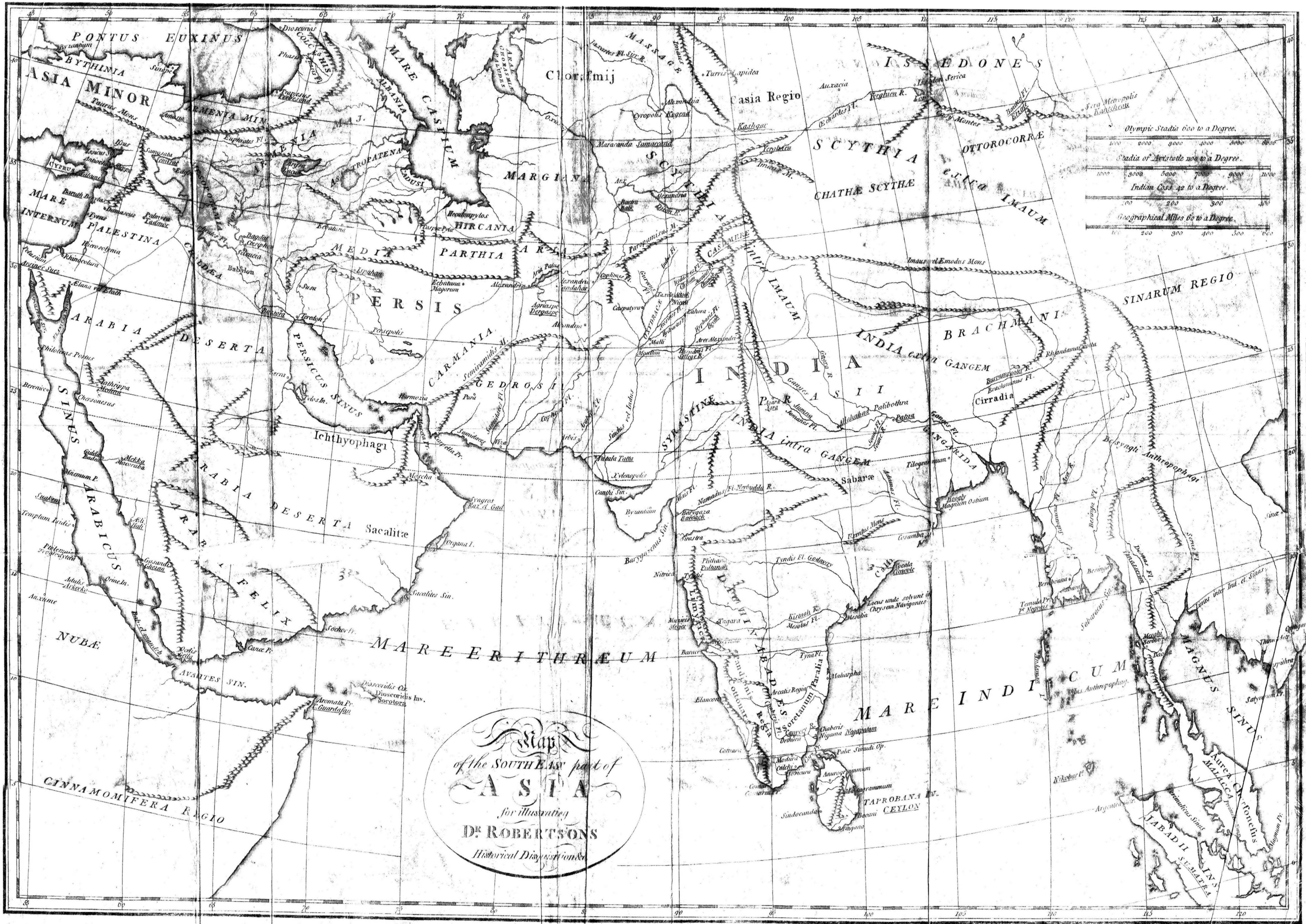


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Map
of the Southern part of
ASIA
for illustration
of
Dr. ROBERTSON'S
Historical Discoveries

Olympic Stadia 600 to a Degree.

1000	2000	3000	4000	5000	6000
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Stadia of Aristotle 1000 to a Degree.

1000	3000	5000	7000	9000	10000
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Indian Cass 40 to a Degree.

100	200	300	400
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Geographical Miles 60 to a Degree.

100	200	300	400	500	600
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HISTORICAL DISQUISITION

CONCERNING

A N C I E N T I N D I A .

A N
H I S T O R I C A L
D I S Q U I S I T I O N

CONCERNING

The Knowledge which the *Ancients* had of
I N D I A;

AND THE

PROGRESS of TRADE with that COUNTRY
prior to the Discovery of the Passage to it by the
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

With an A P P E N D I X,

CONTAINING

Observations on the Civil Policy—the Laws and Judicial Proceedings—
the Arts—the Sciences—and Religious Institutions,
of the *INDIANS.*

By WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D. D. F. R. S. Ed.

PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY, AND HISTORIOGRAPHER
TO HIS MAJESTY FOR SCOTLAND.

L O N D O N:

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P R E F A C E.

THE perusal of Major Rennell's Memoir for illustrating his Map of Indostan, one of the most valuable geographical treatises that has appeared in any age or country, gave rise to the following work. It suggested to me the idea of examining more fully than I had done in the Introductory Book to my History of America, into the knowledge which the Ancients had of India, and of considering what is certain, what is obscure, and what is fabulous, in the accounts of that country which they have handed down to us. In undertaking this inquiry, I had originally no other object than my own amusement and instruction :

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But

But in carrying it on, and consulting with care the authors of antiquity, some facts, hitherto unobserved, and many which had not been examined with proper attention, occurred; new views opened; my ideas gradually extended and became more interesting; until, at length, I imagined that the result of my researches might prove amusing and instructive to others, by exhibiting such a view of the various modes in which intercourse with India had been carried on from the earliest times, as might shew how much that great branch of commerce has contributed, in every age, to increase the wealth and power of the nations which possessed it.

THUS the Historical Disquisition which I now lay before the Reader was begun and completed. What degree of merit it possesses, the Public must determine. My grateful recollection of the favourable manner in which my other works have been received, naturally increases the solicitude with which I wait for its decision concerning this which I now publish.

WHEN

WHEN I first turned my thoughts to this subject, I was so fully aware of the disadvantage under which I laboured in undertaking to describe countries of which I had not any local knowledge, that I have been at the utmost pains to guard against any errors which this might occasion. I have consulted, with persevering industry, the works of all the authors I could procure, who have given any account of India; I have never formed any decided opinion, which was not supported by respectable authority; and as I have the good fortune to reckon among the number of my friends some Gentlemen who have filled important stations, civil and military, in India, and who have visited many different parts of it, I had recourse frequently to them, and from their conversation learned things which I could not have found in books. Were it proper to mention their names, the Public would allow that by their discernment and abilities they are fully entitled to the confidence which I have placed in them.

IN the progress of the work, I became sensible of my own deficiency with respect to another point. In order to give an accurate idea of the imperfection both of the theory and practice of navigation among the Ancients, and to explain with scientific precision, the manner in which they ascertained the position of places, and calculated their longitude and latitude, a greater portion of mathematical knowledge was requisite, than my attention to other studies had permitted me to acquire. What I wanted, the friendship of my ingenious and respectable Colleague, Mr. Playfair, Professor of Mathematics, has supplied, and I have been enabled by him to elucidate all the points I have mentioned, in a manner which, I am confident, will afford my Readers complete satisfaction. To him, likewise, I am indebted for the construction of two maps necessary for illustrating this Disquisition, which without his assistance I could not have undertaken.

I HAVE adhered, in this work, to an arrangement I followed in my former compositions, and to
12 which

P R E F A C E.

ix

which the Public has been long accustomed. I have kept historical narrative as much separate as possible from scientific and critical discussions, by reserving the latter for Notes and Illustrations. I flatter myself that I may claim, without presumption, the merit of having examined with diligence what I submit to public inspection, and of having referred, with scrupulous accuracy, to the authors from whom I have derived information.

College of Edinburgh,
May 10th, 1791.

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I L L U S T R A T I O N S.

NOTE I. SECT. I. p. 6.

CREDULITY and scepticism are two opposite extremes into which men are apt to run, in examining the events which are said to have happened in the early ages of antiquity. Without incurring any suspicion of a propensity to the latter of these, I may be allowed to entertain doubts concerning the expedition of Sesostris into India, and his conquest of that country.—1. Few facts in ancient history seem to be better established, than that of the early aversion of the Egyptians to a sea-faring life. Even the power of despotism cannot at once change the ideas and manners of a nation, especially when they have been confirmed by long habit, and rendered sacred by the sanction of religion. That Sesostris, in the course of a few years, should have so

entirely overcome the prejudices of a superstitious people, as to be able to fit out four hundred ships of force in the Arabian Gulf, besides another fleet which he had in the Mediterranean, appears to be extremely improbable. Armaments of such magnitude would require the utmost efforts of a great and long established maritime power.—2. It is remarkable that Herodotus, who enquired with the most persevering diligence into the ancient history of Egypt, and who received all the information concerning it which the priests of Memphis, Heliopolis, and Thebes, could communicate, Herodot. edit. Wesselingij, lib. ii. c. 3. although he relates the history of Sesostris at some length, does not mention his conquest of India. Lib. ii. c. 102, &c. That tale, it is probable, was invented in the period between the age of Herodotus and that of Diodorus Siculus, from whom we receive a particular detail of the Indian expedition of Sesostris. His account rests entirely upon the authority of the Egyptian priests; and Diodorus himself not only gives it as his general opinion, “that many things which they related, flowed rather from a desire to promote the honour of their country, than from attention to truth,” lib. i. p. 34. edit. Wesselingij, Amst. 1746; but takes particular notice that the Egyptian priests, as well as the Greek writers, differ widely from one another in the accounts which they give of the actions of Sesostris, lib. i. p. 62.—3. Though Diodorus asserts, that in relating the history of Sesostris he had studied to select what appeared to him most probable, and most agreeable to the monuments of that monarch still remaining in Egypt, he has admitted into his narrative many marvellous circumstances which render the whole extremely suspicious.

suspicious. The father of Sesostris, as he relates, collected all the male children who were born in Egypt on the same day with his son, in order that they might be educated, together with him, conformable to a mode which he prescribed, with a view of preparing them as proper instruments to carry into execution the great undertakings for which he destined Sesostris. Accordingly, when Sesostris set out upon his Indian expedition, which, from circumstances mentioned by Diodorus, must have been about the fortieth year of his age, one thousand seven hundred of his youthful associates are said to have been still alive, and were entrusted with high command in his army. But if we apply to the examination of this story the certain principles of political arithmetic, it is evident, that if one thousand seven hundred of the male children born on the same day with Sesostris were alive when his great expedition commenced, the number of children born in Egypt on each day of the year must have been at least ten thousand, and the population of the kingdom must have exceeded sixty millions; Gouget *l'Origine des Loix, des Arts, &c.* tom. ii. p. 12, &c. - A number far beyond the bounds of credibility, in a kingdom which, from the accurate calculations of M. D'Anville, *Memoire sur l'Egypte Anc. et Moderne*, p. 23, &c. does not contain more than two thousand one hundred square leagues of habitable country. Another marvellous particular is the description of a ship of cedar, four hundred and ninety feet in length, covered on the outside with gold, and on the inside with silver, which Sesostris consecrated to the deity who was the chief object of worship at Thebes. *Lib. i. p. 67.* Such too is the account he gives of the Egyptian army, in
in

in which, beside six hundred thousand infantry, and twenty-four thousand cavalry, there were twenty-seven thousand armed chariots. *Ibid.* p. 64.—4. These and other particulars appeared so far to exceed the bounds of probability, that the sound understanding of Strabo the geographer rejected, without hesitation, the accounts of the Indian expedition of Sesostris; and he not only asserts, in the most explicit terms, that this monarch never entered India, *lib. xv. p. 1007. C. edit. Casaub. Amst. 1707*; but he ranks what has been related concerning his operations in that country, with the fabulous exploits of Bacchus and Hercules, p. 1007. *D. 1009. B.* The philosophical Historian of Alexander the Great seems to have entertained the same sentiments with respect to the exploits of Sesostris in India. *Hist. Ind. c. 5. Arrian, Exped. Alex. edit. Gronov. L. Bat. 1704.*—What slender information concerning India, or its inhabitants, Herodotus had received, seems to have been derived, not from the Egyptians, but from the Persians, *lib. iii. c. 105*, which renders it probable, that in his time there was little intercourse between Egypt and India.

NOTE II. SECT. I. p. 8.

WHEN we consider the extent and effects of the Phenician commerce, the scanty information concerning it which we receive from ancient writers must, on a first view, appear surprising. But when we recollect that all the Greek Historians, (Herodotus excepted,) who give any account of the Phenicians, published their works long after the destruction of

Tyre by Alexander the Great, we shall cease to wonder at their not having entered into minute details with respect to a trade which was then removed to new seats, and carried on in other channels. But the power and opulence of Tyre, in the prosperous age of its commerce, must have attracted general attention. In the prophecies of Ezekiel, who flourished two hundred and sixty years before the fall of Tyre, there is the most particular account of the nature and variety of its commercial transactions that is to be found in any ancient writer, and which conveys, at the same time, a magnificent idea of the extensive power of that state. Ch. xxvi, xxvii, xxviii.

NOTE III. SECT. I. p. 11.

THE account given of the revenue of the Persian monarchy by Herodotus is curious, and seems to have been copied from some public record, which had been communicated to him. According to it, the Persian empire was divided into twenty Satrapy's, or governments. The tribute levied from each is specified, amounting in all to 14,560 Eubæan talents, which Dr. Arbuthnot reckons to be equal to 2,807,437l. sterling money; a sum extremely small for the revenue of the Great King, and which ill accords with many facts concerning the riches, magnificence, and luxury of the East, that occur in ancient authors.

NOTE

NOTE IV. SECT. I. p. 16.

IT is surprising that Alexander did not receive, in the provinces contiguous to India, such an account of the periodical rains in that country, as to shew him the impropriety of carrying on military operations there, while these continued. His expedition into India commenced towards the end of Spring, Arrian, lib. iv. c. 22., when the rains were already begun in the mountains from which all the rivers in the Panjab flow, and of course they must have been considerably swelled before he arrived on their banks. Rennell, p. 268.—He passed the Hydaspes at Midsummer, about the height of the rainy season. In a country through which so many large rivers run, an army on service at this time of the year must have suffered greatly. An accurate description of the nature of the rains and inundations in this part of India, is given by Arrian, lib. v. c. 9.; and one still fuller may be found in Strabo, lib. xv. 1013.—It was of what they suffered by these that Alexander's soldiers complained, Strabo, lib. xv. 1021. D.; and not without reason, as it had rained incessantly during seventy days, Diod. Sicul. xvii. c. 94.—A circumstance which marks the accuracy with which Alexander's officers had attended to every thing in that part of India, deserves notice. Aristobulus, in his Journal, which I have mentioned, takes notice that, though heavy rains fell in the mountains, and in the country near to them, in the plains below

below not so much as a shower fell. Strabo, lib. xv. 1013. B. 1015. B. Major Rennell was informed by a person of character, who had resided in this district of India, which is now seldom visited by Europeans, that during great part of the S. W. monsoon, or at least in the months of July, August, and part of September, which is the rainy season in most other parts of India, the atmosphere in the Delta of the Indus is generally clouded, but no rain falls, except very near the sea. Indeed, very few showers fall during the whole season. Captain Hamilton relates, that when he visited Tatta, no rain had fallen for three years before. Memoirs, p. 288.—Tamerlane, who, by the vicinity of the seat of his government to India, had the means of being well informed concerning the nature of the country, avoided the error of Alexander, and made his Indian campaign during the dry season. As Nadir Shah, both when he invaded India, A. D. 1738, and in his return next year, marched through the same countries with Alexander, and nearly in the same line of direction, nothing can give a more striking idea of the persevering ardour of the Macedonian conqueror, than the description of the difficulties which Nadir Shah had to surmount, and the hardships which his army endured. Though possessed of absolute power and immense wealth, and distinguished no less by great talents than long experience in the conduct of war, he had the mortification to lose a great part of his troops in crossing the rivers of the Panjab, in penetrating through the mountains to the north of India, and in conflicts with the fierce natives inhabiting the countries which stretch from the banks of the Oxus to the frontiers of Persia. An

interesting account of his retreat and sufferings is given in the Memoirs of Khojeh Abdulkurreem, a Cashmerian of distinction, who served in his army.

NOTE V. SECT. I. p. 18.

THAT a fleet so numerous should have been collected in such a short time, is apt to appear, at first sight, incredible. Arrian, however, assures us, that in specifying this number, he followed Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, whose authority he considered to be of the greatest weight, lib. vi. c. 3. But as the Panjab country is full of navigable rivers, on which all the intercourse among the natives was carried on, it abounded with vessels ready constructed to the conqueror's hands, so that he might easily collect that number. If we could give credit to the account of the invasion of India by Semiramis, no fewer than four thousand vessels were assembled in the Indus to oppose her fleet. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. c. 74.—It is remarkable that when Mahmoud of Gaznah invaded India, a fleet was collected on the Indus to oppose him, consisting of the same number of vessels. We learn from the Ayeen Akbery, that the inhabitants of this part of India still continue to carry on all their communication with each other by water; the inhabitants of the Circar of Tatta alone have not less than forty thousand vessels of various constructions. Vol. ii. p. 143.

NOTE

NOTE VI. SECT. I. p. 19.

ALL these particulars are taken from the Indian History of Arrian, a work different from that already mentioned, and one of the most curious treatises transmitted to us from antiquity. The first part of it consists of extracts from the account given by Nearchus of the climate and soil of India, and the manners of the natives. The second contains that officer's journal of his voyage from the mouth of the Indus to the bottom of the Persian Gulf. The perusal of it gives rise to several observations.—1. It is remarkable that neither Nearchus nor Ptolemy, nor Aristobulus, nor even Arrian, once mention the voyage of Scylax; This could not proceed from their being unacquainted with it, for Herodotus was a favourite author in the hands of every Greek who had any pretensions to literature. It was probably occasioned by the reasons which they had to distrust the veracity of Scylax, of which I have already taken notice. Accordingly, in a speech which Arrian puts into the mouth of Alexander, he asserts that, except Bacchus, he was the first who had passed the Indus; which implies, that he disbelieved what is related concerning Scylax, and was not acquainted with what Darius Hystaspes is said to have done in order to subject that part of India to the Persian crown. Arrian, vii. c. 10. This opinion is confirmed by Megasthenes, who resided a considerable time in India. He asserts that, except Bacchus and Hercules, (to whose fabulous expeditions Strabo is astonished that he should have given any credit,

lib. xv. p. 1007. D.) Alexander was the first who had invaded India; Arrian, *Hist. Indic.* c. 5. We are informed by Arrian, that the Affacani, and other people who possessed that country, which is now called the kingdom of Candahar, paid tribute, first to the Assyrians, and afterwards to the Medes and Persians; *Hist. Indic.* c. 1. As all the fertile provinces on the north-west of the Indus were anciently reckoned to be part of India, it is probable that what was levied from them is the sum mentioned in the tribute-roll, from which Herodotus drew his account of the annual revenue of the Persian empire, and that none of the provinces to the south of the Indus were ever subject to the kings of Persia.—2. This voyage of Nearchus affords some striking instances of the imperfect knowledge which the ancients had of any navigation different from that to which they were accustomed in the Mediterranean. Though the enterprising genius and enlarged views of Alexander prompted him to attempt opening an intercourse by sea between India and his Persian dominions, yet both he and Nearchus knew so little of the ocean which they wished to explore, as to be apprehensive that it might be found impossible to navigate it, on account of impervious straits, or other obstacles. *Hist. Indic.* c. 20. Q. *Curt.* lib. ix. c. 9. When the fleet arrived near the mouth of the Indus, the astonishment excited by the extraordinary flow and ebb of tide in the Indian ocean, a phenomenon (according to Arrian) with which Alexander and his soldiers were unacquainted, lib. vi. c. 19. is another proof of their ignorance in maritime science. Nor is there any reason to be surprised at their astonishment, as the tides are hardly perceptible in the Mediterranean, beyond which the
knowledge

knowledge of the Greeks and Macedonians did not extend. For the same reason, when the Romans carried their victorious arms into the countries situated on the Atlantic Ocean, or on the seas that communicate with it, this new phenomenon of the tides was an object of wonder and terror to them. Cæsar describes the amazement of his soldiers at a spring-tide, which greatly damaged the fleet with which he invaded Britain, and acknowledges that it was an appearance with which they were unacquainted; Bell. Gallic. lib. iv. c. 29. The tides on the coast near the mouth of the Indus are remarkably high, and the effects of them very great, especially that sudden and abrupt influx of the tide into the mouths of rivers or narrow straits which is known in India by the name of *The Bore*, and is accurately described by Major Rennell, Introd. xxiv. Mem. 278. In the *Periplus Maris Erythræi*, p. 26., these high tides are mentioned, and the description of them nearly resembles that of the Bore. A very exaggerated account of the tides in the Indian ocean is given by Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. xiii. c. 25. Major Rennell seems to think, that Alexander and his followers could not be so entirely unacquainted with the phenomenon of the tides, as Herodotus had informed the Greeks, "that in the Red Sea there was a regular ebb and flow of the tide every day;" lib. ii. c. 11. This is all the explanation of that phenomenon given by Herodotus. But among the ancients there occur instances of inattention to facts, related by respectable authors, which appear surprising in modern times. Though Herodotus, as I have just now observed, gave an account of the voyage performed by Scylax at considerable length, neither Alexander, nor his Historians, take any notice of that event.

I shall

I shall afterwards have occasion to mention a more remarkable instance of the inattention of later writers to an accurate description which Herodotus had given of the Caspiad Sea. From these, and other similar instances which might have been produced, we may conclude, that the slight mention of the regular flow and ebb of tide in the Red Sea, is not a sufficient reason for rejecting, as incredible, Arrian's account of the surprise of Alexander's soldiers when they first beheld the extraordinary effects of the tide at the mouth of the Indus.—

3. The course of Nearchus's voyage, the promontories, the creeks, the rivers, the cities, the mountains, which came successively in his view, are so clearly described, and the distances of such as were most worthy of notice are so distinctly marked, that M. D'Anville, by comparing these with the actual position of the country, according to the best accounts of it, ancient as well as modern, has been able to point out most of the places which Nearchus mentions, with a degree of certainty which does as much honour to the veracity of the Grecian navigator, as to the industry, learning, and penetration of the French geographer. *Mem. de Literat. tom. xxx. p. 132, &c.*

IN modern times, the Red Sea is a name appropriated to the Arabian Gulf, but the ancients denominated the ocean which stretches from that Gulf to India, the Erythræan Sea, from king Erythras, of whom nothing more is known than the name, which in the Greek language signifies red. From this casual meaning of the word, it came to be believed, that it was of a different colour from other seas, and consequently of more dangerous navigation.

NOTE

NOTE VII. SECT. I. p. 24.

ALEXANDER was so intent on rendering this union of his subjects complete, that after his death there was found in his tablets or commentaries, (among other magnificent schemes which he meditated) a resolution to build several new cities, some in Asia, and some in Europe, and to people those in Asia with Europeans, and those in Europe with Asiatics, "that," (says the Historian) by intermarriages, and exchange of "good offices, the inhabitants of these two great continents "might be gradually moulded into a similarity of sentiments, "and become attached to each other with mutual affection." Diod. Sicul. lib. xviii. c. 4.

NOTE VIII. SECT. I. p. 26.

IT seems to be an opinion generally received, that Alexander built only two cities in India, Nicæa and Bucephalia, situated on the Hydaspes, the modern Chelum, and that Craterus superintended the building of both. But it is evident, from Arrian, lib. v. c. ult., that he built a third city on the Acesines, now the Jenaub, under the direction of Hephæstion; and if it was his object to retain the command of the country, a place of strength on some of the rivers to the south of the Hydaspes seems to have been necessary for that purpose. This part of India has been so little visited in modern times, that it is impossible

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

to point out with precision the situation of these cities. If P. Ticffenthaler were well founded in his conjecture, that the river now called Rauvee is the Acesines of Arrian, Bernouilli, vol. i. p. 39., it is probable that this city was built somewhere near Lahore, one of the most important stations in that part of India, and reckoned in the Ayeen Akbery to be a city of very high antiquity. But Major Rennell, in my opinion, gives good reasons for supposing the Jenaub to be the Acesines of the ancients.

NOTE IX. SECT. I. p. 26.

THE religious scruples which prevented the Persians from making any voyage by sea, were known to the ancients. Pliny relates of one of the Magi, who was sent on an embassy from Tiridates to the emperor Nero, " Navigare noluerat, quoniam exspuere in Maria, alijsque mortalium necessitatibus violare naturam eam, fas non putant;" Nat. Hist. lib. xxx. c. 2. This aversion to the sea they carried so far, that, according to the observation of a well-informed Historian, there was not a city of any note in their empire built upon the sea-coast; Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxiii. c. 6. We learn from Dr. Hyde, how intimately these ideas were connected with the doctrines of Zoroaster; Rel. Vet. Pers. cap. vi. In all the wars of the Persians with Greece, the fleets of the Great King consisted entirely of ships furnished by the Phenicians, Syrians, the conquered provinces of the Lesser Asia, and the islands adjacent. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus mention

the quota furnished by each country, in order to compose the fleet of twelve hundred ships with which Xerxes invaded Greece, and among these there is not one belonging to Persia. At the same time it is proper to observe, that according to Herodotus, whose authority is unexceptionable with regard to this point, the fleet was under the command of Ariabignes, a son of Darius, who had several satraps of high rank under his command, and both Persians and Medes served as soldiers on board of it; Herod. lib. vii. c. 96, 97. By what motives, or what authority, they were induced to act in this manner, I cannot explain. From some religious scruples, similar to those of the Persians, many of the natives of Indostan, in our own time, refuse to embark on board a ship, and to serve at sea; and yet, on some occasions, the sepoy in the service of the European powers have got the better of these scruples.

NOTE X. SECT. I. p. 27.

M. LE BARON DE SAINTE-CROIX, in his ingenious and learned *Critique des Historiens d'Alexandre le Grand*, p. 96, seems to entertain some doubt with respect to the number of the cities which Alexander is said to have built. Plutarch de Fort. Alex. affirms, that he founded no fewer than seventy. It appears from many passages in ancient authors, that the building of cities, or, what may be considered as the same, the establishment of fortified stations, was the mode of maintaining their authority in the conquered nations, adopted not only by Alexander, but by his successors. Seleucus and Antiochus,

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

to whom the greater part of the Persian empire became subject, were no less remarkable for founding new cities than Alexander, and these cities seem fully to have answered the purposes of the founders, as they effectually prevented (as I shall afterwards have occasion to observe) the revolt of the conquered provinces.' Though the Greeks, animated with the love of liberty and of their native country, refused to settle in the Persian empire while under the dominion of its native monarchs; even when allured by the prospect of great advantage, as M. de Sainte-Croix remarks, the case became perfectly different, when that empire was subjected to their own dominion, and they settled there, not as subjects, but as masters. Both Alexander and his successors discovered much discernment in chusing the situation of the cities which they built. Seleucia, which Seleucus founded, was inferior only to Alexandria in number of inhabitants, in wealth, and in importance; Mr. Gibbon, vol. i. p. 250. M. D'Anville, Mem. de Literat. xxx.

NOTE XI. SECT. I. p. 29.

It is from Justin we receive the slender knowledge we have of the progress which Seleucus made in India; lib. xv. c. 4. But we cannot rely on his evidence, unless when it is confirmed by the testimony of other authors. Plutarch seems to assert, that Seleucus had penetrated far into India; but that respectable writer is more eminent for his discernment of characters, and his happy selection of those circumstances which mark and discriminate them, than for the accuracy of his historical re-

searches. Pliny, whose authority is of greater weight, seems to consider it as certain, that Seleucus had carried his arms into districts of India which Alexander never visited; Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 17. The passage in which this is mentioned, is somewhat obscure, but it seems to imply, that Seleucus had marched from the Hyphasis to the Hyfudrus, from thence to Palibothra, and from that to the mouth of the Ganges. The distances of the principal stations in this march are marked, amounting to 2244 Roman miles. In this sense, M. Bayer understands the words of Pliny; Histor. Regni Græcorum Bactriani, p. 37. But to me it appears highly improbable, that the Indian expedition of Seleucus could have continued so long as to allow time for operations of such extent. If Seleucus had advanced as far into India as the mouth of the Ganges, the ancients would have had a more accurate knowledge of that part of the country than they seem ever to have possessed.

NOTE XII. SECT. I. p. 30.

MAJOR RENNELL gives a magnificent idea of this, by informing us, that the Ganges, after it has "escaped from the
" mountainous tract in which it had wandered above eight
" hundred miles;" Mem. p. 233. "receives in its course
" through the plains eleven rivers, some of them as large as
" the Rhine, and none smaller than the Thames, besides as
" many more of lesser note;" p. 257.

NOTE XIII. SECT. I. p. 31.

IN fixing the position of Palibothra, I have ventured to differ from Major Rennell, and I venture to do so with diffidence. According to Strabo, Palibothra was situated at the junction of the Ganges and another river; lib. xv. p. 1028. Arrian is still more explicit. He places Palibothra at the confluence of the Ganges and Erranaboas, the last of which he describes as less than the Ganges or Indus, but greater than any other known river; Hist. Ind. c. 10. This description of its situation corresponds exactly with that of Allahabad. P. Boudier, to whose observations the geography of India is much indebted, says, that the Jumna, at its junction with the Ganges, appeared to him not inferior in magnitude to that river; D'Anville, *Antiq. de l'Inde*, p. 53. Allahabad is the name which was given to that city by the emperor Akbar, who erected a strong fortress there; an elegant delineation of which is published by Mr. Hodges, No. IV. of his *Select Views in India*. Its ancient name, by which it is still known among the Hindoos, is *Praeg*, or *Piyag*, and the people of the district are called *Praegi*, which bears a near resemblance to *Prasij*, the ancient appellation of the kingdom of which Palibothra was the capital; P. Tiesenthaler chez Bernouilli, tom. i. 223. D'Anville, p. 56. Allahabad is such a noted seat of Hindoo devotion, that it is denominated *The King of Worshipped Places*; Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 35. "The territory around

“ it, to the extent of forty miles, is deemed holy ground.
 “ The Hindoos believe, that when a man dies in this place,
 “ whatever he wishes for he will obtain in his next regenera-
 “ tion. Although they teach that suicide in general will be
 “ punished with torments hereafter, yet they consider it as
 “ meritorious for a man to kill himself at Allahabad ;” Ayeen
 Akbery, iii. 256. P. Tieffenthaler describes the various ob-
 jects of veneration at Allahabad, which are still visited with
 great veneration by an immense number of pilgrims ; Bernou-
 illi, tom. i. 224. From all these circumstances, we may con-
 clude it to be a place of great antiquity, and in the same
 situation with the Palibothra of antiquity.

MAJOR RENNELL has been induced to place Palibothra on the same site with Patna, chiefly by two considerations.—
 I. From having learned that on or near the site of Patna stood anciently a very large city named *Patelpoot-ber* or *Patalipputra*, which nearly resembles the ancient name of Palibothra. Although there is not now a confluence of two rivers at Patna, he was informed that the junction of the Soane with the Ganges, now twenty-two miles above Patna, was formerly under the walls of that city. The rivers of India sometimes change their course in a singular manner, and he produces some remarkable instances of it. But even should it be allowed, that the accounts which the natives give of this variation in the course of the Soane were perfectly accurate, I question whether Arrian's account of the magnitude of the Erranaboas be applicable to that river, certainly not so justly as to the
 Jumna.

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Jumna.—2. He seems to have been influenced, in some degree, by Pliny's Itinerary, or Table of Distances from Taxila (the modern Attock) to the mouth of the Ganges; Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 17. But the distances in that Itinerary are marked so inaccurately, and in some instances are so palpably erroneous, that one cannot found upon them with much security. According to it, Palibothra is situated four hundred and twenty-five miles below the confluence of the Jumna and Ganges. The actual distance, however, between Allahabad and Patna, is not more than two hundred British miles. A disagreement so considerable cannot be accounted for, without supposing some extraordinary error in the Itinerary, or that the point of conflux of the Jumna with the Ganges has undergone a change. For the former of these suppositions there is no authority (as far as I know) from any manuscript, or for the latter from any tradition. Major Rennell has produced the reasons which led him to suppose the site of Palibothra to be the same with that of Patna; Memoirs, p. 49—54. Some of the objections which might be made to this supposition he has foreseen, and endeavoured to obviate; and after all that I have added to them, I shall not be surpris'd, if, in a geographical discussion, my readers are dispos'd to prefer his decision to mine.

NOTE

NOTE XIV. SECT. I. p. 32.

I DO not mention a short inroad into India by Antiochus the Great, about one hundred and ninety-seven years posterior to the invasion of his ancestor Seleucus. We know nothing more of this transaction, than that the Syrian monarch, after finishing the war he carried on against the two revolted provinces of Parthia and Bactria, entered India, and concluding a peace with Sophagafenus, a king of the country, received from him a number of elephants, and a sum of money; Polyb. lib. x. p. 597, &c. lib. xi. p. 651. edit. Casaub. Justin. lib. xv. c. 4. Bayer's Hist. Regn. Græcor. Bactr. p. 69, &c.

NOTE XV. SECT. I. p. 34.

A FACT cursorily related by Strabo, and which has escaped the inquisitive industry of M. de Guignes, coincides remarkably with the narrative of the Chinese writers, and confirms it. The Greeks, he says, were deprived of Bactria by tribes or hordes of Scythian Nomades, who came from the country beyond the Jaxartes, and are known by the names of Afij, Pasiani, Tachari, and Sacarauli; Strab. lib. xi. p. 779. A. The Nomades of the ancients were nations who, like the Tartars, subsisted entirely, or almost entirely, as shepherds, without agriculture.

NOTE

NOTE XVI. SECT. I. p. 36.

As the distance of Arsinoe, the modern Suez, from the Nile, is considerably less than that between Berenice and Coptos, it was by this route that all the commodities imported into the Arabian Gulf, might have been conveyed with most expedition and least expence into Egypt. But the navigation of the Arabian Gulf, which even in the present improved state of nautical science is slow and difficult, was in ancient times considered by the nations around it to be so extremely perilous, that it led them to give such names to several of its promontories, bays, and harbours, as convey a striking idea of the impression which the dread of this danger had made upon their imagination. The entry into the Gulf they called *Babelmandeb*, the gate or port of affliction. To a harbour not far distant, they gave the name of *Mete*, i. e. Death. A headland adjacent they called *Gardefan*, the Cape of Burial. Other denominations of similar import are mentioned by the author to whom I am indebted for this information. Bruce's Travels, vol. i. p. 442, &c. It is not surprising then, that the staple of Indian trade should have been transferred from the northern extremity of the Arabian Gulf to Berenice, as by this change a dangerous navigation was greatly shortened. This seems to have been the chief reason that induced Ptolemy to establish the port of communication with India at Berenice, as there were other harbours on the Arabian Gulf which were considerably nearer than it to the Nile. At a later period, after
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the ruin of Coptos by the Emperor Diocletian, we are informed by Abulfeda, *Descript. Egypt.* edit. Michaelis, p. 77, that Indian commodities were conveyed from the Red Sea to the Nile, by the shortest route, viz. from Coffeir, probably the Philoteras Portus of Ptolemy, to Cous, the Vicus Apollinis, a journey of four days. The same account of the distance was given by the natives to Dr. Pococke, *Travels*, vol. i. p. 87. In consequence of this, Cous, from a small village, became the city in upper Egypt next in magnitude to Fostat, or Old Cairo. In process of time, from causes which I cannot explain, the trade from the Red Sea by Coffeir removed to Kene, farther down the river than Cous, *Abulf.* p. 13. 77. *D'Anville Egypte*, 196—200. In modern times, all the commodities of India imported into Egypt, are either brought by sea from Gidda to Suez, and thence carried on camels to Cairo, or are conveyed by land carriage by the caravan returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca, *Niebuhr Voyage*, tom. i. p. 224. *Volney*, i. 188, &c. This, as far as I have been able to trace it, is a complete account of all the different routes by which the productions of the East have been conveyed to the Nile, from the first opening of that communication. It is singular that P. Sicard, *Mem. des Missions dans le Levant*, tom. ii. p. 157, and some other respectable writers, should suppose Coffeir to be the Berenice founded by Ptolemy, although Ptolemy has laid down its latitude at 23° 50', and Strabo has described it as nearly under the same parallel with that of Syenè, lib. ii. p. 195, D. In consequence of this mistake, Pliny's computation of the distance between Berenice and Coptos, at two hundred and fifty-eight miles, has been deemed erroneous. *Pococke*, p. 87. But as Pliny not

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only mentions the total distance, but names the different stations in the journey, and specifies the number of miles between each; and as the Itinerary of Antoninus coincides exactly with his account, D'Anville *Egypte*, p. 21, there is no reason to call in question the accuracy of it.

NOTE XVII. SECT. I. p. 37.

MAJOR RENNELL is of opinion, "that under the Ptolemies, the Egyptians extended their navigation to the extreme point of the Indian continent, and even sailed up the Ganges to Palibothra," now Patna. *Introd.* p. xxxvi. But had it been usual to sail up the Ganges as high as Patna, the interior parts of India must have been better known to the ancients than they ever were, and they would not have continued to derive their information concerning them from Megasthenes alone. Strabo begins his description of India in a very remarkable manner. He requests his readers to peruse with indulgence the account which he gives of it, as it was a country very remote, and few persons had visited it; and of these, many having seen only a small part of the country, related things either from hear-say, or, at the best, what they had hastily remarked while they passed through it in the course of military service, or on a journey. *Strabo*, lib. xv. p. 1005. B. He takes notice that few of the traders from the Arabian Gulf ever reached the Ganges. *Ibid.* 1006. C. He asserts, that the Ganges enters

the sea by one mouth, *ibid.* 1011. C.; an error into which he could not have fallen if the navigation of that river had been common in his time. He mentions indeed the sailing up the Ganges, *ibid.* 1010, but it is cursorily in a single sentence; whereas, if such a considerable inland voyage of above four hundred miles, through a populous and rich country, had been customary, or even if it had ever been performed by the Roman, or Greek, or Egyptian traders, it must have merited a particular description, and must have been mentioned by Pliny and other writers, as there was nothing similar to it in the practice of navigation among the ancients. It is observed by Arrian (or whoever is the author of the *Periplus Maris Erythræi*), that previous to the discovery of a new route to India, which shall be mentioned afterwards, the commerce with that country was carried on in small vessels which sailed round every bay, p. 32. *Ap. Hudf. Geogr. Min.* Vessels of such light construction, and which followed this mode of sailing, were ill fitted for a voyage so distant as that round Cape Comorin, and up the bay of Bengal, to Patna. It is not improbable, that the merchants whom Strabo mentions as having reached the Ganges, may have travelled thither by land, either from the countries towards the mouth of the Indus, or from some part of the Malabar coast, and that the navigation up the Ganges, of which he casually takes notice, was performed by the natives in vessels of the country. This opinion derives some confirmation from his remarks upon the bad structure of the vessels which frequented that part of the Indian ocean. From his description of them, p. 1012. C. it is evident that they were vessels of the country.

NOTE XVIII. SECT. I. p. 39.

THE erroneous ideas of many intelligent writers of antiquity with respect to the Caspian Sea, though well known to every man of letters, are so remarkable, and afford such a striking example of the imperfection of their geographical knowledge, that a more full account of them may not only be acceptable to some of my readers, but in endeavouring to trace the various routes by which the commodities of the East were conveyed to the nations of Europe, it becomes necessary to enter into some detail concerning their various sentiments with respect to this matter. 1. According to Strabo, the Caspian is a bay, that communicates with the great Northern ocean, from which it issues at first, by a narrow strait, and then expands into a sea extending in breadth five hundred stadia, lib. xi. p. 773. A. With him Pomponius Mela agrees, and describes the strait by which the Caspian is connected with the ocean, as of considerable length, and so narrow that it had the appearance of a river, lib. iii. c. 5. edit. Pliny likewise gives a similar description of it, Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 13. In the age of Justinian, this opinion concerning the communication of the Caspian Sea with the ocean, was still prevalent; Cosm. Indicopl. Topog. Christ. lib. ii. p. 138. C. 2. Some early writers, by a mistake still more singular, have supposed the Caspian Sea to be connected with the Euxine. Quintus Curtius, whose ignorance of geography is notorious, has adopted this error, lib. vii. c. 7. edit. 3. Arrian, though a much more judicious

judicious writer, and who by residing for some time in the Roman province of Cappadocia, of which he was governor, might have obtained more accurate information, declares in one place, the origin of the Caspian Sea to be still unknown, and is doubtful whether it was connected with the Euxine, or with the great Eastern ocean which surrounds India; lib. vii. c. 16. In another place he asserts, that there was a communication between the Caspian and the Eastern ocean; lib. v. c. 26. These errors appear more extraordinary, as a just description had been given of the Caspian by Herodotus, near five hundred years before the age of Strabo. "The Caspian, says he, is a sea by itself, unconnected with any other. Its length is as much as a vessel with oars can sail in fifteen days, its greatest breadth as much as it can sail in eight days;" lib. i. c. 203. Aristotle describes it in the same manner, and with his usual precision contends that it ought to be called a great lake not a sea; Meteorolog. lib. ii. Diodorus Siculus concurs with them in opinion, vol. ii. lib. xviii. p. 261. None of those authors determine whether the greatest length of the Caspian was from North to South, or from East to West. In the ancient maps which illustrate the geography of Ptolemy, it is delineated, as if its greatest length extended from East to West. In modern times the first information concerning the true form of the Caspian which the people of Europe received, was given by Anthony Jenkinson, an English merchant, who with a caravan from Russia travelled along a considerable part of its coast in the year 1558; Hakluyt Collect. vol. i. p. 334. The accuracy of Jenkinson's description was confirmed by an actual survey of that sea made by order of Peter the Great,

A. D. 1718, and it is now ascertained not only that the Caspian is unconnected with any other sea, but that its length from North to South is considerably more than its greatest breadth from East to West. From this detail, however, we learn how the ill-founded ideas concerning it, which were generally adopted, gave rise to various wild schemes of conveying Indian commodities to Europe by means of its supposed communication with the Euxine sea, or with the Northern ocean. It is an additional proof of the attention of Alexander the Great to every thing conducive to the improvement of commerce, that a short time before his death he gave directions to fit out a squadron in the Caspian, in order to survey that sea, and to discover whether it was connected either with the Euxine or Indian ocean; Arrian. lib. vii. c. 16.

NOTE XIX. SECT. I. p. 49.

FROM this curious detail, we learn how imperfect ancient navigation was, even in its most improved state. The voyage from Berenice to Ocelis, could not have taken thirty days, if any other course had been held than that of servilely following the windings of the coast. The voyage from Ocelis to Musiris would be (according to Major Rennell) fifteen days run for an European ship in the modern stile of navigation, being about seventeen hundred and fifty marine miles, on a straight course; Introd. p. xxxvii. It is remarkable, that though the *Periplus Maris Erythræi* was written after the voyage of Hippalus, the chief object of the author of it is to describe the

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the ancient course along the coasts of Arabia and Persia, to the mouth of the Indus, and from thence down the western shore of the continent to Musiris. I can account for this, only by supposing, that from the unwillingness of mankind to abandon old habits, the greater part of the traders from Berenice still continued to follow that route to which they were accustomed. To go from Alexandria to Musiris, required (according to Pliny) ninety-four days. In the year 1788, the Boddam, a ship belonging to the English East-India Company, of a thousand tuns burthen, took only fourteen days more to complete her voyage from Portsmouth to Madras. Such are the improvements which have been made in navigation.

NOTE XX. SECT. II. p. 50.

It was the opinion of Plato, that in a well-regulated commonwealth the citizens should not engage in commerce, nor the state aim at obtaining maritime power. Commerce, he contends, would corrupt the purity of their morals, and by entering into the sea-service, they would be accustomed to find pretexts for justifying conduct so inconsistent with what was manly and becoming, as would gradually relax the strictness of military discipline. It had been better for the Athenians, he asserts, to have continued to send annually the sons of seven of their principal citizens to be devoured by the Minotaur, than to have changed their ancient manners, and to have become a maritime power. In that perfect republic, of which he delineates the form, he ordains that the capital should be situated at least
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ten miles from the sea; De Legibus, lib. iv. ab initio. These ideas of Plato were adopted by other philosophers. Aristotle enters into a formal discussion of the question, whether a State rightly constituted should be commercial or not; and though abundantly disposed to espouse sentiments opposite to those of Plato, he does not venture to decide explicitly with respect to it; De Repub. lib. vii. c. 6. In ages when such opinions prevail, little information concerning commerce can be expected.

NOTE XXI. SECT. II. p. 53.

PLINY, lib. ix. c. 35. Principium ergo culmenque omnium rerum prætij Margaritæ tenent. In lib. xxxvii. c. 4. he affirms, Maximum in rebus humanis prætium, non solum inter gemmas, habet Adamas. These two passages stand in such direct contradiction to one another, that it is impossible to reconcile them, or to determine which is most conformable to truth. I have adhered to the former, because we have many instances of the exorbitant price of pearls, but none, as far as I know, of diamonds having been purchased at a rate so high. In this opinion I am confirmed by a passage in Pliny, lib. xix. c. 1.; having mentioned the exorbitant price of *Asbestos*, he says, “æquat prætia excellentium Margaritarum;” which implies, that he considered them to be of higher price than any other commodity.

NOTE

NOTE. XXII. SECT. II. p. 54.

PLINY has devoted two entire books of his Natural History, lib. xii. and xiii. to the enumeration and description of the spices, aromatics, ointments, and perfumes, the use of which luxury had introduced among his countrymen. As many of these were the productions of India, or of the countries beyond it, and as the trade with the East was carried on to a great extent in the age of Pliny, we may form some idea of the immense demand for them, from the high price at which they continued to be sold in Rome. To compare the prices of the same commodities in ancient Rome, with those now paid in our own country, is not a gratification of curiosity merely, but affords a standard by which we may estimate the different degree of success with which the Indian trade has been conducted in ancient and modern times. Many remarkable passages in ancient authors, concerning the extravagant price of precious stones and pearls among the Romans, as well as the general use of them by persons of all ranks, are collected by Meursius de Lux. Romanorum, cap. 5.; and by Stanislaus Robierzyckius, in his treatise on the same subject, lib. ii. c. 1. The English reader will receive sufficient information from Dr. Arbuthnot, in his valuable Tables of ancient coins, weights, and measures, p. 172, &c.

NOTE XXIII. SECT. II. p. 56.

M. MAHUDEL; in a memoir read in the academy of inscriptions and belles lettres in the year 1719, has collected the various opinions of the ancients concerning the nature and origin of silk, which tend all to prove their ignorance with regard to it. Since the publication of M. Mahudel's memoir, P. du Halde has described a species of silk, of which I believe he communicated the first notice to the moderns. "This is produced by small insects nearly resembling snails. They do not form cocoons either round or oval-like the silk-worm, but spin very long threads, which fasten themselves to trees and bushes as they are driven by the wind. These are gathered, and wrought into silk stuffs, coarser than those produced by domestic silk-worms. The insects who produce this coarse silk are wild." Description de l'Empire de la Chine, tom. ii. folio, p. 207. This nearly resembles Virgil's description,

Velleraque ut foliis depestant tenuia Seres.

Georg. II. 121.

An attentive reader of Virgil will find, that, besides all the other qualities of a great descriptive poet, he possessed an extensive knowledge of natural history. The nature and productions of the wild silk-worms are illustrated at greater length in the large collection of Memoires concernant l'Histoire, les Sciences, les Arts, &c. des Chinois, tom. ii. p. 575, &c.; and by Pere de Mailla, in his voluminous History of China, tom. xiii. p. 434. It is a singular circumstance in the history of silk, that

on account of its being an excretion of a worm, the Mahomedans consider it as an unclean dress; and it has been decided, with the unanimous assent of all the doctors, that a person wearing a garment made entirely of silk, cannot lawfully offer up the daily prayers enjoined by the Koran. Herbel. Bibl. Orient. artic. *Harir*.

NOTE XXIV. SECT. II. p. 57.

IF the use of the cotton manufactures of India had been common among the Romans, the various kinds of them would have been enumerated in the Law de Publicanis et Vectigalibus, in the same manner as the different kinds of spices and precious stones. Such a specification would have been equally necessary for the direction both of the merchant and of the tax-gatherer.

NOTE XXV. SECT. II. p. 57.

THIS part of Arrian's Periplus has been examined with great accuracy and learning by Lieutenant Wilford; and from his investigation it is evident, that the Plithana of Arrian is the modern Pultanah, on the southern banks of the river Godvery, two hundred and seventeen British miles south from Baroach; that the position of Tagara is the same with that of the modern Dowlatabad, and the high grounds across which the goods were conveyed to Baroach, are the Ballagaut mountains. The bearings and distances of these different

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places, as specified by Arrian, afford an additional proof (were that necessary) of the exact information which he had received concerning this district of India; Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 369, &c.

NOTE XXVI. SECT. II. p. 64.

STRABO acknowledges his neglect of the improvements in geography which Hipparchus had deduced from astronomical observations, and justifies it by one of those logical subtleties which the ancients were apt to introduce into all their writings. "A geographer," says he, (i. e. a describer of the earth) "is to pay no attention to what is out of the earth; nor will men, engaged in conducting the affairs of that part of the earth which is inhabited, deem the distinction and divisions of Hipparchus worthy of notice." Lib. ii. 194. C.

NOTE XXVII. SECT. II. p. 64.

WHAT an high opinion the ancients had of Ptolemy, we learn from Agathemerus, who flourished not long after him. "Ptolemy," says he, "who reduced geography into a regular system, treats of every thing relating to it, not carelessly, or merely according to ideas of his own; but attending to what had been delivered by more ancient authors, he adopted from them whatever he found consonant to truth." Epitome Geogr.

Geogr. lib. i. c. 6. edit. Hudson. From the same admiration of his work, Agathodæmon, an artist of Alexandria, prepared a series of maps for the illustration of it, in which the position of all the places mentioned by Ptolemy, with their longitude and latitude, is laid down precisely according to his ideas. Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. -iii. 412.

NOTE XXVIII. SECT. II. p. 65.

As these public Surveys and Itineraries furnished the ancient geographers with the best information concerning the position and distances of many places, it may be proper to point out the manner in which they were completed by the Romans. The idea of a general survey of the whole empire was first formed by Julius Cæsar, and, having been begun by him under authority of a decree of the senate, was finished by Augustus. As Rome was still far inferior to Greece in science, the execution of this great undertaking was committed to three Greeks, men of great abilities, and skilled in every part of philosophy. The survey of the eastern division of the empire was finished by Zenodorus in fourteen years five months and nine days. That of the northern division was finished by Theodotus in twenty years eight months and ten days. The southern division was finished in twenty-five years one month and ten days. *Æthici Cosmographia apud Geographos, editos à Hen. Stephano, 1577. p. 107.* This was an undertaking worthy of those illustrious persons, and suited to the magnificence of a great people. Besides this general survey, every new war produced

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duced a new delineation and measurement of the countries which were the seat of it. We may conclude from Vegetius, *Instit. Rei Militaris*, lib. iii. c. 6., that every governor of a Roman province was furnished with a description of it; in which were specified the distance of places in miles, the nature of the roads, the bye-roads, the short cuts, the mountains, the rivers, &c.; all these, says he, were not only described in words, but were delineated in a map, that, in deliberating concerning his military movements, the eyes of a general might aid the decisions of his mind.

NOTE XXIX. SECT. II. p. 66.

THE consequence of this mistake is remarkable. Ptolemy, lib. vii. c. 1., computes the longitude of Barygaza, or Baroach, to be $17^{\circ} 20'$; and that of Cory, or Cape Comorin, to be $13^{\circ} 20'$. which is the difference of four degrees precisely; whereas the real difference between these two places is nearly fourteen degrees.

NOTE XXX. SECT. II. p. 66.

RAMUSIO, the publisher of the most ancient and perhaps the most valuable Collection of Voyages, is the first person, as far as I know, who takes notice of this strange error of Ptolemy; *Viaggi*, vol. i. p. 181. He justly observes, that the
 Author

Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea had been more accurate, and had described the peninsula of India as extending from north to south; Peripl. p. 24. 29.

NOTE XXXI. SECT. II. p. 68.

THIS error of Ptolemy justly merits the name of *enormous*, which I have given to it; and it will appear more surprising when we recollect, that he must have been acquainted, not only with what Herodotus relates concerning the circumnavigation of Africa, by order of one of the Egyptian kings, Lib. iv. c. 4., but with the opinion of Eratosthenes, who held that the great extent of the Atlantic ocean was the only thing which prevented a communication between Europe and India by sea; Strab. Geogr. lib. i. p. 113. A. This error, however, must not be imputed wholly to Ptolemy. Hipparchus, whom we may consider as his guide, had taught that the earth is not surrounded by one continuous ocean, but that it is separated by different isthmuses, which divide it into several large basins; Strab. lib. i. p. 11. B. Ptolemy, having adopted this opinion, was induced to maintain that an unknown country extended from Cattigara to Prassum on the south-east coast of Africa; Geogr. lib. vii. c. 3 and 5. As Ptolemy's system of geography was universally received, this error spread along with it. In conformity to it the Arabian geographer Edrissi, who wrote in the twelfth century, taught that a continued tract of land stretched eastward from Sofala on the African coast, until it united with some part of the Indian continent; D'Anville, Antiq.

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Antiq. p. 187. Annexed to the first volume of *Gesta Dei per Francos*, there is an ancient and very rude map of the habitable globe, delineated according to this idea of Ptolemy. M. Goffellin, in his map entitled *Ptolemæi Systema Geographicum*, has exhibited this imaginary tract of land which Ptolemy supposes to have connected Africa with Asia; *Geographie des Grecs analysée*.

NOTE XXXII. SECT. II. p. 69.

IN this part of the Disquisition, as well as in the map prepared for illustrating it, the geographical ideas of M. D'Anville, to which Major Rennell has given the sanction of his approbation, *Introd.* p. xxxix. have been generally adopted. But M. Goffellin has lately published, "The Geography of the
" Greeks analysed; or, the Systems of Eratosthenes, Strabo, and
" Ptolemy, compared with each other, and with the Knowledge
" which the Moderns have acquired;" a learned and ingenious work, in which he differs from his countryman with respect to many of his determinations. According to M. Goffellin, the *Magnum Promontorium*, which M. D'Anville concludes to be Cape Romania, at the southern extremity of the peninsula of Malacca, is the point of Bragu, at the mouth of the great river Ava; near to which he places Zaba, supposed by M. D'Anville, and by Barros, *Decad. ii. liv. vi. c. 1.* to be situated on the strait of Sincapura or Malacca. The *Magnus Sinus* of Ptolemy he holds to be the same with the Gulf of Martaban, not the Gulf of Siam, according to M. D'Anville's decision. The
position

position of Cattigara, as he endeavours to prove, corresponds to that of Mergui, a considerable port on the west coast of the kingdom of Siam; and that Thinæ, or Sinæ Metropolis, which M. D'Anville removes as far as Sin-hoa, in the kingdom of Cochin-China, is situated on the same river with Mergui, and now bears the name of Tana-ferim. The Ibadij Infula of Ptolemy, which M. D'Anville determines to be Sumatra, he contends, is one of that cluster of small isles which lie off this part of the coast of Siam; p. 137—148. According to M. Goffellin's system, the ancients never sailed through the Straits of Malacca, had no knowledge of the island of Sumatra, and were altogether unacquainted with the Eastern Ocean. If to any of my readers these opinions appear to be well founded, the navigation and commerce of the ancients in India must be circumscribed within limits still more confined than those which I have allotted to them. From the *Ayeen Akbery*, vol. ii. p. 7. we learn that Cheen was an ancient name of the kingdom of Pegu; as that country borders upon Ava, where M. Goffellin places the Great Promontory, this near resemblance of names may appear, perhaps, to confirm his opinion that Sinæ Metropolis was situated on this coast, and not so far East as M. D'Anville has placed it.

As Ptolemy's geography of this eastern division of Asia is more erroneous, obscure, and contradictory than in any other part of his work, and as all the manuscripts of it, both Greek and Latin, are remarkably incorrect in the two chapters which contain the description of the countries beyond the Ganges, M. D'Anville, in his *Memoir concerning*

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the limits of the world known to the ancients beyond the Ganges, has admitted into it a larger portion of conjecture than we find in the other researches of that cautious geographer. He likewise builds more than usual upon the resemblances between the ancient and modern names of places, though at all times he discovers a propensity, perhaps too great, to trace these, and to rest upon them. These resemblances are often, indeed, very striking, and have led him to many happy discoveries. But in perusing his works, it is impossible, I should think, not to perceive that some which he mentions are far fetched and fanciful. Whenever I follow him, I have adopted only such conclusions as seem to be established with his accustomed accuracy.

NOTE XXXIII. SECT. II. p. 78.

THE Author of the Circumnavigation of the Erythræan Sea has marked the distances of many of the places which he mentions, with such accuracy as renders it a nearer approach, than what is to be found in any writer of antiquity, to a complete survey of the coast from Myos-hormus, on the west side of the Arabian Gulf, along the shores of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and Caramania, to the mouth of the Indus, and thence down the west coast of the Indian Peninsula to Musiris and Barace. This adds to the value of this short treatise, which, in every other respect, possesses great merit. It may be considered as a remarkable proof of the extent and

accuracy of this Author's intelligence concerning India, that he is the only ancient writer who appears in any degree to have been acquainted with the great division of the country, which still subsists, viz. Indostan Proper, comprehending the northern provinces of the Peninsula, and the Deccan, comprehending the southern provinces. "From Barygaza (says he) the continent stretches to the south; hence that district is called Dachinabades, for, in the language of the country, the south is called Dachanos;" Peripl. p. 29. As the Greeks and Romans, when they adopt any foreign name, always gave it a termination peculiar to their own language, which the grammatical structure of both tongues rendered, in some degree, necessary, it is evident that Dachanos is the same with Deccan, which word has still the same signification, and is still the name of that division of the Peninsula. The northern limit of the Deccan at present is the river Nerbuddah, where our Author likewise fixes it. Peripl. *ibid.*

NOTE XXXIV. SECT. II. p. 81.

THOUGH, in deducing the latitudes of places from observations of the sun or stars, the ancient astronomers neglected several corrections, which ought to have been applied, their results were sometimes exact to a few minutes, but at other times they appear to have been erroneous to the extent of two, or even three degrees, and may perhaps be reckoned, one with another, to have come within half a degree of the truth. This

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part of the ancient geography would therefore have been tolerably accurate, if there had been a sufficient number of such determinations. These, however, were far from being numerous, and appear to have been confined to some of the more remarkable places in the countries which surround the Mediterranean sea.

WHEN, from want of more accurate observations, the latitude was inferred from the length of the longest or shortest day, no great degree of precision was, in any case, to be expected, and least of all in the vicinity of the Equator. An error of a quarter of an hour, which, without some mode of measuring time more accurate than ancient observers could employ, was not easily avoided, might produce, in such situations, an error of four degrees in the determination of the latitude.

WITH respect to places in the torrid zone, there was another resource for determining the latitude. This was by observing the time of the year when the sun was vertical to any place, or when bodies that stood perpendicular to the horizon had no shadow at noon-day; the sun's distance from the Equator at that time, which was known from the principles of astronomy, was equal to the latitude of the place. We have instances of the application of this method in the determination of the parallels of Syene and Meroe. The accuracy which this method would admit of, seems to be limited to about half a degree, and this only on the supposition that the observer was stationary; for if he was travelling from one place to another,

and had not an opportunity of correcting the observation of one day by that of the day following, he was likely to deviate much more considerably from the truth.

WITH respect to the longitude of places, as eclipses of the moon are not frequent, and could seldom be of use for determining it, and only when there were astronomers to observe them with accuracy, they may be left out of the account altogether when we are examining the geography of remote countries. The differences of the meridians of places were therefore anciently ascertained entirely by the bearings and distances of one place from another, and of consequence all the errors of reckonings, surveys, and itineraries, fell chiefly upon the longitude, in the same manner as happens at present in a ship which has no method of determining its longitude, but by comparing the dead-reckoning with the observations of the latitude; though with this difference, that the errors, to which the most skilful of the ancient navigators was liable, were far greater than what the most ignorant ship-master of modern times, provided with a compass, can well commit. The length of the Mediterranean measured, in degrees of longitude, from the Pillars of Hercules to the Bay of Issus, is less than forty degrees; but in Ptolemy's maps it is more than sixty, and, in general, his longitudes, counting from the meridian of Alexandria, especially toward the East, are erroneous nearly in the same proportion. It appears, indeed, that in remote seas, the coasts were often delineated from an imperfect account of the distances sailed, without the least knowledge of the bearings or direction of the ship's course.

Ptolemy,

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Ptolemy, it is true, used to make an allowance of about one-third for the winding of a ship's course, Geogr. lib. i. c. 12. ; but it is plain, that the application of this general rule could seldom lead to an accurate conclusion. Of this there is a striking instance in the form which that geographer has given to the Peninsula of India. From the Barygazenum Promontorium to the place marked Locus unde solvunt in Chrysen navigantes, that is, from Surat on the Malabar coast, to about Narlapour on the Coromandel coast, the distance measured along the sea-shore is nearly the same with what it is in reality; that is, about five hundred and twenty leagues. But the mistake in the direction is astonishing, for the Malabar and Coromandel coast, instead of stretching to the south, and intersecting one another at Cape Comorin, in a very acute angle, are extended by Ptolemy almost in the same straight line from west to east, declining a little to the south. This coast is, at the same time, marked with several bays and promontories, nearly resembling, in their position, those which actually exist on it. All these circumstances compared together, point out very clearly what were the materials from which the ancient map of India was composed. The ships which had visited the coast of that country, had kept an account of the time which they took to sail from one place to another, and had marked, as they stood along shore, on what hand the land lay, when they shaped their course across a bay, or doubled a promontory. This imperfect journal, with an inaccurate account, perhaps, of the latitude of one or two places, was probably all the information concerning the coast of India, which Ptolemy was able to procure. That he should have been able to procure

cure no better information from merchants who sailed with no particular view of exploring the coast, will not appear wonderful, if we consider that even the celebrated Periplus of Hanno would not enable a geographer to lay down the coast of Africa with more precision, than Ptolemy has delineated that of India.

NOTE XXXV. SECT. II. p. 89.

THE introduction of the silk-worm into Europe, and the effects which this produced, came under the view of Mr. Gibbon, in writing the history of the Emperor Justinian, and though it was an incident of subordinate importance only, amidst the multiplicity of great transactions which must have occupied his attention, he has examined this event with an accuracy, and related it with a precision, which would have done honour to an author who had no higher object of research. Vol. iv. p. 71, &c. Nor is it here only that I am called upon to ascribe to him this merit. The subject of my inquiries has led me several times upon ground which he had gone over, and I have uniformly received information from the industry and discernment with which he has surveyed it.

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NOTE XXXVI. SECT. III. p. 94.

THIS voyage, together with the observations of Abu Zeid al Hafan of Siraf, was published by M. Renaudot, A. D. 1718, under the title of "Anciennes Relations des Indes, et de la Chine, de deux Voyageurs Mahometans, qui y allerent dans le Neuvieme Siecle traduites de Arabe, avec des marques sur les principaux endroits de ces Relations." As M. Renaudot, in his remarks, represents the literature and police of the Chinese, in colours very different from those of the splendid descriptions which a blind admiration had prompted the Jesuits to publish, two zealous missionaries have called in question the authenticity of these Relations, and have asserted that the authors of them had never been in China; P. Premare Lettr. edifiantes et curieuses, tom. xix. p. 420, &c. P. Parennin, *ibid.* tom. xxi. p. 158, &c. Some doubts concerning their authenticity were entertained likewise by several learned men in England, on account of M. Renaudot's having given no notice of the manuscript which he translated, but that he found it in the library of M. le Comte de Seignelay. As no person had seen the manuscript since that time, the doubts increased, and M. Renaudot was charged with the crime of imposing upon the public. But the Colbert Manuscripts having been deposited in the King's Library, as (fortunately for literature) most private collections are in France, M. de Guignes, after a long search, discovered the identical manuscript to
which

which M. Renaudot refers. It appears to have been written in the twelfth century; *Journal des Scavans*, Dec. 1764, p. 315, &c. As I had not the French edition of M. Renaudot's book, my references are made to the English translation. The Relation of the two Arabian Travellers is confirmed, in many points, by their countryman Maffoudi, who published his treatise on universal history, to which he gives the fantastical title of "Meadows of Gold, and Mines of "Jewels," a hundred and six years after their time. From him, likewise, we receive such an account of India in the tenth century, as renders it evident that the Arabians had then acquired an extensive knowledge of that country. According to his description, the peninsula of India was divided into four kingdoms. The first was composed of the provinces situated on the Indus, and the rivers which fall into it; the capital of which was Moultan. The capital of the second kingdom was Canoge, which, from the ruins of it still remaining, appears to have been a very large city; Rennell's *Memoirs*, p. 54. In order to give an idea of its populousness, the Indian historians assert, that it contained thirty thousand shops, in which betel-nut was sold, and sixty thousand sets of musicians and singers, who paid a tax to government; *Ferishta*, translated by Dow, vol. i. p. 32. The third kingdom was Cachemire. Maffoudi, as far as I know, is the first author who mentions this paradise of India, of which he gives a short but just description. The fourth is the kingdom of Guzerate, which he represents as the greatest and most powerful; and he concurs with the two Arabian Travellers, in giving the sovereigns of it the appellation of Balhara. What Maffoudi relates concerning India is more

worthy of notice, as he himself had visited that country; Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi, tom. i. p. 9, 10. Maffoudi confirms what the two Arabian Travellers relate, concerning the extraordinary progress of the Indians in astronomical science. According to his account, a temple was built during the reign of Brahman, the first monarch of India, with twelve towers, representing the twelve signs of the zodiac; and in which was delineated, a view of all the stars as they appear in the heavens. In the same reign was composed the famous Sind-Hind; which seems to be the standard treatise of Indian astronomy; Notices, &c. tom. i. p. 7. Another Arabian author, who wrote about the middle of the fourteenth century, divides India into three parts. The northern, comprehending all the provinces on the Indus. The middle, extending from Guzerate to the Ganges. The southern, which he denominates Comar, from Cape Comorin; Notices, &c. tom. ii. p. 46.

NOTE XXXVII. SECT. III. p. 95:

THE naval skill of the Chinese seems not to have been superior to that of the Greeks, the Romans, or Arabians. The course which they held from Canton to Siraf, near the mouth of the Persian Gulf, is described by their own authors. They kept as near as possible to the shore until they reached the island of Ceylon, and then doubling Cape Comorin, they sailed along the west side of the Peninsula, as far as the mouth of the
Indus,

Indus, and thence steered along the coast to the place of their destination; Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxii. p. 367. Some authors have contended, that both the Arabs and Chinese were well acquainted with the mariners compass, and the use of it in navigation; but it is remarkable that in the Arabic, Turkish, or Persian languages there is no original name for the compass. They commonly call it *Bossola*, the Italian name, which shews that the thing signified is foreign to them as well as the word. There is not one single observation, of ancient date, made by the Arabs on the variation of the needle, or any instruction deduced from it, for the assistance of navigators. Sir John Chardin, one of the most learned and best informed travellers who has visited the East, having been consulted upon this point, returns for answer, “I
 “ boldly assert, that the Asiatics are beholden to us for this
 “ wonderful instrument, which they had from Europe a long
 “ time before the Portuguese conquests. For, first, their
 “ compasses are exactly like ours, and they buy them of
 “ Europeans as much as they can, scarce daring to meddle with
 “ their needles themselves. Secondly, It is certain that the
 “ old navigators only coasted it along, which I impute to their
 “ want of this instrument to guide and instruct them in the
 “ middle of the ocean. We cannot pretend to say that they
 “ were afraid of venturing far from home, for the Arabs, the
 “ first navigators in the world, in my opinion, at least for the
 “ Eastern seas, have, time out of mind, sailed from the bottom
 “ of the Red Sea, all along the coast of Africa; and the
 “ Chinese have always traded with Java and Sumatra, which

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“ is a very considerable voyage. So many islands uninhabited
 “ and yet productive, so many lands unknown to the people I
 “ speak of, are a proof that the old navigators had not the
 “ art of sailing on the main sea. I have nothing but argu-
 “ ment to offer touching this matter, having never met with
 “ any person in Persia or the Indies to inform me when the
 “ compass was first known among them, though I made
 “ inquiry of the most learned men in both countries. I have
 “ sailed from the Indies to Persia in Indian ships, when no
 “ European has been aboard but myself. The pilots were
 “ all Indians, and they used the fore-staff and quadrant for
 “ their observations. These instruments they have from us, and
 “ made by our artists, and they do not in the least vary from
 “ ours, except that the characters are Arabic. The Arabs are
 “ the most skilful navigators of all the Asiatics or Africans;
 “ but neither they nor the Indians make use of charts; and
 “ they do not much want them: some they have, but they
 “ are copied from ours, for they are altogether ignorant of per-
 “ spective.” Inquiry when the Mahomedans first entered China,
 p. 141, &c. When M. Niehbuhr was at Cairo, he found
 a magnetic needle in the possession of a Mahomedan, which
 served to point out the Kaaba, and he gave it the name of
El Magnatis, a clear proof of its European origin. *Voyage*
en Arabie, tom. ii. p. 169.

NOTE

NOTE XXXVIII. SECT. III. p. 97.

THE progress of Christianity, and of Mahomedanism, both in China and India, is attested by such evidence as leaves no doubt with respect to it. This evidence is collected by Affermannus, *Biblioth. Orient.* vol. iv. p. 437, &c. 521, &c. ; and by M. Renaudot, in two Dissertations annexed to *Anciennes Relations* ; and by M. de la Croze, *Histoire de Christianisme des Indes*. In our own age, however, we know that the number of profelytes to either of these religions is extremely small, especially in India. A Gentoo considers all the distinctions and privileges of his cast, as belonging to him by an exclusive and incommunicable right. To convert, or to be converted, are ideas equally repugnant to the principles most deeply rooted in his mind ; nor can either the Catholic or Protestant missionaries in India boast of having overcome these prejudices, except among a few in the lowest casts, or of such as have lost their cast altogether. This last circumstance is a great obstacle to the progress of Christianity in India. As Europeans eat the flesh of that animal which the Hindoos deem sacred, and drink intoxicating liquors, in which practices they are imitated by the converts to Christianity, this sinks them to a level with the Pariars, the most contemptible and odious race of men. Some Catholic missionaries were so sensible of this, that they affected to imitate the dress and manner of living of Brahmins, and refused to associate with the Pariars, or to admit them to the participation of the sacraments. But this was condemned by the apostolic
legate

legate Tournon, as inconsistent with the spirit and precepts of the Christian religion; *Voyage aux Indes Orientales*; par M. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 58. note. Notwithstanding the labours of missionaries for upwards of two hundred years, (says a late ingenious writer,) and the establishments of different Christian nations, who support and protect them, out of, perhaps, one hundred millions of Hindoos, there are not twelve thousand Christians, and those almost entirely *Cbancalas*, or outcasts. Sketches relating to the history, religion, learning, and manners of the Hindoos, p. 48. The number of Mahomedans, or Moors, now in Indostan, is supposed to be near ten millions; but they are not the original inhabitants of the country, but the descendants of adventurers, who have been pouring in from Tartary, Persia, and Arabia, ever since the invasion of Mah-moud of Gazna, A. D. 1002, the first Mahomedan conqueror of India. Orme Hist. of Military Transact. in Indostan, vol. i. p. 24. Herbelot, Biblioth. Orient. artic. *Gaznaviah*. As the manners of the Indians in ancient times seem to have been, in every respect, the same with those of the present age, it is probable, that the Christians and Mahomedans, said to be so numerous in India and China, were chiefly foreigners, allured thither by a lucrative commerce, or their descendants. The number of Mahomedans in China has been considerably increased by a practice, common among them, of buying children in years of famine, whom they educate in the Mahomedan religion. Hist. Genev. des Voyages, tom. vi. p. 357.

NOTE XXXIX. SECT. III. p. 102.

FROM the Chronicle of Andrew Dandolo, Doge of Venice, who was elevated to that high station at a time when his countrymen had established a regular trade with Alexandria, and imported from it all the productions of the East, it was natural to expect some information concerning their early trade with that country; but, except an idle tale concerning some Venetian ships which had sailed to Alexandria about the year 828, contrary to a decree of the state, and which stole thence the body of St. Mark; Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. vol. xii. lib. 8. c. 2. p. 170.; I find no other hint concerning the communication between the two countries. On the contrary, circumstances occur, which shew that the resort of Europeans to Egypt had ceased, almost entirely, for some time. Prior to the seventh and eighth centuries, the greater part of the public deeds in Italy, and in other countries of Europe, were written upon paper fabricated of the Egyptian Papyrus; but after that period, as Europeans no longer ventured to trade in Alexandria, almost all charters and other deeds are written upon parchment. Murat. Antiq. Ital. Medii Ævi, vol. iii. p. 832. I have been induced, both in the text and in this note, to state these particulars concerning the interruption of trade between the Christians and Mahometans so fully, in order to correct an error into which several modern authors have fallen, by supposing, that soon after the first conquests of the Caliphs, the trade with India returned into its ancient channels, and the merchants

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chants of Europe resorted with the same freedom as formerly to the ports of Egypt and Syria.

NOTE XL. SECT. III. p. 106.

IT is proper to remark (says Mr. Stewart) that the Indians have an admirable method of rendering their religion lucrative, it being usual for the Faquirs to carry with them, in their pilgrimages from the sea-coasts to the interior parts, pearls, corals, spices, and other precious articles, of small bulk, which they exchange, on their return, for gold-duft, musk, and other things of a similar nature, concealing them easily in their hair, and in the cloths round their middle, carrying on, in proportion to their numbers, no inconsiderable traffic by these means. Account of the Kingdom of Thibet, Philos. Transact. vol. lxxvii. part ii. p. 483.

NOTE XLI. SECT. III. p. 113.

CAFFA is the most commodious station for trade in the Black Sea. While in the hands of the Genoese, who kept possession of it above two centuries, they rendered it the seat of an extensive and flourishing commerce. Even under all the disadvantages of its subjection, at present, to the Turkish government, it continues to be a place of considerable trade. Sir John Chardin, who visited it A. D. 1672, relates, that, during

his residence of forty days there, above four hundred ships arrived at Caffa, or sailed from it. Voyages, i. 48. He observed there, several remains of Genoese magnificence. The number of its inhabitants, according to M. Peyssonnel, amounts still to eighty thousand. Commerce de la Mer Noire, tom. i. p. 15. He describes its trade as very great.

NOTE XLII. SECT. III. P. 115.

THE rapacity and insolence of the Genoese settled in Constantinople, are painted by Nicephorus Gregoras, an eye-witness of their conduct, in very striking colours. "They," says he, "now," i. e. about the year 1340, "dreamed that they had acquired the dominion of the sea, and claimed an exclusive right to the trade of the Euxine, prohibiting the Greeks to sail to the Mæotis, the Chersonesus, or any part of the coast beyond the mouth of the Danube, without a licence from them. This exclusion they extended likewise to the Venetians, and their arrogance proceeded so far as to form a scheme of imposing a toll upon every vessel passing through the Bosphorus." Lib. xviii. c. 2. § 1.

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NOTE XLIII. SECT. III. p. 115.

A PERMISSION from the Pope was deemed so necessary to authorize a commercial intercourse with infidels, that long after this period, in the year 1454, Nicolas V. in his famous bull in favour of prince Henry of Portugal, among other privileges, grants him a licence to trade with Mahomedans, and refers to similar concessions from Pope Martin V., and Eugenius, to kings of Portugal. Leibnitz Codex Jur. Gent. Diplom. Pars I. p. 489.

NOTE XLIV. SECT. III. p. 117.

NEITHER Jovius, the professed panegyrist of the Medici, nor Jo. M. Brutus, their detractor, though both mention the exorbitant wealth of the family, explain the nature of the trade by which it was acquired. Even Machiavel, whose genius delighted in the investigation of every circumstance which contributed to aggrandize or depress nations, seems not to have viewed the commerce of his country as a subject that merited any elucidation. Denina, who has entitled the first chapter of his eighteenth book, "The Origin of the Medici, and the Commencement of their Power and Grandeur," furnishes little information with regard to the trade carried on by them. This
silence

silence of so many authors is a proof that historians had not yet begun to view commerce as an object of such importance in the political state of nations, as to enter into any detail concerning its nature and effects. From the references of different writers to Scipio Ammirato, *Istorie Fiorentine*; to Pagnini, *Della Decima ed altri gravezze della Mercatura di Fiorentini*, and to Balducci, *Practica della Mercatura*, I should imagine that something more satisfactory may be learned concerning the trade both of the republic and family of the Medici; but I could not find any of these books either in Edinburgh or in London.

NOTE XLV. SECT. III. P. 117.

LEIBNITZ has preserved a curious paper, containing the instructions of the republic of Florence to the two ambassadors sent to the Soldan of Egypt, in order to negotiate this treaty with him, together with the report of these ambassadors on their return. The great object of the republic was, to obtain liberty of trading in all parts of the Soldan's dominions, upon the same terms with the Venetians. The chief privileges which they solicited, were; 1. A perfect freedom of admission into every port belonging to the Soldan, protection while they continued in it, and liberty of departure at what time they chose. 2. Permission to have a consul, with the same rights and jurisdiction as those of the Venetians; and liberty to build a church, a warehouse, and a bath, in every place where they settled. 3. That they should not pay for goods imported or exported higher duties than were paid by the Venetians. 4. That the

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effects of any Florentine who died in the dominions of the Soldan should be consigned to the consul. 5. That the gold and silver coin of Florence should be received in payments. All these privileges (which shew on what equal and liberal terms Christians and Mahomedans now carried on trade) the Florentines obtained; but from the causes mentioned in the text, they seem never to have acquired any considerable share in the commerce with India. Leibnitz, Mantissa Cod. Jur. Gent. Diplom. Pars altera, p. 163.

NOTE XLVI. SECT. III. p. 122.

THE Eastern parts of Asia are now so completely explored, that the first imperfect accounts of them, by Marco Polo, attract little of that attention which was originally excited by the publication of his travels; and some circumstances in his narrative have induced different authors to justify this neglect, by calling in question the truth of what he relates, and even to assert that he had never visited those countries which he pretends to describe. He does not, say they, ascertain the position of any one place, by specifying its longitude or latitude. He gives names to provinces and cities, particularly in his description of Cathay, which have no resemblance to those which they now bear. We may observe, however, that as Marco Polo seems to have been, in no degree, a man of science, it was not to be expected that he should fix the position of places with geographical accuracy. As he travelled through China, either in

the suite of the great Khan, or in execution of his orders, it is probable that the names which he gives to different provinces and cities, are those by which they were known to the Tartars, in whose service he was, not their original Chinese names. Some inaccuracies which have been observed in the relation of his travels, may be accounted for, by attending to one circumstance, that it was not published from a regular journal, which, perhaps, the vicissitudes in his situation, during such a long series of adventures, did not permit him to keep, or to preserve. It was composed after his return to his native country, and chiefly from recollection. But notwithstanding this disadvantage, his account of those regions of the East, towards which my inquiries have been directed, contains information with respect to several particulars, altogether unknown in Europe at that time, the accuracy of which is now fully confirmed. I shall mention some of these, which, though they relate to matters of no great consequence, afford the best proof of his having visited these countries, and of his having observed the manners and customs of the people with attention. He gives a distinct account of the nature and preparation of Sago, the principal article of subsistence among all the nations of Malayan race, and he brought the first specimen of this singular production to Venice, Lib. ii. c. 16. He takes notice, likewise, of the general custom of chewing Betel, and his description of the mode of preparing it, is the same with that still in use. Ramus. Viaggi, i. p. 55. D. 56. B. He even descends into such detail as to mention the peculiar manner of feeding horses in India, which still continues. Ramus. p. 53. F. What is of more importance, we learn from him, that the trade with Alexandria continued when
he

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he travelled through India, to be carried on in the same manner as I conjectured it to have been in ancient times. The commodities of the East were still brought to the Malabar coast by vessels of the country, and conveyed thence, together with pepper, and other productions peculiar to that part of India, by ships which arrived from the Red Sea. Lib. iii. c. 27. This, perhaps, may account for the superior quality which Sanudo ascribes to the goods brought to the coast of Syria from the Persian Gulf, above those imported into Egypt by the Red Sea. The former were chosen and purchased in the places where they grew, or where they were manufactured, by the merchants of Persia, who still continued their voyages to every part of the East; while the Egyptian merchants, in making up their cargoes, depended upon the assortment of goods brought to the Malabar coast by the natives. To some persons in his own age, what Marco Polo related concerning the numerous armies and immense revenues of the Eastern princes, appeared so extravagant, (though perfectly consonant to what we now know concerning the population of China, and the wealth of Indostan,) that they gave him the name of *Messer Marco Millioni*. Prefat. de Ramus. p. 4. But among persons better informed, the reception he met with was very different. Columbus, as well as the men of science with whom he corresponded, placed such confidence in the veracity of his relations, that upon them, the speculations and theories, which led to the discovery of the New World, were in a great measure founded. Life of Columbus by his Son, c. 7, and 8.

NOTE

NOTE XLVII. SECT. III. p. 128.

IN the year 1301, Joanna of Navarre, the wife of Philip le Bel, king of France, having been some days in Bruges, was so much struck with the grandeur and wealth of that city, and particularly with the splendid appearance of the citizens wives, that she was moved (says Guicciardini) by female envy to exclaim with indignation, "I thought that I had been the only queen here, but I find there are many hundreds more." Descrit. de Paesi Bassi, p. 408.

NOTE XLVIII. SECT. III. p. 130.

IN the history of the reign of Charles V. vol. i. p. 163. It is observed, that, during the war excited by the famous League of Cambray, while Charles VIII. of France could not procure money at a less premium than forty-two per cent., the Venetians raised what sums they pleased at five per cent. But this, I imagine, is not to be considered as the usual commercial rate of interest at that period, but as a voluntary and public-spirited effort of the citizens, in order to support their country at a dangerous crisis. Of such laudable exertions, there are several striking instances in the history of the republic. In the year 1379, when the Genoese, after obtaining a great naval victory over

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over the Venetians, were ready to attack their capital, the citizens, by a voluntary contribution, enabled the senate to fit out such a powerful armament as saved their country. Sabellicus, *Hist. Rer. Venet.* Dec. ii. lib. vi. p. 385. 390. In the war with Ferrara, which began in the year 1472, the senate, relying upon the attachment of the citizens to their country, required them to bring all their gold and silver plate, and jewels, into the public treasury, upon promise of paying the value of them at the conclusion of the war, with five per cent. of interest; and this requisition was complied with cheerfully. Petr. Cynæus de Bello Ferrar. ap. Murat. *Script. Rer. Ital.* vol. xxi. p. 1016.

NOTE XLIX. SECT. III. p. 130.

Two facts may be mentioned as proofs of an extraordinary extension of the Venetian trade at this period.—1. There is in Rymer's Great Collection, a series of grants from the kings of England, of various privileges and immunities to Venetian merchants trading in England, as well as several commercial treaties with the republic, which plainly indicate a considerable increase of their transactions in that country. These are mentioned in their order by Mr. Anderson, to whose patient industry and sound understanding, every person engaged in any commercial research must have felt himself greatly indebted on many occasions.—2. The establishment of a Bank by public authority, the credit of which was founded
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on that of the state. In an age and nation so well acquainted with the advantages which commerce derives from the institution of banks, it is unnecessary to enumerate them. Mercantile transactions must have been numerous and extensive before the utility of such an institution could be fully perceived, or the principles of trade could be so fully understood as to form the regulations proper for conducting it with success. Venice may boast of having given the first example to Europe of an establishment altogether unknown to the ancients, and which is the pride of the modern commercial system. The constitution of the bank of Venice was originally founded on such just principles, that it has served as a model in the establishment of banks in other countries, and the administration of its affairs has been conducted with so much integrity, that its credit has never been shaken. I cannot specify the precise year in which the bank of Venice was established by a law of the State. Anderson supposes it to have been A. D. 1157. Chron. Deduct. vol. i. p. 84. Sandi Stor. Civil. Venez. part II. vol. ii. p. 768. Part III. vol. ii. p. 892.

NOTE L. SECT. III. p. 132.

AN Italian author of good credit, and a diligent inquirer into the ancient history of its different governments, affirms, that if the several States which traded in the Mediterranean had united together, Venice alone would have been superior to them all, in naval power, and in extent of commerce.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Denina *Revolutions d'Italie* traduits par l'Abbè Jardin, lib. xviii. c. 6. tom. vi. p. 339. About the year 1420, the Doge Mocenigo gives a view of the naval force of the republic, which confirms this decision of Denina. At that time it consisted of three thousand trading vessels, of various dimensions, on board which were employed seventeen thousand sailors; of three hundred ships of greater force, manned by eight thousand sailors; and of forty-five large galleasses, or caracks, navigated by eleven thousand sailors. In public and private arsenals sixteen thousand carpenters were employed. Mar. Sanuto *Vite de Duché di Venezia*, ap. Mur. *Script. Rer. Ital.* vol. xxii. p. 959.

NOTE LI. SECT. III. p. 146.

WHEN we take a view of the form and position of the habitable parts of Asia and Africa, we shall see good reasons for considering the camel as the most useful of all the animals over which the inhabitants of these great continents have acquired dominion. In both, some of the most fertile districts are separated from each other by such extensive tracts of barren sands, the seats of desolation and drought, as seem to exclude the possibility of communication between them. But as the ocean, which appears, at first view, to be placed as an insuperable barrier between different regions of the earth, has been rendered, by navigation, subservient to their mutual intercourse; so, by means of the camel, which the Arabians emphatically call *The Ship of the Desert*,

Desert, the most dreary wastes are traversed, and the nations which they disjoin are enabled to trade with one another. Those painful journies, impracticable by any other animal, the camel performs with astonishing dispatch. Under heavy burdens of six, seven, and eight hundred weight, they can continue their march during a long period of time, with little food or rest, and sometimes without tasting water for eight or nine days. By the wise œconomy of Providence, the camel seems formed of purpose to be the beast of burden in those regions where he is placed, and where his service is most wanted. In all the districts of Asia and Africa, where deserts are most frequent and extensive, the camel abounds. This is his proper station, and beyond this the sphere of his activity does not extend far. He dreads alike the excesses of heat and of cold, and does not agree even with the mild climate of our temperate zone. As the first trade in Indian commodities, of which we have any authentic account, was carried on by means of camels, Genesis, xxxvii. 25, and as it is by employing them that the conveyance of these commodities has been so widely extended over Asia and Africa, the particulars which I have mentioned concerning this singular animal appeared to me necessary towards illustrating this part of my subject. If any of my readers desire more full information, and wish to know how the ingenuity and art of man have seconded the intentions of Nature, in training the camel, from his birth, for that life of exertion and hardship to which he is destined, he may consult *Histoire Naturelle*, by M. le Comte de Buffon, artic. *Gbameau et Dromedaire*, one of the most eloquent, and, as far as I can judge from examining the authorities

which he has quoted, one of the most accurate, descriptions given by that celebrated writer. M. Volney, whose accuracy is well known, gives a description of the manner in which the camel performs its journeys, which may be agreeable to some of my readers. “ In travelling through the desert, camels
 “ are chiefly employed, because they consume little, and carry
 “ a great load. His ordinary burden is about seven hundred
 “ and fifty pounds; his food, whatever is given him, straw,
 “ thistles, the stones of dates, beans, barley, &c. With a
 “ pound of food a day, and as much water, he will travel for
 “ weeks. In the journey from Cairo to Suez, which is forty
 “ or forty-six hours, they neither eat nor drink; but these
 “ long fasts, if often repeated, wear them out. Their usual
 “ rate of travelling is very slow, hardly above two miles an
 “ hour; it is vain to push them, they will not quicken their
 “ pace, but, if allowed some short rest, they will travel fifteen
 “ eighteen hours a day.” Voyage, tom. ii. p. 383.

NOTE LII. SECT. III. p. 148.

IN order to give an adequate idea of the extensive circulation of Indian commodities by land carriage, it would be necessary to trace the route, and to estimate the number, of the various caravans by which they are conveyed. Could this be executed with accuracy, it would be a curious object of geographical research, as well as a valuable addition to commercial history. Though it is inconsistent with the brevity which I have uniformly studied in conducting this Disquisition, to enter into a
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detail of so great length, it may be proper here, for illustrating this part of my subject, to take such a view of two caravans which visit Mecca, as may enable my readers to estimate more justly the magnitude of their commercial transactions. The first is the caravan which takes its departure from Cairo in Egypt, and the other from Damascus in Syria; and I select these, both because they are the most considerable, and because they are described by authors of undoubted credit, who had the best opportunities of receiving full information concerning them. The former is composed not only of pilgrims from every part of Egypt, but of those which arrive from all the small Mahomedan states on the African coast of the Mediterranean, from the empire of Morocco, and even from the Negroe kingdoms on the Atlantic. When assembled, the caravan consists at least of fifty thousand persons, and the number of camels employed in carrying water, provisions, and merchandize, is still greater. The journey, which, in going from Cairo and returning thither, is not completed in less than a hundred days, is performed wholly by land; and as the route lies mostly through sandy deserts, or barren uninhabited wilds, which seldom afford any subsistence, and where often no sources of water can be found, the pilgrims always undergo much fatigue, and sometimes must endure incredible hardships. An early and good description of this caravan is published by Hakluyt, vol. ii. p. 202, &c. Maillet has entered into a minute and curious detail with regard to it; *Descript. de l'Egypte*, part ii. p. 212, &c.. Pocock has given a route, together with the length of each day's march, which he received from a person who had been fourteen times at Mecca, vol. i. pp. 188, 261, &c.—The caravan
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from Damascus, composed of pilgrims from almost every province of the Turkish empire, is little inferior to the former in number, and the commerce which it carries on is hardly less valuable. Voyage de Volney, tom. ii. p. 251, &c. This pilgrimage was performed in the year 1741, by Khizéh Abdulkurreem, whom I formerly mentioned, Note IV. p. 186. He gives the usual route from Damascus to Mecca, computed by hours, the common mode of reckoning a journey in the East through countries little frequented. According to the most moderate estimate, the distance between the two cities, by his account, must be above a thousand miles; a great part of the journey is through a desert, and the pilgrims not only endure much fatigue, but are often exposed to great danger from the wild Arabs. Memoirs, p. 114, &c. It is a singular proof of the predatory spirit of the Arabs, that although all their independent tribes are zealous Mahomedans, yet they make no scruple of plundering the caravans of pilgrims, while engaged in performing one of the most indispensable duties of their religion. Great as these caravans are, we must not suppose that all the pilgrims who visit Mecca belong to them; such considerable additions are received from the extensive dominions of Persia, from every province of Indóstan, and the countries to the East of it, from Abyffinia, from various states on the Southern coast of Africa, and from all parts of Arabia, that when the whole are assembled they have been computed to amount to two hundred thousand. In some years the number is farther increased by small bands of pilgrims from several interior provinces of Africa, the names and situations of which are just beginning to be known in Europe. For this last fact we are indebted

indebted to the Association for promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, formed by some British Gentlemen upon principles so liberal, and with views so public-spirited, as do honour to themselves and to their country. Proceedings, &c. p. 174.

IN the Report of the Committee of the Privy Council on the Slave Trade, other particulars are contained; and it appears that the commerce carried on by caravans in the interior parts of Africa is not only widely extended, but of considerable value. Besides the great caravan which proceeds to Cairo, and is joined by Mahomedan pilgrims from every part of Africa, there are caravans which have no object but commerce, which set out from Fez, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and other States on the sea-coast, and penetrate far into the interior country. Some of them take no less than fifty days to reach the place of their destination; and, as the medium of their rate of travelling may be estimated at about eighteen miles a day, the extent of their journey may be easily computed. As both the time of their out-set, and their route, are known, they are met by the people of all the countries through which they travel, who trade with them. Indian goods of every kind form a considerable article in this traffic, in exchange for which the chief commodity they can give is Slaves. Part vi.

As the journeys of the caravans, which are purely commercial, do not commence at stated seasons, and their routes vary according to the convenience or fancy of the merchants of whom they are composed, a description cannot be given of them with the same degree of accuracy. But by attending to
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the accounts of some authors, and the occasional hints of others, sufficient information may be gathered to satisfy us, that the circulation of Eastern goods by these caravans is very extensive. The same intercourse which was anciently kept up by the provinces in the North-east of Asia with Indostan and China, and which I formerly described, still subsists. Among all the numerous tribes of Tartars, even of those which retain their pastoral manners in greatest purity, the demand for the productions of these two countries is very considerable. Voyages de Pallas, tom. i. p. 357, &c. tom. ii. p. 422. In order to supply them with these, caravans set out annually from Boghar, (Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 332.) Samarcand, Thibet, and several other places, and return with large cargoes of Indian and Chinese goods. But the trade carried on between Russia and China in this part of Asia is by far the most extensive and best known. Some connection of this kind, it is probable, was kept up between them from the earliest period, but it increased greatly after the interior parts of Russia were rendered more accessible by the conquests of Zingis Khan and Tamerlane. The commercial nations of Europe were so well acquainted with the mode of carrying on this trade, that soon after the Portuguese had opened the communication with the East by the Cape of Good Hope, an attempt was made in order to diminish the advantages which they derived from this discovery, to prevail on the Russians to convey Indian and Chinese commodities through the whole extent of their empire, partly by land-carriage and partly by means of navigable rivers, to some port on the Baltic, from which they might be distributed through every part of Europe. Ramusio Raccólto da Viaggi, vol. i. p. 374. B.

This scheme, too great for the monarch then on the throne of Russia to carry into execution, was rendered practicable by the conquests of Ivan Basilowitz, and the genius of Peter the Great. Though the capitals of the two empires were situated at the immense distance of six thousand three hundred and seventy-eight miles from each other, and the route lay for above four hundred miles through an uninhabited desert, (Bell's Travels, vol. ii. p. 167.) caravans travelled from the one to the other. But though it had been stipulated when this intercourse was established, that the number of persons in each caravan should not exceed two hundred, and though they were shut up within the walls of a Caravanserai during the short time they remained in Pekin, and were allowed to deal only with a few merchants, to whom a monopoly of the trade with them had been granted; yet, notwithstanding all these restraints and precautions, the jealous vigilance with which the Chinese government excludes foreigners from a free intercourse with its subjects was alarmed, and the admission of the Russian caravans into the empire was soon prohibited. After various negotiations, an expedient was at length devised, by which the advantages of mutual commerce were secured, without infringing the cautious arrangements of Chinese policy. On the boundary of the two empires, two small towns were built almost contiguous, the one inhabited by Russians, the other by Chinese. To these all the marketable productions of their respective countries are brought by the subjects of each empire; and the furs, the linen and woollen cloth, the leather, the glass, &c. of Russia, are exchanged for the silk, the cotton, the tea, the rice, the toys, &c. of China. By some

well-judged concessions of the sovereign now seated on the throne of Russia, whose enlarged mind is superior to the illiberal maxims of some of her predecessors, this trade is rendered so flourishing, that its amount annually is not less than eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, and it is the only trade with China carried on almost entirely by barter. Mr. Coxe, in his account of the Russian discoveries, has collected, with his usual attention and discernment, every thing relative to this branch of trade, the nature and extent of which were little known in Europe. Chap. ii. iii. iv. Nor is this the only place where Russia receives Chinese and Indian commodities. A considerable supply of both is brought by caravans of independent Tartars to Orenburg, on the river Jaik, Voyage de Pallas, tom. i. p. 355, &c. to Troitzkaia, on the river Oui, and to other places which I might mention. I have entered into this long detail concerning the mode in which the productions in India and China are circulated through Russia, as it affords the most striking instance, I know, of the great extent to which valuable commodities may be conveyed by land carriage.

NOTE LIII. SECT. IV. p. 152.

THE only voyage of discovery in the Atlantic Ocean towards the South, by any of the ancient commercial states in the Mediterranean, is that of Hanno, undertaken by order of the republic of Carthage. As the situation of that city, so much nearer the Straits than Tyre, Alexandria, and the other seats

of ancient trade which I have mentioned, gave it more immediate access to the ocean; that circumstance, together with the various settlements which the Carthaginians had made in different provinces of Spain, naturally suggested to them this enterprise, and afforded them the prospect of considerable advantages from its success. The voyage of Hanno, instead of invalidating, seems to confirm the justness of the reasons which I have given, why no similar attempt was made by the other commercial states in the Mediterranean.

NOTE LIV. SECT. IV. p. 153.

THOUGH the intelligent authors whom I have quoted considered this voyage of the Phenicians as fabulous, Herodotus mentions a circumstance concerning it, which seems to prove that it had really been performed. "The Phenicians," says he, "affirmed that, in sailing round Africa, they had the sun on their right hand, which to me appears not to be credible, though it may be deemed so by others." Lib. iv. c. 42. This, it is certain, must have happened, if they really accomplished such a voyage. The science of astronomy, however, was in that early period so imperfect, that it was by experience only that the Phenicians could come at the knowledge of this fact; they durst not, without this, have ventured to assert what would have appeared to be an improbable fiction. Even after what they related, Herodotus disbelieved it.

NOTE LV. SECT. IV. p. 161.

NOTWITHSTANDING this increasing demand for the productions of India, it is remarkable, that during the sixteenth century some commodities which are now the chief articles of importation from the East, were either altogether unknown, or of little account. Tea, the importation of which, at present, far exceeds that of any other production of the East, has not been in general use, in any country of Europe, a full century; and yet, during that short period, from some singular caprice of taste, or power of fashion, the infusion of a leaf brought from the farthest extremity of the earth, of which it is perhaps the highest praise to say that it is innoxious, has become almost a necessary of life in several parts of Europe, and the passion for it descends from the most elevated to the lowest orders in society. In 1785 it was computed that the whole quantity of tea imported into Europe from China was about nineteen millions of pounds, of which it is conjectured that twelve millions were consumed in Great Britain and the dominions depending upon it. Dodsley's Annual Register for 1784 and 1785, p. 156. The porcelane of China, now as common in many parts of Europe as if it were of domestic manufacture, was not known to the ancients. Marco Polo is the first among the moderns who mentions it. The Portuguese began to import it not long after their first voyage to China, A. D. 1517; but it was a considerable time before the use of it became extensive.

A P P E N D I X.

A P P E N D I X.

I SHALL now endeavour to fulfil an engagement which I came under ^a, to make some observations upon the genius, the manners, and institutions of the people of India, as far as they can be traced from the earliest ages to which our knowledge of them extends. Were I to enter upon this wide field with an intention of surveying its whole extent; were I to view each object which it presents to a philosophical inquirer, under all its different aspects, it would lead me into researches and speculations, not only of immense length, but altogether foreign from the subject of this Disquisition. My inquiries and reflections shall therefore be confined to what is intimately connected with the design of this work. I shall collect the facts

^a See page 21.

which

which the ancients have transmitted to us concerning the institutions peculiar to the natives of India, and, by comparing them with what we know of that country, endeavour to deduce such conclusions as tend to point out the circumstances which have induced the rest of mankind, in every age, to carry on commercial intercourse to so great an extent with that country.

OF this intercourse there are conspicuous proofs in the earliest periods concerning which history affords information. Not only the people contiguous to India, but remote nations, seem to have been acquainted, from time immemorial, with its commodities, and to have valued them so highly, that in order to procure them they undertook fatiguing, expensive, and dangerous journeys. Whenever men give a decided preference to the commodities of any particular country, this must be owing either to its possessing some valuable natural productions peculiar to its soil and climate, or to some superior progress which its inhabitants have made in industry, art, and elegance. It is not to any peculiar excellence in the natural productions of India, that we must ascribe entirely the predilection of ancient nations for its commodities; for, pepper excepted, an article, it must be allowed, of great importance, they are little different from those of other tropical countries; and Ethiopia or Arabia might have fully supplied the Phenicians, and other trading people of antiquity, with the spices, the perfumes, the precious stones, the gold and silver, which formed the principal articles of their commerce.

WHOEVER

WHOEVER then wishes to trace the commerce with India to its source, must search for it, not so much in any peculiarity of the natural productions of that country, as in the superior improvement of its inhabitants. Many facts have been transmitted to us, which, if they are examined with proper attention, clearly demonstrate, that the natives of India were not only more early civilized, but had made greater progress in civilization than any other people. These I shall endeavour to enumerate, and to place them in such a point of view as may serve both to throw light upon the institutions, manners, and arts of the Indians, and to account for the eagerness of all nations to obtain the productions of their ingenious industry.

By the ancient Heathen writers, the Indians were reckoned among those races of men which they denominated *Autochthones* or *Aborigines*, whom they considered as natives of the soil, whose origin could not be traced^b. By the inspired writers, the wisdom of the East (an expression which is to be understood as a description of their extraordinary progress in science and arts) was early celebrated^c. In order to illustrate and confirm these explicit testimonies concerning the ancient and high civilization of the inhabitants of India, I shall take a view of their rank and condition as individuals; of their civil policy; of their laws and judicial proceedings; of their useful and elegant arts; of their sciences; and of their religious institutions; as far as information can be gathered from the ac-

^b Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 151.

^c 1 Kings, iv. 31.

counts of the Greek and Roman writers, compared with what still remains of their ancient acquirements and institutions.

I. FROM the most ancient accounts of India we learn, that the distinction of ranks and separation of professions were completely established there. This is one of the most undoubted proofs of a society considerably advanced in its progress. Arts in the early stages of social life are so few, and so simple, that each man is sufficiently master of them all, to gratify every demand of his own limited desires. A savage can form his bow, point his arrows, rear his hut, and hollow his canoe, without calling in the aid of any hand more skilful than his own^d. But when time has augmented the wants of men, the productions of art become so complicated in their structure, or so curious in their fabric, that a particular course of education is requisite towards forming the artist to ingenuity in contrivance and expertness in execution. In proportion as refinement spreads, the distinction of professions increases, and they branch out into more numerous and minute subdivisions. Prior to the records of authentic history, and even before the most remote æra to which their own traditions pretend to reach, this separation of professions had not only taken place among the natives of India, but the perpetuity of it was secured by an institution which must be considered as the fundamental article in the system of their policy. The whole body of the people was divided into four orders or casts. The members of the first, deemed the most sacred, had it for their province, to

^d Hist. of Amer. vol. iii. 165.

study the principles of religion ; to perform its functions ; and to cultivate the sciences. They were the priests, the instructors, and philosophers of the nation. The members of the second order were entrusted with the government and defence of the state. In peace they were its rulers and magistrates, in war they were the soldiers who fought its battles. The third was composed of husbandmen and merchants ; and the fourth of artificers, labourers, and servants. None of these can ever quit his own cast, or be admitted into another ^e. The station of every individual is unalterably fixed ; his destiny is irrevocable ; and the walk of life is marked out, from which he must never deviate. This line of separation is not only established by civil authority, but confirmed and sanctioned by religion ; and each order or cast is said to have proceeded from the Divinity in such a different manner, that to mingle and confound them would be deemed an act of most daring impiety ^f. Nor is it between the four different tribes alone that such insuperable barriers are fixed ; the members of each cast adhere invariably to the profession of their forefathers. From generation to generation, the same families have followed, and will always continue to follow, one uniform line of life.

SUCH arbitrary arrangements of the various members which compose a community, seems, at first view, to be adverse to improvement either in science or in arts ; and by forming

^e Ayeen Akbery, iii. 81, &c. Sketches relating to the History, &c. of the Hindoos, p. 107, &c.

^f See NOTE I.

around the different orders of men, artificial barriers, which it would be impious to pass, tends to circumscribe the operations of the human mind within a narrower sphere than nature has allotted to them. When every man is at full liberty to direct his efforts towards those objects and that end which the impulse of his own mind prompts him to prefer, he may be expected to attain that high degree of eminence to which the uncontrolled exertions of genius and industry naturally conduct. The regulations of Indian policy, with respect to the different orders of men, must necessarily, at some times, check genius in its career, and confine to the functions of an inferior cast, talents fitted to shine in an higher sphere. But the arrangements of civil government are made, not for what is extraordinary, but for what is common; not for the few, but for the many. The object of the first Indian legislators was to employ the most effectual means of providing for the subsistence, the security, and happiness of all the members of the community over which they presided. With this view they set apart certain races of men for each of the various professions and arts necessary in a well-ordered society, and appointed the exercise of them to be transmitted from father to son in succession. This system, though extremely repugnant to the ideas which we, by being placed in a very different state of society, have formed, will be found, upon attentive inspection, better adapted to attain the end in view, than a careless observer is, on a first view, apt to imagine. The human mind bends to the law of necessity, and is accustomed, not only to accommodate itself to the restraints which the condition of its nature, or the institutions of its country, impose, but to acquiesce in them. From

his entrance into life, an Indian knows the station allotted to him, and the functions to which he is destined by his birth. The objects which relate to these are the first that present themselves to his view. They occupy his thoughts, or employ his hands; and, from his earliest years, he is trained to the habit of doing with ease and pleasure that which he must continue through life to do. To this may be ascribed that high degree of perfection conspicuous in many of the Indian manufactures; and though veneration for the practices of their ancestors may check the spirit of invention, yet, by adhering to these, they acquire such an expertness and delicacy of hand, that Europeans, with all the advantages of superior science, and the aid of more complete instruments, have never been able to equal the exquisite execution of their workmanship. While this high improvement of their more curious manufactures excited the admiration, and attracted the commerce, of other nations, the separation of professions in India, and the early distribution of the people into classes, attached to particular kinds of labour, secured such abundance of the more common and useful commodities, as not only supplied their own wants, but ministered to those of the countries around them.

To this early division of the people into casts, we must likewise ascribe a striking peculiarity in the state of India; the permanence of its institutions, and the immutability in the manners of its inhabitants. What now is in India, always was there, and is likely still to continue: neither the ferocious violence and illiberal fanaticism of its Mahomedan conquerors, nor
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the power of its European masters, have effected any considerable alteration^a. The same distinctions of condition take place, the same arrangements in civil and domestic society remain, the same maxims of religion are held in veneration, and the same sciences and arts are cultivated. Hence, in all ages, the trade with India has been the same; gold and silver have uniformly been carried thither in order to purchase the same commodities with which it now supplies all nations; and from the age of Pliny to the present times, it has been always considered and execrated as a gulf which swallows up the wealth of every other country, that flows incessantly towards it, and from which it never returns^b. According to the accounts which I have given of the cargoes anciently imported from India, they appear to have consisted of nearly the same articles with those of the investments in our own times; and whatever difference we may observe in them seems to have arisen, not so much from any diversity in the nature of the commodities which the Indians prepared for sale, as from a variety in the tastes, or in the wants, of the nations which demanded them.

II. ANOTHER proof of the early and high civilization of the people of India, may be deduced from considering their political constitution and form of government. The Indians trace back the history of their own country through an immense succession of ages, and assert, that all Asia, from the mouth of the Indus on the west, to the confines of China on the east, and from the mountains of Thibet on the north, to Cape Comorin on the south, formed a vast empire,

^a See NOTE II.

^b See NOTE III.

subject to one mighty sovereign, under whom ruled several hereditary Princes and Rajahs. But their chronology, which measures the life of man in ancient times by thousands of years, and computes the length of the several periods, during which it supposes the world to have existed, by millions, is so wildly extravagant, as not to merit any serious discussion. We must rest satisfied, then, until some more certain information is obtained with respect to the ancient history of India, with taking the first accounts of that country, which can be deemed authentic, from the Greeks, who served under Alexander the Great. They found kingdoms of considerable magnitude established in that country. The territories of Porus and of Taxiles comprehended a great part of the Panjab, one of the most fertile and best cultivated countries in India. The kingdom of the Prasij, or Gandaridæ, stretched to a great extent on both sides of the Ganges. All the three, as appears from the ancient Greek writers, were powerful and populous.

THIS description of the partition of India into states of such magnitude, is alone a convincing proof of its having advanced far in civilization. In whatever region of the earth there has been an opportunity of observing the progress of men in social life, they appear at first in small independent tribes or communities. Their common wants prompt them to unite; and their mutual jealousies, as well as the necessity of securing subsistence, compel them to drive to a distance every rival who might encroach on those domains which they consider as their own. Many ages elapse before they coalesce, or acquire sufficient foresight to provide for the wants, or sufficient wisdom to conduct the affairs of

a numerous society. Even under the genial climate, and in the rich soil of India, more favourable perhaps to the union and increase of the human species than any other part of the globe, the formation of such extensive states, as were established in that country when first visited by Europeans, must have been a work of long time; and the members of them must have been long accustomed to exertions of useful industry.

THOUGH monarchical government was established in all the countries of India to which the knowledge of the ancients extended, the sovereigns were far from possessing uncontrouled or despotic power. No trace, indeed, is discovered there of any assembly or public body, the members of which, either in their own right, or as representatives of their fellow-citizens, could interpose in enacting laws, or in superintending the execution of them. Institutions destined to assert and guard the rights belonging to men in a social state, how familiar soever the idea may be to the people of Europe, never-formed a part of the political constitution in any great Asiatic kingdom. It was to different principles that the natives of India were indebted for restrictions which limited the exercise of regal power. The rank of individuals was unalterably fixed, and the privileges of the different castes were deemed inviolable. The monarchs of India, who are all taken from the second of the four classes formerly described, which is intrusted with the functions of government and exercise of war, behold among their subjects an order of men far superior to themselves in dignity, and so conscious of their own pre-eminence, both in rank and in sanctity, that they would deem it degradation and pollution, if they were

were to eat of the same food with their sovereign^k. Their persons are sacred, and even for the most heinous crimes they cannot be capitally punished; their blood must never be shed^l. To men in this exalted station monarchs must look up with respect, and reverence them as the ministers of religion, and the teachers of wisdom. On important occasions, it is the duty of sovereigns to consult them, and to be directed by their advice. Their admonitions, and even their censures, must be received with submissive respect. This right of the Brahmins to offer their opinion with respect to the administration of public affairs was not unknown to the ancients^m; and in some accounts preserved in India of the events which happened in their own country, princes are mentioned, who, having violated the privileges of the casts, and disregarded the remonstrances of the Brahmins, were deposed by their authority, and put to deathⁿ.

WHILE the sacred rights of the Brahmins opposed a barrier against the encroachments of regal power on one hand, it was circumscribed on the other by the ideas which those who occupied the highest stations in society entertained of their own dignity and privileges. As none but the members of the cast next in rank to that which religion has rendered sacred, could be employed in any function of the state, the sovereigns of the

^k Orme's Dissert. vol. i. p. 4. Sketches, &c. p. 113.

^l Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 10. p. 275. 283, &c.

^m Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C.

ⁿ Account of the Qualities requisite in a Magistrate, prefixed by the Pundits to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cii and cxvi.

extensive kingdoms anciently established in India, found it necessary to entrust them with the superintendence of the cities and provinces too remote to be under their own immediate inspection. In these stations they often acquired such wealth and influence, that offices conferred during pleasure, continued in their families, and they came gradually to form an intermediate order between the sovereign and his subjects; and by the vigilant jealousy with which they maintained their own dignity and privileges, they constrained their rulers to respect them, and to govern with equity.

NOR were the benefits of these restraints upon the power of the sovereign confined wholly to the two superior orders in the state; they extended, in some degree, to the third class employed in agriculture. The labours of that numerous and useful body of men are so essential to the preservation and happiness of society, that the greatest attention was paid to render their condition secure and comfortable. According to the ideas which prevailed among the natives of India (as we are informed by the first Europeans who visited their country), the sovereign is considered as the sole universal proprietor of all the land in his dominions, and from him is derived every species of tenure by which his subjects can hold it. These lands were let out to the farmers who cultivated them, at a stipulated rent, amounting usually to a fourth part of their annual produce paid in kind°. In a country where the price of work is extremely low, and where the labour of cultivation is very inconsiderable, the earth yielding its productions almost spontaneously,

° Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 53.

where

where subsistence is amazingly cheap, where few clothes are needed, and houses are built and furnished at little expence, this rate cannot be deemed exorbitant or oppressive. As long as the husbandman continued to pay the established rent, he retained possession of the farm, which descended, like property, from father to son.

THESE accounts given by ancient authors of the condition and tenure of the renters of land in India, agree so perfectly with what now takes place, that it may be considered almost as a description of the present state of its cultivation. In every part of India, where the native Hindoo Princes retain dominion, the *Ryots*, the modern name by which the renters of land are distinguished, hold their possessions by a lease, which may be considered as perpetual, and at a rate fixed by ancient surveys and valuations. This arrangement has been so long established, and accords so well with the ideas of the natives, concerning the distinctions of casts, and the functions allotted to each, that it has been inviolably maintained in all the provinces subject either to Mahomedans or Europeans; and, to both, it serves as the basis on which their whole system of finance is founded*. In a more remote period, before the original institutions of India were subverted by foreign invaders, the industry of the husbandman, on which every member of the community depended for subsistence, was as secure as the tenure by which he held his lands was equitable. Even war did not interrupt his labours or endanger his property. It was not

* See NOTE IV.

uncommon, we are informed, that while two hostile armies were fighting a battle in one field, the peasants were ploughing or reaping in the next field in perfect tranquillity⁹. These maxims and regulations of the ancient legislators of India have a near resemblance to the system of those ingenious modern speculators on political oeconomy, who represent the produce of land as the sole source of wealth in every country; and who consider the discovery of this principle, according to which they contend that the government of nations should be conducted, as one of the greatest efforts of human wisdom. Under a form of government, which paid such attention to all the different orders of which the society is composed, particularly the cultivators of the earth, it is not wonderful that the ancients should describe the Indians as a most happy race of men; and that the most intelligent modern observers should celebrate the equity, the humanity, and mildness of Indian policy. A Hindoo Rajah, as I have been informed by persons well acquainted with the state of India, resembles more a father presiding in a numerous family of his own children, than a sovereign ruling over inferiors, subject to his dominion. He endeavours to secure their happiness with vigilant solicitude; they are attached to him with the most tender affection and inviolable fidelity. We can hardly conceive men to be placed in any state more favourable to their acquiring all the advantages derived from social union. It is only when the mind is perfectly at ease, and neither feels nor dreads oppression, that it employs its active powers in forming numerous arrangements of police,

⁹ Strab. lib. xv. p. 1030. A.

for securing its enjoyments and increasing them. Many arrangements of this nature the Greeks, though accustomed to their own institutions, the most perfect at that time in Europe, observed and admired among the Indians, and mention them as instances of high civilization and improvement. There were established among the Indians three distinct classes of officers, one of which had it in charge to inspect agriculture, and every kind of country work. They measured the portions of land allotted to each renter. They had the custody of the *Tanks*, or public reservoirs of water, without a regular distribution of which, the fields in a torrid climate cannot be rendered fertile. They marked out the course of the highways, along which, at certain distances, they erected stones, to measure the road and direct travellers'. To officers of a second class was committed the inspection of the police in cities, and their functions, of course, were many and various; some of which only I shall specify. They appropriated houses for the reception of strangers; they protected them from injury, provided for their subsistence, and, when seized with any disease, they appointed physicians to attend them; and, on the event of their death, they not only buried them with decency, but took charge of their effects, and restored them to their relations. They kept exact registers of births and of deaths. They visited the public markets, and examined weights and measures. The third class of officers superintended the military department; but, as the objects to which their attention was directed are foreign from the subject of my

* See NOTE V.

inquiries,

inquiries, it is unnecessary to enter into any detail with respect to them*.

As manners and customs in India descend almost without variation from age to age, many of the peculiar institutions which I have enumerated still subsist there. There is still the same attention to the construction and preservation of tanks, and the distribution of their waters. The direction of roads, and placing stones along them, is still an object of police. *Choultries*, or houses built for the accommodation of travellers, are frequent in every part of the country, and are useful as well as noble monuments of Indian munificence and humanity. It is only among men in the most improved state of society, and under the best forms of government, that we discover institutions similar to those which I have described; and many nations have advanced far in their progress, without establishing arrangements of police equally perfect.

III. In estimating the progress which any nation has made in civilization, the object that merits the greatest degree of attention, next to its political constitution, is the spirit of the laws and nature of the forms by which its judicial proceedings are regulated. In the early and rude ages of society, the few disputes with respect to property which arise, are terminated by the interposition of the old men, or by the authority of the chiefs in every small tribe or community; their decisions are dictated by their own discretion, or founded on plain and

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1034. A, &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

obvious maxims of equity. But as controversies multiply, cases similar to such as have been formerly determined must recur, and the awards upon these grow gradually into precedents, which serve to regulate future judgments. Thus, long before the nature of property is defined by positive statutes, or any rules prescribed concerning the mode of acquiring or conveying it, there is gradually formed, in every state, a body of customary or common law, by which judicial proceedings are directed, and every decision conformable to it is submitted to with reverence, as the result of the accumulated wisdom and experience of ages.

IN this state the administration of justice seems to have been in India when first visited by Europeans. Though the Indians, according to their account, had no written laws, but determined every controverted point, by recollecting what had been formerly decided^r; they assert, that justice was dispensed among them with great accuracy, and that crimes were most severely punished^s. But in this general observation is contained all the intelligence which the ancients furnish concerning the nature and forms of judicial proceedings in India. From the time of Megasthenes, no Greek or Roman of any note appears to have resided long enough in the country, or to have been so much acquainted with the customs of the natives, as to be capable of entering into any detail with respect to a point of so much importance in their policy. Fortunately, the defects of their information have been amply supplied by the more

^r Strabo, lib. xv. 1035. D.

^s Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 154.

accurate and extensive researches of the moderns. During the course of almost three centuries, the number of persons who have resorted from Europe to India has been great. Many of them, who have remained long in the country, and were persons of liberal education and enlarged minds, have lived in such familiar intercourse with the natives, and acquired so competent a knowledge of their languages, as enabled them to observe their institutions with attention, and to describe them with fidelity. Respectable as their authority may be, I shall not, in what I offer for illustrating the judicial proceedings of the Hindoos, rest upon it alone, but shall derive my information from sources higher and more pure.

TOWARDS the middle of the sixteenth century, Akber the sixth, in descent from Tamerlane, mounted the throne of Indostan. He is one of the few sovereigns intitled to the appellation both of Great and Good, and the only one of Mahomedan race, whose mind appears to have risen so far above all the illiberal prejudices of that fanatical religion in which he was educated, as to be capable of forming a plan worthy of a monarch who loved his people, and was solicitous to render them happy. As, in every province of his extensive dominions, the Hindoos formed the great body of his subjects, he laboured to acquire a perfect knowledge of their religion, their sciences, their laws and institutions; in order that he might conduct every part of his government, particularly the administration of justice, in a manner as much accommodated as possible to their own ideas*. In this generous undertaking he

* See NOTE VI.

was seconded with zeal by his vizier Abul Fazel, a minister whose understanding was not less enlightened than that of his master. By their assiduous researches, and consultation of learned men^r, such information was obtained as enabled Abul Fazel to publish a brief compendium of Hindoo jurisprudence in the *Ayeen Akbery*^s, which may be considered as the first genuine communication of its principles to persons of a different religion. About two centuries afterwards, the illustrious example of Akber was imitated and surpassed by Mr. Hastings, the Governor General of the British Settlements in India. By his authority, and under his inspection, the most eminent Pundits, or Brahmins learned in the laws, of the provinces over which he presided, were assembled at Calcutta; and, in the course of two years, compiled, from their most ancient and approved authors, sentence by sentence, without addition or diminution, a full code of Hindoo laws^t; which is, undoubtedly, the most valuable and authentic elucidation of Indian policy and manners that has been hitherto communicated to Europe.

A.D. 1773.

ACCORDING to the Pundits, some of the writers upon whose authority they found the decrees which they have inserted in the Code, lived several millions of years before their time^b; and they boast of having a succession of expounders of their laws from that period to the present. Without entering into any

^r *Ayeen Akbery*, A. vol. iii. p. 95.

^s Vol. iii. p. 197, &c.

^t Preface to the Code, p. x.

^b *Ibid.* p. xxxviii.

examination of what is so extravagant, we may conclude, that the Hindoos have in their possession treatises concerning the laws and jurisprudence of their country, of more remote antiquity than are to be found in any other nation. The truth of this depends not upon their own testimony alone, but it is put beyond doubt by one circumstance, that all these treatises are written in the Sanskreet language, which has not been spoken for many ages in any part of Indostan, and is now understood by none but the most learned Brahmins. That the Hindoos were a people highly civilized, at the time when their laws were composed, is most clearly established by internal evidence contained in the Code itself. Among nations beginning to emerge from barbarism, the regulations of law are extremely simple, and applicable only to a few obvious cases of daily occurrence. Men must have been long united in a social state, their transactions must have been numerous and complex, and judges must have determined an immense variety of controversies to which these give rise, before the system of law becomes so voluminous and comprehensive as to direct the judicial proceedings of a nation far advanced in improvement. In that early age of the Roman republic, when the laws of the Twelve Tables were promulgated, nothing more was required than the laconic injunctions which they contain for regulating the decisions of courts of justice; but, in a later period, the body of civil law, ample as its contents are, was found hardly sufficient for that purpose. To the jejune brevity of the Twelve Tables, the Hindoo Code has no resemblance, but with respect to the number and variety of points it considers, it will bear a comparison

parison with the celebrated digest of Justinian; or with the systems of jurisprudence in nations most highly civilized. The articles of which the Hindoo Code is composed, are arranged in natural and luminous order. They are numerous and comprehensive, and investigated with that minute attention and discernment which are natural to a people distinguished for acuteness and subtilty of understanding, who have been long accustomed to the accuracy of judicial proceedings, and acquainted with all the refinements of legal practice. The decisions concerning every point (with a few exceptions occasioned by local prejudices and peculiar customs) are founded upon the great and immutable principles of justice which the human mind acknowledges and respects, in every age, and in all parts of the earth. Whoever examines the whole work, cannot entertain a doubt of its containing the jurisprudence of an enlightened and commercial people. Whoever looks into any particular title, will be surpris'd with a minuteness of detail and nicety of distinction, which, in many instances, seem to go beyond the attention of European legislation; and it is remarkable that some of the regulations which indicate the greatest degree of refinement, were established in periods of the most remote antiquity.

“ In the first of the sacred law tracts, (as is observed by a person
 “ to whom Oriental literature, in all its branches, has been
 “ greatly indebted,) which the Hindoos suppose to have been
 “ revealed by Menu some millions of years ago, there is a
 “ curious passage on the legal interest of money, and the
 “ limited rate of it in different cases, with an exception in re-
 “ gard to adventures at sea; an exception which the sense of
 “ mankind approves, and which commerce absolutely requires,

“ though it was not before the reign of Charles I. that our
 “ English jurisprudence fully admitted it in respect of maritime
 “ contracts .” It is likewise worthy of notice, that though the
 natives of India have been distinguished in every age for the
 humanity and mildness of their disposition, yet such is the so-
 licitude of their law-givers to preserve the order and tranquillity
 of society, that the punishments which they inflict on criminals,
 are (agreeably to an observation of the ancients already men-
 tioned) extremely rigorous. “ Punishment (according to a striking
 “ personification in the Hindoo code) is the magistrate; pu-
 “ nishment is the inspirer of terror; punishment is the nou-
 “ risher of the subjects; punishment is the defender from cala-
 “ mity; punishment is the guardian of those that sleep; pu-
 “ nishment, with a black aspect, and a red eye, terrifies
 “ the guilty .”

IV. As the condition of the ancient inhabitants of India, whether we consider them as individuals, or as members of society, appears, from the preceding investigation, to have been extremely favourable to the cultivation of useful and elegant arts; we are naturally led to enquire, whether the progress which they actually made in them, was such as might have been expected from a people in that situation. In attempting to trace this progress, we have not the benefit of guidance equal to that which conducted our researches concerning the former articles of enquiry. The ancients, from their slender acquaintance

* Sir William Jones's Third Discourse, Asiatic Research. p. 428.

. † Code, ch. xxi. § 8.

with the interior state of India, have been able to communicate little information with respect to the arts cultivated there ; and though the moderns, during their continued intercourse with India for three centuries, have had access to observe them with greater attention, it is of late only, that by studying the languages now and formerly spoken in India, and by consulting and translating their most eminent authors, they have begun to enter into that path of enquiry which leads with certainty to a thorough knowledge of the state of arts cultivated in that country.

ONE of the first arts which human ingenuity aimed at improving, beyond what mere necessity requires, was that of building. In the brief remarks which the subject of my inquiries leads me to make on the progress of this art in India, I shall confine my attention wholly to those of highest antiquity. The most durable monuments of human industry are public buildings. The productions of art, formed for the common purposes of life, waste and perish in using them ; but works destined for the benefit of posterity subsist through ages, and it is according to the manner in which these are executed, that we form a judgment with respect to the degree of power, skill, and improvement to which the people by whom they were erected had attained. In every part of India monuments of high antiquity are found. These are of two kinds, such as were consecrated to the offices of religion, or fortresses built for the security of the country. In the former of these, to which Europeans, whatever their structure may be, give the general name of *Pagodas*, we may observe a diversity of stile, which
both.

both marks the gradual progress of architecture, and throws light on the general state of arts and manners in different periods. The most early Pagodas appear to have been nothing more than excavations in mountainous parts of the country, formed probably in imitation of the natural caverns to which the first inhabitants of the earth retired for safety during the night, and where they found shelter from the inclemency of the seasons. The most celebrated, and, as there is reason to believe, the most ancient of all these, is the Pagoda in the island Elephanta, at no great distance from Bombay. It has been hewn by the hands of man out of a solid rock, about half way up a high mountain, and formed into a spacious area, nearly 120 feet square. In order to support the roof, and the weight of the mountain that lies above it, a number of massy pillars, and of a form not inelegant, have been cut out of the same rock, at such regular distances, as on the first entrance presents to the eye of the spectator an appearance both of beauty and of strength. Great part of the inside is covered with human figures in high relief, of gigantic size as well as singular forms, and distinguished by a variety of symbols, representing, it is probable, the attributes of the deities whom they worshipped, or the actions of the heroes whom they admired. In the isle of Salsette, still nearer to Bombay, are excavations in a similar stile, hardly inferior in magnificence, and destined for the same religious purposes.

THESE stupendous works are of such high antiquity, that as the natives cannot, either from history or tradition, give any information concerning the time in which they were executed, they

they universally ascribe the formation of them to the power of superior beings. From the extent and grandeur of these subterraneous mansions, which intelligent travellers compare to the most celebrated monuments of human power and art in any part of the earth, it is manifest that they could not have been formed in that stage of social life where men continue divided into small tribes, unaccustomed to the efforts of persevering industry. It is only in States of considerable extent, and among people long habituated to subordination, and to act with concert, that the idea of such magnificent works is conceived, or the power of accomplishing them can be found.

THAT some such powerful state was established in India at the time when the excavations in the islands of Elephanta and Salfette were formed, is not the only conclusion to be drawn from a survey of them; the stile in which the sculptures with which they are adorned is executed, indicates a considerable improvement in art at that early period. Sculpture is the imitative art in which man seems to have made the first trial of his own talents. But even in those countries where it has attained to the highest degree of perfection, its progress has been extremely slow. Whoever has attended to the history of this art in Greece, knows how far removed the first rude essay to represent the human form, was from any complete delineation of it*. But the different groupes of figures which still remain entire in the Pagoda of Elephanta, however low they must rank if they be compared with the more elegant works of

* Winkelman's *Hist. de l'Art chez les Anciens*, tom. i. p. 32, &c.

Grecian or even Etruscan artists, are finished in a stile considerably superior to the hard inexpressive manner of the Egyptians, or the figures in the celebrated palace of Persepolis. In this light they have appeared to persons abundantly qualified to appreciate their merit, and from different drawings, particularly those of Niebuhr, a traveller equally accurate in observing, and faithful in describing, we must form a favourable opinion of the state of arts in India at that period.

IT is worthy of notice, that although several of the figures in the caverns at Elephanta be so different from those now exhibited in the Pagodas as objects of veneration, that some learned Europeans have imagined they represent the rites of a religion more ancient than that now established in Indostan, yet by the Hindoos themselves the caverns are considered as hallowed places of their own worship, and they still resort thither to perform their devotions, and honour the figures there in the same manner with those in their own Pagodas. In confirmation of this, I have been informed by an intelligent person, who visited this subterraneous sanctuary in the year 1782, that he was accompanied by a sagacious Brahmin, a native of Benares, who, though he had never been in it before that time, was well acquainted with the parentage, education, and life of every deity or human figure there represented, and explained with fluency the meaning of the various symbols by which the images were distinguished. This may be considered as a clear proof that the system of mythology now prevalent in Benares, is not different from that delineated in the caverns of Elephanta. Mr. Hunter, who visited Elephanta in the year 1784, seems to consider the
figures

figures there as representing deities who are still objects of worship among the Hindoos^f. One circumstance serves to confirm the justness of this opinion. Several of the most conspicuous personages in the groupes at Elephanta are decorated with the *Zennar*, the sacred string or cord peculiar to the order of Brahmins, an authentic evidence of the distinction of casts having been established in India at the time when these works were finished.

2. INSTEAD of caverns, the original places of worship, which could be formed only in particular situations, the devotion of the people soon began to raise temples in honour of their deities in other parts of India. The structure of these was at first extremely simple. They were pyramids of large dimension, and had no light within but what came from a small door. After having been long accustomed to perform all the rites of religion in the gloom of caverns, the Indians were naturally led to consider the solemn darkness of such a mansion as sacred. Some Pagodas in this first stile of building still remain in Indostan. Drawings of two of these at Deogur, and of a third near Tanjore in the Carnatic, all fabrics of great antiquity, have been published by Mr. Hodges^g, and though they are rude structures, they are of such magnitude as must have required the power of some considerable state to rear them.

3. IN proportion to the progress of the different countries of India in opulence and refinement, the structure of their temples

^f Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 286, &c.

^g N^o VI.

gradually improved. From plain buildings they became highly ornamented fabrics, and, both by their extent and magnificence, are monuments of the power and taste of the people by whom they were erected. In this highly finished stile there are Pagodas of great antiquity in different parts of Indostan, particularly in the Southern provinces, which were not exposed to the destructive violence of Mahomedan zeal^a. In order to assist my readers in forming such an idea of these buildings as may enable them to judge with respect to the early state of arts in India, I shall briefly describe two, of which we have the most accurate accounts. The entry to the Pagoda of Chillambrum, near Porto Novo, on the Coromandel coast, held in high veneration on account of its antiquity, is by a stately gate under a pyramid an hundred and twenty-two feet in height, built with large stones above forty feet long, and more than five feet square, and all covered with plates of copper, adorned with an immense variety of figures neatly executed. The whole structure extends one thousand three hundred and thirty-two feet in one direction, and nine hundred and thirty-six in another. Some of the ornamental parts are finished with an elegance intitled to the admiration of the most ingenious artists¹. The Pagoda of Seringham, superior in sanctity to that of Chillambrum, surpasses it as much in grandeur; and, fortunately, I can convey a more perfect idea of it by adopting the words of an elegant and accurate historian. This Pagoda is situated about a mile from the western extremity of the island of Seringham, formed by the division of the great river Caveri into two

^a See NOTE VII.

¹ Mem. de Literat. tom. xxxi. p. 44, &c. Voy. de M. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 217.

channels. “ It is composed of seven square inclosures, one
 “ within the other, the walls of which are twenty-five feet high,
 “ and four thick. These inclosures are three hundred and fifty feet
 “ distant from one another, and each has four large gates with a
 “ high tower; which are placed, one in the middle of each side
 “ of the inclosure, and opposite to the four cardinal points. The
 “ outward wall is near four miles in circumference, and its gate-
 “ way to the South is ornamented with pillars, several of which
 “ are single stones thirty-three feet long, and nearly five in
 “ diameter; and those which form the roof are still larger :
 “ in the inmost inclosures are the chapels. About half a mile
 “ to the East of Seringham, and nearer to the Caveri than the
 “ Coleroon, is another large Pagoda; called Jembikisma; but this
 “ has only one inclosure. The extreme veneration in which
 “ Seringham is held, arises from a belief that it contains that
 “ identical image of the god Wischnu, which used to be
 “ worshipped by the god Brahma. Pilgrims from all parts of
 “ the peninsula come here to obtain absolution, and none come
 “ without an offering of money; and a large part of the reve-
 “ nue of the island is allotted for the maintenance of the Brah-
 “ mins who inhabit the Pagoda; and these, with their families,
 “ formerly composed a multitude not less than forty thousand
 “ souls, maintained, without labour, by the liberality of su-
 “ perstition. Here, as in all the other great Pagodas of India,
 “ the Brahmins live in a subordination which knows no resist-
 “ ance, and slumber in a voluptuousness which knows no
 “ wants ^k.”

^k Orme's Hist. of Milit. Transact. of Indostan, vol. i. p. 178.

A P P E N D I X.

THE other species of public buildings which I mentioned, were those erected for the defence of the country. From the immense plains of Indostan there arise, in different parts, eminences and rocks formed by nature to be places of strength. Of these the natives early took possession, and fortifying them with works of various kinds, rendered them almost impregnable stations. There seems to have been in some distant age, a period of general turbulence and danger in India, when such retreats were deemed essentially necessary to public safety; for among the duties of magistrates prescribed by the Pundits, one is, "that he shall erect a strong fort in the place where he chuses to reside; and shall build a wall on all the four sides of it, with towers and battlements, and shall make a full ditch around it¹." Of these fortresses several remain, which, both from the appearance of the buildings, and from the tradition of the natives, must have been constructed in very remote times. Mr. Hodges has published views of three of these, one of Chunar Gur, situated upon the river Ganges, about sixteen miles above the city of Benares^m; the second, of Gwallior, about eighty miles to the south of Agraⁿ; the third of Bidjegur, in the territory of Benares^o. They are all, particularly Gwallior, works of considerable magnitude and strength. The fortresses in Bengal, however, are not to be compared with several in the Deccan. Affeergur, Burhampour, and Dowlatabad, are deemed by the natives to be impregnable^p; and I am assured, by a good judge, that Affeergur is indeed a most stu-

¹ Introd. to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. cxi.

^m N^o I.

ⁿ N^o II.

^o N^o III.

^p Rennel. Mem. p. 133. 139.

pendous work, and so advantageously situated that it would be extremely difficult to reduce it by force.

NOR is it only from surveying their public works that we are justified in asserting the early proficiency of the Indians in elegant and useful arts: we are led to form the same conclusion by a view of those productions of their ingenuity, which were the chief articles of their trade with foreign nations. Of these the labours of the Indian loom and needle have, in every age, been the most celebrated; and fine linen is conjectured, with some probability, to have been called by the ancients *Sindon*, from the name of the river Indus or Sindus, near which it was wrought in the highest perfection^a. The cotton manufactures of India seem anciently to have been as much admired as they are at present, not only for their delicate texture, but for the elegance with which some of them are embroidered, and the beautiful colour of the flowers with which others are adorned. From the earliest period of European intercourse with India, that country has been distinguished for the number and excellence of the substances for dying various colours, with which it abounded^b. The dye of the deep blue colour in highest estimation among the Romans bore the name of *Indicum*^c. From India too, the substance used in dying a bright red colour, seems to have been imported^d;

^a Sir William Jones's Third Discourse, p. 428.

^b Strab. lib. xv. p. 1018 A. 1024 B.

^c Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxv. c. 6. § 27.

^d Salmasius Exercit. Plinianæ in Solin. 180; &c. 810. Salmasius de Homonymis Hyles Jatrica, c. 107. See NOTE VIII.

and

and it is well known that both in the cotton and silk stuffs which we now receive from India, the blue and the red are the colours of most conspicuous lustre and beauty. But however much the ancients may have admired these productions of Indian art, some circumstances, which I have already mentioned, rendered their demand for the cotton manufactures of India, far inferior to that of modern times; and this has occasioned the information concerning them which we receive from the Greek and Roman writers to be very imperfect. We may conclude, however, from the wonderful resemblance of the ancient state of India to the modern, that, in every period, the productions of their looms were as various as beautiful. The ingenuity of the Indians in other kinds of workmanship, particularly in metals and in ivory, is mentioned with praise by ancient authors, but without any particular description of their nature¹. Of these early productions of Indian artists, there are now some specimens in Europe, from which it appears that they were acquainted with the method of engraving upon the hardest stones and gems; and, both in the elegance of their designs and in neatness of execution, had arrived at a considerable degree of excellence. An ingenious writer maintains, that the art of engraving on gems was probably an Indian invention, and certainly was early improved there, and he supports this opinion by several plausible arguments². The Indian engraved gems, of which he has published descriptions, appear to be the work-

¹ Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1044. B. Dionys. Perieges, vers. 1016.

² Raspe's Introd. to Tassie's Descript. Catal. of engraved Gems, &c. p. xii. &c.

'manship of a very remote period, as the legends on them are in the Sanskreet language'.

BUT it is not only from the improved state of mechanic arts in India, that we conclude its inhabitants to have been highly civilized; a proof of this, still more convincing, may be deduced from the early and extraordinary productions of their genius in the fine arts. This evidence is rendered more interesting, by being derived from a source of knowledge which the laudable curiosity of our countrymen has opened to the people of Europe within these few years. That all the science and literature possessed by the Brahmins, were contained in books written in a language, understood by a few only of the most learned among them, is a fact which has long been known; and all the Europeans settled in India during three centuries, have complained that the Brahmins obstinately refused to instruct any person in this language. But at length, by address, mild treatment, and a persuasion, that the earnestness with which instruction was solicited, proceeded not from any intention of turning their religion into derision, but from a desire of acquiring a perfect knowledge of their sciences and literature, their scruples have been overcome. Several British gentlemen are now completely masters of the Sanskreet language. The mysterious veil, formerly deemed impenetrable, is removed; and, in the course of five years, the curiosity of the public has been gratified by two publications as singular as they were unex-

' Raspe's Introd. to Tassie's Descript. Catal. of engraved Gems, vol. i., p. 74. vol. ii. plate xiii.

pected.

A P P E N D I X,

pected. The one is a translation, by Mr. Wilkins, of an Episode from the *Mahabarat*, an Epic poem, in high estimation among the Hindoos, composed, according to their account, by Kreeشنا Dwypayen Veias, the most eminent of all their Brahmins, above three thousand years before the Christian æra. The other is *Sacotala*, a dramatic poem, written about a century before the birth of Christ, translated by Sir William Jones. I shall endeavour to give my readers such a view of the subject and composition of each of these, as may enable them to estimate the degree of merit which they possess.

THE Mahabarat is a voluminous poem, consisting of upwards of four hundred thousand lines. Mr. Wilkins has translated more than a third of it; but only a short episode, intitled Baghvat-Geeta, is hitherto published, and from this specimen we must form an opinion with respect to the whole. The subject of the poem is a famous civil war between two branches of the royal house of Bhaurat. When the forces on each side were formed in the field, and ready to decide the contest by the sword, Arjoon, the favourite and pupil of the god Kreeشنا, who accompanied him in this hour of danger, requested of him to cause his chariot advance between the two hostile armies. He looked at both armies, and beheld, on either side, none but grandfathers, uncles, cousins, tutors, sons, and brothers, near relations or bosom friends; and when he had gazed for a while, and saw these prepared for the fight, he was seized with extreme pity and compunction, and uttered his sorrow in the following words:—"Having beheld, O *Kreeشنا*! my kindred

“ thus waiting anxious for the fight, my members fail me,
 “ my countenance withereth, the hair standeth an end upon my
 “ body, and all my frame trembleth with horror! Even *Gan-*
 “ *deev*, my bow, escapeth from my hand, and my skin is parched
 “ and dried up.—When I have destroyed my kindred, shall I
 “ longer look for happiness? I wish not for victory, *Kreeshna*;
 “ I want not dominion; I want not pleasure; for what is do-
 “ minion and the enjoyments of life, or even life itself, when
 “ those for whom dominion, pleasure, and enjoyment were to
 “ be coveted, have abandoned life and fortune, and stand here
 “ in the field ready for the battle. Tutors, sons, and fathers,
 “ grandfathers and grandsons, uncles, nephews, cousins, kindred,
 “ and friends! Although they would kill me, I wish not to
 “ fight them; no not even for the dominion of the three re-
 “ gions of the universe, much less for this little earth*.” In
 order to remove his scruples, *Kreeshna* informs him what was
 the duty of a prince of the *Chehteree*, or military cast, when
 called to act in such a situation, and incites him to perform it
 by a variety of moral and philosophical arguments, the nature
 of which I shall have occasion to consider particularly in another
 part of this Dissertation. In this dialogue between *Kreeshna*
 and his pupil, there are several passages which give an high idea
 of the genius of the poet. The speech of *Arjoon* I have quoted,
 in which he expresses the anguish of his soul, must have struck every
 reader as beautiful and pathetic; and I shall afterwards produce
 a description of the Supreme Being, and of the reverence wherewith
 he should be worshipped, which is sublime. But while these ex-

* *Baghvat Geeta*, p. 30, 31.

A P P E N D I X.

cite our admiration, and confirm us in the belief of a high degree of civilization in that country where such a work was produced, we are surpris'd at the defect of taste and of art in the manner of introducing this Episode. Two powerful armies are drawn up in battle-array, eager for the fight; a young hero and his instructor are described as standing in a chariot of war between them; that surely was not the moment for teaching him the principles of philosophy, and delivering eighteen lectures of metaphysics and theology.

WITH regard, however, both to the dramatic and epic poetry of the Hindoos, we labour under the disadvantage of being obliged to form an opinion from a single specimen of each, and that of the latter, too, (as it is only a part of a large work,) an imperfect one. But if, from such scanty materials, we may venture upon any decision, it must be, that of the two, the drama seems to have been conducted with the most correct taste. This will appear from the observations which I now proceed to make upon Sacontala.

IT is only to nations considerably advanced in refinement, that the drama is a favourite entertainment. The Greeks had been for a good time a polished people; Alcæus and Sappho had compos'd their Odes, and Thales and Anaximander had opened their schools, before Tragedy made its first rude essay in the cart of Thespis; and a good time elapsed before it attained to any considerable degree of excellence. From the drama of Sacontala, then, we must form an advantageous idea of the state of improvement in that society to whose taste it was suited. In estimating its merit,
- however,

however, we must not apply to it rules of criticism drawn from the literature and taste of nations with which its author was altogether unacquainted; we must not expect the unities of the Greek theatre; we must not measure it by our own standard of propriety. Allowance must be made for local customs, and singular manners, arising from a state of domestic society, an order of civil policy, and a system of religious opinions, very different from those established in Europe. *Sacotala* is not a regular drama, but, like some of the plays early exhibited on the Spanish and English theatres, is an history in dialogue, unfolding events which happened in different places, and during a series of years. When viewed in this light, the fable is in general well arranged, the incidents are happily chosen, and the vicissitudes in the situation of the principal personages are sudden and unexpected. The unravelling of the piece, however, though some of the circumstances preparatory to it be introduced with skill, is at last brought about by the intervention of superior beings, which has always a bad effect, and discovers some want of art. But as *Sacotala* was descended of a celestial nymph, and under the protection of a holy hermit, this heavenly interposition may appear less marvellous, and is extremely agreeable to the Oriental taste. In many places of this drama it is simple and tender, in some pathetic; in others there is a mixture of comic with what is more serious. Of each, examples might be given. I shall select a few of the first, both because simplicity and tenderness are the characteristic beauties of the piece, and because they so little resemble the extravagant imagery and turgid style of Oriental poetry.

SACONTALA, the heroine of the drama, a princess of high birth, had been educated by an holy hermit in a hallowed grove, and had passed the early part of her life in rural occupations and pastoral innocence. When she was about to quit this beloved retreat, and repair to the court of a great monarch, to whom she had been married, Cana, her foster-father, and her youthful companions, thus bewail their own loss, and express their wishes for her happiness, in a strain of sentiment and language perfectly suited to their pastoral character.

“ HEAR, O ye trees of this hallowed forest, hear and proclaim
 “ that Sacontala is going to the palace of her wedded lord;
 “ she, who drank not, though thirsty, before you were wa-
 “ tered; she, who cropped not, through affection for you,
 “ one of your fresh leaves, though she would have been
 “ pleased with such an ornament for her locks; she, whose
 “ chief delight was in the season when your branches are
 “ spangled with flowers!”

CHORUS of Wood Nymphs.—“ May her way be attended
 “ with prosperity! May propitious breezes sprinkle, for her
 “ delight, the odoriferous dust of rich blossoms. May pools
 “ of clear water, green with the leaves of the lotos, refresh
 “ her as she walks; and may shady branches be her defence
 “ from the scorching sun-beams!”

SACONTALA, just as she was departing from the grove, turns to Cana: “ Suffer me, venerable father! to address
 “ this Madhavi-creeper, whose red blossoms inflame the grove.”

—Cana.

—Cana. “My child I know thy affection for it.” —Sacont.
 “O most radiant of shining plants, receive my embraces, and
 “return them with thy flexible arms! from this day, though
 “removed at a fatal distance, I shall for ever be thine.—O
 “beloved father, consider this creeper as myself!” As she ad-
 vances, she again addresses Cana: “Father! when you
 “female antelope, who now moves slowly from the weight of
 “the young ones with which she is pregnant, shall be deli-
 “vered of them, send me, I beg, a kind message with tidings
 “of her safety.—Do not forget.” —Cana. “My beloved!
 “I will not forget it.” —Sacont. [*Stopping.*] “Ah! what is
 “it that clings to the skirts of my robe, and detains me?” —
 Cana. “It is thy adopted child, the little fawn, whose mouth,
 “when the sharp points of Cusa grass had wounded it, has
 “been so often smeared by thee with the healing oil of Ingudi;
 “who has been so often fed by thee with a handful of Synmaka
 “grains, and now will not leave the footsteps of his protectress.”
 —Sacont. “Why dost thou weep, tender fawn, for me who
 “must leave our common dwelling-place?—As thou wast
 “reared by me when thou hadst lost thy mother, who died
 “soon after thy birth, so will my foster-father attend thee,
 “when we are separated, with anxious care.—Return, poor
 “thing, return—we must part.” [*She bursts into tears.*]
 —Cana. “Thy tears, my child, ill suit the occasion, we shall
 “all meet again; be firm; see the direct road before thee,
 “and follow it. When the big tear lurks beneath thy beau-
 “tiful eye-lashes, let thy resolution check its first efforts to
 “disengage itself.—In thy passage over this earth, where
 “the paths are now high, now low, and the true path sel-
 “dom

“ dom distinguished, the traces of thy feet must needs be un-
 “ equal ; but virtue will press thee right onward *.”

FROM this specimen of the Indian drama, every reader of good taste, I should imagine, will be satisfied, that it is only among a people of polished manners and delicate sentiments that a composition so simple and correct could be produced or relished. I observe one instance in this drama of that wild extravagance so frequent in Oriental poetry. The monarch, in replacing a bracelet which had dropped from the arm of Sacontala, thus addresses her : “ Look, my darling, this is the
 “ new moon which left the firmament in honour of superior
 “ beauty, and having descended on your enchanting wrist,
 “ hath joined both its horns round it in the shape of a
 “ bracelet .” But this is the speech of an enraptured young man to his mistress, and in every age and nation exaggerated praise is expected from the mouth of lovers. Dramatic exhibitions seem to have been a favourite amusement of the Hindoos as well as of other civilized nations. “ The
 “ tragedies, comedies, farces, and musical pieces of the In-
 “ dian theatre, would fill as many volumes as that of any
 “ nation in ancient or modern Europe. They are all in verse
 “ where the dialogue is elevated, and in prose where it is
 “ familiar ; the men of rank and learning are represented
 “ speaking pure Sanscrit, and the women Pracrit, which is
 “ little more than the language of the Brahmins, melted down
 “ by a delicate articulation to the softness of Italian ; while the

* A& IV. p. 47, &c.

* A& III. p. 36.

“ low persons of the drama speak the vulgar dialects of the
“ several provinces which they are supposed to inhabit “.”

V. THE attainments of the Indians in science, furnish an additional proof of their early civilization. By every person who has visited India in ancient or modern times, its inhabitants, either in transactions of private business, or in the conduct of political affairs, have been deemed not inferior to the people of any nation in sagacity, acuteness of understanding, or address. From the application of such talents to the cultivation of science, an extraordinary degree of proficiency might have been expected. The Indians were, accordingly, early celebrated on that account, and some of the most eminent of the Greek philosophers travelled into India, that, by conversing with the sages of that country, they might acquire some portion of the knowledge for which they were distinguished*. The accounts, however, which we receive from the Greeks and Romans, of the sciences which attracted the attention of the Indian philosophers, or of the discoveries which they had made in them, are very imperfect. To the researches of a few intelligent persons, who have visited India during the course of the three last centuries, we are indebted for more ample and authentic information. But from the reluctance with which the Brahmins communicate their sciences to strangers, and the inability of Europeans to acquire much knowledge of them, while, like the mysteries of their religion, they were concealed from vul-

* Preface to *Sacant.* by Sir William Jones, p. ix. See NOTE IX.

• Bruckeri *Hist. Philosoph.* vol. i. p. 190.

gar eyes in an unknown tongue, this information was acquired slowly and with great difficulty. The same observation, however, which I made concerning our knowledge of the state of the fine arts among the people of India, is applicable to that of their progress in science, and the present age is the first furnished with sufficient evidence upon which to found a decisive judgment with respect to either.

SCIENCE, when viewed as disjoined from religion, the consideration of which I reserve for another head, is employed in contemplating either the operations of the understanding, the exercise of our moral powers, or the nature and qualities of external objects. The first is denominated logic; the second ethics; the third physics, or the knowledge of nature. With respect to the early progress in cultivating each of these sciences in India, we are in possession of facts which merit attention.

BUT, prior to the consideration of them, it is proper to examine the ideas of the Brahmins with respect to mind itself, for if these were not just, all their theories concerning its operations must have been erroneous and fanciful. The distinction between matter and spirit appears to have been early known by the philosophers of India, and to the latter they ascribed many powers, of which they deemed the former to be incapable; and when we recollect how inadequate our conceptions are of every object that does not fall under the cognizance of the senses, we may affirm (if allowance be made for a peculiar notion of the Hindoos which shall be afterwards explained) that no description of the human soul is more suited to the dignity

of its nature than that given by the author of the Mahabarat. "Some," says he, "regard the soul as a wonder, others hear of it with astonishment, but no one knoweth it. The weapon divideth it not; the fire burneth it not; the water corrupteth it not; the wind drieth it not away; for it is indivisible, incontumable, incorruptible; it is eternal, universal, permanent, immovable; it is invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable." After this view of the sentiments of the Brahmins concerning mind itself, we may proceed to consider their ideas with respect to each of the sciences, in that tripartite arrangement which I mentioned.

Ist, **LOGIC** and **Metaphysics**. On no subject has the human understanding been more exercised than in analysing its own operations. The various powers of the mind have been examined and defined. The origin and progress of our ideas have been traced; and proper rules have been prescribed, of proceeding from the observation of facts to the establishment of principles, or from the knowledge of principles to form arrangements of science. The philosophers of ancient Greece were highly celebrated for their proficiency in these abstruse speculations; and, in their discussions and arrangements, discovered such depth of thought, and acuteness of discernment, that their systems of Logic, particularly that of the Peripatetick School, have been deemed most distinguished efforts of human reason.

^c Baghvat-Geeta, p. 37.

BUT since we became acquainted, in some degree, with the literature and science of the Hindoos, we find that as soon as men arrive at that stage in social life, when they can turn their attention to speculative inquiries, the human mind will, in every region of the earth, display nearly the same powers, and proceed in its investigations and discoveries by nearly similar steps. From Abul Fazel's compendium of the philosophy^a of the Hindoos, the knowledge of which he acquired, as he informs us, by associating intimately with the most learned men of the nation; from the specimen of their logical discussions contained in that portion of the Shafter published by Colonel Dow^b, and from many passages in the Baghvat-Geeta, it appears that the same speculations which occupied the philosophers of Greece had engaged the attention of the Indian Brahmins; and the theories of the former, either concerning the qualities of external objects, or the nature of our own ideas, were not more ingenious than those of the latter. To define with accuracy, to distinguish with acuteness, and to reason with subtlety, are characteristics of both; and in both, the same excess of refinement, in attempting to analyse those operations of mind which the faculties of man were not formed to comprehend, led sometimes to the most false and dangerous conclusions. That sceptical philosophy, which denies the existence of the material world, and asserts nothing to be real but our own ideas, seems to have been known in India as well as in Europe^c; and the sages of the East, as they were indebted to philosophy for the

^a Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 95, &c. ^b Dissertation, p. xxxix, &c.

^c Dow's Dissertation, p. lvii. Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 128.

knowledge of many important truths, were not more exempt than those of the West from its delusions and errors.

2d, ETHICS. This science, which has for its object, to ascertain what distinguishes virtue from vice, to investigate what motives should prompt men to act, and to prescribe rules for the conduct of life, as it is of all other the most interesting, seems to have deeply engaged the attention of the Brahmins. Their sentiments with respect to these points were various, and, like the philosophers of Greece, the Brahmins were divided into sects, distinguished by maxims and tenets often diametrically opposite. That sect with whose opinions we are, fortunately, best acquainted, had established a system of morals, founded on principles the most generous and dignified which unassisted reason is capable of discovering. Man, they taught, was formed, not for speculation or indolence, but for action. He is born, not for himself alone, but for his fellow men. The happiness of the society of which he is a member, the good of mankind, are his ultimate and highest objects. In chusing what to prefer or to reject, the justness and propriety of his choice are the only considerations to which he should attend. The events which may follow his actions are not in his own power, and whether they be prosperous or adverse, as long as he is satisfied with the purity of the motives which induced him to act, he can enjoy that approbation of his own mind, which constitutes genuine happiness, independent of the power of fortune or the opinions of other men. “ Man (says the author of the Mahabarat) “ enjoyeth not freedom from action. Every man is involun- “ tarily urged to act by those principles which are inherent in

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“ his

“ his nature. He who restraineth his active faculties, and sit-
 “ teth down with his mind attentive to the objects of his
 “ senses, may be called one of an astrayed soul. The man is
 “ praised, who having subdued all his passions, performeth
 “ with his active faculties all the functions of life unconcerned
 “ about the event^b. Let the motive be in the deed, and not
 “ in the event. Be not one whose motive for action is the
 “ hope of reward. Let not thy life be spent in inaction.
 “ Depend upon application, perform thy duty, abandon all
 “ thought of the consequence, and make the event equal,
 “ whether it terminate in good or in evil; for such an equality
 “ is called *Yog* [i. e. attention to what is spiritual]. Seek an
 “ asylum then in wisdom alone; for the miserable and unhappy
 “ are so on account of the event of things. Men who are
 “ endowed with true wisdom are unmindful of good or evil in
 “ this world. Study then to obtain this application of thy
 “ understanding, for such application in business is a precious
 “ art. Wise men who have abandoned all thought of the fruit
 “ which is produced from their actions, are freed from the
 “ chains of birth; and go to the regions of eternal hap-
 “ piness¹.”

FROM these, and other passages which I might have quoted,
 we learn that the distinguishing doctrines of the Stoical School
 were taught in India many ages before the birth of Zeno, and
 inculcated with a persuasive earnestness nearly resembling that
 of Epictetus; and it is not without astonishment that we find
 the tenets of this manly active philosophy, which seem to be

^b Baghrat-Geeta, p. 44.

¹ Ibid. p. 40.

formed only for men of the most vigorous spirit, prescribed as the rule of conduct to a race of people more eminent for the gentleness of their disposition than for the elevation of their minds.

3d, PHYSICS. In all the sciences which contribute towards extending our knowledge of nature, in mathematics, mechanics, and astronomy, Arithmetic is of elementary use. In whatever country then we find that such attention has been paid to the improvement of arithmetic as to render its operations most easy and correct, we may presume that the sciences depending upon it have attained a superior degree of perfection. Such improvement of this science we find in India. While, among the Greeks and Romans, the only method used for the notation of numbers was by the letters of the alphabet, which necessarily rendered arithmetical calculation extremely tedious and operose, the Indians had, from time immemorial, employed for the same purpose the ten cyphers, or figures, now universally known, and by means of them performed every operation in arithmetic with the greatest facility and expedition. By the happy invention of giving a different value to each figure according to its change of place, no more than ten figures are needed in calculations the most complex, and of any given extent; and arithmetic is the most perfect of all the sciences. The Arabians, not long after their settlement in Spain, introduced this mode of notation into Europe, and were candid enough to acknowledge that they had derived the knowledge of it from the Indians. Though the advantages of this mode of notation are obvious and great, yet so slowly do mankind
 2 adopt.

adopt new inventions, that the use of it was for some time confined to science; by degrees, however, men of business relinquished the former cumbersome method of computation by letters, and the Indian arithmetic came into general use throughout Europe^m. It is now so familiar and simple, that the ingenuity of the people, to whom we are indebted for the invention, is less observed and less celebrated than it merits.

THE Astronomy of the Indians is a proof still more conspicuous of their extraordinary progress in science. The attention and success with which they studied the motions of the heavenly bodies were so little known to the Greeks and Romans that it is hardly mentioned by them but in the most cursory mannerⁿ. But as soon as the Mahomedans established an intercourse with the natives of India, they observed and celebrated the superiority of their astronomical knowledge. Of the Europeans who visited India after the communication with it by the Cape of Good Hope was discovered, M. Bernier, an inquisitive and philosophical traveller, was one of the first who learned that the Indians had long applied to the study of astronomy, and had made considerable progress in that science^o. His information, however, seems to have been very general and imperfect. We are indebted for the first scientific proof of the great proficiency of the Indians in astronomical knowledge, to M. de la Loubere, who, on his return from his embassy to Siam,

^m Montucla Hist. des Mathemat. tom. i. p. 360; &c.

ⁿ Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1047 A. Dirn. Perieg. v. 1173.

^o Voyages, tom. ii. p. 145; &c.

brought

brought with him an extract from a Siamese manuscript, which A. D. 1687. contained tables and rules for calculating the places of the sun and moon. The manner in which these tables were constructed rendered the principles on which they were founded extremely obscure, and it required a commentator as conversant in astronomical calculation as the celebrated Cassini, to explain the meaning of this curious fragment. The epoch of the Siamese tables corresponds to the 21st of March, A. D. 638. Another set of tables was transmitted from Chrisnabouram, in the Carnatic, the epoch of which answers to the 10th of March, A. D. 1491. A third set of tables came from Narzapour, and the epoch of them goes no farther back than A. D. 1569. The fourth and most curious set of tables was published by M. le Gentil, to whom they were communicated by a learned Brahmin of Tirvalore, a small town on the Coromandel coast, about twelve miles west of Negapatam. The epoch of these tables is of high antiquity, and coincides with the beginning of the celebrated æra of the Calyougham or Collee Jogue, which commenced, according to the Indian account, three thousand one hundred and two years before the birth of Christ^p.

THESE four sets of tables have been examined and compared by M. Bailly, who with singular felicity of genius has conjoined an uncommon degree of eloquence with the patient researches of an astronomer, and the profound investigations of a geometrician. His calculations have been verified, and his reasonings have been illustrated and extended by Mr. Playfair,

See NOTE X.

in,

in a very masterly Differtation, published in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh¹.

INSTEAD of attempting to follow them in reasonings and calculations, which, from their nature, are often abstruse and intricate, I shall satisfy myself with giving such a general view of them as is suited to a popular work. This, I hope, may convey a proper idea of what has been published concerning the astronomy of India, a subject too curious and important to be omitted in any account of the state of science in that country; and, without interposing any judgment of my own, I shall leave each of my readers to form his own opinion.

IT may be considered as the general result of all the inquiries, reasonings, and calculations, with respect to Indian astronomy, which have hitherto been made public, “ That the
 “ motion of the heavenly bodies, and more particularly their
 “ situation at the commencement of the different epochs to
 “ which the four sets of tables refer, are ascertained with
 “ great accuracy; and that many of the elements of their cal-
 “ culations, especially for very remote ages, are verified by an
 “ astonishing coincidence with the tables of the modern astro-
 “ nomy of Europe, when improved by the latest and most nice
 “ deductions from the theory of gravitation.” These conclusions are rendered peculiarly interesting, by the evidence which they afford of an advancement in science unexampled in the history

¹ Vol. ii. p. 135.

of rude nations. The Indian Brahmins, who annually circulate a kind of almanack, containing astronomical predictions of some of the more remarkable phenomena in the heavens, such as the new and full moons, the eclipses of the sun and moon, are in possession of certain methods of calculation, which, upon examination, are found to involve in them a very extensive system of astronomical knowledge. M. le Gentil, a French astronomer, had an opportunity, while in India, of observing two eclipses of the moon, which had been calculated by a Brahmin, and he found the error in either to be very inconsiderable.

THE accuracy of these results is less surprising than the justness and scientific nature of the principles on which the tables, by which they calculate, are constructed. For the method of predicting eclipses which is followed by the Brahmins, is of a kind altogether different from any that has been found in the possession of rude nations in the infancy of astronomy. In Chaldæa, and even in Greece, in the early ages, the method of calculating eclipses was founded on the observation of a certain period or cycle, after which the eclipses of the sun and moon return nearly in the same order; but there was no attempt to analyse the different circumstances on which the eclipse depends, or to deduce its phenomena from a precise knowledge of the motions of the sun and moon. This last was reserved for a more advanced period, when geometry, as well as arithmetic, were called in to the assistance of astronomy, and if it was attempted at all, seems not to have been attempted with success before the age of Hipparchus. It is a method of

this superior kind, founded on principles, and on an analysis of the motions of the sun and moon, which guides the calculations of the Brahmins, and they never employ any of the grosser estimations, which were the pride of the first astronomers in Egypt and Chaldæa.

THE Brahmins of the present times are guided in their calculations by these principles, though they do not now understand them; they know only the use of the tables which are in their possession, but are unacquainted with the method of their construction. The Brahmin who visited M. le Gentil at Pondicherry, and instructed him in the use of the Indian tables, had no knowledge of the principles of his art, and discovered no curiosity concerning the nature of M. le Gentil's observations, or about the instruments which he employed. He was equally ignorant with respect to the authors of these tables; and whatever is to be learnt concerning the time or place of their construction, must be deduced from the tables themselves. One of these tables (as was formerly observed) professes to be as old as the beginning of the Calyougham, or to go back to the year 3102 before the Christian æra; but as nothing (it may be supposed) is easier than for an astronomer to give to his tables whatever he pleases, and, by calculating backwards, to establish an epoch of any assigned antiquity, the pretensions of the Indian astronomy to so remote an origin are not to be admitted without examination.

THAT examination has accordingly been instituted by M. Bailly, and the result of his inquiries is asserted to be, that the astronomy

nomy of India is founded on observations which cannot be of a much later date than the period above mentioned. For the Indian tables represent the state of the heavens at that period with astonishing exactness; and there is between them and the calculations of our modern astronomy such a conformity, with respect to those ages, as could result from nothing, but from the authors of the former having accurately copied from nature, and having delineated truly the face of the heavens, in the age wherein they lived. In order to give some idea of the high degree of accuracy in the Indian tables, I shall select a few instances of it, out of many that might be produced. The place of the sun for the astronomical epoch at the beginning of the Calyougham, as stated in the tables of Tirvalore, is only forty-seven minutes greater than by the tables of M. de la Caille, when corrected by the calculations of M. de la Grange. The place of the moon, in the same tables, for the same epoch, is only thirty-seven minutes different from the tables of Mayer. The tables of Ptolemy, for that epoch, are erroneous no less than ten degrees with respect to the place of the sun, and eleven degrees with respect to that of the moon. The acceleration of the moon's motion, reckoning from the beginning of the Calyougham to the present time, agrees, in the Indian tables, with those of Mayer to a single minute. The inequality of the sun's motion, and the obliquity of the ecliptic, which were both greater in former ages than they are now, as represented in the tables of Tirvalore, are almost of the precise quantity that the theory of gravitation assigns to them three thousand years before the Christian æra. It is accordingly for those very remote ages (about 5000 years distant from the

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present) that their astronomy is most accurate, and the nearer we come down to our own times, the conformity of its results with ours diminishes. It seems reasonable to suppose, that the time when its rules are most accurate, is the time when the observations were made on which these rules are founded.

IN support of this conclusion, M. Bailly maintains that none of all the astronomical systems of Greece or Persia, or of Tartary, from some of which it might be suspected that the Indian tables were copied, can be made to agree with them, especially when we calculate for very remote ages. The superior perfection of the Indian tables becomes always more conspicuous as we go farther back into antiquity. This shews, likewise, how difficult it is to construct any astronomical tables, which will agree with the state of the heavens for a period so remote from the time when the tables were constructed, as four or five thousand years. It is only from astronomy in its most advanced state, such as it has attained in modern Europe, that such accuracy is to be expected.

WHEN an estimate is endeavoured to be made of the geometrical skill necessary for the construction of the Indian tables and rules, it is found to be very considerable; and, beside the knowledge of elementary geometry, it must have required plain and spherical trigonometry, or something equivalent to them, together with certain methods of approximating to the values of geometrical magnitudes, which seem to rise very far above the elements of any of those sciences. Some of these last mark also very clearly (although this has not been observed by M. Bailly)

Bailly) that the places to which these tables are adapted, must be situated between the Tropics, because they are altogether inapplicable at a greater distance from the Equator.

FROM this long induction, the conclusion which seems obviously to result is, that the Indian astronomy is founded upon observations which were made at a very early period; and when we consider the exact agreement of the places which they assign to the sun and moon, and other heavenly bodies, at that epoch, with those deduced from the tables of De la Caille and Mayer, it strongly confirms the truth of the position which I have been endeavouring to establish, concerning the early and high state of civilization in India.

BEFORE I quit this subject, there is one circumstance which merits particular attention. All the knowledge which we have hitherto acquired of the principles and conclusions of Indian astronomy is derived from the southern part of the Carnatic, and the tables are adapted to places situated between the meridian of Cape Comorin and that which passes through the eastern part of Ceylon. The Brahmans in the Carnatic acknowledge that their science of astronomy was derived from the North, and that their method of calculation is denominated *Fakiam*, or New, to distinguish it from the *Siddantam*, or ancient method established at Benares, which they allow to be much more perfect; and we learn from Abul Fazel, that all the astronomers of Indostan rely entirely upon the precepts con-

‡ Bailly, Disc. Prelim. p. xviii.

tained.

tained in a book called *Soorej Sudbant*, composed in a very remote period^s. It is manifestly from this book that the method to which the Brahmins of the South gave the name of Siddantam is taken. Benares has been from time immemorial the Athens of India, the residence of the most learned Brahmins, and the seat both of science and literature. There, it is highly probable, whatever remains of the ancient astronomical knowledge and discoveries of the Brahmins is still preserved^t. In an enlightened age and nation, and during a reign distinguished by a succession of the most splendid and successful undertakings to extend the knowledge of nature, it is an object worthy of public attention, to take measures for obtaining possession of all that time has spared of the philosophy and inventions of the most early and most highly civilized people of the East. It is with peculiar advantages Great Britain may engage in this laudable undertaking. Benares is subject to its dominion; the confidence of the Brahmins has been so far gained as to render them communicative; some of our countrymen are acquainted with that sacred language in which the mysteries both of religion and of science are recorded; movement and activity has been given to a spirit of inquiry throughout all the British establishments in India; persons who visited that country with other views, though engaged in occupations of a very different kind, are now carrying on scientific and literary researches with ardour and success. Nothing seems now to be wanting but that those entrusted with the administration of the British empire in

^s Aycen Akbery, iii. p. 8.

^t M. Bernier, in the year 1668, saw a large hall in Benares filled with the works of the Indian philosophers, physicians, and poets. *Voy. ii. p. 148.*

India, should enable some person, capable, by his talents and liberality of sentiment, of investigating and explaining the more abstruse parts of Indian philosophy, to devote his whole time to that important object. Thus Great Britain may have the glory of exploring fully that extensive field of unknown science, which the Academicians of France had the merit of first opening to the people of Europe “.

VI. THE last evidence which I shall mention of the early and high civilization of the ancient Indians, is deduced from the consideration of their religious tenets and practices. The institutions of religion, publicly established in all the extensive countries stretching from the Banks of the Indus to Cape Comorin, present to view an aspect nearly similar. They form a regular and complete system of superstition, strengthened and upheld by every thing which can excite the reverence and secure the attachment of the people. The temples, consecrated to their deities, are magnificent, and adorned not only with rich offerings, but with the most exquisite works in painting and sculpture, which the artists, highest in estimation among them, were capable of executing. The rites and ceremonies of their worship are pompous and splendid, and the performance of them not only mingles in all the transactions of common life, but constitutes an essential part of them. - The Brahmins, who, as ministers of religion, preside in all its functions, are elevated above every other order of men, by an origin deemed not only more noble, but acknowledged to be sacred. They have established among themselves a regular hierarchy and gradation of ranks, which, by securing subordination in their own order,

* See NOTE XI.

adds

adds weight to their authority, and gives them a more absolute dominion over the minds of the people. This dominion they support by the command of the immense revenues with which the liberality of princes, and the zeal of pilgrims and devotees, have enriched their Pagodas^u.

IT is far from my intention to enter into any minute detail with respect to this vast and complicated system of superstition. An attempt to enumerate the multitude of deities which are the objects of adoration in India; to describe the splendour of worship in their Pagodas, and the immense variety of their rites and ceremonies; to recount the various attributes and functions which the craft of priests, or the credulity of the people, have ascribed to their divinities; especially if I were to accompany all this with a review of the numerous and often fanciful speculations and theories of learned men on this subject, would require a work of great magnitude. I shall, therefore, on this, as on some of the former heads, confine myself to the precise point which I have kept uniformly in view, and by considering the state of religion in India, I shall endeavour not only to throw additional light on the state of civilization in that country, but I flatter myself that, at the same time, I shall be able to give what may be considered as a sketch and outline of the history and progress of superstition and false religion in every region of the earth.

I. WE may observe, that, in every country, the received mythology, or system of superstitious belief, with all the rites

^u Roger. Porte Ouverte, p. 39. 209, &c.

and ceremonies which it prescribes is formed in the infancy of society, in rude and barbarous times. True religion is as different from superstition in its origin, as in its nature. The former is the offspring of reason cherished by science, and attains to its highest perfection in ages of light and improvement. Ignorance and fear give birth to the latter, and it is always in the darkest periods that it acquires the greatest vigour. That numerous part of the human species whose lot is labour, whose principal and almost sole occupation is to secure subsistence, has neither leisure nor capacity for entering into that path of intricate and refined speculation, which conducts to the knowledge of the principles of rational religion. When the intellectual powers are just beginning to unfold, and their first feeble exertions are directed towards a few objects of primary necessity and use; when the faculties of the mind are so limited as not to have formed general and abstract ideas; when language is so barren as to be destitute of names to distinguish any thing not perceivable by some of the senses; it is preposterous to expect that men should be capable of tracing the relation between effects and their causes; or to suppose that they should rise from the contemplation of the former to the discovery of the latter, and form just conceptions of one Supreme Being, as the Creator and Governor of the universe. The idea of creation is so familiar, wherever the mind is enlarged by science, and illuminated by revelation, that we seldom reflect how profound and abstruse the idea is, or consider what progress man must have made in observation and research, before he could arrive at any distinct knowledge of this elementary principle in religion. But even in its rude state, the human mind, formed for religion,

gion, opens to the reception of ideas, which are destined, when corrected and refined, to be the great source of consolation amidst the calamities of life. These apprehensions, however, are originally indistinct and perplexed, and seem to be suggested rather by the dread of impending evils, than to flow from gratitude for blessings received. While nature holds on her course with uniform and undisturbed regularity, men enjoy the benefits resulting from it, without much inquiry concerning its cause. But every deviation from this regular course rouses and astonishes them. When they behold events to which they are not accustomed, they search for the causes of them with eager curiosity. Their understanding is often unable to discover these, but imagination, a more forward and ardent faculty of the mind, decides without hesitation. It ascribes the extraordinary occurrences in nature to the influence of invisible beings, and supposes the thunder, the hurricane, and the earthquake, to be the immediate effect of their agency. Alarmed by these natural evils, and exposed, at the same time, to many dangers and disasters, which are unavoidable in the early and uncivilized state of society, men have recourse for protection to power superior to what is human, and the first rites or practices which bear any resemblance to acts of religion have it for their object to avert evils which they suffer or dread *.

* In the second volume of the History of America, p. 183, of fifth edition, I gave nearly a similar account of the origin of false religion. Instead of labouring to convey the same ideas in different language, I have inserted here some paragraphs in the same words I then used.

II. As superstition and false religion take their rise, in every country, from nearly the same sentiments and apprehensions, the invisible beings, who are the first objects of veneration, have every where a near resemblance. To conceive an idea of one superintending mind, capable of arranging and directing all the various operations of nature, seems to be an attainment far beyond the powers of man in the more early stages of his progress. His theories, more suited to the limited sphere of his own observation, are not so refined. He supposes that there is a distinct cause of every remarkable effect, and ascribes to a separate power every event which attracts his attention, or excites his terror. He fancies that it is the province of one deity to point the lightning, and, with an awful sound, to hurl the irresistible thunderbolt at the head of the guilty; that another rides in the whirlwind, and, at his pleasure, raises or stills the tempest; that a third rules over the ocean; that a fourth is the god of battles; that while malevolent powers scatter the seeds of animosity and discord, and kindle in the breast those angry passions which give rise to war, and terminate in destruction, others, of a nature more benign, by inspiring the hearts of men with kindness and love, strengthen the bonds of social union, augment the happiness, and increase the number of the human race.

WITHOUT descending farther into detail, or attempting to enumerate that infinite multitude of deities to which the fancy or the fears of men have allotted the direction of the several departments in nature, we may recognise a striking uniformity of features in the systems of superstition established throughout

every part of the earth. The less men have advanced beyond the state of savage life, and the more slender their acquaintance with the operations of nature, the fewer were their deities in number, and the more compendious was their theological creed; but as their mind gradually opened, and their knowledge continued to extend, the objects of their veneration multiplied, and the articles of their faith became more numerous. This took place remarkably among the Greeks in Europe, and the Indians in Asia, the two people, in those great divisions of the earth, who were most early civilized, and to whom, for that reason, I shall confine all my observations. They believed, that over every movement in the natural world, and over every function in civil or domestic life, even the most common and trivial, a particular deity presided. The manner in which they arranged the stations of these superintending powers, and the offices which they allotted to each, were in many respects the same. What is supposed to be performed by the power of Jupiter, of Neptune, of Æolus, of Mars, of Venus, according to the mythology of the West, is ascribed in the East to the agency of Agnée, the god of fire; Varoon, the god of oceans; Vayoo, the god of wind; Cama, the god of love; and a variety of other divinities.

THE ignorance and credulity of men having thus peopled the heavens with imaginary beings, they ascribed to them such qualities and actions as they deemed suitable to their character and functions. It is one of the benefits derived from true re-

† Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94.

ligion, that by setting before men a standard of perfect excellence, which they should have always in their eye, and endeavour to resemble, it may be said to bring down virtue from heaven to earth, and to form the human mind after a divine model. In fabricating systems of false religion the procedure is directly the reverse. Men ascribe to the beings whom they have deified, such actions as they themselves admire and celebrate. The qualities of the gods who are the objects of adoration, are copied from those of the worshippers who bow down before them; and thus many of the imperfections peculiar to men have found admittance into heaven. By knowing the adventures and attributes of any false deity, we can pronounce, with some degree of certainty, what must have been the state of society and manners when he was elevated to that dignity. The mythology of Greece plainly indicates the character of the age in which it was formed. It must have been in times of the greatest licentiousness, anarchy, and violence, that divinities of the highest rank could be supposed capable of perpetrating actions, or of being influenced by passions, which, in more enlightened periods, would be deemed a disgrace to human nature; it must have been when the earth was still infested with destructive monsters, and mankind, under forms of government too feeble to afford them protection, were exposed to the depredations of lawless robbers, or the cruelty of savage oppressors, that the well-known labours of Hercules, by which he was raised from earth to heaven, could have been necessary, or would have been deemed so highly meritorious. The same observation is applicable to the ancient mythology of India. Many of the adventures and exploits of the Indian deities

are suited to the rudest ages of turbulence and rapine. It was to check disorder, to redress wrongs, and to clear the earth of powerful oppressors, that Vishnou, a divinity of the highest order, is said to have become successively incarnate, and to have appeared on earth in various forms *.

III. THE character and functions of those deities which superstition created to itself as objects of its veneration, having every where a near resemblance, the rites of their worship were every where extremely similar. Accordingly as deities were distinguished, either by ferocity of character or licentiousness of conduct, it is obvious what services must have been deemed most acceptable to them. In order to conciliate the favour, or to appease the wrath, of the former, fasts, mortifications, and penances, all rigid, and many of them excruciating to an extreme degree, were the means employed. Their altars were always bathed in blood, the most costly victims were offered, whole hecatombs were slaughtered, even human sacrifices were not unknown, and were held to be the most powerful expiations. In order to gain the good-will of the deities of the latter description, recourse was had to institutions of a very different kind, to splendid ceremonies, gay festivals, heightened by all the pleasures of poetry, musick, and dancing, but often terminating in scenes of indulgence too indecent to be described. Of both these, instances occur in the rites of Greek and Roman worship, which I need not mention to my learned readers *. In

* Voyage de Sonnerat. tom. i. p. 158, &c.

* Strab. lib. viii. p. 581. A. Lib. xii. p. 837. C.

the East the ceremonial of superstition is nearly the same. The manners of the Indians, though distinguished, from the time when they became known to the people of the West, for mildness, seem, in a more remote period, to have been, in a greater degree, similar to those of other nations. Several of their deities were fierce and awful in their nature, and were represented in their temples under the most terrific forms. If we did not know the dominion of superstition over the human mind, we should hardly believe, that a ritual of worship suited to the character of such deities could have been established among a gentle people. Every act of religion, performed in honour of some of their gods, seems to have been prescribed by fear. Mortifications and penances so rigorous, so painful, and so long continued, that we read the accounts of them with astonishment and horror, were multiplied. Repugnant as it is to the feelings of an Hindoo, to shed the blood of any creature that has life, many different animals, even the most useful, the horse and the cow, were offered up as victims upon the altars of some of their gods^b; and what is still more strange, the Pagodas of the East were polluted with human sacrifices, as well as the temples of the West^c. But religious institutions, and ceremonies of a less severe kind, were more adapted to the genius of a people, formed, by the extreme sensibility both of their mental and corporeal frame, to an immoderate love of pleasure. In no part of the earth was a connection between

^b Ayeen Akberry, vol. iii. p. 241. Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 251.

^c Hecto-pades, p. 185—322. Asiat. Researches, p. 265. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 207. Roger, p. 251.

the gratification of sensual desire and the rites of public religion, displayed with more avowed indecency than in India. In every Pagoda there was a band of women set apart for the service of the idol honoured there, and devoted from their early years to a life of pleasure ; for which the Brahmins prepared them by an education which added so many elegant accomplishments to their natural charms, that what they gained by their profligacy, often brought no inconsiderable accession to the revenue of the temple. In every function performed in the Pagodas, as well as in every public procession, it is the office of these women to dance before the idol, and to sing hymns in his praise ; and it is difficult to say, whether they trespass most against decency by the gestures they exhibit, or by the verses which they recite. The walls of the Pagoda are covered with paintings, in a stile no less indelicate^d ; and in the innermost recess of the temple, for it would be profane to call it the sanctuary, is placed the *Lingam*, an emblem of productive power too gross to be explained^e.

IV. How absurd soever the articles of faith may be which superstition has adopted, or how unhallowed the rites which it prescribes, the former are received in every age and country with unhesitating assent, by the great body of the people, and the latter observed with scrupulous exactness. In our reason-

^d Voyage de Gentil. vol. i. p. 244. 260. Preface to Code of Gentoo Laws, p. lvii.

^e Roger Porte Ouverte, p. 157. Voyage de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 41. 175. Sketches, p. 168. Hamilton's Trav. vol. i. p. 379.

ings concerning religious opinions and practices which differ widely from our own, we are extremely apt to err. Having been instructed ourselves in the principles of a religion, worthy in every respect of that divine wisdom by which they were dictated, we frequently express wonder at the credulity of nations in embracing systems of belief which appear to us so directly repugnant to right reason, and sometimes suspect that tenets so wild and extravagant do not really gain credit with them. But experience may satisfy us, that neither our wonder nor suspicions are well founded. No article of the public religion was called in question by those people of ancient Europe with whose history we are best acquainted, and no practice which it enjoined appeared improper to them. On the other hand, every opinion that tended to diminish the reverence of men for the gods of their country, or to alienate them from their worship, excited among the Greeks and Romans, that indignant zeal which is natural to every people attached to their religion, by a firm persuasion of its truth. The attachment of the Indians, both in ancient and modern times, to the tenets and rites of their ancestors, has been, if possible, still greater. In no country, of which we have any account, were precautions taken with so much solicitude, to place the great body of the people beyond the reach of any temptation to doubt or disbelief. They not only were prevented, (as I have already observed the great bulk of mankind must always be in every country,) from entering upon any speculative inquiry, by the various occupations of active and laborious life, but any attempt to extend the sphere of their knowledge was expressly prohibited. If one of the Sooder

whole nation was divided, presumed to read any portion of the sacred books, in which all the science known in India is contained, he was severely punished; if he ventured to get it by heart, he was put to death^f. To aspire after any higher degree of knowledge than the Brahmins have been pleased to teach, would be deemed not only presumption but impiety. Even the higher Casts depended entirely for instruction on the Brahmins, and could acquire no portion of science but what they deigned to communicate. By means of this, a devout reverence was universally maintained for those institutions which were considered as sacred; and, though the faith of the Hindoos has been often tried by severe persecutions, excited by the bigotry of their Mahomedan conquerors, no people ever adhered with greater fidelity to the tenets and rites of their ancestors^g.

V. WE may observe, that when science and philosophy are diffused through any country, the system of superstition is subjected to a scrutiny from which it was formerly exempt, and opinions spread which imperceptibly diminish its influence over the minds of men. A free and full examination is always favourable to truth, but fatal to error. What is received with implicit faith in ages of darkness, will excite contempt or indignation in an enlightened period. The history of religion in Greece and Italy, the only countries of Europe which, in ancient times, were distinguished for their attainments in science,

^f Code of Gentoo Laws, ch. xxi. § 7.

^g Orme's Fragment, p. 102. Sonnerat. vol. i. p. 194.

confirms

confirms the truth of this observation. As soon as science made such progress in Greece as rendered men capable of discerning the wisdom, the foresight, and the goodness displayed in creating, preserving, and governing the world, they must have perceived, that the characters of the divinities which were proposed as the objects of adoration in their temples, could not entitle them to be considered as the presiding powers in nature. A poet might address Jupiter as the father of gods and men, who governed both by eternal laws; but, to a philosopher, the son of Saturn, the story of whose life is a series of violent and licentious deeds, which would render any man odious or despicable, must have appeared altogether unworthy of that station. The nature of the religious service celebrated in their temples must have been no less offensive to an enlightened mind, than the character of the deities in honour of whom it was performed. Instead of institutions, tending to reclaim men from vice, to form or to strengthen habits of virtue, or to elevate the mind to a sense of its proper dignity, superstition either occupied its votaries in frivolous unmeaning ceremonies, or prescribed rites, which operated, with fatal influence, in inflaming the passions and corrupting the heart.

It is with timidity, however, and caution, that men venture to attack the established religion of their country, or to impugn opinions which have been long held sacred. At first, some philosophers endeavoured, by allegorical interpretations and refined comments, to explain the popular mythology, as if it had been a description of the powers of nature, and of the various events and revolutions which take place in the

system of the material world, and endeavoured, by this expedient, to palliate many of its absurdities. By degrees, bolder theories concerning religion were admitted into the schools of science. Philosophers of enlarged views, sensible of the impiety of the popular superstition, formed ideas concerning the perfections of one Supreme Being, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, as just and rational as have ever been attained by the unassisted powers of the human mind.

IF from Europe we now turn to Asia, we shall find, that the observation which I have made upon the history of false religion holds equally true there. In India as well as in Greece, it was by cultivating science that men were first led to examine and to entertain doubts with respect to the established systems of superstition; and when we consider the great difference between the ecclesiastical constitution (if I may use that expression) of the two countries, we are apt to imagine that the established system lay more open to examination in the latter than in the former. In Greece there was not any distinct race or order of men set apart for performing the functions of religion, or to serve as hereditary and interested guardians of its tenets and institutions. But in India the Brahmins were born the ministers of religion, and they had an exclusive right of presiding in all the numerous rites of worship which superstition prescribed as necessary to avert the wrath of Heaven, or to render it propitious. These distinctions and privileges secured to them a wonderful ascendant over their countrymen; and every consideration that can influence the human mind, the honour, the interest, the power of their order, called upon them to support the

the tenets, and to maintain the institutions and rites, with which the preservation of this ascendant was so intimately connected.

BUT as the most eminent persons of the cast devoted their lives to the cultivation of science, the progress which they made in all the branches of it (of which I have given some account) was great, and enabled them to form such a just idea of the system of nature, and of the power, wisdom, and goodness displayed in the formation and government of it, as elevated their minds above the popular superstition, and led them to acknowledge and reverence one Supreme Being, “the Creator of all things (to use their own expressions), and from whom all things proceed.”^a

THIS is the idea which Abul Fazel, who examined the opinions of the Brahmins with the greatest attention and candour, gives of their theology. “They all,” says he, “believe in the unity of the Godhead, and although they hold images in high veneration, it is only because they represent celestial beings, and prevent their thoughts from wandering.”^b The sentiments of the most intelligent Europeans who have visited India, coincide perfectly with his, in respect to this point. The accounts which Mr. Bernier received from the Pundits of Benares, both of their external worship, and of one Sovereign Lord being the sole object of their devotion, is precisely the same with that given by Abul Fazel^c. Mr. Wilkins, better

^a Baghvat-Geeta, p. 84.

^b Aycen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 3.

^c Voyage, tom. ii. p. 159.

qualified perhaps than any European ever was to judge with respect to this subject, represents the learned Brahmins of the present times as Theists, believers in the unity of God¹. Of the same opinion is M. Sonnerat, who resided in India seven years in order to inquire into the manners, sciences, and religion of the Hindoos^m. The Pundits, who translated the Code of Gentoo Laws, declare, “ that it was the Supreme Being, “ who, by his power, formed all creatures of the animal, ve- “ getable, and material world, from the four elements of fire, “ water, air, and earth, to be an ornament to the magazine of “ creation; and whose comprehensive benevolence selected “ man, the center of knowledge, to have dominion and “ authority over the rest; and, having bestowed upon this fa- “ vourite object judgment and understanding, gave him supre- “ macy over the corners of the worldⁿ.”

NOR are these to be regarded as refined sentiments of latter times. The Brahmins being considered by the Mahomedan conquerors of India as the guardians of the national religion, have been so studiously depressed by their fanatical zeal, that the modern members of that order are as far inferior to their ancestors in science as in power. It is from the writings of their ancient Pundits that they derive the most liberal sentiments which they entertain at present, and the wisdom for which they are now celebrated has been transmitted to them from ages very remote.

¹ Preface to Baghvat-Geeta, p. 24.

^m Voyage, tom. i. p. 198.

ⁿ Prelim. Discours. p. lxxiii.

THAT this assertion is well founded we are enabled to pronounce with certainty, as the most profound mysteries of Hindoo theology, concealed with the greatest care from the body of the people, have been unveiled by the translations from the Sanskrect language lately published. The principal design of the Baghvat-Geeta, an episode in the Mahabarat, a poem of the highest antiquity, and of the greatest authority in India, seems to have been to establish the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, and from a just view of the divine nature, to deduce an idea of what worship will be most acceptable to a perfect Being. In it, amidst much obscure metaphysical discussion, some ornaments of fancy unsuited to our taste, and some thoughts elevated to a tract of sublimity into which our habits of judgment will find it difficult to pursue them^a, we find descriptions of the Supreme Being entitled to equal praise with those of the Greek philosophers which I have celebrated. Of these I shall now produce one which I formerly mentioned, and refer my readers for others to the work itself: “ O mighty
 “ Being,” says Arjoon, “ who art the prime Creator, eternal God
 “ of Gods, the World’s Mansion. Thou art the incorruptible
 “ Being, distinct from all things transient. Thou art before
 “ all Gods, the ancient *Poorooob* [i. e. vital soul], and the
 “ Supreme Supporter of the universe. Thou knowest all things,
 “ and art worthy to be known; thou art the Supreme Man-
 “ sion, and by thee, O infinite Form, the universe was spread
 “ abroad.—Reverence be unto thee before and behind; reve-
 “ rence be unto thee, on all sides; O thou who art all in all.

^a Mr. Hastings’s Letter, prefixed to the Baghvat-Geeta, p. 7.

“ Infinite is thy power and thy glory.—Thou art the father of
 “ all things, animate and inanimate. Thou art the wise in-
 “ structor of the whole, worthy to be adored. There is
 “ none like unto thee; where then, in the three worlds,
 “ is there one above thee? Wherefore I bow down; and,
 “ with my body prostrate upon the ground, crave thy mercy,
 “ Lord! Worthy to be adored; for thou shouldest bear with
 “ me, even as a father with his son, a friend with his friend,
 “ a lover with his beloved.” A description of the Supreme
 Being is given in one of the sacred books of the Hindoos,
 from which it is evident what were the general sentiments of
 the learned Brahmins concerning the divine nature and perfec-
 tions: “ As God is immaterial, he is above all conception;
 “ as he is invisible, he can have no form; but from what we
 “ behold of his works we may conclude, that he is eternal, om-
 “ nipotent, knowing all things, and present every where.”

To men capable of forming such ideas of the Deity, the
 public service in the Pagodas must have appeared to be an idol-
 atrous worship of images, by a superstitious multiplication of
 frivolous or immoral rites; and they must have seen that it
 was only by sanctity of heart, and purity of manners, men
 could hope to gain the approbation of a Being perfect in good-
 ness. This truth Veias labours to inculcate in the Mahabarat,
 but with the prudent reserve, and artful precautions, natural to
 a Brahmin, studious neither to offend his countrymen, nor to
 diminish the influence of his own order. His ideas concerning

* Baghvat-Geeta, p. 94. 95.

* Dow's Dissert. p. xl.

the mode of worshipping the Deity, are explained in many striking passages of the poem, but, unwilling to multiply quotations, I satisfy myself with referring to them'.

WHEN we recollect how slowly the mind of man opens to abstract ideas, and how difficult (according to an observation in the Mahabarat) an invisible path is to corporeal beings, it is evident that the Hindoos must have attained an high degree of improvement before their sentiments rose so far superior to the popular superstition of their country. The different states of Greece had subsisted long, and had made considerable progress in refinement, before the errors of false religion began to be detected. It was not until the age of Socrates, and in the schools of philosophy established by his disciples, that principles adverse to the tenets of the popular superstition were much propagated.

A LONGER period of time elapsed before the Romans, a nation of warriors and statesmen, were enlightened by science, or ventured upon any free disquisition concerning the objects or the rites of worship authorized by their ancestors. But in India the happy effects of progress in science were much more early conspicuous. Without adopting the wild computations of Indian chronology, according to which, the Mahabarat was composed above four thousand years ago, we must allow, that it is a work of very great antiquity, and the author of it discovers an acquaintance with the principles of theology, of mo-

* Baghvat Geeta, p. 55. 67. 75. 97. 119.

rals, and of metaphysics, more just and rational, than seems to have been attained, at that period, by any nation whose history is known.

BUT so unable are the limited powers of the human mind to form an adequate idea of the perfections and operations of the Supreme Being, that in all the theories concerning them, of the most eminent philosophers in the most enlightened nations, we find a lamentable mixture of ignorance and error. From these the Brahmins were not more exempt than the sages of other countries. As they held that the system of nature was not only originally arranged by the power and wisdom of God, but that every event which happened was brought about by his immediate interposition, and as they could not comprehend how a being could act in any place unless where it was present, they supposed the Deity to be a vivifying principle diffused through the whole creation, an universal soul that animated each part of it*. Every intelligent nature, particularly the souls of men, they conceived to be portions separated from this great spirit †, to which, after fulfilling their destiny on earth, and attaining a proper degree of purity, they would be again reunited. In order to efface the stains with which a soul, during its residence on earth, has been defiled, by the indulgence of sensual and corrupt appetites, they taught that it must pass, in a long succession of transmigrations, through the bodies of different animals, until, by what it suffers and what it learns in

* Baghvat-Geeta, p. 65. 78. 85. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 163.

† Dow's Differt. p. xliii.

the various forms of its existence, it shall be so thoroughly refined from all pollution as to be rendered meet for being absorbed into the divine essence, and returns like a drop into that unbounded ocean from which it originally issued^u. These doctrines of the Brahmins, concerning the Deity, as the soul which pervades all nature, giving activity and vigour to every part of it, as well as the final re-union of all intelligent creatures to their primæval source, coincide perfectly with the tenets of the Stoical School. It is remarkable, that after having observed a near resemblance in the most sublime sentiments of their moral doctrine, we should likewise discover such a similarity in the errors of their theological speculations^x.

THE human mind, however, when destitute of superior guidance, is apt to fall into a practical error with respect to religion, of a tendency still more dangerous. When philosophers, by their attainments in science, began to acquire such just ideas of the nature and perfections of the Supreme Being, as convinced them that the popular system of superstition was not only absurd but impious, they were fully aware of all the danger which might arise from communicating what they had discovered to the people, incapable of comprehending the force of those reasons which had swayed with them, and so zealously attached to established opinions, as to revolt against any attempt to detect their falsehood. Instead, therefore, of allowing any ray of that know-

^u Voy. de Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 192. 200. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 39. 115. Dow's Dissert. p. xliii.

^x Liplij Physiol. Stoicor. lib. i. [dissert. viii. xxi. Seneca, Antoninus, Epictetus, passim.

ledge which illuminated their own minds to reach them, they formed a theory to justify their own conduct, and to prevent the darkness of that cloud which hung over the minds of their fellow-men from being ever dispelled. The vulgar and unlearned, they contended, had no right to truth. Doomed by their condition to remain in ignorance, they were to be kept in order by delusion, and allured to do what is right, or deterred from venturing upon what is wrong, by the hope of those imaginary rewards which superstition promises, and the dread of those punishments which it threatens. In confirmation of this, I might quote the doctrine of most of the philosophic sects, and produce the words of almost every eminent Greek and Roman writer. It will be sufficient, however, to lay before my readers a remarkable passage in Strabo, to whom I have been so often indebted in the course of my researches, and who was no less qualified to judge with respect to the political opinions of his contemporaries, than to describe the countries which they inhabited. "What is marvellous in fable, is employed," says he, "sometimes to please, and sometimes to inspire terror, and both these are of use, not only with children, but with persons of mature age. To children we propose delightful fictions, in order to encourage them to act well, and such as as are terrible, in order to restrain them from evil. Thus when men are united in society, they are incited to what is laudable, by hearing the poets celebrate the splendid actions of fabulous story, such as the labours of Hercules and Theseus, in reward for which they are now honoured as divinities, or by beholding their illustrious deeds exhibited to public view in painting and sculpture. On the other hand, they

“ they are deterred from vice, when the punishments inflicted
 “ by the gods upon evil-doers are related, and threats are de-
 “ nounced against them in awful words, or represented by
 “ frightful figures, and when men believe that these threats
 “ have been really executed upon the guilty. For it is impossi-
 “ ble to conduct women and the gross multitude, and to
 “ render them holy, pious, and upright, by the precepts of
 “ reason and philosophy; superstition, or the fear of the gods,
 “ must be called in aid, the influence of which is founded on
 “ fictions and prodigies. For the thunder of Jupiter, the ægis
 “ of Minerva, the trident of Neptune, the torches and snakes
 “ of the furies, the spears of the gods, adorned with ivy,
 “ and the whole ancient theology, are all fables, which the
 “ legislators who formed the political constitution of states
 “ employ as bugbears to overawe the credulous and simple.”

THESE ideas of the philosophers of Europe were precisely
 the same which the Brahmins had adopted in India; and ac-
 cording to which they regulated their conduct with respect to
 the great body of the people. As their order had an exclusive
 right to read the sacred books, to cultivate and to teach science,
 they could more effectually prevent all who were not members
 of it from acquiring any portion of information beyond what
 they were pleased to impart. When the free circulation of
 knowledge is not circumscribed by such restrictions, the whole
 community derives benefit from every new acquisition in science,
 the influence of which, both upon sentiment and conduct, ex-
 tends insensibly from the few to the many, from the learned to

1 Strab. lib. i. p. 36. B.

the ignorant. But wherever the dominion of false religion is completely established, the body of the people gain nothing by the greatest improvements in knowledge. Their philosophers conceal from them, with the utmost solicitude, the truths which they have discovered, and labour to support that fabric of superstition which it was their duty to have overturned. They not only enjoin others to respect the religious rites prescribed by the laws of their country, but conform to them in their own practice, and, with every external appearance of reverence and devotion, bow down before the altars of deities, who must inwardly be the objects of their contempt. Instead of resembling the teachers of true religion in the benevolent ardour with which they have always communicated to their fellow-men the knowledge of those important truths with which their own minds were enlightened and rendered happy, the sages of Greece, and the Brahmins of India, carried on, with studied artifice, a scheme of deceit, and, according to an emphatic expression of an inspired writer, they *detained* the truth in unrighteousness². They knew and approved what was true, but among the rest of mankind they laboured to support and to perpetuate what is false.

THUS I have gone through all the particulars which I originally proposed to examine, and have endeavoured to discover the state of the inhabitants of India with respect to each of them. If I had aimed at nothing else than to describe the civil policy, the arts, the sciences, and religious institutions of one of the most ancient and most numerous races of men,

² Rom. i. 18.

that alone would have led me into inquiries and discussions both curious and instructive. I own, however, that I have all along kept in view an object more interesting, as well as of greater importance, and entertain hopes, that if the account which I have given of the early and high civilization of India, and of the wonderful progress of its inhabitants in elegant arts and useful science, shall be received as just and well-established, it may have some influence upon the behaviour of Europeans towards that people. Unfortunately for the human species, in whatever quarter of the globe the people of Europe have acquired dominion, they have found the inhabitants not only in a state of society and improvement far inferior to their own, but different in their complexion, and in all their habits of life. Men in every stage of their career are so satisfied with the progress made by the community of which they are members, that it becomes to them a standard of perfection, and they are apt to regard people, whose condition is not similar, with contempt, and even aversion. In Africa and America, the dissimilitude is so conspicuous, that, in the pride of their superiority, Europeans thought themselves entitled to reduce the natives of the former to slavery, and to exterminate those of the latter. Even in India, though far advanced beyond the two other quarters of the globe in improvement, the colour of the inhabitants, their effeminate appearance, their unwarlike spirit, the wild extravagance of their religious tenets and ceremonies, and many other circumstances, confirmed Europeans in such an opinion of their own pre-eminence, that they have always viewed and treated them as an inferior race of men. Happy would it be if any of the four European nations, who have, successively, acquired extensive territories and power in India, could altogether

vindicate itself from having acted in this manner. Nothing, however, can have a more direct and powerful tendency to inspire Europeans, proud of their own superior attainments in policy, science, and arts, with proper sentiments concerning the people of India, and to teach them a due regard for their natural rights as men, than their being accustomed, not only to consider the Hindoos of the present times as a knowing and ingenious race of men, but to view them as descended from ancestors who had attained to a very high degree of improvement, many ages before the least step towards civilization had been taken in any part in Europe. It was by an impartial and candid inquiry into their manners, that the Emperor Akber was led to consider the Hindoos as no less entitled to protection and favour than his other subjects, and to govern them with such equity and mildness, as to merit from a grateful people the honourable appellation of "The Guardian of Mankind." It was from a thorough knowledge of their character and acquirements, that his Vizier, Abul Fazel, with a liberality of mind unexampled among Mahomedans, pronounces an high encomium on the virtues of the Hindoos, both as individuals and as members of society, and celebrates their attainments in arts and sciences of every kind*. If I might presume to hope that the description which I have given of the manners and institutions of the people of India could contribute in the smallest degree, and with the most remote influence, to render their character more respectable, and their condition more happy, I shall close my literary labours with the satisfaction of thinking that I have not lived or written in vain.

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 2. 81. 95.

N O T E S
 TO THE
 A P P E N D I X.

NOTE I. p. 259.

ACCORDING to all the writers of antiquity, the Indians are said to be divided into seven tribes or casts. Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1029. C, &c. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii. p. 153, &c. Arrian. Indic. c. 10. They were led into this error, it is probable, by considering some of the subdivisions of the casts, as if they had been a distinct independent order. But that there were no more than four original casts, we learn from the concurrent testimony of the best informed modern travellers. A most distinct account of these we have in "La Porte Ouverte, ou la vraye Representation de la Vie, des Mœurs, de la Religion, et du Service des Bramines, qui demeurent sur les Costes

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“ *Costes de Choromandel,*” &c. This was compiled, before the middle of last century, by Abraham Roger, chaplain of the Dutch factory at Pullicate. By gaining the confidence of an intelligent Brahmin, he acquired information concerning the manners and religion of the Indians, more authentic and extensive than was known to Europeans prior to the late translations from the Sanskreet language. I mention this book, because it seems to be less known than it deserves to be. There remains now no doubt with respect either to the number or the functions of the casts, as both are ascertained from the most ancient and sacred books of the Hindoos, and confirmed by the accounts of their own institutions, given by Brahmins eminent for their learning. According to them, the different casts proceeded from Brahma, the immediate agent of the creation under the Supreme Power, in the following manner, which establishes both the rank which they were to hold, and the office which they were required to perform.

The *Brahmin*, from the mouth (wisdom): To pray, to read, to instruct.

The *Chehteree*, from the arms (strength): To draw the bow, to fight, to govern.

The *Bice*, from the belly or thighs (nourishment): To provide the necessaries of life by agriculture and traffick.

The *Sooder*, from the feet (subjection): To labour, to serve.

THE prescribed occupations of all these classes are essential in a well-regulated state. Subordinate to them is a fifth, or adventitious class, denominated *Burrin Sunker*, supposed to be the offspring of an unlawful union between persons of different casts. These are mostly dealers in petty articles of retail trade. Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. xlvi. and xcix. This adventitious cast is not mentioned, as far as I know, by any European author. The distinction was too nice to be observed by them, and they seem to consider the members of this cast, as belonging to the Sooder. Besides these acknowledged casts, there is a race of unhappy men, denominated, on the Coromandel coast, *Pariars*, and, in other parts of India, *Gbandalas*. These are out-casts from their original order, who, by their misconduct, have forfeited all the privileges of it. Their condition is, undoubtedly, the lowest degradation of human nature. No person of any cast will have the least communication with them. Sonnerat, tom. i. p. 55, 56. If a Pariar approach a *Nayr*, *i. e.* a warrior of high cast, on the Malabar coast, he may put him to death with impunity. Water or milk are considered as defiled even by their shadow passing over them, and cannot be used until they are purified. Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 243. It is almost impossible for words to express the sensation of vileness that the name of Pariar or Chandala conveys to the mind of a Hindoo. Every Hindoo who violates the rules or institutions of his cast sinks into this degraded situation. This it is which renders Hindoos so resolute in adhering to the institutions of their tribe, because the loss of cast is, to them, the loss of all human comfort and respectability; and is a punishment,

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ment, beyond comparison, more severe than excommunication, in the most triumphant period of Papal power.

THE four original casts are named, and their functions described in the Mahabarat, the most ancient book of the Hindoos, and of higher authority than any with which Europeans are hitherto acquainted. Baghvat-Geeta, p. 130. The same distinction of casts was known to the author of Heeto-pades, another work of considerable antiquity, translated from the Sanskreet, p. 251.

THE mention of one circumstance respecting the distinction of casts has been omitted in the text. Though the line of separation be so drawn, as to render the ascent from an inferior to a higher cast absolutely impossible, and it would be regarded as a most enormous impiety, if one in a lower order should presume to perform any function belonging to those of a superior cast; yet, in certain cases, the Pundits declare it to be lawful for persons of a high class to exercise some of the occupations allotted to a class below their own, without losing their cast by doing so. Pref. of Pundits to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 100. Accordingly we find Brahmins employed in the service of their princes, not only as ministers of state, Orme's Fragments, p. 207, but in subordinate stations. Most of the officers of high rank in the army of Sevagi, the founder of the Mahratta state, were Brahmins, and some of them Pundits or learned Brahmins. Ibid. p. 97. Many Seapoys in the service of the East India Company, particularly in the Bengal presidency, are of the Brahmin cast.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER fact concerning the casts deserves notice. An immense number of pilgrims, amounting, in some years, to more than 150,000, visit the Pagoda of Jaggernaut, in Orissa, (one of the most ancient and most revered places of Hindoo worship,) at the time of the annual festival in honour of the deity to whom the temple is consecrated. The members of all the four casts are allowed promiscuously to approach the altar of the idol, and seating themselves without distinction, eat indiscriminately of the same food. This seems to indicate some remembrance of a state prior to the institution of casts, when all men were considered as equal. I have not such information as enables me to account for a practice so repugnant to the first ideas and principles of the Hindoos, either sacred or civil. Bernier, tom. ii. p. 102. Tavernier, book ii. c. 9. Anquetil. Disc. Prelim. p. 81. Sketches, p. 96.

SOME of my readers must have observed, that I have given no account of the numerous orders of Indian devotees, to all of whom European writers give the appellation of *Faquirs*; a name by which the Mahomedans distinguish fanatical monks of their own religion. The light in which I have viewed the religious institutions of the Hindoos, did not render it necessary that I should consider the Indian *Faquirs* particularly. Their number, the rigour of their mortifications, the excruciating penances which they voluntarily undergo, and the high opinion which the people entertain of their sanctity, have struck all travellers who have visited India, and their descriptions of them are well known. The powerful influence of enthusiasm; the love of distinction, and the desire of obtaining some portion

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tion of that reverence and those honours which the Brahmins are born to enjoy, may account for all the extraordinary things which they do and suffer. One particular concerning them merits notice. This order of devotees appears to have been very ancient in India. The description of the *Germani*, which Strabo takes from Megasthenes, applies, almost in every circumstance, to the modern Faquirs. Lib. xv. p. 1040. B.

NOTE II. p. 262.

WHAT I have asserted in the text is in general well-founded. It is the opinion, however, of gentlemen who have seen much of India, and who observed all they saw with a discerning eye, that the conquests both of the Mahomedans and of the Europeans have had some effect upon the manners and customs of the natives. They imagine that the dress which the Hindoos now wear, the turban, the jummah, and long drawers, is an imitation of that worn by their Mahomedan conquerors. The ancient dress of the Indians, as described by Arrian, Hist. Indic. c. 16. was a muslin cloth thrown loosely about their shoulders, a muslin shirt reaching to the middle of the leg, and their beards were dyed various colours; which is not the same with that used at present. The custom of secluding women, and the strictness with which they are confined, is likewise supposed to have been introduced by the Mahomedans. This supposition is in some measure confirmed by the drama of Sacontala, translated from the Sanskreet. In that play, several female characters are introduced, who mingle

gle in society, and converse as freely with men, as women are accustomed to do in Europe. The author, we may presume, describes the manners, and adheres to the customs of his own age. But while I mention this remark, it is proper, likewise, to observe, that, from a passage in Strabo, there is reason to think, that, in the age of Alexander the Great, women in India were guarded with the same jealous attention as at present. "When their princes," (says he, copying Megasthenes,) "set out upon a public hunt, they are accompanied by a number of their women, but along the road in which they travel, ropes are stretched on each side, and if any man approach near to them he is instantly put to death." Lib. xv. p. 1037. A. The influence of European manners begins to be apparent among the Hindoos who reside in the town of Calcutta. Some of them drive about in English chariots, sit upon chairs, and furnish their houses with mirrors. Many circumstances might be mentioned, were this the proper place, which, it is probable, will contribute to the progress of this spirit of imitation.

NOTE III. p. 262.

It is amusing to observe how exactly the ideas of an intelligent Asiatic co-incide with those of the Europeans on this subject. "In reflecting," says he, "upon the poverty of Turan [the countries beyond the Oxus] and Arabia, I was at first at a loss to assign a reason why these countries have never been able to retain wealth, whilst, on the contrary, it

5

" is

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“ is daily increasing in Indostan. Timour carried into Turan
 “ the riches of Turkey, Persia, and Indostan, but they are
 “ all dissipated; and, during the reigns of the four first Ca-
 “ liphs, Turkey, Persia, part of Arabia, Ethiopia, Egypt, and
 “ Spain, were their tributaries; but still they were not rich.
 “ It is evident, then, that this dissipation of the riches of a
 “ state, must have happened either from extraordinary drains,
 “ or from some defect in the government. Indostan has been
 “ frequently plundered by foreign invaders, and not one of its
 “ kings ever gained for it any acquisition of wealth; nei-
 “ ther has the country many mines of gold and silver, and
 “ yet Indostan abounds in money and every other kind of
 “ wealth. The abundance of specie is undoubtedly owing to
 “ the large importation of gold and silver in the ships of
 “ Europe, and other nations, many of whom bring ready
 “ money in exchange for the manufactures and natural pro-
 “ ductions of the country. If this is not the cause of the
 “ prosperous state of Indostan, it must be owing to the peculiar
 “ blessing of God.” *Memoirs of Khojeh Abdul-kurreem, a*
Cashmeerian of distinction, p. 42.

NOTE IV. p. 267.

THAT the monarchs of India were the sole proprietors of land,
 is asserted in most explicit terms by the ancients. The people (say
 they) pay a land-tax to their kings, because the kingdom is regal
 property. *Strabo, lib. xv. p. 1030. A. Diod. Sicul. lib. ii.*
p. 153. This was not peculiar to India. In all the great monarchies
 of the East, the sole property of land seems to be vested in the so-
 vereign

vereign as lord paramount. According to Chardin, this is the state of property in Persia, and lands were let by the monarch to the farmers who cultivated them, on conditions nearly resembling those granted to the Indian Ryots. Voyages, tom. iii. p. 339, &c. 4to. M. Volney gives a similar account of the tenure by which lands are held in one of the great provinces of the Turkish empire. Voy. en Syrie, &c. tom. ii. p. 369, &c. The precise mode, however, in which the Ryots of Indostan held their possessions, is a circumstance in its ancient political constitution, with respect to which gentlemen of superior discernment, who have resided long in the country, and filled some of the highest stations in government, have formed very different opinions. Some have imagined that grants of land were made by the sovereign to villages or small communities, the inhabitants of which, under the direction of their own chiefs or heads-men, laboured it in common, and divided the produce of it among them in certain proportions. Descript. de l'Inde, par M. Bernouilli, tom. ii. 223, &c. Others maintain, that the property of land has been transferred from the crown to hereditary officers of great eminence and power, denominated *Zemindars*, who collect the rents from the Ryots, and parcel out the lands among them. Others contend, that the office of the *Zemindars* is temporary and ministerial, that they are merely collectors of revenue, removeable at pleasure, and the tenure by which the Ryots hold their possessions is derived immediately from the sovereign. This last opinion is supported with great ability, by Mr. Grant, in an Inquiry into the Nature of *Zemindary Tenures* in the landed Property of Bengal, &c. This question still continues to be agitated in Bengal, and such plausible arguments have been produced in support of the different

opinions, that although it be a point extremely interesting, as the future system of British finance in India appears likely to hinge, in an essential degree, upon it, persons well acquainted with the state of India, have not been able thoroughly to make up their minds upon this subject. Capt. Kirkpatrick's Introd. to the Institutes of Ghazan Khan. New Asiatic Miscell. N° II. p. 130. Though the opinion of the Committee of Revenue, composed of persons eminent for their abilities, leans to a conclusion against the hereditary right of the Zemindars in the soil, yet the Supreme Council, in the year 1786, declined, for good reasons, to give any decisive judgment on a subject of such magnitude. This note was sent to the press before I had it in my power to peruse Mr. Rouse's ingenious and instructive Dissertation concerning the landed property of Bengal. In it he adopts an opinion contrary to that of Mr. Grant, and maintains, with that candour and liberality of sentiment which are always conspicuous where there is no other object in view but the discovery of truth, that the Zemindars of Bengal possess their landed property by hereditary right. Did I possess such knowledge, either of the state of India, or of the system of administration established there, as would be requisite for comparing these different theories, and determining which of them merits the preference, the subject of my researches does not render it necessary to enter into such a disquisition. I imagine, however, that the state of landed property in India might be greatly illustrated by an accurate comparison of it with the nature of feudal tenures; and I apprehend that there might be traced there a succession of changes taking place, in much the same order as has been observed in Europe, from which it might appear, that the possession of land was granted at first during pleasure, afterwards for life, and at length became perpetual
and

and hereditary property. But even under this last form, when land is acquired either by purchase or inheritance, the manner in which the right of property is confirmed and rendered complete, in Europe by a Charter, in India by a *Sunnud* from the sovereign, seems to point out what was its original state. According to each of the theories which I have mentioned, the tenure and condition of the Ryots nearly resemble the description which I have given of them. Their state, according to the accounts of intelligent observers, is as happy and independent as falls to the lot of any race of men employed in the cultivation of the earth. The ancient Greek and Roman writers, whose acquaintance with the interior parts of India was very imperfect, represent the fourth part of the annual produce of land as the general average of rent paid to the sovereign. Upon the authority of a popular author who flourished in India prior to the Christian æra, we may conclude that a sixth part of the people's income was, in his time, the usual portion of the sovereign. Sacontala, Act V. p. 53. It is now known that what the sovereign receives from land varies greatly in different parts of the country, and is regulated by the fertility or barrenness of the soil, the nature of the climate, the abundance or scarcity of water, and many other obvious circumstances. By the account given of it, I should imagine that, in some districts, it has been raised beyond its due proportion. One circumstance with respect to the administration of revenue in Bengal merits notice, as it redounds to the honour of the Emperor Akber, the wisdom of whose government I have often had occasion to celebrate. A general and regular assessment of revenue in Bengal was formed in his reign. All the lands were then valued, and the rent of each inhabitant and of each village ascertained.

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A regular gradation of accounts was established. The rents of the different inhabitants who lived in one neighbourhood being collected together, formed the account of a village; the rents of several villages being next collected into one view, formed the accounts of a larger portion of land. The aggregate of these accounts exhibited the rent of a district, and the sum total of the rents of all the districts in Bengal formed the account of the revenue of the whole province. From the reign of Akber to the government of Jaffeer Ali Cawn, A. D. 1757, the annual amount of revenue, and the modes of levying it, continued with little variation. But in order to raise the sum which he had stipulated to pay on his elevation, he departed from the wise arrangements of Akber; many new modes of assessment were introduced, and exactions multiplied.

NOTE V. p. 269.

I SHALL mention only one instance of their attention to this useful regulation of police. Lahore, in the Panjab, is distant from Agra, the ancient capital of Indostan, five hundred miles. Along each side of the road between these two great cities, there is planted a continued row of shady trees, forming an avenue, to which (whether we consider its extent, its beauty, or utility in a hot climate) there is nothing similar in any country. Rennel's Memoir, p. 69.

NOTE VI. p. 272.

WE cannot place the equitable and mild government of Akber in a point of view more advantageous, than by contrasting it

it with the conduct of other Mahomedan princes. In no country did this contrast ever appear more striking than in India. In the thousandth year of the Christian æra, Mahmud of Ghazna, to whose dominion were subjected the same countries which formed the ancient kingdom of Bactria, invaded that country. Every step of his progress in it was marked with blood and desolation. The most celebrated pagodas, the ancient monuments of Hindoo devotion and magnificence, were destroyed, the ministers of religion were massacred, and with undistinguishing ferocity the country was laid waste, and the cities plundered and burnt. About four hundred years after Mahmud, Timur or Tamerlane, a conqueror of higher fame, turned his irresistible arms against Indostan, and, though born in an age more improved, he not only equalled, but often so far surpassed the cruel deeds of Mahmud, as to be justly branded with the odious name of the "Destroying Prince," which was given to him by the Hindoos, the undeserving victims of his rage. A rapid but elegant description of their devastations may be found in Mr. Orme's Dissertation on the Establishments made by the Mahomedan conquerors in Indostan. A more full account of them is given by Mr. Gibbon, vol. v. p. 646. vol. vi. p. 339, &c. The arrogant contempt with which bigotted Mahomedans view all the nations who have not embraced the religion of the prophet, will account for the unrelenting rigour of Mahmud and Timur towards the Hindoos, and greatly enhances the merit of the tolerant spirit and moderation with which Akber governed his subjects. What impression the mild administration of Akber made upon the Hindoos, we learn from a beautiful letter of Jesswant Sing, Rajah of Joudpore,

to

to Aurengzebe, his fanatical and persecuting successor. “ Your
 “ royal ancestor, Akber, whose throne is now in heaven, con-
 “ ducted the affairs of this empire in equity and firm security
 “ for the space of fifty-two years, preserving every tribe of
 “ men in ease and happiness; whether they were followers of
 “ Jesus, or of Moses, of David, or of Mahomed; were they
 “ Brahmins, were they of the sect of Dharians, which denies
 “ the eternity of matter, or of that which ascribes the existence
 “ of the world to chance, they all equally enjoyed his counte-
 “ nance and favour; insomuch that his people, in gratitude
 “ for the indiscriminate protection which he afforded them,
 “ distinguished him by the appellation of *Juggut Grow*, Guar-
 “ dian of Mankind.—If your Majesty places any faith in
 “ those books, by distinction called divine, you will there be
 “ instructed, that God is the God of all mankind, not the
 “ God of Mahomedans alone. The Pagan and the Mussul-
 “ man are equally in his presence. Distinctions of colours are
 “ of his ordination. It is He who gives existence. In your
 “ temples, to his Name, the voice is raised in prayer; in a
 “ house of images, where the bell is shaken, still He is the
 “ object of adoration. To vilify the religion and customs of
 “ other men, is to set at naught the pleasure of the Almighty.
 “ When we deface a picture, we naturally incur the resentment
 “ of the painter; and justly has the Poet said, “ Presume not
 “ to arraign or to scrutinize the various works of Power Di-
 “ vine.” For this valuable communication we are indebted to
 Mr. Orme. Fragments, notes, p. xcvi. I have been assured
 by a gentleman who has read this letter in the original, that
 the translation is not only faithful but elegant.

NOTE VII. p. 282.

I HAVE not attempted a description of any subterraneous excavations but those of Elephanta, because none of them have been so often visited, or so carefully inspected. In several parts of India, there are, however, stupendous works of a similar nature. The extent and magnificence of the excavations in the island of Salfette are such, that the artist employed by Governor Boon to make drawings of them, asserted that it would require the labour of forty thousand men for forty years to finish them. *Archæologia*, vol. vii. p. 336. Loose as this mode of estimation may be, it conveys an idea of the impression which the view of them made upon his mind. The Pagodas of Ellore, eighteen miles from Aurungabad, are likewise hewn out of the solid rock, and if they do not equal those of Elephanta and Salfette in magnitude, they surpass them far in their extent and number. M. Thevenot, who first gave any description of these singular mansions, asserts, that for above two leagues all around the mountain nothing is to be seen but Pagodas. *Voy.* part iii. ch. 44. They were examined at greater leisure and with more attention by M. Anquetil du Perron, but as his long description of them is not accompanied with any plan or drawing, I cannot convey a distinct idea of the whole. It is evident, however, that they are the works of a powerful people, and among the innumerable figures in sculpture with which the walls are covered, all the present objects
of

of Hindoo worship may be distinguished. Zend-avesta. Disc. Prelim. p. 233. There are remarkable excavations in a mountain at Mavalipuram near Sadras. This mountain is well known on the Coromandel coast by the name of the *Seven Pagodas*. A good description of the works there which are magnificent and of high antiquity is given. Asiat. Recherches, vol. i. p. 145, &c. Many other instances of similar works might be produced if it were necessary. What I have asserted, p. 282. concerning the elegance of some of the ornaments in Indian buildings, is confirmed by Colonel Call, chief engineer at Madras, who urges this as a proof of the early and high civilization of the Indians. "It may safely be pronounced," says he, "that no part of the world has more marks of antiquity for arts, sciences; and civilization, than the peninsula of India, from the Ganges to Cape Comorin. I think the carvings on some of the Pagodas and Choultries, as well as the grandeur of the work, exceeds any thing executed nowadays, not only for the delicacy of the chisel, but the expense of construction, considering, in many instances, to what distances the component parts were carried, and to what heights raised." Philosophical Transactions, vol. lxii. p. 354.

NOTE VIII. p. 285.

INDIA, says Strabo, produces a variety of substances which dye the most admirable colours. That the *Indicum*, which produced the beautiful blue colour, is the same with the *Indigo* of the
the

the moderns, we may conclude not only from the resemblance of the name, and the similarity of the effects, but from the description given by Pliny in the passage which I have quoted in the text. He knew that it was a preparation of a vegetable substance, though he was ill-informed both concerning the plant itself, and the process by which it was fitted for use, which will not appear surprising when we recollect the strange ignorance of the ancients with respect to the origin and preparation of silk. From the colour of Indigo, in the form in which it was imported, it is denominated by some authors, *Atramentum Indicum*, and *Indicum Nigrum*, Salmaf. Exercit. p. 180, and is mentioned under the last of these names, among the articles of importation from India. Peripl. Mar. Erythr. p. 22. The colour of the modern Indigo, when undiluted, resembles that of the ancient Indicum, being so intensely coloured as to appear black. Delaval's Experim. Inquiry into the Cause of the Changes of Colours, Pref. p. xxiii. The *Gum Lacca*, used in dying a red colour, was likewise known to the ancients, and by the same name which it now bears. Salmaf. Exercit. p. 810. This valuable substance, of such extensive utility in painting, dying, japanning, varnishing, and in the manufacture of sealing-wax, is the production of a very minute insect. These insects fix themselves upon the succulent extremities of the branches of certain trees, and are soon glued to the place on which they settle, by a thick pellucid liquid which exudes from their bodies, the gradual accumulation of which forms a complete cell for each insect, which is the tomb of the parent, and the birth-place of its offspring. This glutinous substance, with which the branches of trees are entirely covered, is the Gum-lacca. An account of its formation, na-

ture, and use, is given in the *Philos. Transf.* vol. lxxi. part ii. p. 374. in a concise, accurate, and satisfactory manner. Ctesias seems to have received an account tolerably distinct of the insect by which the Gum-lacca is produced, and celebrates the beauty of the colour which it dyes. *Excerpta ex Indic. ad calc. Herodot.* Edit. Wesseling, p. 830. *Indian Dyers* was the ancient name of those who dyed either the fine blue or the fine red, which points out the country whence the materials they used were brought. *Salmaf. Ib.* p. 810. From their dying cotton-stuffs with different colours, it is evident that the ancient Indians must have made some considerable proficiency in chemical knowledge. *Pliny, lib. xxxv. c. ii. § 42.* gives an account of this art as far as it was known anciently. It is precisely the same with that now practised in callico-printing.

NOTE IX. p. 295.

As Sanskreet literature is altogether a new acquisition to Europe, Baghyat-Geeta, the first translation from that language, having been published so late as A. D. 1785, it is intimately connected with the subject of my inquiries, and may afford entertainment to some of my readers, after having reviewed in the text, with a greater degree of critical attention, the two Sanskreet works most worthy of notice, to give here a succinct account of other compositions in that tongue with which we have been made acquainted. The extensive use of the Sanskreet language is a circumstance which merits particular attention.

“ The

“ The grand source of Indian literature,” (says Mr. Halhed, the
 first Englishman who acquired the knowledge of Sanskreet,)
 “ the parent of almost every dialect from the Persian gulf to
 “ the China seas, is the Sanskreet, a language of the most ve-
 “ nerable and unfathomable antiquity ; which, although, at
 “ present, shut up in the libraries of Brahmins, and appropri-
 “ ated solely to the records of their religion, appears to
 “ have been current over most of the Oriental world ; and
 “ traces of its original extent may still be discovered in almost
 “ every district of Asia. I have been often astonished to find
 “ the similitude of Sanskreet words with those of Persian and
 “ Arabic, and even of Latin and Greek ; and those not in
 “ technical and metaphorical terms, which the mutation of
 “ refined arts and improved manners might have occasionally
 “ introduced, but in the ground-work of language, in mo-
 “ nosyllables, in the names of numbers, and the appellations of
 “ such things as would be first discriminated on the immediate
 “ dawn of civilization. The resemblance which may be ob-
 “ served in the characters on the medals and signets of various
 “ districts of Asia, the light which they reciprocally reflect
 “ upon each other, and the general analogy which they all bear
 “ to the same grand prototype, afford another ample field for cu-
 “ riosity. The coins of Assam, Napaul, Cashmeere, and many
 “ other kingdoms, are all stamped with Sanskreet characters,
 “ and mostly contain allusions to the old Sanskreet mythology.
 “ The same conformity I have observed on the impression of
 “ seals from Bootan and Thibet. A collateral inference may
 “ likewise be deduced from the peculiar arrangement of the
 “ Sanskreet alphabet, so very different from that of any other

“ quarter, of the world. This extraordinary mode of combi-
 “ nation still exists in the greatest part of the East, from the
 “ Indus to Pegu, in dialects now apparently unconnected, and
 “ in characters completely dissimilar; and it is a forcible argu-
 “ ment that they are all derived from the same source. Another
 “ channel of speculation presents itself in the names of persons
 “ and places, of titles and dignities, which are open to general
 “ notice, and in which, to the farthest limits of Asia, may be
 “ found manifest traces of the Sanskreet.” Preface to the
 Grammar of the Bengal Language, p. 3. After this curious
 account of the Sanskreet tongue, I proceed to enumerate the
 works which have been translated from it, besides the two men-
 tioned in the text.—1. To Mr. Wilkins we are indebted for
Heeto-pades or *Amicable Instruction*, in a series of connected
 fables, interspersed with moral, prudential, and political max-
 ims. This work is in such high esteem throughout the East,
 that it has been translated into every language spoken there.
 It did not escape the notice of the Emperor Akber, attentive to
 every thing that could contribute to promote useful knowledge.
 He directed his Vizier, Abul Fazel, to put it into a style suited
 to all capacities, and to illustrate the obscure passages in it,
 which he accordingly did, and gave it the title of, *The Crite-
 rion of Wisdom*. At length, these fables made their way into
 Europe, and have been circulated there with additions and al-
 terations, under the names of Pilpay and Esop. Many of the
 Sanskreet apologues are ingenious and beautiful, and have been
 copied or imitated by the fabulists of other nations. But in
 some of them the characters of the animals introduced are very
 ill sustained; to describe a tyger as extremely devout, and prac-
 tising

tising charity, and other religious duties, p. 16. or an old mouse well read in the *Neete Sastras*, i. e. Systems of morality and policy, p. 24.; a cat who read religious books, p. 35, &c. discovers a want of taste, and an inattention to propriety. Many of the moral sayings, if considered as detached maxims, are founded upon a thorough knowledge of life and manners, and convey instruction with elegant simplicity. But the attempt of the author to form his work into a connected series of fables, and his mode of interweaving with them such a number of moral reflections in prose and in verse, renders the structure of the whole so artificial that the perusal of it becomes often unpleasant. Akber was so sensible of this, that, among other instructions, he advises his Vizier to abridge the long digressions in that work. By these strictures it is far from my intention to detract in the smallest degree from the merit of Mr. Wilkins. His country is much indebted to him for having opened a new source of science and taste. The celebrity of the Heeto-pades, as well as its intrinsic merit, notwithstanding the defects which I have mentioned, justify his choice of it, as a work worthy of being made known to Europe in its original form. From reading this and his other translations, no man will refuse him the praise, to which he modestly confines his pretensions, “of having drawn a picture which we suppose to be a true likeness, although we are unacquainted with the original.” Pref. p. xiv.—2. In the first number of the *New Asiatic Miscellany*, we have a translation of a celebrated composition in the East, known by the title of the *Five Gems*. It consists of stanzas by five poets who attended the court of Abissura, King of Bengal. Some of these stanzas are simple
and

and elegant.—3. An ode translated from Wulli; in which that extravagance of fancy, and those far-fetched and unnatural conceits, which so often disgust Europeans with the poetical compositions of the East, abound too much. The editor has not informed us to whose knowledge of the Sanskreet we are indebted for these two translations.—4. Some original grants of land, of very ancient dates, translated by Mr. Wilkins. It may seem odd, that a charter of legal conveyance of property should be ranked among the literary compositions of any people. But so widely do the manners of the Hindoos differ from those of Europe, that as our lawyers multiply words and clauses, in order to render a grant complete, and to guard against every thing that may invalidate it, the *Pundits* seem to dispatch the legal part of the deed with brevity; but, in a long preamble and conclusion, make an extraordinary display of their own learning, eloquence, and powers of composition, both in prose and in verse. The preamble to one of these deeds is an encomium of the monarch who grants the land, in a bold strain of Eastern exaggeration: “When his innumerable army
 “marched, the heavens were so filled with the dust of their feet
 “that the birds of the air could rest upon it.” “His elephants
 “moved like walking mountains, and the earth, oppressed by
 “their weight, mouldered into dust.” It concludes with denouncing vengeance against those who should venture to infringe this grant: “Riches and the life of man are as transient as drops
 “of water upon a leaf of the lotus. Learning this truth, O
 “man, do not attempt to deprive another of his property.” Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 123, &c. The other grant, which appears to be still more ancient, is not less remarkable. Both

were found engraved on plates of copper. Ib. p. 357, &c.—
 5. The translation of part of the Shaster, published by Colonel Dow, in the year 1768, ought perhaps to have been first mentioned. But as this translation was not made by him from the Sanskreet, but taken from the mouth of a Brahmin, who explained the Shaster in Persian, or in the vulgar language of Bengal, it will fall more properly under notice when we come to inquire into the state of science among the Hindoos, than in this place, where we are endeavouring to give some idea of their taste in composition.

NOTE X. p. 303.

As many of my readers may be unacquainted with the extravagant length of the four æras or periods of Indian chronology, it may be proper to give an account of them from Mr. Halhed's Preface to the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. xxxvi.

1. THE *Suttee Jogue* (or age of purity) is said to have lasted three million two hundred thousand years, and they hold that the life of man was extended in that age to one hundred thousand years, and that his stature was twenty-one cubits.

2. THE *Tirtab Jogue* (in which one third of mankind was corrupted) they suppose to have consisted of two million four hundred thousand years, and that men lived to the age of ten thousand years.

3. THE

NOTES TO THE APPENDIX.

3. THE *Dwapaar Yogue* (in which half of the human race became depraved) endured one million six hundred thousand years; and the life of man was then reduced to a thousand years.

4. THE *Collee Yogue* (in which all mankind are corrupted, or rather lessened, for that is the true meaning of *Collee*) is the present æra, which they suppose ordained to subsist four hundred thousand years, of which near five thousand are already past, and the life of man in that period is limited to one hundred years.

IF we suppose the computation of time in the Indian chronology to be made by solar or even by lunar years, nothing can be more extravagant in itself, or more repugnant to our mode of calculating the duration of the world, founded on sacred and infallible authority. Some attempts have been made by learned men, particularly by M. Bailly, in a very ingenious dissertation on that subject, to bring the chronology of the Hindoos to accord somewhat better with that of the Old Testament; but, as I could not explain the principles upon which he founds his conclusions, without entering into long and intricate discussions foreign from the subject of this Dissertation, and as I cannot assent to some of his opinions, I shall rest satisfied with referring to his *Astron. Indienne*, Disc. Prelim. p. lxxvii. and leave my readers to judge for themselves. I am happy to observe that a Memoir on the Chronology of the Hindoos will be published in the Second Volume of the Transactions of the Society of Bengal, and I hope that
some

Some learned member of that body will be able, from his acquaintance with the languages and history of the country, to throw light upon a subject which its connection with religion and science renders extremely interesting. From one circumstance, however, which merits attention, we may conclude, that the information which we have hitherto received concerning the chronology of the Hindoos is very incorrect. We have, as far as I know, only five original accounts of the different Jogues or æras of the Hindoos. The first is given by M. Roger, who received it from the Brahmins on the Coromandel coast. According to it, the Suttee Jogue is a period of one million seven hundred and twenty-eight thousand years; the Tirtah Jogue is one million two hundred and ninety-six thousand years; the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and sixty-four thousand. The duration of the Collee Jogue he does not specify. *Porte Ouverte*, p. 179. The next is that of M. Bernier, who received it from the Brahmins of Benares. According to him, the duration of the Suttee Jogue was two million five hundred thousand years; that of the Tirtah Jogue one million two hundred thousand years; that of the Dwapaar Jogue is eight hundred and sixty-four thousand years. Concerning the period of the Collee Jogue, he, likewise, is silent. *Voyages*, tom. ii. p. 160. The third is that of Colonel Dow, according to which the Suttee Jogue is a period of fourteen million of years; the Tirtah Jogue one million eighty thousand; the Dwapaar Jogue seventy-two thousand; and the Collee Jogue thirty-six thousand years. *Hist. of Hindost.* vol. i. p. 2. The fourth account is that of M. Le Gentil, who received it from the Brahmins of the Coromandel coast, and as his information was acquired in

the same part of India, and derived from the same source with that of M. Roger, it agrees with his in every particular. Mem. de l'Academ. des Sciences pour 1772, tom. ii. part i. p. 176. The fifth is the account of Mr. Halhed, which I have already given. From this discrepancy, not only of the total numbers, but of many of the articles in the different accounts, it is manifest that our information concerning Indian chronology is hitherto as uncertain as the whole system of it is wild and fabulous. To me it appears highly probable, that when we understand more thoroughly the principles upon which the factitious æras or Jogues of the Hindoos have been formed, that we may be more able to reconcile their chronology to the true mode of computing time, founded on the authority of the Old Testament; and may likewise find reason to conclude, that the account given by their astronomers of the situation of the heavenly bodies at the beginning of the Collee Jogue, is not established by actual observation, but the result of a retrospective calculation. Whoever undertakes to investigate farther the chronology of the Hindoos, will derive great assistance from a Memoir of Mr. Marsden on that subject, in which he has explained the nature of their year, and the several æras in use among them, with much ingenuity and precision. Philos. Transact. vol. lxxx. part ii. p. 560.

NOTE XI. p. 311.

IN the public buildings of India, we find proofs and monuments of the proficiency of the Brahmins in science, particularly of their attention to astronomical observation. Their religion

ligion enjoins, that the four sides of a Pagoda should face the four cardinal points. In order to execute this with accuracy, they take a method described by M. le Gentil, which discovers a considerable degree of science. He carefully examined the position of one of their Pagodas, and found it to be perfectly exact. Voy. tom. i. p. 133, &c. As some of their Pagodas are very ancient, they must have early attained such a portion of knowledge as was requisite for placing them properly. On the ceilings of Choultrys, and other ancient edifices, the twelve signs of the zodiac are often delineated; and, from their resemblance to those which are now universally used, it is highly probable that the knowledge of these arbitrary symbols was derived from the East. Colonel Call has published a drawing of the signs of the zodiac, which he found on the ceiling of a Choultry at Verdapettah, in the Madura country. Phil. Transact. vol. lxii. p. 353. I have a drawing of them in my possession, differing from his in some of the figures, but I cannot say in what particular place it was found. Sir Robert Barker describes an observatory at Benares, which he visited A. D. 1772. In it he found instruments for astronomical observation, of very large dimensions, and constructed with great skill and ingenuity. Of all these he has published drawings. Phil. Transact. vol. lxxvii. p. 598. According to traditionary account, this observatory was built by the Emperor Akber. The view which Sir Robert took of it was an hasty one. It merits a more attentive inspection, in order to determine whether it was constructed by Akber, or erected in some more early period. Sir Robert intimates, that none but Brahmins who understood the Sanskreet, and could consult the astronomical

mical tables written in that language, were capable of calculating eclipses. P. Tieffenthaler describes, in a very cursory manner, two observatories furnished with instruments of extraordinary magnitude, at Jepour and Ougein, in the country of Malwa. Bernouilli, tom. i. p. 316. 347. But these are modern structures.

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	87. —	<i>antepon.</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>the kingdom</i>	<i>read</i>	<i>their kingdom.</i>
	183. —	1.	<i>for</i>	<i>shall</i>	<i>read</i>	<i>will.</i>
	197. —	9.	<i>for</i>	<i>great veneration</i>	<i>read</i>	<i>great devotion.</i>
	246. —	5.	<i>for</i>	<i>Khizeh</i>	<i>read</i>	<i>Khojeh.</i>
	259. —	<i>pen.</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>seems</i>	<i>read</i>	<i>seem.</i>
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