with their beautiful daughters, and to conſent that they ſhould follow their calling, and devote themſelves to theſe ſeminaries, from whence the ſuperannuated women might return to ſociety without diſgrace: for there is no crime that may not be ſanctified, no virtue that may not be debaſed, by the intervention of the gods. The very notion of a Supreme Being may, in the hands of a crafty prieſt, be made ſubverſive of all morality. He will affirm, not that ſuch a thing is pleaſing to the gods, becauſe it is good; but that ſuch a thing is good, becauſe it is pleaſing to the gods.

The Bramins wanted only to gain another point, in order to complete this inſtitution; which was, to perſuade the people that it was decent, holy, and pleaſing to the gods, to marry a *Balliadere* in preference to all other women, and conſequently to induce them to ſolicit the remains of their debaucheries as a particular mark of favour.

In every city there are other companies, not ſo ſelect as the former, for the amuſement of the rich, and others for their wives. Perſons of every religion, and of every caſt may employ them. There are even

ſtrolling companies of them, conducted by old women, who, having been themſelves trained up in theſe ſeminaries, are promoted in time to the direction of them.

Theſe handſome girls have the cuſtom, as ſingular as it is diſguſtful, of being always followed by an old deformed muſician, whoſe employment is to beat time with an inſtrument of braſs, which the Europeans lately borrowed of the Turks to add to their military muſic, and which in India is called a *tam*. The man who holds it, is continually repeating that word with ſuch vehemence, that by degrees he works himſelf up into dreadful convulſions; while the Balliaderes, intoxicated with the deſire of pleaſing, and the ſweets with which they are perfumed, are at length tranſported beyond their ſenſes.

Their dances are, in general, love pantomimes: the plan, the deſign, the attitudes, the time, the airs, the cadence of theſe ballets, are all expreſſive of this paſſion, with all its raptures and extravagances.

Every thing conſpires to the amazing ſucceſs of theſe voluptuous women; the art and richneſs of their attire, as well as their ingenuity in ſetting off their beauty. Their long black hair falling over their ſhoulders, or braided and turned up, is loaded with diamonds, and ſtuck with flowers. Their necklaces and bracelets are enriched with precious ſtones. Even their noſe-jewels, an ornament which ſhocks us at firſt ſight, has ſomething pleaſing in it, and ſets off all the other ornaments by a certain ſymmetry, the effect of which, though inexplicable, is yet ſenſibly felt by degrees.

Nothing can equal the care they take to preſerve their breaſts, as one of the moſt ſtriking marks of their beauty. To prevent them from growing large or ill-ſhaped, they encloſe them in two caſes, made of an exceeding light wood, which are joined together, and buckled behind. Theſe caſes are ſo ſmooth and ſo ſupple, that they give way to the various attitudes of the body, without being flattened,

BOOK IV.

and without injuring the delicacy of the ſkin. The outſide of theſe caſes is covered with a leaf of gold ſtudded with diamonds. This is certainly one of the moſt refined kind of ornaments, and the beſt calculated to preſerve beauty. They take it off and put it on again with ſingular facility. This covering of the breaſt does not prevent the palpitations, heavings, and tender emotions of it from being perceived: it conceals nothing that can contribute to excite deſire.

Moſt of theſe dancers imagine it an addition to the beauty of their complexion, and the impreſſion of their looks, to trace a black circle round their eyes with a hair bodkin, dipped in the powder of antimony. This borrowed beauty, celebrated by all the eaſtern poets, and which appeared very ſingular at firſt to the Europeans, has at length become perfectly agreeable to them.

The whole life, the whole employment, the whole felicity of the Balliaderes, conſiſts in the art of pleaſing. It is not eaſiy to reſiſt their ſeducing manners. They are even preferred to thoſe beauties of Caſſimere, who fill the ſeraglios of Indoſtan, as the fair Georgians and Circaſſians do thoſe of Iſpahan and Conſtantinople. The modeſty, or rather the reſerve of proud ſlaves, ſequeſtered from the ſociety of men, cannot balance the miraculous arts of theſe expert courtezans.

Extent of the commerce of Surat. Revolutions it has experienced.

They were no where ſo much in repute as at Surat, the richeſt and moſt populous city in India. It began to decline in 1664; and was pillaged by the famous Sevagi, who carried off twenty-five or thirty millions [about 1,200,000l. on an average.] The plunder would have been infinitely greater, had not the Engliſh and Dutch eſcaped the public calamity, by the care they had taken to fortify their factories, and had not the moſt valuable effects been lodged in the caſtle, which was out of the enemy's reach. This loſs made the inhabitants more cautious. They built walls round the city to prevent the like misfortune, the effects of which were removed, when the Engliſh,

in 1686, with ſhameful and inexcuſable rapacity, ſtopped all the ſhips that were fitting out at Surat to be diſpatched to the ſeveral ſeas. This piracy, which laſted three years, deprived this famous mart of almoſt every branch of trade that was not its own peculiar property. The town was nearly reduced to its own natural riches.

Other pirates have ſince infeſted thoſe latitudes, and from time to time diſturbed the trade of Surat. Even the caravans, that carried the merchandiſe to Agra, to Delhi, and all over the empire, were not always ſecured from the attacks of the ſubjects of the independent Rajas, which they met with on the ſeveral roads. A ſingular expedient was formerly contrived for the ſecurity of the caravans, which was, to put them under the protection of a woman or child, of a race eſteemed ſacred by the nations they dreaded. When the banditti appeared, the guardians of the caravans threatened to deſtroy themſelves if they perſiſted in their reſolution of plundering it, and actually did ſo if they did not yield to their remonſtrances. Theſe profligate men, who had not been reſtrained by reſpect of blood held ſacred, were excommunicated, degraded, and caſt out of their tribe. The dread of theſe ſevere puniſhments was ſometimes a check upon avarice; but ſince univerſal commotions have prevailed in Indoſtan, no conſideration can allay the thirſt of gold.

Notwithſtanding all theſe misfortunes, Surat is ſtill a great trading city. The produce of the numberleſs manufactures throughout Guzarat is depoſited in its warehouſes. A great part is carried into the inland countries; the reſt is conveyed to all parts of the globe by continual voyages.

The goods more commonly known are, 1ſt, Dutties, a kind of coarſe unbleached cloth, worn in Perſia, Arabia, Abyſſinia, and the eaſtern coaſt of Africa; and blue linens, which are diſpoſed of in the ſame manner, and are likewiſe ſold to the Engliſh and Dutch for their Guinea trade.

2. The blue and white checks of Cambaya, which

are worn for mantles in Arabia and Turkey: ſome are coarſe, and ſome fine, and ſome even mixed with gold for the uſe of the rich.

3. The white linens of Barokia, ſo well known by the name of Baftas. As they are extremely fine, they make ſummer caftans for the Turks and Perſians. The ſort of muſlin, with a gold ſtripe at each end, with which they make their turbans, is manufactured at the ſame place.

4. The printed callicoes of Amadabat, the colours of which are as bright, as fine, and as durable as thoſe of Coromandel. They are worn in Perſia, in Turkey, and in Europe. The rich people of Java, Sumatra, and the Molucca iſlands, make pagnes and coverlets of theſe chintzes.

5. The gauzes of Bairapour; the blue ones are worn by the common people in Perſia and Turkey for their ſummer clothing, and the red ones by perſons of higher rank. The Jews, who are not allowed by the Porte to wear white, make their turbans of theſe gauzes.

6. Mixed ſtuffs of ſilk and cotton, plain, ſtriped, ſome with ſatin ſtripes, ſome mixed with gold and ſilver. If they were not ſo dear, they would be eſteemed even in Europe for the brightneſs of their colours, and the fine execution of the flowers, though their patterns are ſo indifferent. They ſoon wear out; but this is of little conſequence in the ſeraglios of Turkey and Perſia, where they are uſed.

7. Some are of ſilk, called tapis. Theſe are pagnes of ſeveral colours, much eſteemed in the eaſtern parts of India. Many more would be woven, if it had not been neceſſary to uſe foreign materials, which enhance the price too much.

8. Shauls, very light, warm, and fine cloths, made of the wool of Caſſimere. They are dyed of different colours, ſtriped, and flowered. They are worn for a winter dreſs in Turkey, Perſia, and the more temperate parts of India. With this fine wool, turbans are woven, that are ell-wide, and a little more than three

ells long, which ſell for as much as a thouſand crowns [125l.]. Though this wool be ſometimes manufactured at Surat, the fineſt works of this kind are made at Caſſimere.

Beſide the prodigious quantity of cotton made uſe of in the manufactures of Surat, ſeven or eight thouſand bales at leaſt are annually diſpatched to Bengal. A much greater quantity is ſent to China, Perſia, and Arabia, when the crops are very plentiful. If they are moderate, the overplus is carried down the Ganges, where it is always ſold at a higher price.

Though Surat receives, in exchange for her exports, porcelain from China; ſilk from Bengal and Perſia; maſts and pepper from Malabar; gums, dates, dried fruits, copper, and pearls, from Perſia; perfumes and ſlaves from Arabia; great quantities of ſpices from the Dutch; iron, lead, cloth, cochineal, and ſome hardwares from the Engliſh; the balance is ſo much in her favour, as to bring in yearly twenty-five or twenty-ſix millions of livres [from 1,041,666l. 13s. 4d. to 1,083,333l. 6s, 8d.] in ready money. The profit would be much greater, if the riches of the court of Delhi were not conveyed into another channel.

This balance, however, could never riſe again to what it was when the French ſettled at Surat in 1668. Their leader's name was Caron. He was a merchant of French extraction, who was grown old in the ſervice of the Dutch Company. Hamilton ſays, that this able man, who had ingratiated himſelf with the emperor of Japan, had obtained leave to build a houſe for his maſters on the iſland where the factory ſtood which was under his direction. This building proved to be a caſtle. The natives, who knew nothing of fortification, did not entertain any ſuſpicion of it. They ſurpriſed ſome pieces of cannon that were ſending from Batavia, and informed the court of what was going forward. Caron was ordered to repair to Jeddo, to give an account of his conduct. As he had nothing reaſonable to allege in his vindication, he was treated with great ſeverity and con-

BOOK IV.

tempt. His beard was plucked up by the roots, a fool's cap and coat were put upon him, and in this condition he was expoſed to the inſults of the populace, and baniſhed from the empire. The reception he met with at Java gave him a diſguſt againſt the intereſt he had eſpouſed; and, actuated by revenge, he went over to the French, and became their agent.

Enterpriſe of the French on the iſlands of Ceylon and St. Thomas. Their ſettlement at Pondicherry.

Surat, where they had fixed him, did not anſwer his idea of a chief ſettlement. He diſliked the ſituation; he lamented his being obliged to purchaſe his ſafety by ſubmiſſion; he foreſaw it would be a diſadvantage to carry on trade in competion with richer nations, who knew more, and were in greater eſteem, than themſelves. He wiſhed to find an independent port in the centre of India, or in ſome of the Spice Iſlands, without which he thought it impoſſible for any Company to ſupport itſelf. The Bay of Trinquemale, in the iſland of Ceylon, appeared to him to unite all theſe advantages; and he accordingly ſailed for that place with a powerful ſquadron, which had been ſent him from Europe, under the command of La Haye, who was to act under his direction. The French believed, or feigned to believe, that a ſettlement might be made there without encroaching upon the rights of the Dutch, whoſe property had never been acknowledged by the ſovereign of the iſland, with whom the former had entered into a treaty.

All that was alleged might indeed be true, but the event was not the more ſucceſsful. A project which ought to have been kept a profound ſecret, was divulged; an expedition which ought to have been effected by ſurpriſe, was executed deliberately; and the French were intimidated by a fleet which was not in a condition to fight, and which could not poſſibly have received orders to hazard an engagement. The greater part of the ſhips crews, and of all the land forces, periſhed by want and ſickneſs; ſome men were left in a ſmall fort that had been erected, where they were ſoon compelled to ſurrender. With the remaining few who had ſurvived the hardſhips of this

expedition, the French went in ſearch of proviſions on the coaſt of Coromandel; but finding none either on the Daniſh ſettlement of Tranquebar, or any where elſe, impelled by deſpair, they attacked St. Thomas, where they were informed there was great plenty.

This town, which had long been in a flouriſhing condition, had been built by the Portugueſe above a hundred years before. The king of Golconda, having conquered the Carnatic, did not ſee without regret, ſo important a place in foreign hands; he ſent his generals to attack it in 1662, and they made themſelves maſters of it. The fortifications, though conſiderable and in good repair, did not ſtop the progreſs of the French, who took them by ſtorm in 1672. They were ſoon attacked here, and were forced to ſurrender two years after; becauſe the Dutch, who were at war with Lewis XIV. joined with the Indians to expel them.

This laſt event would have entirely ruined the enterpriſe, after all the expence the government had been at to ſupport the Company, had not Martin been one of the merchants ſent on board La Haye's ſquadron. He collected the remains of the two colonies of Ceylon and St. Thomas, and with them he peopled the little town of Pondicherry, that had been lately ceded to him, and was riſing to a city, when the Company entertained good hopes of a new ſettlement, which they had now an opportunity of forming in India.

The French are invited to Siam. Deſcription of that kingdom.

Some miſſionaries had preached the goſpel at Siam. They had gained the love of the people by their doctrine and by their behaviour. Plain, good-natured, and humane men, without intrigue or avarice, they gave no jealouſy to the government nor to the people; they had inſpired them with reſpect and love for the French in general, and in particular for Lewis XIV.

A Greek, of a reſtleſs and ambitious ſpirit, named Conſtantine Faulkon, in his travels to Siam, had ſo far engaged the affections of the prince, that in a

BOOK IV. ſhort time he raiſed him to the poſt of prime miniſter, or barcalon; an office which nearly anſwers to the ancient *maires* of the palace of France.

Faulkon governed both the people and the king in the moſt deſpotic manner. The prince was weak, a valetudinarian, and had no iſſue. His miniſter conceived a project to ſucceed him; poſſibly to dethrone him. It is well known that theſe attempts are as eaſy and as frequent in abſolute governments, as they are difficult and uncommon in countries where the prince governs by the rules of juſtice; where the origin and meaſure of his authority is regulated by fundamental and immutable laws, which are under the guardianſhip of numbers of able magiſtrates. There the enemies of the ſovereign ſhow that they are enemies of the ſtate; there they find themſelves ſoon thwarted in their deſigns by all the forces of the nation; becauſe, by rebelling againſt the chief, they rebel againſt the laws, which are the ſtanding and unalterable will of the nation.

Faulkon formed the deſign of making the French ſubſervient to his ſcheme, as ſome ambitious men had formerly made uſe of a guard of ſix hundred Japaneſe, who had often diſpoſed of the crown of Siam. He ſent ambaſſadors into France in 1684, to make a tender of his maſter's alliance, to offer ſea-ports to the French merchants, and to aſk for ſhips and troops.

The oſtentatious vanity of Lewis XIV. took advantage of this embaſſy. The flatterers of that prince, who was too much extolled, though he certainly deſerved commendation, perſuaded him, that his fame, ſpread throughout the world, had procured to him the homage of the Eaſt. He was not ſatisfied with the enjoyment of theſe vain honours; but endeavoured to improve the diſpoſitions of the king of Siam to the benefit of the India Company, and ſtill more of the miſſionaries. He ſent out a ſquadron in which there were a greater number of Jeſuits than of traders; and in the treaty which was concluded between

the two kings, the French ambaſſadors, directed by the Jeſuit Tachard, attended much more to the concerns of religion than to thoſe of commerce.

The Company ſtill entertained great hopes of the ſettlement at Siam, and theſe hopes were not ill-grounded,

That kingdom, though divided by a ridge of mountains that is continued till it meets with the rocks of Tartary, is ſo prodigiouſly fruitful, that many of its cultivated lands yield two hundred per cent. Some will even bear plentiful crops ſpontaneouſly. The corn, collected as it was at firſt produced, without care and without trouble, left as it were to nature, falls off and periſhes in the field where it grew, in order to vegetate again in the waters of the ſtream that flows through the kingdom.

There is, perhaps, no country where fruits grow in ſuch plenty and variety, or are ſo wholeſome, as in this delightful ſpot. Some are peculiar to the country; and thoſe which are equally the produce of other countries have a much finer ſmell, and are much higher flavoured, than in any other part of the world.

The earth, always covered with theſe treaſures which are conſtantly ſpringing up afreſh, alſo conceals, under a very ſuperficial ſurface, mines of gold, copper, loadſtone, iron, lead, and calin, a ſpecies of tin, which is highly valued throughout Aſia.

All theſe advantages are rendered uſeleſs by the moſt dreadful tyranny. A prince, corrupted by his power, while he is indulging in his ſeraglio, oppreſſes his people by his caprices, or ſuffers them to be oppreſſed by his indolence. At Siam there are no ſubjects, all are ſlaves. The men are divided into three claſſes: the firſt ſerve as a guard to the monarch, till his lands, and are employed in different manufactures in his palace. The ſecond are appointed to public labours, and to the defence of the ſtate. The third claſs are deſtined to ſerve the magiſtrates, the miniſters, and principal officers of the kingdom.

BOOK IV.

Every Siamese advanced to any eminent post, is allowed a certain number of men who are at his disposal; so that the salaries annexed to great officers are well paid at the court of Siam, because they are not paid in money, but in men, who cost the prince nothing. These unfortunate people are registered at the age of sixteen. Every one on the first summons must repair to the post assigned him, upon pain of being put in irons, or condemned to the bastinado.

In a country where all the men must work for the government during six months in the year, without being paid or subsisted, and during the other six to earn a maintenance for the whole year; in such a country, the very lands must feel the effects of tyranny, and consequently there is no property. The delicious fruits that enrich the gardens of the monarch and the nobles, are not suffered to ripen in those of private men. If the soldiers who are sent out to examine the orchards discover some tree laden with choice fruits, they never fail to mark it for the tyrant's table, or that of his ministers. The owner becomes the guardian of it, and is answerable for the fruit under very severe penalties.

The men are not only slaves to men, but also to the beasts. The king of Siam keeps a great number of elephants. Those of his palace are particularly taken care of, and have extraordinary honours paid to them. The meanest have fifteen slaves to attend them, who are constantly employed in cutting hay, and gathering bananas and sugar-canes for them. The king takes so much pride in these creatures, which are of no real use, that he estimates his power rather by their number than by that of his provinces. Under pretence of feeding these animals well, their attendants will drive them into gardens and cultivated lands, that they may trample upon them, unless the owners will purchase an exemption from these vexations by continual presents. No man would dare to enclose his field against the king's elephants, many

of whom are decorated with honourable titles, and advanced to the highest dignities in the state.

These horrors are revolting to our minds; and yet we have no right to discredit them; we who boast of some philosophy, and of a milder kind of government; and who nevertheless live in a kingdom where the wretched peasant is loaded with irons, if he should dare to mow his meadow, or to disturb his field during the season of the coupling and hatching of the partridges; where he is obliged to leave his vines to the mercy of the rabbits, and suffer his harvest to become a prey to deers, stags, and boars; and where he would be sentenced to the galleys, if he had the boldness to strike, either with his whip or with a stick, any of these voracious animals.

Such various acts of tyranny make the Siamese detest their native country, though they consider it as the best upon earth. Most of them fly from oppression into the forests, where they lead a savage life, infinitely preferable to that of society corrupted by despotism. So great is this desertion, that, from the port of Mergui to Juthia the capital of the empire, one may travel for a week together, without meeting with the least sign of population, through an immense extent of country, well watered, the soil of which is excellent, and still bears the marks of former cultivation. This fine country is now over-run with tigers.

It was formerly inhabited by men. Beside the natives, it was full of settlements that had been successively formed there by the nations situated to the east of Asia. Their inducement was the immense trade carried on there. All historians attest, that in the beginning of the sixteenth century a great number of ships came into these roads every year. The tyranny which prevailed soon after, successively destroyed the mines, the manufactures, and agriculture. All the foreign merchants, and even those of the nation, were involved in the same ruin. The state fell into confusion, and consequently became languid.

BOOK IV.

The French, on their arrival, found it thus reduced. General poverty prevailed, and none of the arts were exercifed; while the people were under the dominion of a defpotic tyrant, who, in attempting to monopolize all the trade, inevitably deftroyed it. The few ornaments and articles of luxury that were confumed at court, and in the houfes of the great, came from Japan. The Siamefe held the Japanefe in high eftimation, and preferred their works to all others.

Advantages which the French might have derived from Siam. The errors which occafioned the lofs of them.

It was no eafy matter to divert them from this attachment, and yet it was the only way of procuring a demand for the produce of French induftry. If any thing could effect this change, it was the Chriftian religion, which the priefts of the foreign miffions had preached to them, and not without fuccefs; but the Jefuits, too much devoted to Faulkon, who began to be odious, abufed the favour they enjoyed at court, and drew upon themfelves the hatred of the people. This odium was transferred from them to their religion. They built churches before there were any Chriftians to frequent them. They founded monafteries, and by thefe proceedings occafioned the common people and the Talapoys to revolt. The Talapoys are the monks of the country; fome of whom lead a folitary life, and others are bufy intriguing men. They preach to the people the doctrines and precepts of Sommona Kodom. That lawgiver of the Siamefe was long honoured as a fage, and has fince been revered as a god, or as an emanation of the deity, a fon of God. A variety of marvellous ftories are told of this man: He lived upon one grain of rice a-day. He pulled out one of his eyes to give to a poor man, having nothing elfe to beftow on him. Another time he gave away his wife. He commanded the ftars, the rivers, and the mountains. But he had a brother, who frequently oppofed his defigns for the good of mankind. God avenged him, and crucified that unhappy brother. This fable had prejudiced the Siamefe againft the religion of a crucified God; and they could not wor-

ſhip Jeſus Chriſt, becauſe he died the ſame death as the brother of Sommona Kodom.

If the French could not carry their commodities to Siam, they could at leaſt gradually inſpire the people with a taſte for them, prepare the way for a great trade with this country, and avail themſelves of that which actually offered, to open connections with all the Eaſt. The ſituation of that kingdom between two gulfs, where it extends one hundred and ſixty leagues along the ſea-coaſt on the one gulf, and about two hundred on the other, would have opened the navigation of all the ſeas in that part of the world. The fortreſs of Bancoc, built at the mouth of the Menan, which had been put into the hands of the French, was an excellent mart for all tranſactions they might have had with China, the Philippines, or any of the eaſtern parts of India. Mergui, the principal port of the kingdom, and one of the beſt in Aſia, which had likewiſe been ceded to them, would have greatly facilitated their trade with the coaſt of Coromandel, and chiefly with Bengal. It ſecured to them an advantageous intercourſe with the kingdoms of Pegu, Ava, Arracan, and Lagos, countries ſtill more barbarous than Siam, but where the fineſt rubies in the world, and ſome gold duſt, are to be found. All theſe countries, as well as Siam, produce the tree which yields that valuable gum, with which the Chineſe and Japaneſe make their varniſh; and whoever is in poſſeſſion of this commodity, may be certain of carrying on a very lucrative trade with China and Japan.

Beſide the advantage of meeting with good ſettlements, which were no expence to the Company, and might throw into their hands a great part of the trade of the Eaſt, they might have brought home from Siam, ivory, logwood, like that which is cut in the bay of Campeachy, a great deal of caſſia, and all the buffalo and deer ſkins that the Dutch formerly brought from thence. They might have grown pepper there, and, poſſibly, other ſpices which were

not to be found in the country, as the people did not underſtand the culture of them, and becauſe the wretched inhabitants of Siam are ſo indifferent to every thing, that nothing ſucceeds with them.

The French paid no regard to theſe objects. The factors of the Company, the officers, and the Jeſuits, were equally ignorant of trade: the whole attention of the latter was taken up in converting the natives, and making themſelves maſters of them. At laſt, after having given but a weak aſſiſtance to Faulkon at the inſtant when he was ready to execute his deſigns, they were involved in his diſgrace; and the fortreſſes of Mergui and Bancoc, defended by French troops, were taken from them by the moſt cowardly of all people.

Views of the French upon Tonquin and Cochinchina. Deſcription of theſe countries.

During the ſhort time that the French were ſettled at Siam, the Company endeavoured to eſtabliſh themſelves at Tonquin. They flattered themſelves that they might trade with ſafety and advantage with a nation which had for about ſeven centuries been inſtructed by the Chineſe. Theiſm prevails among them, which is the religion of Confucius, whoſe precepts and writings are there holden in greater veneration than even in China. But there is not the ſame agreement as in China in the principles of government, religion, laws, opinions, rites, and ceremonies: and though Tonquin has the ſame lawgiver, it is far from having the ſame ſyſtem of morality. We find there neither that reſpect for parents, that love for the prince, thoſe reciprocal affections, nor thoſe ſocial virtues, which are met with in China; nor have they the ſame good order, police, induſtry, or activity.

This nation, which is devoted to exceſſive indolence, and is voluptuous without taſte or delicacy, lives in conſtant diſtruſt of its ſovereigns and of ſtrangers. It is doubtful whether this miſtruſt proceeds from a natural reſtleſſneſs of temper, or whether their ſpirit of ſedition be owing to this circumſtance, that the Chineſe ſyſtem of morality has enlightened the

people without improving the government. Whatever be the progreſs of knowledge, whether it come from the people to the government, or from that to the people, it is neceſſary that both ſhould be enlightened at the ſame time, or elſe the ſtate will be expoſed to fatal revolutions. Accordingly, in Tonquin, there is a continual ſtruggle between the eunuchs who govern, and the people who impatiently bear the yoke. Every thing languiſhes and tends to ruin, in conſequence of theſe diſſenſions; and the calamities muſt increaſe, till the people have compelled their maſters to grow wiſer, or the maſters have rendered their ſubjects quite inſenſible. The Portugueſe and the Dutch, who had attempted to form ſome connections in Tonquin, had been forced to give them up. The French were not more ſucceſsful. No Europeans have ſince carried on that trade, except ſome few merchants of Madras, who have alternately forſaken and reſumed it. They divide with the Chineſe the exportation of copper and ordinary ſilks, the only commodities of any value that country affords.

Cochinchina lay too near to Siam not to draw the attention of the French; and they would probably have fixed there, had they had ſagacity enough to foreſee what degree of ſplendour that riſing ſtate would one day acquire. The Europeans are indebted to a philoſophical traveller for what little they know with certainty of that fine country. The following is the reſult of his obſervations:—

When the French arrived in thoſe diſtant regions, they learned, that, about half a century before, a prince of Tonquin, as he fled from his ſovereign, who purſued him as a rebel, had, with his ſoldiers and adherents, croſſed the river, which ſerves as a barrier between Tonquin and Cochinchina. The fugitives, who were warlike and civilized people, ſoon expelled the ſcattered inhabitants, who wandered about without any ſociety or form of government, or without any law, except that of mutual intereſt, which prompt-

BOOK IV.

ed them not to injure one another. Here they founded an empire upon the basis of agriculture and property. Rice was the food the most easily cultivated, and the most plentiful; upon this article, therefore, the new colonists bestowed their first attention. The sea and the rivers attracted a number of inhabitants to their borders, by the profusion of excellent fish they afforded. Domestic animals were bred in the country; some for food, others for labour. The inhabitants cultivated the trees they were most in want of, such as the cotton for their clothing. The mountains and forests, which could not be cultivated, afforded wild fowl, metals, gums, perfumes, and wood of an excellent kind. These productions served as so many materials, means, and objects of commerce. One hundred galleys were built, which are constantly employed in defending the coasts of the kingdom.

All these several advantages of nature were well bestowed upon a people of a mild and humane disposition, which they partly owe to their women: whether this influence they acquire be owing to their beauty, or whether it be the particular effect of their assiduity and of their skill in business, is not easy to determine: in general we observe, that in the first beginning of all societies, the women are sooner civilized than the men. Even their weakness, and their sedantary life, their being more taken up with various details, and with cares of a less important nature, furnish them sooner with that knowledge and experience, and incline them to those domestic attachments, which are the first promoters and strongest ties of society. This is, perhaps, the reason why, in many savage nations, the women are intrusted with the administration of civil government, which is but a higher degree of domestic economy. So long as the state is but as one great family, the women are capable of undertaking the management of it. Then, undoubtedly, the people are happiest, especially in a climate where nature has left but little for man to do.

Such is the climate of Cochinchina. Accordingly, the people, though but imperfectly civilized, enjoy that happineſs which might excite the envy of more improved ſocieties. They have neither robbers nor beggars. Every one is at liberty to live at his own houſe, or at his neighbour's. A traveller freely enters a houſe in any village, ſits down to table, eats and drinks, without being invited or aſked any queſtions, and then goes away without acknowledging the civility. He is a man, and therefore a friend and relation of the family. If he were a foreigner, he would excite more curioſity, but would be equally welcome.

Theſe cuſtoms are the relics of the government of the firſt ſix kings of Cochinchina, and derived from the original contract entered into between the nation and their leader, before they croſſed the river that divides Tonquin from Cochinchina. Theſe men were weary of oppreſſion. They dreaded the like calamity, and therefore took care to guard againſt the abuſe of authority, which is ſo apt to tranſgreſs its due limits, if not kept under ſome reſtraint. Their chief, who had ſet them an example of liberty, and taught them to revolt, promiſed them that felicity which he himſelf choſe to enjoy; that of a juſt, mild, and parental government. He cultivated with them the land in which they had all taken refuge. He never demanded any thing of them, except an annual and voluntary contribution, to enable him to defend the nation againſt the tyrant of Tonquin, who, for a long time, purſued them beyond the river which ſeparated them from him.

This primitive contract was religiouſly obſerved for upwards of a century, under five or ſix ſucceſſors of that brave deliverer: but at laſt it has been infringed. The reciprocal and ſolemn engagement between the king and his people is ſtill renewed every year, in the face of heaven and earth, in a general aſſembly of the whole nation, collected in an open field, where the oldeſt man preſides, and where the king only

BOOK IV.

aſſiſts as a private perſon. He ſtill honours and protects agriculture, but does not, like his predeceſſors, ſet the example of labour to his ſubjects. When he ſpeaks of them, he ſtill ſays, *they are my children;* but they are no longer ſo. His courtiers have ſtyled themſelves his ſlaves, and have given him the pompous and ſacrilegious title of *king of heaven.* From that moment, men muſt have appeared to him but as ſo many inſects creeping on the ground. The gold which he has taken out of the mines, has put a ſtop to agriculture. He has deſpiſed the homely roof of his anceſtors, and would build a palace. Its circumference has been marked out, and is a league in extent. Thouſands of cannon planted round the walls of this palace, make it formidable to the people. A deſpotic monarch reſides there, who in a ſhort time will be ſecluded from the eyes of the people; and this concealment, which characteriſes the majeſty of eaſtern kings, will ſubſtitute the tyrant to the father of the nation.

The diſcovery of gold has naturally brought on that of taxes; and the adminiſtration of the finances will ſoon take place of civil legiſlation and ſocial contract. Contributions are no longer voluntary, but extorted. Deſigning men go to the king's palace, and craftily obtain the privilege of plundering the provinces. With gold they at once purchaſe a right of committing crimes and the privilege of impunity; they bribe the courtiers, elude the vigilance of the magiſtrates, and oppreſs the huſbandman. The traveller already ſees, as he paſſes along, fallow grounds, and whole villages forſaken by their inhabitants. This *king of heaven,* like the gods of Epicurus, careleſsly ſuffers plagues and calamities to vex the land. He is ignorant of the ſufferings and diſtreſſes of his people, who will ſoon fall into a ſtate of annihilation, like the ſavages whoſe territories they now poſſeſs. All nations governed by deſpotiſm muſt inevitably periſh in this manner. If Cochinchina ſhould relapſe into that ſtate of confuſion out of which it emerged

about a hundred and fifty years ago, it will be wholly disregarded by the navigators who now frequent the ports of that kingdom. The Chinese, who carry on the greatest trade there, get in exchange for their own commodities, wood for small work, and timber for building houses and ships.

They also export from thence an immense quantity of sugar, the raw at four livres [3s. 4d.] a hundred weight, the white at eight [6s. 8d.], and sugarcandy at ten [8s. 4d.]: very good silk, satins, and pitre, the fibres of a tree, not unlike the banana, which they fraudulently mix in their manufactures: black and ordinary tea, which serves for the consumption of common people: and such excellent cinnamon, that it sells three or four times dearer than that of Ceylon. There is but a small quantity of this; as it grows only upon one mountain, which is always surrounded with guards. Excellent pepper is another article; and such pure iron, that they work it as it comes out of the mine, without smelting: gold of three and twenty carrats, which is found there in greater plenty than in any other part of the East: aloes wood, which is more or less esteemed as it is more or less resinous. The pieces that contain most of this resin are commonly taken from the heart, or from the root of the tree. They are called calunbac, and are always sold for their weight in gold to the Chinese, who account them the highest cordial in nature. They are carefully preserved in pewter boxes, to keep them from drying. When they are to be administered, they are ground upon a marble, with such liquids as are best suited to the disorder they are intended to remove. The inferior kind of aloes wood, which always sells for a hundred livres [4l. 3s. 4d.] a pound at least, is carried to Persia, Turkey, and Arabia. They use it to perfume their clothes, and sometimes their apartments, upon very extraordinary occasions, and then they mix it with amber. It is also employed for another purpose. A custom prevails among these nations, when they are desirous of showing their visitors

great marks of civility, to preſent them with pipes, then with coffee and ſweatmeats. When converſation begins to grow languid, the ſherbet is brought in, which is looked upon as a hint to depart. As ſoon as the ſtranger riſes to go away, they bring in a little pan with aloes wood, and perfume his beard, ſprinkling it with roſe water.

Though the French, who had ſcarce any thing elſe to bring but cloth, lead, gunpowder, and brimſtone, were obliged to trade with Cochinchina chiefly in money, yet they were under a neceſſity of purſuing this trade in competition with the Chineſe. This inconvenience might have been obviated by the profit that would have been made upon goods ſent to Europe, or ſold in India; but it is now too late to attempt it. Probity and honeſty, the eſſentials of an acting and laſting trade, are forſaking theſe regions, which were formerly ſo flouriſhing, in proportion as the government becomes arbitrary, and conſequently unjuſt. In a ſhort time no greater number of ſhips will be ſeen in their harbours than in thoſe of the neighbouring ſtates, where they were ſcarcely known.

However this may be, the French Company, driven from Siam, and without hopes of ſettling at the extremities of Aſia, began to regret their factory at Surat, where they dared not appear again, ſince they had left it without paying their debts. They had loſt the only market they knew of for their cloths, their lead, and their iron; and they were continually at a loſs in the purchaſe of goods to anſwer the capricious demands of the mother-country, and the wants of the colonies. By fulfilling all their former engagements, they might have recovered the privilege they had forfeited. The Mogul government, which would have wiſhed to ſee a greater number of ſhips reſorting to Surat, often ſolicited the French to ſatisfy theſe claims; for they preferred them to the Engliſh, who had purchaſed of the court an exemption from all duties. Whether it were for want of honeſty, of ſkill, or of means, certain it is that the Company

never could remove the reproach they had incurred. They confined their whole attention to the fortifying of Pondicherry, when they were ſuddenly prevented by a bloody war, which had its origin in remote cauſes.

The French loſe and recover Pondicherry, their principal ſettlement.

The northern Barbarians, who had overturned the Roman empire, that was miſtreſs of the world, eſtabliſhed a form of government which would not admit of augmenting their conqueſts, and kept every ſtate within its natural limits. The abolition of the feudal laws, and the alterations conſequent upon it, ſeemed to tend a ſecond time to eſtabliſh a kind of univerſal monarchy; but the Auſtrian power, weakened by the great extent of its poſſeſſions, and their diſtance from each other, could not ſubvert the bulwarks that were raiſing againſt it. After a whole century paſſed in conteſts, hopes, and diſappointments, it was forced to yield to a nation, whoſe ſtrength, poſition, and activity, rendered her more formidable to the liberties of Europe. Richelieu and Mazarine began this revolution by their intrigues. Turenne and Condé completed it by their victories. Colbert ſettled it by the introduction of arts, and of all kinds of induſtry. If Lewis XIV. who may be ſaid to have been not, perhaps, the greateſt monarch of his age, but one who beſt ſupported the dignity of the throne, had been more moderate in the exerciſe of his power, and the ſenſe of his grandeur, it is difficult to determine how far he might have carried his good fortune. His vanity proved detrimental to his ambition. After bending his own ſubjects to his will, he wanted to exert the ſame power over his neighbours. His pride raiſed him more enemies, than his influence and his genius could ſupply him with allies and reſources. He was delighted with the flatteries of his panegyriſts and courtiers, who promiſed him univerſal monarchy; and the pleaſure he took in theſe adulations, contributed ſtill more than the extent of his power, to inſpire a dread of univerſal conqueſt and ſlavery. The diſtreſſes and invectives of his prote-

BOOK IV. ſtant ſubjects, diſperſed by a tyrannical fanaticiſm, completed the hatred he had incurred by his ſucceſſes, and by the abuſe he had made of his proſperity.

The Prince of Orange, a man of a ſteady, upright diſpoſition, and of a penetrating judgment, endowed with every virtue that is conſiſtent with ambition, became the chief inſtigator of all theſe reſentments, which he had long fomented by his negotiations and his emiſſaries. France was attacked by the moſt formidable confederacy recorded in hiſtory, and yet ſhe was conſtantly, and in all parts, triumphant.

She was not ſo ſucceſsful in Aſia as in Europe. The Dutch firſt endeavoured to prevail upon the natives to attack Pondicherry, which they could never be compelled to reſtore. The Indian prince, to whom they applied for that purpoſe, was not to be bribed to agree to ſo perfidious a propoſal: his conſtant anſwer was, *The French have bought that place, it would be unjuſt to turn them out.* What the Raja refuſed to do, the Dutch did themſelves: they beſieged the town in 1693, and were obliged to reſtore it at the peace of Ryſwick, in a much better condition than they found it.

Martin was again appointed director, and managed the affairs of the Company with that wiſdom, ſkill, and integrity, which was expected from him. That able and virtuous merchant invited many new ſettlers to Pondicherry, and made the place agreeable to them, by the good order he maintained there, and by his moderation and juſtice. He acquired the favour of the neighbouring princes, whoſe friendſhip was of conſequence to a weak and infant ſettlement. He choſe or formed proper perſons, whom he ſent to the markets of Aſia, and to the ſeveral princes of that empire. He had perſuaded the French, that as they were come laſt to India, that as they found themſelves there in a weak condition, and could not expect any aſſiſtance from their own country, they had no other way of ſucceeding, but by inſpiring the

natives with a favourable opinion of their character. He induced them to lay aſide that levity, and thoſe contemptuous airs, which ſo often make their nation inſufferable to ſtrangers. They grew modeſt, gentle, and attentive to buſineſs; they learned the art of behaving ſuitably to the genius of the ſeveral nations, and to particular circumſtances. Thoſe who did not confine themſelves to the Company's ſervice, frequenting different courts, became acquainted with the places where the fineſt ſtuffs were manufactured, the ſtaples where the choiceſt commodities were to be met with, and in ſhort, with all the particulars relative to the inland trade of every country.

All that Martin had it in his power to accompliſh, was to lay the foundation of future ſucceſs to the Company, by the good opinion he gave of the French, by the pains he took to train up agents, by the informations he gained, and by the good order he maintained in Pondicherry, which daily acquired new inhabitants; but all this was not ſufficient to reſtore the declining ſtate of the Company, ſubject from its infancy to ſuch diſorders as muſt at length certainly deſtroy it.

Decline of the French Company, and the cauſe of it.

His firſt plan was to eſtabliſh a great empire at Madagaſcar. A ſingle voyage carried over ſixteen hundred and eighty-eight perſons, who were made to expect a delightful climate and a rapid fortune, and found nothing but famine, diſcord and death.

So unfortunate a beginning diſcouraged the adventurers from an undertaking, which they had entered upon merely with a view to follow the example of others, or in compliance with ſolicitations. The owners of ſhares had not made good their payments with ſo much punctuality as is required in commercial affairs. The government, which had engaged to advance, without intereſt, a fifth part of the ſums the Company were to receive, and which as yet was only bound to furniſh two millions [83,333l. 6s. 8d.], again drew the ſame ſum out of the public treaſury, in hopes of ſupporting the work

BOOK IV. it had begun. Some time after, its generoſity was carried ſtill further, in making a free gift of what at firſt was only lent.

This encouragement from the miniſtry could not, however, enable the Company to proceed in their deſigns. They were forced to confine them to Surat and Pondicherry; and to abandon their ſettlements at Bantam, Rajapore, Tilſeri, Mazulipatam, Gombroon, and Siam. No doubt they had too many factories, and ſome were ill ſituated; but the inability they were under of ſupporting them, was the only reaſon that they were abandoned.

Soon after this, it became neceſſary to make further advances. In 1682, they gave permiſſion indiſcriminately to French ſubjects and foreigners to trade to the Eaſt Indies for five years, on the Company's ſhips paying the freight that ſhould be agreed upon; and on condition that the goods brought home ſhould be depoſited in the Company's warehouſes, ſold at the ſame time with theirs, and be ſubject to a duty of five per cent. The public ſo eagerly came into this propoſal, that the directors entertained great hopes from the increaſe of theſe ſmall profits, which would be conſtant without any riſque. But the proprietors, leſs ſenſible of theſe moderate advantages, than jealous of the great profits made by the free traders, in two years time obtained a repeal of this regulation, and their charter remained in full force.

To ſupport this monopoly with ſome decency, a fund was wanting. In 1684, the Company obtained from government a call upon all the proprietors, amounting to a fourth part of their property; and in caſe any of them failed to pay the ſum required, their whole ſhare was to be made over to thoſe who ſhould pay it for them, after having reimburſed them a fourth of their capital. Whether from perverſeneſs, from particular motives, or from inability, many did not pay, ſo that their ſhares loſt three fourths of their original value; and, to the diſgrace of the na-

tion, there were men barbarous and unjuſt enough to enrich themſelves with their ſpoils.

An expedient ſo diſhonourable enabled them to fit out a few ſhips for Aſia; but new wants were ſoon felt. Their cruel ſituation, which continually grew worſe, put them upon demanding of the proprietors, in 1697, the reſtitution of the dividends of ten and twenty per cent. which they had received in 1687 and 1691. So extraordinary a propoſal raiſed a general clamour. The Company were obliged to have recourſe to the uſual method of borrowing. Theſe loans became more burdenſome, the more they were multiplied, as the ſecurity was more precarious.

As the Company was in want both of money and credit, the emptineſs of their coffers put it out of their power to afford thoſe advantages, and that encouragement to the merchant in India, without which he will neither work nor ſet others to work. This inability reduced the French ſales to nothing. It is demonſtrable, that from 1664 to 1684, that is, in the ſpace of twenty years, the ſum total of their produce did not exceed nine millions one hundred thouſand livres [379,166l. 13s. 4d.]

To theſe had been added other abuſes. The conduct of the adminiſtrators and agents for the Company had not been properly directed, or carefully looked into. The capital had been broken into, and dividends paid out of the ſtock, which ought only to have ariſen from the profits. The leaſt brilliant and leaſt proſperous of all reigns, had exhibited a model for a commercial company. The trade to China, the eaſieſt, the ſafeſt, and the moſt advantageous that is carried on with Aſia, had been given up to a particular body of merchants.

The bloody war of 1689, added to the calamities of the India Company, even by the very ſucceſſes of France. Swarms of privateers, fitted out from the ſeveral harbours in the kingdom, annoyed, by their vigilance and bravery, the trade of Holland and England. In their numberleſs prizes were found a pro-

BOOK IV.

digious quantity of India goods, which were retailed at a low price. The Company, who by this competition were forced to ſell under prime coſt, endeavoured to find out ſome expedient to ſave themſelves from this danger, but could think of none that was reconcileable with the intereſt of the privateers; nor did the miniſter think proper to ſacrifice an uſeful ſet of men, to a body which had ſo long wearied him with their neceſſities and complaints.

Beſide theſe, the Company had many more cauſes of diſcontent. The financiers had ſhown an open hatred for them, and were continually oppoſing or confining them. Supported by thoſe vile aſſociates which they always have at court, they endeavoured to put an end to the Indian trade, under the ſpecious pretence of encouraging the home manufactures. The government was at firſt afraid of being expoſed to reproach, by departing from the principles of Colbert, and repealing the moſt ſolemn edicts: but the farmers of the revenue found means to render thoſe privileges uſeleſs, which the miniſtry would not aboliſh, and the Company no longer enjoyed, without being abſolutely deprived of them.

Heavy duties were ſucceſſively laid upon all India goods. Half a year ſeldom paſſed without ſome new regulation, ſometimes to allow, ſometimes to prohibit, the uſe of theſe commodities: there was a continued ſcene of contradictions in a part of adminiſtration, that would have required ſteady and invariable principles. All theſe variations gave the Europeans reaſon to think, that trade would with difficulty be eſtabliſhed in a kingdom where all depends upon the caprices of a miniſter, or the intereſt of thoſe who govern.

The conduct of an ignorant and corrupt adminiſtration, the levity and impatience of the proprietors, the intereſted views of the comptrollers of finance, the oppreſſive ſpirit of the treaſury, joined to other cauſes, had prepared the ruin of the Company. The miſeries of the war, carried on for the Spaniſh ſucceſſion, haſtened their deſtruction.

Every resource was exhausted. The most sanguine saw no prospect of their being able to send out a fleet. Besides, if, by unexpected good fortune, some few weak vessels should be fitted out, it was to be feared they might be seized in Europe, or in India, by disappointed creditors, who must necessarily be exasperated. These powerful motives determined the Company, in 1707, to consent that some rich merchants should send their own ships to India, upon condition that they should allow the Company fifteen per cent. profit upon the goods they should bring home, and the right of taking such share in those ships as their circumstances should admit of. Soon after this, they were even reduced to make over the whole and exclusive exercise of their privilege to some privateers of St. Malo, still reserving the same concession, which for some years past had in a certain degree kept them from ruin.

Notwithstanding this desperate situation, in 1714 they solicited the renewal of their charter, which was nearly expired, and which they had enjoyed for half a century. Although they had none of their capital left, and that their debts amounted to ten millions [416,666l. 13s. 4d.], yet, the ministry, who did not know, or would not perceive, that measures more prudential might be adopted, granted them an indulgence for ten years longer. This new regulation was thwarted by the most incredible revolution that the finances of the kingdom ever experienced; the cause and effects of which will be more readily comprehended by those who will take the trouble to follow us in our review of the most distant periods of the monarchy.

Revolutions which have happened in the finances of France since the earliest times of the monarchy.

We are entirely unacquainted with the manner in which the primitive Gauls supplied the several wants of the confederate bodies of which they were members. Their descendents, under the dominion of the Romans, paid no other tax than the fifth of the fruit of their trees, and the tenth of the produce of their harvests, in kind.

This impost was abolished at the invasion of the

BOOK IV. Franks, who did not ſubſtitute any other in lieu of it. The ſovereign, for his private expences, as well as for the exigences of the ſtate, had no other revenue than that which he acquired from his lands, which were extenſive and numerous. They were covered with woods, ponds, breeds of horſes, cattle, and ſlaves, under the conduct of an active director, whoſe buſineſs it was to maintain order, to encourage induſtry, and to enſure plenty. The court went to live ſucceſſively upon theſe domains, which were entirely laid out in uſeful productions; and what they did not conſume was ſold for other purpoſes. The carriages wanted for the journeys of the prince, were furniſhed by the people, and the nobles ſupplied their ſovereign with a reſidence and proviſions. It was cuſtomary to make him a preſent of greater or leſs value at his departure; and this teſtimony of regard was afterwards changed into an impoſt, under the title of *droit de gîte* *, when the heads of the ſtate were diſguſted of this wandering life. With theſe few reſources, and ſome other ſuccours, always of a trifling nature, which were granted (though very ſeldom) in the martial aſſemblies of the nation, the ſovereign contrived ſtill to build magnificent churches, to found rich biſhoprics, to repel formidable enemies, and to make important conqueſts.

At the beginning of the eighth century, Charles Martel, the Mayor of the palace, thought theſe funds inſufficient for the defence of the kingdom, violently attacked by the Saracens, who were formidable from their numbers, their bravery, and their victories. It was the idea of this famous depoſitary of the royal authority, that a war againſt the infidels was to be maintained by holy property; and without any of thoſe precautions which it has ſince been neceſſary to have recourſe to, and which have even been frequently employed without effect, he ſeized upon the riches of the church, which were immenſe. If the clergy flattered themſelves that peace would reinſtate

* Tax of reſidence.

them in their poſſeſſions, they were diſappointed in their expectations. The ſovereigns remained maſters of the richeſt biſhoprics, the nobles of the beſt abbeys, and the gentlemen of the moſt conſiderable benefices. They became ſo many fiefs, the poſſeſſors, or rather perhaps the uſurpers of which, were conſtrained to a military ſervice proportioned to the value of their poſſeſſions. At firſt they were holden only for life; but they afterwards became hereditary, upon the decline of Charlemagne's family. They were then introduced in the courſe of circulation, as all other properties are. They were given away, ſold, or diſtributed. A living was frequently the dowry of a young perſon who uſed to farm the tenths, and the caſual profits of it.

The firſt kings of the third race ſuffered themſelves to be perſuaded that it was a duty of religion, as well as a point of juſtice, to reſtore to the ſanctuary what had been purloined from it. The ſacrifice was ſo much the greater, as theſe princes could not expect any aſſiſtance from a nation that was parcelled out, and which held no more aſſemblies; and as they had nothing remaining of their ancient domain, except what was ſituated in the circuit of the confined territory that had been left immediately at their own diſpoſal, when the government became entirely feudal. The Jews were moſt commonly the perſons, who uſed to ſupply the deficiency which theſe revolutions had occaſioned in the royal coffers.

Thirty-ſeven years after the death of the Meſſiah, Titus attacked and took Jeruſalem. Thouſands of Jews periſhed in the ſiege; a great number were reduced to ſlavery, and the reſt of the nation was diſperſed. Some of them paſſed over into Gaul, where they experienced different treatment, according to times and circumſtances.

Sometimes the Jews purchaſed the right of forming a diſtinct and ſeparate people in the ſtate. They had then their own tribunals, a ſeal that was peculiar to them, burying places without the gates of the

cities, ſynagogues in which they were allowed to pray only in a low voice, and a mark upon their clothes, which rendered it impoſſible not to know them.

If the intention ſometimes prevailed of forcing them to turn Chriſtians, they were more frequently prohibited from it. A Jew who changed his religion, was ſubject to a penalty, and his eſtates were confiſcated. He was thus deprived of every thing, becauſe there was no longer any pretence for loading him with taxes.

Moſt commonly, the nation was left a prey to the uſurious dealings of theſe iniquitous men: but on ſome occaſions it was forbidden to hold any intercourſe with them. It was prohibited by law to hire any Jews for ſervants, to hold any leaſe of them, to put any truſt in their phyſicians, to ſuckle, or even to rear their children.

They were often accuſed of having poiſoned the wells, of having maſſacred the children, and of having crucified a man on the memorable day of Good-Friday. It was by gold alone that they were able to clear themſelves of all theſe atrocious imputations, equally devoid of truth and probability.

The ſpirit of tyranny often loaded them with chains. Their perſons, their eſtates, and their goods, all belonged to the lord of the place where they dwelt. He might purſue them if they changed their reſidence, and the ſovereign himſelf had no right to detain them whenever they were claimed. Theſe kinds of ſlaves were conſidered as an article of trade; they were ſold, either ſeparately, or with the land, at a greater or leſs price, according to their reſpective talents and induſtry.

In ſome inſtances they were compelled to purchaſe their freedom. Theſe low-minded men would have preferred a ſtate of ſlavery which did not prevent them from acquiring riches, to an independence by which they were to be deprived of them; but the liberty of choice was not allowed to them. They were forced to ſubmit, either to expire in torments,

or to drag from the bowels of the earth the treasures they had concealed there.

When these insatiable leeches had devoured the substance of the whole state, they were made to disgorge their plunder, and then exiled. In order to get leave to renew their depredations, they sacrificed part of the treasure they had saved from the general wreck, and made use of the rest in regaining still more than had been taken from them.

Though the barons had more or less a share in the vexations with which the Jews were oppressed, yet the sovereigns, upon whom this perverse race more particularly depended, always derived the principal advantages from them. It was by means of this fatal and odious resource that they supported for some time a feeble and contested authority. In after-times, the debasing of the coin furnished them with fresh assistance.

The ancient governments were very far from making any advantage of their coin. The coinage was always carried on at the expence of the state; and it is a matter of uncertainty which were the people who first laid a tax upon this universal object of exchange. If this fatal example was given by France, the kings of the first and second race must have derived little advantage from this pernicious innovation; because the payments were made, as among the Romans, with metals given by the weight; and because the use of specie was adopted only in the details of commerce. This custom became afterwards considerably less prevalent; and the sovereigns were still more inclined to increase a tax, which was every day becoming more advantageous to them. In a little time they went much further, and did not scruple to commit the most flagrant act of dishonesty, in altering the value of the coin, at pleasure, or according to their necessities. The specie was continually undergoing a fresh melting, and was always mixed with very base alloy.

It was with these odious succours; with the reve-

BOOK IV.

nue of a territory extremely limited; with ſome fiefs, which either became vacant or were confiſcated; with ſome voluntary offerings, which were therefore ſtyled gifts of benevolence; with ſome taxes exacted from the barons, but which were rather tokens of ſubmiſſion than real impoſts; it was, in a word, by theſe means, that the crown was ſupported, and that its power even continued increaſing, during all the time that it had no other enemies to contend with, except vaſſals more feeble than itſelf. Wars at that period laſted no longer than a few weeks; the armies were not numerous; the military ſervice was performed without reward; and the expences of the court were ſo inconſiderable, that, till the fatal reign of Charles VI. they never exceeded 94,000 livres [3916l. 13s. 4d.].

But no ſooner had the epidemic rage of the cruſades drawn the French far away from their frontiers; no ſooner had foreign enemies made powerful inroads into France, than it became neceſſary to eſtabliſh regular and conſiderable funds. The ſovereigns would have been very deſirous of taking upon themſelves the regulation of theſe contributions; and attempted it more than once. They were forewarned of theſe uſurpations by the remonſtrances of enlightened perſons, and compelled to give them up by the revolt of the people. They were obliged to acknowledge that this authority belonged to the nation aſſembled, and to that alone. They even made oath at their coronation, that this ſacred and unalienable right ſhould be for ever reſpected; and this oath was a reſtraint upon them for ſeveral centuries.

During all the time that the crown had no other revenue than the produce of its domains, the collecting of the public treaſury had been allotted to the ſeneſchals and bailiffs, each in their reſpective departments; ſo that power, the adminiſtration of juſtice, and the diſtribution of finance, were all united under one common head. When taxes were general throughout the kingdom, it became neceſſary to ſettle

a new arrangement of matters. Whether these taxes bore upon the person, or upon the houses of the citizens; whether individuals were required to give up the fifth or the tenth of their harvests, and the fiftieth or the hundredth parts of their effects, moveable or immoveable; or whether other calculations, more or less fortunate, were made; still there was a necessity to have a multiplicity of agents to collect these different tributes; and, unfortunately for the state, these agents were sought for in Italy, where the art of squeezing the people had already made an immense progress.

These financiers, who were known by the name of Lombards, gave early proofs of a genius fertile in fraudulent contrivances. Numberless and fruitless attempts were made, at different times, to put a stop to their insatiable cupidity. No sooner was one abuse suppressed, than it was succeeded by another of a different kind. If these infamous plunderers were sometimes prosecuted with rigour by the hand of authority, they found an effectual support from some powerful persons, whose protection and influence they had purchased. At length, however, their enormities were carried to such a height, that no protection could save them. The advances which these pernicious strangers had made to government and to individuals, were confiscated; they were deprived of the immense treasures they had heaped up, and were banished from the kingdom, into which they ought never to have been admitted. After their expulsion, the general assembly of the states, which regulated the subsidies, took upon themselves to collect them; and this arrangement continued till the time of Charles VII. who first ventured to settle a tax without the consent of the nation, and who appropriated to himself the right of having all the imposts collected by his own delegates.

Under the reign of Lewis XII. the public revenue, which had gradually increased, amounted to seven millions six hundred and fifty thousand livres [318,750l.].

BOOK IV.

The marc of ſilver was then valued at eleven livres [9s. 2d.], and the marc of gold at one hundred and thirty [5l. 8s. 4d.]. This ſum anſwered to thirty-ſix millions of our livres [1,500,000l.] at this day.

At the death of Francis I. the treaſury received fifteen millions ſeven hundred and thirty thouſand livres [655,416l. 13s. 4d.]; the marc of ſilver being then valued at fifteen livres [12s. 6d.], and the marc of gold at one hundred and ſixty-five [6l. 17s. 6d.]; this anſwered to fifty-ſix millions of our livres [2,333,333l. 6s. 8d.]. From this ſum, ſixty thouſand four hundred and ſixteen livres, three ſols, four deniers [2517l. 6s. 8½d.], were to be deducted for the perpetual annuities created by that prince, and which, at eight and a half per cent. anſwered to a capital of ſeven hundred and twenty-five thouſand livres [30,208l. 6s. 8d.]. This was an innovation; not but that ſome of his predeceſſors had been acquainted with the fatal reſource of loans; but this had been always upon the ſecurity of their agents, and the ſtate had never been concerned in them.

A ſeries of civil wars, of acts of fanaticiſm, of depredations, of crimes, and of anarchy, during a ſpace of forty years, plunged the finances of the kingdom into a ſtate of diſorder, from which none but a Sully could have recovered them. This economical, enlightened, virtuous, indefatigable, and bold miniſter, reduced to the amount of ſeven millions [291,666l. 13s. 4d.] of annuities, leſſened the taxes by three millions [125,000l.] and left the ſtate twenty-ſix millions [1,083,333l. 6s. 8d.], with the burden only of ſix millions twenty-five thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty-ſix livres, two ſols, ſix deniers [about 251,069l. 8s. 5d.] in annuities; conſequently, when all charges were deducted, twenty millions of livres [833,333l. 6s. 8d.] entered the royal treaſury; fifteen millions five hundred thouſand [645,833l. 6s. 8d.] were ſufficient for the public expences, and the ſavings amounted to four millions five hundred thouſand

livres [187,500l.]. The value of ſilver was then twenty-two livres [18s. 4d.] the marc. BOOK IV.

The compelled retreat of this great man, after the tragical end of the beſt of kings, was a calamity which we ſtill have cauſe to regret. The court immediately indulged itſelf in profuſions which were unparalleled in the monarchy; and the miniſters afterwards formed enterpriſes, to which the powers of the nation were not adequate. The treaſury was again exhauſted by this double principle of unavoidable confuſion. In 1661, the taxes amounted to eighty-four millions two hundred and twenty-two thouſand and ninety-ſix livres [3,509,254l.]: but the debts abſorbed fifty-two millions three hundred and ſeventy-ſeven thouſand one hundred and ſeventy-two livres [2,182,382l. 3s. 4d.]. There remained, therefore, for the public expences, no more than thirty-one millions eight hundred and forty-four thouſand nine hundred and twenty-four livres [1,326,871l. 16s. 8d.], a ſum evidently inſufficient for the exigences of the ſtate. Such was the ſituation of the finances, when the adminiſtration of them was intruſted to Colbert.

This miniſter, whoſe name is become ſo celebrated among all nations, raiſed, in 1683, which was the laſt year of his life, the revenues of the monarch whom he ſerved, to one hundred and ſixteen millions eight hundred and ſeventy-three thouſand four hundred and ſeventy-ſix livres [4,869,728l. 3s. 4d.]. The ſum charged upon it did not exceed twenty-three millions three hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand two hundred and ſeventy-four livres [973,969l. 15s.]; ſo that the ſum of ninety-three millions four hundred and ninety-eight thouſand two hundred and two livres [3,895,758l. 8s. 4d.], was conſequently poured into the king's coffers. The value of ſilver was then twenty-eight livres, ten ſols, ten deniers [1l. 3s. 9½d.] the marc. We have only to regret, that the fatal propenſity of Lewis XIV. for war, and his inordinate turn for every kind of expence that was attended with parade and magnificence, ſhould have deprived

BOOK IV. the kindom of France of ſome of the advantages ſhe might have flattered herſelf with from ſo able an adminiſtrator.

After the death of Colbert, the affairs were plunged again into that chaos, from which his induſtry and talents had made them emerge. Though France appeared with ſome degree of outward ſplendour, yet her internal decay was daily increaſing. Her finances, adminiſtered without order or principle, fell a prey to a multitude of contractors; who made themſelves neceſſary even by their plunders, and went ſo far as to impoſe terms to government. Confuſion, uſury, continual alterations of the coin, reductions of intereſt, alienations of the domain and of the taxes, engagements which it was impoſſible to fulfil, creations of penſions and places, privileges and exemptions of all kinds: theſe, and a variety of other evils, each more ruinous than the other, were the deplorable and unavoidable conſequence of an almoſt uninterrupted ſucceſſion of vicious adminiſtrations.

The loſs of credit ſoon became univerſal. Bankruptcies were more frequent. Money grew ſcarce, and trade was at a ſtand. The conſumption was leſs. The culture of lands was neglected. Artiſts went over to foreign countries. The common people had neither food nor clothing. The nobility ſerved in the army without pay, and mortgaged their lands. All orders of men groaned under the weight of taxes, and were in want of the neceſſaries of life. The royal effects had loſt their value. The contracts upon the *hotel de ville* ſold but for half their worth, and bills of an inferior kind loſt infinitely more. Lewis XIV. a little before his death, was in great want of eight millions [333,333l. 6s. 8d.]; and was forced to give bonds for thirty-two millions [1,333,333l. 6s. 8d.], which was borrowing at four hundred per cent.

No clamours were raiſed againſt ſo enormous an uſury. The revenue of the ſtate amounted, it is true, to one

hundred and fifteen millions three hundred eighty-nine thouſand and ſeventy-four livres [4,807,878l. 1s. 8d.]; but the ſums charged upon it took away eighty-two millions eight hundred and fifty-nine thouſand five hundred and four livres [3,452,479l. 6s. 8d.]; ſo that there remained, for the expences of government, no more than thirty-two millions five hundred and twenty-nine thouſand five hundred and ſeventy livres [1,355,398l. 15s.]; at thirty livres, ten ſols, ſix deniers about [1l. 5s. 5d.] the marc. All theſe funds were, moreover, anticipated for upwards of three years.

Such was the confuſion in the ſtate of public affairs, when, on the firſt of September 1715, the Duke of Orleans aſſumed the reins of government. The true friends of this great prince were deſirous that he ſhould call together a general aſſembly of the ſtates. This would have been an infallible method of preſerving, and even of increaſing, the public favour, already openly declared for him. Whatever meaſures might have been adopted by the nation, to free itſelf from that critical ſituation into which it had been precipitated by the diſſipations of the preceding reign, no blame could have been imputed to him. The Duke of Orleans was ready to concur in this expedient. Unfortunately, the perfidious confidants, who had uſurped too much power over his mind, reprobated a ſcheme in which their private intereſt could not find its advantage; and it was given up.

At that time, ſome great men, diſguſted of the deſpotiſm under which France was oppreſſed, and ſeeing no probability of ſhaking off the yoke, entertained an idea of a complete bankruptcy, which they thought a proper method of moderating the exceſs of abſolute power. The manner in which they conceived that it ſhould be brought about, was ſingular.

According to their ſyſtem, the crown is neither hereditary nor elective. It is nothing more than a truſt granted by the whole nation to one particular

BOOK IV.

houſe, that it may paſs from one elder male to the next, as long as the family ſhall exiſt. Upon this principle, a king of France holds nothing from the perſon whom he ſucceeds. He comes to the throne in his turn, in virtue of the right which his birth gives him, and not as the repreſentative of his father. He cannot, therefore, be bound by the engagements of his predeceſſors. The primordial law which gives him the ſceptre, requires that the ſubſtitution ſhould be ſimple, complete, and free from any obligation.

Theſe bold men were deſirous that theſe maxims, which appeared to them incontrovertible, as well as the deciſive conſequences they drew from them, ſhould be conſecrated in the eyes of all Europe by a moſt ſolemn edict. They thought, that when theſe truths were made known, they would prevent foreigners and natives from lending their capitals to a government which could give no ſolid ſecurity for the debt. Conſequently, the court would from that time be reduced to live upon its own income. However conſiderable this income might be, the neceſſary conſequence of ſuch an event would be, that ſome limit would be ſet to the caprices of the ſovereigns; that the expenſive enterpriſes of miniſters would become of leſs continuance and frequency; and that the inſatiable cupidity of favourites and miſtreſſes muſt in ſome meaſure be reſtrained.

Some politicians, without adopting a ſyſtem, which appeared to them calculated to lead their princes to tyranny, were of opinion, that the crown ſhould be releaſed of its debts, in whatever mode they might have been contracted. They could not bear the diſtreſſing ſight of an amiable people, exaſperated by extortions of all kinds, which they had been expoſed to during a courſe of forty years; a people who were ſinking under the enormous weight of their preſent miſery; and who were in the utmoſt deſpair at foreſeeing that time, that great reſource of the wretched, would bring no relief to their diſtreſſes, but would probably aggravate them. The creditors of the ſtate,

who did not conſtitute a thouſandth part of the citizens, who were moſt of them known only by their depredations, and the moſt upright of whom acquired from the public treaſury the affluence they enjoyed, appeared objects leſs intereſting to theſe politicians. In the grievous neceſſity of ſacrificing one part of the nation to the other, it was their opinion that the lenders ſhould be the victims.

The regent, after ſome deliberations, refuſed to adopt ſo violent a meaſure, which he thought would inevitably fix an indelible ſtain upon his adminiſtration. He choſe rather to inſtitute a ſtrict inquiry into the public engagements, than to ſubmit to a diſgraceful bankruptcy, the publicity of which he thought might be avoided.

An office for the reviſion of accounts, eſtabliſhed on the 7th of December 1715, reduced ſix hundred millions [25,000,000l.] of ſtock payable to bearer, to two hundred and fifty millions [10,416,666l. 13s. 4d.], in government bonds; and yet the national debt, after this operation, amounted ſtill to two thouſand and ſixty-two millions one hundred and thirty-eight thouſand and one livres [85,822,416l. 14s. 2d.].

This enormous debt ſuggeſted the idea of appointing, in the month of March 1716, a bed of juſtice, to call thoſe to account who had been the authors of the public calamities, or who had profited by them. This inquiry ſerved only to expoſe to public view the incapacity of the miniſters who had been intruſted with the management of the finances, the craft of the farmers of the revenue who had ſwallowed them up, and the baſeneſs of the courtiers, who had ſold their intereſt to the firſt bidder. By this experiment, honeſt minds were confirmed in the abhorrence they always had entertained for ſuch a tribunal. It degrades the dignity of the prince who fails to fulfil his engagements, and expoſes to the people, the vices of a corrupt adminiſtration. It is injurious to the rights of the citizen, who is accountable for his actions to none but the law. It ſtrikes terror in-

BOOK IV.

to the rich, who are marked out as delinquents, merely becauſe they are rich, be their fortunes well or ill gotten. It gives encouragement to informers, who point out as fit objects for tyranny ſuch as it may be advantageous to ruin. It is compoſed of unmerciful leeches, who ſee guilt wherever they ſuſpect there is wealth. It ſpares plunderers, who know how to ſcreen themſelves by a ſeaſonable ſacrifice of part of their riches, and ſpoils honeſt men who think themſelves ſecure in their innocence. It ſacrifices the intereſts of the treaſury to the caprices of a few greedy, profligate, and extravagant favourites.

All the ſprings of the ſtate were deſtroyed, before this reſource, which bore evident marks of the paſſions and prejudice, had been experienced. The ſituation of the body politic became ſtill more deſperate, after this convulſive effort. The members of the ſtate loſt the little they had left of energy and life; ſo that it became neceſſary to re-animate the corpſe. This reſurrection was not an impoſſible thing, becauſe there was a general diſpoſition prevailing to make uſe of any remedies that were propoſed; the difficulty was to propoſe none but ſuch as would be effectual: The celebrated Law made the attempt.

Methods contrived by Law, to recover the finances of France from the ſtate of confuſion into which they were fallen. Part taken by the Company in the execution of his projects.

This Scotchman was one of thoſe projectors, or ſtate empirics, who are conſtantly roaming about the courts of Europe, diſplaying their talents, and hurried on by a reſtleſs diſpoſition. He was a deep calculator; and at the ſame time, which appears rather inconſiſtent, endowed with a moſt lively and ardent imagination. His turn of mind and character proved agreeable to the regent, over whoſe underſtanding he ſoon gained an influence. Law engaged himſelf that he would re-eſtabliſh the finances of the kingdom, and eaſily prevailed upon that prince, who was a man of diſſipation and genius, to countenance a plan which promiſed him wealth and reputation. We ſhall now give an account of the ſeries and reſult of his operations.

Firſt, he was allowed, in the month of May 1716,

to eſtabliſh a bank at Paris, the capital of which was to conſiſt of ſix millions of livres [250,000l.], to be formed by twelve hundred ſhares, of three thouſand livres [125l.] each.

This bank was not permitted to make any loan. It was prohibited from entering into any kind of trade, and its engagements were to be at ſight. Every native, and every foreigner, might place their money in it; and it engaged to make all the payments, for the deduction of five ſols [2½d.] upon every three thouſand livres [125l.]. The bills, which it gave out at a very moderate diſcount, were paid in all the provinces by the directors of the mint, who were its agents, and who, on their part, drew upon its treaſury. Its paper was equally received in all the principal places in Europe, at the ordinary courſe of exchange, at the time it became due.

The ſucceſs of this new eſtabliſhment confounded the opponents of its founder, and, perhaps, went beyond his own expectations. Its influence was felt even from the firſt. A rapid circulation of money, which had ſo long remained inactive, from the general miſtruſt that prevailed, ſoon brought every thing into motion again. Agriculture, manufactures, and the arts, were revived. All articles of conſumption reſumed their former courſe. The merchants, finding their bills of exchange diſcounted at five per cent. and getting ſecurities for them which were as good as ſpecie, renewed their ſpeculations. Uſury was put a ſtop to, becauſe perſons of property found themſelves compelled to lend their money at the ſame intereſt as the bank did. When foreigners were able to rely upon the nature of the payments they might have to make, they made freſh demands for productions, from the purchaſing of which they did not abſtain without regret. To the great aſtoniſhment of all nations, the exchange roſe to the advantage of France.

This was a conſiderable ſtep; but it was not doing all that was poſſible or neceſſary. In the month of

BOOK IV. March 1717, it was decreed, that the bills of the bank ſhould be received at all the offices in payment of the taxes, and that they ſhould be paid at ſight, and without diſcount, by thoſe who were intruſted with the management of the public money. By this important regulation, the produce of the taxes was detained in the provinces, the expence attending the carriage of money was ſaved both to the ſovereign and to the public, and the numerous as well as uſeleſs circulations it underwent, through the hands of a multiplicity of agents, were avoided. This operation, which carried the credit of the bank to the higheſt pitch, was equally uſeful to the government. The impoſts were now collected, not only without thoſe acts of violence, which for ſo long a time paſt had raiſed clamours againſt the adminiſtration, and urged the people to acts of deſperation; but alſo the public revenues were continually and rapidly increaſed, in a manner which could not fail to bring about a fortunate change in the ſituation of government.

The unexpected appearance of ſo many advantages, made Law be conſidered as a man of judgment, of extenſive and elevated genius, who deſpiſed riches, and was ambitious of fame, and who wiſhed to tranſmit his name to poſterity by great acts. The gratitude of the people roſe ſo high, that he was thought worthy of the moſt honourable and public monuments. This bold and enterpriſing foreigner availed himſelf of a diſpoſition ſo favourable to him, in haſtening the execution of a project which had for a long time engaged his attention.

In the month of Auguſt 1717, he obtained permiſſion to eſtabliſh the Weſtern Company, the rights of which were at firſt confined to the excluſive trade of Louiſiana, and of the beavers of Canada. The privileges formerly granted for the trade to Africa, to the Eaſt Indies, and to China, were ſoon incorporated with thoſe of the new eſtabliſhment. Theſe companies, thus united, projected the paying off of the national debt. In order to put them in a condition

to accompliſh ſo great a deſign, government granted them the ſale of tobacco, the coinage, the exciſe duties, and the farms general.

In order to haſten the revolution, Law obtained, on the 4th of December 1718, that the bank which he had eſtabliſhed two years before, and which, while its intereſts were diſtinct from thoſe of the ſtate, had been of ſo great utility, ſhould be erected into a royal bank. Its bills paſſed as current coin between individuals, and they were taken in payment at all the royal treaſuries.

The firſt operations of the new ſyſtem gave univerſal ſatisfaction. The ſhares of the Company, moſt of them bought with government bills, and which, upon an average, did not really coſt five hundred livres [20l. 16s. 8d.], roſe to the value of ten thouſand livres [416l. 13s. 4d.], payable in bank bills. Such was the general infatuation, that not only natives, but foreigners, and men of the beſt underſtanding, ſold their ſtock, their lands, and their jewels, in order to play at this extraordinary game. Gold and ſilver were in no kind of eſtimation; nothing but paper currency was ſought after.

It was not, perhaps, impoſſible, but that this enthuſiaſm might have been kept up for a ſufficient length of time, to have been productive of ſome advantage, if Law's views had been implicitly followed. This calculator, notwithſtanding the boldneſs of his principles, was deſirous of limiting the number of ſhares, although he never could have been compelled to reimburſe them. But he was more particularly determined not to diſtribute bank bills to the amount of more than ten or twelve hundred millions of livres [from 41,666,666l. 13s. 4d. to 50,000,000l.]. This was ſuppoſed to be the value of the ſpecie circulating in the kingdom; and he flattered himſelf, that by theſe operations, he ſhould collect in the king's coffers a ſufficient quantity of it, to enable him to pay off any perſons who might be deſirous of changing their paper currency into money. A plan which in

BOOK IV. itſelf was ſo little likely to ſucceed, was ſtill further diſconcerted by the conduct of the regent.

This prince had received from nature a quick and penetrating ſpirit, an uncommon ſhare of memory, and a ſound underſtanding. He acquired by ſtudy a manly degree of eloquence, an exquiſite diſcernment, a taſte for the fine arts, and a proficiency in them. In war, he diſplayed much valour; and in the management of civil affairs, great dexterity and frankneſs. His character, and the circumſtances of the times, contributed to place him in ſome delicate ſituations, by which he gained a complete knowledge of mankind, and an early experience. The kind of diſgrace in which he had lived for a long time, had given him ſocial manners, ſo that he was eaſy of acceſs; and in any intercourſe with him, no man had reaſon to fear the being treated with ill humour or with haughtineſs. His converſation was inſinuating, and his manners perfectly graceful. He was of a benevolent diſpoſition, or at leaſt aſſumed the appearance of it.

Theſe amiable and eſtimable qualities did not produce the great effects that were expected from them. The want of firmneſs in Philip rendered all theſe advantages uſeleſs to the nation. He had never ſtrength of mind ſufficient to refuſe any thing to his friends, to his enemies, to his miſtreſſes, and eſpecially to his favourite Dubois, the moſt corrupt and profligate of men. This inability of refuſing manifeſted itſelf particularly at the time of the ſyſtem. In order to glut the cupidity of all thoſe who had the impudence to ſay, or to think that they were uſeful, he created ſix hundred and twenty-four thouſand ſhares, the value of which roſe to above ſix thouſand millions of livres, [250,000,000l.] and gave out bank bills to the amount of 2696,400,000 livres [112,350,000l.].

A diſproportion ſo enormous, between the paper currency and the coin, might poſſibly have been ſupported in a free nation, where it had been brought on by degrees. The citizens, accuſtomed to conſider the nation as a permanent and independent body,

truſt to its ſecurity the more readily, as they are ſeldom thoroughly acquainted with its powers, and have a good opinion of its equity, founded on experience. Upon the ſtrength of this favourable prejudice, credit is often ſtretched in thoſe ſtates beyond the real reſources and ſecurities of the nation. This is not the caſe in abſolute monarchies, eſpecially ſuch as have often broken their engagements. If in times of public infatuation an implicit confidence be ſhown, it is but for a little while. Their inſolvency becomes evident. The honeſty of the monarch, the mortgage, the ſtock, every thing appears imaginary. The creditor, recovered from his delirium, demands his money with a degree of impatience proportionable to his uneaſineſs. The hiſtory of the ſyſtem corroborates this truth.

The deſire of putting off thoſe, who, firſt recovered from the general phrenzy, were wiſhing to convert their paper into money, made it neceſſary to have recourſe to expedients, ſuch as could only have been ſuggeſted by the moſt inveterate oppoſer of the ſyſtem. Gold was prohibited in trade. All the citizens were forbidden to keep by them more than five hundred livres [20l. 16s. 8d.] in ſpecie. Several ſucceſſive diminutions in the value of the coin were declared by edict. Theſe tyrannical proceedings not only put a ſtop to the demands, but likewiſe reduced ſome timid perſons to the cruel neceſſity of throwing more ſtock into the bank. But this temporary ſucceſs did not even conceal the precipice that had been ſo imprudently opened.

In order to prop up an edifice which was tumbling to pieces on all ſides, it was decreed, that the ſtandard for the coin ſhould be raiſed to eighty-two livres ten ſols [2l. 8s. 9d.] the marc; that the bank bills ſhould be reduced to half of their value, and the ſhares to five ninths. This mode of reducing the diſproportion between the paper currency and the coin, was, perhaps, the leaſt unreaſonable that could have been adopted in the deſperate ſituation of affairs at that

BOOK IV.

time; it completed, however, the general confusion. The consternation became universal: every man thought he had lost the half of his fortune, and hastened to call in the remainder. The coffers were empty, and the stock-holders found they had been deluded by mere chimeras. Then it was that Law disappeared, and with him the expectation, absurdly entertained, of obtaining the restoration of the public finances, through his means. Every thing fell into confusion.

It did not seem possible to clear up this chaos. In order to attempt it, on the 26th of January 1721, an office was created, into which the life annuities, and perpetual annuities, the shares, the bank bills, in a word, all papers bearing the mark of the royal authority, of whatever kind, were to be deposited in the course of two months, and their validity was afterwards to be discussed.

It was found by this examination, so celebrated under the title of *Visa*, that bank bills had been circulated to the amount of 2696,400,000 livres [112,350,000l.]. The value of 707,327,460 livres [29,471,977l. 10s.] of these was burnt, and not reckoned in the liquidation. The stock-holders were condemned to a restitution of 187,893,661 livres [7,808,912l. 10s. 10d.], and other modes were contrived to diminish the national debt. The political machine began now to resume its motions; but they were neither easy, nor even regular.

In whatever manner the finances of the kingdom were afterwards administered, they were never adequate to the expences. This is a distressing fact, the demonstration of which we have before our eyes. In vain were taxes multiplied; wants, fancies, and depredations, were still increased beyond them; and the treasury became more and more in debt. At the death of Lewis XV. the public revenues rose to 375,331,874 livres [15,638,828l. 1s. 8d.]. But the engagements, notwithstanding the multitude of bankruptcies that had been made, amounted to

190,858,531 livres [7,952,438l. 15s. 10d.]. There remained, therefore, no more than 184,473,343 livres [7,686,389l. 5s. 10d.]; the expences of the ſtate required 210,000,000 livres [8,750,000l.]; conſequently there was a deficiency of 25,526,657 livres [1,063,610l. 13s. 4d.] in the treaſury.

The public ſuppoſe, that a better uſe will be made of the revenue under the preſent reign. Their expectations are founded upon the love of order, the contempt of pomp, the ſpirit of juſtice, and thoſe other plain and modeſt virtues, which ſeemed to crowd about the throne when Lewis XVI. aſcended it.

Young prince! thou who haſt been able to preſerve an abhorrence of vice and diſſipation in the midſt of the moſt diſſolute of courts, and under the weakeſt of preceptors, condeſcend to hear me with indulgence, becauſe I am an honeſt man, and one of thy beſt ſubjects; becauſe I have no pretenſions to thy favour, and that every morning and evening I lift up my hands to heaven, praying for the good of mankind, and for the proſperity and glory of thy reign. The boldneſs with which I ſhall venture to tell thee truths that thy predeceſſor never heard from the mouths of his flatterers, and which thou wilt not be more likely to hear from thoſe who approach thee, is the beſt eulogium I can make of thy character.

Thou reigneſt over the fineſt empire in the univerſe. Notwithſtanding the decline into which it has fallen, there is no place upon the earth where the arts and ſciences ſuſtain themſelves with ſo much luſtre. The neighbouring nations are in want of thy aſſiſtance, while thou canſt maintain thyſelf without theirs. If thy provinces were to enjoy all the fertility of which they are ſuſceptible; if thy troops, without being much more numerous, were as well diſciplined as they could be; if thy revenues, without being increaſed, were more faithfully adminiſtered; if a ſpirit of economy directed the expences of thy miniſters, and of thy palace; if thy debts were paid off: what power on earth would be ſo formidable as thine?

Say, where is the monarch who rules over ſubjects ſo patient, ſo faithful, and ſo affectionate? Is there a people more frank, more active, or more induſtrious? Has not all Europe derived from them that ſocial ſpirit which ſo happily diſtinguiſhes the preſent period from all preceding ages? Have not ſtateſmen of all countries pronounced thy empire to be inexhauſtible? Thou thyſelf wilt even be ſenſible of the whole extent of theſe reſources, if thou ſayeſt to thyſelf without delay: "I am young, but my only wiſh is to do "good. Firmneſs gets the better of all obſtacles. "Let me only be preſented with a true picture of my "ſituation: whatever it may be, I ſhall not be a-"larmed." Prince, thou haſt commanded, and I haſten to obey. If, while I am ſpeaking, one tear does but ſteal from thine eyes, our preſervation is at hand.

When an unexpected event placed the ſceptre in thine unexperienced hands, the French navy for one moment, one ſingle awful moment, had ceaſed to exiſt. Weakneſs, diſorder, and corruption, had replunged it into that ſtate of annihilation, from which it had emerged at the moſt brilliant era of the monarchy. It had neither been able to defend our diſtant poſſeſſions, nor to preſerve our coaſts from invaſion and plunder. In all the regions of the globe, our ſeamen and our merchants were expoſed to ruinous oppreſſions, and to mortifications infinitely more intolerable.

The forces and treaſure of the nation had been laviſhed for intereſts, foreign, and perhaps repugnant to our own. But what is gold, or what is blood, in compariſon of honour? Our arms, formerly ſo much dreaded, inſpired no more any kind of terror. We were ſcarce allowed to have courage.

Our ambaſſadors, who for ſo long a time had appeared in foreign courts leſs to negotiate, than to manifeſt the intentions, I had almoſt ſaid the will of their maſters; our ambaſſadors were now deſpiſed. The moſt important tranſactions were concluded without any communication with them. Powers in alliance

with us, divided empires amongſt themſelves without our knowledge. Was it poſſible to declare in a more inſulting, and leſs equivocal manner, the little weight we were conſidered to have in the general balance of the political affairs of Europe? What was become of the dignity and reſpect of the French name?

Such is, young ſovereign, thy ſituation without the limits of thine empire. Thou doſt caſt down thine eyes, and dareſt not to look at it. The internal view of thy kingdom will not afford thee a more comfortable proſpect.

In proof of this, I call to witneſs that ſucceſſion of bankruptcies which have happened from year to year, from month to month, under the reign of thy predeceſſor. Thus it is, that the utmoſt degree of indigence hath inſenſibly been brought on a multitude of ſubjects, who had incurred no other reproach, than that of having indiſcreetly truſted their fortune to their ſovereigns, and of having over-rated the eſtimation of their ſacred promiſe. We ſhould be aſhamed of a breach of faith, even with an enemy; and kings, the fathers of their country, are not aſhamed to break their words in this cruel and baſe manner with their children! Abominable proſtitution of their oaths! It might ſtill be ſome kind of conſolation to theſe unfortunate perſons, if they had fallen victims to the neceſſity of circumſtances, or to the urgency of the public wants, which are ever renewed: but theſe acts of perfidy have been executed after years of a long peace, without their appearing any other motive for them, than the abandoning of the plunder of the public finances, to a multitude of perſons as vile as they were rapacious. Behold the chain of them, deſcending from the upper ſteps of the throne, and extending from thence to the loweſt ranks of ſociety. Behold what is the conſequence, when the monarch ſeparates his intereſts from thoſe of his people.

Caſt thine eyes upon the capital of thine empire, and thou wilt find in it two orders of citizens. The firſt, gorged with riches, diſplay a luxury which

BOOK IV. raiſes the indignation of thoſe whom it does not ſeduce; the others are oppreſſed with indigence, which they increaſe by aſſuming the appearance of affluence that does not belong to them: for ſuch is the power of gold, when it is become the idol of a nation, that it is a ſubſtitute for every talent and for every virtue; in ſo much that a man muſt either have riches, or make it be thought that he has. Among this heap of diſſolute men, thou wilt ſee ſome laborious, honeſt, economical, and induſtrious citizens, half proſcribed by the erroneous laws, which the ſpirit of intoleration hath dictated, deprived of all public functions, and always ready to quit their country, becauſe they are not allowed to take root by the acquiſition of property in a ſtate where they exiſt, without civil honour, and without ſecurity.

Turn thy view towards the provinces, where every ſpecies of induſtry is upon the decline. Thou wilt ſee them ſinking under the load of taxes, and under the oppreſſions, as diverſified as they are cruel, of the numberleſs ſatellites attending on the contractors.

After this, take a review of the country, and behold if thou canſt, with an unweeping eye, the man who enriches us condemned to periſh with miſery; the unfortunate farmer, who ſcarce retains from the lands that he has cultivated a ſufficient quantity of ſtraw to cover his hut and make himſelf a bed. Behold the protected extortioner, roaming about his poor habitation, in hopes of finding, in the appearance of ſome little improvement in his wretched ſituation, the pretence of redoubling his extortions. Behold multitudes of men who have no poſſeſſions, quitting from the earlieſt dawn, their dwelling, with their wives, their children, and their cattle, in order to proceed without wages, and without food, to the making of roads, the advantage of which is entirely for thoſe who engroſs all poſſeſſions.

I perceive that thy feeling heart is overwhelmed with grief; and thou doeſt aſk with a ſigh, what is the remedy to ſuch a variety of evils? Thou ſhalt be

told it; thou ſhall tell it to thyſelf. But thou muſt firſt be informed that the monarch, who hath none but pacific virtues, may ſecure the affection of his ſubjects; and that there is nothing, except fortitude, which can make him reſpected by his neighbours; thou muſt be informed, that kings have no relations, and that family compacts laſt no longer than the contracting parties find their intereſt in them; that there is ſtill leſs confidence to be repoſed in thy alliance with an artful houſe, which requires a ſtrict obſervation of the treaties made with it, without ever being at a loſs for a pretence to elude the conditions of them, when they ſtand in the way of its own aggrandizement; thou muſt be informed, that a king, the only man who knows not whether he has a true friend near him, cannot poſſibly have one out of his dominions, and muſt therefore rely only upon himſelf; that an empire can no more ſubſiſt without morals, and without virtue, than a private family; that it haſtens on in the ſame manner to its ruin by diſſipation, and is equally unable of recovering itſelf without economy; thou muſt be informed, that pomp adds nothing to the majeſty of the throne; that one of thy anceſtors never appeared more great than when attended by a few gaurds, which he had even no occaſion for, more plainly clothed than any one of his ſubjects, and with his back reſting againſt an oak, he heard all complaints that were addreſſed to him, and determined every diſpute; thou muſt be informed, in a word, that thy kingdom will recover from the abyſs digged by thy predeceſſors, if thou wilt take upon thyſelf to regulate thy conduct, upon the model of that of a rich individual, loaded with debt, and yet honeſt enough to be deſirous of anſwering the inconſiderate engagements of his anceſtors, and juſt enough to reject, with indignation, every tyrannical proceeding that might be ſuggeſted to him.

Aſk thyſelf in the courſe of the day, during the night, in the midſt of the tumult of thy court, in the retirement of thy cloſet, when thou doſt reflect; and in

BOOK IV. what moment oughteſt thou not to reflect upon the happineſs of twenty-two millions of people whom thou cheriſheſt, who have an affection for thee, and who anticipate, by their wiſhes, the time when they may adore thee: aſk thyſelf, I ſay, whether thy intention be to perpetuate the abſurd profuſion of thy palace.

Whether thou wilt keep that multitude of high and ſubaltern officers who devour thee.

Whether thou wilt continue the expenſive maintenance of that number of uſeleſs caſtles, with the enormous ſalaries granted to thoſe who govern them.

Whether thou wilt ſtill double and treble the expences of thy houſehold, by journeys as coſtly as they are uſeleſs.

Whether thou wilt diſſipate in ſcandalous feſtivals the ſubſiſtence of thy people.

Whether thou wilt allow that tables of a ruinous game, the ſource of debaſement and corruption, ſhould be fixed under thy own inſpection.

Whether thou wilt ſuffer thy treaſury to be exhauſted, in order to keep up the pomp of thy relations, and to maintain them in a ſtate, the magnificence of which ſhall be emulous of thine own.

Whether thou wilt ſuffer, that the example of a treacherous luxury ſhould diſorder the ſenſes of our women, and drive their huſbands to deſpair.

Whether thou wilt ſacrifice every day, for the feed of thy horſes, a quantity of ſubſiſtence, ſufficient to nouriſh ſeveral thouſands of thy ſubjects, who are periſhing with hunger and miſery.

Whether thou wilt ſtill grant to certain members of the ſtate, already too amply gratified, and to ſome military men, already enjoying a conſiderable ſtipend during a long ſeries of years paſſed in idleneſs, ſums of an extraordinary magnitude, for operations which it is their duty to perform, and which in every other government, except thine, they would be obliged to execute at their own expence.

Whether thou wilt perſiſt in the fruitleſs poſſeſſion of immenſe domains which yield thee nothing, and

the alienation of which, while it might ſerve to diſcharge part of thy debt, would increaſe both thine own income and the riches of the nation. The man to whom every thing belongs as ſovereign, ought not to poſſeſs any thing as a private man.

Whether thou wilt give way to the inſatiable avidity of thy courtiers, and of the courtiers of thy relations.

Whether thou wilt permit that the nobles, the magiſtrates, and all powerful and protected perſons in thy kingdom, ſhould continue to caſt off from their own ſhoulders the burden of the taxes, in order to make it fall with greater weight upon the people. A ſpecies of extortion againſt which the groans of the oppreſſed, and the remonſtrances of enlightened men, have ſo long and ſo unavailingly been uttered.

Whether thou wilt confirm to a body of men, who are in poſſeſſion of a fourth part of the riches of the kingdom, the abſurd privilege of taxing themſelves at diſcretion, and under the title of gratuitous offerings, which they are not aſhamed to give to their ſubſidies, to ſignify to thee that they owe thee nothing; that they are not the leſs entitled to thy protection, and to all the advantages of ſociety, without taking upon themſelves any of the duties of it, and that thou haſt no right to any return of gratitude from them.

When to theſe ſeveral queſtions thou haſt of thyſelf given thoſe juſt and ſincere anſwers which thy feeling and royal heart ſhall dictate, let thy actions correſpond with them. Be firm. Suffer not thyſelf to be ſhaken by any of thoſe repreſentations which duplicity or perſonal intereſt may ſuggeſt to reſtrain thee, perhaps even to inſpire thee with terror; and be aſſured that thou wilt ſoon be the moſt revered, and the moſt formidable potentate of the earth.

Yes, Lewis XVI. ſuch is the fortune that awaits thee; and it is in the confidence that thou wilt attain to it, that I ſtill remain attached to life. I have but one word more to ſay to thee, but that is of im-

BOOK IV.

portance. It is, that thou ſhouldſt conſider as the moſt dangerous of impoſtors, as the moſt inveterate enemy of our happineſs and of thy glory, the impudent flatterer, who ſhall not heſitate to lull thee into a ſtate of fatal tranquillity; either by repreſenting to thee in a fainter light, the diſtreſsful picture of thy ſituation; or by exaggerating the impropriety, the danger, and the difficulty, of employing the reſources that may occur to thy mind.

Thou wilt hear it whiſpered around thee: *Theſe things cannot be done; and even if they could, they are innovations.* Innovations let them be. But all the diſcoveries that have been made in the arts and ſciences, have they not been equally ſo? Is then the art of good government the only one that cannot be improved? Or, are we to reckon as innovations, the general aſſembly of a great nation; the reſtoration of primitive liberty, and the reſpectable exertion of the firſt acts of natural juſtice?

Situation of the India Company at the fall of the ſyſtem.

At the fall of the ſyſtem, the government gave up to the India Company the monopoly of tobacco, in diſcharge of the ninety millions of livres [3,700,000l.] they had lent. It alſo granted them the excluſive privilege of all the lotteries in the kingdom, and allowed them to convert into life annuities and tontines part of their ſhares. There remained only to the number of fifty-ſix thouſand of theſe, which, by ſubſequent events, were reduced to fifty thouſand two hundred ſixty-eight and four tenths. Unfortunately, this ſociety preſerved the privileges of the ſeveral companies out of which it had been formed; and this prerogative added neither to its wiſdom or power; it confined the negro trade, and ſtopped the progreſs of the ſugar colonies. Moſt of its privileges ſerved only to authoriſe odious monopolies. The moſt fertile regions upon earth, when occupied by the Company, were neither peopled nor cultivated. The ſpirit of finance, which reſtrains purſuits as much as the commercial ſpirit enlarges them, became, and has ever ſince continued, the ſpirit of the Company.

The directors thought only of turning to their own advantage the rights ceded to the Company in Asia, Africa, and America. It became a society of contractors, rather than of merchants. Nothing could possibly be said in praise of their administration, had they not been so honest as to pay off the debts accumulated in India for a century past; and taken care to secure Pondicherry against any invasion, by surrounding it with walls. Their trade was but trifling and precarious, till Orry was appointed to superintend the finances of the nation.

Great success of the Company; with an account of those of its agents to whom it was owing.

That upright and disinterested minister sullied his virtues by a harshness of temper, which he apologized for in a manner not much to the credit of the nation. One day when a friend was reproaching him with the roughness of his manners, he answered, *How can I behave otherwise? Out of a hundred people I see in a day, fifty take me for a fool, and fifty for a knave.* He had a brother named Fulvy, who was less rigid in his principles, but had more affability, and a greater share of capacity. He intrusted him with the concerns of the Company, which could not but flourish under such a direction.

Notwithstanding the former prejudices and those which still prevailed; notwithstanding the abhorrence the public had for any remains of Law's system; notwithstanding the authority of the Sorbonne, which had decided that the dividend upon the shares came under the denomination of usury; notwithstanding the blindness of a nation, credulous enough not to be shocked at so absurd a decision; yet still the two brothers found means to convince Cardinal Fleury, that it was proper to support the India Company in an effectual manner. They even prevailed upon that minister, more skilful in the art of managing riches, than in that of increasing them, to lavish the king's favours upon this establishment. The care of superintending its trade, and of enlarging its powers, was afterwards committed to several persons of known abilities.

Dumas was sent to Pondicherry. He soon obtain-

BOOK IV.

ed leave of the court of Delhi to coin money; which privilege was worth four or five hundred thouſand livres [from 16,666l. 13s. 4d. to 20,833l. 6s. 8d.] a year. He obtained a ceſſion of the territory of Karical, which entitled him to a conſiderable ſhare in the trade of Tanjour. Some time after, a hundred thouſand Marattas invaded the Decan. They attacked the Nabob of Arcot, who was vanquiſhed and ſlain. His family, and ſeveral of his ſubjects, took refuge in Pondicherry. They were received with all the kindneſs due to allies in diſtreſs. Ragogi Bouſſola, the general of the victorious army, demanded, that they ſhould be delivered up to him; and further required the payment of 1,200,000 livres [50,000l.] in virtue of a tribute, which he pretended the French had formerly ſubmitted to.

Dumas made anſwer, That ſo long as the Moguls had been maſters of that country, they had always treated the French with the reſpect due to one of the moſt illuſtrious nations in the world, which, in her turn, took a pride in protecting her benefactors; that it was contrary to the character of that magnanimous nation to deliver up a number of women and children, and of unfortunate and defenceleſs men, to ſee them put to death; that the fugitives then in the town were under the protection of his king, who eſteemed it his higheſt honour to be the protector of the diſtreſſed; that every Frenchman in Pondicherry would cheerfully die in their defence; and that his own life was forfeited, if his ſovereign were to know that he had ſo much as liſtened to the mention of a tribute. He added, that he was ready to defend the place to the laſt extremity; and if he ſhould be overpowered, he would get on board his ſhips, and return to Europe: that Ragogi might conſider whether he choſe to expoſe his army to utter deſtruction, when the greateſt advantage that could be obtained by it was to take poſſeſſion of a heap of ruins.

The Indians had not been accuſtomed to hear the French talk with ſo much dignity. This boldneſs

ſtaggered the general of the Marattas; and, after ſome negotiations ſkilfully carried on, he determined to grant peace to Pondicherry.

Whilſt Dumas was procuring wealth and reſpect to the Company, the government ſent La Bourdonnais to the iſle of France.

The Portugueſe, at the time of their firſt voyages to India, had diſcovered to the eaſt of Madagaſcar, between the 19th and 20th degrees of latitude, three iſlands, to which they gave the names of Maſcarenhas, Cerné, and Rodrigue. There they found neither men nor quadrupeds, and attempted no ſettlement upon either of the iſlands. The moſt weſtern of them, which had been called Maſcarenhas, had for its firſt inhabitants, about the year 1660, ſeven or eight hundred Frenchmen. Five years after this, they were joined by two-and-twenty of their countrymen. Their number was ſoon further increaſed by the calamity which deſtroyed the colony of Madagaſcar. The breeding of cattle was the firſt reſource of theſe adventurers, tranſplanted under a new ſky. They afterwards cultivated European corn, Aſiatic and African fruits, and ſome vegetables fit for that mild climate. The health, plenty, and freedom they enjoyed, induced ſeveral navigators, who came there for refreſhments and ſubſiſtence, to ſettle among them. Induſtry was extended with population. In 1718, the diſcovery of a few wild coffee-trees ſuggeſted the idea of tranſplanting ſome coffee-trees from Arabia, which throve extremely well. The culture of this precious tree, and other laborious employments, were performed by ſlaves from the coaſt of Africa, or from Madagaſcar. Then the iſland, which had changed its name from Maſcarenhas to the iſle of Bourbon, became an important object to the Company. There was, unfortunately, no harbour in the colony.

This inconvenience turned the views of the French miniſter at Verſailles towards the iſland of Cerné, where the Portugueſe had, as uſual, left ſome quadrupeds and fowls for the benefit of ſuch of their ſhips

BOOK IV. as neceſſity ſhould oblige to touch there. The Dutch, who afterwards took poſſeſſion of it, forſook it in 1712, from an apprehenſion of multiplying their ſettlements too much. The iſland was uninhabited when the French landed there in 1720, and changed its name from Mauritius to the Iſle of France, which it ſtill bears.

Its firſt inhabitants came over from Bourbon, and were forgotten for fifteen years. They only formed, as it were, a corps de garde, with orders to hang out a French flag, to inform all nations that the iſland had a maſter. The Company, long undetermined, decided at laſt for keeping it; and in 1735, La Bourdonnais was commiſſioned to improve it.

This man, who has ſince been ſo famous, was born at St. Malo, and had been at ſea from the age of ten years; no ſort of conſideration had been able to interrupt his voyages, in every one of which he had ſignalized himſelf by ſome remarkable action. The Arabs and Portugueſe, who were preparing to maſſacre one another in the road of Mocha, had been reconciled through his mediation, and he had diſplayed his valour in the war at Mahé. He was the firſt Frenchman who ever thought of ſending armed veſſels into the Indian ſeas. He was known to be equally ſkilful in the art of ſhip-building, as in that of navigating and defending a ſhip. His ſchemes bore the mark of genius; nor were his views contracted by the cloſe attention he paid to all the minute details of whatever he undertook. His mind was never alarmed with the appearance of difficulties, and he poſſeſſed the rare talent of inſpiring the men under his command with the ſame elevation of ſpirit. His enemies have reproached him with an immoderate paſſion for riches; and it muſt be acknowledged he was not ſcrupulous in the means of acquiring them.

He was no ſooner arrived at the Iſle of France, than he made it his buſineſs to acquire every information he could concerning it, in which he was much aſſiſted by his fortunate ſagacity and his indefatigable

activity. In a little time he endeavoured to inſtil a ſpirit of emulation into the firſt coloniſts on the iſland, who were entirely diſcouraged at the neglect with which they had been treated, and attempted to reduce to a ſtrict ſubordination the vagrants lately arrived from the mother-country. He made them cultivate rice and wheat, for the ſubſiſtence of the Europeans, and caſſava, which he had brought from Brazil, for the ſlaves. They were to be furniſhed from Madagaſcar with meat for the daily conſumption of the inhabitants and of ſea-faring men, till the cattle they had procured from thence ſhould multiply ſo conſiderably, as to prevent the neceſſity of importing any more. A poſt which he had eſtabliſhed on the little iſland of Rodrigue, abundantly ſupplied the ſick with turtle. Here ſhips going to India ſoon found all the refreſhments and conveniences they wanted after a tedious paſſage. Three ſhips, one of which carried five hundred tons burden, were equipped and ſent from the docks he had conſtructed. If the founder had not the ſatisfaction of bringing the colony to the utmoſt degree of proſperity it was capable of, at leaſt he had the credit of having diſcovered what degree of importance it might acquire in able hands.

Theſe improvements, however, though they ſeemed to be owing to inchantment, did not meet with the approbation of thoſe who were principally concerned in them, and La Bourdonnais was compelled to juſtify himſelf. One of the directors was aſking him one day how it happened that he had conducted the affairs of the Company ſo ill, while he had taken ſo much care of his own? *Becauſe*, ſaid he, *I have managed mine according to my own judgment, and thoſe of the Company according to your directions.*

Great men have been in all parts more uſeful to the public than large collective bodies. Nations and ſocieties are but the inſtruments of men of genius; theſe have been the real founders of ſtates and colonies. Spain, Portugal, Holland, and England, owe

BOOK IV. their foreign conquests and settlements to able warriors, experienced seamen, and legislators of superior talents. France especially is more indebted to some fortunate individuals for the glory she has acquired, than to the form of her government. One of these superior men had just established the power of France over two important islands in Africa; another, still more extraordinary, added splendour to the French name in Asia; this was Dupleix.

He was first sent to the banks of the Ganges, where he superintended the colony of Chandernagore. That settlement, though formed in a part of the globe the best adapted for great commercial undertakings, had been in a languid state, till he took the management of it. The Company had not been able to send any considerable funds to it; and the agents, who went over there without any property of their own, had not been able to avail themselves of the liberty that was allowed them of advancing their own private affairs. The activity of the new governor, who brought an ample fortune, the reward of ten years successful labours, soon spread throughout the colony. In a country abounding with money they soon found credit, when once they showed themselves deserving of it. In a short time, Chandernagore excited the admiration of its neighbours, and the envy of its rivals. Dupleix, who had engaged the rest of the French in his vast speculations, opened fresh sources of commerce throughout the Mogul's dominions, and as far as Thibet. On his arrival he had not found a single sloop, and he fitted out fifteen armed vessels at once. These ships carried on trade from one part of India to another. Some he sent to the Red Sea, to the Gulf of Persia, to Surat, to Goa, to the Maldives and Manilla islands, and to all the seas where there was a possibility of trading to advantage.

Dupleix had for twelve years supported the honour of the French name on the Ganges, and increased the revenue of the public, as well as the private fortunes of individuals, when he was called to Pondi-

cherry, to take upon him the general ſuperintendency of all the Company's affairs in India. They were then in a more flouriſhing condition than they had ever yet been, or have ever been ſince; as the returns of that year amounted to twenty-four millions [1,000,000l.]. Had they been ſtill conducted with prudence, and had more confidence been placed in two ſuch men as Dupleix and La Bourdonnais, it is probable that ſuch a power would have been eſtabliſhed as would not have been eaſily deſtroyed.

La Bourdonnais ſaw an approaching rupture with England; and propoſed a ſcheme which would have ſecured to the French the ſovereignty of the ſeas in Aſia, during the whole courſe of the war. Convinced, that whichever nation ſhould firſt take up arms in India, would have a manifeſt advantage over the other, he deſired to be furniſhed with a ſquadron, with which he intended to ſail to the Iſle of France, and there wait till hoſtilities began. He was then to ſet out from that iſland, in order to go and cruize in the ſtraits of Sunda, through which moſt of the ſhips paſs that are going to, or coming from China. There he would have intercepted all the Engliſh ſhips, and ſaved thoſe of the French. He would have even taken the ſmall ſquadron which England ſent into thoſe latitudes; and, having thus made himſelf maſter of the Indian ſeas, would have ruined all the Engliſh ſettlements in thoſe parts.

The miniſtry approved of this plan, and granted him five men of war, with which he put to ſea.

He had ſcarcely ſet ſail, when the directors, equally offended at their being kept in the dark with regard to the deſtination of the ſquadron, and at the expences it had occaſioned them, and jealous of the advantage this appointment would give to a man who, in their opinion, was already too independent, exclaimed againſt this armament as they had done before, and declared it to be uſeleſs. They were, or pretended to be, ſo fully convinced of the neutrality that would be obſerved in India between the two

companies, that they perſuaded the miniſter into that opinion, when La Bourdonnais was no longer preſent to animate him and guide his inexperience.

The court of Verſailles was not aware, that a power, ſupported chiefly by trade, would not eaſily be induced to leave them in quiet poſſeſſion of the Indian ocean; and that, if ſhe either made or liſtened to any propoſals of neutrality, it muſt be only to gain time. It was not aware that, even ſuppoſing ſuch an agreement was made *bonâ fide* on both ſides, a thouſand unforeſeen events might interrupt it. It was not aware, that the object propoſed could never be fully anſwered, becauſe the ſea-forces of both nations, not being bound by any private agreement made between the two companies, would attack their ſhips in the European ſeas. It was not aware, that in the colonies themſelves preparations would be made to guard againſt a ſurpriſe; that theſe precautions would create a miſtruſt on both ſides; and that miſtruſt would bring on an open rupture. All theſe particulars were not perceived by the court, and the ſquadron was recalled. Hoſtilities began; and the loſs of almoſt every French ſhip in India, ſhowed too late which of the two was the moſt judicious ſyſtem of politics.

La Bourdonnais was as deeply affected for the errors that had occaſioned the misfortunes of the nation, as if he had been guilty of them himſelf, and exerted all his powers to remedy them. Without magazines, without proviſions, without money, he found means, by his attention and perſeverance, to form a ſquadron, compoſed of a ſixty-gun ſhip, and five merchantmen, which he turned into men of war. He ventured to attack the Engliſh ſquadron, beat them, purſued and forced them to quit the coaſt of Coromandel; he then beſieged and took Madras, the firſt of the Engliſh ſettlements. The conqueror was preparing for freſh expeditions, which were certain and eaſy; but he met with the moſt violent oppoſition, which not only occaſioned the loſs of the ſum

of 9,057,000 livres [377,375l.] he had ſtipulated for as the ranſom of the city, but alſo deprived him of the ſucceſs which muſt neceſſarily have followed this event.

The Company was then governed by two of the king's commiſſaries, who were irreconcilable enemies to each other. The directors and the inferior officers had taken part in the quarrel, as they were ſwayed by their reſpective inclinations or intereſts. The two factions were extremely exaſperated againſt each other. That which had cauſed La Bourdonnais's ſquadron to be taken from him, was enraged to ſee that he had found reſources in himſelf, which fruſtrated every attack that was made upon him. There is good reaſon to believe, that this faction purſued him to India, and inſtilled the poiſon of jealouſy into the heart of Dupleix. Two men formed to eſteem and love each other, to adorn the French name, and perhaps to deſcend together to poſterity, became the vile tools of an animoſity in which they were not the leaſt intereſted. Dupleix oppoſed La Bourdonnais, and made him loſe much time. The latter, after having ſtaid too long on the coaſt of Coromandel, waiting for the ſuccours which had been unneceſſarily delayed, ſaw his ſquadron deſtroyed by a ſtorm. The crews were diſpoſed to mutiny. So many misfortunes, brought on by the intrigues of Dupleix, determined La Bourdonnais to return to Europe, where a horrid dungeon was the reward of his glorious ſervices, and the end of the hopes which the nation had built upon his great talents. The Engliſh, delivered from that formidable enemy in India, and conſiderably reinforced, found themſelves in a condition to attack the French in their turn; and accordingly laid ſiege to Pondicherry.

Dupleix then made amends for paſt errors. He defended the town with great ſkill and bravery; and after the trenches had been opened ſix weeks, the Engliſh were forced to raiſe the ſiege. The news of the peace arrived ſoon after, and all hoſtilities ceaſed between the companies of both nations.

BOOK IV.

The taking of Madras, La Bourdonnais's engagement at ſea, and the raiſing of the ſiege of Pondicherry, gave the Indian nations a high opinion of the French; and they were reſpected in thoſe parts as the firſt and greateſt of the European powers.

Dupleix endeavoured to avail himſelf of this diſpoſition, and his attention was engaged in procuring ſolid and important advantages for his nation. In order to judge rightly of his projects, we muſt lay before the reader a deſcription of the ſtate of Indoſtan at that time.

Deſcription of Indoſtan.

If we may credit uncertain tradition, that fine rich country tempted the firſt conquerors of the world. But whether Bacchus, Hercules, Seſoſtris, or Darius, did or did not carry their arms through that large portion of the globe, certain it is, that it proved an inexhauſtible fund of fictions and wonders to the ancient Greeks. Theſe people, ever credulous, becauſe they were carried away by their imagination, were ſo inchanted with theſe marvellous ſtories, that they ſtill gave credit to them, even in the more enlightened ages of the republic.

If we conſider this matter according to the principles of reaſon and truth, we ſhall find that a pure air, wholeſome food, and great frugality, had early multiplied men to a prodigious degree in Indoſtan. They were acquainted with laws, civil government, and arts; while the reſt of the earth was deſert and ſavage. Wiſe and beneficial inſtitutions preſerved theſe people from corruption, whoſe only care was to enjoy the benefits of the ſoil and of the climate. If from time to time their morals were tainted in ſome of theſe ſtates, the empire was immediately ſubverted; and when Alexander entered theſe regions, he found very few kings and many free cities.

A country divided into numberleſs little ſtates, ſome of which were popular, and others enſlaved, could not make a very formidable reſiſtance againſt the hero of Macedonia. His progreſs therefore was rapid, and he would have ſubdued the whole country,

had not death overtaken him in the midſt of his triumphs.

By following this conqueror in his expeditions, the Indian Sandrocotus had learned the art of war. This obſcure man, who had nothing to reccommend him but his talents, collected a numerous army, and drove the Macedonians out of the provinces they had invaded. This deliverer of his country then made himſelf maſter of it, and united all Indoſtan under his dominion. How long he reigned, or what was the duration of the empire he had founded, is not known.

At the beginning of the eighth century, the Arabs over-ran India, as they did many other parts of the world. They ſubjected ſome few iſlands to their dominion; but, content with trading peaceably on the continent, they made but few ſettlements on it.

Three centuries after this, ſome barbarians of their religion, who came out from Khoraſſan headed by Mahmoud, attacked India on the north ſide, and extended their depredations as far as Guzarat. They carried off immenſe ſpoils from thoſe wealthy provinces, and buried them under ground in their wretched and barren deſerts.

Theſe calamities were not yet forgotten, when Gengis-Khan, who with his Tartars had ſubdued the greateſt part of Aſia, brought his victorious army to the weſtern borders of India. This was about the year 1200. It is not known what part this conqueror and his deſcendants took in the affairs of Indoſtan. Probably they did not concern themſelves much about them; for it appears, that ſoon after the Patans reigned over this fine country.

Theſe men were a ſet of ſavage peaſants, who iſſuing in troops from the mountains of Candahar, ſpread themſelves throughout the fineſt provinces of Indoſtan, and eſtabliſhed there a ſucceſſion of dominions, independent of each other.

The Indians had ſcarce had time to accuſtom themſelves to this foreign yoke, when they were once more forced to change maſters. Tamerlane, who came

BOOK IV.

from Great Tartary, and was already famous for his cruelties and his victories, advanced to the north ſide of Indoſtan, at the end of the fourteenth century, with a well-diſciplined and triumphant army, inured to all the hardſhips of war. He ſecured the northern provinces himſelf, and abandoned the plunder of the ſouthern ones to his lieutenants. He ſeemed determined to ſubdue all India, when, on a ſudden, he turned his arms againſt Bajazet, overcame and dethroned that prince, and, by the union of all his conqueſts, found himſelf maſter of the immenſe ſpace that extends from the delicious coaſt of Smyrna to the delightful borders of the Ganges. After his death, violent conteſts aroſe, and his poſterity were deprived of his rich ſpoils. Babar, the ſixth deſcendant of one of his children, alone ſurvived to preſerve his name.

That young prince, brought up in ſloth and luxury, reigned in Samarcand, where his anceſtor had ended his days. The Uſbeck Tartars dethroned him, and conſtrained him to take refuge in the Cabuliſtan. Ranguildas, the governor of that province, received him kindly, and ſupplied him with troops.

This wiſe man addreſſed him in the following manner: "It is not towards the north, where vengeance "would naturally call thee, that thy ſteps muſt be "directed. Soldiers, enervated by the pleaſures of "India, could not without raſhneſs attack warriors "famous for their courage and their victories. Heaven "has conducted thee to the banks of the Indus, in "order to fix upon thy brow one of the richeſt "diadems in the univerſe. Turn thy view towards "Indoſtan. That empire, torn in pieces by the in-"ceſſant wars of the Indians and Patans, calls for a "maſter. It is in thoſe delightful regions that thou "muſt eſtabliſh a new monarchy, and raiſe thy "glory equal to that of the formidable Tamerlane."

This judicious advice made a ſtrong impreſſion on the mind of Babar. A plan of uſurpation was immediately traced out, and purſued with activity and

ſkill. Succeſs attended the execution. The northern provinces, not excepting Delhi, ſubmitted after ſome reſiſtance; and thus a fugitive monarch had the honour of laying the foundation of the power of the Mogul Tartars, which ſubſiſts to this day.

The preſervation of this conqueſt required a form of government. That which Babar found eſtabliſhed in India, was a kind of deſpotiſm, merely relative to civil matters, tempered by cuſtoms, forms, and opinion; in a word, adapted to that mildneſs which theſe nations derive from the influence of the climate, and from the more powerful aſcendant of religious tenets. To this peaceable conſtitution Babar ſubſtituted a ſevere and military deſpotiſm, ſuch as might be expected from a victorious and barbarous nation.

If we may rely upon the authority of one of the men who is the moſt deeply verſed in Indian traditions, Ranguildas was long witneſs to the power of the new ſovereign, and exulted in the ſucceſs of his own councils. The recollection of the ſteps he had taken to place his maſter's ſon upon the throne, filled him with a conſcious and real ſatisfaction.

One day, as he was praying in the temple, he heard a Banian, who ſtood by him, exclaim, "O God! "thou ſeeſt the ſufferings of my brethren. We are "a prey to a young man who conſiders us as his "property, which he may ſquander and conſume at "pleaſure. Among the many children who call "upon thee from theſe vaſt regions, one oppreſſes "all the reſt: avenge us of the tyrant; avenge us "of the traitors who have placed him on the throne, "without examining whether he was a juſt man."

Ranguildas, aſtoniſhed, drew near to the Banian, and ſaid, "O thou, who curſeſt my old age, hear "me. If I am guilty, my conſcience has miſled me. "When I reſtored the inheritance to the ſon of my "ſovereign, when I expoſed my life and fortune to "eſtabliſh his authority, God is my witneſs, that I "thought I was acting in conformity to his wiſe de-

BOOK IV.

"crees; and, at the very inſtant when I heard thy "prayer, I was ſtill thanking Heaven for granting "me, in my latter days, thoſe two greateſt of bleſ-"ſings, reſt and glory."

"Glory!" cries the Banian. "Learn, Ranguil-"das, that glory belongs only to virtue, and not to "actions which are only ſplendid, without being uſe-"ful to mankind. Alas! what advantages did you "procure to Indoſtan when you crowned the ſon of "an uſurper? Had you previouſly conſidered whether "he was capable of doing good, and whether he "would have the will and reſolution to be juſt? You "ſay, you have reſtored to him the inheritance of "his fathers, as if men could be bequeathed and "poſſeſſed like lands and cattle. Pretend not to "glory, O Ranguildas! or, if you look for gratitude, "go and ſeek it in the heart of Babar; he owes it "you. You have purchaſed it at a great price, the "happineſs of a whole nation."

Babar, however, while he was bringing his ſubjects under the yoke of deſpotiſm, took care to confine it within certain bounds, and to draw up his inſtitutes with ſo much force, that his ſucceſſors, though abſolute, could not poſſibly be unjuſt. The prince was to be the judge of the people and the arbiter of the ſtate; but his tribunal and his council were to ſit in public. Injuſtice and tyranny delight in darkneſs, that they may conceal themſelves from their intended victims; but when the monarch's actions are to be ſubmitted to the inſpection of his ſubjects, it is a ſign he intends nothing but their good. Openly to inſult a number of men aſſembled, is ſuch an outrage as even a tyrant would bluſh at.

The principal ſupport of his authority was a body of four thouſand men, who ſtyled themſelves the firſt ſlaves of the prince. Out of this body were choſen the Omrahs, thoſe perſons who compoſed the emperor's councils, and on whom he beſtowed lands, diſtinguiſhed by great privileges. This ſort of poſſeſſions always reverted to the crown. It was on this condi-

tion that all great offices were given. So true it is, that despotism enriches its slaves only to plunder them.

Great interest, however, was made for the post of Omrah. Whoever aspired to the government of a province, made this the object of his ambition. To prevent any projects the governors might form for their own aggrandizement or independence, they always had overseers placed about them, who were not under their controul, and who were commissioned to inspect the use they made of the military force they were intrusted with, to keep the conquered Indians in awe. The fortified towns were frequently in the hands of officers, who were accountable only to the court. That suspicious court often sent for its delegate, and either continued or removed him, as it happened to suit its fluctuating policy. These changes were grown so common, that a new governor coming out of Delhi, remained upon his elephant with his face turned towards the city, *waiting*, as he said, *to see his successor come out.*

The form of government, however, was not the same throughout the empire; for the Moguls had left several Indian princes in possession of their sovereignties, and even given them a power of transmitting them to their descendants. They governed according to the laws of the country, though accountable to a nabob appointed by the court. They were only obliged to pay tribute, and to conform to the conditions stipulated with their ancestors at the time of the conquest.

The conquering nation could not have committed any considerable ravages, since it does not yet constitute more than a tenth part of the population of India. There are a hundred millions of Indians to ten millions of Tartars. The two nations have never intermixed. The Indians are the only farmers and artificers. They alone live in the country, and carry on the manufactures. The Mohammedans are to be

found in the capital, at court, in great cities, in the camps and armies.

It appears, that at the period when the Moguls entered Indoſtan, that country was no longer what it had formerly been. The landed property, which, in remote times, had been ſo firmly ſettled in the hands of private perſons, was now generally become the prey of the depoſitaries of authority. All the lands belonged to the Indian or Patan princes; and it may eaſily be imagined that ſavage conquerors, ſunk in ignorance and avarice, did not rectify this abuſe, which is the utmoſt ſtretch of arbitrary power. That portion of the lands of the empire which the new ſovereigns call their own, was divided into large governments, which were called ſubahſhips. The ſubahs, who were intruſted with the civil and military government, were alſo appointed to receive the revenues. This they committed to the care of the nabobs, whom they eſtabliſhed throughout their ſubahſhips; and theſe again truſted this buſineſs to private farmers, whoſe immediate concern it was to cultivate the lands.

At the beginning of their year, which is in June, the nabob's officers agreed with the farmers for the price of their farm. A kind of deed was drawn up, called Jamabandi, which was depoſited in the chancery of the province; after which, the farmers went, each in his own diſtrict, to look for huſbandmen, and advanced them conſiderable ſums to enable them to ſow the ground. After harveſt, the farmers remitted the produce of their grounds to the nabob's officers.

The nabob delivered it to the ſubah, and the ſubah paid it into the emperor's treaſury. The agreements were commonly for half the produce of the land; the other half went to pay the charges of culture, to enrich the farmers, and to ſubſiſt thoſe whom they employed in tilling the land. In this ſyſtem were compriſed not only corn, which is the principal crop, but all other productions of the earth. Betel, ſalt, and tobacco, were all farmed in the ſame manner.

There were alſo ſome cuſtom-houſes, and ſome duties upon the public markets; but no poll-tax, or any tax upon induſtry. Theſe arbitrary rulers had not thought of requiring any thing from men who had nothing left them. The weaver, ſitting at his loom, worked without ſolicitude, and freely diſpoſed of the fruit of his labour.

This liberty extended to every kind of moveables. They were truly the property of private perſons, who were not accountable to any perſon for them. They could diſpoſe of them in their lifetime; and, after their death, they devolved to their offſpring. The houſes of artificers, the town houſes with the little gardens belonging to them, were likewiſe accounted private property. They were hereditary, and might be ſold. In the latter caſe, the buyer and ſeller appeared before the Cothoal. The conditions of the bargain were drawn up in writing; and the Cothoal affixed his ſeal to the deed to make it valid.

The ſame formality was obſerved with regard to the purchaſe of ſlaves; that is, of thoſe unfortunate men, who, under the preſſure of poverty, choſe rather to be in bondage to one man who allowed them a ſubſiſtence, than to live under that general ſlavery in which they had no means of procuring the neceſſaries of life. They then ſold themſelves for a ſum of money; and this was tranſacted in preſence of the Cothoal, that the maſter's property might not be conteſted.

The Cothoal was a kind of notary public. There was one in every diſtrict of a certain ſize. It was before him that the few deeds were tranſacted, which the nature of ſuch a government would admit of. Another officer, called Jemidar, decided all differences that aroſe between man and man; and his deciſions were almoſt always definitive, unleſs the cauſe was a very important one, or unleſs the aggrieved party was rich enough to pay for having it reverſed at the nabob's court. The Jemidar was likewiſe intruſted with the police. He had a power of inflicting ſlight

BOOK IV. punishments; but all capital offences were reserved for the judgment of the nabob, as he alone had a right to pronounce sentence of death.

Such a government, which was no better than a despotism gradually descending from the throne down to the meanest officer, could have no other spring than a coercive power constantly exerted. Accordingly, as soon as the rainy season was over, the monarch quitted his capital, and resided in his camp. The nabobs, the rajas, and the principal officers, were summoned to attend him; and in this manner he proceeded through all the provinces successively, in military parade, which, however, did not preclude political artifice. One great man was often employed to oppress another. The most odious refinement of despotism is that of dividing its slaves. These divisions were fomented by informers, publicly kept by the prince, who were continually spreading alarm and terror. These spies were always chosen among persons of the first rank. Corruption is at its height, when power can ennoble what is mean.

Every year, the great Mogul set out on his travels, more as a conqueror than as a sovereign. He went to administer justice in the provinces, as if he were going to plunder them; and maintained his authority by a parade of military force, which makes arbitrary government a continnal state of war. This manner of governing, though with legal forms, is very dangerous for the monarch. So long as the people feel their wrongs merely through the channel of those who are invested with his authority, they only murmur, upon the supposition that the sovereign is ignorant of them, and would not suffer any injustice if he knew it: but when the sovereign gives it a sanction by his presence and by his own decisions, then all confidence is at an end; the deception vanishes: he was a god; now he is an idiot, or a wicked man.

The Mogul emperors, however, have long enjoyed the superstitious idea the nation had conceived of

their ſacred character. That outward pomp which captivates the people more than juſtice, becauſe men are more affected with what dazzles their eyes, than with what is beneficial to them; the richneſs and ſplendour of the prince's court; the grandeur that ſurrounded him in his travels; all this kept up in the minds of the people thoſe prejudices of ſervile ignorance, which trembles before the idol it has raiſed. The various accounts that have been tranſmitted to us of the luxury of the moſt brilliant courts in the world, are not to be compared to the oſtentatious parade of the great Mogul when he appears in public. The elephants, formerly ſo dreadful in war, but which are become uſeleſs in an army ſince the uſe of cannon; theſe immenſe animals, that are unknown in our climates, give an Aſiatic monarch an air of grandeur, of which we have no conception. The people fall proſtrate before their majeſtic ſovereign, who ſits exalted upon a throne of gold, glittering with precious ſtones, mounted on the haughty animal, who proceeds ſlowly, proud to preſent the maſter of a great empire to the reſpect of ſo many ſlaves. Thus, by dazzling the eyes of men, or inſpiring them with terror, the Moguls preſerved, and even enlarged their conqueſts. Aurengzebe completed them, by making himſelf maſter of the whole peninſula. All Indoſtan, excepting a ſmall portion of it along the coaſt of Malabar, ſubmitted to that ſuperſtitious and barbarous tyrant, who had imbrued his hands in the blood of his father, his brothers, and his nephews.

This infamous deſpot made the Mogul power an object of deteſtation; but he ſupported it as long as he lived. At his death it was irrecoverably reduced. The uncertainty, as to the right of ſucceſſion, was the firſt cauſe of the diſturbances that aroſe after his demiſe, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Only one law was generally acknowledged; that which enacted, that the ſceptre ſhould never go out of the family of Tamerlane; but every emperor was at liberty to chooſe his ſucceſſor, without

BOOK IV. being obliged to regard the degree of consanguinity. This indefinite right proved a source of discord. Young princes, whose birth entitled them to expect the crown, and who frequently were at the head of a province and an army, supported their claim sword-in-hand, and paid little regard to the will of a monarch who was no more. This happened at the death of Aurengzebe. His rich spoils were stained with blood. In these convulsions of the state, the springs that restrained an army of twelve hundred thousand men were relaxed. Every nabob aimed at being independent, increasing the contributions raised upon the people, and lessening the tributes sent into the emperor's treasury. No longer was any thing regulated by law; all was carried on by caprice, or thrown into confusion by violent measures.

The education of the young princes promised no remedy for all these evils. Left to the care of women till the age of seven years, tutored afterwards in some religious principles, they wasted in the soft indulgences of a seraglio those years of youth and activity which ought to be employed in forming the man, and instructing him in the knowledge of life. Care was taken to enervate them, that they might not become dangerous. Conspiracies of children against their fathers were frequent. A suspicious system of policy tended to weaken the character of these young men, in order that they should not be capable of committing a crime. Hence that shocking thought of an oriental poet, that *fathers, while their sons are living, are fondest of their grandsons, because they love in them the enemies of their enemies.*

The Moguls retained nothing of those hardy manners they had brought with them from their mountains. Those among them who were advanced to high offices, or had acquired large fortunes, changed their habitations, according to the seasons. In these retirements, which were some of them more delightful than others, they lived in houses built only of clay or earth, but the inside of which presented every

Asiatic luxury, together with all the pomp of the most corrupted courts. Wherever men cannot raise a lasting fortune, nor transmit it to their posterity, they are desirous of crowding all their enjoyments in the only moment they can call their own. Every pleasure, and even life itself, is exhausted in the midst of perfumes and women.

The Mogul empire was in this state of weakness when it was attacked, in 1738, by the famous Nadercha, better known among us by the name of Thamas Kouli-Kan. The innumerable armies of India were dispersed, without resistance, by a hundred thousand Persians; as those very Persians had formerly fled before thirty thousand Greeks trained by Alexander. Thamas entered victorious into Delhi, received the homage of Muhammet, suffered that weak monarch to live and to reign, united to Persia all the provinces that suited him, and returned loaded with an immense booty, the spoils of Indostan.

Muhammet, despised by his conqueror, was still more so by his subjects. The great men would not serve under a vassal of the king of Persia. The nabobships became independent, paying only a small tribute. In vain did the emperor declare that the nabobs should still be removeable; each of them strove with all his power to make his dignity hereditary, and the sword decided every contest. The subjects were constantly at war with their master, and were not considered as rebels. Whoever could afford to pay a body of troops, pretended to a sovereignty. The only formality observed was, to counterfeit the emperor's sign manual in a *firman*, or warrant of investiture. It was brought to the usurper, who received it on his knees. This farce was necessary to impose upon the people, who had still respect enough remaining for the family of Tamerlane, to choose that all authority should, at least, appear to proceed from that source.

Thus did discord, ambition, and anarchy, oppress this beautiful region of Indostan. Crimes could the

BOOK IV.

more eaſily be concealed, as it was the cuſtom of the great never to write but in ambiguous terms, and to employ none but obſcure agents, whom they diſowned when they found it neceſſary. Aſſaſſination and poiſoning became common crimes, which were buried in the dark receſſes of thoſe impenetrable palaces, full of attendants, ever ready to perpetrate the blackeſt acts on the leaſt ſignal from their maſter.

The foreign troops that were called in by the contending parties, completed the miſeries of this unhappy country. They carried off all the riches of the land, or obliged the owners to bury them under ground; and thus it was that the treaſures amaſſed for ſo many ages gradually diſappeared. A general dejection enſued. The grounds lay fallow, and the manufactures ſtood ſtill. The people would no longer work for foreign plunderers, or domeſtic oppreſſors. Want and famine were ſoon felt. Theſe calamities, which for ten years had infeſted the provinces of the empire, began to viſit the coaſt of Coromandel. The wiſe Nizam-el Muluck, ſubah of the Decan, was now no more. His prudence and talents had kept that part of India which he commanded in a flouriſhing ſtate. The European merchants were apprehenſive that their trade might fail when it had loſt that ſupport. They ſaw no reſource againſt that danger, but to have a territory of their own, large enough to contain a number of manufacturers ſufficient to make up their lading.

Means employed by the French to acquire large poſſeſſions in India.

Dupleix was the firſt who conſidered this as a practicable ſcheme. The war had brought many troops to Pondicherry, with which he hoped, by rapid conqueſts, to procure greater advantages than the rival nations had obtained by a ſteady conduct and mature deliberation.

He had long ſtudied the character of the Moguls, their intrigues, and their political intereſts. He had acquired ſuch knowledge of theſe matters as might have been ſurpriſing even in a man brought up at the court of Delhi. This knowledge, deeply com-

bined, had convinced him that it would be in his power to attain a principal influence in the affairs of Indoſtan; poſſibly, to manage them at his pleaſure. His ſpirit, which prompted him to attempt more than he was able to perform, gave additional ſtrength to his reflections. Nothing terrified him in the great part he propoſed to act at the diſtance of ſix thouſand leagues from his native country. In vain did his friends repreſent to him the dangers attending ſuch an undertaking; he conſidered nothing but the glorious advantage of ſecuring to France a new dominion in the heart of Aſia; of enabling her, by the revenues annexed to it, to defray the charges of trade and the expences of ſovereignty; and even of freeing her from the tribute which our luxury pays to the induſtry of the Indians, by procuring rich and numerous cargoes, which ſhould not be bought with any exports of money, but with the overflowings of the new revenues. Full of this great project, Dupleix eagerly ſeized the firſt opportunity that offered to put it in execution, and ſoon took upon him to diſpoſe of the ſubahſhip of the Decan, and the nabobſhip of the Carnatic, in favour of two men who were ready to give up any thing he ſhould require.

The ſubahſhip of the Decan is a viceroyalty, made up of ſeveral provinces which were formerly ſo many independent ſtates. It extends from Cape Comorin to the Ganges. The ſubah has the ſuperintendence of all the Indian princes, and all the Mogul governors within his juriſdiction; and in his hands are depoſited the contributions that are deſtined to fill the public treaſure. He can compel his inferior officers to attend him in all military expeditions he may think proper to make into the countries under his dominion; but he is not allowed to march them into a foreign territory, without an expreſs order from the emperor.

The ſubahſhip of the Decan becoming vacant in 1748, Dupleix, after a ſeries of events and revolutions, in which the corruption of the Moguls, the weakneſs

BOOK IV. of the Indians, and the boldneſs of the French, were equally conſpicuous, diſpoſed of it, towards the beginning of the year 1751, in favour of Salabat-jing, a ſon of the late viceroy.

This ſucceſs ſecured great advantages to the French ſettlements along the coaſt of Coromandel; but Pondicherry was a place of ſuch importance, that it was thought to deſerve a particular attention. This town, which is ſituated in the Carnatic, has ſuch conſtant and immediate connections with the nabob of that rich diſtrict, that it was thought adviſable to procure the government of the province for a man whoſe affection and ſubmiſſion might be depended upon. The choice fell upon Chunda-ſaeb, a relation of the late nabob, well known for his intrigues, his misfortunes, his warlike exploits, and his ſteadineſs of temper.

In return for their ſervices, the French made him give up an immenſe territory. The principal of their acquiſitions was the iſland of Seringham, formed by the two branches of the Caveri. This long and fertile iſland derives its name and its conſequence from a pagoda, which is fortified, as are moſt great buildings that are devoted to public worſhip. The temple is ſurrounded with ſeven ſquare encloſures, at the diſtance of three hundred and fifty feet from each other, and formed by walls of a moderate height, which are proportionably thick. The altar ſtands in the centre. A ſingle monument of this kind, with its fortifications, and the myſteries and riches it contains, is more likely to enforce and perpetuate a religion, than a multiplicity of temples and prieſts diſperſed in different towns, with their ſacrifices, ceremonies, prayers, and diſcourſes, which, by their number, their frequent repetition, and their being performed in public, are apt to tire the people: theſe are alſo expoſed to the contempt of enlightened reaſon, to dangerous profanations, or to the ſlight and neglect of the people; a circumſtance which the prieſts dread more than ſacrilege itſelf. The prieſts of India, as wiſe as thoſe of Egypt, ſuffer no ſtranger to penetrate

into the pagoda of Seringham. Amidſt the fables in which the hiſtory of this temple is involved, probably ſome acute philoſopher might, if he were admitted into it, trace from the emblems, the form and conſtruction of the edifice, and the ſuperſtitious practices and traditions peculiar to that ſacred encloſure, many ſources of inſtruction, and acquire an inſight into the hiſtory of the moſt remote ages. Pilgrims reſort thither from all parts of Indoſtan, to obtain abſolution of their ſins, and always bring an offering proportionable to their circumſtances. Theſe gifts were ſtill ſo conſiderable at the beginning of the preſent century, as to maintain forty thouſand men in a life of ſloth and idleneſs. The Bramins of this temple, though under the reſtraints of ſubordination, were ſeldom known to quit their retirement for the more buſy ſcenes of intrigue and politics.

Independent of other advantages which the French enjoyed by the acquiſition of Seringham, the ſituation gave them great influence over the neighbouring countries, and an abſolute command over the kingdom of Tanjour, as they could at any time ſtop the waters that were wanted for the culture of the rice.

The territories of Karical and Pondicherry obtained an acceſſion of ten leagues each, with fourſcore villages. If theſe acquiſitions were not ſo conſiderable as that of Seringham in point of political influence, they were much more ſo with regard to trade.

But this was a trifling acquiſition, compared to the territory that was gained to the North, which comprehended the Condavir, Maſulipatnam, the iſland of Divi, and the four provinces of Muſtafanagur, Elur, Rajamandry, and Chicakol. Such important conceſſions made the French maſters of the coaſt for the ſpace of ſix hundred miles, and procured them the beſt linen in Indoſtan. It is true they were to enjoy the four provinces no longer than they ſhould furniſh the ſubah with a ſtipulated number of troops, and maintain them at their own expence; but this

BOOK IV.

agreement, which was only binding to their honesty, gave them little concern. Their ambition made them already think themselves in possession of the treasures that had been heaped up in those vast regions for so many ages.

The ambitious views of the French, and their projects of conquest, were carried much beyond this. They proposed to obtain a cession of the capital of the Portuguese colonies, and to seize upon the district of a triangular form, which lies between Masulipatnam, Goa, and Cape Comorin.

In the mean time, till they could realize these brilliant chimeras, they considered the personal honours that were lavished upon Dupleix as a presage of the greatest prosperity. It is well known, that every foreign colony is in some degree odious to the natives; it is therefore good policy to endeavour to lessen this aversion, and the surest way to attain that end is, to conform as much as possible to the customs and manners of the country. This maxim, which is in general true, is more particularly so in countries where the people reflect but little; and is consequently so in India.

The inclination which the French commander had for Asiatic pomp, was still a further inducement with him, to conform to the customs of the country. Accordingly, he was exceedingly rejoiced when he saw himself invested with the dignity of a nabob. That title put him upon a level with those whose protection he solicited before, and afforded him considerable opportunities to pave the way for those great revolutions he meditated, in order to promote the important interests he was intrusted with. He entertained still greater hopes on being appointed governor of all the Mogul possessions, throughout an extent little inferior to the whole kingdom of France. All the revenues of those rich provinces were to be deposited in his hands, and he was accountable to none but the subah himself.

Though these agreements entered into by mer-

chants could not be very pleaſing to the court of Delhi, they were not much afraid of its reſentment. The emperor, being in want of men and money, which the ſubahs, the nabobs, the rajahs, his meaneſt delegates, took upon themſelves to refuſe him, found himſelf attacked on all ſides.

The Rajaputes, deſcended from thoſe Indians with whom Alexander had been engaged in battle, being driven out of their lands by the Moguls, took ſhelter in ſome mountains that are almoſt inacceſſible. Continual diſturbances put it out of their power to think of conqueſts; but in the intervals of their diſſenſions, they make inroads that cannot fail of haraſſing an empire already exhauſted.

The Patans are ſtill more formidable enemies. Driven by the Moguls from moſt of the thrones of Indoſtan, they have taken refuge at the foot of Mount Imaüs, which is a continuation of the Caucaſus. That ſituation has ſtrangely altered their manners, and given them a fierceneſs of temper which they had not in a milder climate. War is their chief employment. They ſerve alike under the banners of Indian or Mohammedan princes; but their obedience is not equal to their valour. Whatever crime they may have been guilty of, it is dangerous to puniſh them; for they are ſo vindictive, that they will murder when they are weak, and revolt when they are ſtrong enough to attempt any bold enterpriſe. Since the reigning power has loſt its ſtrength, the nation has ſhaken off the yoke. Not many years ago, their generals carried on their ravages as far as Delhi, and did not quit that capital till they had plundered it.

To the north of Indoſtan is a nation, which, though lately known, is the more formidable for being a new enemy. This people, diſtinguiſhed by the name of Sheiks, have found means to free themſelves from the chains of deſpotiſm and ſuperſtition, though ſurrounded by nations of ſlaves. They are ſaid to be followers of a philoſopher of Thibet, who inſpired them with ſome notions of liberty, and taught them

BOOK IV. Theiſm without any mixture of ſuperſtition. They firſt appeared in the beginning of the preſent century; but were then conſidered rather as a ſect than as a nation. During the calamities of the Mogul empire, their number increaſed conſiderably by apoſtates of all religions, who joined with them, and ſought ſhelter among them from the oppreſſions and fury of their tyrants. To be admitted of that ſociety, nothing more is required than to ſwear implacable hatred againſt monarchy. It is aſſerted, that they have a temple, with an altar, on which ſtands their code of laws, and next to it a ſceptre and a dagger. Four old men are elected, who occaſionally conſult the law, which is the only ſupreme power this republic obeys. The Sheiks actually poſſeſs the whole province of Punjal, the greateſt part of the Moultan and the Sindi, both banks of the Indus, from Caſſimere to Tatta, and all the country towards Delhi, from Lahor to Serhend: they can raiſe an army of ſixty thouſand good cavalry.

But of all the enemies of the Moguls, none are, perhaps, ſo dangerous as the Marattas. This nation, of late ſo famous, as far as the obſcurity of their origin and hiſtory will allow us to conjecture, poſſeſſed ſeveral provinces of Indoſtan, from whence they were driven by the fear or the arms of the Moguls. They fled into the mountains which extend from Surat to Goa, and there formed ſeveral tribes, which in proceſs of time united into one ſtate, of which Satarah was for a long time, and Ponah now is, the capital.

Moſt of them carried vice and licentiouſneſs to all the exceſſes which might be expected from an ignorant people, who have caſt off the yoke of prejudices, without ſubſtituting wholeſome laws and knowledge in their ſtead. Tired of laudable and peaceful labours, they thought of nothing but rapine. Yet this was confined to the plundering of a few villages, and the robbing of ſome caravans; till the coaſt of Coromandel, being threatened by Aurengzebe, made

them ſenſible of their ſtrength, by imploring their aſſiſtance.

At this period, they were ſeen coming out of their rocks, mounted on ſmall and ill-ſhaped horſes, but ſtout, and accuſtomed to indifferent feeding, to difficult roads, and to exceſſive fatigue. The whole accoutrement of a Maratta horſeman conſiſted of a turban, a girdle, and a cloak. His proviſions were a little bag of rice, and a leather bottle full of water. His only weapon was an excellent ſabre.

Notwithſtanding the aſſiſtance of theſe barbarians, the Indian princes were forced to bend to the yoke of Aurengzebe; but the conqueror, weary of contending with irregular troops, which were continually ravaging the newly-reduced provinces, determined to conclude a treaty that would have been diſhonourable, had it not been dictated by neceſſity, which is ſtronger than prejudices, oaths, and laws. He ceded for ever to the Marattas the fourth part of the revenues of the Decan, a ſubahſhip formed out of all his uſurpations in the peninſula.

This kind of tribute was regularly paid as long as Aurengzebe lived. After his death, it was granted or refuſed according to circumſtances. The levying of it brought the Marattas in arms to the remoteſt parts of their mountains. Their boldneſs increaſed during the anarchy of Indoſtan. They have made the empire tremble; they have depoſed monarchs; they have extended their frontiers; they have granted their protection to rajas and nabobs who ſtrove to be independant, and their influence has been unbounded.

While the court of Delhi was with difficulty contending with ſo many enemies, all conſpiring to effect its ruin, M. de Buſſy, who, with a ſmall corps of French troops, and an army of Indians, had conducted Salabat-jing to Aurengabad his capital, endeavoured to eſtabliſh him on the throne where he had placed him. The weakneſs of the prince, the

conſpiracies which it occaſioned, the firmans or privileges which had been granted to rivals, and other impediments, obſtructed, but could not ſubvert his projects. By his means the prince reigned more peaceably under the protection of the French than could have been expected, conſidering the circumſtances of his ſituation; and he preſerved him abſolutely independent of the head of the empire.

Chunda-Saeb, appointed nabob of the Carnatic, was not in ſo happy a ſituation. The Engliſh, ever in oppoſition to the French, had ſtirred up a rival againſt him, named Mohammed-Ali-Khan. The names of thoſe two princes ſerved as a pretence for carrying on a vigorous war between the two nations: they fought for glory, for wealth, and to ſerve the paſſions of their reſpective commanders, Dupleix and Saunders. Victory declared alternately for each army. Succeſs would not have been ſo fluctuating, had the governor of Madras had more troops, or the governor of Pondicherry better officers It was difficult to conjecture which of thoſe two men, who were both of the ſame inflexible temper, would in the end obtain the ſuperiority; but it was very certain that neither would ſubmit, while he had either troops or money left. Nor was it likely that either of them would ſoon be reduced to this extremity, notwithſtanding their amazing efforts, becauſe they both found ſuch reſources in their hatred and their genius, as even the moſt able men could not have any conception of. It was evident that the diſturbances in the Carnatic would not be at an end, unleſs the peace was firſt ſettled in Europe; and it was to be feared that the flame, which had been confined to India for ſix years, might ſpread further. The miniſters of France and England obviated this danger, by enjoining the two Companies to fix certain terms of agreement. They made a conditional treaty, which began by ſuſpending all hoſtilities at the commencement of the year 1755; and was to end by eſtabliſhing between them a perfect equality of terri-

tory, of ſtrength, and of trade, on the coaſts of Coromandel and Orixa. This ſtipulation had not yet received the ſanction of the courts of London and Verſailles, when greater intereſts kindled a freſh war between the two nations.

War between the Engliſh and French. The French loſe all their ſettlements.

The report of this great conteſt, which began in North America, and ſpread itſelf throughout the univerſe, reached the Eaſt Indies at a time when the Engliſh were engaged in a very intricate war with the ſubah of Bengal. Had the French been then in the ſame ſtate they were ſome years before, they would have joined with the natives. From narrow views and ill-judged intereſts, they were deſirous of entering into a formal convention, to ſecure the neutrality which had ſubſiſted on the banks of the Ganges during the laſt diſturbances. Their rivals amuſed them with the hopes of ſettling this convention, ſo long as they wanted to keep them in a ſtate of inaction. But as ſoon as their ſucceſſes had enabled them to make their own terms, they attacked Chandernagore. The reduction of this place was followed by the ruin of all the factories dependent upon it, and put the Engliſh in a condition to ſend men, money, proviſions, and ſhips, to the coaſt of Coromandel, where the French were juſt arrived with conſiderable land and ſea forces.

Theſe forces, deſtined to protect the ſettlements of their own nation, and deſtroy thoſe of the enemy, were more than ſufficient to anſwer both thoſe purpoſes. The only point was to make a proper uſe of them; but there was a miſtake in this from the beginning, as will plainly appear from the following obſervations.

Before the commencement of the war, the Company poſſeſſed, on the coaſts of Coromandel and Orixa Maſulipatnam, with five provinces; a large circuit of land about Pondicherry, which for a long time before had been nothing but a ſandbank; and an extent nearly of the ſame ſize in the neighbourhood of Karical; and, laſtly, the iſland of Seringham.

BOOK IV. These possessions made four tracts of country, too far distant to support each other. They bore the marks of the wild fancy and extravagant imagination of Dupleix, who had made these acquisitions

These political errors might have been amended. Dupleix, who compensated for his defects by his great qualities, had acquired so great an influence, that he was offered the perpetual government of the Carnatic. It was the most flourishing province in all the Mogul empire. By singular and fortunate circumstances, it had been governed successively by three nabobs of the same family, who had been equally attentive to agriculture and industry. General felicity had been the result of this mild government and public-spirited conduct, and the public revenues had increased to twelve millions [50,000l.]. A sixth part of this sum would have been given to Salabatjing, and the rest would have been for the Company.

If the ministry and the direction, who alternately supported and neglected their power in India, had but been capable of a firm and settled resolution, they might have sent orders to their agent to give up all the remote conquests, and to be content with that important settlement. It was alone sufficient to give the French a firm establishment, a compact territory in which the settlements would be contiguous, a very large quantity of merchandise, provisions for their fortified towns, and revenues sufficient to maintain a body of troops; which would have enabled them to set the jealousy of their neighbours, and the hatred of their enemies, at defiance. Unfortunately for them, the court of Versailles ordered that Dupleix should not accept of the Carnatic; and affairs remained as they were before that proposal.

The situation was critical. Dupleix was, perhaps, the only man who could support himself in it, or in his stead the celebrated officer who had had the greatest share in his confidence, and was best acquainted with his schemes. The contrary opinion prevailed. Dupleix had been recalled. The general who was ap-

pointed to conduct the Indian war, imagined he must demolish a structure which ought only to have been supported in those troublesome times, and discovered his designs in so public a manner, as contributed greatly to heighten the imprudence of his resolutions.

This man, whose ungovernable temper could never adapt itself to circumstances, had received from nature none of those qualities that render a man fit for command. He was governed by a gloomy, impetuous, and irregular imagination; so that there was a perpetual contrast between his conversation and his projects, and between his projects and his actions. Passionate, suspicious, jealous, and positive to excess, he created an universal diffidence and dejection, and excited animosities never to be suppressed. His military operations, his civil government, his political combinations, all bore evident marks of the confusion of his ideas.

The evacuation of the island of Seringham was the principal cause of the disasters that attended the war with Tanjour. Masulipatnam, and the northern provinces, were lost, from having given up the alliance of Salabat-jing. The inferior powers of the Carnatic, who no longer respected the French for the sake of their old friend the subah of the Decan, completed the general ruin by espousing other interests.

On the other hand, the French squadron, though superior to the English, with which it had engaged three several times without gaining any advantage over it, was at last obliged to leave it master of the seas, by which the fate of India was decided. Pondicherry, after struggling with all the horrors of famine, was forced to surrender on the 15th of January 1761. Lally had, the day before, corrected a plan of capitulation drawn up by the council; he had named deputies to carry it to the enemy's camp; and, by a contradiction that was characteristic of the man, he gave the deputies a letter for the English general, in which he told him, *he would have no ca-*

BOOK IV. *pitulation, becauſe the Engliſh were ſuch people that they would not adhere to it.*

In taking poſſeſſion of the place, the conqueror cauſed not only the troops that had defended it, but all the French in the Company's ſervice, to be ſhipped off for Europe; and, not ſatisfied even with that revenge, they deſtroyed Pondicherry, and made that noble city a heap of ruins.

Thoſe of the inhabitants who were ſent over to France, arrived in deſpair, at having loſt their fortunes, and ſeen their houſes demoliſhed as they quitted the ſhore. They filled Paris with their clamours; they excited the indignation of the public againſt their governor; they impeached him as the author of all their miſeries, and the ſole cauſe of the loſs of a flouriſhing colony. Lally was taken up and tried by the parliament. He had been accuſed of high treaſon and extortion; of the firſt he was acquitted, and of the ſecond no proof could be brought; yet Lally was condemned to loſe his head.

Let us aſk, in the name of humanity, what his crime was, that it ſhould be puniſhable by law? The awful ſword of juſtice was not put into the hands of the magiſtrate to gratify private reſentment, or even to follow the emotious of public indignation. The law alone muſt point out its own victims; and, if the clamours of a blind and incenſed multitude could ſway with the judges to pronounce a capital ſentence, the innocent might ſuffer for the guilty, and there would be no ſafety for the citizen. In this point of view let us examine the ſentence.

It declares, that Lally ſtands convicted of *having betrayed the intereſts of the king, of the ſtate, and of the India Company.* What is meant by betraying of intereſts? What law is there that makes it death to be guilty of this vague and indefinite crime? No ſuch law either does or can exiſt. Diſgrace from the prince, contempt from the nation, and public infamy; theſe are the proper puniſhments for the man, who, from

incapacity or folly, has not ſerved his country as he ought: but death, and that too upon a ſcaffold, is deſtined for crimes of a different nature.

The ſentence further declares, that Lally ſtands convicted *of vexations, exactions, and abuſe of authority.* No doubt he was guilty of theſe in numberleſs inſtances. He made uſe of violent means to procure pecuniary aids; but this money was put into the public treaſure. He injured and oppreſſed the citizens; but he never attempted any thing againſt their lives or againſt their honour. He erected gibbets in the market-place, but cauſed no one to be executed upon them.

In fact, he was a madman of a dark and dangerous caſt; an odious and deſpicable man; a man totally incapable of command. But he was neither guilty of public extortions nor treaſon; and, to uſe the expreſſion of a philoſopher whoſe virtues do honour to humanity, *every one had a right to kill Lally, except the executioner.*

Cauſes of the misfortunes of the French.

The misfortunes that befel the French in Aſia had been foreſeen by all conſiderate men, who reflected on the corruption of the nation. Their morals eſpecially had degenerated in the voluptuous climate of India. The wars which Dupleix had carried on in the inland parts had laid the foundation of many fortunes. They were increaſed and multiplied by the gifts which Salabat-jing laviſhed on thoſe who conducted him in triumph to his capital, and fixed him on the throne. The officers who had not ſhared the dangers, the glory, and the benefits of thoſe brilliant expeditions, found out an expedient to comfort themſelves under their misfortune; which was, to reduce the ſipahis to half the number they were ordered to maintain, and to apply their pay to their own benefit; which they could eaſily do, as the money paſſed through their hands. The agents for trade, who had not theſe reſources, accounted to the Company but for a very ſmall part of the profits made upon the European goods they ſold, though they ought to have been all their own; and ſold them thoſe in India at

BOOK IV. a very high price, which they ought to have had at prime coſt. Thoſe who were intruſted with collecting the revenue of any particular ſpot, farmed it themſelves under Indian names, or let it for a trifle, upon receiving a handſome gratuity; they even frequently kept back the whole income of ſuch eſtates, under pretence of ſome imaginary robbery or devaſtation, which had made it impoſſible to collect it. All undertakings, of what nature ſoever, were clandeſtinely agreed upon, and became the prey of the perſons employed in them, who had found means to make themſelves formidable, or of ſuch as were moſt in favour, or richeſt. The authoriſed abuſe that prevails in India, of giving and receiving preſents on the concluſion of every treaty, had multiplied theſe tranſactions without neceſſity. The navigators who landed in thoſe parts, dazzled with the fortunes which they ſaw increaſed fourfold from one voyage to another, no longer regarded their ſhips, but as the means of carrying on trade and acquiring wealth. Corruption was brought to its greateſt height by people of rank, who had been diſgraced and ruined at home; but who, being encouraged by what they ſaw, and impelled by the reports that were brought to them, reſolved to go themſelves into Aſia, in hopes of retrieving their ſhattered fortunes, or of being able to continue their irregularities with impunity. The perſonal conduct of the directors made it neceſſary for them to connive at all theſe diſorders. They were reproached with attending to nothing in their office but the credit, the money, and the power it gave them; with giving the moſt important poſts to their own relations, men of no morals, application, or capacity; with multiplying the number of factors without neceſſity and without bounds, to ſecure friends in the city and at court; and, laſtly, they were accuſed of obtruding upon the public commodities which might have been bought cheaper and better in other places. Whether the government did not know of theſe exceſſes, or had not reſolution enough

to put a ſtop to them, it was, by its blindneſs or its weakneſs, in ſome meaſure acceſſary to the ruin of the affairs of the nation in India. It might even without injuſtice be charged with being the principal cauſe of them, by ſending ſuch improper perſons to manage and defend an important ſettlement, which had no leſs to fear from its own corruption, than from the Engliſh fleets and armies.

Meaſures taken by the French to re-eſtabliſh affairs in India.

The diſaſters of the Company abroad were aggravated by their ſituation equally diſtreſsful at home. It was neceſſary to repreſent theſe twofold misfortunes to the proprietors. This diſcovery occaſioned a general deſpondency, which gave riſe to a variety of different ſchemes, all equally abſurd. Theſe ſeveral ſchemes were haſtily diſcuſſed; nor was it poſſible that any of them could be fixed upon by men in ſuch a ſtate of uncertainty and diffidence. The deliberations were carried on with too much aſperity; and time, which was of ſo much conſequence, was loſt in upbraidings and invectives. No one could foreſee where theſe commotions would end. The ſtorm at length ſubſided, and freſh hopes began to dawn. The Company, which the enemies to all excluſive privileges wiſhed to ſee aboliſhed, and which ſo many private intereſts had conſpired to deſtroy, ſtill maintained its ground; but it was put upon a better footing; a circumſtance which was abſolutely neceſſary.

Among the cauſes that had occaſioned the diſtreſſes of the Company, there was one which had long been looked upon as the ſource of all the reſt; this was the dependence, or rather the ſlavery, in which the government had kept that great body for near half a century.

Ever ſince the year 1723, the directors had been choſen by the court. In 1730, a commiſſary appointed by the king was introduced into the adminiſtration of the Company. From this period there was an end to all freedom of debate; there was no longer any connection between thoſe who had the management of affairs, and the proprietors; no immediate inter-

BOOK IV.

courſe between the managers and the government. All was directed by the influence, and according to the views of the court. Myſtery, that dangerous veil of arbitrary adminiſtration, concealed all the operations; and it was not till 1744, that the proprietors were called together. They were empowered to name ſyndics, and to call a general meeting once a-year; but they were not better informed of the ſtate of their affairs, nor more at liberty to direct them. The power of chooſing the directors was ſtill veſted in the crown, and inſtead of one commiſſary, the king choſe to have two.

From this time two parties were formed. Each commiſſary had his own ſcheme, his own favourites, and endeavoured to get his own projects adopted. Hence aroſe diviſions, intrigues, informations, and animoſities, which, though they originated in Paris, extended as far as India, and there broke out in a manner ſo fatal to the nation.

The miniſtry, ſhocked at ſuch a number of abuſes, and weary of thoſe endleſs conteſts, attempted to remedy them. It was imagined he had ſucceeded, by appointing a third commiſſary. This expedient, however, ſerved only to increaſe the evil. Deſpotiſm had prevailed while there was but one; diviſion enſued on the nomination of two; and from the moment three were appointed, all was anarchy and confuſion. They were reduced to two, and pains were taken to preſerve harmony as much as poſſible between them; and in 1764, there was but one, when the proprietors deſired that the Company might be brought back to its original form by reſtoring its freedom.

They ventured to repreſent to the government, that they might impute the diſaſters and errors of the Company to themſelves, as the proprietors had not been concerned in the management of their affairs; that they could never be carried on moſt advantageouſly both for them and for the ſtate, till this could be done with freedom, and till an immediate intercourſe was eſtabliſhed between the proprietors and

the directors, and between the directors and the ministry; that whenever there was an intermediate person, the orders given on one part, and the reports made on the other, would neceſſarily, in paſſing through his hands, take a tincture of his own private views and inclinations, ſo that he would always be, in fact, the real and ſole director of the Company; that ſuch a director, not being himſelf perſonally concerned in the affairs of the Company, or not being a competent judge of them, would always ſacrifice the welfare and true intereſt of trade, to add to the tranſient pomp of his appointment, and to ſecure the favour of placemen; that, on the contrary, every thing might be expected from a free direction, choſen by the proprietors, acting under their inſpection, and in concert with them, and ſubject to no kind of reſtraint.

The government was ſenſible of the truth of theſe reaſons. It ſecured the freedom of the Company by a ſolemn edict; and ſome regulations were made, to put the direction of it under a new form.

The intention of theſe ſtatutes was, that the Company might no longer be ruled by men, who often were not worthy to be its factors; that the government might no further interfere than to protect it; that it might be alike preſerved from that ſlavery under which it had ſo long been oppreſſed, and from that ſpirit of myſtery, which had perpetuated its corruption; that there ſhould be a conſtant intercourſe between the directors and the proprietors; that Paris, deprived of the advantage enjoyed by the capitals of other commercial nations, of being a ſea-port, might acquire a knowledge of trade in free and peaceable aſſemblies; that the citizen might form juſt notions of that powerful tie that connects all nations together, and, by informing himſelf of the ſources of public proſperity, learn to reſpect the merchant whoſe operations contribute to it, and to deſpiſe the profeſſions that are deſtructive of it.

Theſe wiſe regulations were attended with happier

BOOK IV. consequences than could possibly be expected. A great activity was observed on all sides. During the five years that the new direction lasted, the sales produced annually 18,000,000 livres [750,000l.]. They had not been so considerable, even in those times which had been looked upon as the most prosperous; for, from 1726 to 1736 inclusively, they had amounted to no more than 437,376,284 livres [18,224,011l. 16s. 8d.], which makes upon an average, in peace and war, 14,108,912 livres [587,871l. 6s. 8d.] a year.

Imminent distress was, however, concealed under this appearance of prosperity. When this was suspected, and endeavours were made to ascertain the matter, it was found that the Company, on renewing its trade, was more indebted than it had been supposed. This is a circumstance common to all mercantile bodies, whose transactions are complicated, extensive, and carried on in distant countries. They have scarce ever a just idea of their situation. Whether this mistake be to be attributed to the fraud, neglect, or incapacity of their agents, certain it is, that it takes place almost universally. The confusion is still increased by the calamity of war. That which the French had been sustaining in India, had been tedious and unsuccessful. The expences and depredations of it were but imperfectly known; and the Company began their operations, reckoning upon a larger capital than they possessed.

This mistake, ruinous in itself, was followed by other fatal errors, which arose, perhaps, from not having sufficiently reflected on the revolutions that had happened recently in India. The Company flattered themselves that their sales would amount to twenty-five millions of livres [1,041,666l. 13s. 4d.], and they were below eighteen millions [750,000l.]. They flattered themselves, that the European commodities would be sold for fifty per cent. more than they had cost, while they scarce fetched their original price. They flattered themselves with a profit of

cent. per cent. upon the productions that ſhould be brought into our climates, and it amounted to no more than ſeventy-two per cent.

All theſe miſcalculations, aroſe from the ruin of the French credit in India, and from the exorbitant power of the victorious nation that had lately ſubdued thoſe diſtant regions: from the neceſſity there frequently was of taking upon credit bad merchandiſe from the Engliſh merchants, who were endeavouring to convey to Europe the immenſe fortunes they had amaſſed in Aſia: from the impoſſibility of procuring funds neceſſary for carrying on the trade, without giving an exorbitant intereſt: from the obligation the Company were under of ſupplying proviſions for the iſles of France and Bourbon, which advances were ſlowly and ill paid by the government, as well as the gratifications granted to them for their exports and imports.

Laſtly, According to the plan of the directors, the expences neceſſary for the carrying on of trade, and for the maintaining of ſovereignty, were not to exceed four millions of livres [180,000l.], whereas, they amounted to more than twice that ſum. The expences for maintaining the right of ſovereignty might even be carried much beyond this in future, ſince, in their nature, they were capable of being extended and increaſed in conformity with the political views of the monarch, the ſole judge of their importance and neceſſity.

In ſuch a ſituation, it was impoſſible that the diſorderly ſtate of the affairs of the Company ſhould not be more and more increaſed. Their ruin, as well as that of their creditors, was upon the point of being completed, when government, warned by the repeated loans they were continually renewing, determined to inquire into the ſtate of their finances. As ſoon as it became acquainted with them, it was thought proper to ſuſpend their excluſive privilege of trade with India. Let us now examine what was the condition of the Company at that period.

BOOK IV.

The charter of the Company is suspended. Their state at that period.

Before 1764, the number of shares amounted to 50,268. At that period the ministry, who, in 1746, 1747, and 1748, had given up to the proprietors the produce of the shares and bonds which were their property, relinquished in their favour the shares and bonds themselves, to the number of 11,835 together, to indemnify them for the expences they had incurred during the last war. These shares having been cancelled, there remained but 38,432.

The wants of the Company obliged them to make a call of 400 livres [16l. 13s. 4d.] per share. Upwards of 34,000 shares answered the call. The 4000 that did not, were reduced, by the terms of the edict which empowered the Company to make the call, to five-eighths of the value of those which had paid; so that, by this operation, the number was reduced to 36,920 whole shares and six-eighths.

The dividends on the shares of the French company, as of all other companies, have varied according to circumstances. In 1722 it was 100 livres [4l. 3s. 4d.]. From 1723 to 1745 it was 150 [6l. 5s.]. From 1746 to 1749 it was 70 [2l. 18s. 4d.]. From 1750 to 1758 it was 80 [3l. 6s 8d.]. From 1759 to 1763 it was 40 [1l. 3s. 4d.]; and in 1764, it was but 20 livres [16s. 8d.]. This account shows, that the dividend and the value of the stock, which always kept pace with it, was necessarily affected by the hazards of trade, and the fluctuation of popular opinion. Hence that prodigious rise and fall in the price of the shares, which fell in one year from two hundred [167l. 18s. reckoning each pistole at 16s. 9d.] to one hundred pistoles [83l. 15s.], then rose to 1800 livres [75l. 8s.]; and soon after fell to 700 [29l. 3s. 4d.]. Yet, in the midst of these revolutions, the stock of the Company was much the same. But this is a calculation which the public never makes. It is determined by the circumstance of the present moment, and its confidence, as well as its fears, are always exaggerated.

The proprietors, who were under apprehensions of having their fortunes reduced to half in one day,

would no longer run the risks of such a situation. In laying in a fresh stock to trade with, they desired to secure the remainder of their fortune in such a manner, as that the shares should at all times bear a settled price, and an interest that could be depended upon. The government settled this matter by an edict issued out in August 1764. The XIIIth article expressly says, That, to secure to the proprietors a settled income, independent of all future events of trade, a sufficient fund should be detached from that portion of the contract which was then free, to secure to every share a capital of 1600 livres [66l. 13s. 4d.], and an interest of 80 livres [3l. 6s. 8d.]; and that *neither that interest nor that capital, should, in any case, or for any cause whatsoever, be answerable for such engagements as the Company might enter into after the date of this edict.*

The Company, therefore, owed for 36,920 shares and six-eighths, at the rate of 80 livres [3l. 6s. 8d.] per share, an interest amounting to 2,953,660 livres [123,069l. 3s. 4d.]. They paid for their several contracts 2,727,506 livres [113,646l. 1s. 8d.], which made in all 5,681,166 livres [236,715l. 5s.] of perpetual annuities. The life annuities amounted to 3,074,899 livres [128,120l. 15s. 10d.]. The sum total of all these life annuities and annual payments was then 8,756,065 livres [364,836l. 10d.]. In what manner the Company raised money to answer their several demands, shall be the subject of our next inquiry.

That great body, which had been much too deeply concerned in Law's scheme, had advanced him 90,000,000 of livres [3,750,000l.]. When that system failed, the government made over to them in payment the exclusive sale of tobacco, which then brought in three millions [125,000l.] a year; but they were left without a capital to trade with. This kept them in a state of inaction till 1726, when the government lent them its assistance. The rapid progress they made astonished all nations, and seemed to promise them a superiority over the most flourishing

companies. This opinion, which was the general one, emboldened the proprietors to complain that their dividends were not doubled and trebled. They thought, as well as the public, that the king's treasury was enriched with their spoils. The profound secrecy with which every thing was carried on, greatly strengthened these surmises.

The breaking out of the war between France and England, in 1744, dissolved the charm. The ministry, too much embarrassed in their own affairs to think of doing any thing for the Company, left it to extricate itself. Then, indeed, every one was surprised to see that Colossus ready to fall, which had never yet met with any shock, and whose greatest misfortune had been the loss of two ships of a moderate value. The Company would have been ruined, had not the government, in 1747, declared itself their debtor in the sum of 180,000,000 of livres [7,500,000l.], and engaged to pay them the interest of that sum for ever at five per cent. This engagement, which was in lieu of the exclusive sale of tobacco, is so important a point in the history of the Company, that it would not be sufficiently illustrated, if we did not trace the matter further back.

The use of tobacco, which was introduced into Europe after the discovery of America, made no very rapid progress in France. The consumption was so small, that the first contract, which began the first of December 1674, and ended the first of October 1680, brought in but 500,000 livres [20,833l. 6s. 8d.] to the government the two first years, and 600,000 [25,000l.] the four last; though the right of stamping pewter had been joined to this privilege. This farm of the revenue was confounded with the general farms till 1691, when it still remained united to them, and was rated at 1,500,000 livres [62,500l.] a year. In 1697, it became once more a separate farm on the same terms, till 1709, when it was increased to 100,000 livres [4166l. 13s. 4d.] more, till 1715. It was then renewed for three years only. The two first years ought

to have produced 2,000,000 of livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.], and the laſt 200,000 [8333l. 6s. 8d.] more. At that period it was increaſed to 4,020,000 livres [167,500l.] a year; but this laſted only from the firſt of October 1718 to the firſt of June 1720. Tobacco then became a mercantile commodity all over the kingdom, and continued ſo till the firſt of September 1721. During this ſhort interval, private perſons laid in ſuch a ſtock, that, when it came to be farmed out again, it could be done but at a moderate price. This contract, which was the eleventh, was for nine years, to commence on the firſt of September 1721, and continue to the firſt of October 1730. The farmers were to give 1,300,000 livres [154,166l. 13s. 4d.] for the firſt thirteen months; 1,800,000 [75,000l.] for the ſecond year; 2,560,000 [106,666l. 13s. 4d.] for the third; and 3,000,000 [125,000l.] for each of the laſt ſix years. This agreement did not take place, becauſe the India Company, to whom the government owed 90,000,000 livres [3,750,000l.], which had been depoſited in the royal treaſury in 1717, demanded the farm of tobacco, which had then been made over to them for ever, and which, from particular events, they had never yet enjoyed. Their petition was found to be juſt, and they obtained what they ſo warmly ſolicited.

They managed this farm themſelves, from the firſt of October 1723, to the laſt day of September 1730. The produce during that ſpace was 50,083,967 livres 11 ſous 9 deniers [about 2,086,831l. 18s. 10d.]; which made 7,154,852 livres 10 ſols 3 deniers [about 298,120.l 17s. 1d.] a year; out of this muſt be deducted yearly 3,042,963l. 19s. 6d. [about 126,790l. 4s. 2d.] for the charges of preparing the land.

Theſe charges were ſo enormous, that it was thought the buſineſs, which grew every day more conſiderable, would be better in the hands of the farmers-general, who would manage it at leſs expence by means of the clerks they employed for other purpoſes. The Company accordingly farmed it for eight years, at

BOOK IV. the rate of 7,500,000 livres [312,500l.] for each of the firſt four years, and 8,000,000 [333,333l. 6s. 8d.] for each of the four laſt. This contract was continued upon the ſame terms till the month of June 1747; and the king promiſed to account with the Company for the increaſe of the produce, as ſoon as it ſhould be known and aſcertained.

At this period, the king united the tobacco farm to his other duties, creating and alienating, for the uſe of the Company, an annuity of nine millions [375 000l.] for ever, upon a capital of an hundred and eighty millions [7,500,000l.]. This large compenſation was thought to be due to them for the old debt of ninety millions [3,750,000l.]; for the overplus of the profit upon the tobacco farm, from 1738 to 1747; and to indemnify them for the expences of the negroe trade, for the loſſes they had ſuſtained during the war, for their giving up the excluſive privilege of the trade to St. Domingo, and for the loſs of the ton duty which had been ſuſpended ever ſince the year 1731. Yet this compenſation has been thought inadequate by ſome of the proprietors, who have diſcovered, that ever ſince the year 1758, upwards of 11,700,000 pounds weight of tobacco have been annually ſold in the kingdom at three livres [2s. 6d.] a pound, though it had been bought for twenty-ſeven livres [1l. 2s. 6d.] a hundred.

The nation was of a very different opinion. The directors, who prevailed upon government to acknowledge ſo large a debt, have been accuſed of ſacrificing the intereſt of the public to that of a private ſociety. A writer, who in our days ſhould examine whether this accuſation were well or ill grounded, would paſs for an idle man. Such a diſcuſſion would be altogether needleſs, ſince every circumſtance of this tranſaction has been made public. It will be ſufficient to obſerve, that it was with the nine millions [375,000l.] a year, improperly ſacrificed by the ſtate, that the Company was enabled to anſwer the demand of 8,756,065 livres [364,836l. 10d.] with

which it was charged, ſo that the overplus remaining to them amounted to about 244,000 livres [10,166l. 13s. 4d.] of net revenue.

It is true, they had private ſimple-contract debts to the amount of 74,505,000 livres [3,104,375l.]; but they had in trade, in ſtock, or in debts to call in, 70,733,000 livres [2,947,208l. 6s. 8d.]. It will be acknowledged, that beſide the difference in the value, there was alſo ſome in the nature of the ſecurities. Accordingly, the government muſt have expected, that it would be obliged to fulfil the engagements of the Company. It has, however, ſaved ten millions of livres [416,666l. 13s. 4d.], the claims of which have been loſt, or the claimants themſelves have unfortunately periſhed in the revolutions that happen ſo frequently in Aſia. The loſſes that have been ſuſtained, reſpecting what was due to the Company in Europe, in America, and in the Indies, have not been much more conſiderable; and if the iſles of France and Bourbon were ever able to pay the 7,106,000 livres [296,089l. 6s. 8d.] they owe, the injury upon this point would not have been of much conſequence.

The only wealth of the Company conſiſted, therefore, in moveable and unmoveable effects, to the amount of about twenty millions [833,333l. 6s. 8d.], and in the proſpect of the extinction of the life annuities, which in time muſt bring in three millions [125,000l.] a year. The actual value of this article might be reckoned equal to a clear capital of thirty millions [1,25,0000l.].

Independent of theſe properties, the Company enjoyed ſome very beneficial rights. The excluſive ſale of coffee had been granted them; but as public utility required that an exception ſhould be made in 1736, with regard to coffee imported from the American iſlands, they obtained, by way of compenſation, a yearly ſum of 50,000 livres [2083l. 6s. 8d.], which was always duly paid. Even the privilege for Mocha coffee was cancelled in 1767, the government

having allowed the importation of that of the Levant. The Company obtained no indemnification on this account.

They had experienced a greater loſs the year before. In 1720 they had been inveſted with the ſole right of tranſporting ſlaves to the American colonies. This ſyſtem ſoon appeared to be erroneous; and it was agreed, that all the merchants in the kingdom ſhould be at liberty to carry on the ſlave trade, upon condition of adding a piſtole [16s. 9d.] per head to the thirteen livres [10s. 10d.] granted out of the royal treaſury. Suppoſing that 15,000 negroes were diſpoſed of every year in the French iſlands, this made a clear income of 345,000 livres [14,375l.] for the Company. This bounty, which was allowed them for a trade they were not concerned in, was taken off in 1767, and was made up to them by a more reaſonable equivalent.

At the firſt formation of the Company, they had obtained a gratuity of 50 livres [2l. 1s. 8d.] upon every ton of goods they ſhould export, and of 75 [3l. 2s. 6d.] upon every ton they ſhould import from abroad. The miniſtry, upon the ſuppreſſion of the bounty upon negroes, increaſed the gratuity upon every ton exported to 75 livres [3l. 2s. 6d.]; and upon every ton imported to 80 [3l. 6s. 8d.]. If we rate both at 6000 tons a year, we ſhall find a produce of above a million [41,666l. 13s. 4d.] for the Company, including the 50,000 livres [2083l. 6s. 8d.] they received upon the coffee.

While the income of the Company remained entire, their expences were leſſened. By the edict of 1764, the iſlands of France and Bourbon were become the property of the government, which engaged to fortify and defend them. By this arrangement the Company was exonerated of two millions [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] a year, without the leaſt detriment to the excluſive trade they enjoyed in thoſe two iſlands.

With all theſe ſeemingly proſperous circumſtances,

the debts of the Company were daily increasing, and it could not possibly have supported itself without the assistance of government. But for some time past the council of Lewis XV. had appeared to be very indifferent about the existence of that great body. At last a decree of council was issued, bearing date the 13th of August 1769, by which the king suspended the exclusive privilege of the India Company, and granted to all his subjects the liberty of navigating and trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope. However, in granting this unexpected freedom, the government thought proper to lay it under some restraint. The decree which opens this new tract to private navigators, requires them to provide themselves with passports, which are to be given them gratis by the directors of the India Company. It obliges them to make their returns to Port l'Orient, and no where else. It establishes a duty by way of Indulto on all goods imported from India; which, by a second decree of council, issued on the sixth of September following, was fixed at five per cent. on all goods coming from India and China, and at three per cent. upon all commodities of the growth of the islands of France and Bourbon.

The Company lose all hopes of reviving their trade, and cede all their effects to government.

The decree of the 13th of August, by only suspending the privilege of the Company, seemed to leave to the proprietors the power of resuming it: but as they saw no probability of ever being able to do this, they wisely determined to liquidate their concerns in such a manner, as to secure their creditors, and the remains of their own fortunes.

For this purpose they offered to give up to the king all the Company's ships, thirty in number; all the warehouses and other buildings belonging to them at Port l'Orient and in India; the property of their factories, with the manufactures dependent on them; all naval and military stores; and, lastly, two thousand four hundred and fifty slaves which they had in the islands. All these articles were valued at at thirty millions [1,250,000l.] by the proprietors,

who at the ſame time demanded the payment of 16,500,000 livres [687,500l.] which were due to them by the government.

The king agreed to the propoſal, but choſe to leſſen the purchaſe-money: not that the effects were not of ſtill greater value while they remained in the hands of the Company; but being made over to the government, they brought an additional encumbrance upon it. So that, inſtead of 46,500,000 livres, [1,937,500l.] which the proprietors demanded, the prince, to clear all accounts with them, created a perpetual annuity for their benefit, of 1,200,000 livres [50,000l.], upon a capital of thirty millions [1,250,000l.]. The edict for that purpoſe was iſſued in January 1770.

This new contract the Company mortgaged for twelve millions [458,333l. 6s. 8d.], which they borrowed upon life annuities at ten per cent. and by a lottery in February following. This money was borrowed to enable them to fulfil the engagements they had entered into when they undertook the laſt expeditions: but it was inſufficient: ſo that, finding themſelves utterly unable to raiſe more, the proprietors, at their meeting on the 7th April 1770, made over their whole property to the king, except the capital that had been mortgaged to the proprietors of the ſhares.

The principal articles compriſed in this ceſſion, conſiſted in the abolition of 4,200,000 livres [175,000l.] in life annuities; in that part of the contract of nine millions [375,000l.] which exceeded the capital of the ſhares; in the hotel of Paris; in the India goods expected home in 1770 and 1771, ſuppoſed to be worth 26,000,000 of livres [1,833,333l. 6s. 8d.]; and, laſtly, in three or four millions [about 150,000l. upon an average] of debts, to be called in from debtors either ſolvent or inſolvent, in India, in the iſles of France and Bourbon, and at San Domingo. The proprietors engaged at the ſame time to furniſh the king with a ſum of 14,768,000 livres [615,333l. 6s. 8d.],

to be raiſed by way of a call, which was fixed at 400 livres [16l. 13s. 4d.] per ſhare. The government, in accepting theſe ſeveral offers, engaged, on their part, to pay all the perpetual and life annuities which the Company was bound to pay; all their other engagements, amounting to about forty-five millions [1,875,000l.]; all the penſions and half-pays granted by the Company, amounting to 80,000 livres [3,333l. 6s. 8d.] a year; and laſtly, to ſtand all the charges and riſks attending a liquidation that muſt neceſſarily continue ſome years.

The capital of each ſhare, which, by the edict of Auguſt 1764, had been fixed at 1600 livres [66l. 13s. 4d.], bearing an intereſt of 80 livres [3l. 6s. 8d.], the king now raiſed to 2500 livres [104l. 13s. 4d.], bearing an intereſt of 125 livres [5l. 4s. 2d.] a year. The new intereſt was made ſubject to a deduction of a tenth, and it was agreed that this deduction ſhould be annually appropriated to the paying off the ſhares by lot, on the footing of their capital of 2500 livres [104l. 13s. 4d.]; ſo that the intereſt on the ſhares thus paid off, would increaſe the ſinking fund till the whole of the ſhares was finally liquidated.

Theſe reſpective conditions are recorded in a decree of council of the 8th of April, including a report of the deliberations holden the day before in a general meeting of the proprietors, and confirmed by letters patent, bearing date the 22d of the ſame month. In conſequence of theſe agreements, the call has been paid, a ſufficiency for the reimburſement of the ſhares, to the number of two hundred and twenty, has been taken out every year, and the ſimple-contract debts of the Company have been punctually paid when they became due.

From all theſe particulars, it is no eaſy matter to form an idea of the actual mode of exiſtence of the India Company, and of the legal ſtate of the trade they carried on. This Company, which at preſent has no property, no buſineſs, no object, cannot how-

BOOK IV.

ever be conſidered as being entirely deſtroyed, ſince the proprietors have reſerved the joint ſtock that was mortgaged for their ſhares; and that they have a common cheſt, and deputies to ſuperintend their intereſts. On the other hand, their charter has been ſuſpended; but it is only ſuſpended, and is not included among the articles which the Company has ceded to the king. The law by which it was granted is ſtill in force; and the ſhips that are fitted out for the Indian ſeas, cannot ſail without a permiſſion in the name of the Company. So that the freedom which has been granted is but a precarious one; and if the proprietors ſhould offer to reſume their trade, with a ſufficient ſtock to carry it on, they would have an undoubted right to do it without any new law to empower them. But except this nominal right, which in fact is much the ſame as if it did not exiſt, as the proprietors are not in a condition to exerciſe it; all their other rights, properties, and factories, are now in the hands of government.

Nevertheleſs, the voyages to India have been ſtill continued, although the ſyſtem of policy had not previouſly paved the way for the free trade that was to ſucceed the monopoly. If ſound principles had been followed, before the new mode of trading had been attempted, it would have been neceſſary to ſubſtitute, inſenſibly, and by degrees, the private merchants to the Company. They ſhould have been enabled to acquire knowledge upon the different branches of a trade with which they were yet unacquainted. They ſhould have been allowed time to form connections in the factories. They ſhould have been encouraged, and, as it were, conducted in the firſt expeditions.

This want of foreſight muſt be one of the principal cauſes which have retarded the progreſs of the free trade, and which perhaps have prevented it from being lucrative when it became more extenſive: its tranſactions have been carried on in thoſe factories

which were previouſly occupied by the monopolizing Company. Let us take a curſory view of thoſe ſettlements, beginning with Malabar.

Preſent ſtate of the French upon the coaſt of Malabar.

Between the provinces of Canara and Calicut, lies a diſtrict which extends eighteen leagues along the coaſt, and ſeven or eight leagues at moſt in the inland parts. The country, which is very unequal, abounds with pepper and cocoa trees. It is divided into ſeveral leſs diſtricts, ſubject to as many Indian lords, who are all vaſſals to the houſe of Colaſtry. The head of this Bramin family is always to confine his whole attention to what concerns the worſhip of the gods. It would be beneath his dignity to ſtoop to profane matters; and the reigns of government are given to his neareſt relation. The country is divided into two provinces. In the largeſt, called the Irouvenate, is the factory of Tellicherry, where the Engliſh purchaſe annually fifteen hundred weight of pepper; and the factory of Cananor, which the Dutch have lately ſold for about 250,000 livres [10,416l. 13s. 4d.], becauſe it was an encumbrance to them.

The ſecond province, called Catenate, extends but five leagues along the coaſt. Here the French were called in by the natives in 1722, with a view to engage them to act againſt the Engliſh; but an accommodation having taken place, and made their aſſiſtance unneceſſary, they were forced to relinquiſh a poſt where they promiſed themſelves ſome advantages. Fired with reſentment and ambition, they returned in greater numbers in 1725, and eſtabliſhed themſelves, ſword in hand, on the mouth of the river Mahé. Notwithſtanding this act of violence, they obtained of the prince, who governed that diſtrict, an excluſive right to the pepper trade. This favour was ſo great an advantage to them, that it gave riſe to a colony of 6000 Indians, who cultivated 6350 cocoa trees, 3967 areka, and 7762 pepper trees. Such was the ſtate of this ſettlement, when the Engliſh made themſelves maſters of it in 1760.

BOOK IV.

The ſame ſpirit of deſtruction that they had ſhown in all their conqueſts, influenced them at Mahé. Their intention was to pull down the houſes and diſperſe the inhabitants. The ſovereign of that country diſſuaded them from their purpoſe. All was ſpared, except the fortifications. When the French returned to their factory, they found every thing much in the ſame condition as they had left it.

Mahé is ſurrounded with hills, on which were erected five forts, that no longer exiſt. Theſe works were too numerous, though ſome precautions are abſolutely neceſſary. It is not proper to be perpetually expoſed to the depredations of the Nayers, who have formerly attempted to plunder and deſtroy the colony, and who might poſſibly have ſtill the ſame intentions, in order to put themſelves under the protection of the Engliſh at Tellicherry, which is but three miles diſtant from Mahé.

Beſide the poſts requiſite to ſecure the place itſelf, it is very neceſſary to fortify the entrance of the river. Since the Marattas have got ports of their own, they infeſt the ſea about Malabar with their piracies. Thoſe banditti even attempt to land wherever they think there is ſome booty to be got. Mahé would not be ſecure from their attacks, if it contained money or commodities to tempt them.

The French might make themſelves ample amends for any expences they ſhould incur, if they did but carry on their trade with ſpirit and ſkill. Their factory is the beſt ſituated for the pepper trade; and the country would afford 2,500,000 pounds weight of that commodity. What could not be conſumed in Europe might be ſold in China, on the Red Sea, and at Bengal. A pound of pepper would coſt them twelve ſous [6d.], and they would ſell it for twenty-five or thirty [about 1s. 2d. on an average.].

This advantage, conſiderable as it is, would be increaſed by the profits upon European goods which would be carried over to Mahé. Thoſe who are beſt acquainted with that factory are of opinion, that it

will be an easy matter to dispose of 400,000 weight of iron, 200,000 of lead, 25,000 of copper, 2000 fire-locks, 20,000 weight of gunpowder, 50 anchors or grapplings, 50 bales of cloth, 50,000 ells of sail-cloth, a good quantity of quicksilver, and about 200 casks of wine or brandy, for the French settled in the colony, or for the English in the neighbourhood. These several articles together would produce at least 384,000 livres [16,000l.], of which 153,600 [6400l.] would be clear gain, allowing the profit to be 40 per cent. Another advantage attending this circulation is, that there would always be a stock in the factory, which would enable them to purchase the productions of the country in the seasons of the year when they are cheapest.

The greatest obstacle to trade is the custom-house established in the colony. This troublesome duty belongs to the sovereign of the country, and has always been a subject of contention. The English of Tellicherry, who laboured under the same grievance, have found means to prevent all disputes about these duties, by paying a certain yearly sum as an equivalent. The French might do the same; but they cannot expect that the prince would agree to it, unless they previously pay him the 46,353 rupees, or 111,247 livres 4 sols [4635l. 6s.], which he has lent; and unless they no longer refuse him the tribute stipulated for the benefit of living peaceably upon his territories. Matters cannot be so easily adjusted at Bengal.

Present state of the French at Bengal.

France has engaged, by the treaty of 1763, to erect no fortifications, and keep no troops in that rich and extensive country. The English, who are sovereigns there, will not suffer the French to deviate from what they have required. Consequently Chandernagore, which before the last war reckoned 60,000, souls, and has now but 24,000, is, and always will be, entirely an open place.

To this misfortune of a precarious situation, may be added injuries and hardships of every kind. Not

ſatisfied with the poſſeſſion of unlimited authority, the Engliſh have been guilty of the moſt ſcandalous enormities. They have inſulted the French in their work-ſhops; ſeduced their workmen; cut the linens off of the looms; inſiſted that the manufacturers ſhould do no work but for them in the three beſt months of the year; and that their own ladings ſhould be picked out and completed before any thing was removed out of the work-ſhops. The ſcheme which the French and Dutch had contrived together, of making an exact eſtimate of the number of weavers, taking only half between them, and leaving the reſt to the Engliſh, has been conſidered as an inſult. That ruling nation have proceeded ſo far as to declare, that they would have their factors buy the goods even in Chandernagore; and the French have been forced to ſubmit to this hardſhip, or they would have been excluded from every market in Bengal. In a word, they have ſo much abuſed the unjuſt right of victory, that a philoſopher might be tempted to wiſh for the ruin of their liberty, were not the people infinitely more oppreſſive and cruel under the government of one man, than under a government tempered by the influence of many.

As long as things remain upon the preſent footing in that opulent part of Aſia, the French will meet with perpetual hardſhips and mortifications, and therefore no ſolid and laſting advantage can accrue to trade. They would be reſcued from this diſgrace, if they could exchange Chandernagore for Chatigan.

Chatigan is ſituated on the confines of Arracan. The Portugueſe, who in the days of their proſperity, endeavoured to get all the important poſts in India into their own hands, made a conſiderable eſtabliſhment at that place. Thoſe who were ſettled there threw off the yoke of their native country, when it became a part of the Spaniſh dominions, chooſing rather to turn pirates than to be ſlaves. They long infeſted the neighbouring coaſts and ſeas with their depredations. At laſt they were attacked by the

Moguls, who raiſed a colony upon their ruins, powerful enough to prevent any inroads which the people of Arracan and Pegu might be tempted to make into Bengal. This place then ſunk into obſcurity, till 1758, when the Engliſh arrived and ſettled there.

The climate is healthy, the waters excellent, and proviſions are in great plenty; the landing is eaſy, and the anchorage ſafe. The continent, and the iſland of Sondiva, make a tolerable harbour. The rivers Barramputri and Etki, which are branches of the Ganges, or at leaſt communicate with it, greatly facilitate commercial operations. If Chatigan be further diſtant from Patna, Caſſimbuzar, and ſome other markets, than the European colonies on the river Hughly, it is nearer to Jogdia, Dacca, and all the manufactures of the lower river. It is a matter of no conſequence, whether ſhips of burden can or cannot enter the Ganges on that ſide, as the inland navigation is never carried on but with boats.

Though the knowledge the Engliſh had of theſe advantages had determined them to ſeize upon Chatigan, we are inclined to think they would have given it up at the laſt peace, to get rid of the French, and remove them from a place which lies too near their own ſettlements, and which long habit had endeared to them. We even preſume, that at Chatigan, the Engliſh would have deſiſted from thoſe conditions they required at Chandernagore, which ſtamp a diſgrace upon the poſſeſſors, more detrimental to the ſchemes of commerce than it is poſſible to conceive. Trade is a free profeſſion. The ſea, the voyages, the riſk, and the viciſſitudes of fortune, all inſpire a love of independence. This gives life and ſpirit to trade, which, when confined, languiſhes, and is loſt.

The preſent opportunity is, perhaps, a favourable one, to think of the exchange we propoſe. The fortifications which the Engliſh had begun to erect at Chatigan having been thrown down by frequent earthquakes, they ſeem to have taken a diſlike to a

BOOK IV.

place for which they had ſhown ſome predilection. As to the French, this inconvenience, great as it is, would be preferable to that of living in a defenceleſs town. It is better to ſtrive againſt nature than againſt men, and to be expoſed to the ſhocks of the earth than to the inſults of nations. The French, though reſtrained at Bengal, fortunately meet with ſome compenſation, in having a better ſituation on the coaſt of Coromandel.

Preſent ſituation of the French upon the coaſt of Coromandel.

To the north of that very extenſive coaſt, they poſſeſs Yanam, in the province of Rajahmandry. This factory, which has no land belonging to it, and is ſituated nine miles from the mouth of the river Ingerom, was formerly a very flouriſhing one. From miſtaken motives it was neglected about the year 1748. It would, however, afford goods to the value of 4 or 500,000 livres [from 16,666l. 13s. 4d. to 20,833l. 6s. 8d.], as the cotton manufactures are very conſiderable in that neighbourhood, and the cottons remarkably fine and good. It has been found by experience to be a good market for diſpoſing of European cloth. The trade of this place would be more lucrative, if they were not obliged to ſhare the profit with the Engliſh, who have a ſmall ſettlement within two miles of the French.

The competition is much more detrimental to their intereſt at Maſulipatnam. The French, who formerly were maſters of the whole town, but have nothing left now except the factory they had before 1749, cannot poſſibly contend with the Engliſh, who make them pay duty for all their imports and exports, and enjoy beſides all the favour in their own trade which ſovereignty can command. Things being thus circumſtanced, the French confine their dealings to the purchaſe of ſome fine handkerchiefs and other callicoes, to the amount of 150,000 livres [6250l.]. It is far otherwiſe at Karical.

This town, ſituated in the kingdom of Tanjour, on one of the branches of the Coleroon, which will bear ſhips of 150 tons burden, was ceded to the

Company in 1738, by a dethroned king, who was in want of protection. Having been restored before he had fulfilled his engagements, he retracted the gift he had made. A nabob attaked the place with his army, and in 1739 gave it up to the French, who were in friendship with him. Soon after this, the ungrateful and perfidious prince was strangled by the intrigues of his uncles; and his successor, who had inherited his enemies with his throne, being desirous of obtaining the friendship of a powerful nation, confirmed them in their possession. The English took the place in 1760, and blew up the fortifications. It was afterwards restored to the French, who returned thither in 1765.

In its present state, Karical is an open place, which may contain 15,000 inhabitants, most of them employed in weaving ordinary handkerchiefs and cottons, for the wear of the natives. The territory belonging to it, which has been considerably increased by the concessions which the king of Tanjour made in 1749, is now once more what it was at first, two leagues in length, and one league in the broadest part. It is composed of fifteen hamlets, of which one only deserves our notice; this is called Tirumale-Rayenpatnam, and contains no less than 25,000 souls. The inhabitants weave and paint Persians that are tolerably fine, fit for Batavia and the Philippine islands. The Coolies and Mohammedans have small vessels, with which they trade to Ceylon, and along the coast.

France may draw annually from this settlement, two hundred bales of cottons or handkerchiefs fit for Europe, and a large quantity of rice for the subsistence of her other colonies.

All goods bought at Karical, Yanam, and Masulipatnam, are carried to Pondicherry, the chief settlement of the French in India.

This town, which rose from such small beginnings, in time became a great, powerful, and famous city. The streets, which are all straight, and most of them

broad, are lined with two rows of trees, which keep them cool even in the heat of day. The moſt remarkable public edifices are a moſque, two pagodas, two churches, and the governor's houſe, which is reckoned the moſt magnificent building in the Eaſt. A ſmall citadel had been conſtructed in the year 1704; but it is of no uſe, ſince houſes have been allowed to be built all round it. To ſupply the loſs of this defence, three ſides of the town had been fortified with a rampart, a ditch, baſtions, and a glacis, which was unfiniſhed in ſome places. The road was defended by ſome batteries judiciouſly placed.

The town, which was full a league in circumference, contained 70,000 inhabitants, of which 4000 were Europeans, Meſtees, or Topaſſes. There were at moſt 10,000 Mohammedans; the reſt were Indians, 15,000 of whom were Chriſtians and the others of ſeventeen or eighteen different caſts or tribes. Three villages, dependent on the town, might contain 10,000 ſouls.

Such was the ſtate of the colony, when the Engliſh made themſelves maſters of it in the beginning of the year 1761, utterly deſtroyed it, and turned out the inhabitants. Others may, perhaps, examine whether the barbarous right of war could juſtify ſuch enormities. Let us turn away our eyes from ſo many cruelties committed by a free, magnanimous, and enlightened nation; and conſider only the reſolution France has taken to reſtore Pondicherry to its former ſplendour. Every thing concurs to juſtify the wiſdom of this choice.

This town, like all others on the coaſt of Coromandel, has no harbour, but it has a much more commodious road. The ſhips can anchor cloſe to the ſhore, under the cannon of the fortifications. Its territory, which is three leagues long and one league broad, is nothing more than a barren ſand-bank on the ſea coaſt; but the greateſt part is fit for the culture of rice, vegetables, and a root called chayaver, which is uſed in dying. Two ſmall rivers that croſs the country, but are not navigable, afford excellent

water for the ſame purpoſe, particularly for the blue dye. Three miles from the town is a hill, which riſes a hundred toiſes above the level of the ſea, and is a guide to ſhips at the diſtance of ſeven or eight leagues; which is a very conſiderable advantage upon ſo flat a coaſt. At the top of this hill is a very large body of water, that has been collecting for ages, and, after refreſhing and fertilizing a ſpacious territory, flows down to water the grounds about Pondicherry. Laſtly, The colony is favourably ſituated for the reception of proviſions and merchandiſe from the Carnatic, the kingdoms of Myſore and Tanjour.

Such were the important reaſons which determined France to rebuild Pondicherry. As ſoon as her agents appeared on the 11th of April 1765, the unfortunate Indians, who had been diſperſed by the calamities of war, and by political intrigues, flocked thither in great numbers. By the beginning of the year 1770, there were 27,000 who had rebuilt their ruined houſes. They are all brought up in the idea, that no man can be happy who does not die in the very place where he firſt ſaw the light. This prejudice, ſo pleaſing to them, and which it may be ſo uſeful to keep up, will undoubtedly make them all return, as ſoon as the town is encloſed.

This deſign was ſet on foot ſome years after the French had regained poſſeſſion of the place. No other idea was then entertained with regard to building upon a ſandy ſoil, where the foundations muſt neceſſarily be laid in the water, than that of a fortification raiſed *ſur puits*, a very expenſive kind of work, and to which there is, as it were, no end. M. Bourcet preferred the erecting of it upon forelands, with a *revêtement* (or outward coating) of no thickneſs, ſloping to two fifths of its height, and ſupported by a rampart of wet earth, well beat and compacted. Theſe forelands had been formerly employed in the conſtruction of the walls ſurrounding the place: but the foundation of the walls which ſupported them had not been laid ſufficiently deep to prevent the ſinking that

BOOK IV. would have been produced by the running off of the ſands which might have eſcaped from under theſe foundations; an advantage which the new mode of conſtruction was far from having. Upon this bad plan a thouſand toiſes of *revêtement* were raiſed.

No ſooner were the miniſtry in Europe informed of the defects of theſe works, than they ſent M. Deſclaiſons, a man diſtinguiſhed in the corps of engineers by his probity and talents. This ſkilful engineer did not adopt either the fortifications *ſur puits*; or thoſe on forelands with *revêtemens* ſloping to two fifths of their height. He began his work in February 1770, and completed in ſeven months an extent of ſix hundred and thirty-ſix toiſes; with ten feet of net maſonry above the foundation, which was laid at the loweſt point where it was poſſible to drain off the waters. His maſonry was ſolid, and his *revêtement* conſtructed according to the rules of the greateſt maſters.

The ſpirit of intrigue, which then carried every thing at Verſailles, occaſioned M. Deſclaiſons to be recalled, and he was ſucceeded by the ſame engineer whoſe works had ſo juſtly been cenſured. This man had recourſe to his former method, although every thing he had done before was already cracked; and he executed a new extent of fortification of eight hundred toiſes, which fell to pieces in the ſame manner as the former.

The voice of reaſon, which will ſometimes make itſelf be heard, prevailed upon the government to apply again to M. Deſclaiſons in 1775. He was deſired to undertake the completion of the works of Pondicherry, but at the ſame time to keep the fortifications that were already erected. This mode of proceeding was too repugnant to ſound principles for him to accede to it; and he judged it indiſpenſibly neceſſary to ſacrifice every thing that had been executed contrary to the rules of the art. He demonſtrated, that the works erected upon forelands were improper both for defence and duration; that the inclined

revêtemens could not fail of breaking either horizontally or vertically; that a wall placed before the forelands muſt neceſſarily make them decay, and might occaſion the ſinking and deſtruction of the *revêtemens* themſelves. His opinion was, that it was proper to defend Pondicherry according to the methods practiſed in Europe; and that an encloſure with ſimple baſtions and a few out-works was ſufficient. The expences of this fortification were to amount to five millions of livres [208,333l. 6s. 8d.]. This reaſoning, though not controverted, was not acceded to; and the place remained defenceleſs, or in a ſtate of weakneſs and ruin, which is every day increaſing.

The French factories in India, in their preſent ſtate, do not produce more than 200,000 livres [8333l 6s. 8d.], while they coſt more than 2,000,000 of livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] every year. This is a very conſiderable ſacrifice, and yet it is leſs than what is required for the preſervation of the iſles of France and Bourbon, which are not in ſo flouriſhing a ſtate as they were expected to have been.

Preſent ſtate of the Iſle of Bourbon.

Bourbon is ſixty miles in length, and forty-five in breadth; but nature has rendered uſeleſs the greateſt part of this extenſive ſpace. Three inacceſſible peaks, which are ſixteen hundred toiſes high; a dreadful vulcano, the environs of which are always burnt up; numberleſs ravines, of ſo ſteep a deſcent that it is impoſſible to clear the ſoil; mountains, the ſummit of which is conſtantly arid; coaſts in general covered with ſtones: theſe are ſo many natural and unſurmountable obſtacles to a cultivation of any extent. Moſt of the lands even, which can be cultivated, are ſloping; and it is not uncommon to ſee the beſt founded expectations fruſtrated by torrents.

A beautiful ſky, a pure air, a delicious climate, and wholeſome waters, have, however, collected in the iſland a population of ſix thouſand three hundred and forty white men, well-made, ſtrong, courageous, and diſtributed in nine pariſhes, of which that of St. Dennis is the principal. Theſe men, a few years ago, were

BOOK IV. celebrated for a ſpirit of candour, equity, and moderation, worthy of the primitive ages. The war of 1756 produced ſome little alteration in their character, without affecting materially their morals.

Theſe virtues were the more remarkable, as they ſprang up and were maintained in the midſt of ſix-and-twenty thouſand one hundred and ſeventy-five ſlaves, according to the calculation made in 1776.

At the ſame period, the colony reckoned ſeven-and-fifty thouſand eight hundred and fifty-eight animals, not one of which was devoted to agriculture. Excepting two thouſand eight hundred and ninety-one horſes, which were employed for different purpoſes, the reſt were entirely deſtined for ſubſiſtence.

In this year, the produce of the harveſt roſe to five millions four hundred and forty-one thouſand twenty-five quintals of corn; to three millions one hundred and ninety-one thouſand four hundred and forty tons of rice; to twenty-two millions four hundred and ſixty-one thouſand eight hundred tons of maize; and to two millions five hundred and fifteen thouſand one hundred and ninety tons of pulſe. Moſt of theſe productions were conſumed in Bourbon itſelf; the reſt ſupplied ſubſiſtence to the Iſle of France.

The colony cultivated for the mother-country eight millions four hundred and ninety-three thouſand coffee plants, the fruit of which is of the beſt kind next to that of Arabia. Each of theſe trees yielded originally near two pounds of coffee. This produce is diminiſhed by three fourths, ſince the cultivation has been carried on in an open country; ſince the planters have been under a neceſſity of growing their trees in an exhauſted ſoil, and ſince the inſects have attacked them.

The court of Verſailles will never attend to the improvement of a colony, where ſteep ſhores, and a ſea violently agitated, render the navigation always dangerous and often impracticable. It were rather to be wiſhed that it might be abandoned, becauſe it is a powerful attraction to ſome men, and to ſome

exertions, which ſhould rather be all concentrated in the Iſle of France, which is only five-and-thirty leagues diſtant from it.

Preſent ſtate of the Iſle of France. Importance of this ſettlement. Account of what has already been done, and of what ſtill remains to be done for it.

According to the obſervations of the Abbé de la Caille, this other poſſeſſion meaſures thirty-one thouſand eight hundred and ninety toiſes in its greateſt diameter; twenty-two thouſand one hundred and twenty-four in its greateſt breadth; and four hundred and thirty-two thouſand ſix hundred and eighty acres of ſuperficies. Numbers of mountains are to be ſeen in it; not one of which is more than four hundred and twenty-four toiſes high. Although the ſoil be in all parts covered with ſtones of a greater or leſs ſize, ſo that it cannot be tilled with the plough, but muſt be worked with the ſpade, it is nevertheleſs fit for many things. Though more ſuperficial and leſs fertile than that of Bourbon, it is more generally ſuſceptible of cultivation.

This iſland for a long time engaged the ſpeculation, rather than the induſtry of its poſſeſſors; they waſted their time in conjectures concerning the uſe it might be put to.

Some were inclined to make a mart of it, where all India goods ſhould centre. They were to be brought thither on India bottoms, and then ſhipped on board French veſſels, which were never to go any further. A double advantage evidently aroſe from this ſcheme; firſt, the expences were leſſened, as both the pay and maintenance of India ſailors is very trifling; and, ſecondly, the ſhips crews were better preſerved, for theſe were ſometimes deſtroyed by the length of the voyage alone, and ſtill more frequently by the climate, eſpecially in Arabia and at Bengal. This plan met with no ſupport. It was feared that the Company would fall into contempt, unleſs they diſplayed, in theſe diſtant latitudes, a naval force ſufficient to enſure reſpect.

Others, agreeably to a new ſyſtem which engaged their attention, were of opinion that the inhabitants of the Iſle of France ſhould be allowed to trade to

BOOK IV. India, which they had never yet been ſuffered to do. The ſupporters of this ſyſtem maintained, that the propoſed freedom would prove an abundant ſource of wealth to the colony, and conſequently to the mother-country. But the iſland was then in want of both veſſels and ſpecie; it had no articles for exportation, nor means of conſumption. For all theſe reaſons, the experiment proved unſucceſsful, and it was reſolved that the iſland ſhould be entirely confined to agriculture.

This new regulation gave riſe to freſh miſtakes. Men were ſent from the mother-country to the colony, who neither underſtood huſbandry, nor were accuſtomed to labour. The lands were diſtributed at a venture, and without diſtinguiſhing what was to be cleared from what did not want it. Money was advanced to the planters, not in proportion to their induſtry, but to the intereſt they could make with the government. The Company who got cent. per cent. upon the commodities the colony drew from Europe, and fifty per cent. upon thoſe that were ſent in from India, required that the produce of the country ſhould be delivered into their warehouſes at a very low price. To complete the misfortunes of the colony, the Company, who had kept all the power in their own hands, broke their engagements they had entered into with their ſubjects, or rather with their ſlaves.

Under ſuch an adminiſtration, no improvements could be expected. Diſcouragement threw moſt of the coloniſts into a ſtate of inaction. Thoſe who had ſome ſhare of induſtry remaining, were either in want of the means that lead to proſperity, or were not ſupported by that ſtrength of mind which enables men to ſurmount the difficulties always attending upon new ſettlements. Thoſe who had an opportunity of ſeeing and obſerving the agriculture of the Iſle of France, found it little better than what they had ſeen among the ſavages.

In 1764, the government took the colony under its

own immediate controul. From that period, to 1776, a population has been ſuceſſively formed there of ſix thouſand three hundred and eighty-ſix white men, including two thouſand nine hundred and fifty-five ſoldiers; of eleven hundred and ninety-nine free negroes, and of twenty-five thouſand one hundred and fifty-four ſlaves. The cattle on the iſland has alſo been increaſed to twenty-five-thouſand three hundred and ſixty-ſeven.

The coffee tree has employed a conſiderable number of planters; but the hurricanes that have ſucceeded each other with extreme rapidity, have prevented any advantage being derived from theſe plantations. The ſoil itſelf, which is in general ferruginous and of little depth, ſeems improper for this culture. It might, therefore, with reaſon be doubted, whether it would ſucceed here, if even the government had not endeavoured to check it, by the duties that have been laid on the coffee at its going out of the iſland, and at its entrance in France.

Three ſugar plantations have been eſtabliſhed, and theſe are ſufficient for the wants of the colony.

No more than forty thouſand weight of cotton has yet been gathered. This laſt commodity is of a good kind, and every thing promiſes an increaſe of it.

The camphor, the aloes, the cocoa tree, the agallochum, the ſago, the cardamom, the cinnamon tree, and many other vegetables proper to Aſia, which have been naturalized in the iſland, will, probably, always remain objects of mere curioſity.

Some iron mines had been diſcovered a long time; but it has been found neceſſary to abandon theſe, becauſe they could not ſupport the competition of thoſe in Europe.

It is well known, that for theſe two hundred years, the Dutch have been enriching themſelves by the ſale of cloves and nutmegs. To ſecure to themſelves the excluſive trade of theſe articles, they have deſtroyed or enſlaved the nation that was in poſſeſſion of thoſe ſpices; and, leſt the price of them ſhould

BOOK IV. fall, even in their own hands, they have rooted up moſt of the trees, and have frequently burnt the fruit of thoſe they had preſerved.

This barbarous avidity, which has ſo often excited the indignation of other nations, ſo ſtrongly exaſperated Mr. Poivre (who had travelled all over Aſia as a naturaliſt and a philoſopher), that he availed himſelf of the authority he was intruſted with in the Iſle of France, and ſent men into the leaſt frequented parts of the Moluccas, to ſearch for what avarice had for ſo long a time with-holden from the reſt of the world. The labours of thoſe intrepid and ſagacious navigators, in whom he had confided, were crowned with ſucceſs.

On the 27th of June 1770, they brought to the Iſle of France 450 nutmeg, and 70 clove trees; 10,000 nutmegs, either growing, or ready to grow; and a cheſt of cloves, ſeveral of which were ſprung up. Two years after this, another importation was made, much more conſiderable than the former.

Some of theſe precious plants were carried to the iſlands of Seychelles, of Bourbon, and of Cayenne; but the greater part of them remained in the Iſle of France. All thoſe which were diſtributed among private perſons periſhed. The care of the moſt ſkilful botaniſts, the moſt conſtant attention, and the moſt conſiderable expences, could not preſerve, even in the king's garden, more than fifty-eight nutmeg, and thirty-eight clove trees. In the month of October 1775, two of theſe laſt bore flowers, which were changed into fruit the next year. That which we have ſeen is ſmall, dry, and meagre. If they are not improved by a long naturalization, the Dutch will only have had a falſe alarm, and they will remain immutably the maſters of the ſpice trade.

Sound policy has given another deſtination to the Iſle of France. The quantity of corn there muſt be increaſed; and the crops of rice extended by a more judicious diſtribution of the waters: it is equally im-

portant to attend to the multiplying of the cattle, and to the improvement of the breed.

Theſe objects of firſt neceſſity were for a long time inconſiderable, although it was an eaſy matter to form paſturages, and although the ſoil yielded twenty for one. Only a few years ago it was ſuggeſted to the government, to buy up, at a good price, all the grain which the planters might have to ſell; and at this period the harveſts were increaſed. If this plan be uninterruptedly followed, the colony will ſoon furniſh proviſions for its inhabitants, for the navigators that may frequent its roads, and for the armies and fleets which circumſtances will ſooner or later bring there. Then this iſland will be what it ſhould, the bulwark of all the ſettlements which France poſſeſſes, or may one day acquire in the Indies; the centre of all military operations, offenſive or defenſive, which her intereſt will oblige her to undertake, or to ſuſtain, in theſe diſtant regions.

It is ſituated in the African ſeas, juſt at the entrance of the Indian ocean. Though raiſed as high as arid or burning coaſts, it is temperate and wholeſome. As it lies a little out of the common track, its expeditions can be carried on with greater ſecrecy. Thoſe who wiſh it was nearer to our continent, do not conſider that, if it were ſo, it would be impoſſible to paſs in a ſhort time from its road to the gulfs in the moſt diſtant of theſe regions, which is an ineſtimable advantage to a nation that has no ſea-port in India.

Great Britain ſees, with a jealous eye, her rivals poſſeſſed of a ſettlement where the ruin of her property in Aſia may be prepared. At the breaking out of a war, her utmoſt efforts will certainly be exerted againſt a colony that threatens her richeſt treaſures. What a misfortune for France, ſhould ſhe ſuffer herſelf to be deprived of it!

Yet what have we not to fear, when we ſee that to this day no care has been taken for the defence of this iſland; that the means for this purpoſe have al-

BOOK IV. ways been wanting, or misapplied; that the court of Versailles, from year to year, has waited for the dispatches of the directors to come to a determination on this point, just as one would wait for the return of a courier from the frontiers; and that even at the time we are writing, there is still perhaps a dispute, respecting the kind of protection which it is most expedient to adopt for a settlement of this importance.

It is the general opinion of seamen, that the security of the Isle of France must depend entirely on the naval forces: but they acknowledge, that these forces cannot fulfil this intention, till they have been sheltered from those hurricanes so frequent and so terrible, which prevail in these latitudes from the month of December to that of April. A great number of merchantmen have indeed been lost, and whole squadrons have received so much injury, even in Port-Lewis, the only one to which seamen at present resort, that too much labour cannot be bestowed in guarding against these dreadful events. For a long time, the government paid little attention to this important object. It has at length determined to dig a large harbour in this road, in the comfortable hope that ships of all dimensions may one day find a safe asylum here.

This business cannot be pushed on with too much expedition; but supposing it executed with every possible success, the maritime forces would still be insufficient for the defence of the colony. The state will never subject itself to the expence of maintaining constantly a stationary squadron in these latitudes; and it is possible that the island may be attacked in the absence of the fleet, which may also be destroyed by sickness or by a storm. Let it be a strong or a weak one, it still runs the risk of being beaten; and even if it were victorious, an opportunity may have been seized of landing troops during the action. These troops would immediately march on to the port, and would make themselves masters of it, as

well as of the victorious ships, which might have taken shelter there in order to refit By this manœuvre, which is a very simple one, a valuable settlement would fall, without striking a blow, into the hands of an enterprising and skilful enemy. These apprehensions, which are well founded, argue the necessity of fortifications.

Some engineers have imagined, that batteries judiciously disposed along the coast, would be sufficient to prevent the besiegers from landing. But since it has been ascertained that the island is accessible to boats in the greatest part of its circumference, that even in several places, a descent could be effected by force under the protection of the men of war, this plan has been relinquished. It has been understood, that there would be an infinite number of posts to fortify; that the expences would be endless; that too many troops would be wanted; and that the distribution of them would leave every point exposed to the consequence of a landing executed suddenly, or by surprise.

The idea of a war of posts has not been thought a more fortunate one. The Isle of France, notwithstanding the advantage of posts, will never collect a sufficient body of troops to resist those which the enemy may bring there. The persons who have proposed this idea, have laid a stress upon the assistance to be obtained from the colonists and the slaves: but they have been obliged at length to acknowledge, that this multitude, which might possibly be of some use behind good ramparts, could be of little or no service in the open field.

The project of building and fortifying a city in the inland parts, has for a long time had its partisans. Such an establishment appeared to them proper to keep the besiegers at a distance from the centre of the colony, and to force them, in time, to relinquish any advantages they might have gained at first. They would not be convinced that without any movement on the part of an enemy, who was become master of

BOOK IV. the ports and of the coaſts, the garriſon, deprived of every external communication, would ſoon be reduced to the neceſſity of ſurrendering at diſcretion, or of periſhing with famine. And even if the enemy were to do nothing more than fill up the roads, and deſtroy the arſenals, magazines, and all the public edifices, would not their principal object be fulfilled? Of what concern would it be then to them, that there ſhould be a fortreſs and a garriſon in the midſt of an iſland, incapable of giving them any uneaſineſs, or of exciting their jealouſy in future?

After ſo many variations and ſuch uncertainties of opinion, the government has begun to be convinced, that the only method of defending the colony is to provide for the ſecurity of its two ports; to eſtabliſh a communication that ſhall give riſe to internal connections between them; that ſhall facilitate a ready diſtribution of the forces according to the deſigns of the enemy, and that ſhall make the ſuccours which might arrive from without by one or other of its roads, common to both parties.

Port-Bourbon, where the Dutch had formed their ſettlement, and Port-Louis, the only one to which the French reſort, had not hitherto appeared capable of being fortified: the firſt, on account of its vaſt extent, the latter, on account of the irregular heights which ſurround it. But the Chevalier d'Arçon has propoſed a plan which has removed all theſe difficulties, and which, after the fulleſt diſcuſſion, has obtained the approbation of thoſe who are the beſt acquainted with this important art. The expences attending the execution of this great project have been rigidly calculated, and it is affirmed that they will not be conſiderable.

But what number of troops will be wanted to defend theſe fortifications? The ſkilful engineer uſually requires but few. He is well aware, that if many were to be ſent, they would ſoon grow effeminate by the heat of the climate, become corrupt by the deſire and expectation of gain, ruined by debauch-

ery, and enervated by idleneſs. Accordingly, he has reduced them in time of peace to two thouſand men, who will be eaſily reſtrained, exerciſed, and diſciplined. This number appears to him ſufficient to reſiſt any ſudden or unexpected attack that might fall on the colony. If it were threatened with extraordinary danger from great preparations, a miniſter, attentive to the ſtorms that are gathering, would have time enough to ſend over the forces neceſſary to defend it, or to act in Indoſtan according to circumſtances.

Some perſons will diſapprove of theſe views. The Iſle of France coſts the ſtate annually eight millions of livres [333,333l. 6s. 8d.]. This expence, which will ſcarce admit of any reduction, excites the indignation of many good citizens. Their wiſh is, that this ſettlement ſhould be abandoned as well as Bourbon, which is only a burdenſome appendage to it.

This indeed would be the ſcheme moſt expedient to be adopted, if we conſidered only the languiſhing trade now carried on by the French in India. But political ſpeculations reach beyond this object. It is foreſeen, that if this reſolution were adhered to, the Engliſh would drive all foreign nations from the Aſiatic ſeas; that they would appropriate to themſelves all the riches of theſe extenſive regions; and that ſo many powerful reſources united in their hands would give them a dangerous influence in Europe. Theſe conſiderations ought ſtill more fully to convince the court of Verſailles of the neceſſity of fortifying the Iſle of France; at the ſame time taking the moſt effectual precautions not to be impoſed upon by the agents choſen to carry this point into execution.

However, there is ſo neceſſary a connection between the Iſle of France and Pondicherry, that thoſe two poſſeſſions are entirely dependent on each other; for, without the Iſle of France, there would be no protection for the ſettlements in India; and, without Pondicherry, the Iſle of France would be expoſed to

BOOK IV. the invaſion of the Engliſh from Aſia as well as from Europe.

The Iſle of France and Pondicherry, when conſidered as having a neceſſary and mutual connection, will be a ſecurity to one another. Pondicherry will protect the Iſle of France, as being the rival of Madras, which the Engliſh muſt always cover with their land and ſea forces; and, on the other hand, the Iſle of France will always be ready to ſuccour Pondicherry, or to act offenſively, as circumſtances ſhall require.

From theſe principles it appears how requiſite it is, after having fortified the Iſle of France, to put Pondicherry immediately in a ſtate of defence. This place will become the neceſſary ſtaple of all the trade carried on with India, as well as a depoſit of all the troops and proviſions that will be ſent there. It will alſo ſerve to protect a ſmall force, when offenſive meaſures are purſued.

When the Iſle of France and Pondicherry are once put in a proper poſture of defence, the court of Verſailles will no longer ſcruple to afford the merchants that protection which the ſovereign owes to his ſubjects, throughout the whole of his dominions. The Britiſh miniſtry, on their parts, will be more fully convinced, than they have hitherto appeared to be, of the neceſſity of reſtraining the Engliſh traders within the bounds of moderation and juſtice. But will the Engliſh Company be made to give up the abuſe of power, and to renounce thoſe looſe principles which their aſtoniſhing ſucceſs has inſpired them with? This cannot be expected. Their reſiſtance would produce acrimony: the intereſt of the two nations would claſh, and war would enſue.

Far be it from us to ſuggeſt any idea that would tend to rekindle the flames of diſcord. Rather let the voice of reaſon and philoſophy be heard by the rulers of the world. May all ſovereigns, after ſo many ages of error, learn to prefer the virtuous glory of making a few men happy, to the mad ambi-

tion of reigning over wafted regions, and people groaning under the weight of oppreffion! May all men, become brethren, accuftom themfelves to confider the univerfe as one family under the eye of one common Father! But thefe wifhes, which are thofe of every enlightened and humane man, will appear as idle dreams to ambitious minifters, who hold the reins of empire. Their bufy and reftlefs difpofition will ftill fhed torrents of blood.

Some pitiful commercial intereft will again arm the French and the Englifh. Though Great Britain, in moft of her wars, has aimed chiefly at deftroying the induftry of her neighbours; and though the fuperiority of her naval forces may ftill keep up the hope, fo often difappointed, of effecting this; yet we may fafely foretel that fhe would choofe to remove the fcene of action from the feas of Afia, where fhe would have fo little to gain, and fo much to lofe. That power is not ignorant of the fecret wifhes formed on all fides for the overthrow of an edifice which eclipfes all the reft. The fubah of Bengal is fecretly exafperated that he has not even the appearance of authority left. The fubah of the Decan is inconfolable to fee his commerce under the controul of a foreign power. The nabob of Arcot endeavours to difpel the jealoufies of his tyrants. The Marattas are exafperated to find perpetual obftacles to their depredations. All the powers of thefe countries are either actually enflaved, or think themfelves on the eve of being fo. England, we may prefume, would not wifh to fee the French at the head of fuch a confederacy. On the contrary, we may venture to foretel, that a ftrict neutrality for India would be the wifeft plan they could purfue, and the one they would moft readily adopt.

But would this fyftem be as eligible for their rivals? Certainly not. The French are aware, that warlike preparations made at the Ifle of France might be employed with advantage; that the conquefts of the Englifh are too extenfive not to be open to at-

BOOK IV.

tacks; and that, ſince their experienced officers are returned home, the Britiſh poſſeſſions in Indoſtan are only defended by young men, more intent upon making their fortunes than upon military exerciſes. It is therefore to be preſumed, that a warlike nation would eagerly ſeize an opportunity of repairing their former diſaſters. At the ſight of their ſtandards, all theſe oppreſſed ſovereigns would take the field; and the rulers of India, ſurrounded with enemies, and attacked at once on the north and on the ſouth, by ſea and by land, would infallibly be overpowered.

Principles which the French ought to purſue in India, if they ſhould ever recover the conſideration and power they enjoyed there.

Then the French, conſidered as the deliverers of Indoſtan, would emerge from that ſtate of humiliation into which their own miſconduct hath plunged them. They would become the idols of the princes and people of Aſia, provided the revolution brought about by them ſhould prove a leſſon of moderation. Their trade would be extenſive and flouriſhing, ſo long as they knew how to be juſt. But this proſperity would end in ſome fatal cataſtrophe, ſhould an inordinate ambition prompt them to plunder, ravage, and oppreſs. They would then, in their turn, ſhare the ſame fate as their extravagant and cruel rivals whom they had reduced.

To conquer, or to plunder with violence, is the ſame thing. The plunderer and the violent man are always objects of deteſtation.

Perhaps it may be true, that great riches are not to be rapidly acquired without great injuſtice; but it is not leſs true, that an unjuſt man is univerſally hated; and it is a matter of uncertainty, whether the wealth he hath gained will indemnify him for the odium he hath incurred.

There is not any one nation that is not jealous of the proſperity of another. Why muſt this jealouſy be perpetuated, notwithſtanding the experience of its fatal conſequences?

There is but one lawful mode of obtaining a ſuperiority over our competitors: this is, mildneſs in adminiſtration; faithful obſervance of engagements;

the having goods of a better quality, and the being satisfied with a moderate profit. Why ſhould we have recourſe to other meaſures, which become more hurtful in proceſs of time than they are uſeful at the moment?

Let the merchant be humane and juſt; and if he ſhould enjoy poſſeſſions, let them not be uſurped. Uſurpation is inconſiſtent with quiet enjoyment.

To act with policy, or to cheat with dexterity, is the ſame thing; and the only reſult of it is miſtruſt, which ariſes as ſoon as the duplicity is diſcovered, and is never removed.

If it be a matter of importance to a citizen, to eſtabliſh a character in ſociety, it is of much higher conſequence to a nation to acquire one among other nations, in the midſt of which its intention is to ſettle and proſper.

A wiſe people will never ſuffer that any encroachment ſhould be made upon liberty or property. They will reſpect the conjugal tie; they will conform to the cuſtoms of the country; and wait for a change of manners from time. If they do not bend the knee before the gods of the country, they will at leaſt carefully abſtain from breaking their altars; let them rather fall by their antiquity. Theſe people will thus become naturalized.

What leſſon ſhall we have learnt from the maſſacre of ſo many Portugueſe, Dutch, Engliſh, and French, unleſs it have taught to keep upon good terms with the natives? If we act with them as our predeceſſors have done, we ſhall certainly be maſſacred as they have been.

Let us, therefore, no longer be impoſtors on our firſt appearance; ſervile when we are received; inſolent when we think ourſelves ſtrong; and cruel when we are become all-powerful.

To enſure the affection of the inhabitants of any diſtrict, is the only circumſtance that can render your ſettlements firm. Act in ſuch a manner that theſe

BOOK IV.

inhabitants ſhall defend you when you are attacked. If they do not defend, they will betray you.

Nations that are ſubdued, long for a deliverer; nations that are oppreſſed, for an avenger; and they will ſoon find one.

Will ye be always extravagant enough to prefer ſlaves to men that are free; diſcontented to affectionate ſubjects; enemies to friends; foes to brethren?

If ye ſhould happen to take a part in the diſputes between two princes, be not lightly influenced by the call of intereſt againſt the claims of juſtice. What compenſation can ye have for loſing the title of juſt? Be rather mediators than auxiliaries. The part of a mediator is always reſpected; that of an auxiliary always hazardous. Will ye ſtill continue to maſſacre, impriſon, and plunder thoſe who have put themſelves under your protection? Proud Europeans, ye have not always conquered by the force of arms. Will ye not at length be aſhamed of having ſo frequently degraded yourſelves to act the part of corrupters of the brave commanders of your enemies?

What do thoſe forts announce with which you have lined all the coaſts; unleſs it be your terror and the odium of thoſe that ſurround you? Ye will no longer be under apprehenſions, when ye are no longer deteſted. Ye will no longer be deteſted when ye are benevolent. The ſavage, as well as the civilized man, aſpires after happineſs.

The advantages of population, and the means of increaſing it, are the ſame in both hemiſpheres.

Upon whatever ſpot ye may ſettle, if ye reſpect yourſelves, and if ye act as the founders of cities, ye will ſoon acquire a power not to be ſubverted. Encourage, therefore, every kind of increaſe in every rank and profeſſion, except that of prieſthood. Let there be no reigning religion. Let every man praiſe God in the manner moſt agreeable to him. Let morality be eſtabliſhed on the globe: it is the buſineſs of toleration.

The ſhip that ſhould tranſport into your colonies healthy and vigorous young men, with induſtrious and prudent young women, would be the beſt laden of all your veſſels. It would prove the ſource of eternal peace between you and the natives.

Do not multiply productions alone, but multiply farmers, conſumers, and with them every ſpecies of induſtry, every branch of commerce. Much will ſtill remain to be done, while you do not meet with your coloniſts on the ſeas; while they are not as frequently ſeen upon your ſhores, as your traders are upon theirs.

Puniſh the crimes of your own people ſtill more ſeverely than thoſe of the natives. Thus it is that you will inſpire the latter with reſpect for the authority of the laws.

Let every agent, not only convicted, but even ſuſpected of the ſlighteſt extortion, be inſtantly recalled. When venality is proved, puniſh it upon the ſpot, that there may be no temptation on one part to offer, what it would be infamous on the other to receive.

Every thing is loſt, while your agents are only protected perſons, or men of bad fame; the former, who are intent only upon repairing their fortunes, by plundering at a diſtance; the latter, who come to hide their ignominy in your counting-houſes and factories. There is no integrity ſo confirmed, as to be expoſed to croſs the line without riſk of being tainted.

If ye are juſt and humane, people will remain with you; they will do more; they will even quit diſtant countries to come and reſide among you.

Appoint ſome days of reſt; and inſtitute ſome feſtivals, but let them be merely of a civil nature. You will be ever bleſt indeed, if the moſt cheerful of theſe feſtivals ſhall be celebrated in commemoration of your firſt arrival in the country.

Be faithful to the treaties you have concluded. Let your ally find an advantage in them, which is the only legitimate guarantee of their duration. If I

be injured, either by my own ignorance, or by your cunning, vain is the oath I have taken; heaven and earth will releaſe me from it.

As long as ye ſhall ſeparate the good of the nation that has received you, from your own advantage, ye will be oppreſſors and tyrants; and it is by the title of benefactors alone that we can conciliate affection.

If the man who dwells near you ſhould bury his gold, you may be aſſured that he curſes you.

To what purpoſe is it that ye oppoſe a revolution, which, though diſtant, will certainly be accompliſhed, notwithſtanding all your efforts to prevent it? The world that you have invaded muſt free itſelf from that which you inhabit. Then the ſeas will only ſeparate friends and brothers. What great calamity do ye ſee in this, ye unjuſt, cruel, and inflexible tyrants?

The edifice of wiſdom is not eternal: but that of folly is continually tottering, and ſoon falls to pieces. Wiſdom imprints its laſting characters upon the rocks; Folly traces hers on the ſand. Settlements have been formed and ſubverted; ruins have been heaped on ruins; countries that were well peopled have become deſert; ports that were full of buildings have been abandoned; vaſt tracts that had been ill cemented with blood have ſeparated, and have brought to view the bones of murderers and of tyrants confounded with each other. It ſeems as if from one region to another proſperity had been purſued by an evil genius which ſpeaks our ſeveral languages, and which diffuſes the ſame calamities in all parts.

Let our firſt victims no longer feel themſelves avenged, and rejoice at ſight of the rage we are continually exerting againſt each other. May theſe ideas, thrown out without art, and as they preſented themſelves to my mind, make a deep and laſting impreſſion! May it pleaſe Heaven, that henceforth I ſhould have nothing but your moderation and wiſdom to celebrate: for it is agreeable to me to praiſe, and painful to cenſure. Let us now examine what

has been the conduct of the northern powers, in endeavouring to ſhare in the commerce of Aſia: for the ſpirit of luxury, penetrating alſo into theſe regions of iron and ice, has made the inhabitants covet the riches and the enjoyments of other nations. BOOK IV.

BOOK V.

Trade of Denmark, Oſtend, Sweden, Pruſſia, Spain, and Ruſſia, to the Eaſt Indies. Some important Inquiries concerning the Connections of Europe with India.

THE moſt powerful nations, as well as the largeſt rivers, have been inſignificant in their origin. It would be difficult to produce one ſingle inſtance of a nation, ſince the creation of the world, that has either extended or enriched itſelf, during a long interval of tranquillity, by the progreſs of induſtry alone, or by the mere reſources of its population. Nature, which makes vultures and doves, creates alſo that ferocious band, that is one day to ruſh upon the peaceful ſociety which has been formed in its neighbourhood, or which it may meet with in its wandering incurſions. The purity of blood among nations, if we may be allowed the expreſſion, as well as the purity of blood among families, cannot be more than temporary, unleſs kept up by whimſical or religious inſtitutions. A mixture is the neceſſary reſult of an infinite number of cauſes; and from this mixture a race univerſally ſprings up, which is either improved or degenerated, according as the character and manners of the conqueror have adapted themſelves to the character and manners of the conquered; or as the character and manners of the conquered people have given way to thoſe of the conqueror. Among the various cauſes which ſooneſt bring about this intermixture, that which preſents itſelf as the primary and principal one, is emigration; more or leſs excited BOOK V.

BOOK V. by the barrenneſs of the ſoil, and the diſagreeableneſs of the reſidence. If the eagle were to find an eaſy ſubſiſtence among the deſert rocks that have been witneſs to his birth, his rapid flight would never have carried him, with his bill half open, and his claws extended, againſt the innocent cattle that feed at the foot of his craggy aſylum. But what does this ravenous and warlike bird do, after he has ſeized his prey? He repairs anew to the ſummit of his rock, from whence he only deſcends when he is again ſolicited by want. It is in the ſame manner that the ſavage treats his civilized neighbour; and his plunder would be perpetual, if nature had not placed between the inhabitant of one region and that of another, between the man of the mountain, and the man who dwells in the valley or among the fens, the ſame barrier that ſeparates the different ſpecies of animals.

Ancient revolutions in Denmark.

It is the general opinion, that, in the earlieſt times, a people called the Cimbri poſſeſſed, at the extremity of Germania, the Cimbrian Cherſoneſus, now known by the name of Holſtein, Sleſwic and Jutland; and that the Teutones lived in the adjacent iſlands. Whether theſe people had, or had not, a common origin, it is certain, that they came out of their foreſts, or out of their marſhes in a collective body, and as one nation, and penetrated among the Gauls, in queſt of plunder, glory, and a milder climate. They were even preparing to croſs the Alps, when Rome judged it neceſſary to ſtem a torrent which carried all before it. Thoſe barbarians triumphed over all the generals that proud republic ſent to oppoſe them, till the memorable era when they were totally defeated by Marius.

Their country, which became almoſt a deſert after that terrible cataſtrophe, was peopled again by the Scythians, who, being driven by Pompey out of that vaſt ſpace between the Euxine and the Caſpian ſea, marched towards the north and weſt of Europe, ſubduing all the nations they found in their way. They conquered Ruſſia, Saxony, Weſtphalia, the Cimbri-

an Cherſoneſus, and the countries as far as Finland, Norway, and Sweden. It is pretended that Wodin, their leader, traverſed ſo many countries, and endeavoured to ſubdue them, only with a view to ſtimulate the people againſt the formidable, odious, and tyrannical power of the Romans. That ſpirit of animoſity, which he had excited in the north, operated ſecretly with ſo much force after his death, that in a few centuries all nations agreed to turn their arms againſt that empire, the declared enemy of all liberty; and, after having ſhaken it by repeated attacks, were at length ſucceſsful enough totally to ſubvert it.

Denmark and Norway remained without inhabitants after theſe glorious expeditions. By inſenſible degrees they recovered their former ſtate, and began to be of ſome conſequence again towards the beginning of the eighth century. Their valour now exerted itſelf, not on land, but on the ocean. Surrounded as they were by two ſeas, they commenced pirates, which is always the firſt ſtep towards navigation in uncivilized nations.

They firſt made trial of their ſtrength againſt the neighbouring ſtates, and ſeized the few merchant ſhips they found ſailing up and down the Baltic. Emboldened by theſe ſucceſſes, they were enabled to plan more conſiderable undertakings. They infeſted the ſeas and coaſts of Scotland, Ireland, England, Flanders, France, and even of Spain, Italy, and Greece. They frequently penetrated into the inland parts of thoſe extenſive countries, and even ventured upon the conqueſt of Normandy and England. Notwithſtanding the confuſion that reigns in the annals of thoſe barbarous times, we may ſtill trace ſome of the cauſes of ſo many extraordinary events.

The inhabitants of Denmark and Norway had originally a ſtrong propenſity to piracy, which has always been obſerved in people bordering upon the ſea, when they are not reſtrained by civilization and good laws. Cuſtom muſt neceſſarily have made the ocean familiar to them, and inured them to its ſtorms.

BOOK IV. Having no agriculture, breeding but few cattle, and finding but a ſcanty reſource from the chaſe, in a country covered with ice and ſnow, they could have no ſtrong attachment to their native land. The facility with which they built their ſhips, which were nothing more than rafts coarſely put together for the purpoſe of ſailing along the coaſts, enabled them to go to all parts, to land their forces, to plunder, and to reimbark. Piracy was to them, what it had been to the firſt heroes of Greece, the road to glory and fortune; an honourable profeſſion, which conſiſted in a contempt of all danger. This idea inſpired them with invincible courage in their expeditions, ſometimes carried on under the joint command of different chiefs, and ſometimes divided into as many armaments as nations. Theſe ſudden attacks, made in a variety of places at the ſame time, left only to the inhabitants of the coaſts, which were but ill defended, in conſequence of their being under a bad government, the dreadful alternative either of being maſſacred, or giving up all their property to redeem their lives.

This propenſity to plunder was a natural conſequence of the ſavage life of the Danes and Norwegians, and of the rough and military education they received; but it was more particularly the effect of the religion of Wodin. That victorious impoſtor improved, if we may be allowed to ſay ſo, the natural fierceneſs of thoſe nations by his ſanguinary tenets. He ordered that all the implements of war, ſuch as ſwords, axes, and lances, ſhould be deified. The moſt ſacred engagements were confirmed by theſe inſtruments which they ſo highly valued. A lance ſet up in the middle of a plain, was the ſignal for prayer and ſacrifice. Wodin himſelf at his death was ranked among the immortal gods, and was the firſt deity of thoſe horrid regions, where the rocks and woods were ſtained and conſecrated with human blood. His followers thought they honoured him by calling him the god of armies, the father of ſlaughter,

the deſtroyer of mankind, the promoter of diſcord. The warriors, when they went to battle, made a vow to ſend him a certan number of ſouls, which they devoted to him. Theſe ſouls were the right of Wodin. It was the general belief, that he appeared in every battle, either to protect thoſe who fought valiantly, or to mark out the happy victims he reſerved for himſelf; that theſe followed him to the regions of bliſs, which were open to none but warriors. The people ran to death, and to martyrdom, to obtain this reward. This belief increaſed their natural propenſity to war, till it grew to enthuſiaſm, and to a religious thirſt for blood.

Chriſtianity overthrew all the ideas reſulting from ſuch a ſyſtem. Its miſſionaries endeavoured to bring their proſelytes to a ſedentary life, that they might be fit to receive their inſtructions. They gave them a diſguſt for their roving life, by ſuggeſting to them other means of ſubſiſtence. They were ſo fortunate as to inſpire them with a love of agriculture, and more eſpecially of fiſhing. The great plenty of herrings, which then came in ſhoals to their coaſts, afforded them an eaſy means of procuring food. When they had ſet apart a ſufficient quantity of theſe fiſh for their own uſe, in order to preſerve it, they bartered the remainder for ſalt. This intercourſe was encouraged at its riſe by one common faith, new proſpects, mutual wants, and great ſecurity. Such a total revolution enſued, that, ſince the converſion of the Danes and Norwegians, not a ſingle inſtance is to be found in hiſtory of their expeditions and depredations.

The new ſpirit, which ſeemed to animate Norway and Denmark, could not fail of extending their communication with the other nations of Europe. Unfortunately it was intercepted by the aſcendant which the Hanſe Towns had acquired. Even when that great and ſingular confederacy fell into decay, Hamburgh ſtill maintained the ſuperiority it had obtained over all the ſubjects of the Daniſh dominions.

BOOK IV.

They were beginning to break the bands that had subjected them to this kind of monopoly, when they were induced to undertake the navigation to the East Indies by an incident that deserves to be noticed.

Denmark begins to carry on a trade with India.

A Dutch factor, named Boschower, being sent by his nation to conclude a treaty of commerce with the king of Ceylon, so ingratiated himself with that monarch, that he became chief of his council, his admiral, and was created prince of Mingone. Boschower, intoxicated with these honours, hastened to Europe, to make a parade of them before his countrymen. He took great offence at the coldness with which those republicans received the titled slave of an Asiatic court; and was so highly provoked at it, that he went over to Christiern IV. king of Denmark, and offered him his services, and the interest he had at Ceylon. His proposals were accepted. He sailed in 1618, with six ships, three of which belonged to the government, and three to the Company that had associated themselves to carry on a trade to India. His death, which happened in their passage, put an end to the hopes they had conceived. The Danes met with a very bad reception at Ceylon; and their chief, Ové Giedde de Tommerup, saw no other resource than to carry them to Tanjour, a part of the continent nearest to that island.

Tanjour is a small state, which is but a hundred miles in its greatest length, and eighty in its greatest breadth. It is of all that coast the province that bears the greatest quantity of rice. This natural wealth, added to a variety of useful manufactures, and a great plenty of roots for dying, makes the public revenue amount to near five millions of livres [208,333l. 6s. 8d.]. Its fertility is owing to its being watered by the Caveri, a river which comes down from the mountains of Gate. At upwards of four hundred miles from the head, it divides into two streams. At the entrance of Tanjour, the eastern branch takes the name of Coleroon. The other retains the name of Caveri, and subdivides again into

four branches, which all flow within the kingdom, and preſerve it from that terrible drought which burns up the reſt of Coromandel for the greateſt part of the year.

This happy ſituation made the Danes wiſh to form a ſettlement in Tanjour. Their propoſals met with a favourable reception. They obtained a fruitful and populous territory; on which they built Tranquebar, and afterwards the fortreſs of Dannebourg, ſufficient for the defence both of the road and the town. On their part, they engaged to pay an annual homage of two thouſand pagodas, or ſixteen thouſand eight hundred livres [700l.], which is continued to this time.

Circumſtances were favourable for eſtabliſhing a large commerce. The Portugueſe, who groaned under the oppreſſion of a foreign yoke, made only feeble effords to preſerve their poſſeſſions; the Spaniards ſent no ſhips but to the Molucca and Philippine iſlands; and the Dutch were ſolely intent upon engroſſing the ſpice trade. The Engliſh felt the effects of the diſturbances their country laboured under, even in India. All theſe powers could not ſee this new rival without regret, but none oppoſed it.

In conſequence of this, the Danes, who began with a capital of no more than 853,263 livres [35,552l. 12s. 6d.], carried on rather a conſiderable trade in all parts of India. Unfortunately the Dutch Company acquired ſuch a ſuperiority, as to exclude them from the markets where they had traded moſt advantageouſly; and, by a ſtill greater misfortune, the diſſentions that rent the north of Europe, would not permit the mother-country to attend to ſuch remote concerns as thoſe of this ſettlement. The Danes at Tranquebar inſenſibly fell into contempt, both with the natives, who value men only in proportion to their riches, and with the rival nations, whoſe competition they could not ſuſtain. They were diſcouraged by this inferiority; and the Company gave up its charter, and made over its ſettlements to the go-

BOOK V.

vernment, as an indemnification for the ſums it had advanced.

Changes the Daniſh trade has undergone in India.

A new Company was formed in 1670 upon the ruins of the old one. Chriſtiern V. gave them, in ſhips and other effects, to the value of three hundred and ten thouſand eight hundred and twenty-eight livres, ten ſous [12,951l. 3s. 9d.]; and the adventurers advanced ſeven hundred and thirty-two thouſand ſix hundred livres [30,525l.]. This ſecond undertaking, which was entered upon without a ſufficient fund, proved ſtill more unſucceſsful than the firſt. After a few voyages, the factory of Tranquebar was left to itſelf. Their ſmall territory, and two veſſels that they freighted for the merchants of that country, were the only means they had to ſupply the inhabitants and their garriſon. Theſe reſources ſometimes failed them; and, to ſave themſelves from the effects of famine, they were reduced to mortgage three of the four baſtions that conſtituted their fortreſs. They were ſcarce able to fit out a ſhip for Europe once in three years with a very moderate cargo.

Pity ſeemed to be the only ſentiment that ſo deſperate a ſituation could inſpire. But the ever-watchful jealouſy and ſuſpicious avarice of other nations, ſtirred up an odious war againſt the Danes. The Raja of Tanjour, who had frequently intercepted their communication with his territory, attacked them in 1689, in the very town of Tranquebar, at the inſtigation of the Dutch. That prince had nearly taken the place after a ſix months ſiege, when it was ſuccoured and ſaved by the Engliſh. This event neither was, nor could be, attended with any important conſequences. The Daniſh Company declined daily, and was at length annihilated in 1730, but not till after it had become bankrupt.

Two years after this, a new Company was formed. The favours that were heaped upon it, to enable it to carry on a free and advantageous trade, plainly ſhow of what importance this commerce appeared to

the government. The charter of the Company was ſettled for forty years. Whatever belonged to the fitting out of their ſhips was exempted from all duties. The workmen they employed, whether natives or foreigners, were not tied down to the regulations of particular companies, which were a reſtraint upon induſtry in Denmark, as well as in other countries of Europe. They were not obliged to uſe ſtampt paper in their tranſactions. They had an abſolute juriſdiction over the perſons they employed; and the ſentences paſſed by the directors were not liable to be reverſed, unleſs the puniſhment were capital. To remove even the appearance of conſtraint, the ſovereign renounced the right he had of interfering in the adminiſtration of their affairs, as being chief proprietor. He retained no influence in the choice of officers, whether civil or military, and only reſerved to himſelf a power of confirming the office of governor of Tranquebar. He even bound himſelf to ratify all political conventions they might think proper to make with the Aſiatic powers.

In return for ſo many indulgences, government only required one per cent. upon all merchandiſe of India and China which ſhould be ſent abroad, and two and a half per cent. upon all that ſhould be conſumed at home.

The grant containing the above conditions was no ſooner confirmed, than it became neceſſary to find adventurers. This was a difficult point; for the trade to India had hitherto proved ſo unſucceſsful, that men of property muſt have been totally averſe from engaging their fortunes in it. A new idea was ſuggeſted to alter this diſpoſition. The ſtock was diſtinguiſhed into two different kinds. The firſt, called *fixed*, was that in which all the effects the old Company had in Europe and Aſia were deſtined to be veſted, the other ſtock was called *variable*, becauſe every year it was regulated by the number and the cargoes of the ſhips that ſhould be fitted out. Every proprietor might chooſe whether he would be

BOOK V. concerned in these expeditions, the profits of which were settled at the close of every voyage. By this arrangement, the Company became permanent by the *fixed*, and annual by the *variable* stock.

It seemed a difficult matter to state the share of expence that each of these funds was to bear. Every thing was settled with more ease than had been expected. It was agreed that the *variable* stock should only pay the necessary expences for the purchase, the fitting out, and the cargoes of the ships. All other charges were to be defrayed from the *fixed* stock, which, by way of compensation, was to take up ten per cent. upon all India goods which should be sold in Europe, and five per cent. upon all that should be sent out from Tranquebar.

The capital of the new Company amounted to 3,240,000 livres [135,000l.], divided into sixteen hundred shares, of 2025 livres [84l. 7s. 6d.] each.

With these funds, which were always in circulation, the proprietors, during the forty years of their charter, fitted out eight hundred ships. The expence of these vessels in money rose to 87,333,637 livres ten sols [3,638,901l. 11s. 3d.], and in merchandise, to 10,580,094 livres [440,837l. 5s.], which in the whole made 97,913,731 livres 10 sols [4,079,850l.]. The returns were sold for 188,939,673 livres [7,872,486l. 7s. 6d.]. Of this Denmark only consumed 35,450,262 livres [1,477,094l. 5s.]; therefore the value of 153,489,411 livres [6,313,392l. 2s. 6d.] of it was exported. Let us make a fresh division, and we shall find, that the annual sales have amounted to the sum of 4,723,491 livres 16 sols [196,812l. 3s. 2d.]; that of this, the country has only consumed annually to the value of 886,250 livres 10 sols [36,927l. 2s. 1d.]; and that foreign nations have carried off to the amount of 3,837,235 livres 10 sols 159,884l. 16s. 3d.].

The dividends were very irregular, during all the time that the charter lasted. They would have been more considerable, if part of the profits had not been

conſtantly appropriated to the extenſion of the trade. By this prudent and conſiderate conduct, the fortunate proprietors trebled their capitals. Their ſtock would have been increaſed with the additional ſum of 2,000,000 of livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.], if in 1754, the Daniſh miniſtry had not prevailed upon the directors to erect a ſtatue to king Frederick V.

When I reflect upon theſe public monuments conſecrated to a ſovereign in his life time, his want of modeſty always occurs to my mind. When a prince orders them himſelf, it ſeems as if he ſaid to his people, 'I am a great man; I am a great king. It is 'impoſſible for me to preſent myſelf every day to 'your view, and to receive the ſplendid teſtimony of 'your admiration and affection. But here is my 'image. Get round it, and ſatisfy yourſelves. When 'I ſhall be no more, you will conduct your child to 'the foot of my ſtatue, and you will ſay to him: 'Behold, my ſon, and conſider him attentively. 'This is the man who repulſed the enemies of the 'ſtate, who commanded its armies in perſon; who 'paid the debts of his anceſtors; whofertilized our 'fields; who protected our farmers; who laid no re-'ſtraint upon our conſcience; who permitted us to 'live in happineſs, freedom, and opulence; let his 'name for ever be bleſt!'

What inſolent vanity is this, even if it be true! What impudence if it be not! But how few would there be of theſe monuments, had they only been erected to princes who deſerved them? If all the others were taken down, how few would remain? If truth had dictated the inſcriptions that are placed around them, what ſhould we read? "To Nero, af-"ter he had aſſaſſinated his mother, killed his wife, "ſlain his preceptor, and imbrued his hands in the "blood of the moſt worthy citizens." You ſhudder with horror. Alas! vile people, why am I not allowed to ſubſtitute true inſcriptions in the place of thoſe with which you have decorated the monuments of your ſovereigns. You would not read of the ſame

BOOK V. crimes; but you would read of others, and you would ſhudder again.

Here I would write, as formerly, upon Pompey's column: "To Pompey, after he had maſſacred three "millions of men." There I would write——Baſe mortals, are you then afraid that your maſters ſhould bluſh for their wickedneſs? When you pay them ſuch homage, how is it poſſible they ſhould think that you are unhappy? How ſhould they not imagine that they are the idols of your hearts, when, by your acclamations, you give your approbation to the ſervility of the courtiers?

But the people will anſwer, "Theſe monuments "are not erected by us. We ſhould never have "thought of conferring the honour of a ſtatue on a "tyrant who kept us plunged in miſery, and to "whom our profound ſilence, when he paſſed through "our city in perſon, ſo frequently announced the in-"dignation we felt. It cannot be imagined that we "ſhould have been ſo mad, after he had exhauſted "us nearly of all our means of ſubſiſtence, to throw "away the few we had ſtill remaining upon a caſt."

Monarchs, if ye are good, ye may be aſſured of the ſtatue which ye raiſe to yourſelves. The nation, whoſe happineſs you have created, will grant it to you a century after your death, when your actions ſhall have been tried at the tribunal of hiſtory. If ye are bad and vicious, you only perpetuate the memory of your wickedneſs and your vices. The ſovereign, who is poſſeſſed of any degree of dignity, will wait. He who is poſſeſſed of true greatneſs of ſoul, would perhaps diſdain a ſpecies of incenſe indiſcriminately beſtowed in all ages upon vice and virtue. While the inſcription was engraving round his ſtatue, TO THE MOST HIGH, MOST WORTHY, MOST PUISSANT, MOST GLORIOUS, MOST MAGNIFICENT PRINCE, &c. he would recollect, that the ſame titles were engraved under the ſtatue of a Tiberius, a Domitian, or a Caligula; and he would exclaim with a worthy Roman, "Spare me a homage that is too ſuſpicious. Let me

" have no tainted honours. My temple is in your " hearts. There it is that my image is beautiful, " and that it will laſt."

And, indeed, with whatever ſolidity monuments may be conſtructed, ſooner or later the hand of Time ſtrikes and overturns them. On the contrary, the edge of his ſcythe is blunted againſt the page of hiſtory. It can have no effect upon the heart, or upon the memory of man. His veneration is tranſmitted from age to age; and ſucceeding centuries are perpetually repeating it. Proud waters of the Seine, ſwell yourſelves if you dare: ye may ſweep away our bridges, and even the ſtatue of Henry; but his name will remain. It is before the image of this great king that the people, impreſſed with tender ſentiments, and the ſtranger, ſtop. If the other monuments, ſovereigns! that are conſecrated to you, are alſo viſited, do not miſtake the intention. Men do not come to honour your perſons; they come to admire the workmanſhip of the art: regretting, at the ſame time, that ſo ſublime a talent, which ſhould devote itſelf to virtue, ſhould be ſo meanly proſtituted to vice. At the foot of your ſtatue, what can the citizen or the ſtranger think, when he ſees himſelf ſurrounded by a ſet of wretches whoſe aſpect diſcovers their miſery, and whoſe plaintive accents ſolicit a trifling aſſiſtance? Is it not, as if they ſaid to him: BEHOLD, AND RELIEVE THE DISTRESS WHICH THIS MAN OF BRONZE HAS BROUGHT UPON US? Erect ſtatues to the great men of your nation, and yours will be looked for among them. But in countries ſubmitted to tyranny there is but one man and one ſtatue. There, the bronze ſpeaks, and the marble exclaims: PEOPLE, LEARN THAT I AM ALL, AND THAT YOU ARE NOTHING. Let me be excuſed for this digreſſion. The fate of a writer would be too hard, if he were not ſometimes allowed to give way to the ſentiment that oppreſſes him.

Preſent ſtate of the Danes in India.

When the charter of the Company expired on the 12th of April 1772, a new one was given them, but

BOOK V. only for twenty years. Some restraints were also laid upon the favours they had before enjoyed.

Excepting the trade to China, which still continues exclusive, the Indian seas are open to all the citizens, and to others who wish to share in their undertakings. But in order to be entitled to this liberty, it is necessary to employ no ships but what are built in one of the ports of the kingdom; to embark upon each vessel to the value of thirteen thousand five hundred livres [562l. 10s.] at least, in merchandise of the national manufacture; to pay to the Company sixty-seven livres ten sols [2l. 16s. 3d.] per last, or two per cent. of the value of the cargo upon its going out, and eight per cent. at its return. Individuals are also allowed to trade from one part of India to another, by paying a duty of entrance of four per cent. on the productions of Asia, and two per cent. on those of Europe, in all the Danish settlements. If the court of Copenhagen, as there can be no doubt, have made these arrangements only with a view of encouraging their factories, experience must have convinced them of their mistake.

The Company was formerly exempt from the duties settled upon all articles employed in the building and victualling of ships. They have been deprived of an exemption which was attended with too many inconveniences. They receive as an indemnity, sixty-seven livres ten sols [2l. 16s. 3d.] per last, and thirteen livres ten sols [11s. 3d.] for each of the persons composing the crews of their ships. On the other hand, they are obliged to export upon each of their vessels dispatched to India to the value of thirteen thousand five hundred livres [562l. 10s.] of mercantile articles fabricated in the kingdom; and to the amount of eighteen thousand livres [750l.] upon each of the ships destined for China.

The customs fixed for the productions of Asia which were consumed in Denmark, or sent to other parts, and which were formerly different, are at present equal. They all of them pay two per cent.

without any regard to the place of their deſtination. The government has alſo reſerved to itſelf the privilege of being the arbiter of the cuſtoms, which the ſilks and coffees, deſtined for the ſtate, ſhould be obliged to pay. This reſtriction is intended to favour the intereſt of the American iſlands, and of the national manufactures.

The king has given up the practice he had of placing annually, in the Company's trade, the ſum of about one hundred thouſand livres [4166l. 13s. 4d.]; from which he uſually derived a benefit of twenty per cent. To indemnify him for this ſacrifice, when the Company fit out but one ſhip, they will add to his private cheſt twenty-two thouſand five hundred livres [937l. 10s.]; when they ſend two, they will pay him thirty-ſix thouſand livres [1500l.]; and forty-five thouſand livres [1875l.] when they diſpatch three, or a greater number.

Under the former adminiſtration, a proprietor of one ſhare was entitled to vote at the general meetings. Three ſhares carried two votes, five ſhares three, and ſo on in the ſame proportion to twelve votes, which number no proprietor could ever go beyond, whatever intereſt he might have in the ſtocks of the Company. But the votes of abſentees or foreigners were admitted upon producing a power of attorney from them. The conſequence of this practice was, that a few merchants reſiding at Copenhagen were the rulers of all the deliberations. This evil has been remedied, by reducing the number of votes any one proprietor may have, either for himſelf or by proxy, to three.

Such are the new views which diſtinguiſh the late charter from thoſe that have preceded it. The example of the miniſtry has influenced the conduct of the proprietors, who have alſo made ſome remarkable alterations in their adminiſtration.

The diſtinction eſtabliſhed between the fixed and the variable ſtock reduced the Company to a precarious ſtate, ſince the proprietors were at liberty, after

BOOK V. every voyage, to withdraw the latter, which ſerved as the baſis of the operations. To give this body a more ſolid conſtitution, theſe two ſtocks have been confounded. Hereafter, the proprietors will not have it in their power to claim any part of their capital, till the expiration of their charter. Thoſe among them, who, for any poſſible reaſon, may wiſh to leſſen the riſk, will be obliged to ſell their ſhares, as it is the conſtant practice every where elſe.

At the expiration of the laſt charter, the Company had a capital of 11,906,059 livres [496,085l 15s. 10d.], divided into ſixteen hundred ſhares, each of the value of about 7425 livres [309l. 7s. 6d.]. The price of the ſhare was evidently too high in a country where the fortunes of individuals are inconſiderable. This inconvenience has been remedied, by dividing each ſhare into three parts; ſo that there are at preſent four thouſand eight hundred ſhares, the price of which, for greater ſecurity, has been only rated in the books at 2250 livres [93l. 15s.]. This alteration muſt have facilitated the purchaſe and the ſale of them, by increaſing the circulation and the value.

The project of raiſing the Daniſh ſettlements in India to a greater degree of proſperity than they had hitherto attained, has next been taken into conſideration. In order to effect this, it has been regulated, that 2,250,000 livres [93,750l.], including their eſtimated value of 900,000 livres [37,500l.], ſhould conſtantly be left there The profits accruing from this ſtock are to remain during ten years, and to be applied to the increaſe of the capital, and no dividends are to be made of them.

Till theſe latter times, the ſhips fitted out in Europe for China, uſed always to carry with them the factors who were to make up the cargoes. It has judiciouſly been imagined, that agents reſiding among theſe celebrated people, would enter more into the ſpirit of the nation, and would make their ſales and purchaſes with greater facility and advantage. In this view, four factors have been fixed at Canton, to man-

age there the interests of the Company that has chosen them.

The Danes had formerly a small settlement on the islands of Nicobar. The expence of it was trifling, but it yielded nothing; and therefore has very prudently been given up.

The Company had contracted the habit of granting, upon mortgage, a credit of several years to the purchasers. This indulgence frequently obliged them to borrow considerable sums at Amsterdam, or at Copenhagen. A practice unknown to the rival nations has been violently opposed. It would have been dangerous, perhaps, to give it up entirely; but it has been restrained within such narrow bounds, that it can no longer create mistrust.

To these principles of commerce, much superior to those that were followed before, the Company have added the advantages of a direction better regulated, more enlightened, and more closely superintended.

Universal confidence has been the result of these prudent combinations. Although the dividend has risen no higher than eight per cent. in 1773, and ten per cent. in 1774 and 1775, yet there has been a profit of twenty-five and thirty per cent. upon the shares. Their price would in all probability have been still higher, if the internal peace of the society had not of late been so scandalously disturbed.

The old Company confined their operations to the trade of China. Among all those they had to choose, this was the one in which they had the least risk to run, and the greatest profit to expect. Without giving up this source of riches, other means of acquiring them, which had been too long neglected, have been pursued.

The coast of Malabar, it is true, has not taken up much of the attention of the Company. Formerly, no more than sixty thousand weight of pepper were annually drawn from Colesche y and Calicut. These purchases have not had any considerable increase, but

BOOK V. there was reason to hope that affairs would wear a more promising aspect in Bengal.

The Danes had but just made their appearance in the Indies, when they fixed themselves at Chinchurat, upon the borders of the Ganges. Their misfortunes drove them from this opulent region during more than a century. They came there again in 1755, with a desire of fixing themselves at Bankibasar, which had belonged to the Ostend Company. Commercial jealousy, which is become the ruling passion of our times, frustrated their designs, and they were reduced to the necessity of founding Frederic-Nagor in the neighbourhood. This factory cost annually 22,500 livres [937l. 10s.] more than was collected from its territory and the customs; and this expence, though inconsiderable, was still greater than the transactions would bear. The care that was taken, after the renewal of the charter, to send some money to this too much neglected settlement, began to give it some share of animation; but it soon fell again to nothing. Its destruction is owing to its having been placed in a state of absolute dependence upon Tranquebar.

This first of the Danish colonies has an excellent territory, which, though only two leagues in circumference, had formerly a population of thirty thousand persons. There were even ten thousand of these in the city itself. Rather a greater number were found in a large village, filled with coarse manufactures. The remainder were usefully employed in some places of less consequence. These, with three hundred workmen, factors, merchants, or soldiers, were all the Europeans fixed in the settlement. Its revenue amounted to 100,000 livres [4166l. 13s. 4d.], and was sufficient for its expences.

In process of time, confusion took place in the colony, which yielded less, and cost twice as much. The adventurers went away; the manufactures languished, the purchases were diminished, and a very scanty profit only was obtained upon those that were

ordered at diſtant periods. Impoſſible as it was to make any advances to the workmen, it was neceſſary to pay for the merchandiſe five-and-twenty or thirty per cent. dearer than if the cuſtoms of the country had been complied with.

Since the year 1772, the aſpect of Tranquebar has been changed. A ſmall degree of liberty, ſome ſtock, a better adminiſtration, and an increaſe of territory, combined with other cauſes, have improved its condition. But its deſtiny, any more than that of the ſociety which regulates it, will never be brilliant.

The local poſition of Denmark, the diſpoſition of its inhabitants, the degree of its power relatively conſidered; every circumſtance, in a word, is unfavourable to its carrying on a great trade with India. Are its provinces ſufficiently rich to furniſh the ſums neceſſary for large undertakings; or will foreigners truſt their property with a ſociety, ſubject to the caprice, and expoſed to the vexations of unlimited authority? It is in the nature of a deſpotic government to diſſolve the ties which ought to unite nations; and when once this ſpring is deſtroyed, it can never be reſtored. It is mutual confidence which draws men together, and combines their intereſts; and arbitrary power is incompatible with this confidence, becauſe it puts an end to all ſecurity. The project formed in 1728, of transferring from Copenhagen to Altena the ſeat of the Aſiatic trade, might poſſibly be attended with ſome advantages; but could not remove any of the obſtacles we have been mentioning. We may therefore venture to affirm, that England and Holland were guilty of a needleſs act of tyranny, when they oppoſed this domeſtic plan of a free and independent power.

Can the man who has any concern for mankind, and who is not poſſeſſed of the narrow ſoul of a monk, to whom the circuit of his cloiſtered priſon is all, and the reſt of the univerſe is nothing; can ſuch a one conceive any thing more abſurd and more cruel than this infamous jealouſy of the great powers; this horri-

BOOK V.

ble abuſe of their ſtrength, in preventing feeble ſtates from improving their condition? The individual who ſhould think of acting the ſame part in the midſt of his country, which they do among other nations, would be looked upon as the moſt execrable of malefactors. Engliſh, French, Dutch, Spaniards, and Germans, this is the honeſt motive for which you take up arms, and maſſacre each other! It is to determine which of you ſhall retain the excluſive privilege of tyranny, and the monoply of proſperity. I am aware that you colour this atrocious project with the pretence of providing for your own ſecurity: but how can you be credited, when it is evident that you ſet no bounds to your ambition; and that the more powerful you are, the more imperious you become? You are not ſatisfied with requiring every thing that it is your own private intereſt to obtain, your pride ſometimes prompts you to aſk what it would be ſhameful to grant. You do not conſider that a people cannot be degraded without fatal conſequences. Their honour may lie dormant for a time; but ſooner or later it will be rouſed, and they will avenge themſelves: and as humiliation is the moſt offenſive of all injuries, ſo it is that which is moſt ſeverely felt and moſt cruelly revenged.

Eſtabliſhment of an India Company at Oſtend.

That knowledge of trade and government, and that ſound philoſophy, which inſenſibly ſpread over all Europe, met with invincible obſtacles in ſome monarchies. Theſe improvements could not reach the court of Vienna, which was wholly intent upon projects of war and aggrandizement, by conqueſts. The Engliſh and Dutch, whoſe attention was engaged in preventing France from increaſing her commerce, her ſettlements, and her navy, excited enemies againſt her on the continent, and laviſhed immenſe ſums upon the houſe of Auſtria, which were employed againſt France: but, at the peace, the luxury of one crown reſtored more riches to the other than it had taken from it by the war.

The power of the houſe of Auſtria, which ought

to be formidable from the extent of its dominions, is confined by reaſon of its ſituation; for moſt of its provinces are diſtant from the ſea. The ſoil of the country yields but a ſmall quantity of wine, and few of the productions that are ſo much valued by other nations. It affords neither oil, ſilk, nor fine wool, which are in ſo much repute. This ſtate had no pretenſions to opulence, and knew not how to be frugal. With the uſual luxury and pomp of great courts, it gave no encouragement to induſtry and manufactures, which might have ſupplied the means of indulging that expenſive taſte. The contempt which it has always ſhown for the ſciences, prevented its progreſs in every thing. Artiſts will never be eminent in any country where they are not aſſiſted by men of learning. Sciences and arts muſt both languiſh, wherever a freedom of thinking is not allowed. The pride and intolerant ſpirit of the houſe of Auſtria kept her vaſt domains in a ſtate of poverty, ſuperſtition, and a rude kind of luxury.

Even the Low Countries, formerly ſo celebrated for their activity and induſtry, retained nothing of their ancient ſpendour. The traveller, who went to Antwerp, beheld with aſtoniſhment the ruins of a city formerly ſo flouriſhing. He compared its exchange with the ſuperb edifices of paganiſm, after the abolition of idolatry. It preſented the ſame ſolitude, the ſame majeſty. The indigent and melancholy citizens were obſerved walking about it, as under Conſtantine; the tattered prieſts were ſeen roaming around their deſerted temples, or ſitting at the foot of the altars where the hecatombs had been ſacrificed, and telling the people their fortunes for a ſmall piece of copper. Antwerp, which had been, for two centuries, the ſtorehouſe of the north, had not now a ſingle ſhip in its harbour. Bruſſels and Louvain, far from ſupplying other nations with their clothing, bought their own of the Engliſh. That valuable article, the herring-fiſhery, had paſſed from Bruges to Holland. Ghent, Courtray, and ſome other towns,

BOOK V. found their linen and lace manufactures decrease daily. Those provinces, placed between the three most enlightened and most trading nations in Europe, had not been able, with all their natural advantages, to support so powerful a competition. After striving some time against oppression, against impediments multiplied by ignorance, and against the privileges which a rapacious neighbour extorted from the continual wants of government, they were totally fallen to decay.

Prince Eugene, as great in a political, as he was in a military capacity, with a mind superior to every prejudice, had been long in search of the means of enriching a power, the boundaries of which he had so greatly enlarged; when a proposal was made to him of establishing an India Company at Ostend. The first contrivers of this scheme had very extensive views. They pretended that, if this undertaking could be accomplished, it would excite a spirit of industry in all the states under the dominion of the house of Austria; would supply that power with a navy, one part of which would be in the Netherlands, and the other at Fiume and Trieste; would rescue it from the kind of dependence it was still under for the subsidies from England and Holland; and render it formidable to the coasts of Turkey, and even to the city of Constantinople.

The able minister, to whom this was addressed, was very sensible of the value of such overtures; he would not, however, be too precipitate. To accustom his own court and all Europe to this new establishment, he ordered that two ships should be sent out to India in 1717, with only his own passports. Their voyage was so successful, that more were sent out the following years. Every expedition proved fortunate; and in 1722 the council of Vienna thought it was necessary to secure the property of the adventurers, who were mostly Flemings, by the most ample charter that ever had been granted. The only stipulation made, was, that the Company should pay

to government, till the end of the year 1724, three per cent. upon every thing exported or imported, and after that period ſix per cent.

The rapacity of all governments is inconceivable. Throughout the whole courſe of this hiſtory, we ſhall not find perhaps one ſingle inſtance, in which the tax has not accompanied the undertaking; not one ſovereign, who has not been deſirous of ſecuring to himſelf part of the harveſt before it was gathered in, without perceiving that theſe premature exactions were the ſureſt way of deſtroying it. From whence does this kind of delirium ariſe? Is it from ignorance, or from poverty? Or, is there a ſecret ſeparation of the intereſt peculiar to government, from the general intereſt of the ſtate?

However this may be, the new Company, which had a capital of ſix millions of florins, or 10,800,000 livres [450,000l.], appeared with advantage in all the markets of India. They made two ſettlements, that of Coblom between Madras and Sadraſpatnam, on the coaſt of Coromandel; and that of Bankibaſar, on the Ganges. They were even in ſearch of a place where their ſhips might touch for refreſhments, and had turned their views upon Madagaſcar for that purpoſe. The Company were ſo fortunate as to be able to repoſe an entire confidence in their agents, who had ſhown a degree of reſolution ſufficient to ſurmount every obſtacle that jealouſy had thrown in their way; and a ſhare of underſtanding, which had extricated them from all the ſnares that had been laid for them. This confidence was ſtill increaſed by the richneſs of their returns, and the value of their ſhares, which brought in fifteen per cent. It is not to be ſuppoſed they would have been diſappointed, had not their projects been oppoſed by political intereſts. To give a clear idea of the reaſons of this policy, we muſt trace the ſubject from the begining.

Cauſes of the deſtruction of the Company at Oſtend.

When Iſabella had ſent out ſhips to facilitate the diſcovery of America, and which proceeded as far as the Philippine iſlands, Europe was ſunk in ſuch a

BOOK V.

ſtate of ignorance, that it was thought proper to prohibit all ſubjects of Spain, who were not natives of Caſtile, from navigating to the Eaſt and Weſt Indies. That part of the Low Countries which had not recovered its liberty, having been ceded, in 1598, to the Infanta Iſabella, on her marriage with the Archduke Albert, the new ſovereigns were required to enter into a ſolemn engagement not to have any concern in this trade. When theſe provinces were again united to the monarchy in 1638, no alteration was made in this odious ſtipulation. The Flemings, juſtly offended at being abridged of the right, which all people are by nature entitled to, of trading wherever other nations are not legally poſſeſſed of an excluſive privilege, complained loudly of this impoſition. They were ſeconded by their governor the cardinal Infant, who procured the permiſſion to trade to the Eaſt Indies. The act to ratify this grant was not yet iſſued, when Portugal ſhook off the yoke under which it had ſo long been oppreſſed. The fear of increaſing the diſcontent of the Portugueſe, whom the Spaniards wiſhed rather to ſooth, prevented the introduction of a new rival to the Portugueſe in Aſia, and protracted the concluſion of this important affair. It was not yet ſettled, when it was reſolved at Munſter, in 1648, that the ſubjects of the king of Spain ſhould never extend their trade in India beyond what it was at that period. This act ought not to have been leſs binding to the emperor than it was to the court of Madrid; ſince he poſſeſſes the Low Countries on the ſame terms, and with the ſame reſtrictions, they were ſubject to when under the dominion of Spain.

Such were the arguments made uſe of by the Engliſh and the Dutch, in order to effect the ſuppreſſion of the new Company, the ſucceſs of which gave them great uneaſineſs. Thoſe two allies, who by their maritime forces could have entirely deſtroyed Oſtend and its trade, were deſirous of avoiding a diſpute with a power which they themſelves had raiſed, and which they thought they ſtood in need of againſt the houſe

of Bourbon. So that, though they were determined not to ſuffer the houſe of Auſtria to go to the ſource of their riches, they contented themſelves with making remonſtrances on the violation of the moſt ſolemn engagements. They were ſeconded by France, which was equally intereſted in this matter, and was alſo guarantee of the violated treaty.

The emperor paid no regard to theſe repreſentations. He was induced to perſiſt in his undertaking by the obſtinacy of his own diſpoſition, by the ambitious proſpects that had been ſuggeſted to him, and by the great privileges and indulgences granted by Spain to the merchants reſiding in his dominions. That crown then entertained the hopes of obtaining the heireſs of the houſe of Auſtria for Don Carlos, and thought no conceſſions too great for ſuch an alliance. The union of thoſe two courts, which had always been conſidered as irreconcileable, alarmed all Europe. Every nation thought itſelf in danger. Numberleſs leagues were formed, and many treaties concluded, to endeavour to diſſolve that connection, which was thought to be more dangerous than it really was. All theſe attempts were ineffectual, till the council of Madrid, having no more treaſures to laviſh upon Germany, were convinced that they were purſuing a viſionary intereſt. Auſtria was not ſurpriſed at the defection of her ally, and ſeemed determined to aſſert her claims, and eſpecially her commercial intereſts. Whether the maritime powers were intimidated by this ſteadineſs, or whether, as was more probably the caſe, they only conſulted the dictates of ſound policy, they determined to guarantee the Pragmatic ſanction in 1727. The court of Vienna acknowledged this important ſervice, by ſacrificing the Oſtend Company.

Though the public acts take notice only of a ſuſpenſion for ſeven years, the proprietors plainly ſaw that their ruin was determined upon, and that this ſtipulation was only inſerted from reſpect to the imperial dignity. They had too high an opinion of the

BOOK V.

court of London and the ſtates general, to ſuppoſe they would have ſecured the indiviſibility of the Auſtrian dominions for a mere temporary advantage. This perſuaſion determined them to think no more of Oſtend, and to diſpoſe of their ſtock ſome other way. They made ſeveral ſucceſſive attempts to form an eſtabliſhment at Hamburgh, at Trieſt, and in Tuſcany; but all their endeavours proved abortive, either from the badneſs of the ſituation, the efforts of powerful nations, or the intrigues of politics. Thoſe were the moſt ſucceſsful who turned their views towards Sweden.

Swediſh Eaſt India Company. Revolutions in the government of that nation.

The ſtudy of nations is of all others the moſt intereſting. The obſerver delights to be acquainted with the particular ſtroke of character that diſtinguiſhes each people, and to ſeparate it from the numerous general characteriſtics that accompany it. In vain has this diſtinguiſhing mark taken a tincture from events: in vain have natural or moral cauſes altered the ſhades of it. A penetrating eye traces it through all theſe diſguiſes, and perceives it notwithſtanding theſe variations. The more extenſive the field of obſervation is, the greater number of ages it preſents to be eſtimated, and of periods to inveſtigate, ſo much the more eaſy is it to determine the problem. Every age, and every period, gives, if we may be allowed the expreſſion, its own equation; and all theſe cannot be ſolved without diſcovering the truth, which was, as it were, wrapped up in them.

But the deſire of being acquainted with a nation, muſt increaſe in proportion to the part it has borne upon the theatre of the univerſe, and to the influence it has had in thoſe majeſtic or terrible ſcenes that have agitated the globe. The cauſe and effects of this great tumult attract equally the attention of the learned and of the multitude; and it is ſeldom that we are tired of reflecting upon them. Are the Swedes to be ranked among the people who have acquired a celebrated name? This is a point which my readers will decide.

Sweden was little known before its ferocious inhabitants had concurred with the other barbarians of the North in the ſubverſion of the Roman empire. After they had ſpread deſtruction with the violence and rapidity of a torrent, they returned to their former obſcurity. An uncultivated and deſert region, without manners, without policy, and without form of government, could ſcarce fix the attention of Europe, which was then but little enlightened, and which made no efforts to emerge from its ignorance. If we may believe ſome old chronicles, of doubtful authority, plunder and aſſaſſinations were very frequent. Sometimes one ſingle chief ruled over the whole country, which at other times was divided among ſeveral maſters. Theſe rivals, greedy of power, had recourſe to the moſt ſhameful or moſt violent methods to ſupplant each other; and revolutions were perpetually taking place. It was between fathers and children that theſe wars were more particularly inveterate. Chriſtianity, which was adopted in this country at the end of the eighth, or the beginning of the ninth century, did not produce the leaſt alteration in the condition of theſe people. The ſame animoſity, the ſame conteſts, and the ſame calamities were ſtill experienced. This dreadful ſtate had been but very little improved, when ſome unfortunate events placed Sweden under the dominion of the Danes, or in a kind of alliance which partook of ſlavery. This ſhameful bondage was diſſolved by Guſtavus Vaſa, who, in 1521, was choſen adminiſtrator of the ſtate, and two years after, its monarch.

The empire was then in a ſtate of anarchy. The prieſts exerciſed the principal authority; and the treaſury received annually no more than twenty-four thouſand marks of ſilver, although the public expences amounted to ſixty thouſand. The new king ſhowed himſelf worthy of the ſituation to which he was raiſed, by concentrating in his hands, powers that were diffuſely ſcattered, by rendering the crown hereditary in his family, by depriving the clergy of part of their

BOOK V. usurpations, by substituting Lutheranism to the established form of worship, and by prudently settling the nature and appropriation of the taxes: but this sovereign, having carried his system of reformation too far, precipitated his subjects into misfortunes which might, and ought to have been foreseen.

Sweden, which from the nature of its productions, its wants, and the extent of its coasts, seemed destined for navigation, had nevertheless neglected it, since its inhabitants had been disgusted of piracy. The people of Lubeck traded with them for their provisions; and brought them salt, stuffs, and all the foreign merchandise they consumed. No ships were seen in their roads; nor were there any magazines in their towns, which did not belong to that republic.

The haughty soul of Gustavus could not brook this dependence. He was determined to break the bands that cramped the industry of his subjects; but he was too precipitate in his measures. He shut his harbours against the people of Lubeck, before he had built any ships, and before he had got any merchants. From this period there was scarce any further intercourse between his subjects and other nations. The whole kingdom fell into a state of languor, of which it would be difficult to form any adequate idea. Some English and Dutch ships, which appeared there at distant intervals, had but imperfectly remedied this evil, when Gustavus Adolphus ascended the throne.

He signalized the first years of his reign by several useful alterations. Agriculture was encouraged; the mines were worked with greater skill; companies were formed to trade to Persia and the West Indies; the foundations of a new colony were laid on the coast of North America. The Swedish flag was displayed in all the European latitudes.

This new spirit was of short duration. The success of the great Gustavus in war, turned entirely the genius of the nation to arms. All men were stimulated with the desire of rendering their names illustrious,

by following the traces of this hero and of his diſciples. The hope of plunder was united to the love of glory. Every man was eager to conquer the enemy, and to enrich himſelf with their ſpoils. The national education was entirely military, and the houſes ſeemed to be converted into camps. The temples, the caſtles, and even the ſimpleſt dwelling-places, were adorned with numberleſs trophies. One generation of ſoldiers was ſucceeded by another of a ſimilar or ſtill more daring nature. This enthuſiaſm had ſpread itſelf among the lower ranks of people, as among the higheſt. Labours of a ſuperior, or of a meaner kind, were all equally deſpiſed; and a Swede thought himſelf born only to conquer, and to regulate the deſtinies of empires. This martial fury had been carried beyond all bounds under Charles XII. but it was extinguiſhed after the tragical death of that extraordinary man.

The Swedes then became quite another people. The exhauſted ſtate of the kingdom; the loſs of former conqueſts; the elevation of Ruſſia; every circumſtance, in a word, tended to diſguſt the moſt confident of a ſyſtem, which it was no longer poſſible to follow with any hopes of ſucceſs, or even without the riſk of completing the ruin of an edifice already ſhaken by repeated and violent ſhocks. Peace was the wiſh both of thoſe who had grown old in the ſervice of the field, and of thoſe whoſe age had not yet called them to bear arms. The cry of the whole nation was for its liberty, which had been ſucceſſively attacked with precaution, deſtroyed by Charles XI. and even the ſhadow of which had been taken away by the unfortunate monarch who had juſt deſcended into the grave without iſſue. All the orders of the ſtate were aſſembled; and without aboliſhing the regal title, they reſtored the republican form of government, and even gave it a greater degree of extenſion than it had had before.

This great revolution was not preceded by any commotion, nor followed by any diſturbance. All the changes were made upon mature deliberation.

BOOK V.

The firſt attention was paid to the moſt neceſſary professions, which till then had been unnoticed or deſpiſed. The arts of convenience, or elegance, were ſoon introduced. The young nobility travelled into every part of Europe where they might gain any kind of knowledge. Thoſe citizens, who had been for a long time abſent from their country while it remained in a ſtate of ruin and devaſtation, returned and brought back with them the various talents they had acquired. Order, political economy, and the ſeveral branches of government, became ſubjects of inquiry. Whatever concerned the republic was maturely diſcuſſed in the general aſſemblies, and freely approved or cenſured in the public writings. Some uſeful publications upon the abſtruſe ſciences appeared, which were worthy of the notice of the moſt enlightened nations. A language, hitherto barbarous, was at length fixed to ſome grammatical rules, and acquired, in proceſs of time, a degree of preciſion and elegance. The manners and morals of the people underwent ſtill more neceſſary and more fortunate alterations. Politeneſs, affability, and a ſpirit of communication, ſucceeded to that ſternneſs of temper, and that roughneſs of character, which a continual ſtate of warfare had left behind it. Improvements of every kind were adopted, from whatever part of the globe they came. Foreigners, who introduced any new diſcoveries, or any branch of uſeful knowledge, met with encouragement; and it was at this favourable juncture that the agents of the Oſtend Company made their appearance.

The Swedes have a ſhare in the India trade. Manner in which they conduct it.

A rich merchant of Stockholm, named Henry Koning, approved of their ſchemes, and procured the approbation of the diet in 1731. An India Company was eſtabliſhed, with an excluſive privilege of trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope. The charter was only for fifteen years. It was thought that this would be the beſt expedient, either to afford an early opportunity of rectifying any imperfections incident to new undertakings, or to relieve the anxiety

of many citizens who warmly oppoſed an enterpriſe, which they thought repugnant to the nature of the climate and the conſtitution. In order, as much as poſſible, to unite the advantages of a free trade with thoſe of a privileged aſſociation, it was agreed that the ſtock ſhould not be fixed, and that each proprietor ſhould be at liberty to withdraw his own at the end of every voyage. As moſt of the adventurers were foreigners, chiefly Flemings, it was thought equitable to ſecure a profit to the nation, by obliging them to pay the government fifteen hundred ſilver dollars, or three thouſand three hundred and ninety livres [141l. 5s.], upon the cargo of every ſhip.

This tax did not prevent the Company from fitting out five-and-twenty ſhips during the time that their charter laſted. Three of theſe were ſent to Bengal, and two-and-twenty to China. One of theſe ſhips was wrecked with its whole cargo, and three of them periſhed without any lading. Notwithſtanding theſe misfortunes, the proprietors, beſide their capital, received eight hundred ſeventeen and a half per cent. which, one year with another, amounted to fifty-four and a half per cent. a profit infinitely great, though each of the proprietors was obliged to make and to pay his own inſurances out of it.

In 1746 the Company obtained a new charter for twenty years. They diſpatched ſucceſſively three veſſels to Surat, and thirty-three to Canton, one of which was wrecked with all its lading, near the place of its deſtination. The profits of the proprietors aroſe to eight hundred ſeventy-one and one quarter per cent. or forty-three per cent. every year. A remarkable event diſtinguiſhed this charter from the firſt. From the year 1753, the proprietors gave up the liberty they had always enjoyed, of withdrawing their capital at pleaſure, and reſolved to form themſelves into a permanent body. The ſtate induced them to conſent to this new arrangement, by taking no more than a duty of twenty per cent. upon all the mercantile articles that ſhould be con-

BOOK V.

ſumed in the kingdom, inſtead of ſeventy-five thouſand livres [3125l.] which it had received for ſeven years paſt upon every voyage. This ſacrifice had been made with a deſign to enable the Swediſh Company to ſuſtain the competition of that which had juſt been eſtabliſhed at Embden: but the public neceſſities occaſioned this indulgence to be retracted in 1765. Perfidy was carried ſo far, that even all the arrears were required to be paid.

In 1766, the monopoly was renewed for twenty years more. The Company lent the government 1,250,000 livres [52,083l. 6s. 8d.] without intereſt, and twice that ſum upon an intereſt of ſix per cent. The firſt of theſe loans was to be ſucceſſively paid off by retaining the 93,750 livres [3906l. 15s.], which the Company had engaged to give for every ſhip they fitted out; and the ſecond was to be returned at four ſtipulated periods. Before the firſt of January 1778, one-and-twenty veſſels had been ſent off, all for China; four of which were ſtill expected. The ſeventeen that had returned, had brought back with them twenty-two millions ſix hundred thouſand pounds weight of tea, and ſome other aricles of much leſs importance. It cannot be preciſely aſcertained what profits have accrued from theſe expeditions; but it may be preſumed that they were conſiderable, ſince the ſhares have gained as far as two-and-forty per cent. It is however generally known, that the dividend was twelve per cent. in 1770, and that it has been ſix per cent. all the other years, and that the Company is charged with the inſurances ſince 1753.

The Company have fixed the ſeat of their affairs at Gottenburg, the poſition of which afforded conveniences for the fitting out of ſhips, and for the ſale of goods, which were not to be met with in the other ports of the kingdom. A preference ſo uſeful has conſiderably increaſed activity in its road, and the cultivation of its territory.

At the origin of the Company, their ſtock varied

from one voyage to another. It was ſaid to be rated at ſix millions [250,000l.] in 1753, and at five [208,333l. 6s. 8d.] only at the laſt convention. The beſt informed perſons know nothing upon this important point except from mere conjecture; for the matter was never laid before the public. As the Swedes had at firſt much leſs concern in this ſtock than they have had ſince, the government have thought proper to envelope it in myſtery. In order to effect this, it was enacted, that any director who ſhould divulge the names of the proprietors, or the ſums they had ſubſcribed, ſhould be ſuſpended, or even depoſed, and ſhould forfeit for ever all the money he had ventured in this undertaking. This ſpirit of myſtery, inconceivable in a free country, continued five-and-thirty years. Twelve of the proprietors were indeed to examine the accounts of the directors every four years: but theſe examiners were appointed by the direction. Since the year 1767, the proprietors themſelves are the perſons who chooſe theſe commiſſaries, and who receive their reports at a general meeting. This new arrangement will certainly have diminiſhed corruption. Secrecy in politics is like lying; it may preſerve a ſtate for the moment, but muſt certainly ruin it in the end. Both are only ſerviceable to evil-minded perſons.

The produce of the ſales has not always been equal. It has been more or leſs conſiderable, according to the number and ſize of the ſhips employed in the trade; and according to the dearneſs of the articles at the place of their manufacture, or their ſcarcity in Europe. We may however affirm, that it has ſcarce ever been lower than two millions of livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.], and has never riſen higher than five millions [208,333l. 6s. 8d.]. Tea has always yielded four-fifths of this produce.

It is with piaſtres, bought at Cadiz, that theſe affairs have been tranſacted. The little that has been brought from other parts does not deſerve to be mentioned.

BOOK V.

The consumption in Sweden was at first rather more considerable than it has been since, because originally there was no duty upon the Asiatic productions. Most of them have been since subjected to a tax of twenty, or five-and-twenty per cent.; some of them even, such as the silks, have been prohibited at times. These taxes have reduced the annual consumption of the kingdom to the value of three hundred thousand livres [12,500l.]. All the rest is exported on paying to the state one-eighth per cent. on the produce of the sale. Sweden, considering the little specie it has, and the mediocrity of its intrinsic resources, cannot admit of a higher degree of luxury; of which we shall soon be convinced.

Present state of Sweden.

Sweden, including that part of Finland and Lapland under its dominion, is of prodigious extent. Its coasts, which are in general difficult of access, are embarrassed with an infinite number of rocks, and many small islands, where some men, almost savages, live by fishing. The interior part of the country is very mountainous. Some plains, however, are to be found, the soil of which, though sandy, marshy, and full of ferruginous matter, is not barren, especially in the most southern provinces. To the north of the empire, want has taught the people, that they could live upon bread made of the bark of the birch-tree, with a few roots and a little rye. In order to procure a nourishment more wholesome and more agreeable, they have endeavoured to sow some of the high grounds, after having felled and burnt the trees that were upon them. The most prudent among them have given up this practice, after having observed, that trees and grass no longer grew upon a stony and meagre soil, exhausted by two or three plentiful harvests. Very large spaces of territory are covered with lakes of greater or less extent: these useless collections of water have been skilfully turned to advantage, in establishing, with the help of several rivers, canals, and sluices, an uninterrupted navigation from Stockholm to Gottenburg.

This ſketch of the natural ſtate of Sweden, would induce us to ſuppoſe that this country was never much peopled, though it has ſometimes been called the *manufactory of human kind*. Probably the numerous bands that came from thence, and which, under the ſo-much-dreaded name of Goths and Vandals, ravaged and ſubdued ſo many regions of Europe, were only ſwarms of Scythians and Sarmatians, who came thither in a conſtant ſucceſſion by the north of Aſia. Yet it would be, perhaps, a miſtake to ſuppoſe, that this vaſt country was always as thinly peopled as it is now. According to all probability, three hundred years ago, this country had more inhabitants than it has at preſent, though at that time they profeſſed the Catholic religion, which enjoins the monaſtic life and the celibacy of the clergy. The account taken in 1751 did not compute the number of ſouls at more than two millions two hundred and twenty-nine thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty-one. In 1769 this number was increaſed by three hundred and forty-three thouſand. It is generally ſuppoſed, that ſince this period, the population, only the thirteenth part of which dwells in the towns, has not increaſed, but has rather diminiſhed; and this calamity is to be attributed to miſery, and to the prevalence of epidemic diſeaſes.

The number of inhabitants would be greater in Sweden, if it were not continually deſerted by the natives, who frequently never return. There are men in all nations, who, either from motives of curioſity, or from a natural reſtleſſneſs, and without any determinate object, are fond of going from one country to another; but this is only the malady of a few individuals, and cannot be conſidered as the general cauſe of a conſtant emigration. There is a natural propenſity in all men to love their own country, which is rather to be accounted for from moral, than from natural principles. An inherent fondneſs for ſociety, the ties of blood and of friendſhip, an acquaintance with the climate and language, that partiality

BOOK V. we are ſo apt to contract for the place, the manners, and the way of life we are accuſtomed to; all theſe are, to a rational being, ſo many motives of attachment to the land in which he was born and educated. They muſt be powerful inducements that can determine him to break all theſe ties at once and to prefer another country, where all will appear extraordinary and new to him. In Sweden, where the whole power reſides in the ſtates compoſed of the ſeveral orders of the kingdom, even that of the peaſants, every one ſhould naturally be more attached to his country; yet emigrations are very frequent, and there is no reaſon to be ſurpriſed at it.

The lands in cultivation were formerly divided into fourſcore thouſand and fifty-two hemmans, or farms, which it was not permitted to parcel out. By an error ſtill more palpable, the laws had determined the number of perſons that might live upon each of theſe farms. When this number was completed, the father of a family was obliged himſelf to expel from his houſe his children born after that period, however he might be in want of them to increaſe the maſs of his productions. It had been expected that this regulation would occaſion the clearing of the uncultivated lands, and produce new hemmans. But it ſhould have been foreſeen, that men, kept in ſuch a ſtate of oppreſſion, would neither have the will nor the means of attending to new eſtabliſhments; and that moſt of them would go into foreign countries, in ſearch of that tranquillity of which their own ſo unjuſtly deprived them. The eyes of the government were not opened till the year 1748. At this period it was at length underſtood, that the public required, that the labourers ſhould have no greater extent of ſoil than they could conveniently work; and the diet allowed them to divide their inheritance into as many portions as they ſhould think proper. This new arrangement of things has already leſſened the emigrations, and muſt, in proceſs of time, bring on the improvement of agriculture.

This was, it is ſaid, in a tolerably flouriſhing ſtate when Guſtavus Vaſa aſcended the throne. This opinion is evidently an improbable one, ſince before that period the empire had only emerged from the horrors of anarchy, to paſs under the yoke of foreign tyranny. It is at leaſt a fact, that ſince that time, this firſt of the arts has been always in a languid ſtate. The nation has continually been reduced to the neceſſity of drawing a great part of its ſubſiſtence from its neighbours, and ſometimes to the amount of ſix or ſeven millions of livres [from 250,000l. to 291,666l. 13s. 4d.]. Many cauſes have contributed to this misfortune. Among the moſt conſiderable may be reckoned the diſtribution of a ſmall number of men over too great a ſpace. The diſtance at which they were from one another, obliged each of them ſeparately to provide for almoſt all his own wants, and has prevented them all from ſeriouſly devoting themſelves to any profeſſion, and even to the cultivation of the lands.

The inſufficiency of the harveſts threw the ſtate into continual embarraſſments. The meaſures adopted at diſtant intervals to remove this evil, have not produced the deſired effect. At length, in 1772, the government had the firmneſs to ſtrike at the principal cauſe of it, by prohibiting the diſtilling of the corn. Unfortunately, the laws were not of ſufficient force to counteract the paſſion theſe people had for this kind of ſpirit; and the ſtate was obliged to relax the ſeverity of them. Its condeſcenſion was not indeed carried ſo far, as to authoriſe the citizens to prepare this liquor themſelves, as they were uſed to do: but it engaged to furniſh them with about three hundred thouſand tons of grain for this purpoſe, inſtead of a million of tons that were before employed in it.

Since this epocha, Sweden has drawn much leſs corn from foreign markets. Some of her writers on agriculture have even pretended, that ſhe might do without this aſſiſtance, if the nation were to forſake

BOOK V. its erroneous methods of proceeding in these matters. This opinion will not meet with many partisans. Whether it be from the defect of the soil, of climate, or of industry, it is certain, that the same number of men working the same number of days, and with the same means, do not bring forth in this region more than a third part of the productions obtained in more fortunate countries.

These disadvantages of agriculture must be compensated by the mines, most of which belonged formerly to the priests. From the hands of the clergy they passed, in 1480, into those of the government. By a still more fortunate revolution they have since become the property of individuals.

There is only the gold mine, discovered in 1738, that has remained with the state. As it yields only seven or eight hundred ducats [between 300l. and 400l. on an average] per annum; and that this sum is insufficient to defray the expences of working it, no native or foreigner has yet offered to take it upon himself.

The silver mine of Sala has been known since the eleventh century. During the course of the fourteenth, it yielded twenty-four thousand marks; and in the fifteenth, no more than twenty-one thousand two hundred and eighty. It fell more and more, till the beginning of the century in which we now live. At present it produces from seventeen to eighteen hundred marks every year. This is fifteen or sixteen times more than all the other mines taken together.

Alum, sulphur, cobalt, and vitriol, are more abundant. These are nothing, however, or scarcely any thing, in comparison of the mines of copper, and especially of iron. From the year 1754 to 1768, there were exported annually nine hundred and ninety-five thousand six hundred and seven quintals of this last metal. It then became to be less in vogue, because Russia brought to market iron of the same quality twenty per cent. cheaper. The Swedes were obliged to lower their price, and they must lower it

ſtill more, in order not to loſe entirely the moſt important branch of their trade. The moſt intelligent among them have taken the reſolution of working their iron themſelves, and of converting it into ſteel, wire, nails, cannon, anchors, and other materials of primary neceſſity to other nations; and the government has prudently encouraged this induſtry by gratifications. Theſe favours have met with general approbation; while opinions have been divided with reſpect to thoſe granted to other manufactures.

There was not, properly ſpeaking, any manufacture in the kingdom at the memorable era which reſtored it to its liberty. It was ſoon divided by two parties; one who diſplayed an inordinate paſſion for all ſorts of manufactures, and laviſhed the moſt exceſſive encouragements upon them all, without diſtinguiſhing thoſe which might be uſeful from thoſe which might be prejudicial to the ſtate. Great confuſion aroſe, from which the nation emerged only to fall into an exceſs equally fatal. The oppoſite party having prevailed, ſhowed as much averſion for the manufactures of neceſſity, as for theſe that were merely works of luxury, and deprived them both indiſcriminately of all the privileges and favours that had been heaped upon them. Notwithſtanding the prodigalities of the treaſury, they had as yet acquired no conſiſtence; and the ſuppreſſion of theſe enormous grants occaſioned their total decay. The foreign artiſts, and even thoſe of the country, diſappeared. The flattering proſpect of promoting great induſtry vaniſhed at once; and the nation found itſelf nearly in the ſame ſtate as it was in before the year 1720.

The fiſheries have not ſhared the ſame fate as the arts. The only one that deſerves our notice, in a political point of view, is the herring fiſhery. It cannot be traced farther back than 1740. Before that period, the herrings did not frequent the coaſts of Sweden. They then came in ſhoals to the coaſt of Gottenburg, which they have never ſince forſaken. The nation conſumes annually forty thouſand barrels

of this fish; and there are one hundred and sixty thousand barrels exported; which, at the rate of thirteen livres fifteen sols [about 11s. 5½d.] each, brings in a revenue of 2,200,000 livres [91,666l. 13s. 4d.] to the state.

The Swedish nation was not yet possessed of this advantage, when the government resolved that foreign navigators should not be allowed to introduce into the ports of Sweden any other than the commodities of their own country; and that they should not even be permitted to convey these from one harbour of the kingdom to another. That famous edict, known by the name of *placard des productions*, restored navigation, which had long since been annihilated by the calamities of war. A flag, which had been hitherto unknown, was now displayed on all the seas. The seamen soon acquired skill and experience. Some able politicians were even of opinion that their progress was growing too considerable for a depopulated country. They thought it would be more advisable to confine themselves to the exportation of their own produce, and the importation of such foreign commodities as they wanted, and totally to lay aside the mere freighting trade. This system was warmly opposed. Some able men were of opinion that, far from restraining this branch of industry, it ought to be encouraged, by abolishing every regulation that might tend to obstruct it. The exclusive right of passing the Sound was formerly appropriated to a few towns, distinguished by the name of *Staple*. All the parts situated to the north of Stockholm and Abo, were obliged to send their commodities to one of these staples, and there to take in those of the Baltic, which they could have procured cheaper at first hand. These odious distinctions, contrived in barbarous times, and tending to favour the monopoly of merchants, still subsist to this day. The wisest speculators in political matters, wish to see them abolished, that a more general competition may produce greater industry.

If we were to judge of the trade of Sweden by the

number of ſhips it employs, we ſhould think it very important. But when we conſider, that this country ſells nothing but tar, pitch, potaſh, planks, fiſh, and coarſe metals, we ſhall not be ſurpriſed to find, that its annual exports do not exceed 15,000,000 livres [625,000l.]. The returns would ſtill be leſs by one-fourth, if we were to be regulated by the accounts of the cuſtoms. But it is a known fact, that although they are only defrauded of five per cent. upon the exports, yet they are cheated of five-and-twenty per cent. on the imports. Admitting this, there would be an almoſt complete balance between what was ſold and what was bought; and the kingdom would neither gain nor loſe by its outward connections. Perſons extremely well verſed in theſe matters, pretend even that the balance is to the diſadvantage of the ſtate, and that it has only filled up the deficiency which this circumſtance muſt have occaſioned in its ſpecie, by the help of the ſubſidies that have been granted by foreign powers. It behoves the nation to redouble all its efforts to extricate itſelf from ſo diſagreeable a ſituation. Let us examine whether the troops are upon a better footing.

Before the reign of Guſtavus Vaſa, every Swede was a ſoldier. Upon an emergency of the ſtate, the huſbandman left his plough, and took up his bow. The whole nation was inured to war by civil commotions, which were unfortunately continual. Government had then but five hundred men in pay; but in 1542, this ſmall corps was increaſed to ſix thouſand. In order to be diſencumbered from the maintenance of theſe forces, it was ſuggeſted, that a portion of the domains of the crown ſhould be aſſigned to them. This plan, oppoſed for a long time by private intereſts, was at length carried into execution. Charles XI. reſumed the royal lands, which his predeceſſors, and eſpecially queen Chriſtina, had laviſhed upon their favourites, and ſettled the moſt valuable part of his army upon them.

This army conſiſts at preſent of a body of twelve

BOOK V.

thouſand and twenty-eight men, always aſſembled, formed indiſcriminately of natives and foreigners, having a regular pay, and ſerving to garriſon all the fortreſſes of the kingdom. There is another corps ſtill more diſtinguiſhed, and conſidered by the people as the bulwark of the empire; it is that which is known by the title of national troops. It conſiſts of thirty-four thouſand two hundred and ſixty-ſix men, who are aſſembled only one-and-twenty days in every year. They have no pay: but they have received from government, under the name of *Boſtel*, poſſeſſions ſufficient for their ſubſiſtence. From the common ſoldier to the general, every man has a dwelling of his own, and lands which he muſt cultivate. The conveniencies of the lodging, and the extent and value of the territory, are proportioned to the rank every man holds in this corps.

This inſtitution has received the encomiums of all Europe. Thoſe who have ſeen the effects of it upon the ſpot, have been leſs warm in their approbation of it. They have obſerved, that theſe lands, which were paſſing with rapidity from one poſſeſſor to another, were always in the greateſt diſorder: that the character of the huſbandman was diametrically oppoſite to that of the military man; that the man who cultivated the land attached himſelf to it, from the care he beſtowed upon it, and never quitted it without regret; while the ſoldier, led by his profeſſion from one province of the kingdom to another, or from one country to a diſtant region, ought always to hold himſelf in readineſs to march cheerfully at the firſt ſtroke of the drum, or the firſt ſound of the trumpet: that the labours of the field grow languid, when they are not ſeconded by a numerous family; that it was conſequently the duty of the farmer to marry; while the dwelling under tents, and in camps, and the hazards of war, required an unmarried man, whoſe courage was not to be enervated by any tender connection; who might live every where without any local predilection, and might expoſe his life every inſtant

without regret: that the perfection of military discipline was loſt without conſtant exerciſe, while the cultivation of the land, admitting of no reſt, and ſuffering no intermiſſion, except in that rigorous ſeaſon which ſeparated the armies, and hardened the ſoil, the ſame hands would be unfit to wield the ſword and to direct the plough: that the two profeſſions required each of them a great degree of experience, and that the uniting of them in the ſame perſon, was a ſure method of having only indifferent farmers and bad ſoldiers: that theſe lands, thus diſtributed, muſt either become hereditary, or return to the ſtate; if they were made hereditary, there would ſoon be none left for other proprietors; and if they returned to the ſtate, this was the means of reducing to beggary, from one moment to another, a multiplicity of children of both ſexes, and of peopling the kingdom, at the end of five or ſix campaigns, with unfortunate orphans: in a word, that the cuſtom of the *Boſtel* appeared to them ſo pernicious, that they did not heſitate to rank it among the number of cauſes that rendered a ſcarcity of corn ſo frequent in Sweden.

The ſituation of this country has determined it to create two very different naval corps; one conſiſting of a great number of galleys, and a few flat-bottomed boats, for the defence of its coaſts, full of ſhoals; the other compoſed of four-and-twenty ſhips of the line, and three-and-twenty frigates, for more diſtant latitudes. In 1772, they were both of them in a moſt ruinous condition. Since that period, theſe veſſels, moſt of which are made of deal, becauſe there is very little oak in the country, and which were almoſt falling to pieces with age, have been repaired. Sweden may poſſibly be in abſolute want of all her galleys; but ſhe muſt infallibly determine to leſſen the number of her ſhips. Her powers will never allow her to arm even half of them.

The public revenue of this kingdom does not exceed ſixteen or ſeventeen millions of livres [from 666,666l. 13s. 4d. to 708,333l. 6s. 8d.]. It is collected by a

BOOK V. land-tax, the returns of the cuſtoms, by duties upon copper, iron, and ſtamped paper, by a poll-tax, and a free gift; and by ſome other articles leſs conſiderable. This is very little for the wants of government; and yet its debts muſt be paid from this trifling ſum.

Theſe debts amounted to ſeven millions five hundred thouſand livres [312,500l.], when Charles XI. came to the crown. That prince, who was an economiſt in a manner becoming a ſovereign, paid them off. He did more than this, for he recovered ſeveral of the domains conquered in Germany, and which had been mortgaged to powerful neighbours. He likewiſe redeemed the crown jewels, upon which conſiderable ſums had been borrowed in Holland. He fortified the frontier towns, ſuccoured his allies, and often fitted out ſquadrons to maintain his ſuperiority on the Baltic. The events ſubſequent to his death once more plunged the nation into its former confuſion. This has ſince been always increaſing, notwithſtanding the ſubſidies beſtowed by France, and other leſs conſiderable ſuccours. In 1772, the ſtate owed 90,450,000 livres [3,768,750l.]; which, at an intereſt of four and a half per cent. brought to the natives, or foreigners, 4,070,250 livres [169,593l. 15s.]. At this period there were not above two millions of livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] circulating in the kingdom. Both public and private affairs were tranſacted with the bills of a bank belonging to the ſtate, and ſecured by the three firſt orders of the republic. This eſtabliſhment has had its cenſors and its panegyriſts; and it is a problem not yet reſolved, whether it has been ufeful or detrimental to the nation.

Poverty is not, however, the greateſt evil under which Sweden laboured; ſhe was threatened with calamities of a more dangerous nature. The ſpirit of diſcord excited a general ferment. Hatred and revenge were the principal cauſes of events. Every man conſidered the ſtate as the prey of his ambition or his avarice. It was no longer for the public ſer-

vice that places had been created: it was for the private emolument of those who filled them. Virtue and talents were rather an obstacle to fortune, than a means of elevation. The national assemblies displayed nothing but acts of disgrace or violence. Crimes were unpunished, and were openly committed. The court, the senate, and all the orders of the republic, were filled with general distrust. All men were bent upon each others destruction, with inveterate fury. When quick and ready means were wanting, they were sought for at a distance; and men were not ashamed to conspire with foreign powers against their own country.

These evils had their source in the nature of the constitution settled in 1720. To a disgustful despotism, had been substituted a system of liberty ill arranged. The powers destined to balance and restrain each other, were neither clearly explained, nor prudently distributed. Accordingly, they began to clash with each other six years after they had been established. Nothing could possibly prevent this. It was a continual struggle between the head of the state, who was incessantly endeavouring to acquire influence by the making of laws, and the jealousy of the nation to preserve the executive power of them. The different orders of the republic disputed with the same inveteracy, concerning the extent of their respective privileges.

These contests, in which one party or the other alternately triumphed or were defeated, occasioned great instability in the public resolutions. What had been decreed in one diet, was cancelled in another, to be re-established anew, and to be again abolished. In this tumult of the passions, the general good was either forgotten, misunderstood, or betrayed. The happiness of the citizens was more and more disturbed; and all the branches of administration bore the stamp of ignorance, self-interest, or anarchy. These numerous evils were wrought up to their highest pitch, by a system of corruption, the most ignomi-

BOOK V. nious, perhaps, that any ſet of men was ever infected with.

Two factions, into which all the others were reſolved, divided the ſtate. That of the *Hats* ſeemed intent upon reſtoring to Sweden its former ſtrength, by recovering thoſe rich poſſeſſions which had been ſevered from it by the misfortunes of war. This faction had devoted itſelf to France, which might have ſome intereſt in encouraging its ambitious views. The faction of the *Caps* was a declared advocate for tranquillity. Its moderation had rendered it agreeable to Ruſſia, which was deſirous of meeting with no obſtacles to her enterpriſes. Theſe two courts, eſpecially that of Verſailles, had opened their treaſures to theſe baſe factions. The leaders of them appropriated to themſelves the greateſt part of theſe idle profuſions; and purchaſed votes with the reſt. Theſe were always at a low price; but at the ſame time they were ſcarce ever to be relied upon. Nothing was more common than for a member of the diet to ſell his vote a ſecond time. It was not even an uncommon circumſtance, that he ſhould make himſelf be paid by both parties at the ſame time.

The unhappy ſituation of a ſtate, apparently free, kept up that ſlaviſh diſpoſition, which degrades moſt of the European nations; they gloried in their chains, when they beheld the ſufferings of a people who had ſhaken off theirs. No one would be convinced that the Swedes had gone from one extreme to another; that, to avoid the miſchief of arbitary power, they had fallen into the confuſions of anarchy. The laws had not provided means to reconcile the private rights of individuals with thoſe of ſociety, and the prerogatives it ought to enjoy for the common ſafety of its members.

In this fatal criſis, it was expedient for the Swedes to intruſt the phantom of a king, of their own creation, with a power ſufficient to inquire into the abuſes of the ſtate, and find out proper remedies for it. This is the greateſt act of ſovereignty a people

can exercise; and it is not losing their liberty, to commit it to the custody of a guardian in whom they can confide, while they watch over the use he makes of the power delegated to him.

Such a resolution would have raised the Swedes to the greatest glory and happiness, and have excited a general opinion of their understanding and wisdom; whereas, by declining so necessary a measure, they have compelled the sovereign to seize upon the supreme authority. He now reigns upon his own terms; and his subjects have no other right left, but such as his moderation would not suffer him to deprive them of.

This event is too recent to allow us to entertain our readers with an account of it. Time alone can reveal what an historian ought to know, in order to speak of it with accuracy. How shall we discriminate those who have seconded the views of the sovereign from generous motives, from those who have acceded to them from abject principles? He himself undoubtedly knows them: but the heart of kings is an impenetrable sanctuary, out of which the marks of esteem or contempt seldom show themselves during their life-time; and the key of which is but too frequently lost at their death. Besides, are not kings subject, as we are, to the illusions of the passions, and do they know better how to distribute censure or praise? The opinions of their subjects are equally suspicious. Among the confused and contradictory voices that are heard at the same time, who shall distinguish the cry of truth from the deep and secret murmur of calumny, or the mysterious reserve of the former from the clamour of the latter? We must wait till interest and flattery have ceased to explain themselves, and till silence is no longer imposed upon us from terror. Then we may be allowed to take up the pen, without incurring the suspicion of meanly paying our court to the man in power, or of insolently bidding defiance to his authority. Though we should be silent, posterity will speak. The mo-

BOOK V.

narch is ſenſible of this truth. Happy, if he can enjoy beforehand its approbation! But woe to him, and woe to his people, if he ſhould diſdain this tribunal!

Let us now inquire into the connections, formed in India by the king of Pruſſia.

The king of Pruſſia forms an Eaſt India Company at Embden. Character of that Prince. Fate of his eſtabliſhment.

This prince, in his younger years, wiſely preferred the advantage of treaſuring up knowledge, to the uſual pleaſures of his age, and the luxurious idleneſs of courts. An intercourſe with the greateſt men of his time, joined to the ſpirit of obſervation, inſenſibly ripened his genius, which was naturally active and eager for improvement. Neither flattery nor oppoſition could ever divert him from the deep reflections he was engaged in. He formed the plan of his future conduct and reign in the early part of his life. It was foretold, on his acceſſion to the crown, that his miniſters would be no more than his ſecretaries; the managers of his finances no more than his clerks; and his generals no more than his aids de camp. Some fortunate circumſtances afforded him an opportunity of diſplaying to the whole world the talents he had acquired in retirement. With a quickneſs peculiar to himſelf, Frederick, inſtantly diſcovering the plan it was his intereſt to purſue, attacked a power by which his anceſtors had been kept in ſlavery. He obtained the victory in five engagements againſt that power, deprived it of its beſt provinces, and concluded a peace with the ſame wiſdom that he had begun the war.

Though his wars were at an end, yet he did not remain inactive. He aſpired to gain the admiration of thoſe very people whom he had ſtruck with terror. He collected all the arts about him, to give an additional luſtre to his name. He reformed the abuſes in the courts of judicature, and dictated himſelf the wiſeſt laws. A plain and invariable order was eſtabliſhed in every part of government. As he was convinced that the authority of a ſovereign is a common benefit to all his ſubjects, a protection which all ſhould equally partake of, he gave to every man

the liberty of approaching his perſon, and of writing to him. Every inſtant of his life was devoted to the welfare of his people; his very amuſements were made uſeful to them. His writings on hiſtory, morality, and politics, abounded with practical truths. Even his poetry was full of profound and inſtructive ideas. He was conſidering of the means of enriching his dominions, when ſome fortunate event put him in poſſeſſion of Eaſt Frieſland in the year 1744.

Embden, the capital of this little province, was reckoned, two centuries ago, one of the beſt ports in Europe. The Engliſh, compelled to abandon Antwerp, had made it the centre of their connections with the continent. The Dutch had long attempted, though in vain, to appropriate it to themſelves, till it ſo ſtrongly excited their jealouſy, that they even endeavoured to fill up the port. It was in every reſpect fit to become the ſtaple of a great trade. The diſtance of this little country from the bulk of the Pruſſian forces might be attended with ſome inconveniences; but Frederick expected that the terror of his name would keep the maritime powers in awe. In his perſuaſion, he eſtabliſhed an Eaſt India Company at Embden in 1751.

The capital of this new ſociety, divided into two thouſand ſhares, was 3,956,000 livres [164,833l. 6s. 8d.], chiefly ſubſcribed by the Engliſh and Dutch, notwithſtanding the ſevere prohibitions of their governments. They were allured by the unlimited freedom they were to enjoy, on paying three per cent. to the ſovereign upon every ſale they ſhould make. The event did not anſwer their expectation; ſix ſhips, ſent ſucceſſively to China, brought to the owners no more than their bare capital, and a profit of half per cent. for each year. Another Company, formed ſoon after in the ſame place for Bengal, was ſtill more unſucceſsful. They never attempted more than two expeditions; and the only return they had was a law-ſuit, which probably will never be determined. The tranſactions of both theſe ſocieties were

BOOK V. suspended upon the commencement of hostilities in 1756, but their final dissolution was not settled till 1763.

This has been the only check the king of Prussia's greatness has ever received. We know how difficult it is to judge of the merit of cotemporaries; because they are not at a sufficient distance. Princes are of all men those we can least hope to be acquainted with. Fame seldom speaks of them without prejudice. We commonly judge of them upon the reports of servile flattery, or unjust envy. The clamours of the various interests and opinions, that are in perpetual agitation around them, confound or suspend the judgment of the wisest men.

Yet, if we might be allowed to pronounce from a multitude of facts connected together, we should say of Frederick, that he had been able to extricate himself from the schemes of all Europe combined against him; that to the greatness and boldness of his enterprises, he joined the most impenetrable secrecy in the execution of them; that he introduced a total change in the art of war, which, before his time, was thought to have attained its highest degree of perfection; that he showed a fortitude scarcely to be paralleled in history; that he turned his very mistakes to better advantage than others do their success; that all mankind were either lost in silent admiration of his actions, or could not sufficiently extol them; and that he reflected as much lustre upon his nation, as other nations reflect upon their sovereign.

This prince always presents a formidable aspect. The opinion he has given of his abilities; the indelible remembrance of his actions; an annual revenue of seventy millions [2,916,666l. 13s. 4d.]; a treasure of more than two hundred [8,333,333l. 6s. 8d.]; an army of a hundred and fourscore thousand men: all these circumstances must secure his tranquillity. Unfortunately it is not so beneficial to his subjects as it was formerly. He still leaves the management of the coin to the Jews, who have introduced the greatest confusion. He has done nothing for the relief of the

richeſt merchants in his dominions, who have been ruined by his ſchemes. He has taken the moſt conſiderable manufactures into his own hands. His dominions are full of monopolies, which are the bane of all induſtry. His people, who idolized him, have been given up to a ſet of foreign plunderers. This conduct hath occaſioned ſuch diſtruſt, both at home and abroad, that we may venture to affirm, that all endeavours to reſtore the Embden Company will prove ineffectual.

O Frederick! thou didſt receive from nature a bold and lively imagination, an unbounded deſire of knowledge, a propenſity to an active life, and a ſtrength of conſtitution to ſupport the fatigues of it. Thine earlier years were devoted to the ſtudy of government, policy, and legiſlation. At the view of thy firſt exploits, mankind, groaning under general oppreſſion and ſlavery, ſeemed to find ſome comfort in their misfortunes, from the expectation that thou wouldſt be their avenger. They foretold thy ſucceſſes, and implored a previous bleſſing upon them; and Europe diſtinguiſhed thee by the title of King and Philoſopher.

When thou didſt firſt appear in the field, all nations were aſtoniſhed at the rapidity of thy marches, at the ſkill diſplayed in thy encampments, and at the excellent diſpoſition thou didſt make of thine army in battle. The ſtrict diſcipline in which thy troops were trained excited univerſal admiration, and inſured them victory: all extolled that mechanical ſubordination which of ſeveral armies makes but one body, whoſe motions, being all governed by one ſingle impulſe, exert their power at once towards the ſame object. Philoſophers themſelves, prejudiced by the hopes thou hadſt raiſed in them, and proud to ſee a friend of the arts and of mankind inveſted with regal dignity, rejoiced perhaps at thy victories, though obtained at the expence of ſo much blood; and they conſidered thee as a model for military kings.

But there is ſtill a more glorious title; that of a

BOOK V.

patriot king. This is a title never given to thoſe princes, who, making no diſtinction between truth and error, juſtice and partiality, good and evil, conſider the principles of morality merely as metaphyſical ſpeculations, and imagine that human reaſon is ſwayed entirely by intereſt. If the love of glory were extinct in thy breaſt; if the powers of thy ſoul, exhauſted by thy great exploits, had loſt their force and energy; if the childiſh paſſions of old age had reduced thee to a level with the generality of kings; what would then become of thy glory? What would become of thoſe praiſes which fame, and the immortal teſtimony of literature and the arts, have beſtowed upon thee? But let us hope that thy reign and thy life will not appear problematical in hiſtory. Let thine heart again be opened to thoſe noble and virtuous ſentiments that were the delight of thy younger days. Let the latter years of thy life be employed in promoting the felicity of thy people. Let ſucceeding generations experience the effects of that happineſs thou ſhalt beſtow upon the preſent. The power of Pruſſia is the work of thy genius; it has been formed, and it muſt be ſupported by thee. It muſt be adapted to the ſtate, the glory of which thou haſt raiſed.

Let thoſe numberleſs treaſures that are buried in thy coffers be again brought into circulation, and give new life to the ſtate: let thy private poſſeſſions, which a ſudden change of fortune may deprive thee of, be hereafter only ſupported upon the baſis of the national riches, which never can fail: let thy ſubjects, bending under the intolerable yoke of a ſevere and arbitrary government, find in thee the affections of a parent, inſtead of the vexations of an oppreſſor: let exorbitant taxes upon individuals, and upon articles of conſumption, no longer obſtruct the advancement of agriculture and induſtry: let the inhabitants of the country, recovered from a ſtate of ſlavery, and thoſe of the towns, becoming perfectly free, paſs their lives agreeably to their inclinations and reſpective powers.

Thus ſhalt thou give ſtability to the empire which thy brilliant talents have extended, and rendered illuſtrious; thus ſhall thy name be inſerted in the reſpectable, but ſmall, liſt of patriot kings.

Let thy virtues carry thee ſtill further, and induce thee to procure the bleſſing of tranquillity to the earth. Let the influence of thy mediation, and the power of thine arms, compel all turbulent and reſtleſs nations to accept of peace. The univerſe is the country of a great man; it is the ſtage ſuited to the diſplay of thy abilities: mayeſt thou become the benefactor of all mankind!

Such was the diſcourſe I addreſſed to thee in the midſt of that tranquillity in which thou didſt flatter thyſelf that thou ſhouldſt end thine honourable career: like the Eternal Being, if we may be allowed to ſay ſo, to whom ſongs of praiſe are addreſſed from all regions of the earth, when a great event made thee reſume thy thunder. A power, which never conſulted any thing but its own aggrandizement in its motives for making peace or war; without any regard to the conſtitution of the Germanic body, or to the treaties that guarantee it; without reſpect to the rights of nations and of families; and in contempt of the cuſtomary and general laws of inheritance; this power, I ſay, formed pretenſions, aſſembled troops, appropriated to itſelf, in imagination, the ſpoils of princes too feeble to reſiſt, and threatened the liberties of the empire. Thou haſt prevented theſe evils. The old lion hath ſhaken his mane; he hath iſſued roaring from the place of his retreat, and his young rival has ſhuddered. Till this inſtant, Frederick had ſhown himſelf powerful. The opportunity has offered of ſhowing himſelf juſt, and he hath ſeized it. Europe has reſounded with prayers for the ſucceſs of his exertions; for he was then neither an ambitious conqueror, nor a rapacious merchant, nor a political uſurper. He had been admired; he now ſhall be bleſſed. I had written at the foot of his ſtatue: THE MOST FORMIDABLE POWERS OF EUROPE WERE COMBINED

BOOK V. AGAINST HIM; AND THEY DISAPPEARED BEFORE HIM. I ſhall now engrave an inſcription leſs pompous, but more inſtructive and more noble. NATIONS, HE BROKE THE CHAINS THAT WERE PREPARING FOR YOU. PRINCES OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE, HE WILL NOT ALWAYS EXIST—LOOK TO YOURSELVES.

Settlement of the Spaniards in the Philippines. Deſcription of theſe iſlands.

No greatneſs, no proſperity can exiſt in a monarchy without the influence of the ſovereign; but it does not ſolely depend upon the monarch to do every thing that is calculated to procure the happineſs of his people. He ſometimes meets with powerful obſtacles in the prejudices, the character, and the diſpoſitions of his ſubjects. Theſe indeed may undoubtedly be corrected; but this is a revolution we often expect for a long time, and which has not yet taken place in the Philippines.

The Philippines, formerly known by the name of the Manillas, form an immenſe Archipelago to the Eaſt of Aſia. They extend from the ſixth to the twenty-fifth degree north, and have an unequal breadth, ſpread from forty to two hundred leagues. Among the number of them, which is prodigious, thirteen or fourteen are diſtinguiſhed more conſiderable than the reſt.

Theſe iſlands preſent to the obſerving eye, a terrible and majeſtic proſpect. They are covered with bazaltes, with lava, with ſcoriæ, with black glaſs, with melted iron, with gray and friable ſtones filled with the wrecks of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, with ſulphur kept in a ſtate of fuſion by the continual action of ſubterraneous fires, and with burning waters which communicate with hidden flames. All theſe great accidents of nature are the effect of extinguiſhed volcanos, of ſome that are ſtill burning, and of others that are forming in theſe deep cavities, where combuſtible materials are always in agitation. We may conjecture without preſumption, that theſe countries, which may be reckoned among the moſt ancient of the globe, are approaching nearer to their deſtruction than any others.

The aſhes, with which theſe immenſe furnaces cover the ſurface of a deep ſoil for ages paſt; the ſtirring up of the ground inceſſantly renewed by earthquakes; the heats that are common to all the countries ſituated under the torrid zone; the moiſture, which is habitually kept up in theſe regions by the proximity of the ocean, by the height of the mountains, and by foreſts as old as the world: ſuch are probably the cauſes of the almoſt incredible fertility of the Philippines. Moſt of the birds, quadrupeds, plants, fruits, and trees that are found in the reſt of Aſia, are alſo ſeen in this Archipelago, and almoſt every thing here is of a better quality. Some vegetables even are diſcovered here, which do not appear any where elſe. If an intelligent naturaliſt were to go over theſe iſlands with the freedom and the aſſiſtance neceſſary, he would certainly enrich the ſciences with a variety of curious, uſeful, and intereſting knowledge.

Unfortunately, the climate of the Philippines is not ſo agreeable as the ſoil is fertile. Although the ſea and land breezes may keep up, during ſix months, a greater degree of temperature than might be expected from their ſituation, yet throughout the reſt of the year, the ſky is all on fire with lightning, and the fields are deluged with continual rains. Nevertheleſs, the air is not unwholeſome. The conſtitution indeed of foreigners is rather weakened by a ſuperabundant perſpiration: but the natives of the country live to an advanced age, without being expoſed to any infirmities except ſuch as man is liable to every where elſe.

The centre of theſe mountainous iſlands is occupied by ſavages, who ſeem to be the oldeſt inhabitants. Whatever may be their origin, they are negroes, and have moſt of them woolly hair. They are not tall, but are ſtrong and nervous. Sometimes a whole family forms itſelf into a little community; but moſt frequently each individual lives with his female companion alone. They never quit their bows

BOOK V.

and arrows. Accuſtomed to the ſilence of the foreſts, they ſeem alarmed at the leaſt noiſe. Their life is entirely the ſame as that of beaſts. The fruits and roots they find in the woods are their only food; and, when they have exhauſted one ſpot, they go and inhabit another. All endeavours to reduce them to ſubjection have proved ineffectual, becauſe nothing is more difficult than to ſubdue a nation wandering among places that are inacceſſible.

The plains from which they have been driven, have been ſucceſſively inhabited by colonies from Malacca, Siam, Sumatra, Borneo, Macaſſar, the Moluccas, and Arabia. The manners, idiom, religion, and government of theſe ſtrangers, evidently diſtinguiſh their ſeveral origins.

The Spaniards and Portugueſe diſpute the poſſeſſion of the Philippines.

Magellan was the firſt European who diſcovered theſe iſlands. Upon ſome diſcontent, he left Portugal, his native country, and entered into the ſervice of the Emperor Charles V. and paſſing the ſtraits that now bear his name, he arrived at the Manillas in 1521; from whence, after his death, his lieutenants repaired to the Moluccas, diſcovered ten or eleven years before by the Portugueſe. This voyage would probably have been attended with remarkable conſequences, had they not been prevented by the combination we are going to mention.

In the fifteenth century, while the Portugueſe were beginning to make voyages to the Eaſt Indies, and endeavouring to monopolize the trade of ſpices, and of manufactures which had been in conſtant requeſt among civilized nations; the Spaniards, by the diſcovery of America, were ſecuring greater treaſures than imagination could form any conception of. Though both nations were purſuing their reſpective views of aggrandizement in far diſtant regions, they might probably interfere with each other; and their mutual antipathy would have made ſuch an event dangerous. To prevent this, the Pope fixed their reſpective claims in 1493, in conſequence of that univerſal and ridiculous power which the Roman pontiffs

had aſſumed for ſeveral centuries, and which the idolatrous ignorance of the two nations, equally ſuperſtitious, ſtill kept up, that they might plead the excuſe of religion for their avarice. He gave to Spain all the countries that ſhould be diſcovered to the weſt of a meridian taken a hundred leagues from the Azores, and to Portugal whatever land they might conquer to the eaſt of that meridian. The year following, the powers concerned agreed among themſelves, at Tordeſillas, to remove the line of ſeparation to the diſtance of three hundred and ſeventy leagues from the Cape de Verd iſlands. This, in the eyes of the moſt intelligent people, was a ſuperfluous precaution. But, at that period, men were not ſufficiently acquainted with the theory of the earth, to know, that, as the navigators of one crown advanced to the weſt, and thoſe of the other to the eaſt, they muſt, ſooner or later, meet in the ſame point. Magellan's expedition evinced this truth.

The court of Liſbon did not conceal the uneaſineſs they felt at this event. They were determined to run any riſk, rather than ſuffer a rival, already too much favoured by fortune, to come and diſpute with them the empire of the Aſiatic ſeas. However, before they ventured to contend with the only power whoſe naval ſtrength was then formidable, they thought it adviſable to try the method of negotiation; and ſucceeded better in it than they expected. Charles V. who was frequently in want of money to carry on his too immenſe and too frequent undertakings, gave up irrevocably, in 1529, for the ſum of 350,000 ducats, or 2,598,750 livres [108,181l. 15s.], all the pretenſions he might have upon the countries recognized under his name in the Indian ocean: he even extended the Portugueſe line of ſeparation to the Ladrone iſlands. This is at leaſt the account given by the Portugueſe hiſtorians; for the Caſtilian writers ſay, that ther monarch reſerved to himſelf the power of renewing the diſcuſſion of his rights, and of reſuming them if the deciſion ſhould be in his

BOOK V.

favour: but only after he had refunded the money he had received.

The treaty of Saragoſſa met with the ſame fate as other political conventions.

The Spaniards form ſettlements at the Philippines. Reaſons that have prevented the ſucceſs of them.

In 1564, Philip II. reſumed the project of conquering the Manillas. Spain was then too much weakened by her conqueſts in America, to think of founding, by force, a new empire at the extremity of the Eaſt Indies. The mild methods of perſuaſion were for the firſt time adopted in her plan of aggrandizement. She charged ſeveral miſſionaries with the office of acquiring new ſubjects for her, and they did not entirely fruſtrate her expectations.

The men upon the coaſts, who were formerly idolators or Mohammedans, and who were made ſubject to Spain by the Chriſtian religion, were not entirely ſavages, as thoſe of the inland parts. They had chiefs, laws, houſes, and ſome imperfect arts. Several of them had ſome knowledge of agriculture. The property of the fields they had ſown was confirmed to them; and the happineſs they enjoyed made others deſirous of acquiring poſſeſſions. The monks, commiſſioned to diſtribute them, reſerved for themſelves the moſt extenſive, beſt ſituated, and moſt fertile portions of this immenſe territory; and the government made a formal ceſſion of theſe lands to them.

Great things were expected from theſe arrangements, imperfect even as they were. Many cauſes have combined to prevent the ſucceſs of them.

In the firſt place, moſt of the miſſionaries, brought up in the ignorance and indolence of a cloiſtered life, have not ſpurred on the Indians under their direction to labour as much as they ought to have done. It may even be ſaid, that they have diverted them from it by employing them inceſſantly in religious ceremonies, meetings, and ſolemnities. A ſyſtem, as repugnant to every kind of rational worſhip, as to ſound policy, has left the lands diſtributed to the ſubjected people in a ſtate of annihilation. Even the

lands of their blind guides have been little or ill cultivated; and this, perhaps, becauſe the government diſtributes 525,000 livres [21,875l.] annually to theſe monks.

The conduct of the Spaniards has always encouraged this fatal inactivity. The propenſity to idleneſs which theſe proud men had brought with them from their country, was ſtill more confirmed by the permiſſion which the court granted them, of ſending every year to America a ſhip laden with the productions and manufactures of Aſia. The treaſures which were brought back by this immenſe veſſel, made them conſider the moſt creditable and leaſt laborious occupations as diſgraceful and inſupportable. Their indolence ſuggeſted no other reſource to keep up a voluptuous life. Accordingly, when the misfortunes of war ſuſpended for a year or two the fitting out of this galleon, moſt of theſe conquerors were plunged in the moſt dreadful miſery. They became beggars, thieves, or aſſaſſins. The troops were participators in theſe enormities, and the tribunals of juſtice were ineffectual againſt ſo many crimes.

The Chineſe naturally preſented themſelves to give to the arts, and to agriculture, that activity which the lazineſs and the pride of the Spaniards denied them. The navigators of this celebrated nation frequented from time immemorial the Manillas, to obtain the productions natural to theſe iſlands. They continued to reſort to them after they had ſubmitted to a foreign yoke. Their numbers increaſed ſtill more, when the riches of Mexico and Peru, which circulated there, gave room for more extenſive ſpeculations. A great number of artiſts, and a ſtill greater number of cultivators, who were too numerous in this flouriſhing empire, were ſoon brought there by their ſhips. Theſe laborious, economical, and intelligent men, offered to clear the lands, to eſtabliſh manufactures, and to ſet on foot every ſpecies of induſtry, upon condition that the property of ſome parts of an immenſe territory, which had no owner, ſhould be

BOOK V.

given to them, and that the tributes exacted from them ſhould be moderate. This was an infallible method of eſtabliſhing, at the extremity of Aſia, a flouriſhing colony, without loſs of men, and without any pecuniary ſacrifice. Unfortunately for the Philippines, the Spaniards have not been ſufficiently ſenſible of this truth; nevertheleſs, the little good that has been done in theſe iſlands has been the work of theſe Chineſe.

Preſent ſtate of the Philippines.

Spain has ſubmitted to its dominion in this Archipelago ſome parts of nine large iſlands. That of Luconia, which is the moſt conſiderable, is five-and-twenty leagues in length, and thirty or forty in breadth. The Spaniards land there at a great circular bay, formed by two capes, at the diſtance of two leagues from each other. In this ſhort ſpace, we meet with the ſmall iſland of Marivelles, which leaves two paſſages open; the eaſtern one is the narroweſt and the ſafeſt.

To the ſouth-eaſt of the bay ſtands the harbour of Cavite, which is in form of a horſe-ſhoe, and is defended by a ſmall fort, and a garriſon of three hundred men. Twelve ſhips may ride here in ſafety upon a ſlimy bottom. Here it is that the veſſels neceſſary for the ſervice of the colony are conſtructed.

In the ſame bay, at three leagues diſtance from Cavite, near the mouth of a navigable river, riſes the famous city of Manilla. L'Egaſe, who took it from the Indians in 1571, judged it a proper place to become the centre of the ſtate that was to be founded, and fixed the ſeat of government and commerce there. Gomes Peres de las Marignas encloſed it with walls in 1590, and built the citadel of St. James. The city has been ſince enlarged and embelliſhed. The river, which traverſes it, deſcends from a lake that is twenty leagues in circumference. It is formed by forty rivulets, upon each of which is ſettled a colony of Indian cultivators. It is from hence that the capital of the empire received its ſubſiſtence. Unfortunately

it is ſituated between two volcanos which communicate with one another, and the cavities of which, always in fermentation, ſeem to pave the way for its ruin.

According to the calculation of 1752, throughout the whole Archipelago, there are no more than one million three hundred and fifty thouſand Indians who have ſubmitted to the Spaniſh yoke. Moſt of them are Chriſtians; and from the age of ſixteen to fifty, they all pay a poll-tax of four reals, or two livres fourteen ſols [2s. 3d.]. They have been diſtributed in twenty-two provinces, of which the iſland of Luconia alone, though not entirely ſubdued, contains twelve.

The ſettlement is ſubject to a governor, whoſe office continues eight years, but who is ſubordinate to the viceroy of Mexico. He commands the army, diſpoſes of all civil and military employments, and may grant lands to the ſoldiers, and even erect them into fiefs. This power, though only balanced by the influence of the clergy, has been found ſo dangerous, that many expedients have been deviſed to check its exorbitancy. The moſt effectual of theſe expedients, is that, by which it is decreed, that the conduct of a governor ſhall be arraigned even after his death; and that, when a governor lives beyond the time of the expiration of his office, he ſhall not quit the place till his adminiſtration has been inquired into. Every individual is at liberty to complain; and, if he has ſuffered any wrong, he is to be indemnified at the coſt of the delinquent, who is likewiſe condemned to pay a fine to the ſovereign, for having brought an odium upon him. At the time this wiſe inſtitution was made, it was obſerved with ſuch rigour, that, when accuſations were of importance againſt the governor, he was impriſoned. Several died in confinement; and others were taken out, only with a deſign to inflict ſevere puniſhments upon them. By degrees this formidable mode of proceeding has come to nothing. The chief of the colony gives his ſucceſſor

BOOK V. enough to pay for his poſt; he having already received the ſame ſum from his predeceſſor.

This colluſion has brought on a ſettled ſyſtem of oppreſſion. Arbitrary taxes have been levied; the public revenue has been leſſened in paſſing through the hands that were appointed to collect it; a duty of ſeven per cent. which has been laid on all merchandiſe on its coming in, has made trade degenerate into ſmuggling; the farmer has been compelled to lay up his crops in the magazines of the government; and ſome governors have carried their tyranny to ſuch atrocious lengths, as to determine the quantity of corn that the fields were to produce, and to oblige the farmers to bring it in; and not only to wait for the payment as long a time as their oppreſſive maſters ſhould think proper, but alſo to receive it in whatever manner it could be given to them. For theſe two centuries paſt, ſome upright governors have attempted to put an end to theſe enormities; but their endeavours have proved ineffectual, becauſe the abuſes were too inveterate to yield to a tranſient and ſubordinate authority. Nothing leſs than the ſupreme power of the court of Madrid could have reſtrained this ſpirit of univerſal rapaciouſneſs; but this power has never exerted itſelf for ſuch a purpoſe. This ſhameful neglect is the true cauſe why the Philippine iſlands have never been in the leaſt improved. Their name would ſcarcely be known, were it not for their connections with Mexico.

Thoſe connections, which have ſubſiſted ever ſince the firſt ſettlement of the Spaniards in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, conſiſt only in conveying the merchandiſe of India to America by the South Sea. None of the articles that compoſe theſe rich cargoes are the produce either of the ſoil or of the induſtry of thoſe iſlands. Their cinnamon is brought from Batavia. The Chineſe bring them ſilks; and the Engliſh or the French ſupply them with white linens and printed callicoes from Bengal and Coromandel. From what-

ever port the goods have been brought, they muſt come in before the departure of the galeons. If they ſhould arrive later, they could not be diſpoſed of, or muſt be ſold at a loſs to merchants, who are obliged to ſhut them up in warehouſes, till they are forgotten. The payments are made in cochineal and Mexican piaſtres, and partly in cowries, which are not current in Africa, but will paſs every where on the banks of the Ganges.

Dangers to which the Philippines are expoſed.

A ſettlement, which has not a more ſolid foundation, may perhaps be eaſily overthrown. We do not therefore heſitate to foretel, that the Philippines will one day, ſooner or later, be taken from its preſent poſſeſſors. A few reflections will be ſufficient to give theſe conjectures the conviction of evidence.

Some enlightened navigators have informed us, that the Spaniſh poſſeſſions, which in theſe diſtant regions had always been in a languid ſtate, are become perceptibly more ſo ſince the year 1768, when the Jeſuits were baniſhed from them. Beſides that the immenſe domains of theſe miſſionaries are entirely fallen off from the fertility to which they had brought them; the lands of the Indians likewiſe whom they governed, which were the only ones tolerably cultivated, and where ſome uſeful arts were to be found, have ſunk again into that ſtate of annihilation from whence they had been raiſed. It has even happened that theſe iſlanders, the leaſt indolent perſons of the colony, have been expoſed to the ſame odium, well or ill founded, which purſued their guides.

A greater calamity affected this Archipelago the next year. All the Chineſe, without exception, were baniſhed from it; and this proſcription occaſioned a breach, which, in all probability, will be cloſed. Theſe people, whoſe ruling paſſion is avarice, came every year to the Philippines with five-and-twenty or thirty ſmall veſſels, and gave encouragement to ſome labours to which they alone could fix a price. Theſe were not the only advantages. A number of their countrymen, ſettled in theſe iſlands, gave an

BOOK V. habitual example of a life conſtantly ſpent in employment. Several of them even viſited the Indian colonies, and, by making them timely and cautious advances, inſpired them with the deſire, at the ſame time that they furniſhed them with the means, of improving their ſituation. It is to be regretted, that theſe means of proſperity have been annihilated, by the impoſſibility which the Spaniards perhaps experienced, of retaining a people ſo prone to inſurrections.

Before theſe deſtructive events, the people manifeſted a determined averſion for their tyrants. Oppreſſion had often made them break through the bounds of obedience; and without the intervention of their paſtors, the unavailing efforts of degenerate troops would never have brought them again into ſubjection. Since the expulſion of theſe miſſionaries, who had moſt influence over them, has deprived the Spaniſh government of its greateſt ſtrength, the Indians, who are leſs reſtrained, muſt be deſirous of recovering their independence, and may have, perhaps, ſufficient energy to re-aſſume their primitive rights.

To theſe dangers, which may be called domeſtic, foreign perils are added, which are ſtill more alarming. Some ſavages, iſſuing from the Malay iſlands, make habitual incurſions on the coaſt of the Philippines, carrying deſtruction along with them, and taking off thouſands of the Chriſtians, whom they reduce to ſlavery. This piracy is ſeldom puniſhed; becauſe the Spaniards, divided into four factions, known by the name of Caſtilians, Galicians, Mountaineers, and Biſcayans, are entirely taken up with the hatred that torments them, and behold, with an indifferent eye, whatever is foreign to their diſputes. The Malays have always been more and more emboldened by theſe diviſions. Already have they driven the common enemy from ſeveral iſlands. They are every day encroaching upon them, and will ſoon become maſters of the poſſeſſion, unleſs they be prevented by ſome European nation, more powerful or

more active than the one they now have to contend with.

In 1762, the Engliſh got poſſeſſion of the Philippines with more facility than they had expected. Although they were deprived of them by treaty, they may perhaps be ſtill ambitious of ſeizing upon them again, when an opportunity ſhall offer. Other nations may equally aſpire to this conqueſt, in order to make it the centre of their empire in the ſeas and upon the continent of India. It is therefore probable that the Spaniards will be driven from the Philippines.

Some politicians think that this would not be an evil; an opinion that has long been entertained. The Philippines had but juſt opened a communication with America, when the Spaniards thought of giving them up, as being prejudicial to the intereſt of the mother-country. Philip II. and his ſucceſſors conſtantly rejected that propoſal, which was often renewed. The city of Seville in 1731, and that of Cadiz in 1733, entertained more rational notions. Both theſe cities imagined, and it is rather ſurpriſing that the idea did not occur ſooner, that it would be advantageous to the Spaniards to have a direct concern with the trade of Aſia, and that the poſſeſſions they had in thoſe parts ſhould be made the centre of their traffic. In vain was it urged, that as India affords ſilks and cottons ſuperior to thoſe of Europe, both in workmanſhip and colouring, and at a much cheaper price, the national manufactures could not ſupport the competition, but would infallibly be ruined. This objection might have its weight with regard to ſome nations; but appeared altogether frivolous, conſidering the ſituation of Spain.

Advantages that might be made of the Philippines.

The Spaniards, indeed, uſe none but foreign ſtuffs and linen, either for wearing apparel or furniture. Thoſe continual demands muſt neceſſarily increaſe the induſtry, the wealth, the population, and ſtrength of their neighbours, who avail themſelves of theſe advantages to keep that nation which ſupplies them

BOOK V. in a ſtate of dependence. They would certainly act with more wiſdom and dignity, were they to uſe the Indian manufactures. They would be preferable, both in point of economy and elegance, and would leſſen that competition which muſt, in the end, prove fatal to Spain.

The inconveniences which uſually attend new undertakings are here previouſly obviated. The iſlands which Spain poſſeſſes lie between Japan, China, Cochinchina, Siam, Borneo, Celebes, and the Moluccas, and are favourably ſituated for forming connections with thoſe ſeveral kingdoms. Their diſtance from Malabar, Coromandel, and Bengal, would not prevent them from protecting effectually any factories it might be thought advantageous to eſtabliſh on theſe induſtrious coaſts. They would, moreover, be defended by immenſe ſeas from the ravages which ſo often affect the continent, and would be eaſily preſerved from the temptation of interfering in the conteſts which prevail there.

This diſtance, however, would not prevent the Archipelago from being ſure of ſubſiſtence. No country in Aſia abounds more in fruits, ſago, cocoa trees, and eſculent plants of all kinds. Rice, which in the greater part of India muſt be watered by dint of labour twice a day, till its grain is well formed, is more eaſily cultivated in the Philippines. When it is ſown on the borders of rivers, or in plains which may be covered with water at pleaſure, it yields two plentiful crops in a year, without requiring any attention, till the time of gathering it.

All the grains of Europe thrive in theſe iſlands. They would furniſh a ſufficiency of them for the ſailors, however numerous they might be, if the negligence and tyranny of the government had not condemned moſt of the lands to a ſhameful ſterility.

The number of cattle on theſe iſlands is a matter of aſtoniſhment to all voyagers. Every religious community has meadows from five-and-twenty to thirty leagues in extent, covered with forty or fifty thou-

ſand oxen. Although they are not watched, they ſeldom get beyond the rivers and mountains which are the boundaries of theſe poſſeſſions. Thoſe which happen to go aſtray, are eaſily known again, by the mark of the different orders, which is impreſſed on them with a hot iron, and they are always faithfully reſtored to their proper owners. Since the invaſion of the Engliſh, and the ravages that were the conſequence of it, the number of horned cattle is leſſened; but it is ſtill very conſiderable.

Before the year 1744, none of our vegetables grew on the fertile ſoil of the Philippines. At this period, Mahé de Villebague carried ſome ſeeds there. All theſe uſeful plants had ſucceeded, when eight months after, the cultivator, who was called away elſewhere by his commercial concerns, left his garden to another Frenchman ſettled in theſe iſlands. The Spaniards, who had not without jealouſy ſeen a foreigner ſhow them what they ought to have done two centuries before, roſe up with ſo much violence againſt his ſucceſſor, that in order to reſtore tranquillity, the adminiſtration thought themſelves obliged to order theſe wholeſome roots to be pulled up. Fortunately, the Chineſe, who are inceſſantly intent upon every thing that can contribute to the improvement of their fortune, had privately taken care of them. By degrees the people grew reconciled to an innovation of ſo uſeful a kind; and it is at preſent one of the chief reſources of the colony.

Such is then one of the effects of national hatred, that it inclines the natives rather to deprive themſelves of a benefit, than to owe it to ſtrangers; and particularly to the French, who of all other nations are the moſt deteſted, notwithſtanding the connection ſubſiſting between the two governments. From whence can this antipathy ariſe?

If we travel much, we ſhall not find any people ſo mild, ſo affable, ſo frank, ſo polite, ſo lively, ſo gallant as the French. They are ſometimes too much ſo; but is this ſo great a fault? They are warmly

BOOK V. and quickly interested, and sometimes for trifling matters, while objects of more importance either affect them little, or only excite their ridicule. This is their favourite weapon, and the most formidable for others, as well as for themselves. They pass rapidly from pleasure to pain, and from pain to pleasure. A Frenchman would find himself fatigued with a continuation of the same happiness; he scarce ever experiences any deep sensations. He becomes infatuated with any thing; but he is neither whimsical, nor impatient, nor enthusiastic. He cares very little for religion, but he respects the priesthood, without having either esteem or reverence for it. He never troubles himself about affairs of state, unless it be to write his ballad or his epigram upon the ministry. This levity is the origin of a species of equality, of which there are no traces any where else. It sometimes puts a man of the lowest rank, who has wit, upon a level with a nobleman. The French are, in some sort, a people of women: for it is among the women particularly, that in the midst of inconsistency, folly, and caprice, we discern some great emotion that surprises us, we hear some word that delights us, and we perceive some act of strength and sublimity. The French are endowed with exquisite sensibility, and with a very refined taste; this is consistent with the sentiment of honour, the gleam of which diffuses itself over all ranks, and upon every object. The French are brave. They are rather indiscreet than open; more libertine than voluptuous. That social disposition, which leads them to assemble in numerous companies, and to visit several of these in a day, makes every thing grow old with them in an instant; writings, politics, fashions, vices and virtues. Every week has its hero, in good as well as bad actions. France is the country where it is most easy for a man to get himself talked of, and where it is most difficult for him to be talked of for any time. A Frenchman loves talents of all kinds; and they are supported in his country less by the rewards of

government than by popular eſtimation. He honours genius. He is too ready in growing familiar; which is an inconvenience to himſelf, and to all perſons who wiſh to conciliate reſpect. The Frenchman in your company is every thing you would wiſh him to be, but you muſt be upon your guard with him; for he improves upon every thing that others invent. Such are the features of which he carries the impreſſion in a manner more or leſs marked, into thoſe countries which he viſits, rather to gratify his curioſity, than to add to his knowledge. Accordingly, he brings back with him nothing more than pretenſions. He is better calculated for converſation than for friendſhip. He has a numerous ſet of acquaintance, and yet he often dies in ſolitude. He is the being upon the face of the earth, who has moſt enjoyments, with the feweſt regrets. As he does not attach himſelf ſtrongly to any thing, he has ſoon forgotten what he had loſt. He poſſeſſes, in a ſuperior degree, the art of ſubſtitution, and is aſſiſted in it by every thing about him. If we except that diſguſting partiality he has for his own country, and which it is not in his power to conceal, the young Frenchman, cheerful, light, agreeable, and trifling, appears to me the moſt amiable man of his nation; and the Frenchman, matured by age, well-informed, and prudent, who has preſerved all the agreeable manners of his youth, is the moſt amiable and the moſt eſtimable man of all countries.

Notwithſtanding this, moſt people have an averſion to the French: but they are particularly intolerable to the Spaniards, to thoſe among them eſpecially who have not contraſted the vices, virtues, character, and manners peculiar to their country, with others of a totally oppoſite nature. This averſion ſeems even to have become more confirmed ſince the beginning of the preſent century. We ſhould be tempted to ſuſpect, that France is conſidered by the nation to which ſhe has given a king, with the ſame contempt, as a man of quality, who has married below his rank, ſhows for his wife's family. If this be the caſe, the

BOOK V. prejudice will never be overcome, till the Bourbons ſhall have been naturalized in Spain, by a long ſucceſſion of flouriſhing reigns.

Let us now return to the Philippines.

Independent of what ſerves for the ſubſiſtence of the natives of the country, and of the conquerors, theſe iſlands afford a number of objects, fit for the trade carried on from one part of India to another; ſuch as tobacco, rice, canes, wax, oils, cowries, ebony, dried fiſh, raſins, Japan wood: but more eſpecially thoſe birds neſts, dried ſtags pizzles, and ſea-dogs, which are ſo eagerly ſought after by all the people of Aſia, and particularly by the Chineſe.

Hitherto, ſugar has been only cultivated for the conſumption of the colony. The apprehenſion of having its price a little raiſed, has occaſioned the exportation of it to be prohibited, with heavy penalties. This erroneous ſyſtem cannot laſt. Permiſſion will ſoon be obtained to furniſh the greateſt part of Aſia with a production, for which the ſoil of the Philippines is extremely favourable. Iron will be an additional object of the trade of theſe iſlands.

This metal abounds, and is of ſuperior quality, throughout the whole Archipelago. Nevertheleſs, none of the mines had yet been opened, till about the year 1768, when Simon de Auda fortunately thought of eſtabliſhing forges. The ſucceſs would have been more certain, if this active governor had not begun too many undertakings at once; if his projects had been more maturely conſidered; and if he had employed, to bring them to perfection, methods more conformable to the principles of humanity and juſtice.

The excellent copper which is diſperſed over ſeveral of the Philippine iſlands, is not leſs worthy of the attention of government. This metal is employed in India for the veſſels uſed in public worſhip, for ordinary utenſils, for coins, which muſt be inceſſantly renewed, becauſe the people are as eager to bury them, as rich men are to conceal more precious trea-

ſures under ground. The Dutch draw from Japan what is neceſſary to ſupply all theſe wants. They will neceſſarily loſe this branch of their trade, if the Spaniards, awakened from their lethargy, ſhould venture to diſpute it with them.

The Philippines have, above the other European colonies, the advantage of poſſeſſing gold. The Indians find ſome particles of it in the ſand and ſlime of the rivers, which carry it along with their ſtreams. The quantity they collect may amount to five or ſix hundred thouſand livres [from 20,833l. 6s. 8d. to 25,000l.] per annum. They deliver it in private to ſome foreign navigators, who in return ſupply them with merchandiſe. Formerly it was ſent into America, for Cavendiſh found to the value of 658,800 livres [27,450l.] of it, upon the galeon that was ſailing towards Mexico. If Spain, foregoing its ancient maxims, ſhould encourage this ſpecies of induſtry, by leaving to thoſe who ſhould devote themſelves to it the free uſe of the riches it would produce, would not that kingdom ſecure to itſelf an additional reſource for trading to advantage in the Indian ſeas?

It would not be reduced to the neceſſity of deſiring that foreign navigators ſhould come in queſt of the productions of theſe iſlands. As the Philippines furniſh plenty of materials for a well-eſtabliſhed navy, its ſubjects might frequent all the markets, and add the benefit of freighting to their other advantages.

This activity would pave the way for the communication between this and the mother-country. In the preſent confuſed ſtate of the Philippines, it is not eaſy to foreſee what they may one day furniſh to Spain. It now procures from thence, alum, buffaloes hides, caſſia, woods for dying, ſaltpetre, tortoiſe-ſhell, and mother-of-pearl, which the Chineſe have hitherto bought up, in order to ſell it again to the Europeans at Canton, for three times the price they had given for it; cacao, which though brought from Mexico has not degenerated; and indigo, which the bounty of nature produces ſpontaneouſly. An enlightened man

BOOK V. was desirous of attempting, in 1750, to give this rich plant every improvement it might receive from cultivation. This novelty met with a general and violent opposition. The marquis d'Obando, who was governor at that period, was obliged to take this citizen under his protection, and assigned him an enclosed territory, where he might carry on his operations with safety. The experiments were all extremely successful; and since this event, the cultivation of this precious dye has been attended to, though not with sufficient industry.

If an indolence peculiar to the Spaniards had not impeded their progress in every thing, they would have naturalized the spices, two centuries ago, upon this territory, so contiguous to the Moluccas. Perhaps they might have shared with the Dutch this source of wealth. It will be committing a new fault, to defer any longer an experiment, the greatest inconvenience of which is, that of its being useless.

This government might also be prompted, by the excellent quality of the cotton cultivated in the Philippines, to establish there, with the assistance of the inhabitants of the continent, beautiful and numerous manufactures. While they were waiting for the success, which, in new undertakings, however well planned, is always slow, the Spaniards would purchase in foreign markets the silks, calicoes, and other articles of the produce of Asia, suitable to their country, and would obtain them at a lower price than their competitors. All the nations in Europe employ the silver they get from America to trade with in India. Before this precious metal can reach the place of its destination, it must have paid considerable duties, taken a prodigious compass, and have been exposed to great risks; whereas the Spaniards, by sending it directly from America to the Philippines, would save duties, time, and insurance; so that while they furnished the same sum as the rival nations, they would in reality make their purchases at a cheaper rate.

If the simple plan we have traced out should ever

be carried into execution, the Spaniards, who are settled in Asia, would necessarily, and for ever emerge from that indolent state of dissolution, in which they have languished for two centuries. The subdued people would bless a government that was become equitable; and those who are still contending for their independence, would submit, in multitudes, to the controul of wise laws. The neighbouring nations, whom pride or injustice have driven from the ports frequented by their forefathers, would again direct their ships into harbours, where industry and harmony were united. The European merchants, who are oppressed with the fetters of monopoly upon the Indian seas, would carry their activity, their knowledge, and their stock, into an asylum of happiness and liberty. The colony, the revenues of which amount to 2,728,000 livres [113,666l. 13s. 4d.], would no longer cost Spain annually 527,500 livres [21,979l. 3s. 4d.]; and would become one of the finest settlements in the world.

This revolution can never be effected by an exclusive Company. For these two centuries past, since the Europeans have frequented the seas of Asia, they have never been animated by a truly laudable spirit. In vain have society, morality, and politics, been improved amongst us; those distant countries have only been witnesses of our rapaciousness, our restlessness, and our tyranny. The mischief we have done to other parts of the world has sometimes been compensated by the knowledge we have imparted, and the wise institutions we have established: but the Indians have still continued under their former darkness and despotism; and we have taken no pains to rescue them from those dreadful calamities. Had the several governments directed the steps of their free traders, it is probable that the love of glory would have been united to a passion for riches, and that some nations would have made attempts capable of rendering their names illustrious. Such noble and disinterested intentions could never be pursued by any company of

BOOK V.

merchants; who, being confined by the narrow views of present profit, have never employed their thoughts about the happiness of the people with whom they traded; a circumstance which, being naturally expected, hath never been imputed to them as a crime.

How much would it redound to the honour of Spain, to show a sensibility for the interests of mankind, and to endeavour to promote them! That nation now begins to shake off the fetters of prejudice, which have kept it in a state of infancy, notwithstanding its natural strength. Its subjects are not yet degraded and corrupted by the contagion of riches, from which they have been happily preserved by their own indolence, and by the rapaciousness of their government. These people must necessarily be inclined to what is good; they are capable of knowing it, and no doubt would practise it, having all the means in their power from the possessions their conquests have given them in the richest countries of the universe. Their ships, sailing from their several ports, might either meet at the Canary islands, or separately proceed to their several destinations, and thus be the means of procuring happiness to the remotest parts of Asia. They might return from India by the Cape of Good Hope; but would go thither by the South Sea, where the sale of their cargoes would greatly increase their capitals. This advantage would secure to them a superiority over their competitors, who sail with false bills of lading, seldom carrying any thing but silver. They would meet with a fresh supply of provisions up the river Plata, if they should be in want of them. Those who were able to wait longer, would only put into Chili, or even proceed to the island of Juan Fernandez.

This delightful island, which takes its name from a Spaniard to whom it had been given, and who took a dislike to it after he had lived there some considerable time, is situated at 110 leagues distance from the continent of Chili. Its greatest length is but about five leagues, and its breadth not quite two.

In this ſmall ſpot, where the land is very mountainous and irregular, there is a clear ſky, pure air, excellent water, and every vegetable that is deemed a ſpecific againſt the ſcurvy. It has appeared from experience, that all ſorts of European and American corn, fruit, and quadrupeds, will ſucceed there extremely well. The coaſts abound with fiſh; and, beſide all theſe advantages, there is alſo a good harbour, where ſhips are ſheltered from every wind but the north, and even that never blows ſo ſtrongly as to be productive of any danger.

Theſe conveniences have induced all the pirates who have infeſted the coaſts of Peru, to put in at Juan Fernandez. Anſon, who went to the South Seas with more important projects, found there a comfortable and ſafe aſylum. The Spaniards, at length convinced that the precaution they had taken to deſtroy the cattle they had placed there was inſufficient to keep off their enemies, took the reſolution, in 1750, to people it. Unfortunately, the new colony was placed on too low a ſpot, and of the hundred and ſeventy-one perſons of every age and ſex who compoſed it, five-and-thirty were ſwallowed up, ſix years after, by the ſurges of the ocean, which exceeded its bounds. Thoſe who had eſcaped the waves, were fixed upon an eminence which commands the harbour; and for their ſecurity, a ſmall fortification has been raiſed, defended by a garriſon of ſixty-ſix men. It now became neceſſary to think of ſupplying their wants. All the ſhips employed in trading between Peru and Chili were at firſt obliged to ſtop at Juan Fernandez. This tyrannical compulſion could not be laſting; and the government at length reſolved, purpoſely, to ſend two ſhips there every year.

This poſt will become a uſeful ſettlement, if the court of Madrid will but attend to her own intereſt. It is needleſs to purſue this ſubject any further. The plan, which we have done nothing more than ſuggeſt, would evidently tend to promote the trade, the navigation, and the greatneſs of Spain. The con-

BOOK V.

nections that Ruſſia keeps up with China by land, can never acquire the ſame degree of importance.

General idea of Tartary.

Between theſe two empires, the greatneſs of which aſtoniſhes the imagination, there is an immenſe ſpace, known in the earlieſt times by the name of Scythia, and ſince by that of Tartary. This region, taken in its full extent, is bounded on the weſt by the Caſpian ſea and Perſia; on the ſouth by Perſia, Indoſtan, the kingdoms of Arracan and Ava, China, and Corea; on the eaſt by the Eaſtern ocean; and on the north by the Frozen ocean. One part of theſe vaſt deſerts is ſubject to the Chineſe empire; another is under the dominion of Ruſſia; the third is independent, and is called Kharifm, and Greater and Leſs Bucharia.

The inhabitants of theſe celebrated regions have always lived by hunting and fiſhing, and upon the milk of their flocks; and have ever had an equal averſion for living in cities, for a ſedentary life, and for the toils of agriculture. Their origin and their cuſtoms, ſo far as we are acquainted with them, are equally ancient, for the former could never be traced on account of their ſequeſtered and wandering way of life. They have lived in the ſame manner as their forefathers did; and, if we look back to the remoteſt antiquity, we ſhall find a very ſtriking reſemblance between the men of the earlieſt ages, and the Tartars of the preſent time.

Theſe people have in general been followers of the great Lama, who reſides at Putali, a town ſituated in a diſtrict, which partly belongs to Tartary, and partly to India. This extenſive region, where mountains riſe above one another, is called Boutan by the inhabitants of Indoſtan, Tangut by the Tartars, Tſan-li by the Chineſe, Laſſa by the Indians beyond the Ganges, and Thibet by the Europeans.

Their religion appears, from monuments of undoubted authority, to be of above three thouſand years ſtanding, and is founded on the exiſtence of a Supreme Being, and the ſublimeſt principles of morality.

It has been generally imagined, that the followers of the Lama believe him to be immortal; that, in order to maintain the deception, this divinity never appears but to a few favourites; that, when he receives the adoration of the people, it is always in a kind of tabernacle, where a dim light ſhows rather a faint repreſentation than an exact reſemblance of that living god; that, when he dies, another prieſt is ſubſtituted in his ſtead, as nearly of the ſame ſize and figure as poſſible; and that by means of theſe precautions the deluſion is kept up, even on the very ſpot where the farce is acted; and much more, without doubt, in the minds of believers who are further removed from it.

A ſagacious philoſopher has lately deſtroyed this prejudice. It is true, the great Lamas ſeldom ſhow themſelves, the better to maintain that veneration they have inſpired for their perſon and their myſteries; but they give audience to ambaſſadors, and admit princes who come to viſit them. But if their perſon be ſeldom to be ſeen, except on ſome important occaſions, or on great feſtivals, their picture is always in full view, being hung up over the doors of the temple at Putali.

The circumſtance that has given riſe to the fable of the immortality of the Lamas, is, that it is a tenet of their faith, that the holy ſpirit, which has animated one of theſe pontiffs, immediately upon his death paſſes into the body of him who is duly elected to ſucceed him. This tranſmigration of the divine ſpirit is perfectly conſonant to the doctrine of the metempſychoſis, which has always been the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem in thoſe parts.

The religion of Lama made conſiderable progreſs in early times. It was adopted in a large part of the globe. It is profeſſed all over Thibet and Mongalia; is almoſt univerſal in Greater and Leſs Bucharia, and ſeveral provinces of Tartary; and has ſome followers in the kingdom of Caſſimere in India, and in China.

BOOK V.

This is the only form of worſhip that can boaſt of ſuch remote antiquity, without any mixture of other ſyſtems. The religion of the Chineſe has been frequently adulterated by the introduction of foreign deities and ſuperſtitions, which have been adapted to the taſte of the lower claſs of people. The Jews have ſeen an end of their hierarchy, and their temple has been demoliſhed. Alexander and Mohammed uſed their utmoſt endeavours to extinguiſh the ſacred fire of the Gaurs. Tamerlane and the Moguls have in a great meaſure diminiſhed the worſhippers of the god Brama in India. But neither time, fortune, nor men, have ever been able to ſhake the divine power of the great Lama.

This is an effect to be reſerved to the improvement of the human mind. If the Tartars be enlightened, they will ſoon examine into the nature of their creed; they will diſpute, and take up arms againſt each other: but ſuperſtition will ariſe half extinct out of the ſtreams of blood which ſhe has ſhed. In order not to loſe all his influence, the prieſt will give up thoſe points of his ſyſtem which are evidently incompatible with common ſenſe; and he will defend the reſt againſt the attacks of infidels. This revolution will however be more ſlowly brought about, than in thoſe empires which have not a well-regulated eccleſiaſtical hierarchy, and where there is not a ſupreme head, whoſe office it is to ſupport the doctrines in their primitive ſtate. The Lamas themſelves confeſs that they are no gods; but they pretend to repreſent the divinity, and to have received a power from heaven to decide ultimately on whatever relates to public worſhip. Their theocracy extends as fully to temporal as to ſpiritual matters; but all civil matters, looked upon as profane by them, they conſider as inconſiſtent with their dignity, and therefore commit the care of government to perſons whom they judge to be worthy of their confidence. This circumſtance has ſucceſſively occaſioned the loſs of ſeveral provinces of their vaſt dominions, which have

fallen a prey to their governors. The great Lama, who formerly was abſolute maſter of all Thibet, now poſſeſſes but a ſmall part of it.

The religious opinions of the Tartars have never enervated their valour. Hardened by the froſts of the North, and by the fatigues of a wandering life; inceſſantly under arms, and perpetually engaged in battles, theſe people have never ceaſed being warlike. An ardent, wild, and reſtleſs diſpoſition, has always diſguſted them of their poor and uncultivated deſerts. Ambition has always attracted their avidity towards the countries of Aſia, celebrated for their opulence. People whom the arts and a ſoft climate have rendered effeminate, could not ſupport the attacks of theſe hardy and ferocious men. The habit of going to war without pay and without magazines, has carried their paſſion for plunder to the moſt inordinate exceſs: and as they were incapable of ſecuring their conqueſts by equitable laws and a ſtrict policy, they have founded their power in all parts on terror and deſtruction.

It was to check the inroads of theſe robbers into China, that, three hundred years before the Chriſtain era, that famous wall was built, which extends from the river Hoambo to the ſea of Kamtſchatka; which has a terrace running all along the top of it, and is flanked in different parts with large towers, after the ancient manner of fortifying. Such a monument ſhows that there muſt have been at that time a prodigious population in the empire: but at the ſame time it ſeems to indicate that there was a want of proweſs and military ſkill. If the Chineſe had been men of courage, they would themſelves have attacked the roving tribes, or kept them in awe by well-diſciplined armies; if they had been ſkilled in the art of war, they would have known that lines five hundred leagues in length, could not be defended in every part, and that, if they were broken but in one place, all the reſt of the fortification would become uſeleſs.

BOOK V.

Accordingly, the inroads of the Tartars continued till the thirteenth century. At that period, the empire was conquered by thoſe barbarians, under the command of Gingis Khan. This foreign power was not deſtroyed till after eighty-nine years, when it fell into the hands of an indolent prince, who was governed by women, and was a ſlave to his miniſters.

When the Tartars were expelled from the conqueſts they had made, they did not adopt the laws and government of China. When they repaſſed the great wall, they relapſed into barbariſm, and lived in their deſerts in as uncivilized a ſtate as they had done before. They united, however, with the few who had continued in their roving way of life, and formed ſeveral hordes, which inſenſibly became populous, and in proceſs of time incorporated into that of the Manchews. Their union inſpired them again with the project of invading China, which was torn with domeſtic diſſenſions.

The diſcontented parties were then ſo numerous, that they had no leſs than eight different armies, under the command of as many chiefs. In this confuſion the Tartars, who had long ravaged the northern provinces of the empire, ſeized upon the capital in 1644, and ſoon after upon the whole kingdom.

This invaſion did not ſeem ſo much to ſubdue China, as to add to its extent, by the acceſſion of a great part of Tartary. Soon after this, China was further enlarged by the ſubmiſſion of the Mogul Tartars, celebrated for having founded moſt of the thrones in Aſia, and particularly that of Indoſtan.

This extraordinary revolution was ſcarce completed, when the empire was threatened with a new enemy, that might prove a formidable one.

Contentions of the Ruſſians and Chineſe in Tartary.

The Ruſſians, who, towards the latter end of the ſixteenth century, had conquered the uncultivated plains of Siberia, had penetrated through a number of deſerts to the river Amour, which led them to the Eaſtern Sea, and as far as Selenga, which brought

them on the confines of China, a country highly extolled for its riches.

The Chinese were apprehensive that the incursions of the Russians might in time give them some disturbance; and they erected some forts to restrain this neighbouring power, whose ambition began to excite their jealousy. Sharp contests then arose between the two nations concerning their boundaries. Skirmishes were frequent between the parties engaged in the pursuits of the chase, and an open war was daily expected. Very fortunately the plenipotentiaries of the two courts found means to bring about a reconciliation in 1689; the limits were fixed at the river Kerbechi, near theplace of negotiation, three hundred leagues from the great wall. This was the first treaty the Chinese had ever been concerned in since the foundation of their empire, and it brought on a new arrangement. They granted the Russians the liberty of sending a caravan every year to Pekin, an indulgence which had always been denied to foreigners with the utmost precaution. It was easily perceived that the Tartars, though they conformed to the manners and government of the Chinese, did not adopt their political maxims.

The Russians obtain leave to send a caravan to China; and make other openings for carrying on the trade to that kingdom.

This liberty granted to the Russians did not inspire them with moderation. They persisted in their usurpations, and built, thirty leagues beyond the stipulated limits, a city, which they called Albassinskoi or Jasca. The Chinese, having in vain complained of this encroachment, at last determined to avenge themselves in 1715. As the Czar was engaged in a war on the Baltic, and could not spare troops to defend the extremities of Tartary, the place was taken after a siege of three years.

The court of Petersburgh was prudent enough not to give way to a fruitless resentment. They sent a minister to Pekin in 1719, with instructions to renew the trade that had been lost amidst the late disturbances. The negotiation succeeded; but the cara-

BOOK V. van of 1721 not being conducted with more caution than the former, it was agreed, that for the future no transactions ſhould be carried on between the two nations except upon the frontiers.

Before this new arrangement, a caravan went every year from Peterſburgh, traverſed immenſe deſerts, and was met on the frontiers of China by ſome hundreds of ſoldiers, who eſcorted it to the capital of the empire. There, all who belonged to it were ſhut up in a caravanſera, to wait till the merchants ſhould offer them the refuſe of their warehouſes. The traffic being thus completed, the caravan returned to Ruſſia, and arrived at Peterſburgh three years after it had ſet out from thence.

In the ordinary courſe of things, the indifferent merchandiſe brought by the caravan would have been of very little value; but as this trade was carried on for the court, and that the goods were always ſold under the immediate inſpection of the ſovereign, commodities of the worſt kind acquired a value. The admiſſion to this kind of fair was a privilege which the monarch ſeldom granted but to his favourites. All were deſirous of approving themſelves worthy of this diſtinction, and the way to ſucceed was by overbidding each other without diſcretion, as each was ambitious that his name ſhould appear upon the liſt of the buyers. Notwithſtanding this ſhameful emulation, what was put up to ſale was ſo trifling, that the produce, deducting the conſumption of the court, never amounted to 100,000 crowns [12,500l.].

Since the caravans have been diſcontinued, two large magazines have been eſtabliſhed at Kiatcha, one Ruſſian, and the other Chineſe, where all the articles, intended for exchange, are depoſited. Commiſſaries appointed by the two nations ſuperintend this trade, in which ſpecie is very ſeldom uſed. If the Ruſſians, who never give any, are obliged ſometimes to receive gold, they are compelled to cede it to the crown upon terms which indemnify it for the taxes it would have levied on the merchandiſe.

The moſt conſiderable of the articles which the Chineſe bring to this ſtaple, is green tea, of an infinitely ſuperior quality to that which Europe receives acroſs the immenſe tract of ſea. Accordingly the Ruſſians are obliged to pay for it as much as twenty livres [16s. 8d.] per pound; although they ſeldom ſell it again for more than fifteen or ſixteen [from 12s. 6d. to 13s. 4d.]. To indemnify them for this loſs, they never fail to raiſe the price of their furs: but this artifice turns out leſs to their advantage than to that of the government, which receives a tax of five-and-twenty per cent. upon every thing that is bought or ſold. The cuſtoms at Kiatcha ſometimes return to the ſtate as far as two millions of livres [83,333l. 6s. 8d.]; in that caſe the trade of Ruſſia with China muſt amount to ſix millions [250,000l.].

It was not ſo conſiderable, when Peter I. endeavoured to eſtabliſh, through independent Tartary, a communication between Siberia and India.

That great prince, whoſe mind was always engaged in ſome uſeful project, was deſirous of opening that communication by means of the Sirth, which waters the Turkeſtan; and in 1719 he ſent 2500 men in order to make himſelf maſter of that river.

There was no ſuch river to be found; its waters had been turned off, and conveyed through ſeveral channels to the lake Arall. This had been done by the Uſbeck Tartars, who had taken umbrage at the repeated obſervations they had ſeen making. So ſingular an incident therefore determined the Ruſſians to return to Aſtracan. The government had loſt ſight of this object, when, towards the year 1738, the inhabitants of the two Bucharias, known by the name of Bucharſis, were themſelves deſirous of trading with Ruſſia. To encourage this unexpected event, the treaſury gave up part of the enormous duties it generally requires. Orenbourg became the ſeat of this new trade. The Tartars bring there, from their own territories, thoſe beautiful fleeces of lambs, that are cut out of their dams bellies, in order that the

BOOK V.

ſkins may be clouded, white and fine. They alſo bring various kinds of merchandiſe which they have drawn from Indoſtan, and eſpecially a quantity of rough diamonds. They likewiſe bring about four hundred quintals of excellent rhubarb. Each quintal coſts 500 livres [20l. 16s. 8d.], and the college of trade ſells it for nearly double that ſum.

We cannot form ſo advantageous an idea of the connections of Ruſſia with the Indies by the Caſpian Sea. This was, however, in the remoteſt ages, the track by which Europe and Aſia communicated with each other. The regions bordering upon that immenſe lake, which are at preſent very much depopulated, extremely poor, and in a ſavage ſtate, afford to intelligent minds undoubted proofs of former ſplendour. Coins of the ancient Kaliphs are daily diſcovered there. Theſe monuments, with others equally authentic, would ſeem to favour the account of ſome Indians having been ſhipwrecked on the coaſts of the Elbe in the reign of Auguſtus, which has always been conſidered as fabulous, notwithſtanding the concurrent teſtimony of cotemporary writers who related the fact. It has never been underſtood how any inhabitants of India could ſail on the Germanic ſeas; but, was it more wonderful to ſee an Indian trading in the northern countries, than to ſee a Roman make his way into India through Arabia? The Indians went into Perſia, where they embarked on the Hircanian Sea, ſailed up the Wolga, penetrated into Permia by the Kama, and from thence might embark on the Northern Sea or on the Baltic.

Enterpriſing men have appeared, and will for ever appear, in all ages. Man has within himſelf a natural energy that torments him; and which is directed by taſte, caprice, or faſtidiouſneſs, to the moſt ſingular attempts. He is curious, and deſirous of ſeeing and of being informed. The thirſt of knowledge is leſs univerſal, but it is more irreſiſtible than that of gold. Man travels to a great diſtance in order to acquire ſomething to ſpeak of, and to make himſelf be

ſpoken of in his own country. What the deſire of fame produces in one, the impatience of miſery occaſions in another. It is imagined that fortune is more eaſily acquired in diſtant regions, than near our own home. Men go a great way to obtain, without fatigue, what they could not otherwiſe get without aſſiduous labour. They travel through lazineſs, or in ſearch of fools and dupes. There are ſome wretched beings who flatter themſelves they ſhall eſcape their deſtiny by running away from it. There are ſome intrepid men who court danger; others, without either ſtrength of mind or virtue, cannot ſupport a poverty which lowers them in ſociety beneath their ſtation or their birth. Ruin ſuddenly brought on, either by gaming, by diſſipation, or by ill-concerted ſchemes, reduces others to a ſtate of indigence to which they are ſtrangers, and which they go to conceal at the poles, or under the equator. To theſe cauſes may be added others that are productive of conſtant emigrations: ſuch as, the oppreſſions of bad governments, want of religious toleration, and the frequency of diſgraceful puniſhments, which drive the guilty man from a country where he would be obliged to walk with his eyes turned to the ground, to another, where he may boldly paſs for a man of probity, and look his equals in the face.

No ſooner had the Engliſh diſcovered Archangel, about the middle of the ſixteenth century, and ſettled a commerce with Ruſſia, than they formed the project of opening a way into Perſia by the Wolga and the Caſpian Sea, which would be much eaſier and ſhorter than that of the Portugueſe, who were obliged to ſail round Africa and part of Aſia, to get into the Gulf of Perſia. A further inducement to attempt this, was, that the northern parts of Perſia, bordering upon the Caſpian Sea, produce much richer commodities than the ſouthern. The ſilks of Chirvan, Mazanderan, and more eſpecially Gilan, are the beſt in all the Eaſt, and might be employed with advantage in any manufactures. But the trade of the

BOOK V. Engliſh was not yet ſufficiently confirmed, to encounter the difficulties that muſt attend ſo vaſt and ſo complicated an undertaking.

Some years after, a duke of Holſtein, who had eſtabliſhed ſome ſilk manufactures in his dominions, was not deterred by theſe difficulties. He wanted to get the raw ſilk from Perſia, and ſent ambaſſadors thither, of whom there never has been any other account but that of their voyage.

When the French were convinced of the influence of trade on the political balance of Europe, they alſo wiſhed to procure Perſian ſilks by the way of Ruſſia; but their fatal paſſion for conqueſt made them forget this project, as well as many others that have been ſuggeſted by men of underſtanding, for the proſperity of that great nation.

Peter I. guided by his own genius, his own experience, and the informations of foreigners, could not but be ſenſible at laſt, that his ſubjects were the people who ought to enrich themſelves by the productions of Perſia, and in proceſs of time by thoſe of India. Accordingly, in 1722, at the beginning of the commotions that have overturned the empire of the Sophis, that great prince ſeized upon the fertile regions bordering on the Caſpian Sea. The heat of the climate, the dampneſs of the ſoil, and the malignancy of the air, deſtroyed the troops that were left to defend thoſe conqueſts. Ruſſia, however, did not reſolve to relinquiſh the provinces ſhe had uſurped, till ſhe found, in the year 1736, that Kouli Khan, who had conquered the Turks, could compel her to reſtore them.

The Court of Perterſburgh laid aſide all thoughts of carrying on any commerce with that part of the world, when an Engliſhman of the name of Elton laid a ſcheme, in 1741, for putting his country in poſſeſſion of it. This enterpriſing man was in the ſervice of Ruſſia; his propoſal was, to convey the Engliſh woollen cloths, by way of the Wolga and the Caſpian Sea, to Perſia, to the north of Indoſtan, and

to the greateſt part of Tartary. In conſequence of this traffic, he was to receive in exchange, gold, and ſuch commodities as the Armenians ſold at an extravagant price, being maſters of all the inland trade of Aſia. This project was warmly adopted by the Engliſh Company in Muſcovy, and favoured by the Ruſſian miniſtry.

But the Engliſh adventurer had ſcarce begun to put it in execution, when Kouli Khan, who wanted bold and active men to ſecond his ambition, found means to entice him into his ſervice, and by his aſſiſtance to make himſelf maſter of the Caſpian Sea. The court of Peterſburgh, exaſperated at this treachery, revoked, in 1746, all the privileges they had granted; but this was an ineffectual remedy for ſo great an evil. The untimely death of the Perſian tyrant was much more likely to bring matters into their former ſtate.

That great revolution, which once more plunged the Sophy's dominions into a more complete anarchy than ever, reſtored to the Ruſſians the dominion over the Caſpian Sea. This was a neceſſary prelude to the opening of a trade with Perſia and India, but was not alone ſufficient to inſure its ſucceſs; which met with almoſt inſuperable obſtacles from the Armenians. An active nation, accuſtomed to the Eaſtern manners, in poſſeſſion of a large capital, extremely frugal in their expences, who had already formed connections from time immemorial, entered into the minuteſt details, and embraced the moſt comprehenſive ſpeculations: ſuch a nation was not eaſily to be ſupplanted. Nor did the court of Ruſſia expect it; but, on the contrary, endeavoured to increaſe the number of theſe able merchants, anciently ſettled at Aſtracan. Its views have not been crowned with ſucceſs. It is however exerting itſelf to ſurmount the obſtacles that have prevented it; and there is much to expect from the new kind of ſpirit that ſeems to animate the whole kingdom of Ruſſia.

BOOK V.

Extent, government, population, and revenues of Ruſſia.

This empire, which, like all others, roſe from ſmall beginnings, is become, in proceſs of time, the largeſt in the world. Its extent from eaſt to weſt is two thouſand two hundred leagues, and from ſouth to north about eight hundred.

Excepting the provinces conquered at the beginning of this century on the borders of the Baltic, which have preſerved all the rights they before enjoyed; the Ukraine, which has been maintained in the poſſeſſion of ſome of its rights; and the wandering tribes which it has been impoſſible to ſubmit to any regular ſyſtem of policy; all the other parts of the empire are ſubject to the ſame form of government.

Under theſe arbitrary laws, a body of ignorant clergy live, who in former times were formidable, but who are become tractable ſince they have been ſtripped of the poſſeſſions laviſhed upon them by ſuperſtition, and of the million of ſlaves who uſed to cultivate them.

After this, a body of nobility preſents themſelves, who are in poſſeſſion of moſt of the lands, and keep in their dependence all the unfortunate men who cultivate them at the ſweat of their brow.

After theſe, comes the claſs of free men. Theſe are ſo obſcure, that Europe has for a long time been ignorant of their exiſtence. At preſent we know that they are compoſed of ſome foreigners, moſtly Germans, whom a reſtleſs ſpirit has determined, or neceſſity compelled, to ſeek a new country; of ſeveral happy and intelligent natives, whoſe chains have been gradually broken, and who profeſs the arts and commerce in the cities; of a ſmall number of cultivators, who have entirely at their own diſpoſal the poor inheritance that has been tranſmitted to them from their anceſtors. The property of theſe farmers becomes, by degrees, the prey of ſome rich man, who, by making them ſome intereſted advances, has indulged them in their lazineſs, or in their profuſion.

Laſtly, the loweſt claſs of the ſtate, if we may give them that name, are the ſlaves. At the beginning of the ſixteenth century, there were few of them, and theſe all priſoners of war. The lords were then in poſſeſſion of fiefs, and the people cultivated lands that belonged to them. A new arrangement took place after the conqueſt of Cazan and Aſtracan. Theſe beautiful and fertile provinces were ſo powerful an attraction to the Ruſſian peaſants, that in order to put a ſtop to the emigration, which was becoming general, the rigorous law which confined them all to their own glebe was publiſhed in 1556. At this fatal period they loſt their property as well as their perſonal liberty. Their oppreſſion has ſince been increaſed, and the human ſpecies has been more and more degraded.

This is undoubtedly the cauſe that has retarded or annihilated the population throughout the whole empire. In 1755, it did not contain more than eight million nine hundred and ſixty-five thouſand three hundred and ſixteen males. Suppoſing the number of women equal to that of men, the whole amounted to ſeventeen million nine hundred and thirty thouſand ſix hundred and thirty-two ſouls. To this number were added the twelve hundred thouſand inhabitants of the provinces taken from Sweden in the beginning of the century; and it was then found that Ruſſia had under its dominion nineteen million one hundred and thirty thouſand ſix hundred and thirty-two ſubjects, excluſive of the clergy, the nobility and the army. If the wars with Pruſſia, Poland, and Turkey, epidemical diſeaſes, and rebellions, have ſince occaſioned an evident diminution of the former population; the great acquiſitions recently made in Lithuania, muſt have filled the deficiency cauſed by theſe dreadful ſcourges.

In ſtates, where the population is not numerous, the public revenue cannot be conſiderable. It was ſcarce any thing in money, when Peter I. aſcended the throne. This prince raiſed it to thirty-five mil-

BOOK V. lions [1,458,333l. 6s. 8d.]. Anna brought it up to ſixty [2,500,000l.], and Elizabeth to one hundred and twenty millions [5,000,000l.]. It was carried ſtill higher during the war with the Turks, but was reduced, at the peace, to the ſtandard it was at when the troubles commenced. At this period, the treaſury owed rather conſiderable ſums to the Genoeſe and Hollanders, which have ſince been paid off. It owed to the nation near two hundred millions [8,333,333l. 6s. 8d.] in bank bills, for which it had mortgaged a quantity of copper diſtributed in the different coffers of the empire.

It is an opinion generally received, that the people are groaning under the weight of their taxes. Even after the burden has been much alleviated, it muſt ſtill be more lightened, if the arts do not multiply, and eſpecially if agriculture be not remarkably improved.

It would be in vain to encourage it in the northern provinces; nothing can thrive in thoſe frozen deſerts. The ſcattered inhabitants of this inhoſpitable climate will never be ſupplied with any kind of food and raiment, except what they can procure from birds, fiſh, and wild beaſts; nor will they ever have any thing beſide theſe to pay their taxes with.

Further from the north, nature begins to wear a milder aſpect, and the country is more populous, and more capable of vegetation. In moſt of the provinces, the labourer is in want of nothing but more perfect utenſils, better methods and more extenſive means for cultivation. The progreſs of knowledge gives reaſon to think that theſe deficiencies will be remedied. Particular attention will be paid to the Ukraine, which is, perhaps, the moſt fruitful country in the known world. It ſupplies Ruſſia with moſt of her home conſumption and articles of trade; and yet ſhe does not receive the twentieth part of what it might be made to produce. The government will ſucceed the more readily in encouraging rural labours, as the Ruſſians have an averſion for reſiding in towns,

and that they have iron at their diſpoſal, which is the great and ineſtimable *primum mobile* of agriculture. Nature has furniſhed it in plenty to moſt of the countries of the empire, and has given it to Siberia in as perfect a ſtate as even to Sweden.

Beſide theſe iron mines, there are alſo others which contain thoſe precious metals that have excited the cupidity of all nations, and in all ages. The ſilver mines near Argun have long been known; and others, both of ſilver and gold, have lately been diſcovered in the country of the Baſkirs. It would be prudent in ſome nations to condemn theſe ſources of wealth to oblivion; but this is not the caſe with Ruſſia, where all the inland provinces are ſo poor, that they are ſcarcely acquainted with thoſe ſigns that have been univerſally agreed upon to repreſent every article of commerce.

General trade of Ruſſia.

The trade which the Ruſſians have opened with China, Perſia, Turkey, and Poland, conſiſts principally in furs, ſuch as ermine, ſables, white wolves, and black foxes ſkins, which all come from Siberia. Although the caprice of the conſumers has raiſed the value of theſe precious furs beyond what could have been expected, yet their price is ſtill increaſing. Theſe commercial connections ſhould be extended to other objects.

The exchanges of the empire with the ſtates of the Grand Signior, were reckoned nothing, or very inconſiderable. They will ſoon become of conſequence, if the Ruſſians know how to avail themſelves of the right acquired by the laſt treaties, of paſſing from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, and from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea. This privilege, which no other nation had yet obtained, and which none has acquired ſince, muſt give to the trade and navigation of the Ruſſians a degree of extenſion, the boundaries of which it would be preſumptuous to fix.

But the greateſt demand for the produce of the country will always be on the coaſts of the Baltic; ſince it is a fact, that the merchandiſe which con-

BOOK V.

ſtantly goes from the ſingle port of Peterſburgh, exceeds by a ninth part the quantity that is ſent from the other two-and-forty cuſtoms of the empire. In 1773, the exports of Ruſſia, including the duty of five-and-twenty per cent. claimed by the ſovereign, amounted to 106,401,735 livres [4,433,406l. 2s. 6d.]: the imports, including the ſame duty, did not exceed 66,544,005 livres [2,772,666l. 17s. 6d.]. Conſequently the apparent balance was 39,557,830 livres [1,648,242l. 18s. 4d.]. We have ſaid the apparent balance; for it is well known, by all perſons who are converſant in theſe matters, that the articles which come into the country, being generally of a ſmaller bulk than thoſe which go out of it, muſt neceſſarily furniſh more frequent opportunities of ſmuggling.

No country is ſo happily ſituated as Ruſſia is for extending its commerce. Almoſt all its rivers are navigable. Peter the Great improved this natural advantage by the aſſiſtance of art, and ordered canals to be cut to join thoſe rivers together. The moſt important of them are finiſhed; others are not quite completed, and ſome are only planned. Such is the grand project of joining the Caſpian Sea to the Euxine, by digging a canal from the Tanais to the Wolga.

Unfortunately, theſe means, which render the circulation of all commodities ſo eaſy throughout the whole empire, and which open ſo ready a communication with all parts of the globe, are rendered uſeleſs by a multiplicity of obſtacles. The government has taken off part of the reſtraints which had ariſen from defective inſtitutions. Thoſe which are owing to the manners will not ſo eaſily be got the better of.

Peter I. decreed that the vaſſals who were poſſeſſed of 2500 livres [104l. 3s. 4d.], ſhould have the right of being free, upon condition that they and their deſcendants ſhould pay annually to the heirs of their former maſter, what he exacted from them before their freedom. Theſe new citizens, without either education or principles, moſtly became merchants; they brought with them into their recent ſituation the

vices they had contracted in ſervitude, and tranſmitted them to their poſterity. The preſent generation ſtill partakes of its origin.

The laws do not allow the foreign merchants to buy up the productions of the empire, in any other place except in the ports; and by the nature of the government, the natives have not, or cannot appear to have, capitals conſiderable enough to form large magazines. Traders are therefore under a neceſſity of employing ſome Ruſſian agent to make the purchaſes. This man, at the time of his undertaking the buſineſs, always requires half of the ſtipulated price; and the reſt is to be paid on the delivery of the goods. Theſe are ſeldom ſo good as they ſhould be; and yet the purchaſer does not often refuſe them, either becauſe he has ſome orders to fulfil, or becauſe he is apprehenſive, not without reaſon, that he ſhall loſe all the money he has advanced.

If the foreigner ſhould have any thing to ſell, he cannot find purchaſers unleſs he will allow them a credit of a year, or a year and a half. At the time of payment, they uſually aſk for a freſh indulgence. If it be refuſed them, they are condemned to an intereſt of eighteen per cent. The more the debt increaſes, the more diſtant is the will or the poſſibility of ſatisfying it. Even the atrocioufneſs of the regulations contrived to prevent or to puniſh bankruptcies, is favourable to the inſolvent or fraudulent debtor. It ſeldom happens that the mercy of the judges, or the corruption of the courtiers, does not ſcreen them from the puniſhments decreed againſt them by law. Powerful protections, if they ſhould be neceſſary, will gratify the vengeance of the deluded creditor; but after he has obtained theſe decrees, purchaſed at a very high price, he will only be more certainly diſappointed in the expectation of recovering any thing that was due to him.

Theſe diſhoneſt acts and depredations have not prevented the trade of the empire from making a tolerable progreſs. This would have been more rapid,

BOOK V.

and more conſiderable, if the phyſical and natural advantages had not been obſtinately oppoſed by political or moral cauſes; if a miniſtry, ſeduced or corrupted, had not put a ſtop to competition, by favouring England to the prejudice of other nations. A better arrangement in this intereſting part of adminiſtration would contribute much to the public felicity. Let us ſee what influence the army could have upon it.

Military ſtrength of Ruſſia.

When Peter I. aſcended the throne, the military in Ruſſia conſiſted only of 40,000 Strelits, undiſciplined and ferocious men, who had no courage but againſt the people whom they oppreſſed, and againſt the ſovereign, whom they depoſed or murdered at pleaſure. This great prince diſbanded thoſe ſeditious troops, and eſtabliſhed an army, modelled after thoſe of the other ſtates in Europe.

Since the death of this reformer of the empire, the troops have been ſtill more improved, and eſpecially increaſed. They have been gradually raiſed to three hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand four hundred and fifty-ſeven men.

Notwithſtanding the bravery, number, and diſcipline of its troops, Ruſſia is, of all the powers, that which ought to be the moſt cautious of expoſing the lives of its ſubjects. The deſire of increaſing a territory already too extenſive, ſhould never tempt the Ruſſians far from their own frontiers, or induce them to begin hoſtilities. Ruſſia will never form a cloſe and compact ſtate, or become an enlightened and flouriſhing nation, unleſs it ſhould renounce the rage of conqueſt, to apply ſolely to the arts of peace. None of its neighbours can compel it to depart from this ſalutary ſyſtem.

On the north ſide, the empire is better guarded by the Frozen ſea, than it would be by ſquadrons and fortreſſes.

To the Eaſt, a ſingle battalion and two field pieces would diſperſe all the hordes of Tartars that ſhould attempt to moleſt it.

Should Perſia ever again become powerful enough to make any attempts againſt this empire, they would be rendered ineffectual by the Caſpian Sea, and by thoſe immenſe deſerts which ſeparate that country from Ruſſia.

To the South, ſeditions, ignorance, want of diſcipline, and every kind of corruption that diſgraces a nation, had for a century paſt ſhaken the Ottoman empire. The Ruſſians have fallen unawares upon the Turks, in this ſtate of degradation, and have contributed to enfeeble them ſtill more. They have broken the ties which attached the Tartars to this dominion; and by procuring the ceſſion of ſome forts and harbours in the Crimea, have ſecured to themſelves the power of regulating, as their policy requires, the movements of this indefatigable, deſtructive, and ferocious body of horſe.

To the Weſt, the Ruſſians have nothing to fear from the Poles, who never had any fortified towns, nor troops, nor revenue, nor government, and who have lately been deprived of half of their territory.

In the beginning of this century, Sweden loſt thoſe of her conqueſts from which ſhe derived ſtrength and riches. Whatever degree of energy ſhe may acquire from her new conſtitution, ſhe will never become a formidable power. Far from being in a condition to aggrandize herſelf at the expence of the Ruſſians, ſhe will, on the contrary, always have reaſon to fear, that ſhe ſhall be deprived by them of what ſtill remains to her in Finland.

It may poſſibly happen, that the fault which the Court of Peterſburghh as committed, in approximating the Pruſſian territory to their poſſeſſions, may one day occaſion hoſtilities. Some favourable circumſtances may perhaps determine this new neighbour to make good the claims of the Teutonic Knights upon Livonia; and then the blood of the Ruſſians and Pruſſians would ſtain the waters of the Baltic, and would be confounded under the walls of Riga. The ambition of the houſe of Brandenburg will, however, be

BOOK V.

too habitually oppoſed on the ſide of Germany, to prevent that power from raiſing any conſiderable alarms in the North.

We learn, from theſe obſervations, that the empire might diminiſh conſiderably its land forces, if they were deſtined only to guard its provinces from invaſion: but as their chief employment is to retain under the yoke people who are always diſſatisfied with an oppreſſive government, it is not an eaſy matter to determine how far they ought to be reduced. The navy muſt be conſidered in another point of view.

The inconſiderable connections of Ruſſia with the reſt of Europe were wholly carried on by land, when the Engliſh, in ſeeking a paſſage to the Eaſt Indies by the northern ſeas, diſcovered the port of Archangel. Having ſailed up the Dwina, they came to Moſcow, and there laid the foundation of a new trade.

Ruſſia had as yet no other communication with her neighbours but by this port, when Peter I. invited the traders who frequented the White Sea to come to the Baltic, and endeavoured to procure a more extenſive and advantageous mart for the productions of his empire. His creative genius ſoon enlarged his views; and he was ambitious of making his country become a maritime power.

His firſt attention was engaged in the conſtruction of veſſels fit for the defence of his own coaſts, and for attacking thoſe of his neighbours. Theſe are galleys of different dimenſions, ſome of which are fitted for cavalry, but a greater number for infantry. As the troops themſelves, who are taught to manage the oar, compoſe the crews, the galleys are armed without expence or delay. The anchor is dropped every night, and the forces land where they are leaſt expected.

When the landing is effected, the troops draw the galleys on ſhore, and form an intrenched camp of them. Part of the army are left to guard them; and the reſt are diſperſed about the country, upon which contributions are to be levied. When the ex-

pedition is at an end, they re-embark, in order to renew the ſame plunder and devaſtation on ſome other ſpot. A number of experiments have ſhown the efficacy of theſe armaments.

This ſucceſsful beginning encouraged the reformer of Ruſſia to attempt to have large ſhips: and it was at Cronſtadt, which ſerves as a harbour to Peterſburgh, that he ſtationed his fleets.

The ſea is not broad enough before the mouth of the harbour. The ſhips that are coming in are forcibly driven, by the impetuoſity of the Nava, upon the dangerous coaſts of Finland. The way to it is through a channel ſo full of breakers, that they cannot be avoided, unleſs the weather be remarkably fine. The ſhips ſoon rot in the harbour. The ſailing of the ſquadrons is greatly retarded by the ice. There is no getting out but with an eaſterly wind; and the weſterly winds blow in thoſe latitudes the greateſt part of the ſummer. Another inconvenience is, that the dock-yards are at Peterſburgh, from whence the ſhips cannot get to Cronſtadt, without paſſing over a very dangerous flat that lies in the middle of the river.

If Peter I. had not had that partiality which great men, as well as others, have for their own plans, he might eaſily have been made ſenſible that Cronſtadt and Peterſburg were improper places for the naval forces of Ruſſia, and that it was in vain to expect that art ſhould remove every natural diſadvantage. He would have given the preference to Revel, which is much better caculated for this important purpoſe. Perhaps, more mature reflections would even have convinced him, that it was not yet the proper time for him to aſpire to this kind of power.

It is demonſtrated both by reaſon and experience, that a military navy muſt have for its baſis a trading one. Ruſſia, of all the European nations, is that, which the abundance of its naval ſtores and the bulk and quantity of its productions, invites to a more active and more extenſive commerce. There

BOOK V.

was not however a ſingle trading veſſel in the whole empire, when the plan was adopted of ſupplying it with a fleet. The founder of an empire, who had been acquainted with the natural progreſs of things, would have firſt turned his views towards a commercial navy. This political arrangment was ſubverted; and the ſucceſſors of Peter I. have never deviated from this erroneous ſyſtem. None of them have thought of ſurmounting the obſtacles which, ariſing from a number of defective inſtitutions, have thwarted mercantile expeditions, by which good crews are formed. They have all confined themſelves to the ſyſtem of maintaining and multiplying ſquadrons, which cannot have either knowledge or experience. At preſent this navy, the expence of which is uſeleſs, is compoſed upon the Baltic of thirty ſhips of the line, and twenty-one frigates; in the ſea of Azoph, it conſiſts of eleven ſhips of war, which ſcarce draw eleven feet of water: and at the mouth of the Danube, of ſeven or eight large barks, armed with guns of no inconſiderable diameter. It would be proper to diſband the greateſt part of theſe forces, till methods had been put in practice to render them uſeful.

Obſtacles which prevent the proſperity of Ruſſia. Meaſures that might be purſued to ſurmount them.

The changes we have taken the liberty to ſuggeſt are indiſpenſably neceſſary to render Ruſſia a flouriſhing ſtate; but this is not the only thing required. To inſure the continuance of her proſperity, ſome ſtability muſt be given to the order of the ſucceſſion. The crown of Ruſſia was long hereditary; Peter I. made it patrimonial; and it became, as it were, elective at the laſt revolution. But every nation wiſhes to know upon what right its government is eſtabliſhed; and the claim that has the greateſt effect upon the people is birth-right. When this evident mark of ſucceſſion is removed from the eyes of the multitude, univerſal revolt and diſſenſion prevail.

But it is not enough to give the people a ſovereign whom they cannot refuſe to acknowledge: that ſovereign muſt make them happy; and this can never

be done in Ruſſia, till the form of government be changed.

Slavery, in whatever ſenſe we underſtand the word, is the ſtate into which the whole nation is fallen. Among the ſubjects of this empire, who are conſidered as free, there is not one of them who is morally certain of the ſafety of his perſon, of the permanent property of his fortune, or of liberty, which may not be taken from him, except in caſes previouſly determined by law.

Under ſuch a government, no tie can ſubſiſt between the members and their head. If he ſhould be always formidable to them, they are no leſs ſo to him. The ſtrength he exerts to oppreſs them, is no other than their own united ſtrength turned againſt themſelves. Deſpair, or a nobler ſentiment, may every inſtant turn it againſt him.

The reſpect due to the memory of ſo great a man as Peter I. ought not to prevent us from declaring that his talents did not enable him at one view to diſcover every requiſite neceſſary to form a well-conſtituted ſtate. He was naturally a man of genius, and had been inſpired with a love of glory. This paſſion made him active, patient, aſſiduous, indefatigable, and capable of conquering every difficulty which nature, ignorance, or cuſtom, could oppoſe, to prevent the ſucceſs of his enterpriſes. With theſe virtues, and the foreign aids he called in, he ſucceeded in eſtabliſhing an army, a fleet, and a ſeaport. He made ſeveral regulations neceſſary for the proſecution of his great projects; but though he has been generally extolled as a lawgiver, he only enacted two or three laws, and thoſe bear the ſtamp of a ſavage diſpoſition. He never proceeded ſo far as to combine the happineſs of his people with his own perſonal greatneſs. After his noble inſtitutions, his people were as wretched as ever; and ſtill groaned under poverty, ſlavery and oppreſſion. He never relaxed in any one inſtance his arbitrary power, but rather made it more oppreſſive; and bequeathed to

BOOK V. his ſucceſſors that deteſtable and pernicious idea, that the ſubjects are nothing, and that the ſovereign is all.

Since his death, this miſchievous ſyſtem has been conſtantly purſued. It has been impoſſible to inculcate the idea that liberty is the birth-right of all men; that every well-regulated ſociety ought to be directed to the general good; and that it is power obtained by unlawful means which has deprived the greateſt part of the globe of this natural advantage.

Such has been the opinion of Catherine II. As ſoon as this celebrated princeſs had aſſumed the reins of government, a report was ſpread on all ſides, that her deſign was to reign over free men. At the inſtant when her intentions began to tranſpire, upwards of a hundred thouſand vaſſals were preparing a revolt againſt their maſters. Many of the lords, who reſided upon their eſtates, were maſſacred. This commotion, the conſequences of which might have ſubverted the ſtate, made it evident, that it was neceſſary to tame the bears before their chains were broken; and that wholeſome laws, and a diffuſion of knowledge, ought to precede liberty.

Immediately, a ſyſtem of legiſlation was planned; and it was deſired that this code ſhould be approved of by the people themſelves, in order that they might reſpect and adhere to it as their own work. *My children*, ſaid the ſovereign to the deputies of her vaſt dominions, *conſider well with me the intereſts of the nation: let us unite in drawing up a body of laws, that may eſtabliſh public felicity upon a permanent baſis.*

Catherine attended afterwards to the forming of men; and was directed in her plan, by a bold and ſtriking truth, addreſſed to Peter I. That prince was flattering himſelf with the greateſt ſucceſs, from the return of the young men whom he had ſent to acquire knowledge in the moſt enlightened countries of Europe; when his buffoon, who was attending to him, folded a piece of paper as hard as he poſſibly could, and preſenting it to him, challenged him to

efface the marks of the fold. But if it were impoſſible to reform Ruſſia in a barbarous ſtate, what hopes can there be of reforming it in a corrupt one? If it were impoſſible to give good morals to a people who had none, how can we expect to inſtil them into the minds of thoſe who are tainted with bad ones? Theſe conſiderations have determined Catherine to leave the preſent generation to itſelf, and to give her whole attention to poſterity.

By her care, ſchools have been eſtabliſhed, in which the nobility of both ſexes are inſtructed in the uſeful ſciences, and in the agreeable arts. Wiſe men, who have ſeen theſe inſtitutions on the ſpot, have cenſured the frivolouſneſs and parade that prevails in them: but reflection will ſooner or later correct any defects they may have.

Other eſtabliſhments, perhaps ſtill more neceſſary, have been formed in favour of the people. There it is that young men, and young girls, receive, in ſeparate dwellings, during a term of fifteen years, all the kinds of inſtruction adapted to the employments or profeſſions they are to exerciſe. When the ſocial virtues have taken deep root in their hearts; when it has been impreſſed upon them, that honour is the moſt noble recompenſe of a virtuous mind, and that ſhame is its moſt dreadful puniſhment, theſe pupils, born in a ſtate of ſlavery, will no longer have any maſter, and will become citizens in the utmoſt extent of the word. The good principles in which they have been educated, will diffuſe themſelves, in proceſs of time, from the centre of the empire to the moſt remote provinces; and with the morals which muſt neceſſarily reſult from them, a well-regulated liberty will be extended, which muſt inſure the felicity of the nation, under the eaſy reſtraint of the laws.

To accelerate the progreſs, always too ſlow, of a wiſe legiſlation, and a good education, it would perhaps be proper to chooſe out one of the moſt fertile provinces of the empire, to erect habitations there,

BOOK V.

to ſupply them with all the implements of huſbandry, and to allot a portion of land to each houſe. It would then be adviſable to invite free men from civilized countries, to give them the entire property of the houſes and lands prepared for them, to ſecure to them a ſubſiſtence for three years, and to have them governed by a chief who ſhould have no property in the country. A toleration ſhould be granted to all religions, and conſequently private and domeſtic worſhip ſhould be allowed, but no public form of worſhip ſhould be eſtabliſhed.

From hence the ſeeds of liberty would ſpread all over the empire: the adjacent countries would ſee the happineſs of theſe coloniſts, and wiſh to be as happy as they. Were I to be caſt among ſavages, I would not bid them build huts to ſhelter them from the inclemency of the weather; they would only laugh at me; but I would build one myſelf. When the ſevere ſeaſon came on, I ſhould enjoy the benefit of my foreſight; the ſavage would ſee it, and next year he would imitate me. It is the ſame thing with an enſlaved nation; we are not to bid them be free; but we are to lay before their eyes the ſweets of liberty, and they will wiſh for them.

I would by no means impoſe upon my coloniſts the burden of the firſt expences I had incurred on their account; much leſs would I entail the pretended debt upon their offspring. This would be falſe and inhuman policy. Is not a ſtate ſufficiently rewarded by a man of twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years of age, who voluntarily devotes his perſon, his ſtrength, his talents, and his life, to the ſervice of the public? Muſt he pay a rent likewiſe for the preſent he makes? When he becomes opulent, he may be conſidered as a ſubject, but not till the third or fourth generation, if the project be meant to ſucceed, and if the people can be brought to that condition, the advantages of which they have had time to be acquainted with.

In this new arrangement, where the intereſts of the monarch will be blended with thoſe of the ſub-

ject, in order to ſtrengthen Ruſſia, ſhe muſt aim leſs at glory, and ſacrifice the influence ſhe has aſſumed over the general affairs of Europe. Peterſburgh, which has improperly been made a capital, muſt be reduced to a mere commercial ſtaple; and the ſeat of government transferred to the heart of the empire. It is from ſuch a centre of dominion, that a wiſe ſovereign, acquainted with the wants and reſources of his people, will effectually labour to unite the detached parts of that large empire. From the ſuppreſſion of every kind of ſlavery will ſpring up a middle ſtate among the people, without which, neither arts, manners, nor learning, ever exiſted in any nation.

Till this ſhall be accompliſhed, the court of Ruſſia will endeavour in vain to enlighten the nation, by inviting famous men from all countries. Thoſe exotics will periſh there, as foreign plants do in our green-houſes. In vain will they erect ſchools and academies at Peterſburgh; in vain will they ſend pupils to Paris and to Rome, to be trained up under the beſt maſters. Thoſe young men, on their return from their travels, will be forced to neglect their talents, and embrace an inferior ſtation to procure a ſubſiſtence. In all undertakings, much depends upon the firſt ſteps we take; and the firſt ſtep is certainly to encourage mechanic arts, and the lower claſſes of men. If we learn to till the ground, to dreſs ſkins, to manufacture our wool, we ſhall ſoon ſee wealthy families ſpring up. From theſe will ariſe children, who, not chooſing to follow the laborious profeſſions of their fathers, will begin to think, to converſe, to write, and to imitate nature; and then we ſhall have philoſophers, orators, poets, painters, and ſtatuaries. Their productions will be ſought after by rich men, and they will purchaſe them. As long as men are in want, they will work, and continue their labour till their wants are ſatisfied. Then they become indolent, and unable to employ their time; and thus the finer arts are in all places the offſpring of genius

BOOK V.

and indolence, for men fly to them when they have no other resources.

If we attend to the progress of society, we find husbandmen plundered by robbers; these husbandmen select a few among themselves to oppose the robbers, and thus they commence soldiers. While some are reaping, and the rest are upon guard, some persons looking on say to the labourers and soldiers; 'You 'seem to be hard at work; if you that are husband-'men will feed us, and you that are soldiers will de-'fend us, we will beguile your labours with our songs 'and dances.' Hence the origin of the trobadour, or bard, and of the man of science. In process of time, the latter is sometimes joined with the chief against the people, and sings the praises of tyranny; sometimes with the people against the tyrant, and then he sings the praises of liberty. Whichever part he takes, he becomes a citizen of consequence.

Let us attend to the usual progress of nature, and indeed it would be in vain to depart from it. We shall find all our efforts ineffectual, and every thing tending to decay around us; we shall be nearly in the same barbarous state from which we endeavoured to extricate ourselves: nor shall we be able to effect this, till circumstances shall give rise to an indigenous policy on our own soil, the progress of which can at most only be acclerated by foreign assistance. This is all we can reasonably expect, and we must continue to cultivate our land.

In this we shall find another advantage, which is, that the arts and sciences of our own growth will gradually advance towards perfection, and we shall be originals; whereas, if we copy foreign models, we shall be ignorant of the cause of their perfection, and we shall never be any thing more than imperfect imitators.

The picture we have here drawn of Russia may be thought to be an improper digression; but, perhaps, this is the time to form a right estimate of a power, which, for some years past, has acted so conspicuous

and diſtinguiſhed a part. Let us now inquire into the connections other Furopean nations have formed with China.

Trade of China with the neibouring countries.

Induſtry prevails among the Chineſe more than among any other people in the world. In a country too populous, notwithſtanding the plenty of productions, the expectation of approaching dearth makes all the citizens induſtrious, active, and reſtleſs. They muſt neceſſarily be intereſted, mean, falſe, and deceitful.

This rapacious diſpoſition made the Chineſe renounce the uſe of gold and ſilver coin in their inland trade. They were forced to this by the great increaſe of coiners, and are reduced to the neceſſity of uſing only copper money.

Copper becoming ſcarce, though hiſtory has not informed us by what means, thoſe ſhells were afterwards brought into uſe, ſo well known by the name of Cowries. The government, having obſerved that the people grew diſſatisfied with ſo brittle a commodity in lieu of coin, ordered that all copper utenſils in the empire ſhould be brought to the mint. This ill-judged expedient, proving inſufficient to anſwer the demands of the public, about four hundred temples of the god Fo were ordered to be demoliſhed, and all his idols melted down. After this, the court paid the magiſtrates and the army, partly in copper, and partly in paper currency. The people were ſo exaſperated at theſe dangerous innovations, that the government was obliged to drop them. From that time, which was three hundred years ago, copper coin is the only legal money.

Notwithſtanding the ſelf-intereſted diſpoſition of the Chineſe, their foreign connections were for a long time inconſiderable. Their diſtant behaviour with other people, proceeded from the contempt they had for them. At length, however, they grew deſirous of frequenting the neighbouring ports; and the Tartar government, leſs ſolicitous to preſerve the ancient manners than the former government had been, en-

couraged this mode of increaſing the wealth of the nation. Voyages were openly undertaken, which before were only tolerated by the intereſted governors of the maritime provinces. A people ſo famed for their wiſdom could not fail of meeting with a favourable reception wherever they went. They took advantage of the high opinion other nations entertained of their taſte, to recommend the commodities they had to diſpoſe of; and their activity exerted itſelf on the continent as well as by ſea.

China at preſent trades with Corea, which is ſuppoſed to have been originally peopled with Tartars. It has certainly often been conquered by them, and has been ſometimes ſubject to, ſometimes independent of ,the Chineſe; to whom it now pays tribute. Here they carry China ware, tea, and ſilks; and in return bring home hemp and cotton, and an ordinary ſort of ginſeng.

The Tartars, who may be conſidered as foreigners, purchaſe of the Chineſe woollen ſtuffs, rice, tea, and tobacco, for which they give them ſheep, oxen, furs, and eſpecially ginſeng. This plant grows upon the confines of tartary, near the great wall. It is alſo found in Canada. Its root is a turnip, ſometimes ſingle, ſometimes divided into two. It has then ſome reſemblance to the inferior parts of a man, from whence it has acquired the name of ginſeng in China, and that of garentoguen among the Iroquois.

Its ſtem, which is renewed every year, leaves, as it falls off, an impreſſion upon the neck of the root, ſo that the age of the plant is known by the number of theſe impreſſions, and its value increaſes in proportion to its age. This ſtem, which is low, ſingle, and furniſhed only with two or three leaves, divided into five ſmaller ones, terminates in a ſmall umbel of flowers. The flowers are compoſed of five petals and as many ſtamina, ſupported upon a piſtil, which being covered with its calix, becomes a ſmall fleſhy fruit, filled with two or three little ſeeds. Some of the flowers produce no fruit.

The virtues of the ginſeng root are many; but it is generally allowed to be a ſtrengthener of the ſtomach, and a purifier of the blood. Its tranſparency is given to it by the ſame proceſs nearly as the Orientaliſts employ for the ſalop. This prepared ginſeng is in ſuch high eſtimation among the Chineſe, that they never find it too dear.

The government ſends out ten thouſand Tartar ſoldiers every year to gather this plant; and every one is obliged to bring home two ounces of the beſt ginſeng gratis, and for the reſt they are paid its weight in ſilver. Private perſons are not allowed to gather it. This odious prohibition does not prevent them. If they did not break this unjuſt law, they would not be able to pay for the commodities they buy in the empire, and conſequently muſt ſubmit to the want of them.

We have already taken notice of the trade of China with the Ruſſians. It will become conſiderable, if the two governments ſhould ever diſcontinue to oppreſs their merchants.

The trade which the empire has opened with the inhabitants of the Leſs Bucharia, conſiſts only in exchanging its tea, tobacco, and woollen cloth, for the gold duſt theſe people find in their torrents, or in their rivers. Theſe tranſactions, which are at preſent inconſiderable, will not receive any great increaſe, till theſe barbarians have been inſtructed in the art of working the mines, with which their mountains abound.

China is ſeparated from the Mogul dominions, and from other parts of India, by moving ſands, mountains, or by rocks, heaped upon one another, which render every communication with theſe opulent regions impracticable. Accordingly, they add nothing to the trifling commerce which this nation carries on annually by land. That which the ſea opens to them is more conſiderable.

The empire ſcarce truſts any thing to the ocean except tea, ſilks, and china. At Japan theſe articles

are paid for with gold and copper; at the Philippine islands, with piastres; at Batavia, with spices; at Siam, with woods for dyeing, and with varnish; at Tonquin, with coarse silks; and at Cochinchina, with gold and sugar. The returns do not exceed five-and-thirty or forty millions of livres [from 1,458,333l. 6s. 8d. to 1,666,666l. 13s. 4d.], although the Chinese double their capitals in this trade. Their agents or partners in most of the markets they frequent, are the descendants of such of their own countrymen as refused to submit to the yoke of the Tartars.

These connections, which on one side terminate at Japan, and on the other at the Straits of Malacca and of Sunda, would probably have been extended, if the Chinese ship-builders had been less attached to their old customs, and had condescended to receive instruction from the Europeans.

It might readily be imagined, that this contempt of one people for the knowledge of another, was one of the principle characteristics of barbarism, or even, perhaps, of the savage state. It is, however, also the vice of a civilized nation. A foolish pride persuades them that they know every thing; or, that what they are ignorant of is not worth the trouble of learning. The nation makes no improvement in the sciences, and its arts remain in that state of mediocrity from whence they will never emerge, unless by some fortuitous event, which time either may, or may not bring about. The country and a cloister are then in a similar situation; and this is a very exact representation of China, which is surrounded on all sides by light that cannot penetrate into it; as if there were no mode of expelling ignorance from it, without introducing corruption. In what state would the European nations be, if, infected with vanity, concealed under the mask of some prejudice, they had not reciprocally enlightened each other? The one is indebted to the other for the seeds of liberty; and they are both of them indebted to a third, for having taught them the true principles of commerce. This

kind of exchange is of infinitely greater consequence to their happiness, than that of their productions.

BOOK V.

The trade of the Europeans with China.

The first Europeans, whom their restless dispositions impelled towards the coasts of China, were admitted indiscriminately into all the ports. Their extreme familiarity with the women, their haughtiness with the men, and repeated acts of insult and indiscretion, soon deprived them of that privilege; and now they are only suffered to put in at Canton, the southernmost harbour of these extensive coasts.

Their ships at first went up as far as the walls of this celebrated city, situated at the distance of fifteen leagues from the mouth of the Tigris. By degrees the harbour was choked up, so as to give no more than twelve or thirteen feet of water. Then our ships, which had constantly been increasing in size, were obliged to stop at Hoanpou, three miles distant from the city. It is a tolerable harbour, formed by two small islands. The French, from some particular circumstances, obtained the liberty, in 1745, of fixing their magazines in the port of Wampou, which is healthy and populous; but the rival nations have always been forced to transact their affairs at the other port, which is entirely desert, and particularly unwholesome after the rice has been cut.

During the five or six months that the ships crews are wearying themselves or perishing at Hoang-pou, the agents are making their sales and purchases at Canton. When these foreigners first frequented this great mart, they were allowed all the liberty that was consistent with the maintaining of the laws. They soon grew tired of the circumspection which is requisite under a government so much addicted to ceremony. To punish them for their imprudence, they were prohibited from having any immediate access to the person in whom the public authority was vested, and they were all obliged to live together in one quarter of the city. The magistrate would not allow any other place of residence to any, except such as could procure a creditable person to be security for

BOOK V.

their good behaviour. Theſe reſtrictions were ſtill increaſed in 1760. The court, being informed by the Engliſh, of the ſhameful oppreſſions of its delegates, ſent commiſſaries from Pekin, who ſuffered themſelves to be bribed by the parties accuſed. Upon the report made by theſe corrupt men, all the Europeans were confined in a few houſes, where they could only treat with a company that was in poſſeſſion of an excluſive charter. The power of this monopoly has been ſince diminiſhed, but the other reſtraints ſtill continue the ſame.

Theſe mortifications have not induced us to relinquiſh the trade to China. We continue to get from thence tea, china, raw ſilk, manufactured ſilks, varniſh, pepper, rhubarb, and ſome other articles of leſs conſequence.

Account of the knowledge we have acquired concerning the tea which the Europeans purchaſe at China.

The tea-plant is a ſhrub which has the appearance of growing wild. It is five or ſix feet high, and is common at China and in Japan. It delights in craggy places; and is moſt frequently found upon the ſlope of hills and along the ſide of rivers. The Chineſe ſow whole fields with it; the Japaneſe are ſatisfied with planting it round the borders of their grounds. It arrives at its full growth only at the end of ſeven years. The ſtem is then cut, in order to obtain freſh ſhoots, each of which bears nearly as many leaves as a whole ſhrub.

Its leaves, which are the only valuable part of the plant, are alternate, oval, pointed, ſmooth, dentated in their circumference, and of a deep green colour. The youngeſt are tender and thin. They acquire more firmneſs and ſubſtance with age. At the baſis of them, diſtinct flowers make their appearance, which have a calix with five or ſix diviſions, as many white petals, often united at the bottom, and a great number of ſtamina placed round a piſtil. This is changed into a rounded ligneous ſhell, with three ridges, and three cells, each filled with one ſpherical ſeed, or with ſeveral angular ſeeds.

Beſide this tea, known by the name of Bohea, we

may diſtinguiſh two other kinds, very ſtrongly characteriſed. One is the green tea, the flower of which is compoſed of nine petals; the other the red tea, which has a large flower with ſix red petals, and furniſhed in its centre with a cluſter of ſtamina, united at their baſe. It is not known whether there are more ſpecies of this plant exiſting. Of the three that have been mentioned, the firſt is the moſt common. The Bohea tea is cultivated in moſt provinces of China, but is not equally good every where; though care be always taken to place it in a ſouthern aſpect and in valleys. The tea that grows in ſtony ground is far preferable to that which grows in a light ſoil, but the worſt ſort is that which is produced in a clayiſh ground. From hence ariſe the varieties that have improperly been called diſtinct ſpecies.

The different degree of perfection in tea does not ariſe merely from the difference of ſoil; but chiefly from the ſeaſon in which it is gathered.

The firſt time of gathering it about the end of February. The leaves then are ſmall, tender, and delicate; and this is the ſort that is called *ficki-tsjaa*, or Imperial tea, becauſe it is chiefly reſerved for the uſe of the court and people of rank. The ſecond time of gathering it is at the beginning of April; the leaves are then larger and more ſpread, but of inferior quality to the firſt. Theſe yield the *toots-jaa*, or Chineſe tea, which the merchants diſtinguiſh into three ſorts. Laſtly, the leaves gathered in the month of June, and which are then arrived at their full growth, yield the *bants-jaa*, or coarſe tea, which is kept for the common people.

A third method of multiplying the various kinds of tea conſiſts in the different manner of preparing it. The Japaneſe, according to the account of Koempfer, have buildings on purpoſe, which contain a ſeries of ſmall furnaces, each of them covered with a plate of iron or copper. When this is heated, it is ſpread over with leaves, which have been previouſly dipped in hot water, or expoſed to its vapour. They are

BOOK V. ſtirred about briſkly, till they have acquired a ſufficient degree of heat. They are afterwards thrown upon mats, and rubbed between the hands. This proceſs, when repeated two or three times, abſorbs all the moiſture. At the expiration of two or three months, it is renewed again, eſpecially for the imperial tea, which, as it is to be uſed in powder, requires a more complete deſiccation. This precious kind of tea is kept in China jars; that of an inferior quality in earthen pots, and the coarſeſt of all in baſkets of ſtraw. The preparation of this laſt, does not require ſo much care. It is dried at a leſs expence in the open air. Beſides theſe teas, there are others that are brought in cakes, in balls, or in little parcels tied round with ſilk. Extracts are alſo made from them.

The practice of the Chineſe in the cultivation, gathering, and preparation of their tea, is leſs known: but it does not appear to be very different from that uſed by the Japaneſe. It has been ſaid that they added to their tea ſome vegetable dye. Its green colour has likewiſe been attributed, but without foundation, to a mixture of copperas, or to the effect of the plate of copper upon which the leaf has been dried.

Tea is the common drink of the Chineſe; and was not introduced among them through vain caprice. Almoſt throughout the empire, the water is unwholeſome and nauſeous. Of all the methods that were tried to improve it, none ſucceeded ſo well as tea. Upon trial it was thought to be endued with other virtues, and was extolled as an excellent diſſolvent, a purifier of the blood, a ſtrengthener of the head and ſtomach, and a promoter of digeſtion and perſpiration.

The high opinion which the Europeans, who firſt went into China, conceived of its inhabitants, induced them to adopt the high, though perhaps exaggerated, opinion the Chineſe had of tea. They communicated their enthuſiaſm to us; and this enthuſiaſm has diffuſed itſelf with continual increaſe through

the North of Europe and of America, in countries where the air is thick and loaded with vapours.

Whatever may be the influence of prejudice in general, yet it muſt be allowed, that tea produces ſome good effects in thoſe countries where the uſe of it is univerſally adopted: but theſe effects cannot be ſo great anywhere as in China. We know the Chineſe reſerve the beſt tea for themſelves, and adulterate that intended for exportation, by mixing with it other leaves, which reſemble thoſe of tea in ſhape, but may not have the ſame properties: we know too that ſince the exportation has been ſo great, they are not ſo circumſpect in the choice of the ſoil, nor ſo careful in the preparing of the tea. Our manner of uſing it may likewiſe contribute to leſſen its virtues.

We drink it too hot and too ſtrong; we always mix it with a great deal of ſugar, frequently with perfumes, and ſometimes with pernicious liquors. Beſide all this, its being conveyed ſo far by ſea is alone ſufficient to exhauſt moſt of its ſalubrious ſalts.

We ſhall never be able to determine exactly the virtues of tea, till it has been naturalized in our own climates. We began to deſpair of ſucceſs, though the experiments had been only made with ſeeds, which being of a very oily nature, are apt to grow rancid. At length Mr. Linnæus, the moſt celebrated botaniſt in Europe, received this ſhrub in its growing ſtate, and contrived to preſerve it out of a greenhouſe even in Sweden. Some plants have been ſince brought into Great Britain, where they live, flower, and thrive in the open air. France has alſo procured ſome; and they will probably ſucceed in the ſouthern parts of that kingdom. It will be a very great advantage to us, if we can cultivate a plant, which can never ſuffer ſo much by change of ſoil, as by growing muſty in the long voyage it muſt undergo in being brought from abroad. It is not long ſince we had as little proſpect of attaining to the art of making porcelain.

Origin, na-

Some years ago there were in the collection of

BOOK V.

ture. and properties of the porcelain which the Europeans purchase in China.

Count Caylus two or three little fragments of a vase supposed to be Egyptian, which being carefully analysed proved to be unglazed porcelain. If that learned man be not in an error, or have not been misinformed, the making of porcelain was known in the flourishing days of ancient Egypt. But, without some more authentic monuments than the allegation of a single fact, we must not deprive China of this invention, where the art has been known for a longer time than we can trace.

Egypt is supposed by many to have the pre-eminence in point of antiquity, both in regard to its foundation, and to laws, sciences, and arts in general, though perhaps China may have as good a claim to it. Nor can it be certainly determined, whether these two empires are not equally ancient, and have not received all their social institutions from a people inhabiting the vast region that divides them: whether the savage inhabitants of the great mountains of Asia, after wandering about for many ages on the continent that forms the centre of our hemisphere, have not insensibly dispersed themselves towards the coasts of the seas that surround it, and formed themselves into separate nations in China, India, Persia, and Egypt: or, whether the successive floods, which may have happened in that part of the world, may not have enclosed and confined them to those regions full of mountains and deserts. These conjectures are not foreign to the history of commerce, which in future times must greatly tend to illustrate the general history of the human race, of the several settlements they have formed, of their opinions and inventions of every kind.

The art of making porcelain is, if not one of the most wonderful, at least one of the most pleasing that men have ever discovered; it is the neatness of luxury, which is preferable to its magnificence.

Porcelain is an earthen ware of the most perfect kind. It varies in colour, texture, and transparency. Transparency, indeed, is not essential to it, for there

is a great deal of very fine porcelain which has not this quality.

It is usually covered with white or coloured varnish. This varnish is merely a layer of melted glass, which must never be completely transparent. This is styled glazed porcelain, and is properly what we call china; the unglazed is distinguished by the name of porcelain biscuit. This is intrinsically as good as the other, but is neither so neat, so bright, nor so beautiful.

The word earthen-ware is well adapted to porcelain, because, as all other earthen-ware, the substance of it is pure earth, without any alteration from art but the mere division of its parts. No metallic or saline substance whatever must enter into its composition, not even in the glazing, which must be made of substances nearly, if not altogether, as simple.

The best porcelain, and commonly the closest, is that which is made of the simplest materials, such as a vitrifiable stone and a pure and white clay. On this last substance depend the closeness and compactness of porcelain, and indeed of earthen-ware in general.

The connoisseurs divide the china that comes from Asia into six classes; the trouted china, the old white, the Japan, the Chinese, the Chinese Japan, and the Indian. These several appellations rather denote a difference that strikes the eye than a real distinction.

The trouted china, which no doubt is called so from the resemblance it bears to the scales of a trout, seems to be the most ancient, and savours most of the infancy of the art. It has two imperfections. The paste is always very brown, and the surface appears full of cracks. These cracks are not only in the glazing, but in the porcelain itself; and therefore this sort has but a small degree of transparency, does not sound so well, is very brittle, and bears the fire better than any other. To hide these cracks, it is painted with a variety of colours: in this kind of

ornament consists its only value. The facility with which Count Lauragais has imitated it, has convinced us that it is only an imperfect sort of porcelain.

The old white is certainly very beautiful, whether we consider only the glazing, or examine the biscuit.

This is very valuable porcelain, but very scarce, and but little used. The paste of it seems to be extremely short, and fit only for small vases, figures, and other ornamental china. It is sold in trade for Japan, though it is certain that some very fine of the same kind is made in China. It is of two different hues; the one a perfect cream-colour, the other a blueish white, which makes it look more transparent. The glazing seems to be more incorporated into this last. This sort has been attempted at St.Cloud, and some pieces have been produced that looked very beautiful; but those who have narrowly examined them, have said that they were no better than frit or lead, and would not bear a comparison.

The Japan is not so easily distinguished as most people imagine from the finest of the sort made in China. A connoisseur, whom we have consulted, pretends, that in general the glazing of the true Japan is whiter, and has less of the blueish cast, than the porcelain of China; that the ornaments are laid on with less profusion, that the blue is brighter, and the patterns and flowers not so whimsical, and more closely copied from nature. His opinion seems to be confirmed by the testimony of some writers, who tell us, that the Chinese who trade to Japan bring home some pieces of china that make more show than their own, but are not so solid; and that they serve to ornament their apartments, but that they never use them, because they will not bear the fire well. All china glazed with coloured varnish, whether sea-green, blueish, or purple, he believes to be Chinese. All the Japan brought into Europe comes from the Dutch, who are the only Europeans that are suffered to come into that empire. Possibly they may have chosen it out of the porcelains brought there every year by

the Chineſe, or they may have purchaſed it at Canton. In either caſe, the diſtinction between the porcelain of Japan and that of China would not be founded on fact, but merely on prejudice. From this opinion it is plain, that what is ſold here for Japan is very fine china.

There is leſs doubt about what we call porcelain of china. The glazing has a bluer caſt than that of Japan, is more highly coloured, and the patterns are more whimſical. The paſte is in general whiter and more compact; the grain finer and cloſer, and the china thinner. Among the ſeveral ſorts made in China, there is one that is very ancient; it is painted of a deep blue, a beautiful red, or a green like verdigriſe, and is very coarſe, very thick, and very heavy. Some of this is trouted, and the grain is often dry and brown. That which is not trouted has a clear ſound, but both want tranſparency. It is ſold for old china, and the fineſt pieces are ſuppoſed to come from Japan. It was originally a better ſort of earthen-ware, rather than a true porcelain; time and experience may have improved it. It is grown more tranſparent, and the colours being more carefully laid on, look brighter. The eſſential difference between this and other China is, that this is made of a ſhorter paſte, and is very hard and ſolid. The pieces of this china have always at the bottom the marks of three or four ſupporters, which were put to prevent its giving way in baking. By this contrivance, the Chineſe have ſucceeded in making very large pieces of porcelain. The china that is not of this ſort, and which is called modern China, is of a longer paſte and finer grain, higher glazed, whiter, and clearer. It ſeldom has the marks of the ſupporters, and its tranſparency has nothing glaſſy in it. All that is made with this paſte is eaſily turned, ſo that it is viſible the workman's hand is glided over it, as over a fine ſmooth clay. There is an infinite variety of this ſort of china, both as to form, colouring, workmanſhip, and price.

BOOK V.

A fifth ſort is what we call Chineſe Japan, becauſe it unites the ornaments of the porcelain, which is thought to come from Japan, with thoſe that are more in the Chineſe taſte. Among this kind of porcelain, there is ſome that is ornamented with a very fine blue, with white ſcrolls. The glazing of this kind is remarkable for being a true white enamel, whereas that of the other ſorts is half tranſparent; for the Chineſe glazing is never entirely ſo.

The colours in general are laid on in the ſame manner, both on the true china and the imitations of it. The firſt and moſt laſting of them is the blue that is extracted from ſmalt, which is nothing more than the calx of cobalt. This colour is commonly laid on before the pieces are either glazed or baked, ſo that the glazing that is put on afterwards ſerves as a diſſolvent. All the other colours, and even the blue that enters into the compoſition on the pallet, are laid on over the glazing, and muſt firſt be mixed up and ground with a ſaline ſubſtance or calx of lead, that favours their ingreſs into the glazing. It is rather a common thing for the Chineſe to colour the whole of the glazing; the colour is then laid on neither above nor below it, but is incorporated into the glazing itſelf. Some very extraordinary fanciful ornaments are made in this manner. In whatever way the colours are applied, they are commonly extracted from cobalt, gold, iron, mineral earths, and copper. That which is extracted from copper is a very delicate colour, and requires great care in the preparation.

All the ſorts of porcelain we have deſcribed are made at King-to-chin, an immenſe town in the province of Kiamſi. This manufacture employs five hundred furnaces and a million of men. It has been attempted to be made at Pekin and other places of the empire; but it has not ſucceeded anywhere, though the ſame workmen have been employed, and the ſame materials made uſe of; ſo that this branch of induſtry is entirely given up, except in the neighbourhood of Canton, where the ſort of porcelain is

made that is known amongſt us by the name of India china. The paſte of it is long and yielding; but in general the colours, eſpecially the blue, and the red of iron, are far inferior to what comes from Japan and the interior parts of China. All the colours, except the blue, ſtand up in lumps, and are very badly laid on. This is the only china that has purple, which has given riſe to that abſurd notion of its being painted in Holland. Moſt of the cups, plates, and other veſſels, which our merchants bring home, are of this manufacture, which is leſs eſteemed in China than our delft is in Europe.

Attempts have been made to introduce this art into Europe. It has ſucceeded beſt in Saxony. The porcelain that comes from this country is real porcelain, and probably made with very ſimple materials, though prepared and mixed with more art than in Aſia. This curious preparation, together with the ſcarcity of the materials, is no doubt the circumſtance that makes the Dreſden porcelain ſo dear. As there is but one ſort of paſte that comes from that manufacture, it has been ſurmiſed, and not without ſome degree of probability, that the Saxons were only in poſſeſſion of their own ſecret, and by no means of the art of making China. This ſuſpicion ſeems to be confirmed, by the great affinity there is between the Saxon and other German porcelain, which ſeems to be made upon the ſame principle.

However this be, it is certain no porcelain is higher glazed, ſmoother, better ſhaped, more pleaſing to the eye, or more ſolid and durable. It will reſiſt a fierce fire much longer than many of the ſorts made in China. The colours are finely diſpoſed, and executed in a maſterly manner; none are ſo well adapted to the glazing; they are blended with great exactneſs; they are bright, without being ſhaded and glazed, like thoſe of moſt of the porcelain made at Sèvre.

The mention of this place reminds us that we muſt take notice of the porcelain made in France. This, like the Engliſh, is only made with frit; that is, with

ſtones that are not fuſible in themſelves, but receive a beginning of fuſion from the mixture of a greater or leſs quantity of ſalt; and accordingly it is more glaſſy, of a looſer texture, and more brittle than any other. That of Sèvre, which is by far the worſt of all, and always looks yellowiſh and dirty, which betrays the lead they put into the glazing, has no other merit than what it derives from the excellence of the artiſts that are employed for the patterns and penciling. Theſe great maſters have diſplayed ſo much taſte in the execution of ſome of the pieces, that they will be the admiration of poſterity; but in itſelf this ware will never be more than an object of taſte, luxury, and expence. The ſupporters will always be a principal cauſe of its dearneſs.

All porcelain, when it receives the laſt effect of the fire, is actually in a ſtate that has a tendency to fuſion, is ſoft and pliable, and might be worked like red-hot iron. There is none of it that will not bend and give way when it is in that ſtate. If the pieces when they are turned, are thicker, or project more on one ſide than another, the ſtrongeſt will infallibly bear away the weakeſt; they will warp to that ſide, and the piece is ſpoiled. This inconvenience is prevented, by propping it up with bits of porcelain made of the ſame paſte, of different ſhapes, which are applied under, or to the parts that project, and are moſt in danger of being warped. As all porcelain ſhrinks in baking, the props muſt alſo be made of ſuch materials as will yield in the ſame degree exactly as the paſte they are intended to ſupport. As the different paſtes do not ſhrink equally, it follows that the props muſt be made of the ſame paſte as the piece they ſupport.

The ſofter the china is, and the more inclining to vitrification, the more it requires to be propped up. This is the great fault of the Sèvre china; the paſte is very coſtly, and frequently more of it is waſted in props, than is employed in making the piece itſelf. The neceſſity of this expenſive method produces ano-

ther inconvenience. The glazing cannot be baked at the ſame time as the porcelain, which therefore muſt twice undergo the heat of the furnace. The porcelain made in China, and the beſt imitations of it, being of a ſtiffer paſte, and leſs ſuſceptible of vitrification, ſeldom want any props, and are baked ready glazed. They therefore conſume much leſs paſte, are ſeldom ſpoiled, and require leſs time, as well as leſs fire and trouble.

Some writers have urged, in favour of the ſuperiority of Aſiatic china, that it reſiſts fire better than ours; that all European china will melt in that of Saxony, but that the Dreſden itſelf will melt in the foreign china. This aſſertion is entirely erroneous, if taken in its full extent. Few porcelains of China will ſtand the fire ſo well as the Dreſden; they ſpoil and bubble in the ſame degree of fire which ſerves to bake that made by Count Lauragais; but this is a circumſtance of ſo little conſequence, that it ſcarce deſerves attention. Porcelain is not intended to return into the furnace when once it is taken out, nor is it deſigned to bear the action of an intenſe fire.

It is in point of ſolidity that the foreign porcelain truly excels that of Europe; it is by the property it has of heating quicker and with leſs riſk, and of bearing, without danger of being broken, the ſudden effect of cold or boiling hot water; by the facility with which it is moulded and baked, which is an ineſtimable advantage, as pieces of all ſizes can be made with great eaſe, as it can be baked without any riſk, be ſold at a lower price, be of more general uſe, and conſequently become the object of a more extenſive trade.

Another great advantage of the India porcelain is that the ſame paſte is very uſeful for making crucibles, and a variety of ſuch veſſels which are conſtantly uſed in the other arts. They not only bear the fire for a longer time, but communicate nothing of their ſubſtance to what is fuſed in them. Their

ſubſtance is ſo pure, white, compact, and hard, that it can ſcarce be melted, and acquires no kind of tinge.

France is at the eve of enjoying all theſe advantages. It is certain that Count Lauragais, who has long been in ſearch of the ſecret of the Chineſe, has at laſt made ſome china that is very like it. His materials have the ſame properties, and if they are not exactly the ſame, at leaſt they are a ſpecies of the ſame kind. Like the Chineſe, he can make his paſte long or ſhort, and follow either his own or ſome other proceſs. His porcelain is not inferior to that of the Chineſe in point of pliableneſs, and is ſuperior to it in point of glazing; perhaps too in the facility with which it takes the colours. If it can be improved to ſuch a degree as to have as fine and as white a grain, we may diſpenſe with the porcelain of China.

While the diſcovery of Count Lauragais, from obſtacles with which we are unacquainted, was confined to mere experiment, the manufactory of Sèvre was gradually leaving off its frit, and ſubſtituting to it another kind of paſte, made from an extremely white earth, found in the province of Limoges. This new porcelain is much more ſolid than the former; its appearance is more beautiful, its grain more pleaſing to the eye, and its tranſparency leſs vitreous. Its glazing is often much finer. This manufacture, by changing its paſte, partakes more of the nature of real porcelain, and the proceſs of making it is more ſimple.

Nevertheleſs, as the earth made uſe of at Sèvre is very ſhort, and as the argillaceous part, which is the only one that can impart coheſion to it, can make it eaſy to work, and give it ſolidity in baking, enters little into the compoſition of this earth, the pieces that are produced from this manufacture will of courſe always bear a high price. Count Lauragais's paſte would not be ſubject to this inconvenience; for though it be not ſo white, yet, under the hand of the artiſt, it will bend, like wax, at pleaſure.

The brilliancy of the Limoges earth has delighted every one. Paris, and its diſtricts, have been immediately filled with porcelain ovens. All theſe manufactures have got their materials from this province, and they have been found of the ſame kind; but more or leſs white, and more or leſs fuſible, according to the part of the very extenſive layer from which they have been taken.

When M. Turgot was intendant of Limoges, he eſtabliſhed a manufactory of porcelain upon a very well concerted plan. If this manufacture, which is upon the ſpot, and which has the advantage over all the reſt of ſelecting its materials, and in cheapneſs of workmanſhip, ſhould be conducted with activity and ſkill, it muſt put an end to all competition. That of Sèvre alone will ſtill ſubſiſt; which, from the elegance of its forms, and the ſuperior taſte of its ornaments, will ever be beyond any kind of compariſon. But we have ſaid enough, and perhaps too much, upon the ſubject in queſtion. We muſt now proceeed to ſpeak of the ſilks of China.

The Europeans buy ſilks in China. Their difference from our ſilks.

The annals of China aſcribe the diſcovery of ſilk to one of the wives of the emperor Hoangti. Theſe princeſſes afterwards amuſed themſelves with breeding up ſilk-worms, drawing the ſilk, and working it. It is even ſaid, that in the interior part of the palace there was a piece of ground ſet apart for the culture of mulberry-trees. The empreſs, attended by the chief ladies of her court, went in perſon and gathered the leaves of ſome of the branches that were brought down ſo as to be within her reach. So prudent an inſtance of policy promoted this branch of induſtry to ſuch a degree, that the Chineſe, who before were only clothed in ſkins, ſoon appeared dreſſed in ſilk. The ſilks, that were now grown very common, were ſoon brought to great perfection. The Chineſe were indebted for this laſt advantage to the writings of ſome ingenious men, and even of ſome miniſters, who had not diſdained to attend to this

new art. All China learned from their theory every thing belonging to it.

The art of breeding up ſilk-worms, and of ſpining and weaving their ſilk, extended from China to India and Perſia, where it made no very rapid progreſs; if it had, Rome would not, at the end of the third century, have given a pound of gold for a pound of ſilk. Greece having adopted this art in the eighth century, ſilks became a little more known, but did not grow common. They were long conſidered as an object of magnificence, and reſerved for perſons in the moſt eminent ſtations, and for the greateſt ſolemnities. At length, Roger, king of Sicily, ſent for manufacturers from Athens; and the culture of the mulberry-tree ſoon paſſed from that iſland to the neighbouring continent. Other countries in Europe wiſhed to partake of an advantage from which Italy derived ſo much wealth; and after ſome fruitleſs attempts they attained it. However, from the nature of the climate, or ſome other cauſe, it has not ſucceeded equally in every place.

The ſilks of Naples, Sicily, and Reggio, whether in organzin or in tram, are all ordinary ſilks; but they are uſeful, and even neceſſary for brocades, for for embroidery, and for all works that require ſtrong ſilk.

The other Italian ſilks, thoſe of Novi, Venice, Tuſcany, Milan, Montſerrat, Bergamo, and Piedmont, are uſed in organzin for the warp, though they are not all equally fine and good. The Bologna ſilks were for a long time preferred to any other. But ſince thoſe of Piedmont have been improved, they juſtly claim the preference, as being the ſmootheſt, the fineſt, and the ligheſt. Thoſe of Bergamo come neareſt to them.

Though the Spaniſh ſilks in general are very fine, thoſe of Valencia are by far the beſt. They are all fit for any ſort of manufacture; the only fault they have, is being rather too oily, which is a great detriment to the dye.

The French ſilks excel moſt others in Europe, and are inferior to none but thoſe of Piedmont and Bergamo in point of lightneſs. Beſides, they are brighter coloured than thoſe of Piedmont; and more even and ſtronger than thoſe of Bergamo.

The variety of ſilk produced in Europe has not yet enabled us to diſpenſe with that of the Chineſe. Though in general it is uneven and heavy, it will always be in requeſt for its whiteneſs. It is generally thought to derive this advantage from nature: but it is more probable, that, when the Chineſe draw the ſilk, they put ſome ingredient into the baſon, that has the property of expelling all heterogeneous ſubſtances, or at leaſt the coarſeſt parts of them. The little waſte there is in this ſilk compared to any other, when it is boiled for dying, ſeems to give great weight to this conjecture.

However this be, the Chineſe ſilk is ſo far ſuperior to any other in whiteneſs, that it is the only one which can be uſed for blondes and gauzes: all our endeavours to ſubſtitute our own in the blonde manufactures have been fruitleſs, whether we have made uſe of prepared or unprepared ſilk. The attempts in gauze have not been quite ſo unſucceſsful. The whiteſt French and Italian ſilks have been tried, and ſeemed to anſwer tolerably well; but neither the colour nor the dreſſing were ſo perfect as in the gauzes made with the Chineſe ſilk.

In the laſt century, the Europeans imported very little ſilk from China. The French ſilk ſucceeded very well for black and coloured gauze, and for catgut that was then in faſhion. The taſte that has prevailed for theſe forty years paſt, and more eſpecially for the laſt twenty-five, for white gauzes and blondes, has gradually increaſed the demand for this production of the Eaſt. Of late it has amounted to eighty thouſand weight a-year, of which France has always taken near three-fourths. This importation has increaſed to ſuch a degree, that in 1766 the Engliſh alone imported a hundred and four thouſand weight:

BOOK V. as it could not be all consumed in gauze and blonde, the manufacturers have used it for tabbies and hose. The stockings made of this silk are of a beautiful white that never changes, but are not near so fine as others.

Beside this silk, so remarkable for its whiteness, which comes chiefly from the province of Tche-Kiang, and is known in Europe by the name of Nanking-silk, which is the place where most of it is prepared, China produces ordinary silks, which we call Canton. As these are only fit for some kinds of tram, and are as dear as our own, which answer the same purpose, very few are imported. The quantity brought home by the English and Dutch does not exceed five or six thousand pieces. The manufactured silks are a much more considerable article.

The Chinese are not less ingenious in weaving their silks than in preparing them. This does not extend to those that are mixed with gold and silver. Their manufacturers have never known how to draw out these metals into thread, and the whole of their art consists in rolling their silks upon gilt paper, or putting the paper upon them after they are woven. Both methods are equally bad.

Though, in general, men are more apt to be pleased with novelty than with true excellence, yet the Europeans have never been tempted to buy these stuffs. They have been equally disgusted at the awkwardness of the patterns, which exhibit nothing but distorted figures, and unmeaning groups; they discover no taste in the disposition of the lights and shades, nor any of that elegance and ease that appear in the works of our good artists. There is a stiffness and a want of freedom, in all that the Chinese do, that is displeasing to persons of any taste; all savours of their particular turn of mind, which is destitute of vivacity and elevation.

The only thing that makes us overlook these defects in those works that represent flowers, birds, or trees, is, that none of those objects are raised. The

figures are painted upon the ſilk itſelf with indelible colours; and yet the deception is ſo perfect, that all theſe objects appear to be brocaded or embroidered. BOOK V.

Their plain ſilks want no recommendation, for they are perfect in their kind; and ſo are their colours, eſpecially the green and the red. The white of their damaſks has ſomething extremely pleaſing. The Chineſe make them only with the ſilk of Tche-Kiang. They thoroughly boil the warp, as we do, but only half-boil the woof. This method gives the damaſk more ſubſtance and ſtiffneſs. It has a reddiſh caſt without being yellow, which is very pleaſing, and has not that glare that dazzles the ſight. This agreeable white is likewiſe obſerved in the Chineſe varniſh.

The Europeans purchaſe lacquered ware and paper in China. Digreſſion upon the arts of this empire.

The varniſh is a particular kind of reſin, which diſtils from a tree called at Japan, *ſitz-dſiu*, and at China, *tſi-chu*. It has few branches, and is of the height of the willow. Its bark is of a whitiſh colour and rough, its wood brittle and full of pith. Its leaves, which are alternately diſpoſed at the extremity of the branches, reſemble thoſe of the aſh, and puſh out from their axillæ cluſters of flowers, which are male upon one plant, and female upon another. The firſt have a calix with five diviſions, five petals, and as many ſtamina. In the others we find, inſtead of ſtamina, a piſtil crowned with three ſtyles; this piſtil becomes a yellowiſh fruit, of the bigneſs of a pea, ſlightly compreſſed on the ſides, and filled with a hard kernel. This tree grows very well from ſeed, but the method of propagating it by ſprigs is preferred. For this purpoſe, the branches from which new plants are to be raiſed, are choſen in autumn. They are ſurrounded at their baſe with a ball of moiſtened earth, tied round with thread, till the ſeaſon of the froſt, and kept moiſt by being conſtantly watered. In the ſpring, when the branch has ſhot ſome branches into this earth, it is ſawed off below the ball, and tranſplanted.

This tree grows only in ſome mild provinces of China and Japan. It is alſo found in thoſe regions

BOOK V.

of America that are ſituated under the ſame latitude, ſuch as Louiſiana and Carolina. It thrives in all ſoils and with all expoſures: but its produce is not the ſame in every place, either in quality or quantity. It requires but little care in cultivating. It is ſufficient to ſtir up the ground a little at the foot of the trees, and to put dead leaves round it, which ſerve inſtead of dung. The trunk of thoſe trees that grow wild in the mountains, is ſometimes twelve inches in diameter. It is much leſs in thoſe trees that are cultivated, and which do not laſt leſs than ten years. This difference is to be attributed to the inciſions that are made in their bark to extract the varniſh. This milky juice, which exiſts in all parts of the tree, diſtils from the inciſions, under the form of liquid pitch. When expoſed to the air it aſſumes a reddiſh colour, which is ſoon changed into a bright black. Shells are fixed at each ſlit, to receive the liquor; which is afterwards poured into bamboos, and then carried to the merchants, who put it into larger veſſels. The freſh varniſh exhales a dangerous vapour, which produces inflammatory humours upon the ſkin of thoſe who are expoſed to it. They preſerve themſelves from this pernicious effect, by turning the head aſide when they collect the liquid, or when they pour it off. Some travellers add, that the workmen rub their hands and face with oil before and after the buſineſs, and that they carefully cover all other parts of their body.

The varniſh is gathered in the ſummer, and the proceſs is repeated three times in the ſame ſeaſon, and upon the ſame tree; but the firſt that runs off is the beſt. When the tree appears exhauſted, its ſtem is cut off, and the root puſhes forth freſh ſhoots, which are ready to yield varniſh at the end of three years.

The varniſh moſt in repute is that which comes from Japan. It does not require much preparation. It is ſufficient to ſtrain it through a cloth, in order to ſeparate it from any foreign particles. The ſuper-

fluous watery parts are alſo evaporated by the heat of the ſun, and hogs gall is added to give it a degree of conſiſtence.

We muſt not confound this varniſh with a very inferior ſort with which it is adulterated. The latter, which is known by the name of Siam varniſh, diſtils from the tree that yields the anacardium. It is only uſed in varniſhing the moſt ordinary utenſils. It is gathered at Siam, Cambodia, and Tonquin, where the Chineſe purchaſe it, becauſe that which they extract from the Tſichu is not ſufficient for their conſumption.

The true varniſh, of which they diſtinguiſh three different kinds in China, is uſed in two ways. The firſt conſiſts in rubbing the wood with a particular ſort of oil uſed in China; and as ſoon as it is dry, the varniſh is laid on. It is ſo tranſparent, that the veins of the wood appear tinged through it, if it be laid on but two or three times. If it be repeatedly applied, it may be brought to ſhine like a looking glaſs.

The other way is more complicated. A kind of paſteboard is glued by the help of maſtic over the wood. On this ſmooth and ſolid ground are ſpread ſeveral layers of varniſh. It muſt be neither too thick nor too liquid; and in this juſt medium the ſkill of the artiſt principally conſiſts.

Whichever way the varniſh is laid on, it effectually preſerves the wood from decaying. The worms can ſcarce penetrate it, neither has the damp ever the leaſt effect upon it; and with a little care this varniſh leaves no ſmell behind.

This varniſh is as pleaſing to the eye as it is durable. It may be applied on gold and ſilver, and mixed with all ſorts of colours. Upon it are painted figures, landſcapes, palaces, hunting parties and battles. In ſhort, it would not be deficient in any reſpect, if it were not generally ſpoiled by the badneſs of the Chineſe drawing.

Notwithſtanding this defect, the making of this ware requires much pains and conſtant attention.

The varnish must be laid on nine or ten times at least, and cannot be spread too thin. There must be a sufficient time allowed between the application of each layer, that it may be suffered to dry. A longer time still must be allowed between the application of the last layer and the polishing, painting and gilding. A whole summer is scarce sufficient for all this process at Nanking, from whence the court and the chief cities of the empire are supplied. It is carried on with greater expedition at Canton. As there is a great demand for this ware in Europe, and as the Europeans will have it made according to their own plan, and will allow but a short time to complete it, it is usually finished in too great haste. The artist, not having time to give the necessary degree of perfection to his work, is satisfied if he can but make it pleasing to the eye. The Chinese manufacture of paper is not liable to the same imperfections.

Originally the Chinese wrote with a steel bodkin upon wooden tablets, which, being fastened together, made a volume. They afterwards traced their characters upon pieces of silk or linen, cut to any length or breadth. At last, about sixteen hundred years ago, they found out the secret of making paper.

The Chinese paper is of two kinds. That which is used for writing and printing, is made of cotton rags, and of hemp, by a process nearly similar to that which is practised in the European manufactures. It is equal, and in some respects superior, to our paper. Its thinness and transparency have suggested the idea of its being made of silk. But the persons who have propagated this opinion knew not that silk, though it may be reduced into very minute particles, will not mix with water, and can never acquire a consistence by being laid upon frames.

In making the second kind of paper, the Chinese use the internal barks of the mulberry tree, of the elm, of the cotton tree, and more frequently of the bamboo. These substances, after they are become rot-

ten by ſoaking in muddy water with lime in it, are cut in pieces, bleached in the dew or in the ſun, triturated in mortars, and boiled in coppers to a fluid paſte. This paſte being ſpread upon frames that are made of ſmall cane rods paſſed through the wire-drawing iron, produces thoſe ſheets of paper that are ſometimes twelve feet long, and four feet broad, and which are generally uſed for hangings in the Chineſe houſes. Sometimes they are deſigned for writing or printing: but they muſt in that caſe be dipped in a ſolution of alum; and even after this proceſs, one can only write or print upon one of the two ſides.

Though this paper be apt to crack, to be injured by damps, and to be worm-eaten, it is become an article of trade. Europe has borrowed from Aſia the idea of furniſhing cloſets and making ſcreens with it.

The figures upon this paper are graceful in their attitudes and in their dreſs: but though we ſee heads, which preſent ſome agreeable feature, yet they are very incorrectly drawn. The eyes in a full face are frequently repreſented as they ſhould appear in a profile; and the hands are always wretchedly done. Moreover, there are no ſhades in theſe drawings, and the objects appear as if they received light from all ſides. They have not even a ſhade upon their ground, and are, in ſome meaſure, tranſparent. Accordingly, it may be ſaid that the Chineſe are not in the leaſt in poſſeſſion of the art of painting: for there can be no painting where there are neither contours, nor half-tints, nor ſhades, nor reflected lights. Their works are at beſt nothing more than ſlight coloured prints.

We cannot draw any concluſion from the plates that were engraved at Paris for the emperor of China. The drawings were made by miſſionaries who had learned the art of deſign in Europe, by which means, they have in general been found conformable to the ideas of effect which we acquire from a ſtudied inſpection of nature. Nevertheleſs, in conformity without doubt to the cuſtom of the empire, one of

BOOK V. them has been found, in which the figures marked no ſhade upon the ground, which made them appear as if they were in the air.

The perſpective we obſerve in theſe drawings, may alſo be attributed to the knowledge acquired in Europe. Though it be not accurate nor well choſen, ſince all the aſpects are repreſented as in a kite's view, yet theſe prints are, in this reſpect, very ſuperior to real Chineſe drawings. In the latter, we may indeed diſtinguiſh ſome idea of diminution in perſpective, and of the leſſening of objects: but we diſcern nothing that can induce us to ſuppoſe, that they have any knowledge of perſpective geometrically demonſtrated.

Theſe theoretical principles being leſs neceſſary in ſculpture, they have made more proficiency in that art. In many of their figures with ſhaking heads, we obſerve accurate imitations of nature, executed with great care, but without taſte in the workmanſhip, and ſervilely copied, as amongſt us, at the revival of the arts. Theſe artiſts know not how to conſider nature in her beauties. This proceeds, probably, from their not ſtudying the naked figure, and from the circumſtance of their not aiming at improvment, as ſoon as they find that they are advanced as far as their predeceſſors.

This confined method of ſtudying may however have produced one good effect among them, with reſpect to their porcelain. It may have contributed to preſerve in their vaſes the forms the moſt ſimple, and thoſe which firſt preſented themſelves. Theſe are, in fact, the moſt proper for this ſpecies of ſculpture. They are the beſt adapted to the neceſſity of bearing an intenſe fire without getting out of ſhape. Their form, which is generally upright, or has none but very eaſy inflections, ſeems more fit to bear the effect of baking. Our abundance of genius, and the conſtant deſire of producing ſomething new, induces us to attempt all kinds of curved attitudes, and frequently to paint objects in the air, which ſucceed

with difficulty; and which, becoming irregular by the action of the fire, produce many defects, and occaſion the loſs of ſeveral pieces. To which we may add, that the firſt workmen who were employed in making figures for vaſes in our manufactures, were too much accuſtomed to work in gold and ſilver, where every thing may be attempted. It is to be hoped, that time, experience, and the failure of ſucceſs in many trials, will reſtore to this art the ſimplicity that belongs to it.

Since the cuſtom of painting upon paper has been adopted in France and England, the Chineſe paper is in leſs requeſt. We may poſſibly be as ſucceſsful in our endeavours of producing rhubarb for ourſelves.

China ſupplies the Europeans with rhubarb, and other articles.

The rhubarb is a root which has the property of purging gently, of ſtrengthening the ſtomach, of facilitating digeſtion, and of deſtroying worms in children. It is a tuberoſe root, rather ſpongy, brown in the outſide, yellow internally, and ſtreaked with reddiſh veins. Its taſte is bitter and aſtringent, its ſmell acrid and aromatic. That which is cloſe, has a ſtrong ſmell, and tinges the ſaliva yellow, is preferred. The pieces that are rotten, too looſe in their texture, and have but little ſmell, are thrown away.

We have not, as yet, any certain idea of the plant that yields this remedy: it has not been examined upon the ſpot by any naturaliſt. The rhubarb of Muſcovy, the leaves of which are undulated, has been for ſome time conſidered as the true rhubarb: but its root, which is too compact, and leſs purgative ſeems to decide the matter againſt it. Another ſpecies, which is the *Rheum Palmatum* of the botaniſts, and ſome ſeeds of which Mr. de Juſſieu has lately received through Ruſſia, ſhould ſeem to be the plant in queſtion. Its root has the ſame texture, the ſame diſtinguiſhing characters, the ſame properties, as that which is uſed in our ſhops. It is oblong, tuberoſe, and puſhes out ſeveral leaves, palmated, has ſharp pointed pods, from the middle of which there riſes,

BOOK V. at the height of ſix feet feet, a ſtalk of white flowers, rather ſmall, each of which is compoſed of a coloured calix with ſix diviſions of nine ſtamina, and one piſtil, ſurmounted with three ſtyles, which becomes, as it ripens, a triangular ſeed.

We know not the preciſe place from whence this ſpecies originally comes: but it is well aſcertained, that the true rhubarb grows without cultivation, between the thirtieth and thirty-ninth degrees of north latitude. The provinces of Chenſi and of Setſchuen, to the north-weſt of China, the leſs Bucharia, and the kingdom of Tangut, fill up a great part of this immenſe ſpace.

The root of the rhubarb is taken out of the earth towards the end of winter, before the leaves are unfolded. It is cut into pieces, which are placed upon long tables, and ſtirred about ſeveral times in a day, till the juice they contain is grown thick and concrete. Without this precaution, the moſt active part of the root would be diſſipated, the conſequences of which would be a diminution of its weight and of its virtues. The roots are afterwards ſtrung upon little ſtrings to dry them, and are hung up in the open air, in a ſhady place, or tied round the necks of the cattle, as ſome travellers affirm. They are afterwards folded up in cotton, and ſent to their reſpective deſtinations.

The Calmuck Tartars, and the inhabitants of Great Bucharia, are the perſons who carry the rhubarb to Oremburg, where the Ruſſian government has it bought up. The good roots are carefully ſeparated from the bad ones. Thoſe that are not worth preſerving are burned; and the reſt are dried a ſecond time. The rhubarb that is not conſumed in the interior part of the empire, is delivered to the Engliſh merchants at a ſtipulated price, which never varies. It is the beſt of all the rhubarbs.

Next to this is the ſort which the people of Great Bucharia carry into Perſia, and which, after having

traverſed part of Aſia by land, arrives on the borders of the Mediterranean, where it is bought by the Venetians.

Before it is ſold again, this rhubarb is treated nearly with the ſame care as that which has paſſed through the hands of the Ruſſians.

The rhubarb which comes to us by theſe two channels, not being ſufficient for our conſumption, we have been obliged to employ that which our navigators bring us from China. It is very inferior to the other ſorts; whether it be that it has only been dried in an oven, as it has been imagined from its not being bored; or whether it may have acquired ſome particular taſte by being placed near other productions; or, in a word, whether a long voyage at ſea may not have altered its properties.

The Europeans have been deſirous of appropriating to themſelves this ſalutary plant. The rhubarb tree which is ſeen in the royal garden at Paris, has already furniſhed ſome ſeeds and ſhoots, which have ſucceeded in an open ground, in ſeveral provinces of the kingdom. The ſociety eſtabliſhed at London for the encouragement of arts and commerce, diſtributed, in 1779, medals to two Fngliſh cultivators who had produced rhubarb of a ſuperior quality. Theſe firſt experiments muſt have been attended with favourable conſequences.

Beſide the articles already mentioned, the Europeans bring from China, ink, camphire, borax, canes, gum-lac; and formerly they purchaſed gold there.

In Europe a mark of gold is worth about fourteen marks and a half of ſilver. If there were a country in which it was worth twenty, our merchants would carry gold thither to exchange it for ſilver. They would bring us back that ſilver, to receive gold in exchange, which they would again carry abroad for the ſame purpoſe. This trade would be continued in this manner till the relative value of the two metals came to be much the ſame in both countries. It was upon this principle, that for a long time ſilver

BOOK V.

was ſent to China, to be bartered for gold; by which traffic a profit of forty-five per cent. was made. It was never carried on by the charter companies; becauſe the profit they made upon it, however conſiderable it may appear, was yet much inferior to that obtained upon their merchandiſe. Their agents, who were not indulged in purſuing what trade they choſe, attended to theſe ſpeculations for their own advantage. They followed this branch of commerce with ſo much aſſiduity, that in a ſhort time the returns were not ſufficient to induce them to continue it. Gold is of greater or leſs value at Canton, according to the time of the year when it is purchaſed; its value is lower from the beginning of February to the end of May, than through the reſt of the year, when the harbour is full of foreign ſhips. Yet, in the moſt favourable ſeaſon, no more than eighteen per cent. is to be made of it, which is not a ſufficient inducement for any one to undertake this traffic. The only agents, who have not been ſufferers by the ceſſation of this trade, are thoſe of the French company, who were never allowed to be concerned in it. The directors reſerved that profit for themſelves. Many attempted it; but Caſtanier was the only one who carried on the trade with abilities and ſucceſs. He ſent goods to Mexico; theſe were ſold for piaſtres, which were carried to Acapulco, then to the Philippines, and from thence to China, where they were bartered for gold. That able man, by this judicious circulation, had opened a track, which it is ſurpriſing that no one has ſince purſued.

Account of the Europeans who have formed connections with China.

All the European nations, which ſail beyond the Cape of Good Hope, go as far as China. The Portugueſe were the firſt who landed there. The Chineſe gave them the town of Macao, which was built upon a barren and rugged ſpot, on the point of a little iſland at the mouth of the river Canton, and with it a territory of about three miles in circumference. They obtained the freedom of the harbour, which is too narrow, but ſafe and commodious, upon the con-

dition of paying to the emperor all the duties to be levied on the ſhips that ſhould come in; and they purchaſed the liberty of building fortifications, by engaging to pay a yearly tribute of 37,500 livres [1562l. 10s.]. As long as the court of Liſbon maintained the ſovereignty of the Indian ſeas, this place was a famous mart. It declined in the ſame proportion as the power of the Portugueſe, and gradually came to nothing. There would ſcarce be any remembrance left of this ſpot, formerly ſo celebrated, if, during one part of the year, it did not ſerve as an aſylum for the European factors, who, after the departure of their ſhips, are obliged to quit Canton, which they cannot re-enter till their veſſels return. Nevertheleſs, the feeble remains of this once flouriſhing colony, ſtill enjoyed a kind of independence till the year 1774.

At that period, the murder of a Chineſe determined the viceroy of the province to apply to his court for a magiſtrate to inſtruct and govern the barbarians of Macao; theſe were the words of his petition. The court ſent a Mandarin, who took poſſeſſion of the town in the name of his maſter. He ſcorned to live among foreigners, who are always holden in great contempt, and fixed his reſidence at the diſtance of a league from the town.

The Dutch met with worſe treatment about a century ago. Thoſe republicans, who, notwithſtanding the ſuperiority they had gained in the Aſiatic ſeas, had been excluded from China by the intrigues of the Portugueſe, at laſt got acceſs to the ports of that empire. Not ſatisfied with the precarious footing they had acquired there, they attempted to erect a fort near Hoang-pou, under pretence of building a warehouſe. It is ſaid, that their deſign was to make themſelves maſters of the navigation of the Tigris, and to give law both to the Chineſe and to foreigners, who were deſirous of trading to Canton. Their views were diſcovered too ſoon for their intereſt. They were all maſſacred; and it was a great while

BOOK V.

before any of their nation could venture to appear anew upon the coaſts of China. They were ſeen there again about the year 1730. The firſt ſhips that arrived there came from Java. They brought various commodities of the growth of India in general, and of their own colonies in particular, and bartered them for thoſe of the country. The commanders of theſe veſſels, wholly intent upon pleaſing the council of Batavia, from which they immediately received their orders, and expected their promotion, had nothing in view but to diſpoſe of the merchandiſe they were intruſted with, without attending to the quality of that they received in return. The Company ſoon found, that in conſequence of this proceeding they could never ſupport themſelves againſt their competitors. This conſideration determined them to ſend ſhips directly from Europe with money. They touch at Batavia, where they take in ſuch commodities of the country as are fit for China, and return directly into our latitudes, with much better ladings than formerly, but not ſo good as thoſe of the Engliſh.

Of all the nations that have eſtabliſhed an intercourſe with China, the Fngliſh have maintained it the moſt conſtantly. They had a factory in the iſland of Chuſan, at the time when affairs were chiefly tranſacted at Emouy. When theſe were centered at Canton, their activity was ſtill the ſame. As their Company were required to export woollen cloths, they determined to keep agents conſtantly at this place to diſpoſe of them. This cuſtom of the Engliſh, joined to the great demand for tea in their ſettlements, made them, at the beginning of the century, maſters of almoſt all the trade carried on between China and Europe. The heavy duties laid by the Parliament on that foreign production, at laſt made other nations, and France in particular, ſenſible of the advantages of this commerce.

France had formed in 1660 a particular Company for the trade of theſe latitudes. A rich merchant of

Rouen, named Fermanel, was at the head of the undertaking; which was begun with an insufficient capital, and proved unsuccessful. The aversion, naturally entertained for a people who believed that foreigners came among them for no other purpose than to corrupt their morals, and to deprive them of their liberty, was considerably increased by the losses that were sustained. In vain, towards the year 1685, did the Chinese alter their opinion, and consequently their behaviour. The French seldom frequent their ports. The new society formed in 1698, was not more active than the former; nor did they succeed in this trade, till it came to be united with that of India, and rose in the same proportion.

The Danes and the Swedes began to frequent the ports of China about the same time, and have acted upon the same principles as the French. The Embden Company would probably have adopted them likewise, had it subsisted long enough.

The annual purchases made by the Europeans in China, if we compute them by those of the year 1766, amount to 26,754,494 livres [1,114,770l. 11s. 8d.]; this sum, above four-fifths of which is laid out on the single article of tea, was paid in piastres, or in goods carried by twenty-three ships. Sweden furnished 1,935,168 livres [80,632l.] in money, and 427,500 [17,812l. 10s.] in tin, lead, and other commodities. Denmark, 2,161,630 livres [90,067l. 18s. 4d.] in money, and 231,000 [9625l.] in iron, lead, and gun-flints. France, 4,000,000 [166,666l. 13s. 4d.] in money, and 400,000 [16,666l. 13s. 4d.] in drapery. Holland, 2,735,400 [113,975l.] in money, and 44,600 [1858l. 6s. 8d.] in woollen goods, beside 4,000,150 [166,672l. 18s. 4d.] in the produce of her colonies. Great Britain, 5,443,566 livres [226,815l. 5s.] in money, 2,000,475 [83,353l. 2s. 6d.] in woollen cloths, and 3,375,000 [140,625l.] in various articles from different parts of India. All these sums together amount to 26,754,494 livres [1,114,777l. 11s. 8d.]. We do not include in this calculation 10,000,000

BOOK V.

[416,666l 13s. 4d.] in ſpecie, which the Engliſh have carried over and above what we have mentioned, becauſe they were deſtined to pay off the debts that nation had contracted, or to lay in a ſtock to trade upon in the intervals between the voyages.

Conjectures concerning the future ſtate of the trade of Europe in China.

It is not eaſy to forſee what this trade will hereafter be. Though the Chineſe are ſo fond of money, they ſeem more inclined to ſhut their ports againſt the Europeans, than to encourage them to extend their trade. As the ſpirit of the Tartars has ſubſided, and the conquerors have imbibed the maxims of the vanquiſhed nation, they have adopted their prejudices, and in particular their averſion and contempt of foreigners. They have diſcovered theſe diſpoſitions, by the humiliating hardſhips they have impoſed upon them, after having treated them with great reſpect. The tranſition is but ſhort from this precarious ſituation to a total expulſion. It may not be far off; and this is the more likely, as there is an active nation which is, perhaps, ſecretly contriving to bring about this event.

The Dutch are not ignorant that all Europe is grown very fond of ſeveral Chineſe productions. They may readily ſuppoſe, that the impoſſibility of procuring them from the firſt hand would not hinder the conſumption. If all Europeans were excluded from China, the natives would export their own commodities. As their ſhipping is not fit for a long navigation, they would be under a neceſſity of carrying them to Batavia or Malaca; and the nation to whom theſe colonies belong, would immediately get all this trade in its hands. It is dreadful even to ſuſpect theſe republicans of any thing ſo baſe, but it is well known that they have been guilty of more odious acts for intereſts of leſs conſequence.

If the ports of China were once ſhut, it is probable they would be ſo for ever. The obſtinacy of that nation would never ſuffer them to retract, and there is no appearance that they would be compelled to it. What meaſures could be taken againſt a ſtate at the

diſtance of eight thouſand leagues? No government can be ſo abſurd as to imagine, that men, after the fatigues of ſo long a voyage, would venture to attempt conqueſts in a country defended by ſuch a number of people however deſtitute of courage this nation, which has never tried its ſtrength againſt the Europeans, may be ſuppoſed to be. The only way in which we could diſtreſs theſe people, would be by intercepting their navigation, which is an object they pay little attention to, as it neither affects their ſubſiſtence nor their conveniences.

Even this fruitleſs revenge would be practicable but for a ſhort time. The ſhips employed in this piratical cruiſe would be driven from thoſe latitudes, one part of the year by the monſoons, and the other part by the ſtorms they call typhons, which are peculiar to the ſeas of China.

Having thus explained the manner in which the Europeans have hitherto carried on the Eaſt India trade, it will not be improper to examine three queſtions, which naturally ariſe upon the ſubject and have not yet been decided. 1. Whether it be adviſable to continue that trade. 2. Whether large ſettlements be neceſſary to carry it on with ſucceſs. 3. Whether it ought to be left in the hands of excluſive companies. We ſhall diſcuſs theſe points with impartiality, as we have no other concern in the cauſe but the intereſt of mankind.

All the accounts we have of things, are perverted by ignorance or evil intentions. The politician is guided only by his views; the merchant by his intereſt. There is none but the philoſopher who knows when to doubt; who is ſilent, when his knowledge fails him; and who tells the truth, when once he reſolves to ſpeak. For indeed, what reward could be offered, of ſufficient importance to induce him to deceive mankind, and to forfeit his character? If we ſuppoſe it fortune; he is rich enough, if he have but a ſufficiency to ſatisfy his wants, which are extremely limited. Is it ambition? If he have the happineſs of

BOOK V.

being wise, he may excite the envy of others; but there is nothing under the heavens that he can possibly covet. Is he to be tempted with dignities? He knows they will not be offered to him; and if they should be, he knows that he would not accept them without a certainty of doing good. Is he to be seduced by flattery? He is totally unacquainted with this art, and disdains the contemptible advantages of it. Can he be influenced by fear? He fears nothing; not even death. If he be thrown into a dungeon, he is well aware this is not the first time that tyrants, or fanatics, have plunged virtue into such a situation, from whence she has been taken out merely to be dragged upon a scaffold. It is he who escapes out of the hands of destiny that knows not how to lay hold of him, because he has broken off, as the stoic says, the handles by which the strong seizes upon the weak, and disposes of them at pleasure.

Whether Europe should continue its trade with India.

Whoever considers Europe as forming but one body, the members of which are united in one common interest, or at least in the same kind of interest, will not hesitate to pronounce, whether her connections with Asia be advantageous or not. The India trade evidently enlarges the circle of our enjoyments. It procures us wholesome and agreeable liquors, conveniences of a more refined nature, more splendid furniture, some new pleasures, and a more comfortable existence. Such powerful incentives have had the same influence upon those nations, who, from their situation, activity, good fortune in making discoveries, and boldness in enterprises, can procure these enjoyments for themselves at their very source; as upon those who are unable to acquire them, unless through the channel of the maritime states, whose navigation enabled them to disperse the superfluities of their enjoyments over the whole continent. The Europeans have been so eager in their pursuit after these foreign luxuries, that neither the highest duties, the strictest prohibitions, nor the severest penalties, have been able to restrain it. Every government, after having

in vain tried to ſubdue this inclination, which only increaſed by oppoſition, has been forced at laſt to yield to it; though general prejudices, which were ſtrengthened by time and cuſtom, made them conſider this compliance as detrimental to the ſtability of the common good.

But the time was come, when it became neceſſary to remove the reſtraints. Can it be a matter of doubt, whether it be beneficial to add the enjoyments of foreign climates to thoſe of our own? Univerſal ſociety exiſts as well for the common intereſt of the whole, as by the mutual intereſt of all the individuals that compoſe it. An increaſe of felicity muſt, therefore, reſult from a general intercourſe. Commerce is the exerciſe of that valuable liberty, to which nature has invited all men; which is the ſource of their happineſs, and indeed of their virtues. We may even venture to aſſert, that men are never ſo truly ſenſible of their freedom as they are in a commercial intercourſe; nor is any thing ſo conducive to it as commercial laws: and one particular advantage derived from this circumſtance is, that as trade produces liberty, ſo it contributes to preſerve it.

We muſt be but little acquainted with man, if we imagine, that, in order to make him happy, he muſt be debarred from enjoyments. We grant, that the being accuſtomed to want the conveniencies of life leſſens the ſum of our misfortunes; but by diminiſhing our pleaſures in a greater proportion than our pains, we are rather brought to a ſtate of inſenſibility than of happineſs. If nature have given man a heart ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions; if his imagination be for ever involuntarily employed in ſearch of ideal and deluſive objects of happineſs, it is fit that his reſtleſs mind ſhould have an infinite variety of enjoyments to purſue. But let reaſon teach him to be ſatisfied with ſuch things as he can enjoy, and not to be anxious for thoſe that are out of his reach; this is true wiſdom. But to require, that reaſon ſhould make us voluntarily reject what it is in our power to

BOOK V.

add to our present happiness, is to contradict nature, and to subvert the first principles of society; it is to transform the universe into one vast monastery, and to change men into so many idle and melancholy anchorets. Let us suppose this project executed; and, casting our eyes upon the globe, let us ask ourselves, whether we should be better pleased with it in the state we should then see it, than as it was before?

How shall we persuade man to be content with the few indulgences that moralists think proper to allow him? How shall we ascertain the limits of what is necessary, which varies according to his situation in life, his attainments, and his desires? No sooner had his industry facilitated the means of procuring a subsistence, than the leisure he gained by this was employed in extending the limits of his faculties and the circle of his pleasures. Hence arose all his factitious wants. The discovery of a new species of sensations excited a desire of preserving them, and a propensity to find out others. The perfection of one art introduced the knowledge of several others. The success of a war, occasioned by hunger or revenge, suggested the idea of conquest. Navigation put men under a necessity of destroying one another, or of forming a general union. Commercial treaties between nations parted by the seas, and social compacts between men dispersed upon the earth, bore an exact resemblance to each other. These several relations began by contests, and ended by associations. War and navigation have occasioned a mutual communication between different people and different colonies. Hence men became connected with each other by dependence or intercourse. The refuse of all nations, mixing together during the ravages of war, are improved and polished by commerce; the true spirit of which is, that all nations should consider themselves as one great society, whose members have all an equal right to partake of the conveniencies of the rest. Commerce, in its object and in the means employed to carry it on, supposes an inclination and a liberty between all na-

tions to make every exchange that can contribute to their mutual ſatisfaction. The inclination and the liberty of procuring enjoyments are the only two ſprings of induſtry, and the only two principles of ſocial intercourſe among men.

Thoſe who cenſure the trade of Europe with India, have only the following reaſons to allege againſt an univerſal and free intercourſe; that it is attended with a conſiderable loſs of men; that it checks the progreſs of our induſtry; and that it leſſens our ſtock of money. Theſe objections are eaſily obviated.

As long as every man ſhall be at liberty to chooſe a profeſſion, and to employ his abilities in any manner moſt agreeable to himſelf, we need not be ſolicitous about his deſtiny. As in a ſtate of freedom every thing has its proper value, no man will expoſe himſelf to any danger, without expecting an equivalent. In a well regulated ſociety, every individual is at liberty to do what is moſt conformable to his inclination and his intereſt, provided it be not inconſiſtent with the properties and liberties of others. A law, that ſhould prohibit every trade in which a man might endanger his life, would condemn a great part of mankind to ſtarve, and would deprive ſociety of numberleſs advantages. We need not croſs the line to carry on a dangerous trade; ſince, even in Europe, we may find many occupations far more deſtructive to the human race than the navigation to India. If the perils attending ſea-voyages deſtroy ſome of our men, let us only give due encouragement to the culture of our lands, and our population will be ſo much increaſed, that we ſhall be better able to ſpare thoſe ſelf-devoted victims who are ſwallowed up by the ſea. To this we may add, that moſt of thoſe who periſh in long voyages are loſt through accidental cauſes, which might eaſily be prevented by more wholeſome diet and a more regular life. But if men will add, to the vices prevalent in their own climate, and to the corruption of their own manners, thoſe of the countries where they land, how is it poſ-

BOOK V. ſible that they ſhould reſiſt theſe united principles of deſtruction?

Even ſuppoſing that the India trade ſhould coſt Europe as many men as it is ſaid to do, are we certain that this loſs is not compenſated by the labours to which that trade gives riſe, and which encourage and increaſe our population? Would not the men, diſperſed upon the ſeveral ſhips continually ſailing in theſe latitudes, occupy a place upon land which is now left vacant for others? If we conſider attentively the number of people contained in the ſmall territories of maritime powers, we ſhall be convinced, that it is not the navigation to Aſia, nor even navigation in general, that is detrimental to the population of Europe: but, on the contrary, navigation alone may, perhaps, balance all the cauſes that tend to the deſtruction and decreaſe of mankind. Let us now endeavour to remove the fears of thoſe who apprehend that the India trade never leſſens the number of our manufactories at home, and the profits ariſing from them.

Admitting it true, that it had put a ſtop to ſome of our labours, it has given riſe to many more. It has introduced into our colonies the culture of ſugar, coffee, and indigo. Many of our manufactures are ſupported by India ſilk and cotton. If Saxony and other countries in Europe make very fine china; if Valencia manufactures Pekins ſuperior to thoſe of China; if Switzerland imitates the muſlins and worked callicoes of Bengal; if England and France print linens with great elegance; if ſo many ſtuffs, formerly unknown in our climates, now employ our beſt artiſts; are we not indebted to India for all theſe advantages?

Let us proceed further, and ſuppoſe that we are not indebted to Aſia for any of our improvements, the conſumption we make of its commodities cannot therefore be detrimental to our induſtry; for we pay for them with the produce of our own manufactures exported to America. I ſell a hundred livres worth

of linen to the Spaniard, and ſend that money to the Eaſt Indies. Another ſends the ſame quantity of the linen itſelf. We both bring home tea. In fact, we are both doing the ſame thing; we are changing a hundred livres worth of linen into tea: the only difference is, that the one does it by two tranſactions, and the other by a ſingle one. Suppoſe the Spaniard, inſtead of giving me money, had given me goods that were ſaleable in India, I ſhould not have hindred our artificers by carrying them thither. Is it not the very ſame thing as if I had carried our own produce there? I ſail from Europe with the merchandiſe and manufactures of my own country; I go to the South Sea, and exchange them for piaſtres; I carry thoſe piaſtres to India, and bring home things that are either uſeful or agreeable. Have I been the means of reſtraining the induſtry of my country? Far from it; I have extended the conſumption of its produce, and multiplied the enjoyments of my countrymen. The circumſtance that miſleads the oppoſers of the India trade is, that the piaſtres are brought over to Europe before they are carried to Aſia. But finally, whether the money be or be not employed as the intermediate pledge of exchange, I have either directly or indirectly made an exchange with Aſia, and bartered goods for goods, my manufactory for theirs, my productions for their productions.

But it is objected by ſome diſcontented men, that India has at all times ſwallowed up all the treaſures of the univerſe. Ever ſince chance has taught men the uſe of metals, ſay theſe cenſurers, they have never ceaſed to ſearch for them. Avarice, ever reſtleſs, has not forſaken theſe barren rocks, where nature has wiſely concealed thoſe inſidious treaſures. Since they were taken out of the bowels of the earth, they have conſtantly been diffuſed upon the ſurface of it; and notwithſtanding the extreme opulence of the Romans, and of ſome other nations, they have diſappeared from Europe, Africa, and ſome parts of Aſia. India hath entirely abſorbed them. Riches are

BOOK V. all taking the ſame courſe; paſſing on continually from weſt to eaſt, and never returning. It is therefore for India, that the mines of Peru have been opened; and for the Indians, that the Europeans have been guilty of ſo many crimes in America. While the Spaniards are laviſhing the lives of their ſlaves in Mexico to obtain ſilver out of the bowels of the earth, the Banians take ſtill more pains to bury it again. If ever the wealth of Potoſi ſhould be exhauſted, we muſt go in ſearch for it on the coaſt of Malabar where we have ſent it. When we have drained India of its pearls and ſpices, we ſhall, perhaps, by force of arms recover from them the ſums thoſe luxuries have coſt us. Thus ſhall our cruelties and caprices remove the gold and ſilver into other climes, where avarice and ſuperſtition will again bury them under ground.

Theſe complaints are not altogether groundleſs. Ever ſince the reſt of the world have opened a communication with India, they have conſtantly exchanged gold and ſilver for arts and commodities. Nature has ſupplied the Indians with the few neceſſaries they want; their climate will not admit of our luxuries; and their religion gives them an abhorrence for ſome things that we feed upon. As their cuſtoms, manners, and government, have continued the ſame, notwithſtanding the revolutions that have overturned their country, we muſt not expect they ſhould ever alter. India ever was, and ever will be, what it now is. As long as any trade is carried on there, money will be brought in, and goods ſent out. But before we exclaim againſt the abuſe of this trade, we ſhould attend to its progreſs, and conſider what is the reſult of it.

Firſt, it is certain our gold does not go to India. It has gold of its own, beſides a conſtant ſupply from Monomotapa, which comes by the eaſtern coaſt of Africa, and by the Red Sea; from the Turks, which is brought by the way of Arabia and Baſſora; and from Perſia, which is conveyed both by the ocean and the continent. This enormous maſs is never in-

creaſed by the gold we procure from the Spaniſh and Portugueſe colonies. In a word, we are ſo far from carrying gold to Aſia, that for a long while we have carried ſilver to China to barter it againſt gold.

Even the ſilver which India gets from us is by no means ſo conſiderable as may be imagined from the immenſe quantity of Indian goods we bring home. The annual ſale of theſe goods has of late years amounted to an hundred and ſixty millions [6,666,666l. 13s. 4d.]. Suppoſing they have coſt but half of what they ſold for, eighty millions [3,333,333l. 6s. 8d.] muſt have been ſent to India to purchaſe them, beſides what muſt have been ſent over for our ſettlements. We ſhall not ſcruple to affirm, that, for ſome time paſt, all Europe has not carried thither more than twenty-four millions [1,000,000l.] a year. Eight millions [333,333l. 6s. 8d.] are ſent from France, ſix [250,000l.] from Holland, three [125,000l.] from England, three [125,000l.] from Denmark, two [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] from Sweden, and two [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] from Portugal.

This calculation will not appear improbable, if we conſider, that though in general India be in no want either of our produce or of our manufactures, yet it receives from us, in iron, lead, copper, woollens, and other leſs articles, to the full amount of one fifth of the commodities we buy there.

This mode of payment is augmented by the produce of the European ſettlements in Aſia. The moſt conſiderable are thoſe of the ſpice iſlands for the Dutch, and of Bengal for the Engliſh.

The fortunes made by the free traders and agents in India contribute alſo to leſſen the exportation of our ſpecie. Thoſe induſtrious men depoſit their ſtock in the coffers of their own country, or of ſome other nation, to be repaid them in Europe, whither they all return ſooner or later. Therefore a part of the India trade is carried on with money got in the country.

Particular events alſo put us ſometimes in poſſeſ-

ſion of the treaſures of the Eaſt. It is undeniable, that by the revolutions in the Decan and Bengal, and by diſpoſing of theſe empires at pleaſure, the French and the Engliſh have obtained the wealth accumulated in theſe opulent regions for ſo many ages. It is evident that thoſe ſums, joined to others leſs conſiderable, which the Europeans have acquired by their ſuperior ſkill and bravery, muſt have retained a great deal of ſpecie among them, which otherwiſe would have gone into Aſia.

That rich part of the world has even reſtored to us ſome of the treaſure we had poured into it. The expedition of Kouli Khan into India is univerſally known; but it is not equally ſo, that he wreſted from the effeminate and cowardly people of this country upwards of 2,000,000,000 [83,333,333l. 6s. 8d.] in ſpecie, or in valuable effects. The emporor's palace alone contained ineſtimable and innumerable treaſures. The preſence-chamber was covered with plates of gold; the cieling was ſet with diamonds. Twelve pillars of maſſive gold, adorned with pearls and precious ſtones, ſurrounded the throne, the canopy of which was remarkably beautiful, and repreſented a peacock, with wings and tail extended to overſhadow the monarch. The diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and all the ſparkling gems which compoſed this curious piece of workmanſhip, perfectly imitated the colours of this beautiful bird. No doubt part of that wealth is returned into India. Much of the treaſure brought to Perſia from the conqueſt of the Mogul, muſt have been buried under ground during the ſubſequent wars; but the ſeveral branches of commerce muſt certainly have brought ſome to Europe, through ſuch channels as are too well known to make it neceſſary to ſpecify them.

Admitting that none of theſe riches have reached us, the opinion of thoſe who condemn the trade of India, becauſe it is carried on with ſpecie, will not be better ſupported, which may be eaſily proved. Gold and ſilver are not the produce of our ſoil, but

of America, and are ſent us in exchange for the productions of our own country. If Europe did not remit them to Aſia, America would ſoon be unable to return any to Europe. The too great plenty of it on our continent would ſo reduce its value, that the nations who bring it to us could no longer get it from their colonies. When once an ell of linen cloth, which is now worth twenty ſols [10d.], riſes to a piſtole [16s. 9d.], the Spaniards cannot buy it of us, to carry it to the country which produces ſilver. The working of their mines is expenſive. When this expence ſhall have increaſed to ten times that ſum, and the value of ſilver is ſtill the ſame, the buſineſs of working in the mines will be more coſtly than profitable to the owners, who will conſequently give it up. No more gold and ſilver will come from the new world to the old; and the Americans will be obliged to neglect their richeſt mines, as they have gradually forſaken the leſs valuable ones. This event would have taken place before, if they had not found a way of diſpoſing of about 3,000,000,000 [125,000,000l.] in Aſia, by the Cape of Good Hope, or by the Philippine iſlands. Therefore this circulation of money into India, which ſo many prejudiced perſons have hitherto conſidered as a ruinous exportation, has been beneficial both to Spain, by ſupporting the only manufacture ſhe hath, and to other nations, who without it could never have diſpoſed of their produce, or of the fruits of their induſtry. Having thus juſtified the India trade, we ſhall next proceed to inquire, whether it has been conducted on the principles of ſound policy.

Whether it be neceſſary that the Europeans ſhould have large eſtabliſhments in India, in order to carry on the trade?

All the nations in Europe, who have ſailed round the Cape of Good Hope, have aimed at founding great empires in Aſia. The Portugueſe, who led the way to thoſe wealthy regions, firſt ſet us the example of a boundleſs ambition. Not content with having made themſelves maſters of the iſlands in which the choiceſt productions were to be found, and erected fortreſſes wherever they were neceſſary to ſecure to

BOOK V.

themſelves the navigation of the Eaſt, they aſpired alſo to the authority of giving laws to Malabar, which, being divided into ſeveral petty ſovereignties, that were jealous of, or at enmity with each other, was forced to ſubmit to the yoke.

The Spaniards did not at firſt ſhow more moderation; even before they had completed the conqueſt of the Philippine iſlands, which were to be the centre of their power, they ſtrove to extend their dominion further. If they have not ſince ſubdued the reſt of that immenſe Archipelago, or filled all the adjacent countries with their enormities, we muſt look for the cauſe of their tranquillity in the treaſures of America, which have confined their purſuits, though they did not ſatisfy their deſires.

The Dutch deprived the Portugueſe of their moſt conſiderable poſts on the continent, and drove them out of the ſpice iſlands. They have preſerved thoſe poſſeſſions, and ſome later acquiſitions only by eſtabliſhing a form of government, leſs oppreſſive than that of the nations on whoſe ruins they were riſing.

The ſlowneſs and irreſolution of the French in their proceedings, prevented them for a conſiderable time from forming or executing any great projects. As ſoon as they found themſelves ſufficiently powerful, they availed themſelves of the ſubverſion of the power of the Moguls to uſurp the dominion of Coromandel. They obtained by conqueſt, or by artful negotiations, a more extenſive territory than any European power had ever poſſeſſed in Indoſtan.

The Engliſh, more prudent, did not attempt to aggrandiſe themſelves till they had deprived the French of their acquiſitions, and till no rival nation could act againſt them. The certainty of having none but the natives of the country to contend with, determined them to attack Bengal. This was the province of all India which afforded moſt commodities fit for the markets of Aſia and Europe, and was likely to conſume moſt of their manufactures: it was alſo that which their fleet could moſt effectually pro-

tect, as it hath the advantage of a great river. They have ſucceeded in their plan of conqueſt, and flatter themſelves they ſhall long enjoy the fruits of their victory.

Their ſucceſſes, and thoſe of the French, have aſtoniſhed all nations. It is eaſy to conceive how ſolitary and defenceleſs iſlands, that have no connection with their neighbours, may have been ſubdued. But it is very aſtoniſhing, that five or ſix hundred Europeans, ſhould at this time have beaten innumerable armies of Gentiles and Mohammedans, moſt of them ſkilled in the art of war. Theſe extraordinary ſcenes, however, ought not to appear ſurpriſing to any one who conſiders what has happened before.

The Portugueſe had no ſooner appeared in the Eaſt, than with a few ſhips and a few ſoldiers they ſubverted whole kingdoms. The eſtabliſhment of ſome factories, and the building of a ſmall number of forts, was ſufficient to enable them to cruſh the powers of India. When the Indians were no longer oppreſſed by the firſt conquerors, they were ſo by thoſe who expelled and ſucceeded them. The hiſtory of theſe delightful regions was no longer the hiſtory of the natives, but that of their tyrants.

But what ſingular men muſt theſe have been, who never could gather any improvement from experience and adverſity; who ſurrendered themſelves to their common enemy without making any reſiſtance, and who never acquired ſkill enough from their continual defeats to repulſe a few adventurers, caſt, as it were, from the ſea upon their coaſts! It is a matter of doubt whether theſe men, alternately deceived and ſubdued by thoſe who attacked them, were not of a different ſpecies. To reſolve this problem, we need only trace the cauſes of this weakneſs in the Indians; and our firſt inquiry ſhall turn upon that ſyſtem of deſpotiſm with which they are oppreſſed.

There is no nation, which, as it becomes civilized, does not loſe ſomething of its virtue, courage, and independence; and it is evident that the inhabitants

BOOK V. of the ſouth of Aſia, having been firſt collected into ſocieties, muſt have been the earlieſt expoſed to deſpotiſm. Such has been the progreſs of all aſſociations from the beginning of the world. Another truth, equally evident from hiſtory, is, that all arbitrary power haſtens its own deſtruction; and that revolutions will reſtore liberty, ſooner or later, as they are more or leſs rapid. Indoſtan is perhaps the only country, in which the inhabitants, after having once loſt their rights, have never been able to recover them. Tyrants have frequently been deſtroyed, but tyranny has always ſupported itſelf.

Civil ſlavery has been added in India to political ſlavery. The Indian is not maſter of his own life; he knows of no law that will protect it from the caprice of the tyrant, or the fury of his delegates. He is not maſter of his own underſtanding; he is debarred from all ſtudies that are beneficial to mankind, and only allowed ſuch as tend to enſlave him. He is not maſter of his own field; the lands and their produce belong to the ſovereign, and the labourer may be ſatisfied if he can earn enough to ſubſiſt himſelf and family. He is not maſter of his own induſtry; every artiſt, who has had the misfortune to betray ſome abilities, is in danger of being doomed to ſerve the monarch, his deputies, or ſome rich man, who has purchaſed a right to employ him at pleaſure. He is not maſter of his own wealth: he buries his gold under ground, to ſecure it from the rapacious hand of power; and leaves it there at his death, abſurdly imagining it will be of ſervice to him in the next world. No doubt this abſolute and tyrannical authority, with which the Indian is continually oppreſſed, muſt ſubdue his ſpirit, and render him incapable of thoſe efforts that courage requires.

The climate of Indoſtan is another impediment to any generous exertions. The indolence it inſpires is an invincible obſtacle to great revolutions and vigorous oppoſitions, ſo common in the northern regions. The body and the mind equally enervated, have on-

ly the virtues and vices of ſlavery. In the ſecond, or at fartheſt in the third generation, Tartars, Turks, Perſians, and even Europeans, contract the ſlothful diſpoſition of the Indians. Theſe influences of the climate might certainly be ſubdued by religious or moral inſtitutions; but the ſuperſtitions of the country will not admit of ſuch exalted views. They never promiſe future rewards to the generous patriot who falls in his country's cauſe. While they adviſe, and ſometimes command ſuicide, by repreſenting in a ſtrong light the alluring proſpect of future happineſs, they at the ſame time ſtrictly forbid the effuſion of blood.

This circumſtance is a neceſſary conſequence of the doctrine of tranſmigration, which muſt inſpire its followers with conſtant and univerſal benevolence. They are in continual fear of injuring their neighbour, that is, all men and all animals. How can a man reconcile himſelf to the idea of being a ſoldier, when he can ſay, Perhaps the elephant or the horſe I am going to deſtroy may contain the ſoul of my father—perhaps the enemy I ſhall kill has formerly been the chief of my family? Thus, in India, religion tends to keep up the ſpirit of cowardice which reſults from deſpotiſm and the nature of the climate; the manners of the people contribute ſtill more to increaſe it.

In every country, love is the ruling paſſion; but it is not equally ſtrong in every climate. While northern nations are moderate in their deſires, the ſouthern ones indulge in them with a degree of ardour ſuperior to every reſtraint. The policy of princes has ſometimes turned this paſſion to the advantage of ſociety; but the legiſlators of India ſeem to have principally intended to increaſe the fatal influence of their ardent climate. The Moguls, the laſt conquerors of thoſe regions, have proceeded ſtill further. Love is with them a ſhameful and deſtructive exceſs, conſecrated by religion, by the laws, and by government. The military conduct of the nations of Indoſ-

tan, whether Pagans or Mohammedans, is consistent with their dissolute manners. We shall mention some particulars taken from the writings of an English officer remarkable for his military exploits in those parts.

The soldiers make up the smallest part of the Indian camps. Every trooper is attended by his wife, his children and two servants; one to look after his horse, and the other to forage. The train of the officers and generals is proportionable to their vanity, their fortune, and their rank. The sovereign himself, more intent upon making a parade of his magnificence than upon the necessities of war, when he takes the field, carries along with him his seraglio, his elephants, his court, and almost all the inhabitants of his capital. To provide for the wants, the fancies, and the luxury of this strange multitude, a kind of town must of course be formed in the midst of the army, full of magazines and unnecessary articles. The motions of a body so unwieldy and so ill arranged cannot but be very slow. There is great confusion in their marches, and in all their operations. However abstemious the Indians, and even the Moguls, may be, they often experience a want of provisions; and famine is usually attended with contagious distempers, and occasions a dreadful mortality.

These distempers, however, seldom destroy any but recruits. Though, in general, the inhabitants of Indostan affect a strong passion for military glory, yet they engage in war as seldom as they can. Those, who have been so successful in battle as to obtain some marks of distinction, are excused from serving for some time; and there are few that do not avail themselves of this privilege. The retreat of these veterans reduces the army to a contemptible body of soldiers, levied in haste in the several provinces of the empire, and who are utterly unacquainted with discipline.

The nature of the provisions on which these troops subsist, and their manner of living, is entirely consist-

ent with this improper mode of raiſing them. At night they eat a prodigious quantity of rice; and after this meal they take ſtong opiates, which throw them into a deep ſleep. Notwithſtanding this pernicious cuſtom, no guards are placed about their camp to prevent a ſurpriſe; nor is it poſſible to make a ſoldier riſe early, even to execute any enterpriſe that may require the greateſt diſpatch.

The military operations are regulated by birds of prey, of which there are always a great number in the army. If they be found heavy or languid, it is an unfavourable omen, and prevents the army from giving battle: if they be fierce and violent, the troops march out to action, whatever reaſons there may be for avoiding or deferring it. This ſuperſtition, as well as the obſervance of lucky and unlucky days, determines the fate of the beſt concerted deſigns.

No order is obſerved in marching. Every ſoldier goes on as he chooſes, and only follows the corps to which he belongs. He is frequently ſeen carrying his proviſions upon his head, with the veſſels for dreſſing them; while his arms are carried by his wife, who is commonly followed by ſeveral children. If a foot-ſoldier has any relations, or buſineſs to tranſact in the enemy's army, he is under no apprehenſion in going to it; and returns to join his colours without meeting with the leaſt oppoſition.

The action is not better conducted than the preparations for it. The cavalry, in which conſiſts the whole ſtrength of an Indian army (for the infantry are holden in general contempt), are uſeful enough in charging with the ſword and ſpear, but can never ſtand the fire of cannon and muſquetry. They are afraid of loſing their horſes, which are moſtly Arabian, Perſian, or Tartar, and in which their whole fortune conſiſts. The troops that compoſe this cavalry are in great eſteem, and well paid; they are ſo fond of their horſes, that ſometimes they will go into mourning upon loſing them.

The Indians dread the enemy's artillery, as much

BOOK V. as they confide in their own; though they neither know how to tranſport it, nor how to make uſe of it. Their great guns, which are called by pompous names, are generally of a very extraordinary ſize, and rather prevent than aſſiſt the gaining of a victory.

Thoſe who are ambitious of being diſtinguiſhed, intoxicate themſelves with opium, to which they aſcribe the property of warming the blood, and of animating them to the performance of heroic actions. In this temporary ſtate of intoxication, they bear a greater reſemblance, in their dreſs and impotent rage, to women actuated by a ſpirit of enthuſiaſm, than to men of courage and reſolution.

The prince who commands theſe deſpicable troops is always mounted on an elephant richly caparisoned, where he is at once the general and the ſtandard of the whole army, whoſe eyes are fixed upon him. If he ſhould fly, or be ſlain, the whole machine is deſtroyed; the ſeveral corps diſperſe, or go over to the enemy.

This deſcription, which we might have enlarged upon without exaggeration, renders probable the account given of our ſucceſſes in Indoſtan. Many Europeans, judging of what might be effected in the inland parts, by what has been done on the coaſts, imagine we might ſafely undertake the conqueſt of the whole country. This extreme confidence ariſes from the following circumſtance: that in places where the enemy could not haraſs their troops in the rear, nor intercept their ſuccours, they have overcome timorous weavers and merchants, undiſciplined and cowardly armies, weak princes jealous of each other, and perpetually at war with their neighbours or their own ſubjects. They do not conſider, that, if they wanted to penetrate into the interior parts, they would all periſh before they had proceeded half way up the country. The exceſſive heat of the climate, continual fatigue, numberleſs diſeaſes, want of proviſion, and a variety of other cauſes, would ſoon conſiderably diminiſh their numbers, even though they

had nothing to apprehend from thoſe troops that might moleſt them.

We will ſuppoſe, however, that ten thouſand European ſoldiers had actually over-run and ravaged India from one end to the other; what would be the conſequence? Would theſe forces be ſufficient to ſecure the conqueſt, to keep every nation, every province, every diſtrict in order? And if this number be not ſufficient, let it be calculated what number of troops would be neceſſary for the purpoſe.

But let us admit that the conquerors had firmly eſtabliſhed their government in India, they would ſtill reap very little advantage from this circumſtance. The revenues of Indoſtan would be ſpent in Indoſtan itſelf. The European power, that had purſued this project of uſurpation, would have experienced nothing but a conſiderable decreaſe in its population, and the diſgrace of having followed a viſionary ſyſtem.

This, indeed, is now an uſeleſs queſtion, ſince the Europeans themſelves have made their ſucceſs in Indoſtan more difficult than ever. By engaging the natives to take a part in their mutual diſſenſions, they have taught them the art of war, and trained them to arms and diſcipline. This error in politics has opened the eyes of the ſovereigns of thoſe countries, whoſe ambition has been excited to eſtabliſh regular troops. Their cavalry marches in better order; and their infantry, which was always conſidered in ſo deſpicable a light, has now acquired the firmneſs of our battalions. A numerous and well-managed artillery defends their camps and protects their attacks. The armies, compoſed of better troops, and better paid, have been able to keep the field longer.

This change which might have been foreſeen, had the Europeans not been blinded by temporary intereſt, may in time become ſo conſiderable, as to raiſe unſurmountable obſtacles to the deſire they have of extending their conqueſts in Indoſtan, and poſſibly they may looſe thoſe they have already made. Whe-

BOOK V. ther this will be a misfortune or an advantage, is what we ſhall next take into conſideration.

When the Europeans firſt began to trade in that wealthy region, they found it divided into a great many ſmall ſtates, ſome of which were governed by princes of their own nation, and ſome by Patan kings. Their mutual hatred was the occaſion of continual conteſts. Beſide the wars that were carried on between province and province, there was a perpetual one between every ſovereign and his ſubjects. It was fomented by the tax-gatherers, who, to ingratiate themſelves at court, always levied heavier taxes than had been laid on the people. Theſe barbarians aggravated this heavy burden by the oppreſſions they made the inhabitants ſuffer. Their extortions were only another method of ſecuring to themſelves the poſts they enjoyed, in a country where he was always in the right who had the moſt to give.

From this anarchy, and theſe violent proceedings, it was imagined, that, to ſettle a ſafe and permanent commerce, it was neceſſary to ſupport it by the force of arms; and the European factories were accordingly fortified. In proceſs of time, jealouſy, which divides the European nations in India, as it does every where elſe, expoſed them to more conſiderable expences. Each of theſe foreign nations thought it neceſſary to augment their forces, leſt they ſhould be overpowered by their rivals.

The dominion of the Europeans, however, extended no further than their own fortreſſes. Goods were brought thither from the inland parts with little difficulty, or with ſuch as was eaſily overcome. Even after the conqueſts of Kouli-Khan had plunged the north of Indoſtan into confuſion, the coaſt of Coromandel enjoyed its former tranquillity. But the death of Nizam-al-Muluc, Subah of the Decan, kindled a flame which is not yet extinguiſhed.

The diſpoſal of theſe immenſe ſpoils naturally belonged to the court of Dehli; but the weakneſs of that court emboldened the children of Nizam to diſ-

pute their father's treasure. To supplant each other, they had recourse alternately to arms, to treachery, to poison, and to assassinations. Most of the adventurers they engaged in their animosities and crimes perished during these horrid transactions. The Marattas alone, a nation who alternately sided with both parties, and often had troops in each, seemed as if they would avail themselves of this anarchy, and invade the sovereignty of the Decan. The Europeans have pretended it was greatly their interest to oppose this deep but secret design, and they allege the following reasons in their defence.

The Marattas, say they, are thieves, both from education and from their political principles. They have no regard to the law of nations, no notion of natural or civil right, and spread desolation wherever they go. The most populous districts are abandoned at the very report of their approach. In the countries they have subdued, nothing is to be seen but confusion, and all the manufactures are destroyed.

The Europeans, who were most powerful on the coast of Coromandel, thought such neighbours would utterly destroy their trade; and they could never venture to send money by their agents to buy goods in the inland countries, as they would certainly be plundered by these banditti. The desire of preventing this evil, which must ruin their fortunes, and deprive them of the benefit of their settlements, suggested to their agents the idea of a new system.

It was asserted, that, in the present situation of Indostan, it was impossible to keep up useful connections without a military establishment; that, at so great a distance from the mother-country, the expence could not possibly be defrayed out of the mere profits of trade, were they ever so great: that therefore it was absolutely necessary to procure sufficient possessions to answer these great expences; and consequently, that the possessions must be considerable.

This argument, probably suggested to conceal insatiable avarice or boundless ambition, and which the

paſſion for conqueſt may have occaſioned to be conſidered as a very ſtrong one, may perhaps be a mere illuſion. A variety of natural, moral, and political reaſons may be urged in oppoſition to it. We ſhall only inſiſt upon one, which is founded upon a fact. From the Portugueſe, who firſt attempted to aggrandize themſelves in India, to the Engliſh, who cloſe the fatal liſt of uſurpers, not one acquiſition, however important or trifling, except Bengal and the Spice iſlands, hath ever paid the expence of taking and ſupporting it. The more extenſive the poſſeſſions have been, the greater has been the expence of maintaining them to the ambitious power that had, by whatever means, acquired them.

This is what will always happen. Every nation that has obtained a large territory will be deſirous of preſerving it. It will think there is no ſafety but in fortified places, and will conſtantly multiply them. This warlike appearance will deter the huſbandman and the artiſt, who will not expect to enjoy tranquillity. The neighbouring princes will grow jealous, and will juſtly be afraid of falling a prey to a trading nation now become a conquering one. In conſequence of this, they will be deviſing means to ruin an oppreſſor, whom they had admitted into their harbours, with no other view than to increaſe their own treaſures and power. If they find themſelves under a neceſſity of entering into a treaty, they will, at the inſtant of ſigning, ſecretly vow the deſtruction of their new ally. Falſehood will be the baſis of all their agreements; and the longer they have been forced to diſſemble, the more time they will have had to prepare the means deſtined to deſtroy their enemy.

The juſt apprehenſion of theſe perfidies will oblige the uſurpers to be always upon their guard. If they are to be defended by Europeans, what a conſumption of men for the mother-country! what an expence to raiſe them, to tranſport them into theſe countries, to maintain and recruit them! If, from a principle of

economy, they content themſelves with the Indian troops, what can be expected from a confuſed and unprincipled multitude, whoſe expeditions always degenerate into robbery, and conſtantly end in a ſhameful and precipitate flight? Their principles, whether natural or moral, are ſo weakened, that even the defence of their gods and their own houſeholds could never inſpire the boldeſt among them with any thing beyond a ſudden and tranſient exertion of intrepidity. It is not probable that foreign intereſts, ruinous to their country, ſhould ever animate men whoſe minds are ſunk in indolence and corruption: is it not more probable that they will be ever ready to betray a cauſe they abhor, and in which they find no immediate and laſting advantage?

To theſe inconveniences will be added a ſpirit of extortion and plunder, which even in the times of peace will nearly reſemble the devaſtations of war. The agents, intruſted with thoſe remote concerns, will be deſirous of making rapid fortunes. The ſlow and regular profits of trade they will not attend to, but will endeavour to promote ſpeedy revolutions in order to acquire great wealth. They will have occaſioned innumerable evils before they can be controuled by authority at the diſtance of ſix thouſand leagues. This authority will have no force againſt millions; or the perſons intruſted with it will arrive too late to prevent the fall of an edifice ſupported on ſo weak a foundation.

This reſult makes it needleſs to inquire into the nature of the political engagements the Europeans have entered into with the powers of India. If theſe great acquiſitions be prejudicial, the treaties made to procure them cannot be rational. If the merchants of Europe be wiſe, they will forego the rage of conqueſt, and the flattering hopes of holding the balance of Aſia.

The court of Dehli will finally ſink under the weight of inteſtine diviſions, or fortune will raiſe up a prince capable of reſtoring it. The government will remain

BOOK V. feudal, or once more become despotic. The empire will be divided into many independent states, or will be subject only to one master. Either the Marattas or the Moguls will become a ruling power; but the Europeans should not be concerned in these revolutions; whatever be the fate of Indostan, the Indians will still continue their manufactures, our merchants will purchase them, and sell them again to us.

It would be needless to allege, that the spirit which has always prevailed in those countries has forced us to depart from their common rules of trade; that we are in arms upon the coasts; that this position unavoidably obliges us to interfere with the affairs of our neighbours; and that, if we avoid all intercourse with them, such a reserve will certainly prove extremely detrimental to our interests. These fears will appear groundless to sensible men, who know that a war in those distant regions must be still more fatal to the Europeans than to the natives; and that the consequence will be, that we must either subdue the whole, which is scarcely possible, or be for ever expelled from a country where it is our advantage to maintain our connections.

The love of order and tranquillity would even make it desirable to extend these pacific views; and, far from thinking that great possessions are necessary, time will probably discover even the inutility of fortified posts. The Indians are naturally gentle and humane, though crushed under the severe yoke of despotism. The nations who formerly traded with them, always commended them for their candour and honesty. The Indians are now in a state of confusion, equally alarming to them and to us. Our ambition has carried discord into all parts of their country, and our rapaciousness has inspired them with hatred, fear, and contempt for our continent; they look upon us as conquerors, usurpers and oppressors, sanguinary and avaricious men. This is the character we have acquired in the East. Our examples have increased the number of their national vices, at the

ſame time that we have taught them to be in guard againſt ours.

If in our tranſactions with the Indians we had been guided by principles of probity; if we had ſhown them, that mutual advantage is the baſis of commerce; if we had encouraged their cultivation and manufactures, by exchanges equally advantageous to both; we ſhould inſenſibly have gained their affections. If we had fortunately taken care to preſerve their confidence in our dealings with them, we might have removed their prejudices, and, perhaps, changed their form of government. We ſhould have ſucceeded ſo far as to have lived among them, and trained up civilized nations around us, who would have protected our ſettlements for our mutual intereſts. Every one of our eſtabliſhments would have been to each nation in Europe as their native country, where they would have found a ſure protection. Our ſituation in India is the conſequence of our profligacy and of the ſanguinary ſyſtems we have introduced there. The Indians imagine nothing is due to us, becauſe all our actions have ſhown, that we did not think ourſelves under any ties with reſpect to them.

This ſtate of perpetual contention is diſpleaſing to moſt of the Aſiatic nations, and they ardently wiſh for a happier change. The diſorder of our affairs muſt have inſpired us with the ſame ſentiments. If we be all in the ſame diſpoſitions, and if one common intereſt ſhould really incline us to peace and harmony, the moſt effectual way to attain this deſirable end would perhaps be, that all the European nations, who trade to India, ſhould agree among themſelves to preſerve a neutrality in thoſe remote ſeas, which ſhould never be interrupted by the diſturbances that ſo frequently happen on our own continent. If we could once conſider ourſelves as members of one great commonwealth, we ſhould not want thoſe forces which make us odious abroad, and ruinous at home. But, as our preſent ſpirit of diſcord will not permit us to expect that ſuch a change can ſoon take place, it re-

BOOK V.

mains only that we now consider, whether Europe ought still to carry on the commerce of India by charter companies, or to make it a free trade.

Whether Europe ought to lay open the trade to India, or carry it on by exclusive charters.

If this question were to be decided upon general principles, it would be easily answered. If we ask whether, in a state which allows any particular branch of trade, every citizen has a right to partake of it; the answer is so plain as to leave no room for discussion. It would be unnatural that subjects, who share alike the burden and public expence of civil society, should not be alike partakers of the benefits arising from the compact that unites them: they would have cause to complain, that they sustain all the inconveniences of society, and are deprived of the advantages they expected to receive from it.

On the other hand, political notions are perfectly reconcileable with these ideas of justice. It is well known that freedom is the very soul of commerce, and that nothing else can bring it to perfection. It is generally allowed that competition awakens industry, and gives it all the vigour it is capable of acquiring. Yet for upwards of a century, the practice has constantly been contradictory to these principles.

All the nations of Europe, that trade to India, carry on that commerce by exclusive companies; and it must be confessed, that this practice is plausible, because it is hardly conceivable that great and enlightened nations should have been under a mistake for above an hundred years on so important a point, and that neither experience nor argument should have undeceived them. We must conclude, therefore, that either the advocates for liberty have given too great a latitude to their principles, or that the favourers of exclusive privilege have too strenuously asserted the necessity of such limitations; possibly, both parties, from too great an attachment to their respective opinions, have been deceived, and are equally distant from the truth,

Ever since this famous question has been debated, it has always been thought to be a very simple one;

it has always been ſuppoſed that an India company muſt neceſſarily be excluſive, and that its exiſtence was eſſentially connected with its privilege. Hence the advocates for a free trade have aſſerted that excluſive privileges were odious; and, therefore, that there ought to be no company. Their opponents have argued, on the contrary, that the nature of things required a company; and therefore that there muſt be an excluſive charter. But if we can make it appear that the reaſons urged againſt charters prove nothing againſt companies in general, and that the circumſtances which may render it neceſſary to have an India company, do not ſupply any argument in favour of a charter; if we can demonſtrate that the nature of things requires, indeed, a powerful aſſociation, a company for the India trade; but that the excluſive charter is connected only with particular cauſes, inſomuch that the company may exiſt without the charter; we ſhall then have traced the ſource of the common error, and found out the ſolution of the difficulty.

Let us inquire what conſtitutes the particular nature of commercial tranſactions. It is the climate, the produce, the diſtance of places, the form of the government, the genius and manners of the people who are ſubject to it. In the trade with India, the merchant muſt undertake a voyage of ſix thouſand leagues in ſearch of the commodities which the country ſupplies: he muſt arrive there at a certain ſeaſon, and wait till another for the proper winds to return home. Therefore every voyage takes up about two years, and the proprietors of the veſſels muſt wait this time for their returns. This is the firſt and a very material circumſtance.

The nature of a government in which there is neither ſafety nor property will not permit the people to have any public marts, or to lay up any ſtores. Let us repreſent to ourſelves men who are depreſſed and corrupted by deſpotiſm, workmen who are unable to undertake any thing of themſelves; and, on

the other hand, nature more liberal in her gifts, than power is rapacious, ſupplying a ſlothful people with food ſufficient for their wants and their deſires; and we ſhall wonder that any induſtry ſhould be found in India. And indeed it may be affirmed, that ſcarce any manufacture would be carried on there, if the workmen were not encouraged by ready money, or if the goods were not engaged for a year before they are wanted. One-third of the money is paid at the time the work is ordered, another when it is half done, and the remainder on delivery of the goods. From this mode of payment there is a conſiderable difference made, both in price and in the quality of the goods; but from hence likewiſe ariſes a neceſſity of having one's capital out a year longer, that is, three years inſtead of two. This is an alarming circumſtance for a private man, eſpecially if we conſider the largeneſs of the capital that is requiſite for ſuch undertakings.

As the charges of navigation and the riſks are very great, they cannot be ſupported without bringing home complete cargoes, that is, cargoes of a million or a million and a half of livres [from 41,666l. 13s. 4d. to 62,500l.] at prime coſt in India. Where ſhall we find merchants, or even men poſſeſſed of a ſufficient capital to enable them to advance ſuch a ſum, to be reimburſed only at the end of three years? Undoubtedly there are very few in Europe; and among thoſe who might have the power, ſcarce any would have the will. If we conſult experience, we ſhall find that men of moderate fortunes only are the perſons who are inclined to run great riſks, in order to make great profits. But when once a man is poſſeſſed of an ample fortune, he is inclined to enjoy it, and to enjoy it with ſecurity. The deſire of riches cannot indeed be ſatisfied by the poſſeſſion of them, which, on the contrary, frequently increaſes it; but, at the ſame time, the poſſeſſion of wealth furniſhes various means of gratifying that deſire without either trouble or danger. This opens to our view the ne-

ceſſity of entering into aſſociations, where a number of men will not ſcruple to be concerned, becauſe every individual will venture but a ſmall part of his fortune, and will rate the meaſure of his profits upon the united ſtock of the whole ſociety. This neceſſity will appear ſtill more evident, if we conſider how the buſineſs of buying and ſelling is managed in India, and what precautions it requires.

To make a previous agreement for a cargo, above fifty different agents muſt be employed, who are diſperſed in different parts, at the diſtance of three, four, and five hundred leagues from each other. When the work is done, it muſt be examined and meaſured; otherwiſe the goods would ſoon be found faulty, from the want of honeſty in the workmen, who are equally corrupted by the nature of their government, and by the influence of crimes of every kind which the Europeans have ſet them the example of for theſe three centuries paſt.

After all theſe details, there are ſtill other operations remaining equally neceſſary. There muſt be whitſters, men to beat the linens, packers, and bleaching-grounds, which muſt be ſupplied with pools of water fit for the purpoſe. It would certainly be very difficult for individuals to attend and to obſerve all theſe precautions; but even admitting it poſſible for induſtry to effect this, yet it could only be done as long as each of them could keep up a continued trade, and regularly ſhip off freſh cargoes. All theſe particulars are not to be executed in a ſhort time, and not without eſtabliſhed connections. Every private man, therefore, ſhould be able to fit out a ſhip annually during three years, that is, to diſburſe four millions of livres [166,666l. 13s. 4d.]. This is evidently impoſſible; and it is plain that ſuch an undertaking can only be carried into execution by a ſociety.

But, perhaps, ſome commercial houſes will be eſtabliſhed in India, on purpoſe to tranſact this previous buſineſs, and to keep cargoes in readineſs for the ſhips that are to be ſent off to Europe.

This eſtabliſhment of trading houſes at ſix thouſand leagues from the mother-country, with the immenſe ſtock that would be requiſite to pay the weavers in advance, ſeems to be a viſionary ſcheme, inconſiſtent with reaſon and experience. Can it be ſeriouſly imagined that any merchants, who have already acquired a fortune in Europe, will tranſmit it to Aſia to purchaſe a ſtock of muſlins, in expectation of ſhips that, perhaps, may never arrive, or, if they ſhould, may be but few in number, and may not have a ſufficient capital to purchaſe with? On the contrary, we ſee that every European, who has made a ſmall fortune in India, is deſirous of returning home; and, inſtead of endeavouring to increaſe it by thoſe eaſy methods that private trade and the ſervice of the companies offers in that country, he is rather anxious to come and enjoy it with tranquillity in his own.

If other proofs and examples were neceſſary, we need only attend to what paſſes in America. If we could ſuppoſe that commerce, and the hopes of the profits ariſing from it, were capable of alluring rich Europeans to quit their native country, it would certainly be in order to ſettle in that part of the world which is much nearer than Aſia, and where they would find the ſame laws and manners as in Europe. It might naturally be ſuppoſed that the merchants ſhould previouſly buy up the ſugars of the planters, and keep them in readineſs to be delivered to the European ſhips as ſoon as they arrive, on receiving other commodities in exchange, which they would afterwards ſell to the planters when they wanted them. But it is quite the contrary. The merchants ſettled in America, are nothing more than commiſſaries or factors, who tranſact the exchanges between the planters and the Europeans; and are ſo far from being able to carry on any conſiderable trade on their own account, that, when a ſhip has not met with an opportunity of diſpoſing of her lading, it is left in truſt, on the account of the own-

er, in the hands of the commiſſary to whom it was conſigned. It is reaſonable, therefore, to conclude, that what is not practiſed in America would ſtill be leſs ſo in Aſia, where a larger ſtock would be wanted, and greater difficulties muſt be encountered. Add to this, that the ſuppoſed eſtabliſhment of commercial houſes in India would not ſuperſede the neceſſity of forming companies in Europe; becauſe it would be equally neceſſary to diſburſe twelve or fifteen hundred thouſand livres [from 50,000l. to 62,500l.] for the fitting out of every ſhip, which could never return into the ſtock till the third year at ſooneſt.

This neceſſity being once proved in every poſſible caſe, it is manifeſt that the trade of India is of ſuch a nature, that very few merchants, if any, can undertake it upon their own capital, or carry it on by themſelves, and without the help of a great number of partners. Having demonſtrated the neceſſity of theſe ſocieties, we muſt now endeavour to prove, that their intereſt, and the nature of things would incline them to unite in one and the ſame company.

This propoſition depends upon two principal reaſons: the danger of competition in the purchaſes and ſales, and the neceſſity of aſſortments.

The competition of buyers and ſellers reduces the commodities to their juſt value. When the competition of ſellers, is greater than that of buyers, the goods ſell for leſs than they are worth; and when there are more buyers than ſellers, their price is raiſed beyond their ordinary value. Let us apply this to the India trade.

When we ſuppoſe that this trade will extend in proportion to the number of private ſhips ſent there, we are not aware that this multiplicity will only increaſe the competition on the ſide of the buyers; whereas it is not in our power to increaſe it on the ſide of the ſellers. It is juſt the ſame as if we were to adviſe a number of traders to bid over one another, in order to obtain their goods at a cheaper rate.

BOOK V.

The Indians ſcarce make any conſumption of the produce either of our lands or manufactures. They have few wants, little ambition, and no great ſhare of induſtry. They would readily diſpenſe with the gold and ſilver of America, which is ſo far from procuring them any enjoyments, that it only ſerves to ſupport the tyranny under which they are oppreſſed. Thus, as all objects of exchange have no value but in proportion to the wants or the fancy of the exchangers, it is evident that in India our commodities are worth very little, while thoſe we buy there are of great value. As long as no Indian ſhips come into our harbours to carry away our ſtuffs and our metals, we may venture to affirm, that thoſe people are in no want of us, and will conſequently make their own terms in all their dealings with us. Hence it follows, that the greater number there are of European merchants who are concerned in this trade, the more the produce of India will riſe, and our own ſink, in value; and that at laſt it will be only by immenſe exports that we ſhall be able to procure any Indian goods. But if, in conſequence of this order of things, each particular ſociety be obliged to export more money, without bringing home more goods, its trade muſt be very diſadvantageous, and the ſame competition that began its ruin in Aſia will complete it in Europe: becauſe the number of ſellers being then greater, while that of buyers ſtill continues the ſame, the ſocieties will be obliged to ſell at a lower price, after having bought at an advanced one.

The article of aſſortments is not of leſs conſequence. By aſſortments is meant the combination of all the ſeveral ſorts of commodities that the different parts of India produce; a combination which is proportioned to the preſent plenty or ſcarcity of each kind of commodity in Europe. On this chiefly depends the ſucceſs and all the profits of the trade. But nothing would be more difficult in the practice for private ſocieties than this aſſortment. How, indeed, ſhould theſe ſmall ſocieties, unconnected with each other,

whoſe intereſt it is to conceal their mutual tranſactions, acquire the knowledge that is requiſite for this important purpoſe? How could they direct ſuch a multitude of agents as muſt be employed? It is plain that the ſupercargoes and commiſſaries, incapable of general views, would be all aſking for the ſame ſort of goods at the ſame time, in hopes of making a greater profit. This would of courſe enhance the price of that article in India, and lower it in Europe, to the great detriment of the owners, and of the nation in general.

All theſe conſiderations would certainly be perceived by the captains of ſhips and by the men of property, who would be ſolicited to enter into theſe ſocieties. They would be diſcouraged by the fear of having a competition with other ſocieties, either in the purchaſe, the ſale, or the making up of the aſſortments. The number of theſe ſocieties would ſoon be reduced; and trade, inſtead of extending, would conſtantly decline, and at laſt be entirely loſt.

It would, therefore, be for the intereſt of theſe private ſocieties, as we have before obſerved, to unite together; becauſe then all their agents, both on the coaſt of Coromandel, and on that of Malabar and in Bengal, being united and directed by one conſiſtent ſyſtem, would jointly labour in the ſeveral factories to collect proper aſſortments for the cargoes that were to be ſent away from the chief factory, ſo that the whole ſhould make a complete aſſortment when brought home, being collected upon an uniform plan, and proportioned according to the orders and inſtructions ſent from Enrope.

But it would be in vain to expect that any ſuch union could take place without the aſſiſtance of government. In ſome caſes men require to be encouraged; and it is chiefly, as in the preſent inſtance, when they are afraid of being denied that protection which they ſtand in need of, or apprehenſive that favours may be granted to others, which may be injurious to them. Government would find it their in-

tereſt to encourage this aſſociation, as it is certainly the ſureſt, if not the only way to procure, at the moſt reaſonable prices, the India goods that are wanted for home conſumption, and for exportation. This truth will appear more ſtriking from a very ſimple inſtance.

Let us ſuppoſe a merchant, who freights a ſhip for India with a conſiderable ſtock. Will he commiſſion ſeveral agents at the ſame place to buy the goods he wants? This cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed; becauſe he will be ſenſible, that, each of them endeavouring to execute his orders with as much ſecrecy as poſſible, they would neceſſarily injure one another, and muſt conſequently enhance the price of the goods; ſo that he would have a leſs quantity of the commodity for the ſame ſum, than if he had employed but one agent. The application is eaſy; government is the merchant, and the company is the agent.

We have now proved only that in the India trade, the nature of things requires that the ſubjects of one country ſhould unite into one company, both for their own intereſt and for that of the ſtate; but nothing has yet appeared, from whence it can be inferred that this company muſt be an excluſive one. We imagine, on the contrary, that the excluſive privilege always granted to theſe companies depends on particular cauſes, which have no eſſential connection with this trade.

When the ſeveral nations in Europe began to find that it was their intereſt to take a part in the trade of India, which individuals refuſed to do, though none were excluded from it, they found themſelves under the neceſſity of forming companies, and giving them every encouragement that ſo difficult an undertaking required. Capitals were advanced to them; they were inveſted with all the attributes of ſovereign power; permitted to ſend ambaſſadors; and empowered to make peace and war; a fatal privilege, which, unfortunately for them and for mankind, they have too often exerciſed. It was found neceſſary at the

ſame time to ſecure to them the means of indemnifying themſelves for the expences of ſettlements, which muſt be very conſiderable. This gave riſe to excluſive privileges, which at firſt were granted for a term of years; and afterwards made perpetual, from circumſtances which we ſhall now explain.

The brilliant prerogatives granted to the companies, were, in fact, ſo many impediments to trade. The right of having fortreſſes, implied the neceſſity of building and defending them; that of having troops implied the obligation of paying and recruiting them. It was the ſame with regard to the permiſſion of ſending ambaſſadors, and concluding treaties with the Indian princes. All theſe privileges were attended with expences merely of parade, fit only to check the progreſs of trade, and to intoxicate the agents and factors ſent by the companies into India, who on their arrival fancied themſelves ſovereigns, and acted accordingly.

Nations, however, found it very convenient to have ſome kind of ſettlements in Aſia, which apparently were attended with no coſt; and as it was reaſonable, while the companies bore all the expences, that all the profits ſhould be ſecured to them, the privileges have been continued. But if the ſeveral nations, inſtead of attending only to this pretended ecomomy, which could be but temporary, had extended their views to futurity, and connected all the events which muſt naturally be brought about in the courſe of a number of years; they muſt have foreſeen that the expences of ſovereignty, which can never be aſcertained, becauſe they depend upon numberleſs political contingencies, would in time abſorb both the profits and the ſtock of a trading company; that then the public treaſury muſt be exhauſted, to aſſiſt the chartered company; and that this aſſiſtance, being granted too late, could only remedy the miſchiefs that had already happened, without removing the cauſe of them; ſo that the companies would never riſe to any degree of importance.

BOOK V.

But why ſhould not ſtates at length be undeceived? Why ſhould they not take upon themſelves a charge which probably belongs to them, and the burden of which, after having cruſhed the companies, muſt finally fall upon them? There would then be no further need of an excluſive privilege. The companies which ſubſiſt at preſent, and are of great importance on account of their old connections and eſtabliſhed credit, would be ſupported with the greateſt care. The appearance of monopoly would vaniſh for ever; and their freedom might enable them to purſue ſome new track, which they could not think of while they were encumbered with the charges annexed to the charter. On the other hand, commerce, being open to all the members of the community, would proſper and flouriſh by their induſtry, new diſcoveries would be attempted, and new enterpriſes formed. The trade, from one part of India to another, having the certainty of a market in Europe, would become conſiderable and extenſive. The companies, attentive to theſe improvements, would regulate their dealings by the ſucceſs of private trade; and this emulation, which would not be injurious to any individual, would be beneficial to the ſeveral ſtates.

We apprehend this ſyſtem would tend to reconcile all intereſts, and would be conſiſtent with all principles. It ſeems to be liable to no reaſonable objection, either on the part of the advocates for the excluſive charter, or of thoſe who contend for a free trade.

If the former ſhould aſſert, that the companies, without the excluſive charter, would have but a precarious exiſtence, and would ſoon be ruined by private traders; I ſhould anſwer them, that they were not ſincere, when they affirmed that private trade could never ſucceed. For, if it could poſſibly occaſion the ruin of that of the companies, as they now pretend, it can only effect this by engroſſing every branch of their trade againſt their will, by a ſuperiority of powers, and by the aſcendant of liberty.

Beſides, what is it that really conſtitutes our companies? It is their ſtock, their ſhips, their factories, or their excluſive charter. What is it that has always ruined them? Extravagant expences, abuſes of every kind, viſionary undertakings; in a word, bad adminiſtration, far more deſtructive than competition. But if the diſtribution of their powers be made with prudence and economy, if the ſpirit of property direct their operations, there is no obſtacle which they cannot ſurmount, no ſucceſs which they may not expect.

But would not this ſucceſs give umbrage to the advocates for freedom? Would they not in their turn urge, that thoſe rich and powerful companies would alarm private men, and in ſome meaſure deſtroy that general and abſolute freedom which is ſo neceſſary to trade?

We ſhould not be ſurpriſed at this objection from them; for men, both in their actions and opinions, are more commonly guided by ſyſtem than by facts. I do not except from this error the greateſt part of our writers upon revenue. Commercial and civil liberty are the two tutelar deities of mankind, which we all reverence as well as they. But, that we may not be influenced by mere words, let us attend to the idea they are meant to convey. Let us aſk thoſe enthuſiaſts for liberty, what they would wiſh; whether they would have the laws entirely aboliſh thoſe ancient companies, that every citizen might freely partake of this trade, and ſhould equally have the ſame means of procuring the enjoyments of life, and the ſame reſources to raiſe a fortune? But if ſuch laws, with all their appearance of liberty, are in fact totally excluſive, let us not be induced by this falſe reaſoning to adopt them. When the ſtate allows all its members to carry on a trade that requires a large ſtock, and which conſequently very few are able to undertake; I would aſk, what advantage ariſes to the people in general from this regulation? It ſeems as if one meant to laugh at their credulity, in permitting

BOOK V.

hem to undertake what they cannot execute. If the companies ſhould be totally ſuppreſſed, there will be no India trade, or it will be only carried on by a few capital merchants.

I will go further ſtill, and, waving the conſideration of the excluſive charter, venture to affirm that the India companies, from the nature of their formation, have given opportunities to ſeveral people to become ſharers in their trade, who would otherwiſe never have been concerned in it. Let us take a review of the number of perſons, in all ſtations, and of all ages, that are proprietors, and partake of the profits of the trade, and it muſt be owned, that it would have been far more circumſcribed if it had been in private hands; that the formation of companies has only diffuſed while it ſeemed to reſtrain it; and that the moderate price of the ſhares muſt be a powerful motive to the people, to wiſh for the preſervation of an eſtabliſhment, which opens to them a track from which they would for ever have been excluded by a free trade.

We believe, indeed, that both companies and private men might equally ſucceed without injuring one another, or creating any mutual jealouſies. The companies might ſtill purſue thoſe great objects, which, by their nature and extent, can only be managed by a wealthy and powerful aſſociation. Private men, on the contrary, would confine themſelves to ſuch objects as are ſcarcely attended to by a great company, but might, by proper economy, and the combination of many ſmall fortunes, become a ſource of riches to them.

Stateſmen, who by their talents are called to the direction of public affairs, muſt determine this point, and rectify the ideas of an obſcure citizen, who may have been miſled by his want of experience. The ſyſtem of politics cannot too ſoon nor too deeply be applied to regulate a trade which ſo eſſentially concerns the fate of nations, and will probably always be an object of the greateſt importance.

To put an end to all intercourſe between Europe

and India, that luxury, which has made ſuch rapid progreſs in our part of the world, ſhould be baniſhed from every ſtate. Our effeminacy ſhould not create a thouſand wants unknown to our forefathers. The rivalſhip of trade ſhould no longer agitate the ſeveral nations who vie with each other in amaſſing riches. Such a revolution ſhould take place in the manners, cuſtoms, and opinions of men, as is never likely to happen. Our actions ſhould be regulated according to the principles of nature, which we ſeem to have abandoned for ever. BOOK V.

Such are the laſt reflections ſuggeſted to us with reſpect to the connections of Europe with Aſia: let us now turn our thoughts to America.

BOOK VI.

Diſcovery of America. Conqueſt of Mexico; and Settlements of the Spaniards in that part of the New World.

ANCIENT hiſtory preſents a magnificent ſcene to our view. The ſucceſſive repreſentation of great revolutions, heroic manners, and extraordinary events, will become more and more intereſting, the more uncommon it is to meet with incidents that bear any reſemblance to them. The period of founding and of ſubverting empires is paſt. The man before whom *the world was ſilent*, is no more. The ſeveral nations of the earth, after repeated ſhocks, after all the ſtruggles between ambition and liberty, ſeem at length totally reconciled with the wretched tranquillity of ſervitude. Battles are now fought with cannon, for the purpoſe of taking a few towns, and of gratifying the caprices of a few powerful men: formerly they were fought with the ſword, in order to overthrow and to eſtabliſh kingdoms, or to avenge the natural rights of mankind. The hiſtory of the world is become inſipid and trifling; and yet men are not become more happy. A regular and conſtant ſyſtem

BOOK VI.

Parallel of ancient and modern hiſtory.

BOOK VI. of oppreſſion has ſucceeded to the tumults and ſtorms of conqueſt; and we behold, with a degree of indifference, the various ranks of ſlaves aſſaſſinating each other with their chains, for the amuſement of their maſters.

Europe, that part of the globe which has moſt influence over the reſt, ſeems to have fixed itſelf on a ſolid and durable foundation. It is compoſed of communities that are almoſt equally powerful, enlightened, extenſive, and jealous. They will encroach perpetually upon each other; and, in the midſt of this continued fluctuation, ſome will be extended, others more limited, and the balance will alternately incline to different ſides, without ever being entirely deſtroyed. The fanaticiſm of religion, and the ſpirit of conqueſt, thoſe two diſturbers of the univerſe, operate no longer as they have done. That ſacred lever, whoſe extremity was attached to the earth, and whoſe centre of motion was in heaven, is now broken, or much weakened: and kings begin to diſcover, not for the happineſs of their people, which concerns them little, but for their own private intereſt, that the object of the firſt importance is to obtain riches and ſecurity. Hence large armies are kept up, frontiers are fortified, and trade is encouraged.

A ſpirit of barter and exchange hath ariſen in Europe, that ſeems to open a vaſt ſcene of ſpeculation to individuals, but is only conſiſtent with peace and tranquillity. A war, among commercial nations, is a conflagration that deſtroys them all. The time is not far off, when the ſanction of government will extend to the private engagements between ſubjects of different nations; and when thoſe bankruptcies, the effects of which are felt at immenſe diſtances, will become concerns of government. In theſe mercantile ſtates, the diſcovery of an iſland, the importation of a new commodity, the invention of ſome uſeful machine, the conſtruction of a port, the eſtabliſhment of a factory, the carrying off a branch of trade from a rival nation, will all become tranſactions of

the utmoſt importance; and the annals of nations muſt hereafter be written by commercial philoſophers, as they were formerly by hiſtorical orators.

The diſcovery of a new world was alone ſufficient to furniſh matter for our curioſity. A vaſt continent, entirely uncultivated, human nature reduced to the mere animal ſtate, fields without harveſts, treaſures without proprietors, ſocieties without policy, and men without manners, what an intereſting and inſtructive ſpectacle would theſe have formed for a Locke, a Buffon, or a Monteſquieu! What could have been ſo aſtoniſhing, ſo affecting, as an account of their voyage! But the image of rude unpoliſhed nature is already disfigured. We ſhall endeavour to collect the features of it, though now half effaced, as ſoon as we have deſcribed, and delivered up to the execration of poſterity, thoſe rapacious and cruel Chriſtians, whom chance unfortunately conducted to this other hemiſphere.

Ancient revolutions of Spain.

Spain, which was known in the earlieſt ages under the names of Heſperia and Iberia, was inhabited by people, who, defended on one ſide by the ſea, and on the other by the Pyrenees, enjoyed in peace an agreeable climate and a fruitful country, and who governed themſelves according to their own cuſtoms. The ſouthern part of this nation had in ſome degree emerged from its ſtate of babariſm, by ſome trifling connections it had formed with foreigners; but the inhabitants on the coaſts of the ocean reſembled all thoſe nations which know no other occupation but that of the chaſe. They were ſo much attached to this kind of life, that they left the toils of agriculture to their wives; the fatigues of which they had encouraged them to ſupport by eſtabliſhing general aſſemblies annually, in which thoſe women, who had moſt diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the labours of agriculture, received public applauſe.

Here we have an inſtance of the weaker ſex being employed in the moſt laborious occupations of life, either ſavage or civilized; the young girl, holding in

BOOK VI. her delicate hands the inſtrument of huſbandry; and her mother, perhaps with child of a ſecond or third infant, bending her body over the plough, and thruſting the plough-ſhare or the ſpade into the boſom of the earth during the moſt exceſſive heats. If I am not deceived, this phenomenon will appear to a man who reflects, one of the moſt aſtoniſhing that occurs in the ſingular annals of our ſpecies. It would be difficult to find a more ſtriking example of what reſpect for national cuſtoms can effect; for there is leſs heroiſm in expoſing one's life, than in devoting it to conſtant fatigue. But if ſuch be the power of men collected together over the minds of women, how much greater would that of women, in a collective body, be over the hearts of men?

Such was the ſituation of Spain, when the Carthaginians turned their rapacious views upon a country filled with riches, which were unknown to its inhabitants. Theſe merchants, whoſe ſhips covered the Mediterranean, introduced themſelves as friends, who came to barter ſeveral articles of convenience againſt metals that were thought to be uſeleſs. The temptations of a trade ſo advantageous in appearance, ſeduced the Spaniards ſo powerfully, that they permitted theſe republicans to build upon their coaſts houſes for their occaſional reſidence, magazines for the ſecurity of their merchandiſe, and temples for the exerciſe of their religion. Theſe eſtabliſhments inſenſibly became fortified places, of which this power, whoſe policy was ſuperior to its military ſkill, availed itſelf to enſlave a credulous people, who were always divided among themſelves, and always irreconcileable in their enmities. By bribing ſome, and intimidating others, Carthage ſucceeded in ſubduing Spain, and even effected this with Spaniſh ſoldiers and Spaniſh wealth.

When the Carthaginians were become maſters of the moſt extenſive and moſt valuable part of this fine country, they ſeemed either to be ignorant of the means of eſtabliſhing their dominion there, or to ne-

glect them. Instead of continuing to appropriate to themselves the gold and silver, with which the conquered nations were abundantly supplied from their mines, by exchanging commodities of little value for those metals, they chose to seize them by force. Nor was this spirit of tyranny confined to the body of the republic; it also influenced the generals, the officers, the private men, and even the merchants. The violence of these proceedings threw the conquered provinces into a state of despair, and excited in those which were yet free an extreme aversion for so intolerable a yoke. In this situation they all of them resolved to accept of assistance, as fatal to them as their misfortunes were oppressive. Spain became a theatre of jealousy, ambition, and hatred, between Rome and Carthage.

The two commonwealths contended with great obstinacy for the empire of this beautiful part of Europe; and, perhaps, it would finally have belonged to neither of them, if the Spaniards had continued quiet spectators of the contest, and left the rival nations time to destroy each other. But they chose to become actors in the bloody scene, and thus reduced themselves to be slaves to the Romans; in which state they remained till the fifth century.

In a short time the degeneracy of those masters of the world, inspired the savage nations of the north with the enterprising idea of invading the provinces that were ill-governed and ill-defended. The Suevi, the Alani, the Vandals, and the Goths, passed the Pyrenean mountains. These barbarians, being robbers by profession, were incapable of becoming citizens, and made war upon each other. The Goths, superior in abilities or good fortune, subdued the rest, and reduced all the kingdoms of Spain into one; which, notwithstanding the defects in its constitution, and the unbounded extortions of the Jews, who were the only merchants, supported itself till the commencement of the eighth century.

BOOK VI.

At this period, the Moors, who had ſubdued Africa with that impetuoſity which was the characteriſtic of of all their enterpriſes, croſſed the ſea. They found in Spain a king deſtitute of virtue and abilities; a multitude of courtiers, and no ſtateſmen; ſoldiers devoid of courage, and generals without experience; an effeminate people, holding the government in contempt, and diſpoſed to change their maſter; and they alſo found rebels, who joined them for the ſake of plundering, burning, and maſſacring all that oppoſed them. In leſs than three years, the ſovereignty of of the Chriſtians was deſtroyed, and that of the infidels eſtabliſhed upon a ſolid foundation.

Spain was indebted to its conquerors for the firſt principles of taſte, humanity, politeneſs, and philoſophy; as alſo for introducing into the country ſeveral arts, and a conſiderable trade. Theſe brilliant proſpects were not of long duration. They were ſoon diſſipated by the numberleſs ſects that aroſe among the conquerors, and the irreparable fault they committed in eſtabliſhing diſtinct ſovereigns in all the principal towns of their dominions.

During this time, the Goths, who, to ſcreen themſelves from the power of the Mohammedans, had ſought an aſylum in the extremity of the Aſturias, were labouring under the yoke of anarchy, plunged in a barbarous ſtate of ignorance, oppreſſed by their fanatical prieſts, languiſhing under inexpreſſible poverty, and perpetually haraſſed by civil wars. Under the influence of theſe calamities, far from thinking to avail themſelves of the diviſions ſubſiſting among their enemies, they were ſufficiently happy in being forgotten, or in not being known by them. But as ſoon as the crown, which was originally elective, became hereditary in the tenth century; as ſoon as the nobility and biſhops became incapable of diſturbing the ſtate; and that the people, raiſed from ſlavery, were admitted to a ſhare of the government; the national ſpirit began to revive. The Arabians, attacked on every ſide, were ſucceſſively ſtripped of their con-

queſts; and at the end of the fifteenth century they had but one little kingdom remaining.

Their fall would have been more rapid, had they engaged with a power that could have united, in one common centre, the conqueſts it gained over them. But the revolution was not affected in this manner. The Mohammedans were attacked by different chiefs, each of which was at the head of a diſtinct ſtate. Spain was divided into as many kingdoms as it contained provinces: and it was not till after a long time, ſeveral ſucceſſions, wars, and revolutions, that theſe ſmall ſtates were at laſt united in the two monarchies of Caſtile and Arragon. At length, the marriage of Iſabella with Ferdinand having happily joined all the crowns of Spain into one family, they found themſelves equal to the enterpriſe of attacking the kingdom of Granada.

This ſtate, which ſcarcely occupied one-eighth part of the peninſula of Spain, had always been in a flouriſhing condition from the time of the invaſion of the Saracens; but its proſperity had increaſed in proportion as the ſucceſſes of the Chriſtians had induced a greater number of infidels to take refuge there. It conſiſted of three millions of inhabitants. Throughout the reſt of Europe there were no lands ſo well cultivated; manufactures ſo numerous and improved; ſo regular and ſo extenſive a navigation. The public revenues amounted to ſeven millions of livres [291,666l. 13s. 4d.]; a prodigious ſum at a time when gold and ſilver were very ſcarce.

Theſe ſeveral advantages, far from deterring the monarchs of Caſtile and Arragon from invading Granada, were the motives that principally urged them to the enterpriſe. They were obliged to carry on a ten years bloody war, in order to ſubdue this flouriſhing province. The conqueſt of it was completed by the ſurrender of the capital in the beginning of January 1492.

Columbus forms the deſign of

It was in theſe glorious circumſtances, that Chriſtopher Columbus, a man of obſcure birth, whoſe

BOOK VI.

discovering America.

knowledge of aſtronomy and navigation was far ſuperior to that of his cotemporaries, propoſed to the Spaniards, who were happy at home, to aggrandize themſelves abroad. He was led by a ſecret impulſe to imagine that another continent certainly exiſted, and that he was the perſon deſtined to diſcover it. The idea of Antipodes, which ſuperſtition had condemned as heretical and impious, and reaſon itſelf had treated as chimerical, appeared to this penetrating genius to have its foundation in truth. This idea, perhaps the greateſt that ever entered into the human mind, took ſtrong poſſeſſion of his imagination; and, having in vain propoſed the acquiſition of a new hemiſphere to his native country Genoa, to Portugal, where he then reſided, and even to England, which he might have expected would readily have concurred in any maritime enterpriſe, he at laſt communicated his views and his projects to Iſabella.

The miniſters of this princeſs, who looked upon the ſcheme of diſcovering a new world as the offspring of a diſtempered brain, treated the author of it for ſome time with thoſe airs of contemptuous inſolence, which men in office often put on with thoſe who have nothing but genius to recommend them. But Columbus was not to be diſcouraged by any difficulties; he poſſeſſed, as all men do who engage in extraordinary enterpriſes, a degree of enthuſiaſm, which renders them ſuperior to the cavils of the ignorant, the contempt of the proud, the mean arts of the covetous, and the delays of the indolent. At length, by perſeverance, ſpirit, and courage, joined to the arts of prudence and management, he ſurmounted every obſtacle. Having obtained three ſmall veſſels, and ninety men, he ſet ſail on the third of Auguſt 1492, with the title of admiral and viceroy of the iſlands and territories he ſhould diſcover, and arrived at the Canaries, where it was his intention to caſt anchor.

Columbus ſails firſt towards the Canaries.

Theſe iſlands, ſituated at the diſtance of five hundred miles from the coaſts of Spain, and of a hundred miles from the continent of Africa, are ſeven in num-

Description of these islands.

ber. They were known to the ancients by the name of the Fortunate Islands. It was at the most western part of this small Archipelago that the celebrated Ptolemy, who lived in the second century of the Christian era, established a first meridian; from whence he computed the longitudes of all the places, the geographical position of which he determined. According to the judicious remark of three French astronomers, who have published so curious and so instructive an account of a voyage in 1771 and 1772, he might have chosen Alexandria for this purpose: but he was apprehensive, without doubt, that this predilection for his country might be imitated by others, and that some confusion might arise from these variations. The plan which this philosopher adopted, of taking for his first meridian, that which appeared to leave to the east of it all the part of the world then known, was generally approved, and followed for several centuries. It is only in modern times, that several nations have improperly substituted to this meridian, that of the capital of their own empire.

The habit that had been contracted of repeating the name of the Fortunate Islands, did not prevent them from being totally neglected. Some navigators had certainly reconnoitred anew these pagan territories, since, in 1344, the court of Rome gave the property of them to Louis de la Cerda, one of the Infants of Castile. Obstinately thwarted by the head of his family, this prince had never yet been able to avail himself of this extraordinary liberality, when Béthencourt went from Rochelle, on the 6th of May 1402, and two months after seized upon Lancerota. It being impossible for him to proceed any farther with the forces he had remaining, this adventurer determined to pay homage to the king of Castile of all the conquests he should make. With the succours furnished him by this monarch, he seized upon Fuerteventura in 1404, upon Gomera in 1405, and upon the isle of Ferro in 1406. Canary, Palma, and Teneriffe, did not submit till 1483, 1492, and 1496.

BOOK VI.

This Archipelago, by the name of the Canary Iſlands, has ever ſince made part of the Spaniſh dominions, and has been governed by the laws of Caſtile.

The Canaries enjoy the advantage of a ſky that is generally ſerene. The heat is great on the coaſts; but the air is agreeably temperate upon the places that are a little higher; and too cold upon ſome of the mountains that are covered with ſnow the greateſt part of the year.

All, or nearly all, the fruits and animals of the Old and of the New World thrive upon the different kinds of ſoil in theſe iſlands. They furniſh oils, ſome ſilk, a great deal of perella *, and a conſiderable quantity of ſugar, inferior to that which comes from America. The corn they ſupply is moſt commonly ſufficient for the conſumption of the country; and without mentioning liquors of an inferior kind, their exports in wine amount annually to ten or twelve thouſand pipes of Malmſey.

In 1768, the Canaries reckoned one hundred and fifty-five thouſand one hundred and ſixty-ſix inhabitants, excluſive of five hundred and eight clergy, nine hundred and twenty-two monks, and ſeven hundred and forty-ſix nuns. Twenty-nine thouſand eight hundred of theſe inhabitants were embodied into a regiment. Theſe militia were nothing at that period; but they have ſince been a little diſciplined, as well as all the troops in the other Spaniſh colonies.

Although the audience, or ſuperior tribunal of juſtice, be in the iſland particularly called Canary, yet the iſland of Teneriffe, which is known by its volcanos, and by a mountain which, according to the lateſt and beſt obſervations, riſes one thouſand nine hundred and four toiſes above the level of the ſea, is conſidered as the capital of the Archipelago. It is the moſt extenſive, the richeſt, and the moſt populous. It is the reſidence of the governor-general, and the ſeat of adminiſtration. The traders, who are almoſt all Engliſh or Americans, make their purchaſes in its

* A fungous ſubſtance from which a red dye is extracted.

harbour of Sainte Croix, and take in their cargoes there.

The money which theſe merchants bring to the iſlands, ſeldom circulates in them. It is not carried off by the imports, ſince they conſiſt only in the monopoly of tobacco, and a tax of ſix per cent. on all exports and imports: inconſiderable reſources, which muſt be abſorbed by the expences of ſovereignty. If the Canaries ſend annually fifteen or ſixteen hundred thouſand livres [from 62,500l. to 66,666l. 13s. 4d.] to the mother-country, it is for the ſuperſtition of the cruſades: it is for one half of the firſt year's ſalaries paid to the crown, by thoſe who have obtained any poſt under government: it is for the *droit des lances*, ſubſtituted throughout the whole empire, to the obligation formerly impoſed upon all titled perſons, of following the king to war: it is for one third of the revenue of the biſhoprics, which, in whatever part of the world they may be, belongs to the government: it is for the produce of the lands acquired or preſerved by ſome families reſiding in Spain: in a word, it is to defray the expences of thoſe, who by a reſtleſs diſpoſition, ambition, or the deſire of acquiring knowledge, are prompted to quit the Archipelago.

So conſiderable an exportation of ſpecie has kept the Canaries conſtantly exhauſted. They would have emerged from this ſituation, had they been ſuffered peaceably to enjoy the liberty which, in 1657, was granted them, of fitting out every year for the other hemiſphere, five ſhips laden with a thouſand tons of proviſions or merchandiſe. Unfortunately, the reſtraints put upon this trade at Cadiz, gradually reduced it to the ſending of one very ſmall veſſel to Caracca. This tyranny is drawing to an end; and we ſhall ſpeak of its decline, after we have accompanied Columbus to the great ſcene upon which his genius and courage are going to be diſplayed.

On the ſixth of September, the admiral quitted Gomera, where his too feeble veſſels had been re-

BOOK VI.

paired, and his proviſions renewed: he then abandoned the track purſued by preceding navigators; and directed his courſe weſtward, in order to get into an unknown ocean.

In a little time, the ſhips crews, terrified at the idea of the immenſe track of ſea that ſeparated them from their native country, began to expreſs their fears. They murmured, and the moſt violent of the mutineers propoſed ſeveral times that they ſhould throw the author of their danger overboard. His moſt zealous adherents were even without hope; and he had now nothing to expect either from ſeverity or mildneſs. The admiral then ſpake to them in the following terms: *If the land does not appear in three days time, I give myſelf up to your reſentment.* The ſpeech was bold, but not raſh.

For ſome time paſt, on ſounding, he had found a bottom, and from other circumſtances, which are ſeldom deceitful, he had reaſon to conclude that he was not far from the object of his purſuit.

Arrival of Columbus in the New World.

The New World was diſcovered in the month of October. Columbus landed on one of the Lucayas, or Bahama iſlands, which he called San-Salvador, and took poſſeſſion of it in the name of Iſabella. No European at that time imagined that there could be any injuſtice in ſeizing upon a country which was not inhabited by Chriſtians.

The iſlanders, on ſeeing the ſhips, and a race of men ſo different from themſelves, were terrified, and ran away. The Spaniards caught ſome of them, treated them with great civility, and diſmiſſed them loaded with preſents.

This behaviour entirely diſſipated the fears of the whole nation: the inhabitants appeared upon the ſhore without arms. Several of them came on board. They viewed every thing with admiration. Their manners were free and open. They brought fruits. They aſſiſted the Spaniards in getting on ſhore, by taking them upon their ſhoulders. The inhabitants of the neighbouring iſlands ſhowed the ſame obliging

diſpoſition. The ſailors, ſent by Columbus to make diſcoveries, every where met with the kindeſt reception. Men, women, and children, were employed in procuring proviſions for them. They filled the hammocks where they ſlept with the fineſt cotton.

Tell me, reader, whether theſe were civilized people landing among ſavages, or ſavages among civilized people? Of what conſequence was it that they were naked; that they dwelt in the midſt of the foreſts, and lived under huts; that there was neither a code of laws among them, nor civil or criminal juſtice, provided they were mild, humane, beneficent, and poſſeſſed all the virtues that diſtinguiſh the human ſpecies? Alas! people with the ſame behaviour would have met with the ſame reception every where. Let us forget, if it be poſſible, the inſtant of this diſcovery, this firſt interview between two worlds, or rather let us recal it to our memory, only to increaſe our deteſtation of the one we inhabit.

But it was gold the Spaniards wanted, and they ſoon found it. Several of the ſavages wore ornaments made of this precious metal, which they preſented to their new gueſts; who on their part were more diſguſted with the naked appearance and ſimplicity of theſe people, than touched with their kindneſs. They were incapable of diſcerning in them the genuine characters of nature. Surpriſed to find men of a copper colour without beards or hair on their bodies, they looked upon them as a race of imperfect animals, who were only to be treated with humanity, till the neceſſary information was obtained in regard to the neighbouring countries, and the ſeat of the gold mines.

The Spaniards make their firſt ſettlement tn America at St. Domingo. Manners of the inhabitants of this iſland.

Having taken a view of ſeveral ſmaller iſlands, Columbus landed on the north ſide of a large one called by the natives Hayti; to which he gave the name of Hiſpaniola, and which is now called San Domingo; he was conducted thither by ſome ſavages of the other iſlands, who accompanied him without the leaſt diſtruſt, and gave him to underſtand, that it was the

BOOK VI. great iſland which furniſhed them with the metal the Spaniards were ſo eager to acquire.

The iſland of Hayti, which is two hundred leagues in length, and ſixty, and in ſome places eighty, in breadth, is divided from eaſt to weſt by a chain of mountains, which occupy the centre of the iſland, and are for the moſt part ſteep. It was diſtributed into five populous kingdoms, the inhabitants of which lived in perfect amity. Their kings, who were called Caciques, were ſo much the more abſolute, as they were much beloved. The complexion of theſe people was much fairer than that of thoſe in the other iſlands. They painted their bodies. The men went quite naked. The women wore a kind of cotton petticoat, which reached no further than their knees. The girls, as well as the men, were naked. Their food was maize, roots, fruit, and ſhell-fiſh. As they were temperate, nimble, and active, but not ſtrong, they were averſe from labour. They lived free from care in a ſtate of agreeable indolence. Their time was ſpent in dancing, diverſion, and ſleep. By the accounts the Spaniards give of them, they ſhowed little marks of underſtanding; and indeed iſlanders, who live in a ſtate of ſeparation from the reſt of mankind, muſt of neceſſity have very confined ideas. Detached ſocieties arrive at improvement by ſlow and difficult advances. They derive no advantages from thoſe diſcoveries, which time and experience throw in the way of other people: neither do the chances of acquiring knowledge occur ſo frequently among them.

The Spaniards themſelves confeſs, that theſe people were humane, void of malice and revenge, and almoſt diveſted of any paſſion whatever. They were ignorant, but ſhowed no deſire of being informed. This indifference, and the confidence they repoſed in ſtrangers, prove that they were happy. Their hiſtory, and their notions of morality, were contained in a collection of ſongs, which they learnt from their infancy; and they had, in common with all

nations, ſome fables concerning the origin of the human race.

We know little of their religion, to which they were not much attached; and it is probable that in this reſpect, as well as in many others, they have been calumniated by the authors of their deſtruction, who pretend that theſe iſlanders, whoſe manners were ſo gentle, paid adoration to a number of malevolent beings. The worſhippers of a malevolent deity can never be good themſelves. But of what conſequence were their deities or their mode of worſhip? Did they queſtion the ſtrangers upon the ſubject of their religion? Or, was their belief a motive of curioſity, hatred, or contempt for them? They were the Europeans, who conducted themſelves as if they had been adviſed by the demon of the iſlanders; and the iſlanders behaved as if they had obeyed the Deity of the Europeans.

They had no law that limited the number of their wives. It was common for one of them to have ſome privileges and diſtinctions allotted to her; but theſe gave her no authority over the reſt. She was the one whom the huſband loved the beſt, and by whom he thought himſelf beſt beloved. On the death of her huſband, ſhe ſometimes cauſed herſelf to be buried in the ſame grave with him. This was not a cuſtom, a duty, or a point of honour, among theſe people; but the wife found it impoſſible to ſurvive the object of her tendereſt affection. This freedom in love and marriage, which was authoriſed by their laws and manners, was by the Spaniards called debauchery, licentiouſneſs, and vice: and to the pretended exceſſive indulgence of the iſlanders in this particular, they attributed the origin of a diſgraceful and deſtructive diſeaſe, which is generally thought to have been unknown in Europe before the diſcovery of America.

Theſe iſlanders had no other weapon than a bow and arrows made of wood, the point of which being hardened in the fire was ſometimes armed with ſharp ſtones, or the bone of a fiſh. The ordinary dreſs of

the Spaniards was of itſelf an impenetrable armour againſt arrows of this kind, ſhot with little dexterity. Theſe weapons and ſome ſmall clubs, or rather large ſticks, which could ſeldom give a mortal blow were far from making theſe people formidable.

They were diſtinguiſhed into different claſſes, one of which had a claim to a kind of nobility; but we are little acquainted either with the prerogatives annexed to this diſtinction, or with the means of obtaining it. This ignorant and ſavage people had alſo ſorcerers among them, who have always been either the offspring or parents of ſuperſtition

Columbus omitted no attention that might engage the friendſhip of theſe iſlanders. But at the ſame time he made them ſenſible, that though he had no inclination to hurt them, he did not want the power. The proofs he gave in their preſence of the ſurpriſing effects of his artillery, convinced them of the truth of what he ſaid. They looked upon the Spaniards as men deſcended from heaven; and the preſents they received, were in their eſtimation, not mere curioſities, but ſacred things. This error was productive of great advantages; nor was it removed by any act of folly or cruelty. They gave the ſavages red caps, glaſs beads, pins, knives, and bells, and received in return gold and proviſions.

Columbus availed himſelf of this harmony to fix upon a place for a ſettlement, which he deſigned ſhould be the centre of all his future projects. He erected a fort with the aſſiſtance of the iſlanders, who cheerfully laboured to forge chains for themſelves. He left thirty-nine Caſtilians in the place; and having reconnoitred the greateſt part of the iſland, ſet ſail for Spain.

He arrived at Palos, a port of Andaluſia, from whence he had ſailed ſeven months before. He proceeded by land to Barcelona, where the court reſided. This journey was a triumph. The nobility and the people went to meet him, and followed him in crowds to the preſence of Ferdinand and Iſabella.

He presented to them some islanders, who had voluntarily accompanied him. He produced pieces of gold, birds, cotton, and many curiosities, which were valuable on account of their novelty. Such a variety of uncommon objects, exposed to the view of a people whose vanity inflamed by imagination magnified every thing, made them fancy that they saw an inexhaustible source of riches for ever flowing into their country. The enthusiasm spread, and reached even to the throne. At the public audience the sovereigns gave to Columbus, he was permitted to be covered, and to sit as a grandee of Spain. He related his voyage to them. They loaded him with caresses, commendations, and honours; and soon after he reimbarked with seventeen sail, to make new discoveries, and to establish colonies.

On his arrival at San Domingo with fifteen hundred men, soldiers, artificers, and missionaries; with provisions for their subsistence; with the seeds of all the plants that were thought likely to thrive in this hot and damp climate; and with the domestic animals of the old hemisphere, of which there was not one in the new one, Columbus found nothing but ruins and carcases upon the spot where he had left fortifications and Spaniards. These plunderers had occasioned their own destruction by their haughty, licentious, and tyrannical behaviour; and he had the address to persuade those who had less moderation than himself, that it was good policy to postpone their revenge to another time. A fort, honoured with the name of Isabella, was constructed on the borders of the ocean; and that of Saint Thomas was erected on the mountains of Cibao, where the islanders gathered from the torrents the greatest part of the gold they used for their ornaments, and where the conquerors intended to open mines.

While these works were carrying on, the provisions that had been brought from Europe had been either consumed or were spoiled. The colony had not received fresh ones enough to supply the deficiency;

BOOK VI.

and ſoldiers, or ſailors, had neither had any leiſure, knowledge, or inclination enough to produce freſh articles of ſubſiſtence. It became neceſſary to have recourſe to the natives of the country, who cultivating but little, were unable to ſubſiſt ſtrangers, who, though they were the moſt moderate perſons of the old hemiſphere, yet conſumed each of them as much as would have been ſufficient for ſeveral Indians. Theſe unfortunate people gave up all they had, and ſtill more was required. Theſe continual exactions produced an alteration in their character, which was naturally timid; and all the Caciques, except Guacanahari, who had firſt received the Spaniards in his dominions, reſolved to unite their forces, in order to break a yoke which was becoming every day more intolerable.

Cruelties committed by the conquerors at San Domingo, and their effects.

Columbus deſiſted from purſuing his diſcoveries, in order to prevent, or put a ſtop to this unexpected danger. Although two-thirds of his followers had been hurried to the grave by miſery, by the climate, and by debauchery; although ſickneſs prevented many of thoſe who had eſcaped theſe terrible ſcourges from joining him; and although he could not muſter more than two hundred infantry and twenty horſe to face the enemy, yet this extraordinary man was not afraid of attacking, in 1495, in the plains of Vega-Real, an army, which hiſtorians in general have computed at one hundred thouſand men. The chief precaution taken was to fall upon theſe troops in the night-time.

The unhappy iſlanders were conquered before the action began. They conſidered the Spaniards as beings of a ſuperior order. Their admiration, reſpect, and fear, were increaſed by the European armour; and the ſight of the cavalry in particular aſtoniſhed them beyond meaſure. Many of them were ſimple enough to believe that the man and the horſe were the ſame animal, or a kind of deity. Had their courage even been proof againſt theſe impreſſions of terror, they could have made but a faint reſiſtance. The cannon-

ading, the pikes, and a discipline to which they were strangers, must have easily dispersed them. They fled on all sides. To punish them for their rebellion, as it was called, every Indian above fourteen years of age was subjected to a tribute in gold or in cotton, according to the district he lived in.

This arrangement of matters, which required assiduous labour, appeared the greatest of evils to a people who were not used to be employed. The desire of getting rid of their oppressors, became their only passion. As they entertained no further hope of their being able to send them away by force, the idea occurred to them, in 1496, of expelling them by famine. In this view, they sowed no more maize, they pulled up the cassava roots that were already planted, and they themselves took refuge among the most barren and steep rocks.

Desperate resolutions are seldom attended with success; accordingly, that which the Indians had taken proved extremely fatal to them. The gifts of rude and uncultivated nature were not sufficient for their support, as they had inconsiderately expected they would be; and their asylum, however difficult of access, was not able to screen them from the pursuits of their incensed tyrants, who, during this total privation of local resources, accidentally received some provisions from the mother-country. Their rage was carried to such a height, that they trained up dogs to hunt and devour these unhappy men; and it has even been said, that some of the Castilians had made a vow to massacre twelve Indians every day in honour of the twelve Apostles. Before this event, the island was reckoned to contain a million of inhabitants. A third part of this considerable population perished on this occasion, by fatigue, hunger, and the sword.

Scarce had the remains of these unfortunate people, who had escaped so many disasters, returned to their habitations, where calamities of another kind were preparing for them, than divisions arose among

BOOK VI. their perſecutors. The removal of the capital of the colony from the north to the ſouth, from Iſabella to San Domingo, might poſſibly furniſh a pretence for ſome complaints: but the diſſenſions had their chief origin in the paſſions raiſed to an uncommon degree of fermentation under a burning ſky, and not ſufficiently reſtrained by an authority not properly eſtabliſhed. When the buſineſs was to dethrone ſome cacique, to plunder ſome diſtrict, or to exterminate ſome village, the commands of Columbus's brother, or of his repreſentative, were readily obeyed. After the ſharing of the booty, the ſpirit of independence became again the prevailing ſpirit: and their mutual jealouſies and animoſities were only attended to. The parties at length took up arms againſt each other, and war was openly declared.

During the courſe of theſe diviſions, the admiral was in Spain, where he had returned in order to anſwer the accuſations that were inceſſantly renewed againſt him. The recital of all the great actions he had performed, and the expoſition of all the uſeful things he meant to carry into execution, eaſily regained him the confidence of Iſabella. Ferdinand himſelf began to be a little reconciled to the idea of diſtant voyages. The plan of a regular form of government was traced, which was firſt to be tried at San Domingo, and afterwards adopted, with ſuch alterations as experience ſhould have ſhown to be neceſſary, in the ſeveral ſettlements, which in proceſs of time might be founded in the other hemiſphere. Men, ſkilled in the working of the mines, were carefully ſelected; and the government took upon itſelf to pay and to maintain them for ſeveral years.

The people thought differently from their ſovereigns. Time, which brings on reflection when the firſt tranſports of enthuſiaſm are paſſed, had extinguiſhed the deſire originally ſo ardent, of going to the New World. Its gold was no longer an object of temptation: on the contrary, the livid complexions of all thoſe who returned home; the ſevere

and diſgraceful diſtempers with which moſt of them were afflicted; the accounts of the unwholeſomeneſs of the climate, of the numbers who had loſt their lives, and the hardſhips they had undergone from the ſcarcity of proviſions; an unwillingneſs to be under the command of a foreigner, the ſeverity of whoſe diſcipline was generally cenſured; and, perhaps, the jealouſy that was entertained of his growing reputation; all theſe reaſons contributed to produce an inſuperable prejudice againſt San Domingo in the ſubjects of the crown of Caſtile, the only Spaniards who, till the year 1593, were allowed to embark for that iſland.

It was abſolutely neceſſary, however, to procure coloniſts; the admiral therefore propoſed to have recourſe to the priſons, and to reſcue criminals from death and infamy, for the purpoſe of aggrandizing their country, of which they were the refuſe and the diſgrace. This project would have been attended with fewer inconveniences in ſuch colonies as, having gained a more ſolid eſtabliſhment, might, by the force of their laws, have reſtrained or corrected licentious and profligate individuals; but infant ſtates require founders of a different character from a ſet of rogues. America will, perhaps, never get rid of the remains of that alloy which debaſed the firſt colonies that were tranſported thither from Europe; and Columbus himſelf was ſoon convinced of the injudicious advice he had given.

Had this enterpriſing ſeaman carried out with him men of the common ſtamp, he might, during the voyage, have inſpired them with honeſt principles at leaſt, if not with high notions of honour. Theſe perſons on their arrival would have conſtituted a majority, and, by ſetting the example of obedience, would neceſſarily have brought back to order thoſe who had deviated from it. Such a harmony would have been productive of the moſt ſalutary effects, and have eſtabliſhed the colony on the moſt ſolid foundation. The Indians would have been treated in a better manner,

BOOK VI.

the mines worked to greater advantage, and the taxes more eafily levied. The mother-country, animated by this fuccefs to greater exertions, might have formed new fettlements, which would have augmented the glory, the wealth, and the power of Spain. Thefe important events, which might have been brought forward in a few years, were rendered abortive by this hafty idea.

The malefactors who accompanied Columbus, in conjunction with the plunderers that infefted San Domingo, formed one of the moft unnatural kinds of fociety that had ever appeared upon the globe. Their mutual coalition enabled them boldly to fet all authority at defiance; and the impoffibility of fubduing them, made it neceffary to have recourfe to attempts to bring them over. Several were tried in vain. At length, in 1499, it was fuggefted, that to the lands which every Spaniard received, a greater or lefs number of iflanders fhould be annexed, whofe time and labour was to be devoted to mafters deftitute of humanity and prudence. This act of weaknefs reftored apparent tranquillity to the colony, but without conciliating to the admiral the affection of thofe who profited by it. The complaints made againft him were even more conftant, more urgent, more general, and more attended to than they had been before.

This extraordinary man purchafed upon very hard terms the fame which his genius and induftry had procured him. His life exhibited a perpetual contraft of elevation and depreffion. He was not only continually expofed to the cabals, calumnies, and ingratitude of individuals; but was alfo obliged to fubmit to the caprices of a haughty and turbulent court, which by turns rewarded or punifhed, reduced him to the neceffity of making the moft humiliating juftifications, and reftored him to its confidence.

The prejudice, entertained by the Spanifh miniftry againft the author of the greateft difcovery ever made, operated fo far, that an arbitrator was fent to the

New World, to decide between Columbus and his soldiers. Bovadilla, the most ambitious, self-interested, unjust, and violent man that had yet gone over to America, arrived at San Domingo in 1500; deprived the admiral of his property, his honours, and his command, and sent him to Europe in irons. The sovereigns were warned, by public indignation, that the world expected the immediate punishment of so daring a crime, and the reparation of so great an outrage. In order to conciliate propriety with their prejudices, Ferdinand and Isabella recalled, with real or feigned resentment, the agent who had so cruelly abused the power with which they had intrusted him: but they did not restore to his post the deplorable victim of his incomprehensible villany. Columbus, rather than languish in indolence, or live in a state of humiliation, determined to undertake a fourth voyage as an adventurer, into regions which might almost be said to have been created by himself. After this effort, which neither the malice of mankind, nor the caprice of the elements, rendered useless, he ended in 1506, at Valladolid, his brilliant career, which the recent death of Isabella had deprived him of every hope of its ever being fortunate. Although he was no more than fifty-nine years of age, yet his bodily strength was much weakened: but the faculties of his mind had not lost any of their energy.

Such was the end of this uncommon man, who, to the astonishment of Europe, added a fourth part to the earth, or rather half a world to this globe, which had been so long desolate, and so little known. It might reasonably have been expected, that public gratitude would have given the name of this intrepid seaman to the new hemisphere, the first discovery of which was owing to his enterprising genius. This was the least homage of respect that could be paid to his memory; but either through envy, inattention, or the caprice of fortune even in the distribution of fame, this honour was reserved for Americus Vespucius, a Florentine, who did nothing more than follow

BOOK VI.

the footſteps of a man whoſe name ought to ſtand foremoſt in the liſt of great characters. Thus the very era, which added America to the known world, was diſtinguiſhed by an inſtance of injuſtice, that may be conſidered as a fatal prelude to thoſe ſcenes of violence of which this unhappy country was afterwards to be the theatre.

His misfortunes had commenced with the diſcovery. Columbus, notwithſtanding his humanity and his talents, increaſed them himſelf by fixing Americans upon the lands which he diſtributed to his ſoldiers. This plan, which he had purſued merely to remove the embarraſſments to which he was expoſed from an almoſt inceſſant ſpirit of rebellion, was continued and extended by Bovadilla, in the view of gaining the affections of the Spaniards. Ovando, who ſucceeded him, broke all theſe connections, as he had been ordered to do. Reſt was the firſt enjoyment of theſe feeble beings, who had been condemned by force to labours, which were neither conſiſtent with the nature of their food, with their conſtitution, nor with their cuſtoms. They then wandered about as chance directed their ſteps, or ſat themſelves down and did nothing. The conſequence of this indolence was a famine, which was fatal both to them and their oppreſſors. It might have been poſſible to bring about ſome fortunate alteration in circumſtances with mildneſs, prudent regulations, and a great ſhare of patience. But theſe ſlow and moderate meaſures were not ſuitable to conquerors, who were eager to acquire, and earneſt to enjoy. They demanded, with a degree of warmth inſeparable from a concern of importance, that all the Indians ſhould be diſtributed among them, in order to be employed in working of the mines, in the cultivation of corn, or in any other kind of labour of which they might be thought capable. Religion and political views were the two pretences made uſe of palliate this dreadful ſyſtem. It was urged, that ſo long as theſe ſavages were tolerated in their ſuperſtitions, they would never em-

brace Chriſtianity; and would always be in a dſpoſition to revolt, unleſs their diſperſion ſhould put it out of their power to make any attempt. The court, after ſeveral diſcuſſions, reſolved to adopt an arrangement, ſo contrary to every ſound principle. The whole iſland was divided into a greater number of diſtricts; which the Spaniards obtained of greater or leſs extent, in proportion to their rank, intereſt, or birth. The Indians attached to theſe precarious poſſeſſions, were ſlaves, whom the law was always bound to protect, though it never did it effectually either at San Domingo, or in the other parts of this New World, where this horrid plan has ſince been generally eſtabliſhed.

Some commotions were the immediate conſequence of this arrangement: but they were put a ſtop to by treachery or by the effuſion of blood. When ſlavery was completely eſtabliſhed, the produce of the mines became more certain. At firſt one half belonged to the crown. This claim was afterwards reduced to one third, and at length limited to a fifth part.

The treaſures brought from San Domingo excited the avarice even of thoſe who would not venture to croſs the ſeas. The grandees, the favourites, and thoſe who had employments in the ſtate, obtained ſome of this property, which procured them riches without care, without diſburſements, and without anxiety. They committed the care of them to agents who were to make their own fortunes, while they increaſed thoſe of their principals. In leſs than ſix years time, ſixty thouſand American families were reduced to fourteen thouſand; and the continent and the adjacent iſlands were ranſacked for ſavages to ſupply their place.

They were indiſcriminately chained together like beaſts. Thoſe who ſank under their burdens were compelled to riſe by ſevere blows. No intercourſe paſſed between the ſexes except by ſtealth. The men periſhed in the mines; and the women in the fields, which they cultivated with their weak hands.

BOOK VI.

Their conſtitutions, already exhauſted with exceſſive labour, were ſtill further impaired by an unwholeſome and ſcanty diet. The mothers expired with hunger and fatigue, preſſing their dead or dying infants to their breaſts, ſhrivelled and contracted for want of a proper ſupply of milk. The fathers either poiſoned themſelves, or hanged themſelves on thoſe very trees on which they had juſt before ſeen their wives or their childen expire. The whole race became extinct. Let me be allowed to pauſe here for a moment. My eyes overflow with tears, and I can no longer diſcern what I am writing.

Voyages which lead the Spaniards to the knowledge of Mexico.

Before theſe ſcenes of horror had completed the ruin of the firſt countries diſcovered by the Spaniards in the New World, ſome adventurers of that nation had formed ſettlements of leſs importance at Jamaica, at Porto Rico, and at Cuba. Velaſquez, who founded the laſt of theſe, was deſirous that his colony ſhould ſhare with that of San Domingo the advantage of making diſcoveries on the continent; and he found moſt of the perſons, whom an active and inſatiable avidity had led into his iſland, very well diſpoſed to ſecond his views. A hundred and ten perſons embarked, on the eighth of February 1517, on board three ſmall veſſels at Saint Jago; ſailed weſtward, and landed ſucceſſively at Yucatan, and at Campeachy. They were received as enemies upon both theſe coaſts; many of them periſhed in the conteſts they were engaged in, and the reſt regained, in the utmoſt confuſion, the port from whence they had ſet out a few months before with ſuch flattering expectations. Their return was marked by the death of Cordova, the commander of the expedition, who expired of his wounds.

Till this period, the new hemiſphere had preſented nothing to the Spaniards but naked and wandering ſavages, without any occupation or form of government. This was the firſt time they had ſeen a people dwelling in houſes, clothed, formed into a national body, and ſufficiently advanced in the arts to convert precious metals into vaſes.

This discovery, while it excited apprehensions of new dangers, presented, at the same time, the alluring prospect of a rich booty; two hundred and forty Spaniards therefore went on board of four ships fitted out by the chief of the colony at his own expence. They began by verifying the reports brought by the preceding adventurers; they then continued their voyage as far as the river Paduco, and thought they perceived in all parts still more evident marks of civilization. They often landed. Sometimes they were very warmly attacked, and sometimes they were received with a degree of respect bordering upon adoration. They found one or two opportunities of exchanging some trifles of the old hemisphere for the gold of the new one. The most enterprising of them were of opinion that a settlement should be formed upon these beautiful regions; but their commander Gryalva, though active and intrepid, was not animated with the soul of a hero, and did not think his forces sufficient for so important an undertaking. He returned to Cuba, where he gave an account, more or less exaggerated, of all he had seen, and of all he had been able to learn, concerning the empire of Mexico.

The conquest of this immense and opulent region was immediately resolved upon by Velasquez; but he took some time in deliberating upon the choice of the agent he meant to employ on this occasion. He was apprehensive of intrusting the business to a man who should not have the qualities necessary to ensure its success, or to one who should have too much ambition to give the honour of it to him. His confidants at length determined his choice in favour of Fernando Cortez, the one of his lieutenants whom his talents most strongly indicated as the fittest person to execute the project, but at the same time the most improper to answer his personal views. The activity, elevation of mind, and boldness displayed by the new commander in preparing for an expedition, the difficulties of which he forsees and wishes to remove,

BOOK VI. awaken all the anxiety of a governor naturally too ſuſpicious. He was obſerved to be employed, firſt in private, and afterwards openly, in ſuggeſting a plan for the withdrawing of an important commiſſion, which he reproached himſelf with having inconſiderately given. But this regret was too late. Before the arrangements, contrived to keep back the fleet, compoſed of eleven ſmall veſſels, could be ſettled, it had ſet ſail on the tenth February 1519, with nine hundred ſailors, five hundred and eight ſoldiers, ſixteen horſe, thirteen muſkets, thirty-two croſs-bows, a great number of ſwords and pikes, four falcons, and ten field-pieces.

Theſe preparatives for invaſion, however inſufficient they may ſeem to be, had not even been furniſhed by the crown, which at that time only lent its name to the new diſcoveries and ſettlements. The plans of aggrandizement were formed by private perſons, who conducted them according to meaſures either well or ill concerted, and who carried them into execution at their own expence. The thirſt of gold, and the ſpirit of chivalry which ſtill ſubſiſted, were the two chief motives that excited the ferment. Theſe two powerful incentives hurried at once into the New World men of the higheſt and of the loweſt claſs in ſociety; robbers intent on nothing but plunder; and men of exalted minds, who imagined they were purſuing the road to glory. This is the reaſon why the veſtiges of theſe firſt conquerors were marked by ſo many crimes, and by ſo many extraordinary actions; why their cupidity was ſo atrocious, and their bravery ſo aſtoniſhing.

Cortez ſeemed to be animated with the two paſſions of riches and of fame. In going to the place of his deſtination, he attacked the Indians of Tabaſco, beat their troops ſeveral times, compelled them to ſue for peace, received homage from them, and obliged them to give him proviſions, ſome pieces of cotton, and twenty women, who were glad to follow him. This readineſs of theirs may be accounted for very naturally.

In America the men were in general addicted to that ſhameful kind of debauchery which ſhocks nature, and perverts animal inſtinct. This depravity has been attributed by ſome to natural weakneſs, which, however, ſhould rather ſeem to be contrary than incentive to it. It may rather be aſcribed to the heat of the climate; the contempt the men have for the ſofter ſex; the little pleaſure that can be experienced in the arms of a woman haraſſed with labour; the inconſtancy of taſte; the caprice which excites us in every particular to enjoyments that are leaſt common; and inſpires us with certain inordinate propenſities to voluptuouſneſs, more eaſy to be conceived than explained with decency. Beſides, thoſe hunting parties, in which the men were frequently abſent from the women for whole months, contributed alſo to familiarize men more with each other. This vice is therefore in theſe countries nothing more than the conſequence of an univerſal and violent paſſion, which even in civilized nations tramples upon honour, virtue, decency, probity, the ties of conſanguinity, and patriotic ſentiment; beſides, that there are ſome actions to which civilized people have with reaſon attached moral ideas, that never have entered into the minds of ſavages.

However this may be, the arrival of the Europeans raiſed new ideas in the American women. They threw themſelves without reluctance into the arms of theſe libidinous ſtrangers, who had inured themſelves to cruelty, and whoſe avaricious hands were imbrued in blood. While the unfortunate remains of theſe ſavage nations were endeavouring to ſeparate themſelves from the ſword that purſued them by immenſe tracts of deſerts, their women, who had been hitherto too much neglected, boldly trampling on the carcaſes of their children and of their murdered huſbands, went to ſeek their deſtroyers even in their camp, in order to entice them to ſhare the ardent tranſports with which they were devoured. This furious attachment of the American women for the

BOOK VI.

Spaniards, may be reckoned among the cauſes that contributed to the conqueſt of the New World. Theſe women uſually ſerved them as guides, frequently procured them ſubſiſtence, and ſometimes betrayed conſpiracies to them

The moſt celebrated of theſe women was named Marina. Though ſhe was the daughter of a tolerably powerful cacique, ſhe had been reduced, by ſome ſingular events, to a ſtate of ſlavery among the Mexicans from her earlieſt infancy. She had been brought, by freſh incidents, to Tabaſco before the arrival of the Spaniards. Struck with her figure and her charms, they ſoon diſtinguiſhed her from the reſt. Their general ſurrendered his heart to her, and at the ſame time excited a warm paſſion in her breaſt. In the midſt of amorous embraces ſhe readily learnt the Spaniſh language. Cortez, on his part, ſoon diſcovered the intelligent mind and reſolute character of his miſtreſs; and not only made her his interpreter, but alſo his adviſer. All hiſtorians agree that ſhe acted a conſiderable part in every enterpriſe againſt Mexico.

The Spaniards land at Mexico. Their firſt engagements are againſt the republic of Tlaſcala.

Montezuma was ſovereign of the empire when the Spaniards landed there. The monarch was ſoon informed of the arrival of theſe ſtrangers. Throughout this vaſt extent of kingdom couriers were placed at different diſtances, who ſpeedily acquainted the court with every thing that happened in the moſt diſtant provinces. Their diſpatches were compoſed of pieces of cotton, upon which were delineated the ſeveral circumſtances of the affairs that required the attention of government. The figures were intermixed with hieroglyphic characters, which ſupplied what the art of the painter had not been able to expreſs.

It was to be expected, that a prince who had been raiſed to the throne by his valour, who had extended his empire by conqueſt, who was in poſſeſſion of numerous and diſciplined armies, would either ſend to attack, or would have marched himſelf to diſperſe, a handful of adventurers, who dared to infeſt and plunder his dominions. But this ſtep was neglected; and

the Spaniards, who had always an irreſiſtible turn to the marvellous, endeavoured to explain, by having recourſe to a miracle, a conduct ſo evidently oppoſite to the character of the monarch, and incompatible with his ſituation. The writers of this ſuperſtitious nation have not ſcrupled to declare to the whole univerſe, that a little before the diſcovery of the New World, it had been foretold to the Mexicans, that an invincible people from the Eaſt would ſoon come among them, who would, in a memorable and terrible manner, avenge the gods irritated by their moſt horrid crimes, and particularly that vice which is moſt repugnant to nature. This fatal prediction alone, they ſay, had faſcinated the underſtanding of Montezuma. By this impoſture, they imagined that they ſhould gain the double advantage of juſtifying their uſurpations, and making Heaven anſwerable for a part of their cruelties. This abſurd fable has for a long time obtained credit among ſome perſons in both hemiſpheres, and the infatuation is not ſo ſurpriſing as might at firſt be imagined. The reaſons of it will be made evident by a few reflections.

Ancient revolutions, the period of which is uncertain, have ſubverted the earth; and the ſcience of aſtronomy demonſtrates the poſſibility of theſe cataſtrophes, of which the natural and moral hiſtory of the world furniſhes us with a multitude of inconteſtible proofs. A great number of comets are moving, in all directions, round the ſun. The motions of their orbits, far from being invariable, are evidently changed by the action of the planets. Several of theſe bodies have paſſed near the earth, and may poſſibly have ſtruck againſt it. This event is not likely to happen in the courſe of one year, or even of one century: but the probability of it increaſes ſo much from the number of the earth's revolutions, that it may almoſt be aſſerted, that this planet has not always eſcaped the ſhock of the different comets that have traverſed its orbit.

Such a circumſtance muſt have occaſioned inex-

preſſible ravages upon the ſurface of the globe. The rotatory axis being altered, the ſeas would abandon their former poſition to precipitate themſelves towards the new equator; the greateſt part of the animals would either be drowned by the deluge, or deſtroyed by the violent ſhock given to the earth by the comet; and whole ſpecies muſt have been annihilated; ſuch are the diſaſters which a comet muſt have produced.

Independent of this general cauſe of devaſtation, earthquakes, volcanoes, and a variety of other unknown cauſes, which act on the internal parts of the globe, as well as on its ſurface, muſt have changed the reſpective poſition of its parts, and conſequently the ſituation of the poles upon which it rotates. The waters of the ſea, diſplaced by theſe changes, muſt have quitted one tract of land to occupy another, and muſt have cauſed thoſe inundations and ſucceſſive deluges which have in all parts left viſible marks of ruin and devaſtation, or laſting memorials of their fatal effects in the annals or traditions of mankind.

This perpetual ſtruggle of one element with another; of the earth ingulfing the waters in her internal cavities; and of the ſea encroaching upon, and ſwallowing up, large tracts of land; this eternal conteſt ſubſiſting between two elements apparently incompatible, but in reality inſeparable from each other, expoſes the inhabitants of the globe to evident dangers, and fills them with apprehenſions concerning their fate. The lively recollection of paſt, naturally inſpires a dread of future changes. Hence the univerſal traditions concerning deluges in the earlier ages, and the expectation of the future conflagration of the world. The violent agitations which have been felt in every part of the globe, earthquakes occaſioned by inundations, or volcanoes produced by thoſe convulſions, excite and keep up terror in the minds of men. This terror has been diffuſed, and received the ſanction of every ſyſtem of ſuperſtition; and it is obſerved to operate moſt ſtrongly in coun-

tries, ſuch as America, where the veſtiges of theſe re- BOOK VI.
volutions of the globe are moſt remarkable and moſt recent.

Man, once poſſeſſed with fear, conſiders a ſingle calamity as the parent of a thouſand others. Earth and heaven ſeem equally to conſpire his ruin: he imagines that he views death both above and beneath him: he looks upon events, which accidentally happen at the ſame juncture, as connected in the nature and order of things; and, as every tranſaction on this globe muſt neceſſarily appear under the aſpect of ſome conſtellation, the ſtars are accuſed of having a ſhare in every calamity, the cauſe of which is unknown; and the human mind, which has ever been bewildered in its inquiries concerning the origin of evil, has been led to ſuppoſe, that certain ſimilar ſituations of the planets, however common, have an immediate and neceſſary influence on all revolutions happening at the time, or ſoon after ſucceeding.

Political events, in particular, on account of their greater importance to mankind, have ever been conſidered as more immediately depending on the motion of the ſtars. Hence have ariſen falſe predictions, and the terrors they have inſpired; terrors which have always diſturbed the earth, and of which ignorance is the cauſe, at the ſame time that it regulates the degree of them.

Though Montezuma, as well as many other perſons, might poſſibly have been affected with this diſeaſe of the human mind, there is no circumſtance that can induce us to impute this prevailing weakneſs to him. His political conduct, however, was not the wiſer on this account. Since this prince had been upon the throne, he had no longer diſplayed any of thoſe talents that had placed him upon it. Sunk in a ſtate of effeminacy and indolence, he deſpiſed his ſubjects, and oppreſſed his tributaries. His mind was ſo debaſed and corrupted, that even the arrival of the Spaniards could not rouſe him into action. He waſted in negotiations the time he ſhould have employed in

BOOK VI. combat, and wiſhed to ſend away, laden with preſents, enemies he ought to have deſtroyed. Cortez, to whom this ſupineneſs was very convenient, omitted nothing that might contribute to encourage it, and always treated with him on the moſt friendly terms. He declared, that he was ſent merely with orders to hold a conference with the powerful emperor of Mexico, on the part of the greateſt monarch of the Eaſt. Whenever he was preſſed to reimbark, he always repreſented, that no ambaſſador had ever been diſmiſſed without being admitted to an audience. At length the deputies, finding him inflexible, were obliged, according to their inſtructions, to have recourſe to menaces, and ſpoke in high terms of the opulence and ſtrength of their country. Cortez then, turning to his ſoldiers, told them: *This is exactly what we wiſhed to meet with, great dangers and great wealth.* He had then completed all his preparatives, and gained every information that was neceſſary. Reſolved therefore to conquer or to periſh, he ſet fire to all his ſhips, and directed his march towards the capital of the empire.

In his way he met with the republic of Tlaſcala, which had ever been at enmity with the Mexicans, who wanted to make it ſubject to their empire. Cortez, not doubting but that they would favour his projects, demanded permiſſion to paſs through their country, and propoſed an alliance. A people, who had prohibited themſelves from holding almoſt any kind of intercourſe with their neighbours, and whom this unſociable principle had accuſtomed to a general miſtruſt, could not be favourably inclined to ſtrangers, whoſe manner was imperious, and who had ſignalized their arrival by inſults offered to the gods of the country. Accordingly they rejected, without heſitation, the two propoſals that were made to them. The ſurpriſing accounts given of the Spaniards aſtoniſhed the inhabitants of Tlaſcala, but did not diſmay them. They fought four or five battles; in one of which the Spaniſh troops were broken. Cortez was

obliged to intrench himſelf; and the Indians, who wanted nothing but arms to make them victorious, ruſhed to death upon his breaſt-works.

Another circumſtance, which contributed not a little to the defeat of the Tlaſcalans, was a certain point of honour, dictated by the feelings of common humanity, adopted by the Greeks at the ſiege of Troy, and by ſome people among the Gauls, and eſtabliſhed among ſeveral nations. This was the dread and diſgrace of ſuffering the dead or the wounded to be carried off by the enemy. An attention to this point occaſioned a continual confuſion in their ranks, and abated the vigour of their attacks.

A political conſtitution, which could not be expected to have been found in the New World, had been eſtabliſhed in this region. The country was divided into ſeveral diſtricts, over which princes preſided with the title of Caciques. They led their ſubjects to war, levied taxes, and adminiſtered juſtice: but it was neceſſary that their laws and edicts ſhould have the ſanction of the ſenate of Tlaſcala, in which the ſupreme authority reſided. This body was compoſed of citizens, choſen out of each diſtrict by an aſſembly of the people.

The morals of the Tlaſcalans were extremely rigid. Falſehood, filial ingratitude, and ſodomy, were puniſhed with death. Theft, adultery, and drunkenneſs, were abhorred; and the perſons guilty of theſe crimes were baniſhed. Polygamy was tolerated by law. Their climate led to it, and the government encouraged it.

Military merit here, as in all uncivilized ſtates, or ſuch as aſpire to conqueſt, was in the higheſt eſtimation. In their warlike expeditions they carried in their quivers two arrows, on which were engraved the figures of two of their ancient heroes. They began the engagement by diſcharging one of thoſe arrows, which it was a point of honour to recover. In their towns they wore a dreſs, which they laid aſide when

BOOK VI. they went to battle. They were celebrated for ſimplicity and ſincerity in their public treaties, and for the veneration they paid to old men.

Their country, though uneven, of no great extent, and only moderately fertile, was ſtill very populous, tolerably well cultivated, and the inhabitants were happy.

Such were the people whom the Spaniards diſdained to acknowledge to be of the ſame ſpecies with themſelves. One of the qualities of the Tlaſcalans, which excited their contempt the moſt, was the love of liberty. They fancied that theſe people had no form of government, becauſe it was not veſted in a ſingle perſon; no police, becauſe it differed from that of Madrid; no virtues, becauſe they were not of the ſame religious perſuaſion; and no underſtanding, becauſe they did not adopt the ſame opinions.

Perhaps, no people have ever been ſo firmly attached to their national prejudices, as the Spaniards were at that time, and as they ſtill continue to be. By theſe prejudices all their ſentiments were dictated, their judgments influenced, and their characters formed. The ſtrong and ardent genius they derived from nature, ſerved only to aſſiſt them in inventing ſophiſms to confirm them in their errors. Never was the perverſion of human reaſon maintained in a more dogmatical, determined, obſtinate, and ſubtile manner: nor was their attachment to their cuſtoms leſs ſtrong than to their prejudices. They thought no people in the world were intelligent, enlightened, and virtuous, except themſelves. This national pride, carried to an exceſs of infatuation beyond example, would have inclined them to conſider Athens in the ſame contemptuous light as they did Tlaſcala. They would have treated the Chineſe as brutes, and have every where left marks of outrage, oppreſſion, and deveſtation.

This haughty and imperious turn of mind did not, however, prevent the Spaniards from making an al-

liance with the Tlaſcalans, who furniſhed them with ſix thouſand troops to conduct their march, and aſſiſt them in their enterpriſe.

The Spaniards, after having introduced themſelves into the capital of the empire, are obliged to evacuate it after ſeveral extraordinary events.

With this reinforcement, Cortez advanced towards Mexico, through a fertile country, well watered, and covered with woods, cultivated fields, villages, and gardens. The ſoil produced a variety of plants unknown in Europe. Birds of the brighteſt plumage, and animals of a new ſpecies, appeared in great abundance. Nature differed from herſelf only in aſſuming a more agreeable and richer dreſs. The temperature of the air, and the continual, though tolerable heat, preſerved the earth in a conſtant verdure and fertility. On the ſame ſpot were ſeen trees covered with bloſſoms, and others with delicious fruits; and the corn that was ſown in one field was reaped in another.

The Spaniards ſeemed to be inſenſible to the beauties of ſo new a ſcene. They ſaw that gold was the common ornament of the houſes and temples; that the arms, furniture, and perſons, of the Mexicans were adorned with the ſame metal. This alone attracted their notice, like Mammon, whom Milton deſcribes as forgetting the Divinity in Heaven itſelf, and having his eyes always fixed upon its golden porches.

Montezuma's wavering diſpoſition, and, perhaps, the fear of ſtaining his former glory, prevented him from marching againſt the Spaniards at their arrival, and from joining the Tlaſcalans, who had behaved with greater courage than he had done; and, laſtly, from attacking conquerors who were fatigued with their own victories. He had contented himſelf with endeavouring to divert Cortez from his deſign of viſiting his capital, and reſolved at laſt to introduce him into it himſelf. Thirty kings or princes were ſubject to his dominion, many of whom were able to bring a numerous army into the field. He poſſeſſed conſiderable riches, and his power was abſolute. It appears that his ſubjects were intelligent and in-

BOOK VI. duſtrious. They were alſo a warlike people, and had high notions of honour.

Had the emperor of Mexico known how to avail himſelf of theſe advantages, the ſceptre could never have been wreſted out of his hands. But this prince, forgetting what he owed to himſelf and to his ſtation, did not ſhow the leaſt ſign of courage or ability. When he might have cruſhed the Spaniards with his whole force, notwithſtanding their ſuperiority in diſcipline and arms, he rather choſe to have recourſe to perfidy.

While he loaded them with preſents, careſſes, and every token of reſpect at Mexico, he gave orders to attack Vera Cruz, a colony the Spaniards had eſtabliſhed upon the ſpot where they landed, with a view of ſecuring their retreat, and of being furniſhed with ſupplies. Cortez acquainted his companions with the news, and ſaid to them, " It is abſolutely neceſſary " to ſurpriſe theſe barbarians with ſome extraordinary " exploit; I am reſolved to ſeize the emperor, and " make myſelf maſter of his perſon." This deſign being approved, he inſtantly marched with his officers to Montezuma's palace, and told him he muſt either follow him, or die. The prince, whoſe puſillanimity could only be equalled by the raſhneſs of his enemies, reſigned himſelf into their hands. He was obliged to conſent to the puniſhment of the generals, who had acted only in obedience to his orders; and completed his diſgrace, by ſubmitting to do homage to the king of Spain.

In the midſt of theſe ſucceſſes, intelligence was received, that Narvaez had juſt arrived from Cuba with eight hundred infantry, fourſcore cavalry, and twelve pieces of cannon, in order to take the command of the army, and to puniſh the refractory. Theſe forces had been ſent by Velaſquez, who was diſſatisfied that a few adventurers, ſent out under his auſpices, ſhould have neglected all intercourſe with him, declared themſelves independent of his authority, and ſent

deputies into Europe, to obtain the confirmation of those powers they had arrogated to themselves. Although Cortez had no more than two hundred and fifty men, he marched up to his rival, engaged, and took him prisoner. He obliged the vanquished to lay down their arms, but afterwards restored them, and proposed that they should follow him. He gained their affections by his confidence and magnanimity; and these soldiers enlisted under his standard. He instantly marched back with them to Mexico, where he had not been able to leave more than fifty Spaniards, who with the Tlascalans closely guarded the emperor.

Commotions were excited among the nobility of Mexico, whose indignation was raised at the captivity of their prince; and the indiscreet zeal of the Spaniards having prompted them to disturb a public festival, celebrated in honour of the deities of the country, by destroying their altars, and making a massacre of the worshippers and priests, the people had been provoked to take up arms.

The Mexicans had a number of barbarous superstitions; and their priests were monsters, who made the most scandalous abuse of that abominable worship, which they had imposed upon the credulity of the people. They acknowledged, like all other civilized nations, a Supreme Being, and a future state of rewards and punishments: but these sublime doctrines were disgraced by a mixture of absurdities, which destroyed their credibility.

The religious system of the Mexicans taught them to expect the final catastrophe of the world at the conclusion of every century; and that year was distinguished throughout the whole empire by every mark of grief and consternation.

The Mexicans invoked inferior powers in the same manner as other nations have invoked Genii, Camis, Manitous, Angels, and Fetiches. The lowest of this class of deities had all their temples, images, functions,

and diſtinct authority aſſigned them, with the power of working miracles.

The Mexicans had alſo their holy water to ſprinkle the people; and the emperor drank of it. Pilgrimages, proceſſions, and donations to the prieſts, were eſteemed acts of piety: and they were no ſtrangers to expiations, penances, mortifications, and abſtinence. They had ſome ſuperſtitious obſervances peculiar to themſelves. A ſlave was annually choſen, and ſhut up in the temple; to him they paid adoration, offered incenſe, invoked him as a deity, and concluded the ſcene by putting him to death with great ſolemnity.

Another piece of ſuperſtition, of which no traces are to be found in any other country, was this: on certain days the prieſt made a ſtatue of paſte, which they ſent to the oven to be baked; they then placed it upon an altar, where it became a divinity. Upon this day innumerable crowds of people flocked to the temple. The prieſts cut the ſtatue in pieces, and diſtributed a portion of it to all the perſons in the aſſembly, who ate it, and thought they were ſanctified by ſwallowing their god.

It was certainly more eligible to eat gods than men: and yet the Mexicans ſacrificed their priſoners of war in the temple of the god of battles. The prieſts, it is ſaid, afterwards ate them, and ſent portions to the emperor, and the principal lords of the realm. When peace had laſted ſome time, the prieſts took care to have it inſinuated to the emperor, that the gods were hungry; and war was commenced with no other view than to make priſoners.

Such a ſyſtem of religion was, in every view, odious and terrible; and all its ceremonies were of a diſmal and ſanguinary caſt. It kept mankind perpetually in awe, was calculated to make a people cruel, and to give the prieſts an unlimited authority.

Theſe barbarous abſurdities, though they might juſtly excite the deteſtation of the Spaniards, could

not juſtify their attempts to ſuppreſs them by the greateſt cruelties. They could not juſtify them in attacking and murdering a people aſſembled in the principal temple of the capital; or in aſſaſſinating the nobles in order to ſeize upon their poſſeſſions.

On his return to Mexico, Cortez found the Spaniards beſieged on the ſpot where he had left them. It was a ſpace of ſufficient extent to contain the Spaniards and their allies, and ſurrounded with a thick wall, upon which were placed towers at different diſtances. The artillery had been diſpoſed in the beſt manner poſſible; and the ſervice had been always executed with as much regularity and vigilance as in a beſieged place, or in the moſt expoſed camp. The general was not able to make his way into this kind of fortreſs, till after he had encountered many difficulties; and when he had at length got into it, the dangers ſtill continued. Such was the obſtinate fury of the natives of the country, that they expoſed themſelves to the riſk of penetrating through the embraſures of the cannon, into the aſylum which they wiſhed to force.

In order to relieve themſelves from ſo deſperate a ſituation, the Spaniards had recourſe to ſallies; which were ſucceſsful, without being deciſive. The Mexicans gave proofs of extraordinary courage. They cheerfully devoted themſelves to certain death. Naked and ill-armed, they were ſeen to throw themſelves into the ranks of the Spaniards, with a view of making their arms uſeleſs, or wreſting them out of their hands. They were all ready to periſh, in order to reſcue their country from the yoke of theſe foreign uſurpers.

The moſt bloody engagement was fought upon an eminence which the Americans had ſeized, and from whence they overwhelmed all that preſented themſelves with ſhowers of arrows, more or leſs deſtructive. The party charged with diſlodging them, was three times repulſed. Cortez was irritated by this reſiſtance, and though much wounded, reſolved to take

the attack upon himſelf. Scarce had he got poſſeſſion of this important poſt, than two young Mexicans threw down their arms, and came over to him as deſerters. Placing one knee on the ground in a ſuppliant poſture, they ſprang upon him with extreme quickneſs, and ſeized him, in hopes of making him periſh by dragging him away along with them. Cortez, either by his ſtrength or dexterity, diſengaged himſelf from them; and the two Mexicans died the victims of this noble but fruitleſs enterpriſe.

This, and many other exploits, which ſhowed equal courage, made the Spaniards deſirous of coming to terms of accommodation. At length Montezuma, ſtill a priſoner, conſented to become the inſtrument of his people's ſlavery; and, in all the pomp of the throne, he made his appearance upon the wall, to perſuade his ſubjects to diſcontinue hoſtilities. Their reſentment convinced him that his reign was at an end, and he was mortally wounded by the ſhower of arrows they diſcharged at him.

This tragical event was followed by a new arrangement of things. The Mexicans at length perceived, that their plan of defence and their plan of attack were equally defective; and reſolved to do nothing more than intercept the proviſions, and reduce by famine an enemy, whom the ſuperiority of their diſcipline and of their arms rendered invincible. Cortez no ſooner perceived this change of meaſures, than he thought of ſecuring a retreat among the Tlaſcalans.

The execution of this project required great diſpatch, impenetrable ſecrecy, and well-concerted meaſures. The march was begun in the middle of the night: the army was ſilently filing off along a bank, when the rear-guard was attacked by a numerous body, and the flanks by canoes diſtributed on each ſide of the cauſeway. If the Mexicans, who had a greater number of troops than they could bring into action, had taken the precaution to place ſome at the extremity of the bridges which they had prudent-

ly broken, all the Spaniards, and their allies, would have perifhed in this bloody engagement. Fortunately for them, the enemy knew not how to avail himfelf of all his advantages; and they at length reached the borders of the lake, after having undergone a variety of incredible dangers and fatigues. The confufion they were in ftill expofed them to a total defeat, when they were relieved from this danger by a frefh error of the enemy.

No fooner had the morning dawn difcovered to the Mexicans the field of battle, of which they were mafters, than they perceived among the flain, a fon and two daughters of Montezuma, whom the Spaniards were carrying off with fome other prifoners. This fight chilled them with horror. The idea of having maffacred the children, after having facrificed the father, was too violent for men, enfeebled and enervated by a habit of blind obedience, to be able to bear. They were afraid of adding impiety to regicide; and employed in idle funeral rites the time they owed to the prefervation of their country.

During this interval, the beaten army, which had loft its artillery, ammunition, and baggage, with five or fix hundred Spaniards, and two thoufand Tlafcalans, and which had fcarce a foldier remaining that was not wounded, was refuming its march. The enemy foon purfued, haraffed, and at length furrounded it in the valley of Otumba. The cannonade, and the firing of the fmall arms, the pikes and fwords, did not prevent the Indians, all naked as they were, from advancing and charging their enemies with great fury. Courage was juft upon the point of yielding to numbers, when Cortez himfelf determined the fortune of the day. He had been informed, that in this part of the New World the fate of the battle depended upon the royal ftandard. Thefe colours, the form of which was remarkable, and which were never brought into the field but on the moft important occafions, were at no great diftance from him. He immediately rufhed forward,

BOOK VI.

with the braveſt of his companions, to take them from the enemy. One of them ſeized and carried them into the Spaniſh ranks. The Mexicans immediately loſt all courage; and throwing down their arms, betook themſelves to flight. Cortez purſued his march, and arrived in the country of Tlaſcala without oppoſition.

The Spaniards employ other means for ſubduing Mexico, and are ſucceſsful.

Cortez did not relinquiſh either the deſign or the hopes of ſubduing the empire of Mexico; but he adopted a new plan, and propoſed to make one part of the inhabitants aſſiſt him in the reduction of the other. The form of the Mexican government, the diſpoſition of the people, and the ſituation of the city, favoured his project and facilitated the execution of it.

The empire was elective, and certain princes or caciques were the electors. They uſually choſe one of their own body. He was obliged to take an oath, that, ſo long as he filled the throne, the rains ſhould fall in due ſeaſon, the rivers cauſe no inundations, the fields be exempt from ſterility, and that mankind ſhould not be deſtroyed by the malignant effects of a contagious air. This cuſtom may have had ſome reference to a theocratical government, the traces of which are ſtill to be found almoſt among all nations in the world. It might likewiſe probably be the intention of this whimſical oath, to intimate to the new ſovereign, that, as the misfortunes of a ſtate almoſt always ariſe from wrong meaſures of adminiſtration, his government ought to be conducted with ſuch moderation and wiſdom, that public calamities might never be conſidered as the conſequences of his imprudence, or as the juſt puniſhment of his licentiouſneſs. According to the admirable tenor of their laws, merit was the only title to the crown: but ſuperſtition had given the prieſts a conſiderable influence in their elections. On his acceſſion to the throne, the emperor was obliged to make war, and to offer the priſoners to the gods. This prince, though elective, had an abſolute authority, as there were no written

laws; and he was at liberty to make what alterations he chose in the old customs. Almost all the forms of justice, and ceremonies of the court, had the sanction of religion. The same crimes that are punished in all other places were punishable by the laws; but the criminals were often saved by the interposition of the priests. There were two laws which had a tendency to destroy the innocent, and to make the Mexicans bend under the double yoke of tyranny and superstition. By these laws, persons offending against the sanctity of religion, or the majesty of the prince, were condemned to death. It is easy to discern how much laws of so little precision might afford opportunities of gratifying private revenge, or of promoting the interested views of priests and courtiers.

The steps by which private men obtained the rank of nobility, and the nobility rose to posts of honour, were bravery, piety, and perseverance. In the temples a more painful noviciate was prescribed than in the army; and they nobles, who had undergone such hardships to obtain their distinctions, submitted to the meanest employments in the palace of the emperors.

Among the great numbers of vassals in Mexico, Cortez concluded there might be some who would be ready to shake off the yoke and join the Spaniards. He had remarked that the Mexicans were holden in great detestation by the petty states that were subject to the empire, and that the emperors exercised their authority with extreme severity. He had likewise observed, that the provinces in general disliked the religion of the metropolis, and that even in Mexico the nobility and persons of fortune, whose intercourse with society had abated the force of their prejudices, and softened their popular manners, had lost their attachment to this mode of religion; and that many of the nobility were disgusted at the low services exacted of them by their masters.

After Cortez had been silently deliberating upon

BOOK VI. his great projects, and bringing them to maturity, during ſix months, he marched out of his retreat, attended by five hundred and ninety Spaniards, ten thouſand Tlaſcalans, and ſome other Indians, bringing along with them forty horſes, and eight or nine field-pieces. His march towards the centre of the Mexican dominions was eaſy and rapid. The petty nations, which might have retarded or embarraſſed it, were all eaſily ſubdued, or voluntarily ſurrendered themſelves to him. Many of the diſtricts in the neighbourhood of the capital of the empire were alſo forced to yield to him, or ſubmitted of themſelves.

Succeſſes calculated to aſtoniſh even the moſt preſumptuous, ought naturally to have attached every individual to the intrepid and preſcient commander, whoſe work they were; but this was not the caſe. Among his Spaniſh troops, there were rather a conſiderable number, who had kept up too lively a recollection of the dangers which they had eſcaped with ſo much difficulty; and who were become traitors, from the dread of thoſe they had ſtill to encounter. They agreed among themſelves to aſſaſſinate their general, and to give the command to a perſon who would abandon projects which appeared to them extravagant; and would take prudent meaſures for their preſervation. The treaſon was juſt upon the point of being carried into execution, when remorſe induced one of the conſpirators to throw himſelf at the feet of Cortez. Immediately this bold man, the reſources of whoſe genius were more and more unfolded by unexpected events, cauſed Villafagna, the principal agent in this dark plot, to be arreſted, tried, and ſentenced, but not till he had extorted from him an accurate liſt of his accomplices. The buſineſs was to diſſipate the anxiety which ſuch a diſcovery might occaſion. This was effected, by giving out that the villain had torn a paper, which contained, no doubt, either the plan of the conſpiracy, or the names of the conſpirators; and that he had carried

his ſecret with him to the grave, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the torments employed to extort it from him. BOOK VI.

In the meanwhile, the general, in order not to give his troops time to reflect too much upon what had happened, haſtened to the attack of Mexico, the grand object of his ambition, and the ultimate end of the hopes of the army: the project was attended with great difficulty.

Mountains, which for the moſt part were a thouſand feet high, ſurrounded a plain of about forty leagues. The greater part of this immenſe ſpace was occupied by lakes which communicated with each other. At the northern extremity of the greateſt of theſe, in the midſt of a few ſmall iſlands, had been built the moſt conſiderable city that exiſted in the New World, before the Europeans had diſcovered it. Three cauſeways, of different lengths, but all of them broad, and conſtructed with ſolidity, led up to it. The inhabitants of the ſhores, too diſtant from theſe great roads, came up to them in their canoes.

Cortez made himſelf maſter of the navigation, by means of ſome ſmall veſſels, the materials of which had been prepared at Tlaſcala; and he ordered the dykes to be attacked by Sandoval, by Alvarado, and by Olid, to each of whom he diſtributed an equal number of guns, of Spaniſh troops, and of Indian auxiliaries.

Every thing had been diſpoſed for a long time to make an obſtinate reſiſtance. The means of defence had been prepared by Quetlavaca, who had ſucceeded his brother Montezuma; but who had periſhed of the ſmall-pox, brought into theſe regions by a ſlave belonging to Narvaez; and when the ſiege began, the reins of the empire were guided by Guatimozin.

The actions of this young prince were all heroic, and all prudent. The fire of his look, the elevation of his diſcourſe, and the brilliancy of his courage, made every impreſſion he wiſhed upon his people. He diſputed the ground foot by foot, and never aban-

BOOK VI.

doned a ſingle inch of it, till it was ſtrewed with the carcaſes of his ſoldiers, and ſtained with the blood of his enemies. Fifty thouſand men, who had haſtened from all parts of the empire to defend their maſter and their gods, had periſhed by the ſword or by fire; famine occaſioned daily inexpreſſible ravages; to theſe numerous calamities contagious diſeaſes had been added, and yet, all theſe circumſtances had not been capable of ſhaking the firmneſs of his ſoul, even for one ſingle inſtant. The beſiegers, after a number of deſtructive battles and heavy loſſes, had at length reached the centre of the place, which, however, he did not yet think of giving up. He was at laſt prevailed upon to quit theſe ruins, which could no longer be defended, in order to repair to the provinces, and to carry on the war there. In the view of facilitating this retreat, ſome overtures of peace were made to Cortez: but this noble artifice had not the ſucceſs that it deſerved; and the canoe, in which this generous and unfortunate monarch had embarked was taken by a brigantine. An officer of the Spaniſh revenue, ſuſpecting that he had treaſures concealed, ordered him to be extended upon red-hot coals to extort a confeſſion. His favourite, who underwent the ſame torture, complaining to him of his ſufferings, the emperor ſaid, *Am I upon a bed of roſes?* An expreſſion equal to any of thoſe which hiſtory has recorded as worthy the admiration of mankind; an expreſſion which the Mexicans would repeat to their children, if ever the period ſhould arrive, in which the Spaniards ſhall expiate the cruelties they have exerciſed, and that race of deſtroyers ſhall be plunged into the ſea, or drowned in their own blood. Theſe people might, perhaps, have preſerved the actions of their martyrs, and the hiſtory of their perſecutions. In theſe it will be recorded, that Guatimozin was dragged half dead from the flames, and that three years after he was publicly hanged, under pretence of his having conſpired againſt his tyrants and executioners.

Idea we are to form of Mexico before it submitted to Spain.

After ten weeks of a brisk and regular attack, with the assistance of sixty or a hundred thousand Indian allies, and by the superiority of their discipline, their arms, and their shipping, the Spaniards at length made themselves masters of Mexico; and if we may credit the accounts they give, it was a magnificent city. There were thirty thousand houses, an immense number of inhabitants, and some superb edifices within its walls. The sovereign's palace, built of marble and jasper, was of prodigious extent. It was ornamented with baths, statues, and fountains; and was full of pictures, which, though made only of feathers, were finely coloured, brilliant and natural. Most of the great, as well as the emperor, had menageries filled with all the animals of the New Continent. Their gardens were spread with plants of every species. Every production of the soil and climate that was scarce and brilliant, was an object of luxury to an opulent nation, where nature was beautiful and the arts imperfect. The temples were numerous, and in general magnificent; but they were stained with blood, and lined with the heads of the unhappy victims that had been sacrificed in them.

One of the greatest beauties of this dazzling city, was a square, which was usually filled with a hundred thousand persons, overspread with tents and shops, where the merchants displayed all the riches of the country, and all the works of industry wrought by the Mexicans. Birds of all colours, brilliant shells, a profusion of flowers, and various pieces of workmanship in gold and enamel, gave these markets a more beautiful and splendid appearance to the eye than it is possible to meet with in the richest fairs of Europe.

One hundred thousand canoes were constantly passing and repassing between the city and the borders of the lakes; which were ornamented with fifty cities, and with a multitude of towns and villages.

The rest of the empire, as far as the respective

BOOK VI.

ſituations would allow, preſented the ſame ſpectacle: but with the difference that is always obſerved between the capital and the provinces. This nation, the antiquity of which was not very remote, which had no communication with enlightened people, which knew not the uſe of iron, and had not the advantage of writing, which was ignorant of thoſe arts by which we have the advantage of being acquainted with others, and of practiſing them, and which was ſituated in a climate where the faculties of man are not called forth by want; this nation, we are told, had riſen to this degree of eminence by its genius alone.

This is a pompous deſcription, given in an inſtant of vanity by a conqueror naturally addicted to exaggeration, or deceived by the great ſuperiority which a well-regulated ſtate had over the ſavage regions that had yet been laid waſte in the New Hemiſphere; and the falſity of it may eaſily be made evident to every man's capacity. It is not, however, merely by contraſting the preſent ſtate of Mexico with that in which its conquerors pretend to have found it, that this can be effected. The deplorable effects of a deſtructive tyranny, and of a long ſeries of oppreſſion, are ſufficiently known. But let us call to mind the ravages which the barbarians, iſſuing from the North, formerly committed among the Gauls and in Italy. When this torrent had paſſed away, did there not remain upon the earth great monuments which atteſted, and do ſtill atteſt, the power of the people that had been ſubdued? And does the region we are now conſidering, preſent us with ſuch magnificent ruins? We muſt therefore take it for granted, that the public and private edifices, ſo pompouſly deſcribed, were nothing more than irregular maſſes of ſtone heaped upon one another; that the celebrated Mexico was nothing more than a little town, compoſed of a multitude of ruſtic huts, irregularly diſperſed over a large ſpace of ground; and that the other places, the grandeur and beauty of which it has been cuſtomary to extol, were ſtill inferior to this firſt of the cities.

The labours of men have always been proportioned to their ſtrength, and to the inſtruments they have made uſe of. Without the ſcience of mechanics, and the invention of its machines, there can be no great monuments exiſting. Without a quadrant or a teleſcope, there can be no great progreſs made in aſtronomy, no preciſion in obſervations. Without iron, there can be no hammers, no pincers, no anvils, no forges, no ſaws, no axes, no hatchets, no work in metal that can deſerve to be looked at; no maſonry, no carpenter's or joiner's work, no architecture, no engraving, no ſculpture. With all theſe helps, what time does it not take our workmen to ſeparate from the quarry, raiſe and carry away a block of ſtone? What time to cut into a ſquare? And how could this be effected without the reſources we have? The ſavage would have been a man of great underſtanding, who, upon ſeeing for the firſt time, one of our large buildings, would have admired it, not as the work of our ſtrength and induſtry, but as an extraordinary phenomenon of nature, which of herſelf ſhould have raiſed thoſe columns, bored thoſe windows, fixed thoſe entablatures, and prepared ſo wonderful a retreat. It would have been to him the moſt beautiful cavern that the mountains would have ever preſented to his view.

Let us ſtrip Mexico of all that has been beſtowed upon it by fabulous accounts, and we ſhall find that this country, though far ſuperior to the ſavage regions which the Spaniards had yet diſcovered in the New World, was ſtill nothing in compariſon of the civilized nations of the old continent.

The empire was ſubject to a deſpotiſm as cruel as it was ill-concerted. Fear, the great ſpring of arbitrary governments, was ſubſtituted to morality and principles. The chief of the ſtate was gradually become a kind of divinity, which the moſt preſumptuous did not dare to look up to; and of whoſe actions the moſt imprudent would not have ventured to form a judgment. We may readily conceive in what man-

BOOK VI. ner citizens purchaſe every day, by the ſacrifice of their liberty, the pleaſures and conveniences of life to which they have been accuſtomed from their infancy: but that people, to whom rude nature offered greater happineſs than that which they enjoyed under the ſocial compact that united them, ſhould quietly remain in a ſtate of ſlavery, without once thinking that there was nothing more than a mountain or a river to croſs, in order to be free; this is a circumſtance that would be incomprehenſible, if we knew not how much the habit of ſuperſtition degrades the human race in all parts.

Several of the provinces, which might be conſidered as conſtituting a part of this vaſt dominion, governed themſelves by their primary laws, and according to their ancient maxims. Tributaries merely of the empire, they continued ſtill under the controul of their caciques. The obligations impoſed upon theſe great vaſſals, was to cover or to enlarge the frontiers of the ſtate, whenever they were ordered; to contribute continually to the public charges, originally, according to a ſettled rate; but latterly, according to the neceſſities, rapacity, or caprices of the deſpot.

The adminiſtration of the countries more immediately dependent on the throne, was intruſted to ſome of the great, who were aſſiſted in their functions by nobles of an inferior order. Theſe officers enjoyed, at firſt, a degree of dignity and importance: but they were nothing more than the inſtruments of tyranny, ſince arbitrary power had raiſed itſelf upon the ruins of a government which might have been called feudal.

To each of theſe offices, a portion of land, of greater or leſs extent, was attached. Thoſe who directed the councils, who commanded the armies, or whom their employments detained at court, enjoyed the ſame advantage. Perſons in office changed their dwelling with their occupation, and loſt it as ſoon as they returned into private life.

There were ſome poſſeſſions more entire, and which

might be alienated or tranſmitted to poſterity. Theſe were few in number; and muſt have belonged to citizens of the moſt diſtinguiſhed claſs.

The people had nothing but commons, the extent of which was regulated by the number of inhabitants. In ſome of them the labours were carried on in a community, and the harveſts were depoſited in the public granaries, to be diſtributed as they were wanted; in others, the cultivators divided the fields between them, and tilled them for their own private uſe; but the territory was not allowed to be diſpoſed of in any of them.

Several diſtricts, more or leſs extenſive, were covered with a kind of bondſmen attached to the glebe, paſſing from one proprietor to another, and not being able to claim any thing more than the coarſeſt and moſt ſcanty ſubſiſtence.

The men ſtill more degraded, were the domeſtic ſlaves. Their life was eſteemed ſo contemptible, that, according to the accounts of Herrera, one might deprive them of it, without fear of being ever proſecuted by the law.

All the orders of the ſtate contributed to the ſupport of government. In all ſocieties that are a little advanced, taxes are paid in ſpecie. The Mexicans were ignorant of this common meaſure of every kind of value, though gold and ſilver were in their poſſeſſion. They had indeed begun to ſuſpect the utility of an univerſal mode of exchange, and they already employed the ſeeds of the cocoa in ſome trifling details of commerce: but the uſe of theſe was much limited, and could not be extended to the diſcharge of the taxes. The debts due to the treaſury were therefore all paid in kind.

As all the agents of the public ſervice received their ſalaries in proviſions, a part of what was allotted to them, was kept back as their contribution.

The lands attached to offices, as well as thoſe that were poſſeſſed in property, gave to the ſtate a part of their produce.

Beſide the obligation impoſed upon all communities to cultivate a certain extent of ſoil for the crown, they were alſo obliged to cede to it a third part of their harveſts.

Hunters, fiſhermen, potters, painters, and all workmen without diſtinction, gave up the ſame portion of their induſtry every month.

Even the beggars were taxed with certain fixed contributions, which they were obliged to pay from their labour, or from the alms they received.

Agriculture, at Mexico, was very much confined; though it was the only occupation of the majority of the inhabitants. Their cares were reſtrained to the cultivation of maze and cocoa, and there was even but a ſmall quantity of thoſe productions gathered. Had it been otherwiſe, the firſt Spaniards would not ſo frequently have been in want of ſubſiſtence. The imperfect ſtate of this firſt of the arts might be owing to ſeveral cauſes. Theſe people had a ſtrong propenſity to idleneſs. The inſtruments they made uſe of were faulty. They had not tamed any animal that could aſſiſt them in their labours. Their fields were ravaged by fallow deer, or by wandering people. They were inceſſantly oppreſſed by government. In a word, their natural conſtitution was particularly weak, which aroſe partly from unwholeſome and inſufficient food.

The table of the rich, of the nobles, and of men in office, beſide the produce of the chaſe, and of fiſhing, was ſupplied with turkeys, ducks, and rabbits, the only animals, except little dogs, which the inhabitants of theſe countries had been able to tame. But the proviſions of the common people conſiſted only of maze, prepared in different manners; of cocoa, diluted in warm water, and ſeaſoned with honey and pimento; and of the herbs of the fields which were not too hard, or had no bad ſmell. Their drink conſiſted of ſome liquors that could not intoxicate. With reſpect to ſtrong liquors, they were ſo ſtrictly prohibited, that a permiſſion from government was

neceſſary to be obtained for uſing them; and it was only granted to old or ſick perſons. At ſome ſolemnities, and in public labours only, every one had a quantity given him proportioned to his age. Drunkenneſs was conſidered as the moſt odious of all vices. Perſons convicted of it, were publicly ſhaved, and their houſe was pulled down. If they were in any public office, they were deprived of it, and declared incapable of ever holding any poſt under government.

The Mexicans were almoſt generally naked. Their bodies were painted; and their heads ſhaded with plumes. Some bones, or ſmall pieces of gold, according to the rank of the perſons, were faſtened to their noſes and ears. The only clothing the women had, was a kind of ſhift which came down to the knees, and was open at the breaſt. Their chief ornament conſiſted in the arrangement of their hair. Perſons of ſuperior rank, and even the emperor himſelf, were only diſtinguiſhed from the commonalty, by a kind of cloak compoſed of a ſquare piece of cotton faſtened on the right ſhoulder.

The palace of the prince, and thoſe of the nobles, though rather extenſive, and built of ſtone, had no conveniences, no elegance, nor even any windows. The people dwelt in huts made of earth, and covered with branches of trees. They were prohibited from raiſing them above the ground floor. Several families were frequently heaped together under the ſame roof.

The furniture was worthy of the dwellings. In moſt of them, there was no other carpeting but mats, no other bed than ſtraw, no ſeat but a layer of palm leaves, no utenſils except earthen ware. Cloths and carpets of cotton, wrought with more or leſs care, and employed for various purpoſes, were the chief diſtinctions between the houſes of the rich and thoſe of the common people.

If the arts of primary neceſſity were in ſo imperfect a ſtate at Mexico, we muſt conclude that thoſe

BOOK VI.

of ornament were ſtill more ſo. The form and workmanſhip of the few vaſes and jewels of gold and ſilver that have been brought to us, is equally barbarous. The ſame coarſeneſs prevails in thoſe pictures, of which the firſt Spaniards ſpoke with ſo much admiration, and which were compoſed of feathers of all colours. Theſe paintings are no longer exiſting, or are at leaſt very ſcarce; but engravings have been made from them. The artiſt is infinitely below his ſubject, whether he repreſents plants, animals, or men. There is no light, nor ſhade, nor deſign, nor accuracy in his work. Neither had architecture made any greater progreſs in this country. Throughout the whole extent of the empire, there is no ancient monument to be found, that hath any kind of majeſty in it; nor are there even any ruins which renew the idea of former greatneſs. The only things Mexico had to boaſt of, were the cauſeways that led up to the capital, and the aqueducts which brought the water for drinking from a very conſiderable diſtance.

The ſciences were ſtill leſs advanced than the arts; and this is the natural conſequence of the ordinary progreſs of the human mind. It is ſcarce poſſible that a people, whoſe civilization was not of ancient date, and who could not have received any inſtruction from their neighbours, ſhould have the leaſt extenſive degree of knowledge. All that can be concluded from their religious and political inſtitutions is, that they had made ſome little progreſs in aſtronomy. But how many ages would it have required to enlighten them, ſince they were deprived of the aſſiſtance of writing, and ſince they were ſtill far diſtant from this powerful, and perhaps only mode of acquiring knowledge, as it appears from the imperfection of their hieroglyphics.

Theſe were pictures traced out upon the barks of trees, upon the ſkins of fallow deer, or upon pieces of cotton; and deſtined to preſerve the memory of the laws, the tenets, and the revolutions of the empire. The number, the colour, and the attitude of

the figures, were all varied according to the objects that were meant to be expreſſed. Although theſe imperfect ſigns could not be ſuppoſed to have that diſtinct character which precludes every reaſonable doubt, yet we may imagine, that when aſſiſted by the traditions of ſocieties and families, they might convey ſome information reſpecting paſt events. The indifference of the conquerors for every thing that had no reference to their inſatiable avidity, made them neglect to inquire for the key of theſe important depoſits. Soon after, their monks looked upon them as monuments of idolatry; and Zummeraga, the firſt biſhop of Mexico, condemned all that could be collected of them to the flames. The little that eſcaped from this fanatical conflagration, and which has been preſerved in one or the other hemiſphere, has not contributed to diſpel the darkneſs into which the negligence of the firſt Spaniards had plunged us.

The era of the foundation of the empire is even unknown. The Caſtilian hiſtorians, indeed, tell us, that before the tenth century, this vaſt ſpace was inhabited only by ſome wandering hordes that were entirely ſavage. They tell us, that about this period, ſome tribes iſſuing from the North and North-weſt, occupied parts of the territories, and introduced milder manners. They tell us, that three hundred years after, a people ſtill more advanced in civilization, and coming from the neighbourhood of California, ſettled on the borders of the lakes and built Mexico there. They tell us, that this laſt nation, ſo ſuperior to the others, had, for a long period, nothing but chiefs, whom they raiſed to the government, or deprived them of it, as they found it ſuitable to their intereſts. They tell us, that the authority, which till then had been divided and revocable, was concentrated in a ſingle perſon, and became permanent, one hundred and thirty, or one hundred and ninety-ſeven years before the arrival of the Spaniards. They tell us, that the nine monarchs, who ſucceſſively aſcended the throne, gave the domains of the ſtate an exten-

ſion which they had not had under the former government. But what degree of credit can we reaſonably grant to annals ſo confuſed and contradictory, and filled with the moſt abſurd fables that have ever been propoſed to the credulity of mankind? In order to believe that a ſociety whoſe dominion was ſo extenſive, whoſe inſtitutions were ſo numerous, and whoſe form of worſhip was ſo regular, had ſo modern an origin as it hath been ſaid, we ſhould have other teſtimonies beſide thoſe of the fierce ſoldier, who had neither the neceſſary talents nor the will to examine into any thing; we ſhould have other vouchers beſide thoſe fanatic prieſts, who were intent upon nothing elſe but erecting their own form of worſhip upon the ruin of the ſuperſtitions they found eſtabliſhed there. What ſhould we know of China, if the Portugueſe had been able to ſet it in flames, to ſubvert or deſtroy it, as they have done the Brazils? Should we at this day ſpeak of the antiquity of the Chineſe books, of their laws, and their manners? When ſome philoſophers ſhall have been allowed to penetrate into Mexico, to ſearch for, and to decipher the ruins of their hiſtory, and that theſe learned men ſhall neither be monks nor Spaniards, but either Engliſh or French, who ſhall have full liberty, and all proper means for the diſcovery of truth; then perhaps, we may gain ſome information concerning the hiſtory of this country, if barbariſm hath not completely deſtroyed all the monuments that could aſſiſt in inveſtigating it.

Theſe inquiries could not, however, lead to an exact knowledge of the ancient population of the empire, which, according to the reports of the conquerors, was immenſe. The country places were covered with inhabitants; the towns were crowded with citizens, and the armies were very numerous. Abſurd narrators! have we not been aſſured by you that it was a riſing ſtate; that it was continually diſturbed with obſtinate wars; that all priſoners were either maſſacred upon the field of battle, or ſacrificed to the

gods in the temples; that at the death of every emperor, of every cacique, and of every great man, a number of victims, proportioned to their dignity, were ſacrificed on their tombs; that from a prevailing depraved inclination the women were neglected; that the mothers ſuckled their children for four or five years, and that they became barren at an early period; that the people groaned inceſſantly, and in all parts, under the oppreſſions of the treaſury; that the provinces were covered with corrupted waters and vaſt foreſts; and that the Spaniſh adventurers had more to ſuffer from dearth, than from the length of marches, or the darts of the enemy?

How ſhall we reconcile facts certified by ſo many witneſſes, with that exceſſive population ſo ſolemnly atteſted in your proud annals? Before ſound philoſophy had attentively conſidered your ſtrange contradictions; and when the odium you had drawn upon yourſelves inſured an implicit faith in your abſurd exaggerations, the univerſe, which ſaw no more than a deſert in Mexico, was perſuaded that you had precipitated numberleſs generations into the grave. Undoubtedly, your ferocious ſoldiers did too often ſtain themſelves with innocent blood; undoubtedly, your fanatic miſſionaries did not oppoſe theſe barbarities as they ought to have done; undoubtedly, a reſtleſs tyranny, and an inſatiable avarice, carried off from this unfortunate part of the world many of its feeble children: but ſtill your cruelties were leſs than the nations have reaſon to ſuppoſe, from the accounts given by the hiſtorians of your ravages. And it is I whom you look upon as the detractor of your character, who, while I accuſe you of ignorance and impoſture, become, as much as poſſible, your apologiſt.

Would ye rather chooſe that the number of your aſſaſſinations ſhould be exaggerated, than that your ſtupidity and contradictions ſhould be unmaſked? In this place, I call Heaven to witneſs, I have been attentive only to cleanſe you from the blood with which you ſeem to make it your glory to be covered; and

BOOK VI. in every other part where I have ſpoken of you, my only deſign hath been to ſuggeſt means of reſtoring your nation to its former ſplendour, and of alleviating the deſtiny of thoſe wretched people that are ſubject to your empire. If you diſcover in me any ſecret hatred, or any motive of ſelf-intereſt, I give myſelf up to your contempt. Have I treated the other deſtroyers of the New World, even the French, my own countrymen, with more caution? Why, therefore, ſhould you be the only people who are offended? Becauſe you have nothing but pride remaining. Become powerful again, and you will become leſs captious; and truth, while it makes you bluſh, will ceaſe to anger you.

Whatever was the population of Mexico, the taking of the capital occaſioned the ſubjection of the whole ſtate; which was not ſo extenſive as it hath been generally ſuppoſed to be. Upon the South Sea, the empire began only at Nicaragua, and ended at Acapulco: and even part of the coaſts watered by this ocean, had never been ſubdued. Upon the North Sea, there was ſcarce any thing that interſected it from the river of Tabaſco to that of Panuco: but in the inland parts, Tlaſcala, Tepeaca, Mechoacan, Chiapa, and ſome other leſs conſiderable diſtricts, had preſerved their independence. Their freedom was taken from them in leſs than a year by the conqueror, who found it ſufficient to ſend ten, fifteen, or twenty horſe, to preclude all reſiſtance; and before the end of the year 1522, the provinces, which had rejected the laws of the Mexicans, and rendered the communication between their poſſeſſions difficult or impracticable, conſtituted all a part of the Spaniſh dominion. In proceſs of time, it acquired immenſe additions on the northern ſide. Theſe would even have been more conſiderable, and particularly more uſeful, had it not been for the incredible barbarities that accompanied or followed the acquiſition of them.

As ſoon as the Caſtilians had made themſelves maſters of Mexico, they divided the beſt lands among

themſelves; they reduced to ſlavery the people who had cleared them, and condemned them to labours incompatible with the nature of their conſtitution, and repugnant to their habits. This ſyſtem of general oppreſſion excited conſiderable inſurrections. Theſe aroſe without a concurrence of meaſures, without a chief to direct them, and without a plan; they were the effect of deſpair alone; and ended to the diſadvantage of the too unfortunate Indians. An irritated conqueror, with fire and ſword in hand, paſſed with extreme rapidity from one extremity of the empire to the other, and left in all parts memorable traces of vengeance, the details of which would make the moſt bloody-minded men ſhudder. There was a barbarous emulation between the officer and the ſoldier, which ſhould ſacrifice moſt victims; and even the commander himſelf, perhaps, ſurpaſſed his troops and lieutenants in ferocity.

Cortez, however, did not reap the advantages he might expect from ſo many acts of inhumanity. It began to be a maxim of policy in the court of Madrid, not to leave ſuch of her ſubjects as had ſignalized themſelves by ſome important diſcovery, time enough to ſettle themſelves in their authority, from the apprehenſion, well or ill founded, that they might think of rendering themſelves independent of the Crown. If the conqueror of Mexico did not give a reaſon for adopting ſuch a ſyſtem, he was at leaſt one of the firſt victims of it. The unlimited powers he had at firſt enjoyed, were daily curtailed; and in proceſs of time, they were ſo exceedingly reſtrained, that he preferred a private ſituation to the vain appearances of an authority accompanied with the greateſt diſguſt. This Spaniard was deſpotic and cruel; and his ſucceſſes are tarniſhed by the injuſtice of his projects. He was an aſſaſſin covered with innocent blood: but his vices were of the times, and of his nation, and his virtues were his own. Let us place this man among the ancients; let us give him another country, another education, another turn of mind, other manners,

BOOK VI.

and a different religion. Let us put him at the head of the fleet that advanced against Xerxes; or reckon him among the Spartans at the Straits of Thermopylæ; or suppose him to be one of those generous Batavians who freed themselves from the tyranny of their countrymen, and Cortez will appear a great man. His qualities will become heroic, and his memory will be irreproachable. Had Cæsar been born in the fifteenth century, and commanded at Mexico, he would have been a worse man than Cortez. To find an excuse for the faults that have been laid to his charge, we must ask ourselves what better expectations we could have formed of a man, who treads for the first time upon unknown regions, and whose first object is to provide for his own safety? It would be highly unjust to confound him with the peaceable founder, who is acquainted with the country, and regulates the measures, the space, and the time at pleasure.

External, and internal troubles with which Mexico has been agitated since it has become a Spanish possession.

Since Mexico had been subjected to the Castilians, this immense country was no longer exposed to invasion. Its provinces were not ravaged by any neighbouring or distant enemy. The peace it enjoyed was not disturbed from without, except by pirates. In the South Sea, the enterprises of these robbers were confined to the taking of a few ships: but in the North Sea, they pillaged Campeachy once, and Vera-Cruz twice; and they frequently spread devastation upon coasts less known, less opulent, and not so well defended.

While the navigation and the shores of this wealthy region were a prey to the pirates, and to the squadrons of the nations disgusted at the ambition of Spain, or merely jealous of its superiority, the Chichemecas disturbed the interior part of the empire. If we give credit to Herrera and Torquemada, these were the people who occupied the best parts of the country before the arrival of the Mexicans. To avoid the yoke destined for them by the conqueror, they took refuge in caverns and mountains, where

their natural ferocity increaſed, and where they led entirely the life of beaſts. The new revolution which had juſt changed the ſtate of the former country, did not incline them to milder manners; and what they ſaw or learnt of the character of the Spaniards, inſpired them with implacable hatred againſt a nation ſo proud and ſo oppreſſive. This paſſion, always terrible among ſavages, manifeſted itſelf by the ravages they committed in all the ſettlements formed in their neighbourhood, and by the cruelties they exerciſed upon thoſe who attempted to open the mines. In vain had forts and garriſons been ſtationed upon the frontiers, to contain or ſuppreſs them; their rage continued inceſſantly till the year 1592. At this period, Captain Caldena perſuaded them to put an end to their hoſtilities. In the view of rendering theſe pacific ſentiments durable, the government made them build dwellings, collected them into ſeveral villages, and ſent among them four hundred Tlaſcalan families, who were commiſſioned to inſtruct them in ſome arts, and to teach agriculture to a people who had hitherto been clothed only with the ſkins of beaſts, and had lived entirely by hunting, or upon the ſpontaneous productions of nature. It was long before theſe prudent meaſures ſucceeded. The Chichemecas refuſed for a long time to receive the inſtructions the government had undertaken to give them, and even rejected every kind of intercourſe with benevolent and American teachers. It was not till the year 1608, that Spain was freed from the care of clothing and feeding them.

Eighteen years after, a moſt violent conteſt happened between the civil and eccleſiaſtical power at Mexico. A man convicted of a multitude of crimes, ſought impunity for all his enormities at the foot of the altars. The viceroy Gelves cauſed him to be dragged from thence. This act of neceſſary juſtice was conſtrued into an outrage againſt the divinity. The thunder of excommunication was immediately ſent forth; and the people roſe. The regular and

BOOK VI. ſecular clergy took up arms. The palace of the commander was burnt; his guards, friends, and partizans were put to the ſword. He himſelf was put in irons and ſent to Europe, with ſeventy gentlemen who had not been afraid to eſpouſe his cauſe. The archbiſhop, who was the author of all theſe calamities, and whoſe vengeance was not yet ſatisfied, purſued his victim, with the wiſh and deſire of ſacrificing him. The court, after having heſitated for ſome time, decided at length in favour of fanaticiſm. The defender of the rights of the throne, and of order, was condemned to total oblivion; and his ſucceſſor was authoriſed ſolemnly to conſecrate all the notions of ſuperſtition, and particularly the ſuperſtition of aſylums.

The word aſylum taken in its full extent, might ſignify any place, privilege, or diſtinction, that protects a criminal from the impartial exerciſe of juſtice. For what is the claim that weakens and ſuſpends the authority of the law? An aſylum. What is the place of confinement that withdraws the guilty from the priſon common to all malefactors? An aſylum. What is a retreat where the creditor cannot go and ſeize up his fraudulent debtor? An aſylum. What is a diſtrict where one may exerciſe all the functions of ſociety without authority, and in a country where all the reſt of the citizens cannot obtain that privilege without a premium? An aſylum. What is a tribunal to which one may appeal from a definitive ſentence pronounced by another, which is ſuppoſed to be the laſt reſort of the law? An aſylum. What is an excluſive privilege, for whatever motive it may have been ſolicited and obtained? An aſylum. In an empire where the citizens partaking unequally of the advantages of ſociety, do not ſhare the burdens of it in proportion to theſe advantages, what are the different diſtinctions that relieve ſome at the expence of others? They are aſylums.

The aſylums of the tyrant, of the prieſt, of the ſtateſman, of the nobleman, of the contractor, and of the merchant, are well known; and I could name

thoſe of almoſt all the ranks of ſociety. What portion is there indeed of ſociety that hath not a protection for a certain number of malverſations, which it may commit with impunity.

The moſt dangerous of aſylums, however, is not that into which a man may make his eſcape, but that which he carries about with him, that which accompanies and inveſts the guilty perſon, which ſerves him as a ſhield, and which forms between him and me an encloſure in the centre of which he ſtands, and from whence he may inſult me, while puniſhment cannot reach him. Such are the eccleſiaſtical habit and character. Both the one and the other were formerly a ſort of aſylum, where the impunity of the moſt flagitious crimes was almoſt aſſured. Is this privilege entirely aboliſhed? We have frequently ſeen monks and prieſts thrown into priſon; but we ſcarce have ever ſeen any of them taken out from thence to be conveyed to the public place of execution.

What! becauſe a man is obliged by his profeſſion to have a peculiar ſanctity of manners, ſhall he obtain privileges, and be treated with a commiſeration that ſhall be refuſed to the criminal who is not bound by the ſame obligations? If it be urged, that there is a reſpect due to his functions, to his cloth, and to his character; we ſhall anſwer, that juſtice is equally and without diſtinction due to every citizen. If the ſword of the law be not moved indiſcriminately in every direction; if it ſhould be unſteady; or if it ſhould be raiſed or lowered in favour of any one it may meet with in its paſſage, that ſociety is not well regulated. There exiſts in it, under another name, and under another form, a deteſtable privilege, a protection denied to ſome and reſerved for others.

But theſe kinds of aſylum, though generally contrary to the proſperity of ſocieties, ſhall not here engage our attention. We ſhall only ſpeak of thoſe which temples or places of divine worſhip have afforded, and ſtill continue to afford, in ſeveral parts of the globe.

BOOK VI.

These places of refuge were known to the ancients. In Greece, when that country was still but half civilized, it was thought that tyranny could not be restrained otherwise than by religion. The statues of Hercules, of Theseus, and of Pirithoüs, seemed well calculated to inspire villains with terror, when they had no longer the vengeance of these heroes to dread. But as soon as the asylum, instituted in favour of innocence, served only for the preservation of the guilty, and was made subservient either to the interests or vanity of those who granted the protection, these places of retreat were abolished.

Other people, in imitation of the Greeks, established asylums. But the citizen used to put himself under the protection of the gods, merely to avoid the armed hand that pursued him. There, he called upon the law, and summoned the people to his assistance. His fellow-citizens, together with the magistrate, drew near, and the man was examined before them. If it was found that he had abused the asylum, he received a double punishment; one for the crime he had committed, the other for having profaned the place in which he had taken refuge.

When Romulus wanted to people his city, he made an asylum of it; and some temples, in the times of the republic, were devoted to this purpose. After the death of Julius Cæsar, the triumvirate made an asylum of his chapel. In after ages, the servility of the people frequently erected the statues of tyrants into places of refuge. From thence it was that the slave insulted his master; and that the disturber of public tranquillity stirred up the populace against good men.

This horrible institution of barbarism and paganism occasioned inexpressible evils; when Christianity, ascending the throne of the empire, did not scruple to adopt and even to extend it. The consequences of this ecclesiastical policy were soon severely felt. The laws lost their authority, and the order of society was subverted. The magistrate then at-

tacked theſe aſylums with courage; the prieſt defended them with obſtinacy. A warm conteſt was carried on for many centuries with great animoſity. The party that prevailed under the reign of a firm prince, was depreſſed under that of a ſuperſtitious one. Sometimes this aſylum was general, and ſometimes was under reſtrictions. It was annihilated at one period, and reſtored at another.

In an inſtitution ſo evidently contrary to natural equity, to civil law, to the ſanctity of religion, to the ſpirit of the goſpel, and to the good order of ſociety, the circumſtances that ſhould naturally tend moſt to aſtoniſh us are, its duration, the diverſity of the objects of the edicts of the emperors, the contradiction of the canons, and the obſtinacy of ſeveral biſhops; but more eſpecially the extravagant abſurdity of the lawyers, in determining, with preciſion, the extent of the aſylum, according to the ſize or title of the reſpective churches. If it was a great church, the aſylum was to extend a certain number of feet beyond its circumference; if a ſmall church, it was to be leſs extenſive, and ſtill leſs if it was a chapel: the protection was the ſame, whether the church were conſecrated or not.

It is very extraordinary, that in a long ſucceſſion of generations, not one monarch, not one eccleſiaſtic, not one magiſtrate, not even one ſingle man ſhould have reminded his cotemporaries of the bright days of Chriſtianity. Formerly, he might have ſaid to them, the ſinner was detained for years at the gate of the temple, where he expiated his fault, expoſed to the injuries of the air, in the preſence of all his brethren, and of all the citizens. He was not allowed to enter the church, except by degrees; nor to approach the ſanctuary, but in proportion as his penance drew near to an end. And in our days, a villian, an extortioner, a thief, and an aſſaſſin covered with blood, not only finds the gates of our temples open to him, but alſo meets with protection, impunity, food, and ſecurity.

BOOK VI.

But if the aſſaſſin had plunged his dagger into the breaſt of a citizen, even upon the ſteps of the altar, what muſt be done in that caſe? Shall the place of the bloody ſcene become his aſylum? This would certainly be a privilege very convenient for criminals. Why ſhould they murder in the ſtreets, in the houſes, or upon the highways, where they may be ſeized? ſhould they not rather chooſe to aſſaſſinate in the churches? There never was a more diſguſting inſtance of the contempt of the laws, and of the ambition of the clergy, than this immunity granted by the churches. It was reſerved to ſuperſtition to make the Supreme Being, in this world, the protector of the ſame crimes which he puniſhes in another with eternal ſufferings. Let us hope that the extremity of the evil will point out more ſenſibly the neceſſity of the remedy.

This fortunate revolution will be brought about later at other places than at Mexico, where the people are plunged in a ſtate of ſtill more profound ignorance than in the other regions ſubject to Caſtile. In 1732, the conſpiring elements ſwallowed up one of the richeſt fleets that had ever been diſpatched from this opulent part of the New World. Univerſal deſpair prevailed in the two hemiſpheres. Amongſt a people plunged in ſuperſtition, all events are miraculous; and the anger of Heaven was generally conſidered as the ſole cauſe of this great diſaſter, which might very poſſibly have been brought about by the inexperience of the pilot, or by other cauſes equally natural. An *Auto da fé* appeared to be the ſureſt method of recovering the divine favour; and thirty-eight wretched people periſhed in the flames, the victims of ſo deplorable an infatuation.

Methinks I am preſent at this horrible expiation. I behold it, and exclaim; 'Stop, execrable monſters! What connection is there between the calamity you have experienced and the pretended or real crime of thoſe whom you detain in your priſons? If they entertain opinions which render them

'odious to the Almighty, it belongs to him to crush 'them with his thunder. He hath borne with them 'for a great number of years, and ſtill continues to 'bear with them, and yet you torment them. If it 'were his will to condemn them to eternal puniſh-'ments on the terrible day of his vengeance, does 'it belong to you to accelerate their chaſtiſement! 'Why ſhould you deprive them of the inſtant of re-'pentance, which perhaps awaits them, in the de-'cline of life, in the hour of danger, or the period 'of ſickneſs? But infamous wretches as ye are, diſ-'ſolute prieſts, and libidinous monks, were not your 'crimes ſufficient to ſtir up the anger of Heaven? 'Correct yourſelves; proſtrate yourſelves at the foot 'of the altars, cover yourſelves with ſackcloth and 'aſhes; implore the mercy of the Moſt High, rather 'than employ yourſelves in leading to the ſtake a 'number of innocent perſons, whoſe death, far from 'wiping away your crimes, will only increaſe the 'number of them, by thirty-eight more, for which 'you will never be forgiven. To appeaſe the Deity, ye 'burn mankind! Are ye worſhippers of Moloch?' But ye hear me not; and the unfortunate victims of your ſuperſtitious cruelty are already caſt into the flames.

Soon after this, the New Mexico, which was bordering and dependent upon the Old, was afflicted with a calamity of another kind. This vaſt region, ſituated, for the moſt part, under the temperate zone, was for a time unknown to the ravagers of America. The miſſionary Ruys firſt penetrated into it in 1580. He was ſoon after followed by the captain Eſpajo, and, laſtly, by John d'Onaſte; who by a ſeries of labours begun in 1599, and terminated in 1611, ſucceeded in opening ſome mines, in multiplying cattle and means of ſubſiſtence, and in ſettling firmly the Spaniſh dominion. The order he had eſtabliſhed was diſturbed in 1652 by civil commotions. In the courſe of theſe animoſities, Roſas the commandant was aſſaſſinated; and his friends, who attempted to avenge his death, periſhed after him. Theſe acts of violence

BOOK VI. continued till the tardy arrival of Pagnaloſſe. This intrepid and ſevere commander had almoſt ſtifled the rebellion, when, in a tranſport of juſt indignation, he gave a blow to a turbulent monk, who was ſpeaking to him in an inſolent manner, and even dared to threaten him. The prieſts, who were maſters of the country, immediately ſeized upon his perſon. He was excommunicated, delivered up to the inquiſition, and ſentenced to conſiderable fines. In vain did he urge the court to avenge the royal authority inſulted in his perſon; the influence of his enemies prevailed over his ſolicitations. Their rage and their power made him even apprehend a more fatal deſtiny; and in order to avoid their daggers, and to withdraw himſelf from their intrigues, he took refuge in England, abandoning the reins of government to whoever would or could get hold of them. His flight plunged the province into freſh misfortunes; and it was not till after ten years of anarchy and carnage, that every thing was brought again into order and ſubjection.

Can any thing be more abſurd than this authority of the monks in America? They are a ſet of men without knowledge and without principles; their independence tramples upon their inſtitutions, and makes them regardleſs of their vows; their conduct is ſcandalous, their houſes are ſo many places of evil reſort, and their tribunals of penance ſo many trading ſhops. From thence it is, that for a piece of money they quiet the conſcience of the villain; from thence it is, that they inſinuate corruption into innocent minds, and that they ſeduce women and girls into debauchery: they are a ſet of ſimoniſts, who make a public traffic of holy things. The Chriſtianity they teach, is defiled with all ſorts of abſurdities. Greedy of inheritancy, they defraud, rob, and perjure themſelves. They degrade the magiſtrates, and thwart them in their operations. There are no crimes which they cannot commit with impunity. They inſpire the people with a ſpirit of rebellion.

They are ſo many encouragers of ſuperſtition, and the cauſe of all the troubles that have agitated theſe diſtant regions. As long as they exiſt there they will keep up anarchy, from the confidence, as blind as it is unlimited, which they have obtained of the people, and from the puſillanimity with which they have inſpired the depoſitaries of the authority, whom they diſpoſe of at pleaſure by their intrigues. Let us therefore inquire of what great utility they are. Are they informers? A wiſe adminiſtration hath no need of them. Are they to be managed as a counterpoiſe to the power of the viceroy? This is an idle apprehenſion. Are they tributaries of the great? This is an evil that muſt be put a ſtop to. Under whatever aſpect we conſider matters, the monks are a ſet of wretches, who ſcandalize and diſturb Mexico too much to be allowed to remain there any longer.

Subjection and order were again diſturbed, and more generally ſo in 1593, by a law which forbade the Indians the uſe of ſtrong liquors. This prohibition could not have for its object the liquors of Europe, which were neceſſarily too high priced ever to be uſed by men living in a conſtant ſtate of oppreſſion, and inceſſantly ſtripped of their property. It was only from the palm wine that the government endeavoured to wean them.

This liquor is drawn from a plant known at Mexico by the name of maguey, and reſembling the aloes in its form. Its leaves, collected about the neck of the root, are thick, pulpous, almoſt ſtraight, ſeveral feet in length, hollowed in the form of a gutter, thorny on the back, and terminated by a very ſharp point. The ſtem, which riſes out of this tuft, aſcends to twice its height, and bears upon its branching top yellowiſh flowers. Their calix, with ſix diviſions, is charged with an equal number of ſtamina. It adheres at the bottom to the piſtil, which, together with it, becomes a capſula with three cells filled with ſeeds. The maguey grows in every part of Mexico, and is eaſily multiplied from ſlips. Hedges are made

BOOK VI.

of it Its ſeveral parts have each of them their utility. The roots are employed for cordage; the ſtems furniſh wood; the points of the leaves ſerve for nails, or needles; and even the leaves themſelves are fit for thatching the roofs; and a thread is produced from them fit for the manufacture of various looms.

But the moſt eſteemed produce of the maguey is a ſweet and clear water, which is collected by means of a hole made with an inſtrument in the middle of the tuft, after the ſhoots and the inward leaves are removed. This hole, which is three or four inches deep, is filled and emptied every day; and the liquor continues running in this manner for a whole year, ſometimes even for eighteen months. This liquor, when inſpiſſated, forms a real ſugar; but when mixed with ſpring water, and laid by in vaſes, it acquires, after having fermented four or five days, the ſharpneſs of cyder, and almoſt the ſame kind of taſte. If orange or lemon peel be added to it, it becomes intoxicating. This property renders it ſtill more agreeable to the Mexicans, who not being able to conſole themſelves for the loſs of their liberty, endeavour to forget the humiliating ſtate of their ſlavery. Accordingly, the attention of the Indians is continually turned towards the houſes where this liquor is diſtributed. They paſs whole days and weeks there; they leave the ſubſiſtence of their families in them, and very frequently the few clothes they have.

The Spaniſh miniſtry, informed of theſe exceſſes, wiſhed to put a ſtop to them; but did not ſet about it in a proper manner. Inſtead of bringing back the people to good morals by paternal cares, and by the moſt effectual mode of inſtruction, they had recourſe to the fatal expedient of prohibitions. The minds of men grew heated, ſeditions were multiplied, and acts of voilence repeated, from one extremity of the empire to the other. The government was obliged to give way; and withdrew theſe prohibitive acts: but to indemnify itſelf for the ſacrifice of its authority, taxes

were laid upon this liquor, which bring in annually to the treasury eleven or twelve thousand livres from 458l. 6s. 8d. to 500l.

Five and twenty or thirty years after this, a new scene of a particular kind was opened at Mexico. In this important possession, the police was so much neglected, that all the roads were seized upon by a numerous band of robbers. No citizen could venture to go out of his house without a passport from the chiefs of these banditti. Whether from carelessness, weakness, or corruption, the magistrate took no measures to put an end to so great a calamity. At length, the court of Madrid, roused by the clamours of a whole nation, committed the care of the public security to Velasquès. This equitable, firm, and strict man, independent of the tribunals and the viceroy, succeeded at length in re-establishing order, and fixing it upon so firm a basis, that it hath never since been shaken.

A war undertaken against the people of Cinaloa, Sonora, and New Navarre, hath been the last remarkable event that hath disturbed the empire. These provinces, situated between Old and New Mexico, did not make a part of Montezuma's dominions. It was not till 1540, that the devastators of the New World penetrated into them, under the command of Vasquès Coronado. They found there some petty nations, who, upon the borders of the sea, lived by fishing, and in the inland parts upon the produce of the chase; and who, when these means of subsistence failed them, had no other resource than in the spontaneous productions of nature. In these districts, neither clothing nor huts were in use. Branches of trees to shade them from the heats of a burning sun; and reeds tied together to shelter them from the torrents of rain: these were the only contrivances thought of by the inhabitants to guard against the inclemency of the seasons. During the severest frosts they slept in the open air, round the fires which they had kindled.

This country, in appearance so poor, contained

BOOK VI. mines, which ſome Spaniards undertook to work. They were found to yield plentifully; and yet the greedy proprietors of them did not enrich themſelves. As it was neceſſary to bring from Vera Crux, upon the back of mules, through a difficult and dangerous road of ſix or ſeven hundred leagues, the quickſilver, the ſtuffs, and moſt of the articles required for ſubſiſtence and for the labours, all theſe objects, when they arrived at the ſpot, had increaſed ſo much in value, that the moſt fortunate undertaking ſcarce furniſhed a ſufficiency to pay for them.

It became neceſſary to abandon the whole, or to take other meaſures; the laſt of theſe ſchemes was reſolved upon. The Jeſuit Ferdinand Conſang was commiſſioned, in 1746, to reconnoitre the gulf of California, which borders theſe immenſe regions. After this navigation, conducted with ſkill, the Court of Madrid became acquainted with the coaſts of the continent, with the harbours that nature has formed there, with the ſandy and arid places that are not ſuſceptible of cultivation, and with the rivers, which, by the fertility they diffuſe along their borders, invite to the eſtabliſhing of colonies in thoſe parts. Nothing, in future, could prevent the ſhips that ſailed out of Acapulco, from entering the Vermeil Sea; from conveying with eaſe into the neighbouring provinces, miſſionaries, troops, miners, proviſions, merchandiſe, and every thing that was wanted for the colonies, and from returning laden with metals.

In the meanwhile, it was indiſpenſably neceſſary previouſly to gain over the natives of the country by acts of humanity, or to ſubdue them by force of arms. But how was it poſſible to conciliate men who were to be uſed as beaſts of burden, or to be buried alive within the bowels of the earth? Accordingly, the government reſolved upon force; and war was deferred only from the incapacity in an exhauſted treaſury to bear the expence of it. At length, in 1768, a credit of twelve hundred thouſand livres [50,000l.] was found, and hoſtilities commenced. Some hordes

of ſavages ſubmitted after a trifling reſiſtance. This was not the caſe with the Aplachians, the moſt warlike of theſe nations, and the moſt eager for independence. They were purſued without intermiſſion for three years, with a view of exterminating them. Great God! what an idea! To exterminate men! Could we ſay otherwiſe of wolves? Exterminate them, and for what? Becauſe they were a high-minded people, and were ſenſible of the natural right they had to liberty; becauſe they diſdained to be ſlaves. And yet we call ourſelves civilized people, and Chriſtians.

The diſtance of both the ancient and new conqueſts from the centre of authority, gave reaſon to think that they would be in a languid ſtate, till they ſhould be furniſhed with an independent adminiſtration. A particular commander was therefore given to them, who, with a title leſs pompous than that of Viceroy of New Spain, enjoyed the ſame prerogatives.

Progreſs of Mexico under the government of Spain.

We muſt now examine to what degree of proſperity Mexico hath riſen, notwithſtanding the enormous loſſes it has experienced from foreign enemies, and notwithſtanding the domeſtic troubles with which it hath ſo frequently been agitated.

The largeſt of the Cordeleirias mountains, after having croſſed all South America, becomes lower and narrower in the iſthmus of Panama; continues in the ſame form through the provinces of Coſta Rieca, Nicaragua, and Guatimala; ſpreads itſelf and riſes again throughout the reſt of Mexico, but without ever approaching to that prodigious height which it hath in Peru. This alteration is more particularly remarkable towards the South Sea. The ſhores here are extremely deep, and no bottom is to be found except very near the land; while in the Northern Sea, it is found at a great diſtance from the continent. Accordingly, the roads are as good and as frequent in the firſt of theſe ſeas, as they are ſcarce and bad in the other.

The climate of a region ſituated almoſt entirely in

BOOK VI. the torrid zone, is alternately damp and hot. These variations are more perceptible and more common in the low, marshy, woody, and uncultivated districts of the East, than in those parts of the empire, which beneficent nature hath treated more favourably.

The quality of the soil is also very different. Sometimes it is barren, sometimes fertile, according as it is mountainous, level, or sunk under the waters.

No sooner were the Spaniards masters of this opulent and immense country, than they hastened to build cities upon it, in those places which appeared to them best calculated for the maintenance of their authority, and in those which promised them greater advantages from their conquest. Such of the Europeans as chose to fix there, obtained a sufficient extent of territory; but they were obliged to search for planters, whom the law did not allow them.

Another arrangement of things was observed in the country places. They were most of them distributed to the conquerors in reward of their blood or their services. The extent of these domains, which were only granted for two or three generations, was proportioned to rank and favour. A greater or less number of Mexicans were attached to them as vassals. Cortez had three and twenty thousand of them in the provinces of Mexico, Tlascala, Mechoacan, and Oxaca, but with this distinction, that they were to belong to his family in perpetuity. Oppression must have been less severe in these hereditary possessions than in the rest of the empire, since in 1746 fifteen thousand nine hundred and forty Indians were still reckoned there, with eighteen hundred Spaniards, Mestees, or Mulattoes, and sixteen hundred negro slaves.

The country had none of the animals necessary for the subsistence of its new inhabitants, for plowing the lands and for the other wants inseparable from a mixed society. These things were all brought from the islands already subjected to Castile, which had themselves lately received them from our hemisphere.

The animals propagated with incredible rapidity. But they all of them degenerated; and how indeed was it poſſible, that they ſhould not have experienced very evident alterations, when they were weakened by croſſing the ſeas, deprived of their ordinary food, and given up to the hands of perſons who were incapable of rearing and taking care of them? The ſheep were the moſt materially affected. Mendoza had ſome rams brought from Spain in order to renew the degenerated race; and ſince that period, the fleeces have been found of a ſufficient good quality to ſupply materials for conſiderable manufactures.

The multiplication of the cattle brought on a great increaſe in the cultures. To the maize, which had always been the principal food of the Mexicans, the grains of our countries were added. At firſt they did not thrive. The ſeeds of them, thrown at hazard among the briars, did not at firſt yield any thing but thick and barren weeds. A vegetation too rapid, and too vigorous, did not allow them time to ripen, nor even to form themſelves: but this ſuperabundance of juices gradually diminiſhed; and at length moſt of our ſeeds, vegetables, and fruits, were ſeen to proſper. If the vine and the olive tree were not naturalized in this part of the New World, this was owing to the prohibition of government, which intended to leave a mart open for the productions of the mother country. Perhaps the ſoil and the climate would themſelves have rejected theſe precious plants; at leaſt we have an authority for thinking ſo, when we ſee that the experiments which the Jeſuits and the heirs of Cortez were allowed to try, about the year 1706, were not ſucceſsful, and that thoſe which have been ſince made, have not been much more ſo.

Cotton, tobacco, cocoa, ſugar, and ſome other productions, were in general proſperous: but for want of hands or induſtry, theſe articles were confined to an inland circulation. There is nothing but

BOOK VI.

jalap, vanilla, indigo, and cohineal, which conſtitutes the trade of New Spain with other nations.

Of the culture of Jalap.

Jalap is one of the purgatives of moſt frequent uſe in medicine. It derives its name from the town of Xalapa, in the environs of which it grows plentifully. Its root, which is the only part in uſe, is tuberoſe, large, lengthened out into the form of a French turnip, white on the inſide, and full of a milky juice. The plant which it produces, hath been for a long time unknown. At preſent, we are informed, that it is a ſpecies of convolvulus, reſembling in its appearance that of our hedges. Its ſtem is climbing, angular, and covered with a ſlight down. Its leaves, alternately diſpoſed, are rather large, downy on the upper ſide, and wrinkled on the under, and marked with ſeven coſtæ: they are ſometimes entire and cordiform, ſometimes divided into ſeveral lobes, more or leſs diſtinct. The flowers, which grow in cluſters along the ſtem, have a calix, acorn-like at its baſe, deeply divided into five parts, and accompanied with two flowery leaves. The corolla, which is large and campaniform, whitiſh on the outſide, and of a dark purple within, ſupports five white ſtamina of unequal length. The german, which is placed in the middle, and ſurmounted with a ſingle ſtyle, becomes, as it ripens, a round capſula, encloſing in a ſingle cell four ſeeds of a red colour, and very hairy.

This plant is not only found in the neighbourhood of Xalapa, but alſo among the ſands of Vera-Crux. It is eaſily cultivated. The weight of the roots is from twelve to twenty pounds. They are cut into ſlices, in order to dry them. They then acquire a brown colour, and a reſinous appearance. The taſte of them is rather acrid, and excites a nauſea. The beſt jalap is cloſe, reſinous, brown, not eaſily broken, and inflammable. It is given only in ſmall doſes, becauſe it is an active and violent purgative. Its reſinous extract, made with ſpirit of wine, is employed for the ſame purpoſes, but with ſtill greater caution. There are ſeven thouſand five hundred

quintals of this root consumed annually in Europe, which cost 972,000 livres [40,541l. 13s. 4d.].

BOOK VI.

Of the culture of the Vanilla.

The vanilla is a plant which, like the ivy, grows to the trees it meets with, covers them almost entirely, and raises itself by their aid. Its stem, of the thickness of the little finger, is greenish, fleshy, almost cylindrical, knotty at intervals, and sarmentose, as that of the vine. Each knot is furnished with an alternate leaf, rather thick, of an oval shape, eight inches long and three broad. It also pushes forth roots, which, penetrating the barks of the trees, extracts a sufficient degree of nourishment from them to support the plant for some time in vigour, when by accident the bottom of the stem happens to be damaged, or even separated from the principal root. This stem, when grown to a certain height, branches out, spreads sideways, and is covered with clusters of flowers, rather large, white on the inside, and greenish without. Five of the divisions of their calix are long, narrow, and undulated. The sixth, which is more internal, appears in the form of a horn. The pistil, which they crown, supports a single stamina. It becomes, as it ripens, a fleshy fruit, formed like a pod, of seven or eight inches long, which opens into three valves loaded with small seeds.

This plant grows naturally in uncultivated lands that are always damp, sometimes under water, and covered with large trees; from whence it may be inferred, that such a kind of soil is the fittest for its cultivation. In order to multiply it, it is sufficient to plant at the foot of the trees some branches or twigs, which take root and rise up in a short time. Some cultivators, in order to preseve their plants from rotting, prefer the fastening of them to trees, even at the height of a foot from the ground. These plants soon throw out filaments, which descending in a straight line, penetrate into the earth, and form roots there.

The season for gathering the pods begins towards the end of September, and lasts about three months. The aromatic that is peculiar to them cannot be ob-

BOOK VI.

tained without preparation. This preparation consists in threading several pods, and dipping them for a moment in a caldron of boiling water to whiten them. They are afterwards suspended in a place exposed to the open air and to the rays of the sun. A thick and plentiful liquor then distils from their extremity, the exit of which is facilitated by a slight pressure, repeated two or three times in the course of the day. In order to retard the drying, which ought to go on slowly, they are rubbed over at several different times with oil, which preserves their suppleness, and keeps them from insects. They are also tied round with a cotton thread to prevent them from opening. When they are sufficiently dried, they are rubbed in hands anointed with oil, and they are put into a pot that is varnished, in order to keep them fresh.

This is all that is known of the vanilla, which is particularly appropriated to perfume chocolate; the use of which has passed from the Mexicans to the Spaniards, and from them to other nations; and even this information, which we have obtained concerning it, is entirely modern, and owing to a French naturalist. It is not possible, that the masters of this part of the New World, notwithstanding the indifference they have hitherto shown for the history of nature, should not have better information upon this matter. If they have not communicated it, it is because they have been desirous of reserving this production exclusively to themselves, although only fifty quintals of it are annually brought to Europe, where they are not sold for more than 431,568 livres [17,982l.]. The time will come when this matter shall be brought to light, and then the vanilla will be as generally known as the indigo is at present.

Of the culture of the Indigo tree.

The indigo tree is a straight and rather bushy plant. From its root arises a ligneous brittle stem, of the height of two feet, branching from the beginning, white on the inside, and covered with a greyish bark. The leaves are alternate, composed of several small leaves disposed in two rows along a common costa,

which is terminated by a ſingle foliolum, and furniſhed at its baſis with two ſmall membranes which are called ſtipulæ. At the extremity of each branch ariſe cluſters of reddiſh, papilionaceous flowers, rather ſmall, and compoſed of a number of petals. The ſtamina, to the number of ſix, and the piſtil, ſurmounted with a ſingle ſtyle, are arranged as they are in moſt of the herbaceous flowers. The piſtil is changed into a ſmall rounded pod, ſlightly curved, one inch in length, and a line and a half in breadth, full of cylindrical, ſhining, and browniſh ſeeds.

This plant requires a light ſoil, well tilled, and never deluged with water. For this reaſon, ſpots are preferred which are ſloping, becauſe this poſition preſerves the indigo plant from the ſtagnation of the rain, which might deſtroy it, and from inundations, that might cover it with a prejudicial ſlime. Low and flat grounds may alſo be employed for this culture, if channels and ditches are made to draw off the waters, and if care be taken to plant them only after the rainy ſeaſon, which often occaſions overflowings. The ſeed is ſown in little furrows made by the hoe, two or three inches in depth, at the diſtance of a foot from each other, and in as ſtraight a line as poſſible. Continual attention is required to pluck up the weeds, which would ſoon choke the plant. Though it may be ſown in all ſeaſons, the ſpring is commonly preferred. Moiſture cauſes this plant to ſhoot above the ſurface in three or four days. It is ripe at the end of two months. When it begins to flower, it is cut with pruning-knives; and cut again at the end of every ſix weeks, if the weather be a little rainy. It laſts about two years, after which term it degenerates; it is then plucked up, and planted afreſh.

As this plant ſoon exhauſts the ſoil, becauſe it does not abſorb a ſufficient quantity of air and dew to moiſten the earth, it is of advantage to the planter to have a vaſt ſpace which may remain covered with trees, till it becomes neceſſary to fell them, in order

to make room for the indigo; for trees are to be considered as ſyphons, by means of which the earth and air reciprocally communicate to each other their fluid and vegetating ſubſtance; ſyphons, into which the vapours and the juices being alternately drawn up, are kept in equilibrium. Thus while the ſap aſcends by the roots to the branches, the leaves draw in the air and vapours, which circulating through the fibres of the tree deſcend again into the earth, and reſtore to it in dew what it loſes in ſap. It is in order to maintain this reciprocal influence, that when there are no trees to preſerve the fields in a proper ſtate for the ſowing of indigo, it is cuſtomary to cover thoſe which are exhauſted by this plant with potatoes or lianes, the creeping branches of which preſerve the freſhneſs of the earth, while the leaves, when burnt, renew its fertility.

Indigo is diſtinguiſhed into ſeveral ſpecies, of which only two are cultivated: the true indigo, which is the ſort we have been ſpeaking of, and the baſtard indigo, which differs from the former, in having a much higher, more woody, and more durable ſtem; in having its foliola longer and narrower, its pods more curved, and its ſeeds black. Though the firſt be ſold at a higher price, it is uſually advantageous to cultivate the other; becauſe it is not ſo frequently renewed, is heavier, and yields more leaves, the produce of which is, however, leſs, from an equal quantity. The firſt will grow in many different ſoils: the ſecond ſucceeds beſt in thoſe which are moſt expoſed to the rain. Both are liable to great accidents in their early ſtate. They are ſometimes burnt up by the heat of the ſun, or choked by a web with which they are ſurrounded by an inſect peculiar to theſe regions. Sometimes the plant becomes dry, and is deſtroyed by another very common inſect; at other times, the leaves, which are the valuable part of the plant, are devoured in the ſpace of twenty-four hours by caterpillars. This laſt misfortune, which is but too common, hath given occaſion to the ſaying,

that the planters of indigo went to bed rich, and rose in the morning totally ruined.

This production ought to be gathered in with great precaution, for fear of making the farina that lies on the leaves, and which is very valuable, fall off by shaking it. When gathered, it is thrown into the steeping vat, which is a large tub filled with water. Here it undergoes a fermentation, which in twenty-four hours at farthest is completed. A cock is then turned, to let the water run into the second tub, called the mortar or pounding-tub. The steeping-vat is then cleaned out, that fresh plants may be thrown in; and thus the work is continued without interruption.

The water which hath run into the pounding-tub, is found impregnated with a very subtile earth, which alone constitutes the dregs or blue substance that is the object of this process, and which must be separated from the useless salt of the plant, because this makes the dregs swim on the surface. To effect this, the water is forcibly agitated with wooden buckets that are full of holes, and fixed to a long handle. This part of the process requires the greatest precautions. If the agitation be discontinued too soon, the part that is used in dying, not being sufficiently separated from the salt, would be lost. If, on the other hand, the dye were to be agitated too long after the the complete separation, the parts would be brought together again, and form a new combination; and the salt re-acting on the dregs would excite a second fermentation, that would alter the dye, spoil its colour, and make what is called burnt indigo. These accidents are prevented by a close attention to the least alterations that the dye undergoes, and by the precaution which the workmen take to draw out a little of it from time to time in a clean vessel. When they perceive that the coloured particles collect by separating from the rest of the liquor, they leave off shaking the buckets, in order to allow time to the blue dregs to precipitate to the bottom of the tub, where

they are left to ſettle till the water is quite clear. Holes made in the tub at differents heights are then opened one after another, and this uſeleſs water is let out.

The blue dregs remaining at the bottom having acquired the conſiſtence of a thick muddy liquid, cocks are then opened, which draw it off into the ſettler. After it is ſtill more cleared of much ſuperfluous water in this third and laſt tub, it is drained into ſacks; from whence, when water no longer filters through the cloth, this matter, now become of a thicker conſiſtence, is put into cheſts, where it entirely loſes its moiſture. At the end of three months the indigo is fit for ſale.

It is uſed in waſhing to give a bluiſh colour to linen: painters alſo employ it in their water colours; and dyers cannot make fine blue without indigo. The ancients procured it from the Eaſt Indies; in modern times it has been tranſplanted into America. The cultivation of it, ſucceſſively attempted at different places, appears to be fixed at Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Louiſiana, San Domingo, and Mexico. This laſt ſort, which is the moſt eſteemed, is known by the name of Guatimala indigo, becauſe it grows upon the diſtrict of that famous city. The manner in which it is procured is worthy of remark.

In theſe beautiful countries, where every eſtate is from fifteen to twenty leagues in extent, a part of this large ſpace is annually devoted to the culture of indigo. For this purpoſe it is ſufficient to burn the ſhrubs which cover the grounds, and careleſsly to paſs the plough once over them. This is done in the month of March, a ſeaſon in which it very ſeldom rains in this delightful climate. A man on horſeback then ſcatters the ſeed of the plant, in the ſame manner as we ſow corn in Europe. No one then pays any attention to this valuable production, till the time of gathering it.

From hence it happens that the indigo grows in ſome places and not in others; and that the indigo

which does not rise, is frequently choked by the weeds, from which it might have been preserved by pulling them up frequently. Accordingly, the Spaniards gather less indigo from an extent of three or four leagues, than other nations do from a few acres of land carefully managed; and their indigo, though much superior to any other, is not yet so perfect as it might be. Europe receives annually six thousand quintals of it, which cost 7,626,960 livres [317,790l.].

This prosperity would infallibly increase, if the court of Madrid were to enable the natives to cultivate indigo on their own account. This personal interest, thus substituted to a foreign one, would render them more active and more intelligent; and it is probable that the abundance and superiority of the Mexican indigo, would in time exclude that of the other colonies from all the markets.

Of the culture of the Cochineal.

The cochineal, to which we owe our beautiful scarlet and purple colours, has not yet been found anywhere but in Mexico. I had asserted, from the testimony even of the best writers, that the nature of this colour was not known before the beginning of this century. Upon searching into the originals, I find, that Acosta, in 1530, and Herrera, in 1601, had described it, as well as our modern naturalists. I therefore retract, and wish I could have an opportunity of doing the same with regard to many other things I have written of the Spaniards. The ignorance of travellers, and the levity with which they consider the productions of nature in all its kingdoms, is the reason that natural history is so full of falsities, which pass from one work to another, and which are transmitted from age to age by authors who successively copy each other. We scarce give ourselves the trouble to examine what we think we are well acquainted with; and thus it is, that after having propagated error, the testimonies which delay inquiries prolong the duration of it still more. Another inconvenience arising from this is, that philosophers lose time, which is precious, in forming systems which

impoſe upon us, till the pretended facts upon which they were founded have been ſhown to be falſe.

The cochineal is an inſect of the ſize and form of a bug. The two ſexes are diſtinct as in moſt other animals. The female, fixed upon a point of the plant, almoſt from the firſt inſtant of its birth, remains always attached to it by a kind of trunk, and preſents to the eye only an hemiſpherical cruſt, which covers all the other parts. This covering is changed twice in twenty-five days, and is ſprinkled over with a white and thick duſt, which is immiſcible with water. At this period, which is that of puberty, the male, which is much ſmaller, and more ſlightly made, iſſues out of a farinaceous tube, by means of wings with which he is provided. He flutters over the immoveable females, and fixes upon each of them. The ſame female is thus viſited by ſeveral males, who periſh ſoon after fecundation. The bulk of the female viſibly enlarges, till a drop of liquid, which eſcapes from under her, ſhows that the eggs, which are in great number, will ſoon make their appearance. The little inſects burſt their covering at the time of their birth, and ſoon ſpread themſelves over the plant, to chooſe a favourable ſpot to fix upon. They particularly endeavour to ſhelter themſelves from the eaſt wind. Accordingly, the ſhrub upon which they live, when viewed on that ſide, appears quite green, while upon the oppoſite ſide, which the inſects have preferred, it is white.

This ſhrub, which is known by the name of nopal, or Indian fig, is about five feet high. Its ſtem is fleſhy, large, flattened, downy, a little rough, and covered with cluſters of thorns, regularly diſpoſed upon it ſurface. It branches out very much, and grows narrow, as well as its branches, at every point of ramification: this gives to each portion of the plant thus made narrow, the form of an oval, thick, and thorny leaf. It hath no other leaves but theſe. Its flowers, ſcattered over the young ſtems, are compoſed of a ſcaly calix which ſupports ſeveral petals and

ſtamina. The piſtil, ſurmounted with a ſingle ſtyle, and concealed at the bottom of the calix, grows along with it into a fruit that is fit for eating; it reſembles a fig, and is full of ſeeds, fixed in a kind of reddiſh pulp.

There are ſeveral ſpecies of nopal. Thoſe which have a ſmooth ſtem, with a number of thorns placed too cloſe to each other, are not fit for the breeding of the cochineal. Theſe inſects thrive well only on that ſort which hath few thorns, and a downy ſurface proper to give them a firmer footing. Wind and cold rain, as well as too much damp, are injurious to the plant. The mode of lopping the trees is not advantageous. It is better to replant it every ſix years, by putting ſeveral pieces of the ſtems into cavities of ſome depth, diſpoſed in a quincunx, or a ſquare, at the diſtance of ſix or eight feet from each other. A ſpot thus planted, and diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Nopalry*, is uſually no more than one or two acres in extent, ſeldom three. Each acre produces as much as two quintals of cochineal, and one man is ſufficient to cultivate it; he muſt weed frequently, but with precaution, in order not to diſturb the inſect, which would not ſurvive if it were diſplaced. The cultivator muſt alſo take care to get rid of the animals that would deſtroy the plant; the moſt formidable of which is a caterpillar, which makes its way even through the inſide of the plant, and attacks the inſect underneath.

Eighteen months after the plantation, the nopal is covered with cochineals; but in order to diſtribute them more regularly over the whole plant, and to prevent them from injuring each other, from their proximity, ſmall neſts, made of the outſide rind of the cocoa, open to the weſt, and filled with twelve or fifteen females ready to lay their eggs, are fixed to ſpines at certain diſtances. The little ones which come out, fix themſelves on the nopal, and attain to their utmoſt growth in two months, which is the limited duration of their life. They are then gather-

BOOK VI. ed; and this operation is renewed every two months from October to May. The crop may be less valuable if it should be mixed with another kind of cochineal of a lower price, or if there be a great quantity of males, which are in little estimation, because they are less, and that they fall off before the time. This crop is to be gathered some days before the laying of the eggs, either to prevent the loss of the eggs, which are rich in colour, or to hinder the little ones from fixing upon a plant which is already exhausted, and must be left to itself for a few months. Beginning then by the bottom of the plant, the cochineals are successively detached with a knife, and are made to fall into a bason placed underneath, one of the edges of which being flattened, adapts itself exactly to the plant, which is afterwards cleaned with the same knife, or with a cloth.

Immediately before the rainy season comes on, in order to prevent the total destruction of the cochineals, which might be occasioned by the unwholesomeness of the air, the branches of the nopal, loaded with infant insects, are cut off. These branches are laid up in the houses, where they maintain their freshness, as all mucilaginous plants do. Here the cochineals thrive during the bad season. As soon as that is passed, they are placed on the trees, where the vivifying freshness of the air soon makes them propagate.

The wild cochineal, a different species from the fine, or mesteque cochineal, we have been speaking of, but cultivated in the same places, and on the same plant, does not require as much care and precaution; it is a more hardy insect, and bears the injuries of the air better. The crop of it is consequently less variable in the produce, and may be gathered all the year. This insect differs from the other, inasmuch as it is more voracious, less abounding in colour, and enveloped in a kind of cotton, which it extends two lines all round it. This species multiplies more readily, spreads further and faster without

any assistance; so that a nopalry is soon covered with them. As its produce is more certain, as its price is equivalent to two thirds of that of the finer sort, and as it propagates upon all the species of nopal, it may be cultivated with success, but separately; because, if it were placed near the other, it would starve it, and the other might also be smothered under the down. This species is also found in Peru, upon a very prickly nopal, which is extremely common there.

As soon as the cochineals are gathered, they are plunged in hot water to kill them. There are different ways of drying them. The best is, to expose them to the sun for several days, by which means they acquire a red brown colour, which the Spaniards call *renegrida*. The second method is to put them in an oven, where they assume a greyish colour streaked with veins of purple, which hath given them the name of *jaspeada*. But the most imperfect, which is what the Indians most generally practise, consists in putting them on plates along with their cakes of maize: in which process they are frequently burnt, and are called *negra*.

Though the cochineal be classed in the animal kingdom, the species of all others the most likely to corrupt, yet it never spoils. Without any other care than merely that of keeping it in a box, it hath been preserved in all its virtue for ages.

This valuable production would probably succeed in different parts of Mexico; but hitherto scarce any beside the province of Oaxaca hath seriously attended to it. The crops have been more plentiful upon a barren soil, which is beneficial to the nopal, than upon a soil naturally fertile; they have experienced less accidents in an agreeably mild exposure, than in places where the heat and cold were more sensibly felt. The Mexicans were acquainted with the cochineal before the destruction of their empire. They made use of it to paint their houses, and to dye their cotton. We read in Herrera, that, as early as the year 1523, the ministry sent orders to Cortez to encourage

BOOK VI. the cultivation of it. The conquerors rejected this kind of labour, as they despised every other, and it was consigned entirely to the Indians. They are the only persons who still carry it on; though too frequently with funds advanced by the Spaniards, upon terms more or less usurious. The produce of their industry is all conveyed to the capital of the province, which is likewise named Oaxaca.

This town, to which there are beautiful roads leading up, and where a perpetual spring prevails, rises in the midst of a spacious plain, covered with agreeable hamlets and well cultivated. The streets are wide, run in a straight line, and consist of houses that are rather low, but constructed in a pleasing manner. The squares, the aqueduct, and the public edifices, are executed in a good taste. There are some manufactures of silk and cotton; and the merchandise of Asia and of Europe is in general use. We have an opportunity of seeing several travellers, whom particular circumstances had led to Oaxaca. They have uniformly assured us, that of all the settlements formed by the Spaniards in the New World, this was the one in which the spirit of society had made the greatest progress. These several advantages appear to be the result of the cochineal trade.

Exclusive of what is consumed by America and the Philippines, Europe receives annually four thousand quintals of fine cochineal, two hundred quintals of granilla, a hundred quintals of cochineal dust, and three hundred quintals of the wild cochineal, which, when brought into its ports, are sold for 8,610,140 livres [358,755l. 16s. 8d.].

This rich article hath been hitherto cultivated only for the profit of Spain. M. Thierry, a French botanist, in defiance of more dangers than can be imagined, hath taken it away from Oaxaca itself, and transplanted it to San Domingo, where he cultivates it with a degree of perseverance worthy of the courage which animated him in obtaining it. His first attempts have succeeded beyond his expectations, and

there is every reaſon to hope that the ſequel will anſwer to this fortunate beginning. May this ſpecies of cultivation, as well as others, extend itſelf ſtill further, and engage the attention of other nations! Are we not all brethren, all children of one common father, and are we not all called to fulfil the ſame deſtiny? Is it neceſſary that I ſhould thwart the proſperity of my fellow creature, becauſe nature hath placed a river or a mountain between him and me? Doth this barrier authoriſe me to hate and to perſecute him? How many calamities hath this excluſive predilection for particular ſocieties brought upon the globe, and how many more will it ſtill occaſion in future, unleſs ſound philoſophy ſhould at length enlighten the minds of men, too long beguiled by factitious ſentiments? My voice is certainly too feeble to diſſipate the deluſion. But ſome writers will undoubtedly ariſe, whoſe reaſoning and eloquence will, ſooner or later, perſuade future generations, that mankind is of greater concern to us than one's country; or rather, that the felicity of the one is intimately connected with the happineſs of the other.

To the great exportations we have been mentioning, we muſt add the following articles that are ſent from Mexico: ten thouſand three hundred and fifty quintals of logwood, which produce 112,428 livres [4684l. 10s.]; three hundred and ten quintals of a ſpecies of Braſil wood, which produce 4266 livres [177l. 15s.]; forty-ſeven quintals of carmine, which produce 81,000 livres [3375l.]; ſix quintals of tortoiſe-ſhell, which produce 24,300 livres [1012l. 10s.]; forty-ſeven quintals of aronotto, which produce 21,600 livres [900l.]; thirty quintals of ſarſaparilla, which produce 4147 livres [172l. 15s. 10d.]; forty-four quintals of balſam, which produce 45,920 livres [1913l. 6s. 8d.]; five quintals of dragon's blood, which produce 270 livres [11l. 5s.]; and one hundred hides with the hair on, which produce 1620 livres [67l. 10s.]

But, as if nature had not yet done enough for

BOOK VI.

Spain, in granting to her, almoſt gratuitouſly, all the treaſures of the earth, which other nations cannot obtain without the hardeſt labour, ſhe hath alſo beſtowed upon her, eſpecially at Mexico, gold and ſilver, which are the vehicle or repreſentative of every produce.

Of the working of the mines.

Such is the dominion which theſe ſhining and fatal metals have over us, that they have counterbalanced the infamy and execration which the plunderers of America juſtly deſerved. The names of Mexico, Peru, and Potoſi, no longer make us ſhudder; and yet we are men! Even at this day, when the ſpirit of juſtice and the ſentiments of humanity are inculcated in all our writings, and are become the invariable rule of our judgments; a navigator, who ſhould come into our ports with a veſſel laden with riches avowedly obtained by methods equally barbarous, would land amidſt the general acclamations of the multitude. Where is then that wiſdom, which is ſo much the boaſt of the preſent age? What is then that gold, which removes from us the idea of vice, and prevents us from feeling that ſenſe of horror which the ſhedding of blood naturally impreſſes us with? There are undoubtedly ſome advantages annexed to a medium of exchange between nations, to an external repreſentation of all ſorts of value, to a common eſtimate of all labours. But would not greater advantages have been obtained, if nations had continued in a ſtate of tranquillity, detached from each other, ignorant and hoſpitable, than thus to have become corrupted with the moſt ferocious of all paſſions?

The origin of metals hath not always been well underſtood. It was long thought that they were as old as the creation. It is now believed, with greater reaſon, that they are formed ſucceſſively. In fact, it is impoſſible to doubt, that nature is continually in action, and that ſhe exerts herſelf with as much power in the bowels of the earth as in the regions of the ſky.

Every metal, according to the chemiſts, hath for

its principle an earth which conſtitutes and is peculiar to it. It preſents itſelf to us, ſometimes in the form that characterizes it, and ſometimes under various appearances, when it requires a degree of habit and ſkill to recognize it. In the firſt caſe it is called native, in the ſecond mineralized ore.

Metals, whether native or mineralized, are ſometimes ſcattered by fragments in beds of earth that are horizontal or inclined. But this is not the place of their origin. They have been conveyed thither by great volcanos, floods, and earthquakes, which are continnally ſubverting our miſerable planet. They are commonly found, ſometimes in regular veins, and ſometimes in detached maſſes, within the rocks and mountains where they are formed.

According to the conjectures of naturaliſts, from theſe large caverns which are perpetually heated there ariſe continual exhalations. Theſe ſulphureous and ſaline liquors act on the metallic particles, attenuate and divide them, and put them in motion within the cavities of the earth. They unite again; and then, becoming too heavy to ſupport themſelves in the air, they fall, and are heaped up one upon another. If, in their ſeveral motions, they have not met with other bodies, they form pure metals; which they do not, if they happen to have been combined with foreign ſubſtances.

Nature, which ſeems to have intended to conceal theſe metals, hath not been able to ſecrete them from the avidity of man. From repeated obſervations, we are led to diſcover the places where there are mines. They are uſually found in mountains, where plants grow with difficulty, and ſoon fade; where trees are ſmall and crooked; where the moiſture of dews, rains, and even ſnows, is ſoon dried up; where ſulphureous and mineral exhalations ariſe; where the waters are impregnated with vitriolic ſalts; and where the ſands, contain metallic particles. Though each of theſe marks, ſeparately conſidered, be ambiguous, it ſeldom

BOOK VI. happens, when all of them are united, but that the earth contains ſome mine.

But what are the terms on which we extract this treaſure or this poiſon from thoſe caverns where nature had concealed it? We muſt pierce rocks to an immenſe depth; we muſt dig ſubterraneons channels, to carry off the waters which flow in and menace us on every ſide; we muſt convey into immenſe galleries the wood of whole foreſts cut into props; we muſt ſupport the vaults of theſe galleries againſt the enormous weight of the earth which perpetually tends to fill them up, and to bury in their ruins thoſe avaricious and preſumptuous men who conſtructed them; we muſt dig canals and aqueducts; we muſt invent hydraulic machines of aſtoniſhing and various powers, and all the ſeveral kinds of furnaces; we muſt hazard being ſuffocated or conſumed by a vapour which takes fire from the glimmering flame of the lamps, without which the work could not be carried on; and we muſt at laſt periſh by a conſumption, which reduces human life to one half of its duration. If we conſider how many obſervations, experiments, and trials, all theſe works imply, we ſhall carry the origin of the world far beyond its known antiquity. To ſhow us the gold, iron, copper, tin, and ſilver, uſed in the earlieſt ages, is to amuſe us with an idle ſtory which can only impoſe upon children.

When the labour of mineralogy is finiſhed, that of metallurgy begins. Its object is to ſeparate metals from each other, and to detach them from the extraneous bodies which envelope them.

In order to ſeparate the gold from the ſtones which contain it, it is ſufficient to break them in pieces and reduce them to powder. The matter thus pulverized is afterwards triturated with quickſilver, which combines itſelf to this precious metal, but without forming any union, either with the rock, or ſand, or even the earth, which were mixed with it. By means of

fire, the mercury is afterwards diſtilled, which, on ſeparating, leaves the gold at the bottom of the veſſel in the ſtate of a powder which is purified in the coppel. Native ſilver requires no other preparations.

But when ſilver is combined with other ſubſtances, or with metals of a different nature, great knowledge and conſummate experience are requiſite to purify it. Every circumſtance authoriſes us to think that this art is unknown in the New World. It is alſo generally acknowledged, that the miners of Germany and Sweden would find, in a mine that hath already been worked, more wealth than the Spaniard had been able to extract from it. They would enrich themſelves by mines, which, through want of ſkill, have been rejected as inſufficient to defray the expences of working them.

Before the arrival of the Caſtilians, the Mexicans had no gold except what the torrents detached from the mountains; they had ſtill leſs ſilver, becauſe the chances that might bring it into their hands were infinitely leſs frequent. Theſe metals were not employed by them as a medium of exchange, but only as objects of ornament, or of mere curioſity. They were little attached to them. Accordingly, they laviſhed the ſmall quantity they had of them upon a foreign people, who made them their idol; and they caſt it at the feet of their horſes, who, while they were chewing the bit, ſeemed as if they were feeding upon them. But when hoſtilities had commenced between the two nations, and in proportion as the animoſities increaſed, theſe perfidious treaſures were partly thrown into the lakes and rivers, in order to deprive an implacable enemy of them, who ſeemed to have croſſed ſo many ſeas for no other purpoſe than to obtain the poſſeſſion of them. It was particularly in the capital and its neighbourhood that this practice was adopted. After the empire was ſubdued, the conquerors went all over it, in order to ſatisfy their ruling paſſion. The temples, the palaces, the private houſes, and even the meaneſt hovels, were ranſack-

ed and pillaged. This ſource being exhauſted, it became neceſſary to have recourſe to the mines.

Thoſe from which the greateſt expectations could be formed, were ſituated in countries which had not yet ſubmitted to the Mexican yoke. Nuno de Guſman was commiſſioned, in 1530, to reduce them to ſubjection. The advantages which this commander derived from an illuſtrious name, did not prevent him from ſurpaſſing in barbarity all the adventurers who had previouſly deluged the unfortunate plains of the New World with blood. Trampling upon millions of carcaſes, he ſucceeded, in leſs than two years, in eſtabliſhing a very extenſive dominion, from which the audience of Guadalaxara was inſtituted. This was always the part of New Spain the moſt abounding in metals. Theſe riches are more eſpecially common in New Galicia, in New Biſcay, and chiefly in the country of Zacatecas. From the midſt of theſe arid mountains is drawn the greateſt part of thoſe eighty millions of livres [3,333,333l. 6s. 8d.] which are annually coined in the mints of Mexico. The internal circulation, the Eaſt Indies, the national iſlands, and the contraband trade, abſorb near one half of this ſpecie. The mother country receives 44,196,047 of theſe livres [1,841,501l. 19s. 2d.], to which we muſt add, five thouſand ſix hundred and thirty-four quintals of copper, which are ſold in Europe for 453,600 livres [18,900l.].

In the earlieſt periods after the conqueſt, all the payments were made with ingots of ſilver, and with pieces of gold, the weight and value of which had received the ſanction of government. The neceſſity of having a regular kind of coin was ſoon felt; and towards the year 1542, theſe original metals were converted into coins of different ſizes. Some copper coins were even ſtricken, but the Indians rejected them. When they were compelled to receive them, they uſed to throw them, with contempt, into the lakes and rivers. In leſs than a year's time, the amount of more than a million of this coin diſap-

peared; and it became neceſſary to give up a medium of exchange, which diſguſted the lower claſs of people.

Although the breeding of cattle, cultivation, and the working of the mines, have not been carried nearly to ſuch a degree of perfection as they would infallibly have been by an active people, yet the manufactures are ſtill in a worſe ſtate. Thoſe of woollen and cotton are very general; but as they are in the hands of the Indians, Meſtees, and Mulattoes, and that they ſerve only for the clothing of the middling claſs of people, they are inconceivably imperfect. Some better kinds have been made only at Quexetaco, where tolerably fine woollen cloths are manufactured. But it is particularly in the province of Tlaſcala that the works are carried on with ſpirit. The poſition of this province between Vera Cruz and Mexico, the mildneſs of the climate, the beauty of the country, and the fertility of the ſoil, have attracted there moſt of the workmen who have paſſed from the Old to the New World. Theſe manufactures have produced ſucceſſively ſilk-ſtuffs, ribands, gold and ſilver, and other laces, and hats, which have been conſumed by ſuch of the Meſtees and Spaniards as were not able to pay for the merchandiſe brought from Europe. Los Angèles, an extenſive, rich and populous town, is the centre of this buſineſs. All the earthen ware, and moſt of the glaſſes and cryſtals that are ſold in the empire, come from its manufactures. The government hath even fire-arms made there.

What is the reaſon that Mexico hath not riſen to greater proſperity?

The indolence of the people inhabiting New Spain, muſt be one of the principal cauſes that have retarded the proſperity of this celebrated region, but it is not the only one; and the difficulty of cummunication muſt have added greatly to this want of activity. The circulation of trade is continually ſtopped, by all the obſtacles that can have been ſuggeſted by an unjuſt and rapacious adminiſtration. There are at moſt but two rivers able to bear even ſmall canoes, and nei-

BOOK VI.

ther of them poſſeſſes this advantage in all ſeaſons. There are but few traces of roads even near the great towns; in every other part the proviſions or merchandiſe can only be conveyed upon the back of mules, and every thing that is brittle upon the heads of the Indians. In moſt of the provinces, the price which the traveller is to pay for lodging, for horſes, for guides, and for proviſions, is regulated by the police; and this cuſtom, however barbarous it may be thought, is ſtill preferable to what is practiſed in places where liberty ſeems to be more reſpected.

Theſe obſtacles to public proſperity have been increaſed by the ſevere yoke under which oppreſſive maſters held the Indians, upon whom all the hard labour was impoſed. This evil is become more conſiderable from the diminution of the hands employed to ſerve the cupidity of the Europeans.

The firſt ſteps of the Caſtilians at Mexico were marked with blood. The carnage extended itſelf during the memorable ſiege of the city; and it was carried to the higheſt pitch of exceſs, in the expeditions that were undertaken to ſubdue deſperate people who had endeavoured to break their chains. The introduction of the ſmall-pox increaſed the depopulation, which was ſtill augmented ſoon after, by the epidemic diſeaſes of 1545 and 1576, the firſt of which deprived the empire of eight hundred thouſand inhabitants, and the ſecond, of two millions, if we chooſe to adopt the calculations of the credulous and exaggerating Torquemada. It is even demonſtrated, that without any accidental cauſe, the number of the inhabitants hath been inſenſibly reduced to a very few. According to the regiſters of 1600, there were five hundred thouſand tributary Indians in the dioceſe of Mexico; and in 1741, there remained no more than one hundred and nineteen thouſand ſix hundred and eleven. In the dioceſe of Los Angèles there were two hundred and fifty-five thouſand; and there remained no more than eighty-eight thouſand two hundred and forty. In the dioceſe of Oaxaca

there were a hundred and fifty thouſand; and there remained no more than forty-four thouſand two hundred and twenty-two. We do not know the changes that have happened in the dioceſes of the ſix other churches; but it is probable that they have been the ſame every where.

The cuſtom which prevailed, and ſtill prevails among the Spaniards, Meſtees, Mulattoes, and Negroes, frequently to take wives from among the Indians, while no one female of theſe branches hath ever, or ſcarce ever, choſe huſbands from among them, hath undoubtedly contributed to the diminution of this race: but the effect of this circumſtance muſt have been rather confined; and if we be not deceived, conſequences much more extenſive have been produced by a ſyſtem of permanent tyranny.

It muſt be acknowledged, however, that in proportion as the population of the natives diminiſhed, that of the foreigners increaſed in a very remarkable degree of progreſſion. In 1600, the dioceſe of Mexico reckoned no more than ſeven thouſand of theſe families; and in 1741, their number was raiſed to one hundred and nineteen thouſand five hundred and eleven. The dioceſe of Los Angèles reckoned only four thouſand, and theſe were raiſed to thirty thouſand ſix hundred. The dioceſe of Oaxaca computed only a thouſand; and theſe were raiſed to ſeven thouſand two hundred and ninety-ſix. The ancient inhabitants, however, have been but imperfectly replaced by the new ones. The cultivation of the lands, and the working of the mines, were the ordinary occupation of the Indians. The Spaniards, the Meſtees, the Mulattoes, and even the blacks, have moſt of them diſdained to attend to theſe great objects: ſeveral of them live in a ſtate of idleneſs. A ſtill greater number of them devote a few moments to the arts and to commerce. The reſt are employed in the ſervice of the rich.

It is particularly in the capital of the empire that we are diſguſted with this laſt circumſtance. The in-

BOOK VI. habitants of Mexico, who for ſome time had reaſon to doubt, whether the Caſtilians were a ſet of robbers, or a conquering people, ſaw their capital almoſt totally deſtroyed by the cruel wars that were carried on in it. Cortez ſoon rebuilt it in a ſtyle very ſuperior to that in which it appeared before this cataſtrophe.

The city riſes in the midſt of a great lake, the banks of which exhibit fortunate ſituations, which would be delightful if nature were a little aſſiſted by the efforts of art. Upon the lake itſelf, the eye beholds with ſatisfaction a number of floating iſlands. Theſe are rafts formed by weeds interwoven with each other, and ſufficiently ſolid to bear thick layers of earth, and even dwellings lightly conſtructed. Some Indians live there, and cultivate a plenty of vegetables. Theſe ſingular gardens do not always occupy the ſame ſpace. Their ſituation is changed, when this alteration ſuits the poſſeſſors.

Very wide banks raiſed upon piles lead up to the city. Five or ſix canals convey all the productions of the country to its centre, and in it its moſt beautiful parts. A wholeſome water, which is derived from a mountain at the diſtance only of five or ſix hundred toiſes, is diſtributed in all the houſes, and even to all the different ſtories, by means of aqueducts very well contrived.

The air of this city is very temperate: woollen clothing may be worn there all the year. The leaſt precautions are ſufficient to prevent any inconveniences from the heat. Charles V. aſked a Spaniard, on his arrival from Mexico, how long the interval was there between ſummer and winter? *Juſt as long*, replied he with great truth and wit, *as it takes to paſs out of ſunſhine into the ſhade.*

The advantage which this city hath of being the capital of New Spain, hath ſucceſſively multiplied its inhabitants. In 1777, the number of births amounted to five thouſand nine hundred and fifteen, and that of burials to five thouſand and eleven; from

whence we may conclude, that its population is not much inferior to two hundred thouſand ſouls. All the citizens are not opulent, but ſeveral of them are, perhaps, more ſo than in any other part of the globe. Theſe riches, very rapidly accumulated, ſoon had a remarkable influence. Moſt of the materials, which in other parts were of iron or copper, were here made of ſilver or gold. Theſe brilliant metals were uſed as ornaments for the ſervants, for the horſes, for the moſt common furniture, and employed for the meaneſt purpoſes. The manners, which always follow the courſe of luxury, were raiſed to the ſame romantic train of magnificence. The women, within their houſes, were attended by thouſands of ſlaves, and did not appear in public without a retinue, which amongſt us is reſerved for the majeſty of the throne. To theſe extravagances the men added ſtill greater profuſions, which they laviſhed upon the negro women, whom they raiſed publicly to the rank of their miſtreſſes. The luxury ſo inordinate in the common actions of life, ſurpaſſed all bounds upon occaſion of the leaſt feſtival. The general and prevailing pride was then in commotion, and every individual laviſhed millions to juſtify his own. The crimes neceſſary to ſupport theſe extravagances were previouſly expiated; for ſuperſtition declared every man holy and juſt, who beſtowed large ſums upon the churches.

Every circumſtance bore the mark of an oſtentation hitherto unknown in the two hemiſpheres; the inhabitants were no longer ſatisfied with a decent dwelling, ſituated in wide and even ſtreets. Moſt of them required hotels, the extent of which was ſuperior to either their convenience, or their elegance. Public edifices were multiplied, without recalling to the mind of any man the proſperous days of architecture, or even of the beſt Gothic times. The principal ſquares had all the ſame form, the ſame regularity, and the ſame kind of fountain, with ornaments executed without taſte. Trees that were ill choſen, and of a dirty appearance, deprived the walks of the

BOOK VI.

ornaments which they might have received from avenues well diſtributed, and from water-works. Among the fifty-five convents which had been founded by a ſpirit of credulity worthy of pity, there were very few of them which did not create diſguſt from the faults of their conſtruction. The numberleſs temples, in which the treaſures of the whole globe were heaped up, were generally devoid of majeſty, and were not calculated to inſpire thoſe who frequented them with ideas and ſentiments worthy of the Supreme Being, whom they came to adore. Among this multiplicity of immenſe buildings, there are but two that are worthy of fixing the attention of the traveller. One is the palace of the viceroy, where the tribunals of juſtice are alſo holden, where the coin is ſtricken, and where the quickſilver is depoſited. The people, who were driven to deſpair by famine, burnt it in 1692. It hath been ſince rebuilt upon a better plan. It is a ſquare with four towers, and is ſeven hundred and fifty feet in length, and ſix hundred and ninety in breadth. The cathedral, begun in 1573, and finiſhed in 1667, would equally do honour to the beſt artiſts. It is four hundred feet in length, by one hundred and ninety-five in breadth, and hath coſt 9,460,800 livres [394,200l.]. Unfortunately, theſe edifices are not ſo ſolid as it might be wiſhed they were.

We have ſeen, that Mexico was ſituated upon a conſiderable lake, divided by a narrow ſlip of land into two parts, the one filled with ſweet water, the other with ſalt. Theſe waters appear equally to flow from a high mountain at a ſmall diſtance from the city, but with this difference, that the ſalt waters muſt neceſſarily traverſe ſome mines which communicate this quality to them. But beſide theſe regular ſprings, there exiſt, a little further off, four ſmall lakes, which in tempeſtuous ſeaſons, ſometimes diſcharge themſelves into the great one with deſtructive violence.

The ancient inhabitants of this city had always

been expoſed to inundations, which made them purchaſe, at a very dear rate, the advantages they acquired from the ſituation they had choſen to fix the centre of their power upon. To the calamities inſeparable from theſe too frequent overflowings, the conquerors experienced the additional diſappointment of ſeeing their heavier buildings, though raiſed upon piles, ſink, in a very ſhort time, from four to ſix inches, in a ſoil that had not firmneſs enough to ſupport them.

Attempts were made, at different times, to turn aſide theſe dreadful torrents: but the directors of theſe great works had not ſufficient ſkill to employ the moſt effectual means; nor were the ſubaltern agents ſufficiently zealous to ſupply, by their efforts, the want of capacity in their chiefs.

The engineer Martinès conceived, in 1607, the idea of a great canal, which appeared in general preferable to all the methods purſued before that period. In order to defray the expences of this project, the government required the hundredth part of the value of the houſes, lands, and merchandiſe; a ſpecies of impoſt unknown in the New World. Four hundred and ſeventy-one thouſand one hundred and fifty-four Indians were employed, during ſix years, at this work; and the undertaking was afterwards judged to be impracticable.

The court, wearied with the diverſity of opinions, and the troubles they occaſioned, decreed, in 1631, that Mexico ſhould be abandoned, and that a new capital ſhould be erected on ſome other ſpot. The ſpirit of avarice, which objected to the leaſt ſacrifice; that of libidiouſneſs, which was afraid of having its pleaſures interrupted; and that of indolence, which ſhuddered at the idea of trouble; all the paſſions, in a word, united themſelves to oblige the miniſtry to change their reſolutions; and they prevailed.

Upwards of a century paſſed away before the gogernment attended to the duty of preventing the miſfortunes of which the people were inceſſantly com-

BOOK VI.

plaining. At length their attention was roufed. In 1763, it was refolved to cut a mountain, in which fome excavations only had till that time been made; and the waters have fince had as free a paffage as the public fecurity required. The commercial body have undertaken this great work for the fum of 4,320,000 livres [180,000l.]. They even agreed to pay whatever additional expences this labour might be attended with, and that if there were any favings, they fhould be applied to the profit of the treafury. This generofity hath not been a virtue of mere oftentation. The merchants have expended 1,890,000 livres [78,750l.] in rendering this fervice to their country.

Other works are meditated. The project of drying up the great lake that furrounds Mexico feems to be at a ftand; and perfons of the art require 8,100,000 livres [337,500l.] to complete the new plan in a proper manner. This is a large fum. But what is money, when the bufinefs is to make the air wholefome, to preferve the lives of men, or to increafe provifions? What infinite good would the rulers of the world do, and how much will they be honoured, when the gold which they lavifh in inordinate luxury, upon greedy favourites, or in idle caprices, fhall be confecrated to the improvement of their empire! An airy hofpital, conftructed with fkill and carefully managed; the abolition of beggary, or the employing of indigent perfons; the paying off of the national debt; a moderate tax, diftributed with equity; the reformation of the laws, by the compofition of a clear and fimple code; fuch inftitutions would raife their glory to a higher pitch than magnificent palaces; than the conqueft of a province, after a number of victories; than all the bronzes, all the marbles, and all the infcriptions of flattery.

If the court of Madrid, who have the greateft reafon to entertain fuch hopes, fhould do for Mexico what they have propofed, they will foon fee this famous city become the feat of government, the place

of the mint, the residence of the most extensive proprietors, the centre of all important affairs; they will behold it soaring to a still greater height, communicating to the provinces under its dependence the impulse it shall have received, giving energy to industry, increasing internal circulation, and, by a necessary consequence, extending and multiplying its foreign connections.

Connections of Mexico with the Philippines.

That which Mexico hath formed with the Philippines, is the most notorious of all those it maintains through the channel of the South Sea.

When the court of Madrid, whose ambition increased with their prosperity, had conceived the plan of forming a great establishment in Asia, their attention was seriously engaged in considering of expedients to ensure it success. This project was necessarily attended with great difficulties. The riches of America so powerfully attracted the Spaniards, who consented to a voluntary exile, that it did not appear possible to engage even the most wretched of them to settle at the Philippines, unless it were agreed to give them a share in the treasures of those islands. This sacrifice was resolved upon. The rising colony was authorised to send every year into America India goods, in exchange for metals.

This unrestrained freedom was attended with such important consequences, that the jealousy of the mother-country was excited. Tranquillity was in some measure restored, by restraining a commerce, which was thought to be, and which really was, immense. The trade that was to be allowed in future, was divided into twelve thousand equal shares. Every head of a family was to have one, and persons in office a number proportioned to their rank. Religious communities were included in this arrangement, according to the extent of their credit, and the opinion that was entertained of their utility.

The vessels which set out at first from the island of Cebu, and afterwards from the island of Luconia, originally took the route of Peru. The length of this

BOOK VI.

voyage was prodigious. Trade-winds were diſcovered, which opened a much ſhorter paſſage to Mexico; this branch of commerce was tranſacted on its coaſt, where it was ſettled.

A veſſel of about two thouſand ton burden is diſpatched every year from the port of Manilla. According to the laws at preſent in force, and which have frequently been varied, this ſhip ought not to carry more than four thouſand bales of merchandiſe, and yet it is laden with at leaſt double that quantity. The expences of building, of fitting out, and of the voyage, which are always infinitely more conſiderable than they ought to be, are ſupported by the government, which receives no other indemnification than 75,000 piaſtres or 405,000 livres [16,875l.] per veſſel.

The departure of it is fixed for the month of July. After having cleared a multitude of iſlands and rocks, which are always troubleſome, and ſometimes dangerous, the galleon ſteers northward as far as the thirtieth degree of latitude. There the trade-winds begin to blow, which convey it to the place of its deſtination. It is generally thought, that if it proceeded further, it would meet with ſtronger and more regular winds, which would haſten its courſe: but the commanders are forbidden, under the heavieſt penalties, to go out of the track that hath been marked out to them.

This is undoubtedly the reaſon that hath prevented the Spaniards, during the courſe of two centuries, from making the leaſt diſcovery upon an ocean, which would have offered ſo many objects of inſtruction and advantage to more enlightened and leſs circumſpect nations. The voyage laſts ſix months, becauſe the veſſel is over-ſtocked with men and merchandiſe, and that all thoſe that are on board are a ſet of timid navigators, who never make but little way during the night-time, and often, though without neceſſity, make none at all.

The port of Acapulco, where the veſſel arrives, hath two inlets, ſeparated from each other by a ſmall

iſland: the entrance into them in the day is by means of a ſea-breeze, and the ſailing out in the night-time is effected by a land-breeze. It is defended only by a bad fort, fifty ſoldiers, forty-two pieces of cannon, and thirty-two of the corps of artillery. It is equally extenſive, ſafe, and commodious. The baſon which forms this beautiful harbour is ſurrounded by lofty mountains, which are ſo dry, that they are even deſtitute of water. Four hundred families of Chineſe, Mulattoes, and Negroes, which compoſe three companies of militia, are the only perſons accuſtomed to breathe the air of this place, which is burning, heavy, and unwholeſome. The number of inhabitants in this feeble and miſerable colony is conſiderably increaſed upon the arrival of the galleons, by the merchants from all the provinces of Mexico, who come to exchange their ſilver and their cochineal, for the ſpices, muſlins, china, printed linens, ſilks, perfumes, and gold works of Aſia.

At this market, the fraud impudently begun in the Old World, is as impudently completed in the New. The ſtatutes have limited the ſale to 2,700,000 livres [112,500l.], and it exceeds 10,800,000 livres [400,000l.]. All the money produced by theſe exchanges ſhould give ten *per cent.* to the government: but they are deprived of three-fourths of the revenue which they ought to collect from their cuſtoms, by falſe entries.

After ſtaying here about three months, the galleon reſumes its courſe to the Philippine iſlands, with a few companies of infantry, deſtined to recruit the garriſon of Manilla. This veſſel hath been intercepted in its paſſage three times by the Engliſh. It was taken in 1587 by Cavendiſh, in 1709 by Rogers, and in 1742 by Anſon. The leaſt part of the riches with which it is laden remains in the colony; the reſt is diſtributed among the nations which had contributed to form its cargo.

The long paſſage which the galleons had to make, had made it a deſirable thing to have a port where

BOOK VI.

they might refit and take in refreſhments. Such a port was found on the road from Acapulco to the Philippines, in an Archipelago known by the name of the Marianne iſlands.

Deſcription of the Marianne iſlands. Singularities that have been obſerved in them.

Theſe iſlands form a chain which extends from the 13th to the 22d degree. Several of them are nothing more than rocks: but there are nine of them which are of ſome extent. There it is that nature, in all her richneſs and beauty, diſplays a perpetual verdure; abounds in flowers of an exquiſite odour, in waters as clear as cryſtal, falling into caſcades; in trees loaded with flowers and fruits at the ſame time, and in pictureſque ſituations which art will never imitate.

In this Archipelago, which is ſituated under the torrid zone, the air is pure, the ſky ſerene, and the climate temperate.

It was formerly inhabitated by numbers of people, the origin of whom nothing remains to indicate. They were undoubtedly thrown on theſe coaſts by ſome ſtorm; but this event muſt have happened ſo long ago, that they had forgotten their origin, and thought themſelves the only inhabitants of the globe.

Some cuſtoms, moſt of them ſimilar to thoſe of the other ſavages of the South Sea, ſerve them inſtead of a form of worſhip, of a code of laws, and of a ſyſtem of government. They paſſed their days in perpetual indolence; and it was to the bananas, to the cocoa-nuts, and eſpecially to the rima, that they owed this misfortune or advantage.

The rima, mentioned by ſome travellers under the name of the bread-tree, is not yet well known to the botaniſts. It is a tree, the ſtem of which, that is high and ſtraight, is divided towards its top into ſeveral branches. Its leaves are alternate, large, firm, thick, and deeply ſinuated towards their lateral edges. The youngeſt of them, before they unfold themſelves, are encloſed in a membrane which dries up, and when it falls, leaves a circular impreſſion round the ſtem. They yield, as well as the other parts of the tree, a

very viſcous, milky fluid. From the axilla of the ſuperior leaves, a ſpongy ſubſtance is produced, ſix inches in length, and covered all over with male flowers, very cloſe to each other. Lower down, other ſubſtances are found, loaded with female flowers, the piſtil of which becomes an elongated berry filled with a kernel. Theſe berries, which are ſupported upon one common axis, are ſo cloſe to each other, that they are confounded, and form, by their aſſemblage, a very large fruit, ten inches in length, and beſet with thick, ſhort, and blunted points. It appears that there are two ſpecies or varieties of the rima. The fruit of one of them is pulpy on the inſide, and full of kernels, which are good for eating, and which have the figure and taſte of the cheſnut. The fruit of the other ſpecies is ſmaller: it hath no kernels, becauſe theſe come to nothing when it is perfectly ripe. The pulp of it is ſoft, ſweetiſh, and unwholeſome. But when it is gathered a little before it is ripe, it hath the taſte of the artichoke, and is eaten as bread, from whence it hath been called the Bread Fruit. Thoſe who wiſh to keep it one or more years, cut it into ſlices, and dry it in the oven, or in the ſun.

There are three things which appear worthy of remark in the hiſtory of the Marianne iſlands.

The uſe of fire was totally unknown there. None of thoſe terrible volcanoes, the deſtructive traces of which are indelibly marked on the face of the globe; none of thoſe celeſtial phenomena which frequently light up devouring and unexpected flames in all climates; none of thoſe fortunate occurrences, which, by friction or colliſion, extract brilliant ſparks from ſuch a number of bodies: nothing, in a word, had given the peaceable inhabitants of the Marianne iſlands the leaſt idea of an element ſo familiar to other nations. It was neceſſary that the reſentment of the firſt Spaniards that arrived upon theſe ſavage coaſts, ſhould burn ſome hundreds of their huts, in order to make them acquainted with it.

This uſe of fire was little calculated to give them

a favourable idea of it, or to make them wish to see it appear again. Accordingly, they took it for an animal which fixed itself to the wood, and fed upon it. Those whom their ignorance of so new an object had induced to come near it, having burnt themselves, their cries inspired the rest with terror, so that they did not dare to look at it but at a great distance. They dreaded the bite of this wild beast, whom they thought capable of wounding them by the mere violence of its respiration. They recovered, however, by degrees from the consternation with which they had been seized: their mistake was gradually removed, and they at length accustomed themselves to the use of this valuable advantage, of which all other known people had been in possession from time immemorial.

Another circumstance worthy of attention is the superiority which the weaker sex had assumed over the stronger in the Marianne islands. Such was their ascendant, that the women there enjoyed unlimited power in their families; that nothing could be parted without their consent, and that they had the free disposal of every thing; that in no instance, even that of infidelity publicly acknowledged, it was permitted to be wanting in the attentions that were due to them; that how little soever they themselves might judge their husbands to be deficient in mildness, complaisance, and submission, they were at liberty to make a new choice; and that if they thought themselves betrayed, they might pillage the hut, and cut down the trees of the traitor, or make their relations, or companions, commit the same havock.

But how could such strange customs have been established, and have taken root? If we credit ancient or modern accounts, the men of this Archipelago were black, ugly, and deformed; they had most of them a disgusting cutaneous disease, notwithstanding the daily use of the bath. The women, on the contrary, had a tolerably clear complexion, regular features, an easy air, some graces, and a taste for singing and dancing. It is not therefore surprising

that with all theſe means of pleaſing, they ſhould have acquired an abſolute empire, which cannot be ſhaken. It is truly extraordinary, that there ſhould have been any countries, and eſpecially ſavage regions, where a difference ſo marked hath been found between the two ſexes. The unanimity of hiſtorians upon this point, will probably never ſilence the doubts that naturally ariſe in the mind from ſo improbable an account.

The united teſtimonies of any number of writers, cannot prevail againſt a well-known, general, and conſtant law of nature. We know, that in every part, except at the Marianne iſlands, the woman has been found, as ſhe ought to be, ſubject to the man. In order to induce me to believe this exception, it muſt be ſupported by another; which is, that in this region, the women were ſuperior to the men, not only in underſtanding, but even in bodily ſtrength. If I be not aſſured of one of theſe facts, I ſhall deny the other; unleſs, however, ſome ſuperſtitious tenet have rendered their perſons ſacred. For there is nothing which ſuperſtition doth not alter, no cuſtom, however monſtrous, which it doth not eſtabliſh, no crimes to which it doth not lead, no ſacrifices which it doth not obtain. If ſuperſtition, at the Marianne iſlands, declares to man, It is the will of God that thou ſhouldſt cringe before woman; he will not fail to cringe to her. Beauty, talents, and wit, in all countries of the world, whether ſavage or civilized, will induce a man to throw himſelf at the feet of a woman: but theſe advantages peculiar to ſome women, cannot eſtabliſh in any part a general ſyſtem, of the tyranny of the weaker ſex over the ſtronger. The man commands the woman, even in thoſe countries where the woman commands the nation. The phenomenon, at the Marianne iſlands, would be in the ſyſtem of morality, the ſame as the equilibrium of two unequal weights, ſuſpended to levers of equal length, would be in the ſyſtem of philoſophy. No kind of authority ought to induce us to believe an

BOOK VI.

absurdity. But it may be urged, that the women may have deserved this authority on account of some important services, the memory of which may have been lost. Supposing this to be the case, the men would soon have forgotten the gratitude they might have shown in the first instance.

The third remarkable thing in the Marianne islands, was a *pross*, or canoe, the singular form of which hath always attracted the attention of most enlightened navigators.

These people resided in islands separated from each other by considerable distances. Although they had neither the means nor the desire of making exchanges, yet they wished to communicate with each other. They succeeded in this design with the assistance of a vessel, entirely safe, though very small: a vessel fit for every naval evolution, notwithstanding the simplicity of its construction; and so easily managed, that three men were sufficient for all the manœuvres; a vessel, which received the winds sideways, a circumstance absolutely necessary in these latitudes; which had the unparalleled advantage of going and returning, without ever tacking about, and merely by shifting the sail; a vessel, in a word, so expeditious, that it ran twelve or fifteen knots in less than an hour, and that it sometimes went faster than the wind. All connoisseurs acknowledge, that this *pross*, which is called *flying*, on account of its lightness, is the most perfect kind of boat that hath ever been contrived; and the invention of it cannot be disputed with the inhabitants of the Marianne islands, since the model of it hath never been found in any sea in the world. If it were reasonable to decide upon the genius of a nation, from one single distinct art, we could not avoid having the greatest opinion of these savages, who, with coarse utensils, and without the assistance of iron, have obtained effects at sea, which the most enlightened people have not been able to procure to themselves from a multiplicity of contrivances. But in order to determine with judgment on this matter,

it would require other proofs than a ſingle talent, which chance may have ſupplied; and theſe proofs are not to be found in any hiſtory.

The Marianne iſlands were diſcovered in 1521 by Magellan. This celebrated navigator called them the Ladrone Iſlands, becauſe their ſavage inhabitants, who had not the leaſt idea of the right of property, which is unknown in a ſtate of nature, ſtole from on board their ſhips ſome trifles which tempted their curioſity. The Spaniards neglected, for a long time, to fix themſelves in this Archipelago, where there were none of thoſe rich mines that excited their cupidity. It was only in 1668, that the ſhips which ſtopped there, from time to time, in their paſſage from Mexico to the Eaſt Indies, landed a few miſſionaries on theſe iſlands. Ten years after this, the court of Madrid thought that they did not gain a ſufficient number of ſubjects by the means of perſuaſion; and they ſupported the ſermons of their miſſionaries with a military force.

Savages, living by themſelves, and guided by a wild inſtinct; to whom the bow and the arrow were even unknown, and whoſe only weapon of defence was a large ſtick: ſuch ſavages could not reſiſt the European arms and troops. Nevertheleſs, moſt of them ſuffered themſelves to be put to death rather than they would ſubmit. A great number of them were the victims of the diſgraceful maladies which their inhuman conquerors had introduced among them. Thoſe who had eſcaped all theſe diſaſters, took the deſperate reſolution of making their wives miſcarry, in order that they might not leave behind them a progeny of ſlaves. The population decreaſed, throughout the whole Archipelago, to ſuch a degree, that it became neceſſary, five-and-twenty or thirty years ago, to unite the feeble remains of them in the ſingle iſland of Guam.

This iſland is forty leagues in circumference. Its harbour, ſituated in the weſtern part, and defended by a battery of eight guns, is formed on one ſide by

BOOK VI. a ſlip of land which advances two leagues into the ſea, and on the other by a ſhoal of the ſame extent, which ſurrounds it almoſt circularly. Four ſhips may anchor here, ſheltered from all winds except the weſtern, which never blows hard in theſe latitudes.

At the diſtance of four leagues from this harbour, upon the borders of the ſea, and in a fortunate poſition, the agreeable town of Agana is ſituated. In this chief place of the colony, and in twenty-one ſmall hamlets ſcattered around the iſland, fifteen hundred inhabitants are diſtributed, the unfortunate remains of a population formerly numerous.

The interior part of Guam ſerves as an aſylum and a paſturage for the goats, hogs, oxen, and poultry, which the Spaniards brought there at the time of the conqueſt, and which have ſince become wild. Theſe animals, which muſt either be ſhot or caught in a trap, were the principal food of the Indians and of their oppreſſors, when the face of things was ſuddenly changed.

An active, humane, and enlightened man hath at length underſtood, that population would not be reſtored, but that it would even ſtill continue decreaſing, unleſs he could ſucceed in introducing agriculture into his iſland. This elevated idea hath induced him to become himſelf a cultivator. Stimulated by his example, the natives of the country have cleared thoſe lands, the property of which he had promiſed them. Theſe fields have been covered with rice, cacao, maize, ſugar, indigo, cotton, fruits, and vegetables; the uſe of which, they had been ſuffered to remain ignorant of during one or two centuries; their ſucceſs hath increaſed their docility. Theſe children of rude nature, in whom tyranny and ſuperſtition had completed the degradation of the human ſpecies, have followed in the workſhops ſome arts of primary neceſſity; and have frequented, without any evident ſigns of reluctance, the ſchools that have been opened for their inſtruction. Their enjoyments have increaſed with their occupations; and they have

at length experienced happineſs in one of the fineſt countries in the world: ſo true it is that every thing may be accompliſhed by mildneſs and benevolence, ſince theſe virtues are capable of extinguiſhing reſentment even in the mind of a ſavage. BOOK VI.

This unexpected revolution hath been brought about by M. Tobias; who, in 1772, ſtill governed the Marianne iſlands. May this virtuous and reſpectable Spaniard one day obtain what would complete his happineſs, the conſolation of ſeeing his favourite children forego their paſſion for the cocoa-tree wine, and their turn for labour increaſe!

If the Spaniards, from the beginning, had been inſpired with the reaſonable views of the prudent Tobias, the Marianne iſlands would have been civilized and cultivated. This double advantage would have procured to this Archipelago a ſecurity which it cannot expect from a garriſon of an hundred and fifty men, concentrated in Guam.

The conquerors, quiet in their poſſeſſions, would then have devoted themſelves to their paſſion for new diſcoveries, which were at that time the prevailing turn of the nation. Aſſiſted by the genius of their new ſubjects for navigation, their activity would have conveyed the uſeful arts, and the ſpirit of ſociety, into the numerous iſlands that cover the Pacific Ocean, and ſtill beyond them. The univerſe would have been enlarged, as it were, by ſuch glorious labours. All commercial nations would undoubtedly have derived, in proceſs of time, ſome advantage from connections formed with theſe regions, which were before unknown: ſince it is impoſſible that one nation ſhould enrich itſelf, and that others ſhould not partake of its proſperity; but the court of Madrid would have enjoyed ſooner, and more conſtantly, the productions of theſe new eſtabliſhments. If we do not miſtake, this arrangement of matters would have been more advantageous to Spain, than that which confines the Marianne iſlands to the furniſhing of refreſhments for the galleons returning from Mexico

BOOK VI.

to the Phillipines, as California is deſtined to ſupply them to thoſe which go from the Phillipines to Mexico.

Ancient and modern ſtate of California.

California is properly a long neck of land, which proceeds from the northern coaſts of America, and runs along between eaſt and ſouth as far as the torrid zone: it is waſhed on each ſide by the Pacific Ocean. The part that is known of this peninſula is three hundred leagues long, and ten, twenty, thirty, or forty broad.

It is impoſſible that, throughout ſuch an extent of country, the nature of the ſoil and the temperature of the air ſhould be every where the ſame. It may be ſaid, however, that, in general, the climate here is dry and exceſſively hot; the ground bare, ſtony, mountainous, ſandy, and conſequently barren, and unfit for agriculture and for the breeding of cattle. Amidſt the ſmall number of trees that are found here, the moſt uſeful is the pitahaya, the produce of which conſtitutes the principal food of the Californians. This tree is a ſpecies of the *Cereus Peruvianus*, which, like the reſt of the ſame claſs, hath no leaves. Its ſtems, which are ſtraight and fluted, have their ſides full of prickles, and furniſh an immediate ſupport to ſome whitiſh flowers, ſimilar to thoſe of the nopal on which the cochineal lives, but much longer. The fruits which ſucceed theſe flowers have inequalities upon their ſurface, which are produced by the remaining baſis of the ſcales of the calix. They are of the ſize of a hen's egg, red on the outſide, and filled in the inſide with a white pulp fit for eating, and ſweeter and more delicate than the ordinary fig. In the midſt of this pulp are found ſome ſmall, black, and ſhining ſeeds.

The ſea, which is richer than the land, ſwarms with moſt excellent fiſh of every kind. But the circumſtance which renders the Gulf of California of more importance is the pearls, which, in the fiſhing-ſeaſon, draw there, from the ſeveral provinces of Mexico, a ſet of greedy men, who have been ſubject-

ed to the tax of giving the fifth part of their fishery to government.

The Californians are well made, and very strong. They are extremely pusillanimous, inconstant, indolent, stupid, and even insensible. They are children, in whom reason is not yet unfolded. They are more swarthy than the Mexicans. This difference of colour proves that the civilized state of society subverts or totally changes the order and laws of nature, since we find under the temperate zone a savage people, that are blacker than the civilized nations of the torrid zone.

Before the Europeans had penetrated into California, the natives had no form of religion; and that of their government was such as might be expected from their ignorance. Each nation was an assemblage of several cottages, more or less numerous, that were all mutually confederated by alliances, but without any chief. They were strangers even to filial obedience, although this sentiment be, if not more lively, at least more pure, in the state of nature than in that of society.

In reality, the helps which a regular system of police assures to all individuals among civilized nations, the young savages expect only from their father. It is he who provides for their subsistence when they are children, and who watches for their safety. How is it possible that they should not have recourse to his benevolence? How should they not avoid, with care, what might deprive them of his support?

Respect, which is not exacted, can scarce be diminished in children, who constantly return, impelled by habit still more than by want, to the cottage in which they were born, and from which they never wander to any distance. The separations which education, industry, and trade, so frequently occasion amongst us, and which cannot but loosen the ties of kindred, are unknown among the savages. They remain with the person to whom they owe their existence, as long as he lives. It is not possible, therefore,

BOOK VI. that they ſhould deviate from obedience. They receive no imperious orders. There is no being more free than the little ſavage. He is born in a ſtate of liberty. He goes and comes, walks out and returns, and even ſleeps from home, without ever being aſked what he hath been doing, or what hath been become of him. The idea of exerting family authority, in order to bring him back, if he ſhould chooſe to diſappear, would never be ſuggeſted. Nothing is ſo common in cities as bad fathers; but there are none to be found amidſt the foreſts. The more ſocieties increaſe in opulence and luxury, the leſs are the claims of conſanguinity attended to. We may even venture to ſay, that the ſeverity, variety, and long continuance of our ſyſtem of education; that all theſe ſeveral fatigues contribute to alienate the affection of our children for us. Nothing but experience can reconcile them to us. We are obliged to wait a long time before our cares are returned with gratitude, and our reprimands are forgotten. The ſavage hath never heard any of theſe from the mouth of his parents. He was never chaſtiſed by them. When he knew how to ſtrike the animal on whom he was to feed, he had ſcarce any thing more to learn. His paſſions being natural, he can ſatisfy them without dreading the ſeverity of his parents; while there are numberleſs motives which oblige our parents to counteract our propenſities. Can it be ſuppoſed that there is not one child among us, who, impelled by the deſire of enjoying ſpeedily a large fortune, does not think that his father lives too long? We wiſh we could perſuade ourſelves that there were not. The heart of the ſavage, to whom his father hath nothing to leave, is a ſtranger to this kind of parricide.

In our families, children are apt to think that their aged parents talk at random; but it is not the ſame in the hut of the ſavage. There is very little talking in it, and a high opinion is entertained of the wiſdom of parents. Their inſtructions ſupply the deficiency of obſervation reſpecting the craft of animals, the

woods which contain game, the coaſts abounding in fiſh, and the ſeaſons and times proper for hunting and fiſhing. If the old man ſhould relate any particularities of his wars or of this travels; if he ſhould recal the memory of the battles he hath been engaged in, or of the ſnares he hath eſcaped; if he ſhould elevate his mind to explain to his children ſome of the moſt ſimple phenomena of nature; if, on a ſtar-light night, ſtanding at the entrance of his hut, he ſhould trace out to them, with his finger, the courſe of the conſtellations that glitter over their heads, according to the limited knowledge he hath of them: all theſe circumſtances will excite their admiration of him. Should a ſtorm come on, ſhould any revolution happen upon the earth, in the air, or in the waters, or ſhould any agreeable or diſtreſſing event take place, all the children exclaim, our father foretold it to us; and their ſubmiſſion to his counſels, as well as their veneration for his perſon, is increaſed. When he is drawing near to his laſt moments, anxiety and grief are painted in their countenances, their tears flow at his death, and a long-continued ſilence prevails around his bed. He is laid in the earth, and his burial-place is ſacred. Annual honours are paid to his aſhes; and, in important or doubtful circumſtances, they are ſometimes conſulted. Children, alas! among ourſelves are devoted to ſo many diſſipations, that their fathers are ſoon forgotten by them. It is not, however, that I prefer a ſavage to a civilized ſtate. This is a proteſtation I have made more than once. But the more I reflect upon this point, the more it ſeems to me, that from the moſt rude to the moſt civilized ſtate of nature, every thing is nearly compenſated, virtues and vices, natural good and evil. In the foreſt, as well as in ſociety, the happineſs of one individual may be leſs or greater than that of another: but I imagine that nature hath ſet certain bounds to the felicity of every conſiderable portion of the human ſpecies, beyond which we have nearly as much to loſe as to gain.

BOOK VI.

BOOK VI.

Mexico had no ſooner been pacified, than Cortez conceived the project of adding California to his conqueſts. He undertook this expedition himſelf, in 1526; but it was not a ſucceſsful one. Thoſe which were afterwards undertaken in rapid ſucceſſion to each other, during the courſe of two centuries, were not more fortunate; whether the expences of them were ſupported by individuals or by the government: this continuance of adverſe fortune may be accounted for.

The cuſtom of taking views, tracing plans, or charts, of the places that were viſited, was not then very common. If ſome adventurer, more intelligent, or more laborious than his companions, wrote an account of his voyage, it was ſeldom depoſited in the public regiſters; and if it were, it was buried in the duſt and forgotten. The printing of it would have remedied this inconvenience; but the fear of making foreigners acquainted with what it was impoſſible to conceal from them, occaſioned this mode of communication to be rejected. Thus it was, that the people gained no experience. Abſurdities were perpetuated; and the laſt commanders who undertook theſe expeditions, miſcarried by the ſame faults that had prevented the ſucceſs of the former.

The conqueſt of California had been entirely given up, when the Jeſuits, in 1697, ſolicited permiſſion to undertake it. As ſoon as they had obtained the conſent of government, they began to execute a plan of legiſlation, which they had formed from accurate ideas of the nature of the ſoil, the character of the inhabitants, and the influence of the climate. Their proceedings were not directed by fanaticiſm. They arrived among the ſavages whom they intended to civilize, with curioſities that might amuſe them; with corn for their food, and with apparel calculated to pleaſe them. The hatred theſe people bore to the Spaniſh name could not ſupport itſelf againſt theſe demonſtrations of benevolence. They teſtified their acknowledgments as much as their want of ſenſibility

and their inconſtancy would permit them, Theſe faults were partly overcome by the religious inſtitutors, who purſued their project with a degree of warmth and aſſiduity peculiar to their ſociety. They made themſelves carpenters, maſons, weavers, and huſbandmen; and by theſe means ſucceeded in imparting knowledge, and, in ſome meaſure, a taſte for the moſt uſeful arts, to this ſavage people, who have been all ſucceſſively formed into one body. In 1745, they compoſed forty-three villages, that were ſeparated from each other by the barrenneſs of the ſoil, and the want of water.

The inhabitants of theſe ſmall villages ſubſiſt principally on corn and pulſe, which they cultivate, and on the fruits and domeſtic animals of Europe, the breeding of which is an object of continual attention. The Indians have each their field, and the property of what they reap; but ſuch is their want of foreſight, that they would ſquander in a day what they had gathered, if the miſſionary did not take upon himſelf to diſtribute it to them as they ſtand in need of it. They already manufacture ſome coarſe ſtuffs. The neceſſaries they are in want of are purchaſed with pearls, which they fiſh in the gulf, and with wine nearly reſembling that of Madeira, which they ſell to New Spain and to the galleons; and the uſe of which, experience hath ſhown, it is neceſſary to prohibit among them.

A few laws, that are very ſimple, are ſufficient to regulate this riſing ſtate. In order to enforce the obſervance of them, the miſſionary chooſes the moſt intelligent perſon of the village; who is empowered to whip and impriſon; the only puniſhments of which they have any knowledge.

So many cruel and deſtructive ſcenes have hitherto diſtreſſed our minds, that we may be permitted to ſtop for a moment in conſidering labours that were inſpired by humanity, and directed by benevolence: all other conqueſts had been made by force of arms.

BOOK VI.

We have ſeen nothing but men deſtroying or loading each other with chains. The regions we have gone over, have ſucceſſively preſented to us ſo many ſcenes of perfidy, of ferocioufneſs, of treachery, of avarice, and of all the crimes to which man is ſtimulated by the combination and violence of the moſt inordinate paſſions. The traces of our pen have been conſtantly marked with blood. The region we are now entered upon, is the only one which hath been ſubdued by reaſon. Let us repoſe ourſelves, and take breath. Let the picture of innocence and peace diſſipate the gloomy ideas with which we have hitherto been aſſailed, and relieve us for a moment from thoſe painful ſenſations with which our heart hath ſo conſtantly been oppreſſed, agonized, and torn. Alas! the new ſenſations I experience will laſt too ſhort a time to excite envy. Thoſe great cataſtrophes which ſubvert the globe, and the deſcription of which is pleaſing to all readers, from the violence of the ſhocks they receive from them, and from the tears, partly delicious, and partly bitter, which they draw from their eyes, will ſoon fully the remainder of theſe deplorable annals. Readers, are ye wicked, or are ye good? If ye were good, ye would not, it ſhould ſeem, liſten to the recital of theſe calamities; if ye are wicked, ye would hear them without ſhedding a tear. Yet, I perceive your eyes are overflowing. Ye pant after happineſs, and yet misfortune alone can awaken your attention. The reaſon of it is plain. The afflictions of others afford you comfort in your own, and your ſelf-eſtimation is increaſed by the compaſſion you beſtow upon them.

In all California there are only two garriſons, each conſiſting of thirty men, and a ſoldier with every miſſionary. Theſe troops were choſen by the legiſlators, and were under their orders, though they were paid by the government. The court of Madrid ſaw no inconvenience in leaving theſe trifling forces in the hands of thoſe who had acquired their confidence;

and they have been convinced, that this was the only expedient to preſerve their new conqueſts from a ſyſtem of oppreſſion totally deſtructive.

Such was the ſtate of affairs, when, in 1767, the court of Madrid expelled the Jeſuits from California, as they did from all the other provinces. Theſe miſſionaries had formed the project of carrying on their labours upon the two ſhores of the ſea, as far as the chain of mountains which connects California with New Spain. They wiſhed to raiſe the empire, the ſubjects of which they were increaſing, to a degree of power, that might allow them to behold with tranquillity the voyages of the Ruſſians, and the diſcovery of the North-weſt paſſage, which the Engliſh have been in ſearch of for ſo long a time. Far from abandoning theſe great projects, it is ſaid that the Spaniſh miniſtry hath extended them ſtill further. It will not even be long before the inhabitants of the two hemiſpheres will ſee them carried into execution, unleſs ſome unſurmountable obſtacles, proceeding from unexpected events, ſhould counteract their plans.

But till theſe vaſt ſpeculations ſhall either be annihilated or realiſed, California ſerves for a port of refreſhment for ſhips that ſail from the Philippine iſlands to Mexico. Cape St. Lucas, ſituated at the ſouthern extremity of the peninſula, is the place where they touch. There they find a good harbour, refreſhments, and ſignals, which give them information of the appearance of any enemy in theſe latitudes, which are the moſt dangerous for them. It was in 1734 that the galleon arrived there for the firſt time; where it hath ever ſince been ordered, or compelled by neceſſity, to ſtop.

The ſyſtem, adopted by all the ſtates of Europe, of holding colonies in the moſt abſolute dependence on the mother-country, hath always rendered the connections of Mexico with Aſia ſuſpicious to ſeveral of the Spaniſh politicians. Far from agreeing with them in opinion, Alberoni wiſhed to give an unlimited extenſion to the freedom of theſe connections. It

BOOK VI. appeared to him a very wiſe plan, that the Eaſt Indies ſhould clothe the two continents of America. It was his idea, that the coloniſts would be dreſſed more to their taſte, at a cheaper rate, and in a manner more ſuitable to the climate. In times of the European wars they would not be expoſed, as they frequently had been, to the want of the moſt common and neceſſary articles of life. They would be richer, more attached to the mother-country, and better able to defend themſelves againſt the enemies it might draw upon them. Theſe enemies themſelves would be leſs formidable, becauſe they would gradually loſe the ſtrength which they acquire from furniſhing Mexico and Peru with proviſions. Spain, in a word, by collecting from the merchandiſe of India the ſame duties which it receives from thoſe that are furniſhed by its rivals, would loſe no part of its revenue. It might even, upon emergencies, obtain from its colonies ſuccours, which, at preſent, they have neither the will nor the power to ſupply.

The views of this bold and enterpriſing miniſter were extended ſtill further. He wiſhed that the mother-country itſelf ſhould form immenſe connections with the Eaſt, through the medium of its American colonies. According to him, the Philippines, which had hitherto paid an enormous tribute to the induſtry of the European or Aſiatic nations, that furniſhed them with manufactures, or productions, might ſend their inhabitants in ſearch of them, upon their own ſhips, and obtain them at firſt hand. By giving the ſame quantity of metals as their competitors, they would purchaſe at a cheaper rate, becauſe theſe metals, coming directly from America, would not have incurred ſo much expence, as thoſe which are conveyed into our regions, before they go to India. The merchandiſe embarked at Manilla, would arrive at Panama, upon an ocean perpetually calm, in a very ſtraight line, and with the ſame winds. By means of a very ſhort canal, which hath been ſolicited a long time by the merchants, the cargoes would afterwards

be easily conveyed to the mouth of the Chagre, where they would be embarked for Europe.

Alberoni was well aware, that those powers, whose interests this arrangement would prejudice, and whose trade it would ruin, would endeavour to obstruct it; but he thought himself in a condition to bid defiance to their resentment in the European seas, and he had already given orders for putting the coasts and harbours of the South Sea in a state not to fear the efforts of any feeble squadrons that might attack them.

These views were approved of by some. Those who were enthusiasts in favour of Alberoni, and there were many of them, conceived them to be the sublime efforts of a powerful genius, for the prosperity and glory of a monarchy, which he was endeavouring to restore to its former splendour. Others, and these were the greater number, considered these projects, so great in appearance, merely as the ravings of a disordered imagination, which exaggerated the resources of a ruined state, and which flattered itself that it should give the commerce of the whole world to a nation reduced, for two centuries past, to the impossibility of carrying on its own. The disgrace of this extraordinary man quieted the ferment which he had raised in the two hemispheres. The connections of the Philippines with Mexico continued upon the former footing, as well as those which this great province maintained with Peru by the South Sea.

Communication of Mexico with Peru and with Spain by means of Guatimala.

The coasts of Mexico do not resemble those of Peru, where the vicinity and height of the Cordeleras entertain a perpetual spring, and keep up regular and mild winds. As soon as the line is crossed, at the height of Panama, the free communication of the atmosphere from East to West being no longer interrupted by that prodigious chain of mountains, the climate becomes different. The navigation, indeed, is easy and safe in these latitudes from the middle of October to the end of May: but during the rest of the year, the calms and storms which alternately prevail, render the sea troublesome and dangerous.

The coaſt which borders this ocean, hath an extent of ſix hundred leagues. Formerly, not one trading veſſel, nor fiſhing ſmack, was known to come out of the ports which nature hath formed there. This inactivity was partly owing to the indolence of the people: but the fatal arrangements made by the court of Madrid, had contributed ſtill more to produce it.

When the empire of the Incas, and that of Montezuma, firſt became provinces of Spain, the communication between them by the South Sea was open and uncontrouled. Some time after this, it was reſtrained to two ſhips; and in 1636 it was entirely prohibited. Urgent and repeated repreſentations determined the government to open it again at the end of half a century, but with reſtrictions that rendered it of no effect. It was not till 1774, that North and South America were allowed to make all the exchanges which their mutual intereſt might require. The ſeveral parts of the two regions will undoubtedly derive great advantages from this new arrangement of things. It may however be foretold, that it will be more ſerviceable to Guatimala than to any other country.

This audience extends its important juriſdiction over twelve leagues to the Weſt, ſixty to the Eaſt, a hundred to the North, and three hundred to the South: it is formed by ſeven or eight provinces.

That of Coſta Ricca is very thinly peopled, but little cultivated, and ſcarce affords any thing except cattle. A great part of the ancient inhabitants have hitherto refuſed to ſubmit to the yoke.

Nicaragua is regularly diſtreſſed every year with a ſix month's rain, which falls down in torrents, and a ſix month's devouring drought. The inhabitants are ſome of the moſt effeminate men of New Spain, though among the leaſt opulent.

The Caſtilians have exerciſed more cruelties at Honduras than at any other place. They made a deſert of it, and accordingly they get nothing from it, except a little caſſia, and ſome ſarſaparilla.

Vera-Pas uſed to furniſh the old Mexico with thoſe bright plumages, of which thoſe pictures, that have been extolled for ſo long a time, were compoſed. This province hath loſt all its importance, ſince this kind of trade hath been given up.

Soconuſco is known only by the perfection of its cacoa. The greateſt part of this fruit ſupplies America itſelf. The two hundred quintals that are brought to Europe belong to government. If there be a greater quantity than the court can conſume, it is ſold to the public at double the price of that which comes from Caraccas.

Chiapa, though in the centre of Mexico, formed a ſtate independent of that empire at the arrival of the Spaniards: but this diſtrict was alſo compelled to yield to arms, the progreſs of which nothing could ſtop. There was not much blood ſpilt on this ſpot, and the Indians are ſtill more numerous here than any where elſe. As the province abounds only in corn, fruits, and paſturage, few of the conquerors ſettled in it; and this is perhaps the reaſon why man is leſs degraded, and leſs degenerated here, than in thoſe diſtricts that are full of mines, or advantageouſly ſituated for trade. The natives ſhow ſome intelligence, and a degree of aptitude for the arts, and they ſpeak a language which is ſoft, and hath even ſome ſort of elegance. Theſe qualities are eſpecially remarkable at Chiapa de Los Indios, a city of ſome importance, where the moſt conſiderable families of the natives have taken refuge, which they alone occupy and where they enjoy great privileges. The dexterity and courage of theſe men, who are leſs oppreſſed than their neighbours, is habitually diſplayed upon the river which waſhes their walls. With a number of boats they form naval armaments, inſtitute ſea-fights with each other, and attack and defend themſelves with ſurpriſing agility. They build up caſtles of wood, which they cover with painted linen, and lay ſiege to them. They do not leſs excel in bull-fighting, cudgelling, dancing, and all bodily exerciſe.

How much will theſe accounts make us regret, that the Indians ſhould have fallen under the power of a conqueror, who hath contracted, inſtead of enlarging, the bonds of their ſervitude.

The province of Guatimala hath, in common with the other provinces dependent upon it, cattle, mines, corn, maize, ſugar, and cotton: but none of the reſt ſhare with it the advantage of cultivating indigo. It is upon its territory that a city bearing its name is ſituated, where all the offices of adminiſtration, and all the tribunals neceſſary for the government of ſo large a country, are united.

This celebrated city was built, whether properly or improperly, in a valley about three miles broad, and bounded by two lofty mountains. From the mountain towards the South run ſeveral rivulets and fountains, which delightfully refreſh the villages that are ſituated on the declivity, and keep up a perpetual ſucceſſion of flowers and fruits. The aſpect of the mountain that is to the North is terrible. There is no verdure ever ſeen upon it; nothing but aſhes, and calcined ſtones. A kind of rumbling noiſe, which the inhabitants aſcribe to the boiling of metals that are in a ſtate of fuſion within the caverns of the earth, is continually heard. From theſe internal furnaces iſſue flames and torrents of ſulphur, which fill the air with a horrible infection. Guatimala, according to an expreſſion much uſed, is ſituated between Paradiſe and hell.

The articles that are wanted in Peru, are diſpatched from this capital by the South Sea. The gold, the ſilver, and the indigo deſtined for this continent, are carried upon mules to the town of St. Thomas, ſituated at the diſtance of ſixty leagues from the city, at the extremity of a very deep lake, which loſes itſelf in the Gulf of Honduras. All theſe riches are exchanged in this ſtaple for the merchandiſe that is brought from Europe in the months of July and Auguſt. This place is entirely open, though it would have been very eaſy to have ſecured it from every

attack; the more ſo as its entrance is rendered narrow by two high rocks, which project on each ſide within cannon-ſhot of each other. It is probable that Spain will not alter her conduct till ſhe hath ſuffered for her negligence; which ſhe might eaſily be made to do.

The veſſels that ſhould undertake this expedition might anchor in perfect ſafety in the road. A thouſand or twelve hundred men, landing at St. Thomas, might paſs over the mountains for the ſpace of fifteen leagues, where they would find commodious roads and ſubſiſtence. The reſt of their way would be acroſs plains that are well peopled and plentiful. They would then arrive at Guatimala, in which there is not a ſingle ſoldier, nor the leaſt fortification. Its forty thouſand ſouls, Indians, negroes, Meſtees, and Spaniards, who have never ſeen an enemy, would be incapable of making the leaſt reſiſtance. In order to ſave their lives, they would deliver up the immenſe riches they have been accumulating for more than two centuries, which would amount at leaſt to thirty millions [1,250,000l.] The troops would reimbark with this booty, and, if they choſe it, with hoſtages that would ſecure their retreat.

Unfortunately this danger cannot now be incurred. A dreadful earthquake hath completely deſtroyed Guatimala in 1772. This city, one of the richeſt in America, preſents nothing but a heap of ruins.

In other countries ſuch a city would ſoon be reſtored again; for what cannot active and induſtrious nations do? By them, regions that were thought uninhabitable are peopled; the moſt ungrateful ſoil is rendered fruitful; the waters are driven back, and this fertility ariſes from the ſlime; moraſſes are made to bear houſes; and man cuts roads for himſelf through the bodies of mountains. He ſeparates, or connects together at pleaſure, the rocks, by bridges which are, as it were, ſuſpended over the obſcure depth of the abyſs, at the bottom of which the angry torrent ſeems to murmur at his boldneſs. He raiſes

dikes against the swelling of the sea, and sleeps with tranquillity in the dwelling which he hath founded on the waves. He collects together a few planks, and sitting down upon them, orders the winds to convey him to the extremity of the globe, and the winds obey his commands. O man! that art sometimes so pusillanimous and so little, how great dost thou appear in thy projects, and in thine actions; with two feeble levers of flesh, and assisted only by thine understanding, thou dost attack the whole system of nature, and dost subdue her! Thou bravest the conspiring elements, and dost reduce them to obedience! Nothing can resist thee, whether thy soul be tormented with love, or with the desire of possessing some beautiful woman, destined one day to become the object of thine aversion; whether it be swayed by interest, or by the rage of filling thy coffers with riches, from which thou dost flatter thyself with the prospect of enjoyments, which thou wilt reject when in thy power; or whether it be stimulated with the thirst of glory, or the ambition of obtaining the applause of thy cotemporaries whom thou dost despise, or of posterity, which cannot certainly have a stronger claim to thy reverence! If thou dost great things from passion, thou dost others equally great from a spirit of restlessness and disquietude. Thou wast acquainted with but one world; and when thou didst conjecture the existence of another, thou didst go in search of it, and didst find it. I have progressively followed thy footsteps in this New World. If the boldness of thine enterprises should sometimes have concealed their enormity from me, I am still equally confounded, whether thy crimes freeze me with horror, or thy virtues transport me with admiration.

Such is the picture of the ferocious Spaniards who conquered America: but the nature of the climate, a vicious administration, and the plentiful enjoyment of all things, enervated their descendants. Every undertaking which carried with it the least difficulty, was found to be above the efforts of their corrupted

minds; and their effeminate arms refuſed every kind of labour. During this long period, a ſtate of lethargy prevailed, of which there are few examples in hiſtory. How was it poſſible, that in ſuch a ſtate, a city ſwallowed up by volcanoes, ſhould have been raiſed out of its ruins? But for ſome years paſt, the ſpirit of the nation hath been reviving. Already hath the plan of another city been traced, more ſpacious, more convenient, more beautiful than the former: and it will be erected at the diſtance of eight leagues from that, upon a more ſolid baſis. Already hath the court of Madrid, contrary to their uſual and too tardy modes of proceeding, ſet aſide the funds neceſſary for the conſtruction of the public edifices. Already do the inhabitants, relieved from thoſe tributes which might have ſerved as a reaſon or as a pretence for their inactivity, coincide with the views of government. New Spain will ſoon be embelliſhed with a New Guatimala. If this exertion ſhould continue, or if it ſhould increaſe, the Engliſh will probably be driven from the ſettlements they have begun between the Lake of Nicaragua and Cape Honduras.

Deſcription of Honduras, Jucatan, and Campeachy. Reaſons of the diſputes between Spain and England in theſe parts.

This diſtrict occupies one hundred and eighty leagues of the coaſt, and runs back into the inland parts, as far as ſome very high mountains at a greater or leſs diſtance from the ocean.

The climate is wholeſome and temperate. The ſoil is commonly even, very well watered, and ſeems fit for all the productions cultivated between the tropics. The inhabitants are not here expoſed to thoſe frequent droughts and terible hurricanes, which, in the iſlands of the New World, ſo often fruſtrate the moſt reaſonable expectations.

The country is chiefly inhabited by the Moſkito Indians. Theſe people were formerly numerous; but the ſmall-pox hath conſiderably diminiſhed their population. It is not ſuppoſed that their ſeveral tribes can at preſent put more than nine or ten thouſand men under arms.

A nation, ſtill leſs populous, is fixed in the envi-

rons of Cape Gracias-à-Dios. These are the Samboes, descendants, as it is said, of the crew of a Guinea ship which was shipwrecked in these latitudes. Their complexion, their features, their hair, and their propensities, will scarce allow us to assign any other origin to them.

The English are the only Europeans, whom their cupidity hath induced to settle in these savage regions.

Their first establishment was formed about the year 1730, at twenty-six leagues distance from Cape Honduras. Its position, at the extremity of the coast, and upon the Black River, which hath no more than six feet water at its mouth, will probably always retard and prevent its progress.

At the distance of fifty-four leagues from this colony is Gracias-à-Dios; the harbour of which formed by an arm of the sea, is immense, and tolerably safe. It is near this famous cape that the English have fixed themselves, upon a navigable river, the borders of which are very fertile.

Seventy leagues beyond this, this enterprising nation hath found, at Blue-field, some spacious and fruitful plains, an accessible river, a convenient harbour, and a rock which might easily be made impregnable.

In 1769, the three factories did not employ more than two hundred and six white men, as many Mulattoes, and nine hundred slaves. Exclusive of the mules and other articles sent to Jamaica, they sent this year to Europe eight hundred thousand feet of mahogany, two hundred thousand pounds weight of sarsaparilla, and ten thousand pounds of tortoise-shell. The number of hands hath been since increased. Sugar-canes have begun to be planted; and the first sugar they have yielded hath been found to be of a superior quality. Some careful observers affirm, that a quiet possession of the Moskito country, would one day be more valuable to Great Britain, than all the islands which that nation now possesses in the West Indies.

The Engliſh do not ſeem to form the leaſt doubt reſpecting their right of property. Never, ſay the writers of this country, did Spain ſubdue theſe people, and never did theſe people ſubmit to Spain. They were by right, and *ipſo facto*, independent, when, in 1670, their chiefs, of their own accord, had recourſe to England, and acknowledged its ſovereignty. So little was this ſubmiſſion compelled, that it was renewed at ſeveral intervals. At their ſolicitation, the court of London ſent, in 1741, a body of troops upon this territory; and theſe were ſoon followed by a civil adminiſtration. If, after the peace of 1763, the troops and the magiſtrates were withdrawn, and if the fortifications, raiſed for the ſecurity of the ſavages and their protectors, were demoliſhed, this was owing to the ignorance of the miniſtry, who ſuffered themſelves to be perſuaded that the Moſkito country made part of the Bay of Honduras. This miſtake having been removed, a regular form of government hath again been eſtabliſhed in theſe regions at the beginning of 1776.

We ſhould not ſcruple to enter upon the diſcuſſion of theſe great intereſts, if the powers which they concern conducted themſelves with reaſon and juſtice: but it is ſtrength and convenience that ſettles every thing between them, although none of them have had the boldneſs to acknowledge it. Monarchs, what is that falſe ſhame which checks you? Since equity is for you nothing but an idle name, why do ye not avow it? Of what uſe are thoſe treaties which cannot guarantee the continuation of peace, to which the weakeſt is compelled to accede; which denote nothing in either of the contracting parties, except their being exhauſted of the means to continue the war; and which are always infringed? It would be better that ye ſhould ſign only a ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, without fixing the duration of it. If ye have reſolved to be unjuſt, ceaſe, at leaſt, to be perfidious; for perfidy is a baſe and odious vice, inconſiſtent with the dignity of potentates. The fox in the lion's ſkin, or the lion in the fox's ſkin, are two animals equally ridiculous.

But, instead of addressing our discourse to deaf persons, whom we cannot convince of any thing, and whom we may offend, let us give some account of the Bay of Honduras and Campeachy, and of the peninsula of Jucatan, which separtes them.

This peninsula is a hundred leagues in length, and twenty or five and twenty in breadth. The country is entirely level. There is neither a river nor a stream to be seen in it: but the water is everywhere so near the surface of the earth, and the shells are everywhere found in so great abundance, that this large space must formerly have made part of the sea. The first Spaniards who appeared upon these coasts found, according to Herrera, a very singular custom established there. The men generally carried about them some looking-glasses made of a shining-stone, in which they incessantly viewed themselves, while the women never made any use of this instrument, which is of so much value to beauty.

If the continual use which women make in our country of a looking-glass only shows the desire that they have of making themselves agreeable to the men, by adding to the charms which they have received from nature, every attention that art can give them; the men would be taking the same trouble at Jucatan, in order to please the women. But it is so singular a fact, that we may reasonably call it in question, unless it be supported by another, still more extraordinary, which is, that the men devote themselves to idleness, while the women are condemned to labour. When the functions peculiar to the two sexes are perverted, I shall not be surprised to find in one the frivolousness of the other.

The Jucatan, Honduras, and Campeachy, did not offer to the devastators of the New Hemisphere those rich metals for which they had crossed so many seas. Accordingly, they neglected and despised these regions. Few of them settled there; and those who came there by chance soon contracted the indolence of the Indians. None of them attended to the culti-

vation of productions fit for exportation. In common with the colonies which had been deſtroyed or enſlaved, they lived upon cacao and maize; to which they had added the eaſy and convenient reſource of cattle brought from the Old World. In order to pay for their clothing, which they either would not, or knew not how to make themſelves, and for ſome other articles of moderate value, which they were ſupplied with from Europe, they had properly no other reſource, than a kind of wood for dyeing, known in all the markets by the name of Campeachy or logwood.

The tree which furniſhes it is rather high, hath alternate leaves, compoſed of eight ſmaller ones, in form of a heart, and diſpoſed in two rows along one common coſta. Its flowers, which are ſmall and reddiſh, are collected in cluſters at the extremities of the branches. They have each of them a calix of a ſingle piece; from the bottom of each ariſe five petals, and ten diſtinct ſtamina; the piſtil, placed in the centre, becomes a ſmall oval pod, flattened, and divided longitudinally into two ovals filled with two or three ſeeds. The moſt internal part of the wood, which is at firſt red, becomes black ſome time after the wood hath been felled. It is only this inner part of the tree that yields this black and violet colour.

The taſte for theſe colours, which was perhaps more general two centuries ago than it is at preſent, procured a conſiderable vent for this precious wood. This ſale was for the benefit of the Spaniards alone, till the ſettlement of the Engliſh at Jamaica.

Among the multitude of pirates who were continually coming from this famous iſland, ſeveral went to cruiſe in the two bays, and on the coaſts of the peninſula, to intercept the veſſels that ſailed there. Theſe plunderers were ſo little acquainted with the value of their cargo, that, when they found barks laden with it, they took away nothing but the iron utenſils. One of them having carried off a large veſſel, which had nothing elſe but the logwood on board, brought it into the Thames, deſigning only to equip it as a priva-

BOOK VI.

teer; when, contrary to his expectation, he ſold at a very high price the wood which he had thought to be of ſo little value, that he had always burnt it during his voyage. After this diſcovery, the pirates, who were not ſucceſsful at ſea, never failed to repair to the river of Champeton, where they took on board the piles of wood which were always found ranged on the ſhore.

The peace of the Engliſh with Spain having put a ſtop to the depredations of theſe pirates, ſeveral of them employed themſelves in cutting Indian wood. Cape Catoche furniſhed them at firſt with abundance. As ſoon as they perceived it diminiſh, they went to ſettle between Tabaſco and the river of Champeton, about Lake Triſte, and in Beef Iſland, which is very near it. In 1675, their numbers amounted to two hundred and ſixty. Their ardour, which at firſt was extreme, ſoon gave way; and the habit of idleneſs prevailed. As the greateſt part of them were excellent markſmen, the chaſe became their predominant paſſion; and their former inclination to plunder was rekindled in them by this exerciſe. They ſoon began to make inroads into the Indian towns, the inhabitants of which they carried off. The women were deſtined to wait on them; and the men they ſold at Jamaica, or other iſlands. The Spaniards, rouſed from their lethargy by theſe enormities, ſurpriſed them in the midſt of their debaucheries, and carried them off. Moſt of them were even taken in their cottages: they were led priſoners to Mexico, where they ended their days in the mines.

Thoſe who eſcaped took refuge in the Gulf of Honduras, where they were joined by ſome wandering freebooters of North America. In proceſs of time they increaſed to fifteen hundred men. The ſtate of independence and plenty in which they lived rendered the marſhy country they inhabited agreeable to them. Strong intrenchments ſecured them and their proviſions; and they confined themſelves to thoſe employments which their unhappy companions lamented that

they had ever neglected. They only took care not to penetrate into the interior part of the country, to cut wood, without being well armed.

Their induſtry was crowned with the greateſt ſucceſs. In reality, the ton of wood, which had been ſold as high as nine hundred livres [37l. 10s.], was gradually fallen to a very low price; but this diſadvantage in the price was compenſated by the quantity that was ſold. The cutters delivered up the produce of their labours, either to the people of Jamaica, who brought them Madeira wine, ſtrong liquors, linens, and clothes; or to the Engliſh colonies of North America, which ſupplied them with proviſions. This commerce, which was always carried on by ſmugglers, and which occaſioned much clamour, became lawful in 1763. The liberty of cutting logwood was ſecured to Great Britain; but ſhe was not permitted to raiſe forts, and was even obliged to deſtroy thoſe which had been built. The court of Madrid ſeldom have made any ſacrifices ſo great as that of eſtabliſhing, in the centre of their poſſeſſions, an active, powerful, and ambitious nation. Accordingly, ſoon after the peace, they ſought to render even this conceſſion, which unfortunate circumſtances had extorted, almoſt uſeleſs.

The wood which grows upon the dry ſoil at Campeachy is much ſuperior to that which is cut in the marſhes of Honduras. The laſt-mentioned wood was, however, moſt in uſe, becauſe the price of the former had, for a long time paſt, exceeded all bounds. This deficiency in the ſale was a juſt puniſhment of the blindneſs and avidity of the treaſury. The Spaniſh miniſtry at length underſtood this great truth. The merchandiſe was diſburdened of all the duties with which it had been oppreſſed; it was freed from all the ſhackles which impeded its circulation, and then it had a large vent in all the markets. Soon after this, the Engliſh found no ſale for their commodities. The court of Madrid, without having failed in their engagements, will find themſelves freed from a competition, which rendered the poſſeſſion of two large pro-

BOOK VI.

vinces uſeleſs to them. The port of Cadiz ſometimes receives the wood directly from the place it comes from; but it is more frequently ſent to Vera Cruz, which is the true point of union between Mexico and Spain.

It is chiefly by Vera Cruz that Mexico communicates with Spain. Maxims by which this trade hath been hitherto conducted.

Old Vera Cruz ſerved at firſt for a mart. This town, founded by Cortez on the very ſpot where he firſt landed, is ſituated on the borders of a river, which is dry one part of the year, but which in the rainy ſeaſon is capable of receiving the largeſt veſſels. The danger to which the ſeamen were expoſed, in a ſituation where nothing defended them againſt the violence of the winds ſo common in theſe latitudes, induced them to ſeek for more ſecure ſhelter, which they found eighteen miles lower down on the ſame coaſt. There they built New Vera Cruz, at ſeventy-two leagues diſtance from the capital of the empire.

New Vera Cruz is ſituated in a climate rendered diſagreeable and unwholeſome by a burning ſun, and by frequent ſtorms. It is bounded on the north by dry ſands, and on the weſt by infectious moraſſes. The buildings are all of wood. The only inhabitants are, a moderate garriſon, ſome agents of government, the navigators arriving from Europe, and the commiſſioners that are neceſſary to receive and expedite the cargoes. This harbour is formed by the ſmall iſland of St. Juan de Ulloa. It hath the diſadvantage of not being able to hold more than thirty or thirty-five veſſels, which are not always ſheltered from the northern winds. The entrance into it is by two channels only, which are ſo narrow, that they will not admit more than one ſhip at a time. The ſea in the neighbourhood is likewiſe extremely dangerous, on account of a great number of rocks almoſt even with the ſurface of the water. It was generally thought by the pilots of the country, that nothing but a complete knowledge of the ſituation, acquired by many years experience, could poſſibly have enabled them to avoid ſo many ſhoals. Some deſperate pirates having ſurpriſed the place in 1712, towers were then conſtructed on the

ſhore, where vigilant centinels are continually on guard for the common ſafety.

It is into this bad harbour, which is properly the only one there is in the gulf, that the fleet arrives, the deſtination of which is to furniſh Mexico with proviſions. The ſhips that bring them do not land in ſucceſſion. They are fitted out at Cadiz, with a convoy, every two, three, or four years, as occaſions and circumſtances require. They are uſually from twelve to fourteen large merchant ſhips, eſcorted by two ſhips of the line, or by a greater number, if public tranquillity be diſturbed or threatened. In order to prevent the dangers to which they might be expoſed at landing, by the hurricanes, they ſet out from Spain in the months of February, May, or June. In their paſſage, they take in refreſhments at Porto Rico, and arrive, after a voyage of ſeventy or eighty days, at Vera Cruz, from whence their whole cargo is conveyed by mules to Xalapa.

In this town, which is ſituated twelve leagues from the harbour, on the back of a mountain, and well built, is kept a fair, which was limited by the ancient regulations to ſix weeks, but which at preſent laſts four months, and which is ſometimes prolonged to a further period, at the ſolicitation of the Spaniſh or Mexican merchants. When the commercial tranſactions are finiſhed, the metals, and other articles given by Mexico in exchange for the productions and merchandiſe of Europe, are ſent to Vera Cruz, where they are embarked for our hemiſphere. The ſeaſons for diſpatching them are not all equally favourable. It would be dangerous to put to ſea in the months of Auguſt and September, and impoſſible to do it in October and November. The fleet always takes the route of the Havannah, where it is joined by veſſels from Honduras, Carthagena, and other places. It ſtops there ten or twelve days, to take in freſh proviſions, and to allow time to the ſhips to freight themſelves with ſugar, tobacco, and other articles ſupplied by the iſland of

BOOK VI. Cuba. The ſhips then ſail through the ſtraits of Bahama; they continue their courſe to the height of New England, and after ſailing for a long time in this latitude of forty degrees, they at length veer to the ſouth-eaſt, to come in view of Cape St. Vincent, and to proceed to Cadiz.

In the interval between the ſailing of one fleet and the other, the court of Madrid ſends out one or two men of war, which are called Azogues, to carry to Mexico the quickſilver that is neceſſary for working the mines. This quickſilver was originally drawn from Peru; but the commiſſions were ſo uncertain, ſo ſlow, and ſo often fraudulent, that in 1734 it was judged to be more convenient to ſend it from Europe. The mines of Guadalcanal at firſt furniſhed the means. Theſe were afterwards forſaken for the richer mines of Almaden, in Eſtramadura. The Azogues, on their return, take charge of the produce of the ſales that have been made ſince the departure of the fleet, of the ſums repaid for credit granted, and of the funds which the Mexican merchants chooſe to employ on their own account in the next expedition. The government habitually allows three or four merchantmen to accompany theſe ſhips. Their whole cargo ſhould conſiſt of fruits and liquors; but other more important articles are fraudulently introduced. Theſe merchantmen always return with their ballaſt, unleſs by ſpecial favour they ſhould be allowed to take in ſome cochineal.

If the departure of the fleet be delayed from reaſons of convenience or policy, the court ſends one of its ſhips from the Havannah to Vera Cruz. It there takes charge of every thing that belongs to government, and of the metals which the debtors, or ſpeculating perſons, chooſe to ſend from the New Hemiſphere into the Old.

From 1748 to 1753, one year with another, New Spain ſent to the mother-country, by the way of Vera Cruz and of Honduras, 62,661,466 livres [2,610,894l. 8s. 4d.], 574,550 [23,939l. 11s. 8d.] of which were

in gold, 43,621,497 [1,817,562l. 7s. 6d.] in silver, and 18,465,419 [769,392l. 9s. 2d.] in productions, at the price in Europe.

Of the productions, there were to the amount of 529,200 livres [22,094l. 19s. 4d.] for the crown, and 17,936,219 [747,342l. 9s. 2d.] for the merchants.

Of the gold and silver, there were to the amount of 25,649,040 livres [1,048,710l.] for trade, 12,067,007 livres [502,791l. 19s. 2d.] for the agents of the government, or for private persons who meant to remit their fortunes to Europe, and 6,480,000 livres [270,000l.] for the government.

The court of Madrid cannot fail of seeing this tribute increase; and it is upon the following reasons that this conjecture is founded.

Mexico was formerly without any means of defence: for what was to be expected from a few tradesmen, whom each city might put under arms, when the state was threatened with any danger of greater or less importance? Six regiments of infantry and two of cavalry were soon formed out of these scattered militia, and who have since been disciplined by officers sent from Europe. Time extended the ideas of government. Men, accustomed to the occupations of the arts and of commerce, did not appear to afford a sufficient support to authority; and it was determined to raise, in the country itself, two battalions of infantry, and two regiments of dragoons, who should have none other but the military profession. After the peace of 1763, the government thought that a people enervated by idleness and by the climate were but ill adapted to war; and they sent some regular troops from the mother-country into the colony. This system is still followed, and there are always three or four battalions from our continent at Mexico, which are only relieved after they have staid there four years.

To these means of preservation others have been added, not less effectual. The island of St. Juan de Ulloa, which forms the harbour of Vera Cruz, and which is to defend it, had but a few bad fortifications.

BOOK VI.

Theſe have been razed. Some extenſive and ſolid works, calculated to make the moſt obſtinate reſiſtance, have been lately conſtructed upon their ruins, and in the body of the rock. If, contrary to every appearance, this key of Mexico ſhould be forced, the country, even after this misfortune, would not be without defence. At the diſtance of four-and-twenty leagues from the ſea, and at the opening of the mountains, in a plain which nothing can command, the foundations of the magnificent citadel of Perole were laid in 1770. The arſenals, the barracks, the magazines, and every part of it, are bomb-proof.

According to all appearances, the court of Madrid will never leſſen the number of troops they keep in New Spain: but that part of the public revenue which the fortifications uſed to abſorb, cannot fail of increaſing their treaſures, unleſs they ſhould employ them in the colony itſelf, in forming ſome uſeful eſtabliſhments. Already large docks are opened upon the borders of the river Alvarado, where woods for ſhipbuilding abound. This novelty is of fortunate preſage, and will undoubtedly be followed by others. Perhaps, after having remained for three centuries in a ſtate of oppreſſion or lethargy, Mexico will at length fulfil the important deſtination to which it hath been ſo long called up in vain by nature. In this comfortable hope, let us take our leave of North America, in order to go into the ſouthern part of that continent, where we ſhall ſee, by an arrangement of providence which will never change, the ſame effects produced by the ſame cauſes, the ſame animoſities excited by the ſame barbarity, the ſame precautions ſuggeſted by the ſame apprehenſions, the ſame oppoſitions raiſed by the ſame jealouſies; where we ſhall ſee one robbery giving riſe to another, one diſgrace avenged by a ſubſequent diſgrace; where we ſhall ſtill ſee ſtupid perſeverance in evil, and find a leſſon of unavailing experience.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

MAR 26 1948

MAR 26 1948