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Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu,  
*Complete Works, vol. 3 (Grandeur and Declension of  
the Roman Empire; A Dialogue between Sylla and  
Euclates; Persian Letters)* [1721]

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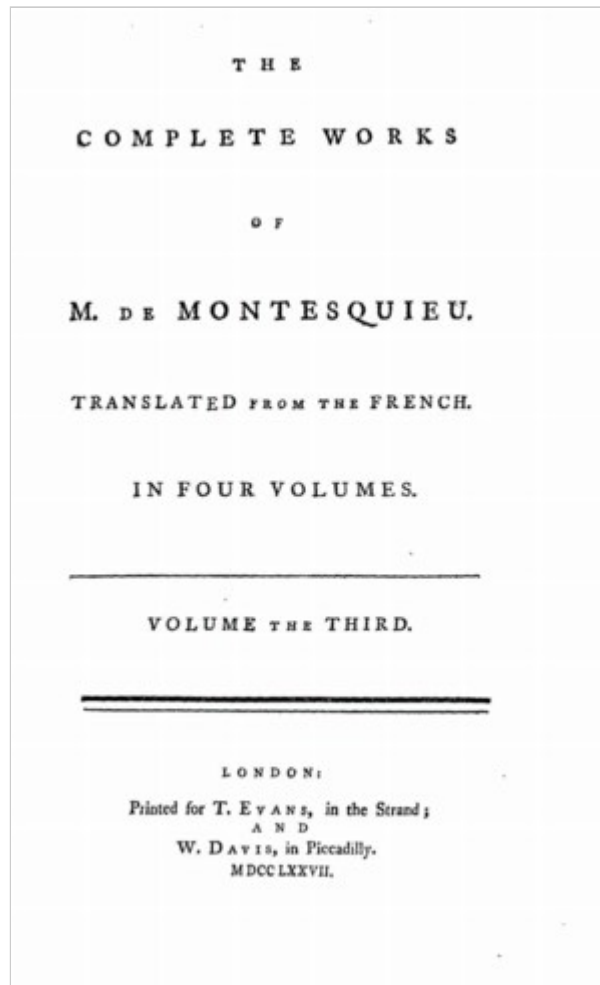
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## About This Title:

This is volume 3 from the *Complete Works*. It contains his piece on the *Grandeur and Declension of the Roman Empire*, a short *Dialogue between Sylla and Eucrates*, and the *Persian Letters*.

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# C O N T E N T S

T O T H E

## P E R S I A N L E T T E R S .

### L E T T E R I .

- U**SBEK to his friend Ruffan, at Ispahan, desiring him to inform him frankly what the public say of his departure, Page 209
- II. Usbek to the first black eunuch, at his seraglio at Ispahan, giving him instructions about the care of his wives, 210
- III. Zachi to Usbek, at Tauris, lamenting his absence, and reminding him of their former loves, 211
- IV. Zephis to Usbek, at Erzeron, complaining of the ill-behaviour of the black eunuch, 213
- V. Ruffan to Usbek, at Erzeron, acquainting him with the public talk at Ispahan, of his quitting that place, 213
- VI. Usbek to his friend Nefir, at Ispahan, expressing his sorrow at leaving Persia; and his sentiments as to his wives, 214
- VII. Fatme to Usbek, at Erzeron, bewailing his absence, 215
- VIII. Usbek to his friend Ruffan, acquainting him with his real motives for travelling, 216
- IX. The Chief Eunuch to Ibben, at Erzeron, informing him of his miserable situation, whilst he follows the pleasures of his masters through various countries, 218
- X. Mirza to his friend Usbek, at Erzeron, desiring his opinion upon this question: Whether pleasure is happiness, and if felicity consists in the satisfaction of the senses, or the practice of virtue, 222
- XI. XII. XIII. XIV. Usbek to Mirza, at Ispahan, answering his question by the history of a people called the Troglodites, 223, 226, 229, 230
- XV. The first eunuch to Jaron, the black eunuch at Erzeron, expressing his early friendship for him, 232
- O 4
- XVI. Usbek

## Table Of Contents

[Considerations On the Causes of the Grandeur and Declension of the Roman Empire.](#)

[Chap. I.: The Infancy of Rome. the Wars It Sustained.](#)

[Chap. II.: Of the Science of War, As Practised By the Romans.](#)

[Chap. III.: The Methods By Which the Romans Raised Themselves to Empire.](#)

[Chap. IV.: Of the Gauls. of Pyrrhus. Parallel Between Carthage and Rome. the War of Hannibal.](#)

[Chap. V.: The State of Greece, of Macedonia, of Syria, and of Egypt, After the Depression of Carthage.](#)

[Chap. VI.: The Conduct Which the Romans Observed, In Order to Subdue All Nations.](#)

[Chap. VII.: How It Was Possible For Mithridates to Resist the Romans.](#)

[Chap. VIII.: Of the Divisions Which Always Subsisted In the City.](#)

[Chap. IX.: Two Causes Which Destroyed Rome.](#)

[Chap. X.: Of the Corruption of the Romans.](#)

[Chap. XI.: Of Sylla, Pompey, and Cæsar.](#)

[Chap. XII.: Observations On the State of Rome After the Death of Cæsar.](#)

[Chap. XIII.: Augustus.](#)

[Chap. XIV.: Tiberius.](#)

[Chap. XV.: Remarks On the Emperors, From Caius Calicula to Antoninus.](#)

[Chap. XVI.: Considerations On the State of the Empire From Antoninus to Probus.](#)

[Chap. XVII.: Changes In the State.](#)

[Chap. XVIII.: An Account of Some New Maxims Received By the Romans.](#)

[Chap. XIX.: Some Particulars of the Grandeur of Attila. the Establishment of the Barbarians Accounted For. Reasons Why the Western Empire Was Overturned Before That In the East.](#)

[Chap. XX.: The Conquests of Justinian. Some Account of His Government.](#)

[Chap. XXI.: Disorders In the Eastern Empire.](#)

[Chap. XXII.: The Weakness of the Eastern Empire.](#)

[Chap. XXIII.: The Duration of the Eastern Empire Accounted For. Its Destruction.](#)

[A Dialogue Between Sylla and Eucrates.](#)

[Persian Letters. By M. De Montesquieu.](#)

[Preliminary Reflections On the Persian Letters, By M. De Montesquieu. Prefixed to the Quarto Edition.](#)

[Introduction to the First French Edition.](#)

[Letter I.: Usbæk to His Friend Rustan At Ispahan.](#)

[Letter II.: Usbek to the First Black Eunuch, At His Seraglio In Ispahan.](#)

[Letter III.: Zachi to Usbek, At Tauris.](#)

[Letter IV.: Zephis to Usbek At Erzeron.](#)

[Letter V.: Rustan to Usbek, At Erzeron.](#)

[Letter VI.: Usbek to His Friend Nessir, At Ispahan.](#)

[Letter VII.: Fatme to Usbek, At Erzeron.](#)

- [Letter VIII.: Usbek to His Friend Rustan, At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter IX.: The Chief Eunuch to Ibbi, At Erzeron.](#)  
[Letter X.: Mirza to His Friend Usbek, At Erzeron.](#)  
[Letter XI.: Usbek to Mirza, At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter XII.: Ushek to the Same, At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter XIII.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter. XIV.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter XV.: The First Eunuch, to Jaron, the Black Eunuch, At Erzeron.](#)  
[Letter XVI.: Usbek to Mollak Mehemet Ali, Guardian of the Three Tombs, At Com.](#)  
[Letter XVII.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter XVIII.: Mollak Mehemet Ali to Usbek, At Erzeron.](#)  
[Letter XIX.: Usbek to His Friend Rustan, At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter XX.: Usbek to Zachi, His Wife, At the Seraglio At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter XXI.: Usbek, to the Chief White Eunuch.](#)  
[Letter XXII.: Jaron to the First Eunuch.](#)  
[Letter XXIII.: Usbek to His Friend Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXIV.: Rica to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXV.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXVI.: Usbek to Roxana, At the Seraglio At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter XXVII.: Usbek to Nessir, At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter XXVIII.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter XXIX.: Rica to Ibben At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXX.: Rica to the Same, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXXI.: Rhedi to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter XXXII.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter XXXIII.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter XXXIV.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXXV.: Usbek to Gimchid, His Cousin, Dervise of the Shining Monastery of Tauris.](#)  
[Letter XXXVI.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter XXXVII.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXXVIII.: Rica to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XXXIX.: Hagi \\* Ibbi to the Jew Ben-joshua, a Mahometan Proselyte, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XL.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter Xli.: the Chief Black Eunuch to Usbek.](#)  
[Letter Xlii.: Pharan to Usbek, His Sovereign Lord.](#)  
[Letter Xliii.: Usbek to Pharan, At the Gardens of Fatme.](#)  
[Letter Xliv.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Xlv.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Xlvi.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Xlvii.: Zachi to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Xlviii.: Usbek \\* to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Xlix.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter L.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Li.: Nargum the Persian Envoy Residing At Muscovy, to Usbek At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lii.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*.](#)

[Letter Liii.: Zelis to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Liv.: Rica, Usbek At \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lv.: Rica to Ibben At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter Lvi.: Usbek to Ibbin, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter Lvii.: Usbek, to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lviii.: Rica to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lix.: Rica to Usbek, At a \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lx.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter Lxi.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lxii.: Zelis to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lxiii.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxiv.: the Chief of the Black Eunuchs to Usbek At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lxv.: Usbek to His Wives, At the Seraglio At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter Lxvi.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxvii.: Ibben to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lxviii.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxix.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lxx.: Zelis to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lxxi.: Usbek to Zelis.](#)  
[Letter Lxxii.: Rica to Ibben, At \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxxiii.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxxiv.: Usbek to Rica, At \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxxv.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lxxvi.: Usbek to His Friend Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter Lxxvii.: \\* : Ibben to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lxxviii.: Rica to Usbek, At \\*\\*\\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxxix.: the Chief Black Eunuch to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lxxx.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxi.: Nargum, Envoy From Persia In Muscovy, to Usbek At Paris.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxii.: Rica to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxiii.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxiv.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxv.: Usbek to Mirza, At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxvi.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxvii.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxviii.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Lxxxix.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XC.: Usbek to the Same, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XCI.: Usbek to Rustan, At Ispahan.](#)  
[Letter XCII.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter XCIII.: Usbek to His Brother, Santon \\* In the Monastery of Casbin.](#)  
[Letter XCIV.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter XCV.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter XCVI.: The Chief Eunuch to Usbek At Paris.](#)  
[Letter XCVII.: Usbek to Hassein, Dervise of the Mountain of Jaron.](#)  
[Letter XCVIII.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter XCIX.: Rica to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter C.: Rica to the Same.](#)



[Letter CI.: Usbek to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CII.: Usbek to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter CIII.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CIV.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CV.: Redi to Usbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter CVI.: Usbek to Redi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter CVII.: Rica to Ibben At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter CVIII.: Usbek to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CIX.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CX.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXI.: Usbek to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXII.: Rhedi to Esbek, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter CXIII.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter CXIV.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXV.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXVI.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXVII.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXVIII.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXIX.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXX.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXXI.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXXII.: Usbek to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXXIII.: Usbek to Mollak Mahomet Ali, Keeper of the Three  
Sepulchres, At Com.](#)  
[Letter CXXIV.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter CXXV.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXXVI.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXXVII.: Rica to Ibben, At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter CXXVIII.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXXIX.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter CXXX.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXXXI.: Rhedi to Rica, At Paris.](#)  
[Letter CXXXII.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXXXIII.: Rica to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter CXXXIV.: Rica to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXXXV.: Rica to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXXXVI.: Rica to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXXXVII.: Rica to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CXXXVIII.: Rica to Ibben At Smyrna.](#)  
[Letter CXXXIX.: Rica to the Same.](#)  
[Letter CxI.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter Cxli.: Rica to the Same.](#)  
[Letter Cxlii.: Rica to Usbek, At \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter Cxliii.: Rica to Nathaniel Levi, a Jewish Physician At Leghorn.](#)  
[Letter Cxliv.: Usbek to Rica.](#)  
[Letter Cxlv.: Usbek to \\* \\* \\*](#)  
[Letter Cxlvi.: Usbek to Rhedi, At Venice.](#)  
[Letter Cxlvii.: the Chief Eunuch to Usbek At Paris.](#)

[Letter Cxlix.: Narsit to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Letter Cl.: Usbek to Narsit, At the Seraglio of Ispahan.](#)

[Letter Cli.: Solin to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Letter Clii.: Narsit to Usbek, At Paris:](#)

[Letter Cliii.: Usbek to Solin, At the Seraglio of Ispahan.](#)

[Letter Cliv.: Usbek to His Wives, At the Seraglio of Ispahan.](#)

[Letter Clv.: Usbek to Nessir, At Ispahan.](#)

[Letter Clvi.: Roxana to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Letter Clvii.: Zachi to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Letter Clviii.: Zelis to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Letter Clix.: Solin to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Letter Clx.: Solin to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Letter Clxi.: Roxana to Usbek, At Paris.](#)

[Three Letters of M. De Montesquieu to M. Le Chevalier De Bruant.](#)

[Letter I.](#)

[Letter II.](#)

[Letter III.](#)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CAUSES OF THE GRANDEUR AND DECLENSION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

### CHAP. I.

#### The Infancy Of Rome. The Wars It Sustained.

WE are not to form to ourselves an idea of the city of Rome, in its infancy, from the cities which exist at this time, except we have in view those of the Crim Tartars, built for the stowing and securing of plunder, cattle, fruits, and other produce of the country. The ancient names of the chief places in Rome, are all relative to this use.

The city was even without streets, unless we will give this name to the continuation of roads which center in it. The houses were straggling, built after an irregular manner, and very small; for the inhabitants being always either at their work, or in the public square, were very seldom at home.

But the greatness of Rome soon appeared in its public edifices. Works which \* have raised, and still raise the greatest idea of its power, were formed under its kings. They began already to lay the foundation of that city which was to be eternal.

Romulus, and his successors, were engaged in almost perpetual wars with their neighbours, to encrease the number of their citizens, their women, and their territories. They used to return to the city, loaded with the spoils of conquered nations; and these spoils, which consisted of wheatsheaves and flocks, used to fill them with the greatest joy. Such is the origin of triumphs, to which that city afterwards chiefly owed its grandeur.

The strength of the Romans was greatly encreased by their union with the Sabines, a stubborn, warlike people, resembling the Lacedæmonians, from whom they sprung. Romulus \* copied the form of their shields, which were large, and used them ever afterwards instead of the small buckler of Argos: And it is to be observed, that the circumstance which chiefly raised the Romans to the sovereignty of the world, was, their laying aside their own customs as soon as they met with better among the people they conquered; and it is well known that they fought successively against all nations.

It was a maxim then among the republics of Italy, that treaties made with one king were not obligatory towards his successor. This was a sort of law of nations † among them. Thus every thing which had been submitted to by one king of Rome, they thought themselves disengaged from under another, and wars continually begot wars.

The reign of Numa, being long and pacific, was very well adapted to leave the Romans in their humble condition; and had their territory in that age been less

confined, and their power greater, it is probable their fortune would have been fixed for ever.

One cause of the prosperity of Rome was, that all her kings were great men. No other history presents us with an uninterrupted succession of such statesmen and such captains.

In the infancy of societies, the leading men in the republic form the constitution; afterwards, the constitution forms the leading men in the republic.

Tarquin took upon him the government, without being elected by the senate <sup>\*</sup>, or the people. His power became hereditary: he rendered it absolute. These two revolutions were soon followed by a third.

Sextus, the son of Tarquin, by violating the chastity of Lucretia, took such a step as has seldom failed to drive tyrants from the cities over which they presided; for when once a people are made strongly sensible, by the commission of so enormous a crime, of the slavery to which they are reduced, they immediately form a desperate resolution.

A people may suffer, without murmuring, the imposing of new tributes, since they are not certain but that some advantage may accrue to themselves from the disposal of the monies so levied; but when an insult is put upon them, they are affected with their misfortune only; and this they aggravate, by fixing to it the idea of all the calamities which can possibly happen.

It must however be confessed, that the death of Lucretia did no more than occasion, accidentally, the revolution which happened; for a haughty, enterprising, bold people, confined within walls, must necessarily either shake off the yoke, or soften the asperity of their manners.

From the situation of things at that time, this was the result, either that Rome should change the form of its government, or continue for ever a small, poor monarchy.

Modern history furnishes us with a very remarkable example of what happened at that time in Rome; for as men have been sensible of the same passions in all ages, the occasions which give rise to great revolutions are various, but the causes are for ever the same.

As Henry VII. of England increased the power of the commons, merely to humble the nobility; so Servius Tullius enlarged the privileges of the people, in order to depress the senate: but the people growing afterwards bolder, ruined each of the monarchies under which they lived.

No flattering colours have been employed in the picture which is left us of Tarquin; his name has not escaped any of the orators who declaimed against tyranny: but his conduct, before his calamities, which it is evident he foresaw, his gentleness and humanity towards the conquered, his beneficence to the soldiers, the arts by which he engaged such numbers to endeavour at his preservation, the edifices he raised for the

public use, his courage in the field, the constancy and patience with which he bore his misfortunes, a twenty years war he either carried on, or caused to be carried on against the Romans, though deprived of his kingdom, and very poor; these things, and the resources perpetually found, prove manifestly, that he was no contemptible person.

The rank or place which posterity bestows, is subject, as all others are, to the whim and caprice of fortune. Woe to the reputation of that monarch who is oppressed by a party which after becomes the prevailing one; or who has endeavoured to destroy a prepossession that survives him.

The Romans, after having banished their kings, appointed consuls annually; a circumstance which contributed to raise them to so exalted a pitch. In the lives of all princes there are certain periods of ambition, and these are afterwards succeeded by other passions, and even by indolence; but the commonwealth being governed by magistrates who were changed every year, and who endeavoured to signalize themselves in their employment, in the view of obtaining new ones, ambition had not a moment to lose. Hence it was that these magistrates were ever persuading the senate to stir up the people to war, and pointed out to them new enemies every day.

This body (the senate) was inclined enough to do this of their own accord; for, being quite tired of the complaints and demands of the people, they endeavoured to remove the occasion of their disquiet, and to employ them in foreign wars.

Now the common people were generally pleased with war, because a method had been found to make it beneficial to them, by the judicious distribution that was made of the spoils.

Rome being a city in which neither trade nor arts flourished, the several individuals had no other way of enriching themselves but by rapine.

An order and discipline was therefore established in the way and manner of pillaging, \* and this was pretty near the same with that now practised among the inhabitants of Lesser Tartary.

The plunder was laid together, and afterwards distributed among the soldiers; not even the minutest article was lost, because every man, before he set out, swore not to embezzle any thing; besides that the Romans were, of all nations, the most religious observers of oaths, these being considered as the sinews of their military discipline.

In fine, those citizens who staid at home, shared also in the fruits of the victory; for part of the conquered lands was confiscated, and this was subdivided into two portions, one of which was sold for the benefit of the public, and the other divided, by the commonwealth, among such citizens as were but in poor circumstances, upon condition of their paying a small acknowledgment.

As the consuls had no other way of obtaining the honour of a triumph, than by a conquest or a victory, this made them rush into field with unparalleled impetuosity; they marched directly to the enemy, when force immediately decided the contest.

Rome was therefore engaged in an eternal, and ever obstinate war: Now, a nation that is always \* at war, and that too from the very frame and essence of its government, must necessarily be destroyed, or subdue all other nations; for, these being sometimes at war, and at other times in peace, could never be so able to invade others, nor so well prepared to defend themselves.

By this means the Romans attained a perfect knowledge in the military arts: In transient wars most of the examples are lost; peace suggests different ideas, and we forget not only our faults, but even our virtues.

Another consequence of the maxim of waging perpetual war, was, that the Romans never concluded a peace but when they were victorious; and indeed, to what purpose would it be to make an ignominious peace with one nation, and afterwards go and invade another?

In this view, their pretensions rose always in proportion to their defeat; by this they surprized the conqueror, and said themselves under a greater necessity of conquering.

Being for ever obnoxious to the most severe vengeance, perseverance and valour became necessary virtues: and these could not be distinguished among them from self-love, from the love of one's family, of one's country, and whatever is dearest among men.

The same had happened to Italy, which besel America in late ages; the natives of the former, quite helpless and dispersed up and down, having resigned their habitations to new comers, it was afterwards peopled by three different nations, the Tuscans \*, the Gauls, and the Greeks. The Gauls had no manner of relation or affinity either with the Greeks or Tuscans; the latter formed a society which had its peculiar language, customs and morals; and the Grecian colonies, who descended from different nations that were often at variance, had pretty separate interests.

The world in that age was not like the world in ours: voyages, conquest, trassick, the establishment of mighty states, the invention of post-offices, of the sea compass, and of printing; these, with a certain general polity, have made correspondence much easier, and give rise among us to an art called by the name of politics: every man sees at one glance whatever is transacted in the whole universe; and if a people discover but ever so little ambition, all the nations round them are immediately terrified.

The people of Italy had † none of those engines which were employed in sieges: and further, as the soldiers were not allowed any stipend, there was no possibility of keeping them long before a town or fortress Hence it was, that few of their wars were decisive; these fought from no other motive, but merely to plunder the enemy's camp or his lands; after which, both the conqueror and the conquered marched back to their respective cities. This circumstance gave rise to the strong resistance which the people of Italy made, and at the same time to the inflexible resolution the Romans formed to subdue them, this favoured the latter with victories, which no way depraved their morals, and left them in their original poverty.

Had the Romans made a rapid conquest of the neighbouring cities, they would have been in a declining condition at the arrival of Pyrrhus, of the Gauls, and of Hannibal; and, by a fate common to most governments in the world, they would have made too quick a transition from poverty to riches, and from riches to depravity.

But Rome, for ever struggling, and ever meeting with obstacles, made other nations tremble at its power, and at the same time was unable to extend it; and exercised in a very narrow compass of ground, a train of virtues that were to prove of the most fatal consequence to the universe.

All the people of Italy were not equally warlike: those who inhabited the eastern part, as the Tarentines and the Capuans, all the cities of Campania, and of Græcia Major, were quite immersed in indolence and in pleasures: but the Latins, the Hernici, the Sabines, the Æqui, and the Volscians were passionately fond of war: these nations lay round Rome; the resistance they made to that city was incredible, and they surpassed them in stubbornness and inflexibility.

The Latin cities sprung from Alban colonies, which were founded \* by Latinus Sylvius: besides their common extraction with the Romans, there were several rites and ceremonies common to both; and Servius Tullius had † engaged them to build a temple at Rome, to serve at the center of union of the two nations. Losing a battle near the lake of Regillus, they were subjected to an alliance, and forced to associate in the ‡ wars which the Romans waged.

It was manifestly seen, during the short time that the tyranny of the decemvirs lasted, how much the aggrandizing of Rome depended on its liberty. The government seemed to have lost the \* soul which animated even to the minutest part of it.

There remained at that time but two sorts of people in the city, those who submitted to slavery, and those who, for their own private interest, endeavoured to enslave the rest. The senators withdrew from Rome as from a foreign city; and the neighbouring nations did not meet with the least resistance from any quarter.

The senate having found means to give the soldiers a regular stipend, the siege of Veii was undertaken, which lasted ten years. But now a new art, and a new system of war, were seen to arise among the Romans: their successes were more signal and conspicuous; they made a better advantage of their victories; their conquests were greater they sent out more colonies; in fine, the taking of Veii proved a kind of revolution.

But all this did not lessen their toils: if, on one side, they attacked with greater vigour the Tuscans, the Æqui, and the Volscians; for this very reason they were abandoned by the Latins and the Hernici their allies, who were armed after the same manner, and observed the same discipline with themselves; this engaged the Tuscans to form new alliances; and prompted the Samnites, the most martial people of all Italy, to involve them in a furious war.

After the soldiers received pay, the senate no longer distributed to them the lands of the conquered people, upon whom other conditions were now imposed; they were obliged, for instance, to pay the army a certain quota for a time, and to send supplies of cloaths and corn.

The taking of Rome by the Gauls, did no way lessen its strength; almost the whole army, which was dispersed rather than overcome, withdrew to Veii; the people sheltered themselves in the adjacent cities; and the burning of Rome was no more than the setting fire to a few cottages of shepherds.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. II.

### Of The Science Of War, As Practised By The Romans.

AS the Romans devoted themselves entirely to war, and considered it as the only science, they therefore bent all their thoughts, and the genius with which they were informed to the improvement of it doubtless a god, says \* Vegetius, inspired them with the idea of the legion.

They judged that it would be necessary to arm the soldiers who composed the legion with weapons whether offensive or defensive, of a stronger and † heavier kind than those of any other nation.

But as some things must be done in war, which a heavy body is not able to execute, the Romans would have the legion include within itself a band of light forces, which might issue from it in order to provoke the enemy to battle, or draw back into it in case of necessity; they also would have this legion strengthened with cavalry, with archers, and slingers, to pursue those who fled, and compleat the victory; that it should be defended by military engines of every kind, which it drew after it; that every this body should entrench itself, and be, as Vegetius \* observes, a kind of strong hold.

But that the Roman soldiers might be able to carry heavier arms than other men, it was necessary they should become more than men; and this they became by perpetual labour, which increased their vigour, and by exercises that gave them an activity, which is no more than a just distribution of the strength we are invigorated with.

It is observed in this age, that the † immoderate labour which soldiers are obliged to undergo, destroys our armies; and yet it was by incredible labour that the Romans preserved themselves. The reason I take to be this; their toils were continual and uninterrupted, whereas our soldiers are ever shifting from the extremes of labour to the extremes of idleness, than which nothing can possibly be more destructive.

I must here take notice of what authors † relate concerning the training up of the Roman soldiery. They were inured to the military pace, that is, to walk twenty miles, and sometimes four and twenty, in five hours. During these marches, they carried burthens of threescore pounds weight; they habituated themselves to running and leaping, armed cap-a-pee; in their § exercises they made use of swords, javelins and arrows, double the weight of common weapons; and these exercises were carried on without intermission.

The camp was not the only military school; there being, in Rome, a place in which the citizens used to perform exercises, (it was the Campus Martius:) after their fatigues \* they plunged into the Tiber, to accustom themselves to swimming, and cleanse away the dust and sweat.

We have no very just idea of bodily exercise: the man who assiduously applies himself to it, appears to us rather in a contemptible light, inasmuch as the far greater part of his exercises have for their object nothing more than self-gratification: whereas, among the ancients, every exercise, even down to that of dancing, made a part of the art military.

With us moderns a deep knowledge in the use of warlike weapons is become ridiculous; for since the custom of single combats was introduced, fencing has been regarded as the sciences of quarrelsome fellows or cowards.

Those who criticise Homer for inspiring his heroes with strength, dexterity and agility of body, should hold Sallust ridiculous, who celebrates Pompey † for running, leaping, or carrying a burthen as well as any man of his time.

Whenever the Romans thought themselves exposed to any danger, or were desirous of repairing some loss, it was a constant practice among them to invigorate and give new life to their military discipline. Are they engaged in a war with the Latins, a people no less martial than themselves? Manlius reflects upon the best methods of strengthening the command in the field, and puts to death his own son, for conquering without his orders. Are they defeated before Numantia? Scipio Æmilianus immediately removes the several blandishments, which had enervated them. Have the Roman legions passed under the yoke at Numedia? Metellus wipes away their ignominy, the instant he has obliged them to resume their ancient institutions. Marius, that he may be enabled to vanquish the Cimbri and the Teutones, begins by diverting the course of \* rivers; and Sylla employs in such hard labour his soldiers, who were terrified at the war which was carrying on against Mithridates, that they sue for battle, to put an end to their hardships.

Publius Nasicus made the Romans build a fleet of ships, at a time when they had no occasion for such a force: these people dreaded idleness more than an enemy.

Aulus Gellius † gives no very good reasons for the custom among the Romans of letting soldiers bleed who had committed a fault; the true reason is, that strength being the chief qualification of a soldier, this was the means of adding not to his weakness, but to his disgrace.

These men thus inured were generally healthy and vigorous: we do not find by historians, that the Roman armies, which waged war in so great a variety of climate, fell often a prey to diseases; whereas in the present age we daily see armies, without once engaging, perish and melt away, if I may use the expression, in a single campaign.

Desertions are very frequent among us for this reason, because the soldiers are the dregs of every nation, and not one of them possesses, or thinks himself possessed of, a certain advantage which gives him a superiority over his comrades. But among the Romans they were less frequent; it being scarce possible that soldiers, raised from among a people naturally so haughty and imperious, and so sure of commanding over others, should demean themselves to such a degree, as to cease to be Romans.

As their armies were not great, they were easily subsisted: the commander had a better opportunity of knowing the several individuals; and could more easily perceive the various faults and misdemeanours committed by the soldiery.

The violence of their exercises, and the wonderful roads they built, enabled them to make long and speedy marches. Their sudden presence damped the spirits of their opposers they shewed themselves, especially after some unfortunate event, at a time when their enemies were in that state of negligence which is generally consequent on victory.

In the battles fought in our age, every single soldier has very little security and confidence, except in the multitude; but among the Romans, every individual, more robust and of greater experience in war, as well as more inured to the fatigues of it, than his enemy, relied upon himself only. He was naturally endued with courage, or in other words, with that virtue which a sensibility of our own strength inspires.

As no troops in the world were, in any age, so well disciplined, it was hardly possible that in a battle, how unfortunate soever, but some Romans must rally in one part or other of it; or, on the other side, but that the enemy must be defeated in some part of the field: and, indeed, we find every where in history, that whenever the Romans happened to be overpowered at the beginning, either by numbers, or the fierceness of the onset, they at last wrested the laurel out of the enemy's hand.

Their chief care was to examine, in what particular their enemies had an advantage over them, and when this was found, they immediately rectified it. They accustomed themselves to behold the blood and the wounds of the gladiators. The cutting swords \* of the Gauls, and the elephants of Pyrrhus intimidated them but once. They strengthened their cavalry † first, by taking the bridles from the horses, that their impetuosity might be boundless; and afterwards by intermixing them with Velites \*: when they understood the excellence of the Spanish † sword, they quitted their own for it. They baffled all the art of the most experienced pilots, by the invention of an engine which is described by Polybius. In fine, as Josephus observes ‡, war was a subject of meditation to the Romans, and peace and exercise.

If any nation boasted, either from nature or its institution, any peculiar advantage, the Romans immediately made use of it: they employed their utmost endeavours to procure horses from Numedia, bowmen from Crete, slingers from the Baleares, and ships from the Rhodians.

To conclude, no nation in the world ever prepared for war with so much wisdom, and carried it on with so much intrepidity.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. III.

### The Methods By Which The Romans Raised Themselves To Empire.

AS the people of Europe, in this age, have very near the same arts, the same arms, the same discipline, and the same manner of making war; the prodigious fortune to which the Romans attained, seems incredible to us. Besides, power is at this time divided so disproportionably, that it is not possible for a petty state to raise itself, merely by its own strength, from the low condition in which Providence has placed it.

This merits some reflections, otherwise we might behold several events without being able to account for them; and for want of having a perfect idea of the different situation of things, we should believe, in perusing ancient history, that we view a set of men different from ourselves.

Experience has shewn perpetually, that an European prince who has a million of subjects, cannot, without destroying himself, keep up and maintain above ten thousand soldiers; consequently, great nations only are possessed of armies.

But the case was different anciently with regard to commonwealths; for this proportion between the soldiers and the rest of the people, which is now as one to an hundred, might, in those times, be pretty near as one is to eight.

The founders of ancient commonwealths had made an equal distribution of the lands: this circumstance alone raised a nation to power; that is to say, made it a well regulated society. This also gave strength to its armies; it being equally the interest (and this too was very great) of every individual, to exert himself in defence of his country.

When laws were not executed in their full rigour, affairs returned back to the same point in which we now see them. The avarice of some particular persons, and the lavish profuseness of others, occasioned the lands to become the property of a few; immediately arts were introduced to supply the reciprocal wants of the rich and poor; by which means there were but very few soldiers or citizens seen; for the revenues of the lands that had before been employed to support the latter, were now bestowed wholly on slaves and artificers, who administered to the luxury of the new proprietors; for otherwise the government, which, how licentious soever it be, must exist, would have been destroyed. Before the corruption of the state, the original revenues of it were divided among the soldiers, that is, the labourers; after it was corrupted, they went first to the rich, who let them out to slaves and artificers, from whom they received by way of tribute a part for the maintenance of the soldiers. And it was impossible that people of this cast should be good soldiers, they being cowardly and abject; already corrupted by the luxury of cities, and often by the very art they professed; not to mention, that as they could not properly call any country their own,

and reaped the fruits of their industry in every clime, they had very little either to lose or keep.

In the survey \* of the people of Rome, some time after the expulsion of the kings, and in that taken by Demetrius Phalerous † at Athens, the number of inhabitants was found nearly equal; Rome had four hundred forty thousand, Athens four hundred thirty-one thousand. But the survey at Rome was made at the time when its establishment was come to maturity, and that of Athens when it was quite corrupt. We find that the number of citizens grown up to manhood, made at Rome a fourth part of its inhabitants, and at Athens a little less than the twentieth; the strength of Rome, therefore, to that of Athens, was at these different times almost as four to twenty, that is, it was five times larger.

Agis and Cleomenes ‡ observing, that instead of thirty thousand citizens, (for so many were at Sparta in Lycurgus's time) there were but seven hundred, scarce a hundred of whom were possessed of lands; and that all the rest were no more than a cowardly populace: they undertook to revive the laws enacted on this occasion; and from that period Lacedæmonia recovered its former power, and again became formidable to all the Greeks.

It was the equal distribution of lands that at first enabled Rome to soar above its humble condition; and this the Romans were strongly sensible of in their corrupted state.

This commonwealth was confined to narrow bounds, when the Latins, having refused to succour them with the troops which had been \* stipulated, ten legions were presently raised in the city only: scarce at this time, says Livy, Rome, whom the whole universe is not able to contain, could levy such a force, were an enemy to appear suddenly under its wall: a sure indication that we have not risen in power, and have only increased the luxury and wealth which incommode us.

Tell me, would Tiberius Gracchus say † to the nobles, which is the most valuable character, that of a citizen or of a perpetual slave; who is most useful, a soldier, or a man entirely unfit for war? will you, merely for the sake of enjoying a few more acres of land than the rest of the citizens, quite lay aside the hopes of conquering the rest of the world, or be exposed to see yourselves dispossessed by the enemy, of those very lands which you refuse us?

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. IV.

### Of The Gauls. Of Pyrrhus. Parallel Between Carthage And Rome. The War Of Hannibal.

THE Romans were engaged in several wars against the Gauls: a thirst of glory, a contempt of death, and an inflexible resolution of conquering, were equal in both nations, but the weapons they used were different; the bucklers of the latter was small, and their swords unfit for execution; and, indeed, the Gauls were cut to pieces by the Romans, much after the same manner as the Mexicans, in these latter ages, by the Spaniards; and a surprizing circumstance is, that though these people were combating perpetually with the Romans, they yet suffered themselves to be destroyed one after another, without their ever being sensible of, enquiring after, or obviating the cause of their calamities.

Pyrrhus invaded the Romans at a time when they were strong enough to oppose the power of his arms, and to be taught by the victories he obtained over them: from him they learned to entrench themselves, as also the choice and proper disposition of a camp; he accustomed them to elephants, and prepared them for mightier wars.

The grandeur of Pyrrhus was confined merely to his personal qualities. Plutarch <sup>\*</sup> informs us, that he was obliged to begin the war of Macedonia, from his inability to maintain any longer the six thousand foot, and five hundred horse in his service. This prince, sovereign of a small country, which has never made the least figure since his time, was a military rambler, who was continually forming new enterprises, because he could not subsist but by enterprizing.

Tarentum, his ally, had much degenerated from the institution of the Lacedæmonians, her ancestors <sup>†</sup>. He might have done great things with the assistance of the Samnites; but they were almost quite destroyed by the Romans.

As the Carthagenians grew wealthy sooner than the Romans, so they were sooner corrupted: thus whilst at Rome, public employments were made the reward of virtue only, and no other emolument accrued from them than honour, and a preference in toils; at Carthage, the several advantages which the public can bestow on particular persons were venal, and every service done by such persons, was there paid by the public.

A monarchy is not dragged nearer to the brink of ruin by the tyranny of a prince, than a commonwealth by a lukewarmness and indifference for the general good. The advantage of a free state is, that the revenues are employed in it to the best purposes; but where does not the reverse of this happen! The advantage of a free state is, that it admits of no favourites; but when the contrary is seen, and instead of the friends and relations of a prince, great fortunes are amassed for the friends and relations of all persons who have any share in the government; in this case an universal ruin must

ensue; the laws are then eluded more dangerously, than they are infringed by a sovereign prince, who being always the greatest citizen in the state, is most concerned to labour at its preservation.

By the constant practice of ancient customs and manners, and a peculiar use that was made of poverty, the fortunes of all the people in Rome were very near upon a level; but in Carthage, some particular persons boasted the wealth of kings.

The two prevailing factions in Carthage were so divided, that the one was always for peace, and the other always for war; by which means it was impossible for that city, either to enjoy the one, or engage in the other to advantage.

In Rome, \* war immediately united the several interests; but in Carthage it divided them still more.

In a monarchy, feuds and divisions are easily quieted, because the prince is invested with a coercive power to curb both parties; but they are most lasting in a commonwealth, because the evil generally seizes the very power which only could have wrought a cure.

In Rome, which was governed by laws, the people entrusted the senate with the management of affairs; but in Carthage, which was governed by fraud and dissoluteness, the people would themselves transact all things.

Carthage, in warring with all its riches against the poverty of Rome, had a disadvantage in this very circumstance; for gold and silver may be exhausted, but virtue, perseverance, strength, and poverty are inexhaustible.

The Romans were ambitious through pride, and the Carthaginians through avarice; the former would command, the latter amass; and these, whose minds were wholly turned to traffick, perpetually casting up their income and expences, never engaged in any war from inclination.

The loss of battles, the decrease of a people, the decay of trade, the consumption of the public treasure, the insurrection of neighbouring nations, might force the Carthaginians to submit to the severest terms of peace: but Rome was not swayed by the consideration of blessings or calamities, being determined by no other motive but its glory; and as the Romans were persuaded they could not exist without commanding over others, neither hopes nor fears of any kind could prevail with them to conclude a peace, the conditions of which were not prescribed by themselves.

Nothing is so powerful as a commonwealth, in which the laws are exactly observed; and this not from fear nor from reason, but from a passionate impulse, as in Rome and Lacedæmon; for then the wisdom of a good legislature is united to all the strength a faction could possibly boast.

The Cathaginians made use of foreign forces, and the Romans employed none but their own. As the latter had never considered the vanquished but merely as so many instruments for future triumphs, they made soldiers of the several people they

conquered; and the greater opposition those made, the more worthy they judged them of being incorporated into their republic. Thus we find the Samnites, who were not subdued till after four and twenty triumphs \*, became auxiliaries to the Romans; and some time before the second Punic war, they raised from among that nation and their allies †, that is, from a country of little more extent than territories of the Pope and Naples, seven hundred thousand foot, and seventy thousand horse to oppose the Gauls.

In the height of the second Punic war, Rome had always a standing army of twenty-two or twenty-four legions; and yet it appears by Livy, that at this time the census, or general survey, amounted to but about 137,000 citizens.

The Carthaginians employed a greater number of troops in invading others, and the Romans in defending themselves; the latter armed, as we have just now seen, a prodigious multitude of men to oppose the Gauls and Hannibal who invaded them; and they sent out no more than two legions against the most powerful kings; by which means their forces were inexhaustible.

Carthage was not so strong from its situation, as Rome from the spot on which it stood: the latter had thirty colonies ‡ round it, all which were as so many bulwarks. The Romans were never abandoned by one of their allies till the battle of Cannæ; the reason is, the Samnites and other nations of Italy were used to their sovereignty.

As most of the cities of Africa were poorly fortified, they presently surrendered to the first enemy that appeared under their walls; so that Agathocles, Regulus, Scipio, in a word, all who made a descent on those places, immediately spread despair through all Carthage.

We can ascribe to nothing but to an evil administration, the several calamities which the Carthaginians suffered during the whole war that Scipio carried on against them; their city \*, and even their armies were famished, at the same time that the Romans enjoyed a profusion of all things.

Among the Carthaginians, the armies which had been defeated, grew more insolent upon it, insomuch that they sometimes used to crucify their generals, punishing them in this manner for their own cowardice, Among the Romans, the consul, after punishing such soldiers as had fled from their colours, by a † decimation, marched the surviving forces against the enemy.

The government of the Carthaginians was vastly oppressive ‡: They had trampled so much upon the Spaniards, that, when the Romans arrived among them, they were considered as their deliverers; and if we reflect upon the immense sums it cost the Carthaginians to maintain, in that country, a war which proved fatal to them, it will appear that injustice is very improvident, and is not mistress of all she promises.

The founding of Alexandria had very much lessened the trade of Carthage. In the first ages, superstition used to banish, in some measure, all foreigners from Egypt; and after the Persians had conquered this kingdom, they had bent their whole thoughts to



the weakening of their new subjects; but under the Grecian monarchs, Egypt possessed almost the whole commerce of the universe \*, and that of Carthage began to decay.

Such powers as are established by commerce, may subsist for a long series of years in their humble condition, but their grandeur is of short duration; they rise by little and little, and in an imperceptible manner, for they do not perform any particular exploit which may make a noise, and signalize their power: But when they have once raised themselves to so exalted a pitch, that it is impossible but all must see them, every one endeavours to deprive this nation of an advantage which it had snatched, as it were, from the rest of the world.

The Carthaginian cavalry was preferable to that of the Romans for these two reasons; first, because the horses of Numidia and Spain were better than those of Italy; secondly, because the Roman cavalry was but indifferently provided with arms; for the Romans, as † Polybius informs us, did not introduce any change on this occasion, till such time as they fought in Greece.

In the first Punic war, Regulus was defeated as soon as the Carthaginians made choice of plains for their cavalry to engage in; and in the second, † Hannibal owed his most glorious victories to the Numidians.

Scipio, by the conquest of Spain and the alliance he made with Masinissa, deprived the Carthaginians of this superiority: The Numedian cavalry won the battle of Zama, and put an end to the war.

The Carthaginians had greater experience at sea, and were better skilled in the working of ships than the Romans: But this advantage seems to have been less in those ages than it would be in the present.

As the ancients had not the use of the sea-compass, they were confined almost to coasting; and indeed they had nothing but gallies, which were small and flat-bottomed; most roads were to them as so many harbours; the knowledge of their pilots was very narrow and contracted, and their tackle extremely simple. Their art itself was so imperfect, that as much is now done with an hundred oars, as in those ages with a thousand.

Their larger vessels had a disadvantage in this, that being moved with difficulty by the crew of galley-slaves, it was impossible for them to make the necessary evolutions. Mark Antony experienced this, in the most fatal manner, at Actium; for his ships were not able to move about, when attacked on all sides by the lighter vessels of Augustus.

As the ancients used nothing but galleons, the lighter vessels easily broke the oars of the greater ones, which were then but as so many unwieldy, immoveable machines, like modern ships when they have lost their masts.

Since the invention of the sea-compass, different methods have been employed; oars \* have been laid aside; the main ocean has been visited, great ships have been built; the machine has become more complicated, and the practices have been multiplied.

The discovery of gun powder has occasioned a circumstance one would no way have suspected, which is, that the strength of fleets depends more than ever upon art; for in order to resist the sury of the cannon, and prevent the being exposed to a superior fire, it was necessary to build great ships; but the power of the art must be proportioned to the bulk of the machine.

The small vessels of the antients used often to grapple suddenly with one another, on which occasion the soldiers engaged on both sides: A whole land-army was shipped on board a fleet. In the sea-fight won by Regulus and his colleague, an hundred and thirty thousand Romans fought against an hundred and fifty thousand Carthaginians: At that time soldiers were looked upon as considerable, and artists the very reverse; but in these ages, the soldiers are considered as a little or nothing, and artists the very contrary \*.

A strong proof of the difference is, the victory won by Duillius the consul: The Romans were totally ignorant of navigation; when a Carthaginian galley happening to be stranded on their coast, served them as a model for the building of others: In three months time their sailors were trained, their fleet was completely fitted out; the Romans put to sea, came up with the Carthaginians, and defeated them.

In this age, the whole life of a prince is scarce sufficient for the raising and equipping a navy, capable to make head against a power already possessed of the empire of the sea: This perhaps may be the only thing which money cannot of itself effect; and though a great † monarch in our days succeeded immediately in an attempt of this kind, experience has proved to others ‡, that such an example is to be admired rather than imitated.

The second Punic war made so much noise in the world, that it is known to every one: When we survey attentively the croud of obstacles which started up before Hannibal, and reflect, that this extraordinary man surmounted them all, we view the most august spectacle that antiquity can possibly exhibit.

Rome was a miracle in constancy and resolution after the battles of Ticinus, of Trebia, and Trasymenus; after the defeat at Cannæ, which was still more fatal to them, though they saw themselves abandoned by most of the nations in Italy, yet they would not sue for peace; and for this reason, the senate never once receded from their ancient maxims: They conducted themselves towards Hannibal, in the same manner as they had before behaved with regard to Pyrrhus, to whom they refused all terms of accommodation, till such time as he should leave Italy; and Dionysius Halicarnasseus \* informs us, that, when Coriolanus was treating with the Romans, the senate declared they would never infringe their ancient customs; that their people could not conclude a peace so long as the enemy should continue in their territories; but that in case the Volscians would think fit to retire, they then should agree to any terms that were just and reasonable.

Rome was saved by the strength and vigour of its institution; after the battle of Cannæ, their very women were not allowed to shed tears; the senate refused to ransom the prisoners, and sent the miserable remains of the army to carry on the war

in Scicily, unrecompensed, and deprived of every military honour, till such time as Hannibal was driven out of Italy.

On the other side, Terentius Varro the consul had fled ignominiously as far as Venusia: This man, whose extraction was very mean, had been raised to the consulship merely to mortify the nobles. However, the senate would not enjoy the unhappy triumph; They saw how necessary it was for them to gain the confidence of the people on this occasion; they therefore went out to meet Vario, and returned him thanks for not despairing of the safety of the commonwealth.

It is commonly not the real loss sustained in a battle (that of the slaughter of some thousand men) which proves fatal to a state, but the imaginary loss, the general damp, which deprives it even of that strength and vigour which fortune had left it.

Some things are asserted by all men, because they have been asserted once: It is thought Hannibal committed an egregious error, in not laying siege to Rome after the battle of Cannæ: It must be confessed, that the inhabitants of the former were at first seized with a panic; but then the surprize and dread of a martial people, which always turns to bravery, is not like that of a despicable populace, who are sensible to nothing but their weakness: A proof Hannibal would not have succeeded, is, that the Romans were still powerful enough to send succours where any were wanted.

It is also said, that Hannibal was greatly overseen, in marching his army to Capua, where his soldiers enervated themselves; but people who make these assertions should consider, that they do not go back to the true cause of it: Would not every place have proved a Capua to a body of men, who had enriched themselves with the spoils of so many victories? Alexander, whose army consisted of his own subjects, made use, on the like occasion, of an expedient which Hannibal, whose army was composed wholly of mercenaries, could not employ; and this was, the setting fire to the baggage of his soldiers, and burning all their wealth and his own. We are told that Kouli Khan, after his conquest of the Indies, left to the share of each soldier no more than one hundred and fifty silver roupees.

The very conquests of Hannibal began to change the fortune of the war: He did not receive any succours from Carthage, either by the jealousy of one party <sup>\*</sup>, or the too great confidence of the other: So long as he kept his whole army together, he always defeated the Romans; but when he was obliged to put garrisons into cities, to defend his allies, to besiege strong holds, or prevent their being besieged, he then found himself too weak, and lost a great part of his army by piecemeal. Conquests are easily made, because we achieve them with our whole force; they are retained with difficulty, because we defend them with only a part of our forces.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. V.

### The State Of Greece, Of Macedonia, Of Syria, And Of Egypt, After The Depression Of Carthage.

I IMAGINE Hannibal did not abound in witticisms, especially in favour of Fabius and Marcellus against himself. I am sorry to see Livy strew his flowers on these enormous colossuses of antiquity: I wish he had done like Homer, who neglects embellishing them, and knew so well how to put them in motion.

Besides, what Hannibal is made to speak, ought to have common sense: but if, on hearing the defeat of his brother, he said publicly, that it was the prelude of the ruin of Carthage; could any thing have a greater tendency to drive to despair a people, who had placed their confidence in him, and to discourage an army which expected such high recompences after the war?

As the Carthaginians lost every battle they fought, either in Spain, in Sicily, or in Sardinia; Hannibal, whose enemies were fortifying themselves incessantly, whilst very inconsiderable reinforcements were sent him, was reduced to the necessity of engaging in a defensive war: This suggested to the Romans the design of making Africa the seat of war: Accordingly Scipio went into that part of the world, and so great was his success, that the Carthaginians were forced to recal from Italy, Hannibal, who wept for grief at his surrendering to the Romans those very plains, in which he had so often triumphed over them.

Whatever is in the power of a great general and a great soldier to perform, all this Hannibal did to save his country: Having fruitlessly endeavoured to bring Scipio to pacific terms, he fought a battle, in which fortune seemed to delight in confounding his ability, his experience and good sense.

Carthage received the conditions of peace, not from an enemy, but from a sovereign; the citizens of it obliged themselves to pay ten thousand talents in fifty years to give hostages to deliver up their ships and elephants, and not to engage in any war without the consent of the Romans; and in order that this republic might always continue in a dejected state, the victors heightened the power of Masinissa, its irreconcilable enemy.

After the depression of Carthage, the Romans were scarce engaged but in petty wars, and obtained mighty victories; whereas before they had obtained but petty victories, and been engaged in mighty wars.

There were in those times two worlds, as it were, separate from each other; in one, the Carthaginians and Romans fought, and the other was shaken by the feuds and divisions which had subsisted ever since the death of Alexander: In the latter, no regard was had \* to the transactions of the western world: For though Philip, king of

Macedon, had concluded a treaty with Hannibal, yet very little resulted from it; and this monarch, who gave the Carthaginians but very inconsiderable succours, just shewed the Romans that he bore them a fruitless ill will.

When two mighty people are seen to wage a long and obstinate war, it is often ill policy to imagine that it is safe for the rest of the world to continue as so many idle spectators, for whichever of the two people triumphs over the other, engages immediately in new wars; and a nation of soldiers marches and invades nations who are but so many citizens.

This was very manifest in those ages; for scarce had the Romans subjected the Carthaginians, but they immediately invaded other nations, and appeared in all parts of the earth, carrying on an universal invasion.

There were at that time in the east but four powers capable of making head against the Romans; Greece, the kingdoms of Macedonia, Syria and Egypt: we must take a view of the condition, at that time, of the two first of those powers; because the Romans began by subjecting them.

There were three considerable people in Greece, the Ætolians, the Achaians, and the Bœotians; these were so many associations formed by free cities, which had their general assemblies and magistrates in common. The Ætolians were martial, bold, rash; greedy of gain, very lavish of their promises and oaths; in fine, a people who warred on land in the same manner as pirates do at sea. The Achaians were incommoded perpetually by troublesome neighbours or defenders. The Bœotians, who were the most heavy people of all Greece, but at the same time the wisest, lived generally in peace; guided entirely by a sensation of happiness and misery, they had not genius enough to be either roused or misguided by orators. What is most extraordinary, their republic subsisted even in the midst of anarchy \*.

Lacedæmon had preserved its power, by which I mean that warlike spirit which the institutions of Lycurgus inspired. The Thessalians were, in some measure, enslaved by the Macedonians. The Illyrian kings had already been very much depressed by the Romans. The Acarnanians and Athamanes had been cruelly infested by the troops of Macedon and Ætolia successively. The Athenians \*, weak in themselves and unsupported by † allies, no longer astonished the world, except by the slatteries they lavished on kings; and the orators no more ascended the rostra where Demosthenes had harangued, unless to propose the basest and most scandalous decrees.

Besides, Greece was formidable from its situation, its strength, the multitude of its cities, the great number of its soldiers, its polity, manners and laws; the Greeks delighted in war; they knew the whole art of it; and, had they united, would have been invincible.

They indeed have been terrified by the first Philip, by Alexander, and by Antipater, but not subdued; and the Kings of Macedon, who could not prevail with themselves to lay aside their pretensions and their hopes, made the most obstinate attempts to enslave them.

The greatest part of Macedonia was surrounded with inaccessible mountains; the inhabitants of it were formed by nature for war; courageous, obedient, industrious, and indefatigable; and these qualities must necessarily have been owing to the climate, since the natives of it are, to this day, the best soldiers in the Turkish empire.

Greece maintained itself by a kind of balance: the Lacedæmonians were generally in alliance with the Ætolians, and the Macedonians with the Achaians; but the arrival of the Romans quite destroyed the equilibrium.

As the kings of Macedonia were not able to maintain a large body of troops, the least loss was of consequence to them; besides, it was difficult for these monarchs to aggrandize themselves; because, as their ambitious views were not unknown, other nations kept a watchful eye over every step they took; and the successes they obtained in the wars undertaken for the sake of their allies, was an evil which these very allies endeavoured immediately to remedy.

But the kings of Macedonia generally possessed great talents; their monarchy was not like those which proceed for ever in the same steps that were taken at the foundation of them; instructed perpetually by dangers and experience, involved in all the disputes of Greece, it was necessary for them either to bribe the principal magistrates of cities, to raise a mist before the eyes of nations, or to divide or unite their interests; in a word, they were obliged to expose, every moment, their persons to the greatest dangers.

Philip, who in the beginning of his reign had won the love and confidence of the Greeks by his moderation, changed on a sudden; he became \* a cruel tyrant, at a time when he ought to have behaved with justice, both from policy and ambition: he saw though at a distance, the Romans possessed of numberless forces; he had concluded the war to the advantage of his allies, and was reconciled to the Ætolians: it was natural he should now endeavour to unite all the Greeks with himself, in order to prevent the Romans from fettling in their country; but so far from this, he exasperated them by petty usurpations; and trifled away his time in examining affairs of little or no consequence, at a time when his very existence was endangered: by the commission of three or four evil actions, he made himself odious and detestable to all Greece.

The Ætolians were most exasperated, and the Romans snatching the opportunity of their resentment, or rather of their folly, made an alliance with them, entered Greece and armed it against Philip. This prince was defeated at the battle of Cynocephalæ, and the victory was partly gained by the valour of the Ætolians: so much was he intimidated upon this, that he concluded a treaty, which was not so properly a peace, as the renouncing his own strength; for he evacuated his garrisons in all Greece, delivered up his ships, and bound himself under an obligation of paying a thousands talents in ten years.

Polybius compares, with his usual good sense, the disposition of the Roman armies with that of the Macedonians, which was observed by all the kings who succeeded Alexander: he points out the conveniencies, as well as inconveniencies, of the phalanx

and of the legion: he prefers the disposition used by the Romans, in which he very probably was right, since all the battles fought at that time shew it to have been preferable.

A circumstance which had contributed very much to the danger to which the Romans were exposed in the second Punic war, was Hannibal's presently arming his soldiers after the Roman manner; but the Greeks did not change either their arms or their way of fighting; and could not prevail with themselves to lay aside customs, by the observance of which they had performed such mighty things.

The success which the Romans obtained over Philip, was the greatest step they ever took towards a general conquest: to make sure of Greece, they employed all methods possible to depress the Ætolians, by whose assistance they had been victorious: they ordained, moreover, that every city of Greece which had been subject to Philip, or any other sovereign prince, should from that time be governed by its own laws.

It is very evident, that these petty commonwealths must necessarily be dependent: the Greeks abandoned themselves to a stupid joy, and fondly imagined they were really free, because the Romans had declared them to be so.

The Ætolians, who had imagined they should bear sway in Greece, finding they had only brought themselves under subjection, were seized with the deepest grief; and as they had always formed desperate resolutions, they invited, in order to correct one extravagance by another, Antiochus king of Syria into Greece, in the same manner as they had before invited the Romans.

The kings of Syria were the most powerful of all Alexander's successors, they being possessed of almost all the dominions of Darius, Egypt excepted; but by the concurrence of several circumstances, their power had been much weakened. Seleucus, who founded the Syrian empire, had destroyed, towards the latter end of his life, the kingdom of Lysamachus. During the feuds and distractions, several provinces took up arms; the kingdom of Pergamus, of Capadocia, and of Bithynia started up; but these petty, fearful states, always considered the depression of their former masters as the making of their own fortune.

As the kings of Syria always beheld, with a most invidious eye, the felicity of the kingdom of Egypt, they bent their whole thoughts to the conquest of that country; by this means, neglecting the east, they were dispossessed of several provinces there, and but indifferently obeyed in the rest.

In fine, the kings of Syria possessed upper and lower Asia; but experience has shewn, that in this case, when the capital city and the chief forces are in the lower provinces of Asia, there is no possibility of maintaining the upper ones; and on the contrary, when the seat of the empire is in the upper provinces, the monarch weakens himself by maintaining the lower ones. Neither the Persian nor Syrian empires were ever so powerful as that of the Parthians, though these reigned over but part of the provinces which formed the dominions of those two powers. Had Cyrus not conquered the kingdom of Lydia, had Seleucus continued in Babylon, and let the successors of

Antigonus possess the maritime provinces, the Greeks would never have conquered the Persian empire, nor the Romans that of Seleucus. Nature has prescribed certain limits to states, purposely to mortify the ambition of mortals: When the Romans stepped beyond those limits, the greatest part of them were destroyed by the Parthians \* ; when the Parthians presumed to pass them, they were forced immediately to retire back; And in our days, such Turks as advanced beyond those boundaries, were obliged to return whence they came.

The kings of Syria and Egypt had, in their respective dominions, two kinds of subjects, victorious nations, and nations vanquished; the former still puffed up with the idea of their origin, were ruled with very great difficulty: They were not fired with that spirit of independence, which animates us to shake off the yoke, but with that impatience which makes us wish to change our sovereign.

But the chief weakness of the kingdom of Syria sprung from that of the court, where such monarchs presided as were successors to Darius, not to Alexander. Luxury, vanity, and effeminacy, which had prevailed through all ages in the Asiatic courts, triumphed more particularly in that of Syria: The evil infected the common people and the soldiers, and caught the very Romans themselves; since the war in which they engaged against Antiochus, is the true æra of their corruption.

Such was the condition of the kingdom of Syria, when Antiochus, who had performed such mighty things, declared war against the Romans; but he did not conduct himself in it with the wisdom which is even employed in common affairs: Hannibal requested either to have the war revived in Italy, and Philip bribed; or else, that he might be prevailed upon to stand neuter. Antiochus did not follow any part of this advice: He appeared in Greece with only a small part of his forces; and as though he were come merely to see the war, not to carry it on, he followed nothing but his pleasures, by which means he was defeated, and fled out of Asia, terrified rather than conquered.

Philip, who was dragged to this war by the Romans, as though a flood had swept him along, employed his whole power in their service, and became the instrument of their victories: The pleasure of taking vengeance of, and laying waste Ætolia; the promise made him of lessening the tribute he paid, and of leaving him the possession of certain cities; some personal jealousy of Antiochus; in a word, a few inconsiderable motives swayed his resolutions; and not daring so much as to think of shaking off the yoke, he only considered how he might best lighten it.

Antiochus formed so wrong a judgment of things, as to fancy that the Romans would not molest him in Asia; however, they followed him thither; he was again overcome, and, in his consternation, consented to the most infamous treaty that ever was concluded by so mighty a prince.

I cannot recollect any thing so magnanimous, as a resolution taken by a monarch in our days \* , to bury himself under the ruins of the throne, rather than accept of terms unworthy of a king: So haughty was his soul, that he could not stoop lower than his misfortunes had thrown him; and he was very sensible, that courage may, but infamy never can, give fresh strength to the regal diadem.



We often meet with princes who have skill enough to fight a battle, but with very few that have the talents requisite for carrying on a war; who are equally capable of making a proper use of fortune, and of waiting for her; and who join to a frame of mind, which raises suspicions before it executes, such a disposition as makes them fearless after they have once executed.

After the depression of Antiochus, only some inconsiderable powers remained, if we except Egypt, which, from the advantage of its situation, its fertility, its commerce, the great number of its inhabitants, its naval and land forces, might have been formidable; but the cruelty of its kings, their cowardice, their avarice, their imbecillity, and their enormous sensualities, made them so odious to their subjects, that they supported themselves, for the most part, by the protection of the Romans.

It was a kind of fundamental law, with regard to the crown of Egypt, that the sisters should succeed with the brothers; and in order to preserve unity in the government, the brother was married to the sister. Now, it is scarce possible to figure any thing more pernicious in politics than such an order of succession; for as all the little domestic feuds rose so high as to disorder the state, whichever of the two parties had the least discontent, immediately excited against the other the inhabitants of Alexandria, a numberless multitude, always prepared to join with the first of their kings who should rouse them; so that there were for ever princes who actually reigned, and pretenders to the crown. And as the kingdoms of Cyrene and Cyprus were generally possessed by other princes of that house, who laid their respective claims to the whole; by that means, the throne of these princes was ever tottering; and being indifferently settled at home, they had no power abroad.

The forces of the kings of Egypt, like those of the Asiatic monarchs, were composed of auxiliary Greeks. Besides the spirit of liberty, of honour, and of glory, which animated the latter people, they were incessantly employed in bodily exercises of every kind. In all their chief cities games were instituted, wherein the victors were crowned in the presence of all Greece, which raised a general emulation: Now, in an age when combatants fought with arms, the success of which depended upon their strength and dexterity, it is natural to suppose that men thus exercised, must have had a great advantage over a crowd of barbarians, who were enlisted at random, and dragged indiscriminately into the field, as was evident from the armies of Darius.

The Romans, in order to deprive the kings of such a body of soldiery, and to bereave them, but in an easy, silent manner, of their principal forces, observed two things: First, they established, by insensible degrees, as a maxim, with respect to all the cities of Greece, that they should not conclude any alliance, give any succour, or make war against any nation whatsoever, without their consent: Secondly, in their treaties with kings \*, they forbid them to levy any forces from among the allies of the Romans, by which means, those monarchs were reduced to employ their national troops only.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. VI.

### The Conduct Which The Romans Observed, In Order To Subdue All Nations.

DURING the course of so mighty a prosperity, in which it is usual for mankind to forget themselves, the senate continued to act with the same depth of judgment; and whilst their armies were spreading an universal terror, they would not suffer those to rise who were once depressed.

A tribunal arose which judged all nations: At the close of every war they determined the rewards or punishments which every one had merited: They took away from the vanquished people, part of their lands, and gave them to their allies, in which they did two things; they engaged, in the interests of Rome, princes from whom they had little to fear, and much to hope; and they weakened others from whom they had nothing to hope, and every thing to fear.

In warring with an enemy they made use of their allies, but immediately extirpated the destroyers. Philip was overcome by the assistance of the Ætolians, who were destroyed presently after, for having joined themselves to Antiochus. This king was overcome by the assistance of the Rhodians; but after the most conspicuous rewards had been bestowed upon them, they were depressed for ever, upon pretence that they had demanded to have a peace concluded with Perseus.

When the Romans were opposed by several enemies at the same time, they granted a truce to the weakest, who thought themselves happy in obtaining it; considering it as a great advantage, that their ruin had been suspended.

When they were engaged in a mighty war, the senate winked at wrongs of every kind, and silently waited the season proper for chastisement: If at any time a people sent them the offenders, they refused to punish them, chusing rather to consider the whole nation as guilty, and reserve to themselves a useful vengeance.

As they made their enemies suffer inexpressible evils, very few leagues were formed against them; for he who was at the greatest distance from the danger, did not care to come near it.

For this reason war was seldom denounced against them, but themselves always made it at a season, in the manner, and with a people, as best suited their interest; and, among the great number of nations they invaded, there were very few but would have submitted to injuries of every kind, provided they could but be suffered to live in peace.

As it was usual for them to deliver themselves always in a magisterial way, such ambassadors as they sent to nations who had not yet felt the weight of their power,

were sure to meet with ill-treatment, which furnished them with a sure \* pretence to engage in a new war.

As they never concluded a peace with sincerity and integrity, and intended a general invasion, their treaties were properly only so many suspensions from war; they inserted such conditions in them, as always paved the way to the ruin of those states which accepted them: They used to send the garrisons out of the strong holds: they regulated the number of the land forces, or had the horses and elephants delivered up to them; and in case this people were powerful at sea, they obliged them to burn their ships, and sometimes to remove higher up in the country.

After having destroyed the armies of a prince, they drained his treasury, by imposing a heavy tribute, or taxing him immoderately, under colour of making him defray the expence of the war: a new species of tyranny, which obliged him to oppress his subjects, and thereby lose their affection.

Whenever they granted a peace to some prince, they used to take one of his brothers or children by way of hostage, which gave them an opportunity of raising, at pleasure, commotions in his kingdom: When they had the next heir among them, it was their custom to intimidate the possessor: Had they only a prince of a remote degree, they made use of him to foment the insurrections of the populace.

Whenever any prince or people withdrew their allegiance from their sovereign, they immediately indulged them with the title of \* ally to the Romans; by which means they became sacred and inviolable; so that there was no monarch, how formidable soever, who could rely one moment upon his subjects, or even upon his own family.

Although the title of their ally was a kind of servitude †, yet was it very much sought after; for these who enjoyed it were sure to receive no injuries but from them, and had reason to flatter themselves such would be less grievous. Hence nations and kings were ready to undertake any kind of services, and submitted to the meanest and most abject acts, merely for the sake of obtaining it.

They had various kinds of allies; some were united to them by privileges and participation in their grandeur, as the Latins and the Hernici; others by their very settlements, as their colonies; some by good offices, as Masinissa, Eumenes, and Attalus, who were obliged to them for their kingdoms or their exaltation; others by free and unconstrained treaties, and these, by the long continuation of the alliance, became subjects, as the kings of Egypt, Bithynia, Capadocia, and most of the Grecian cities; in fine, many by forced and involuntary treaties, and by the law of their subjection, as Philip and Antiochus; for every peace the Romans granted an enemy, included also an alliance with him; or, in other words, they made every nation subdued by them, contribute to the depression of others.

When they permitted any cities the enjoyment of their liberties, they immediately raised two \* factions in them, one of which defended the laws and liberties of the country, whilst the other asserted, that the will of the Romans was the only law; and

as the latter faction was always the most powerful, it is plain such a liberty could be but a mere name.

They sometimes possessed themselves of a country upon a pretence of being heirs to it: They entered Asia, Bithynia, and Lybia by the last wills of Attalus, of Nicomedes †, and of Appion; and Egypt was enslaved by that of the king of Cyrene.

To keep great princes for ever in a weak condition, they would not suffer them to conclude an alliance with those nations to whom they had granted theirs †; and as they did not refuse it to any people who bordered upon a powerful prince, this condition inserted in a treaty of peace, deprived him of all his allies.

Besides, when they had overcome any considerable prince, one of the articles of the treaty was, that he should not make war, upon account of any feuds of his own, with the allies of the Romans (that is to say, generally with all his neighbours;) but should submit them to arbitration; which deprived him of a military power for time to come.

And in order to keep the sole possession of it in their own hands, they bereaved their very allies of this force; the instant these had the least contest, they sent ambassadors, who obliged them to conclude a peace: we need but consider the manner in which they terminated the wars of Attalus and Prusias.

When any prince had gained such a conquest as often had exhausted him, immediately a Roman ambassador came and wrested it out of his hands: among a multitude of examples, we may remember how they, with a single word, drove Antiochus out of Egypt.

Fully sensible how well the European nations were turned for war, they established as a law, that no \* Asiatic monarch should be suffered to come into Europe, and there invade any people whatsoever. The chief motive of their declaring war against Mithridates † was, for his having subdued some barbarians contrary to his prohibition.

When they saw two nations engaged in war, although they were not in alliance, nor had any contest with either of them, they nevertheless appeared upon the stage of action, and, like our knight-errants, always sided with the weakest: it was an † ancient custom, says Dionysius Halicarnasseus, for the Romans to grant succour to all who came to implore it.

These customs of the Romans were not certain particular incidents, which happened by chance, but were so many invariable principles; and this is easy to perceive, for the maxims they put in practice against the greatest monarchs were exactly the same with those they had employed, in their infant state, against the little cities which stood round them.

They made Eumenes and Masinissa contribute to the subjection of Philip and Antiochus, as they had before employed the Latins and the Hernici to subdue the Volscians and the Tuscans: they obliged the Carthaginians and the kings of Asia to surrender their fleets to them, in like manner as they had forced the citizens of Antium to give up their little vessels.

When any state composed too formidable a body from its situation or union, they never failed to divide it. The republic of Achaia was formed by an association of free cities; the senate declared, that every city should from that time be governed by its own laws, independent on the general authority.

The commonwealth of Bœoria rose likewise from a league made between several cities: but, as in the war of Perseus, one city declared for that prince, and others for the Romans, the latter received them into favour, when the common alliance was dissolved.

Macedonia was surrounded by inaccessible mountains: the senate divided it into four parts; declared those free; prohibited them every kind of alliance among themselves by marriage; carried off all the nobles into Italy, and by that means reduced this power to nothing.

Had a great monarch, who reigned in our time, followed these maxims, when he saw a neighbouring prince dethroned, he would have employed a stronger force in his support, and have confined him to the island which continued faithful to him. By dividing the only power that could have opposed his designs, he would have drawn infinite advantages even from the misfortunes of his ally.

Whenever there happened any feud in a state, they immediately made themselves judges of it; and thereby were sure of having that party only, whom they condemned, for their enemy. If princes of the same blood were at variance for the crown, they sometimes declared them both kings, and by this means crushed the power of both: if one of them was \* a minor, they declared in his favour, and made themselves his guardians in quality of protectors of the world; for they had carried matters to so high a pitch, that nations and kings were there subjects, without knowing directly upon what right or title; it being a maxim, that the bare hearing of their names, was sufficient for a people to acknowledge them their sovereigns.

The Romans never engaged in far distant wars, till they had first made an alliance with some power contiguous to the enemy they invaded, who might unite his troops to the army they sent; and as this was never considerable with regard to numbers, they always had \* another in that province which lay nearest the enemy, and a third in Rome, ever ready to march at a moment's warning. In this manner they never hazarded but a small part of their forces, whilst their enemy ventured all his.

They sometimes insidiously perverted the subtilty of the terms of their language: they destroyed Carthage, upon pretence that they had promised to preserve the *Civitas* not the *Urbs*†. It is well known in what manner the Ætolians, who had abandoned themselves to their faith, were imposed upon; the Romans pretended, that the signification of these words, *abandon one's self to the faith of an enemy*, implied, the loss of all things, of persons, lands, cities, temples, and even of burial-places.

The Romans would even go so far, as to give arbitrary explanations to treaties: thus, when they were resolved to depress the Rhodians, they declared, that they had formerly given them Lycia, not by way of present, but as a friend and ally.

When one of their generals concluded a peace, merely to preserve his army, which was just upon the point of being cut to pieces, the senate, who did not ratify it, took advantage of this peace and continued the war. Thus when Jugurtha had surrounded an army of Romans, and permitted them to march away unmolested, upon the faith of a treaty, these very troops he had saved were employed against him: and when the Numantians had reduced twenty thousand Romans, just perishing with hunger, to the necessity of suing for peace; this peace, which had saved the lives of so many thousand citizens, was broke at Rome, and the public faith was eluded by \* sending back the consul who had signed it.

They sometimes would conclude a peace with a monarch upon reasonable conditions, and the instant he had signed them, they added others of so injurious a nature, that he was forced to renew the war. Thus, when they had forced Jugurtha to † deliver up his elephants, his horses, his treasures, and his deserters, they required him to surrender up his person, which being the greatest calamity that can befall a prince, cannot for that reason be ever made an article of peace.

In fine, they set up a tribunal over kings, whom they judged for their particular vices and crimes: they heard the complaints of all persons who had any dispute with Philip: they sent deputies with them by way of safeguard, and obliged Perseus to appear before these, to answer for certain murders and certain quarrels he had with some inhabitants of the confederate cities.

As men judged of the glory of a general by the quantity of the gold and silver carried in his triumph, the Romans stripped the vanquished enemy of all things. Rome was for ever enriching itself; and every war they engaged in, enabled them to undertake a new one.

All the nations who were either friends or confederates, quite \* ruined themselves by the immensely rich presents they made, in order to procure the continuance of the favours already bestowed upon them, or to obtain greater; and half the monies which used to be sent upon these occasions to the Romans, would have sufficed to conquer them.

Being masters of the universe, they arrogated to themselves all the treasures of it; and were less unjust robbers, considered as conquerors, than considered as legislators. Hearing that Ptolemy king of Cyprus was possessed of immense wealth, they † enacted a law, proposed by a tribune, by which they gave to themselves the inheritance of a man still living, and confiscated to their own use the estates of a confederate prince.

In a little time, the greediness of particular persons quite devoured whatever had escaped the public avarice; magistrates and governors used to sell their injustice to kings: two competitors would ruin one another, for the sake of purchasing an ever-dubious protection against a rival who was not quite undone; for the Romans had not even the justice of robbers, who preserve a certain probity in the exercise of guilt. In fine, as rights, whether lawful or usurped, were maintained by money only; princes, to obtain it, despoiled temples, and confiscated the possessions of the wealthiest citizens;

a thousand crimes were committed, purely for the sake of giving to the Romans all the money in the universe.

But nothing was of greater advantage to this people than the awe with which they struck the whole earth: in an instant, kings were put to silence, and seemed as though they were stupid; no regard was had to their eminence, but their very persons were attacked; to hazard a war, was to expose themselves to captivity, to death, to the infamy of a triumph. Thus kings, who lived in the midst of pomps and pleasures, did not dare to fix their eyes stedfastly on the Roman people; and their courage failing them, they hoped to suspend a little the miseries with which they were threatened, by their patience and submissive actions.

Observe, I intreat you, the conduct of the Romans. After the defeat of Antiochus they were possessed of Africa, Asia, and Greece, without having scarce a single city in these countries that were immediately their own. They seemed to conquer with no other view but to bestow; but then they obtained so complete a sovereignty, that whenever they engaged in war with any prince, they oppressed him, as it were, with the weight of the whole universe.

The time proper for seizing upon the conquered countries was not yet come: had the Romans kept the cities they took from Philip, the Greeks would have seen at once into their designs: had they, after the second Punic war, or that with Antiochus, possessed themselves of lands in \* Africa and in Asia, they could never have preserved conquests so slightly established.

It was the interest of the Romans to wait till all nations were accustomed to obey, as free and as confederate, before they should attempt to command over them as subjects; and to let them blend and lose themselves, as it were, by little and little, in the Roman commonwealth.

See the treaty which they made with the Latins after the victory at the lake of Legilus \*. This was one of the principal foundations of their power, yet not a single word occurs in it, which can give the least suspicion that they aimed at empire.

This was a slow way of conquering; after overcoming a nation, they contented themselves with weakening it; they imposed such conditions as consumed it insensibly: if it recovered, they depressed it still more, and it became subject, without a possibility of dating the first æra of its subjection.

Thus Rome was not properly either a monarchy or a commonwealth, but the head of a body composed of all the nations in the universe.

Had the Spaniards, after the conquest of Mexico and Peru, followed this plan, they would not have been obliged to destroy all, for the sake of preserving all.

It is a folly in conquerors to force their own laws and customs on all nations; such a conduct is of very ill consequence, for men are capable of obeying under all kinds of government.

But as Rome did not impose any general laws, the nations did not form any dangerous associations; they formed one body no otherwise than by a common obedience; and were all Romans without being countrymen.

It perhaps will be objected, that no empires founded on the laws of fiefs were ever durable or powerful. But nothing could be so contradictory as the plan of the Romans and that of the Goths: and just to mention these plans, the former was a work of strength, the latter of weakness: in the one, subjection was extreme; in the other, independence; in the Gothic states, power was lodged in the vassals, and the right of judging only in the prince; whereas it was the reverse in the Roman government.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. VII.

### How It Was Possible For Mithridates To Resist The Romans.

AMONG the several kings whom the Romans invaded, Mithridates was the only one who made a courageous defence, and exposed them to danger.

His dominions were situated to wonderful advantage for carrying on a war with them: they bordered on the inaccessible countries of mount Caucasus, peopled with savage nations, whom that prince could call to his assistance; they thence extended along the sea of Pontus, which Mithridates covered with his ships, and he was incessantly purchasing new armies of Scythians: Asia was open to his invasions; and he was rich, because his cities, situated on the Pontus Euxinus, carried on an advantageous traffic with nations less industrious than themselves.

Proscriptions, the custom of which began at this time, had forced several Romans to leave their country. These were received by Mithridates with open arms, and he formed legions \*, into which he incorporated those exiles, who proved the best soldiers in his army.

On the other side, the Romans, disordered by intestine divisions, and threatened with more imminent dangers, neglected the affairs of Asia, and suffered Mithridates to pursue his victories, or take breath after his defeats.

Nothing had contributed more to the ruin of most kings, than the manifest desire they shewed for peace: by this, they had prevented all other nations from dividing with them a danger, from which they were so anxious to extricate themselves: but Mithridates immediately made the whole world sensible, that he was an enemy to the Romans, and would be so eternally.

In fine, the cities of Greece and Asia, finding the Roman yoke grow more intolerable every day, reposed their whole confidence in this barbarous king, who invited them to liberty.

This disposition of things gave rise to three mighty wars, which form one of the noblest parts of the Roman history, and for this reason: we do not, on this occasion, read of princes already overcome by luxury and pride, as Antiochus and Tigranes; not by fear, as Philip, Perseus, and Jugurtha; but a magnanimous king, who, in adversity, like a lion that gazes upon his wounds, was fired with the greater indignation upon that account.

In his part of the Roman history is singular, because it abounds with perpetual and ever-unexpected revolutions; for as on one side, Mithridates could easily recruit his armies, so it appeared, that in those reverses of fortune, in which kings stand in greatest need of obedience and a strict discipline, his barbarian forces forsook him: as he had the art of enticing nations, and stirring up cities to rebellion, so was he likewise

betrayed by his captains, his children and his wives; in fine, as he was sometimes opposed by unexperienced Roman generals, so there was sent against him, at other times, Sylla, Lucullus, and Pompey.

This prince, after having defeated the Roman generals, and conquered Asia, Macedonia, and Greece; having been vanquished, in his turn, by Sylla; confined by a treaty to his former limits, and harrassed by the Roman generals; having been once more superior to them, and conqueror of Asia; driven away by Lucullus; pursued into his own country; obliged to fly for shelter to Tigranes, and defeated with him: finding this monarch irrecoverably lost, and depending merely upon himself for succour, he took sanctuary in his own dominions, and re-ascended the throne.

Lucullus was succeeded by Pompey, who quite overpowered Mithridates. He then flies out of his dominions, and crossing the Araxes, marches from danger to danger through the country of the Lazi; and assembling in his way all the barbarians he met with, appeared in the Bosphorus against his son \* Macchares, who had reconciled himself to the Romans.

Although plunged in so deep an abyss, he yet † formed a design of making Italy the seat of the war, and of marching to Rome at the head of those nations who enslaved it some years after, and by the same way these now took.

Betrayed by Pharnaces, another of his sons, and by an army terrified at the greatness of his enterprises and the perils he was going in search of, he died in a manner worthy a king.

It was then that Pompey, in the rapidity of his victories, completed the pompous work of the Roman grandeur: he united to the body of its empire, countries of a boundless extent, which, however, heightened the Roman magnificence rather than increased its power; and though it appeared by the titles carried in his triumph, that he had increased the revenue of the public treasury ‡ above a third, there yet was no augmentation in power, and the public liberty was thereby only exposed to the greater danger.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. VIII.

### Of The Divisions Which Always Subsisted In The City.

WHILST Rome was conquering the world, a hidden war was carrying on within its walls: these fires were like those of volcanos, which break out the instant they were sed by some combustible substance.

After the expulsion of the kings, the government became aristocratical: the patrician families only, obtained all the employments and dignities in the \* state, and consequently all † honours civil and military.

The patricians being determind to prevent, if possible, the return of the kings, endeavoured to soment the restless principles which now prevailed in the minds of the people; but they did more than they would willingly have done: by attempting to inspire them with a hatred for kings, they fired them with an inordinate thirst for liberty. As the royal authority had devolved entirely upon the consuls, the people sound they were far from possessing that liberty they were taught to idolize: they therefore sought for methods by which they might depress the consulate; procure plebeian magistrates; and share the curule, or greater employments with the nobles. The patricians were forced to comply with all the demands of the people; for in a city where poverty was the public virtue, where wealth, that clandestine path to power, was despised, neither birth nor dignities could bestow any great advantages: it was therefore necessary for power to fall into the hands of the greater number, and for aristocracy to change, by insensible degrees, into a popular state.

Those who are subordinate to a king, are less tortured with envy and jealousy, than such as live under an hereditary aristocracy: the prince is at so great a distance from his subjects, that he is scarce seen by them; and is raised so far above them, that they cannot conceive any relation capable of giving them disgust. But when the nobles preside in a state, they are exposed to the eyes of all men, and are not seated so high as to prevent odious comparisons from being made perpetually; and, indeed, the people have detested senators, in this and in all ages. Such commonwealths in which birth does not bestow any share in the legislature, are the happiest in this respect; for it is natural that the people should not bear so much envy to an authority, which they bestow on whom they think proper, and resume at will.

The people being disgusted at the patricians, withdrew to the Sacred Hill (Mons Sacra) whither deputies being sent, they were appeased: and as they all made a promise to assist one another, in case the patricians should not perform their \* engagement, which would have created seditions every moment, and disturbed all the magistrates in the exercise of their functions; it was judged better to create an officer †, who might protect the people against any injustice that should be done them: but by a malady for ever incident to man, the plebeians, who had obtained tribunes merely for their own defence, employed those very magistrates to annoy others: so that they

stript, by insensible degrees, the patricians of all their privileges. This gave rise to everlasting contests: the people were supported, or rather animated, by their tribunes; and the patricians were defended by the senate, the greatest part of which consisted of patricians, who were more inclined to favour the ancient maxims, and afraid that the populace would raise some tribune to arbitrary power.

The people employed, in the defence of this magistrate, their own strength, and the superiority they had in the suffrages, their refusal to march into the field, their threats to go quite away, the partiality of the laws, in fine, their judiciary sentences against those who had opposed them too vigorously: the senate defended themselves by their wisdom, their justice, and the love they inspired into all for their country; by their beneficence, and the prudent distribution of the commonwealth; by the veneration which the people had for the glory of the principal \* families, and the virtue of illustrious personages; by religion itself, the ancient institutions, and the prohibition of days of public meeting, upon pretence that the auspices had not been favourable; by their clients; by the opposition of one tribune to another; by the creation of a † dictator, the occupations of a new war, or the misfortunes and calamities which united all parties; in a word, by a paternal condescension, in granting the people part of their demands, purposely to make them relinquish the rest; and by that stedfast maxim, of preferring the safety of the republic to the prerogatives of any order or public employment whatsoever.

In process of time, when the plebians had depressed the patricians to such a degree, that this \* distinction of families was empty and fruitless, and that both were indiscriminately raised to honours, new contests arose between the populace, whom their tribunes spirited up, and the chief families, whether patricians or such plebians as were styled noble, and were favoured by the senate that was composed of them: but, as the ancient manners subsisted no more: as particular persons were possessed of immense wealth, and that it is impossible but wealth must give power; these nobles made a stronger resistance than the patricians had done, which occasioned the death of the Gracchi, and of † several persons who followed their plan ‡.

I must take notice of an office which contributed greatly to the happy polity of Rome; it was that of the censors. These numbered or surveyed the § people; farther, as the strength of the commonwealth consisted in the strictness of discipline, in the severity of manners, and the uninterrupted observation of certain customs; they corrected such errors and abuses as the legislative power had not foreseen, or the ordinary magistrate \* could not punish. Some bad examples are worse than crimes, and a violation of manners has destroyed more states, than the infraction of laws: in Rome, whatever might tend to introduce dangerous novelties, to create a change in the minds or affections of the citizens, and prevent, if I may use the expression, the perpetuity of it; all disorders and tumults, whether public or private, were reformed by the censors; these had authority to expel whomsoever they pleased; the senate could take from a knight the horse maintained for him at the public expence; or degrade a citizen to the rank of such as contributed to the maintenance of the magistrates of the city, without enjoying the privileges of it; in a word, the censors took a view of the actual situation of the republic, and distributed the people † among their various tribes in such a

manner, as to prevent the tribunes and persons of an aspiring temper from engrossing the suffrages, or the people from abusing their power.

M. Livius \* degraded the people themselves, and reduced thirty-four tribes out of thirty-five, to the rank of those who had no share in the privileges of the city: for, said this Roman, you first condemned me, and afterwards raised me to the consulate and the censorship; you therefore must either have prevaricated once in punishing me, or twice in creating me consul and afterwards censor.

M. Duronius †, tribune of the people, was expelled the senate by the censors, for having annulled, when in office, the law which limits the expences of feasts.

The following institution was a very wise one; no magistrate ‡ could be turned out of his employment, because that would have disturbed the exercise of the public power; but they divested such a man of his order and rank, and deprived, as it were, a citizen of his particular nobility.

Servius Tullius had made the famous division by centuries, which Livy ? and Dionysius Halicarnasseus § have so well explained. He had divided one hundred and ninety-three centuries into six classes, and in the last century, which of itself formed the sixth class, he placed all the commonalty. This disposition evidently excluded the commonalty from voting; not of right, but in fact. Afterwards it was determined, that, some particular cases excepted, the division of tribes should be followed in voting. There were thirty-five of these tribes, each having their respective vote, four belonging to the city, and thirty-one to the country. The principal citizens, who were all farmers, naturally belonged to the country-tribes, and those of the city admitted the commonalty \*, though these had very little influence in affairs: this was considered as the safety of the republic. And when Fabius replaced in the four city-tribes, the commonalty, whom Appius Claudius had dispersed through them all, he acquired by that action the title of Maximus †. The censors every five years surveyed the state of the republic, and distributed the people in their several tribes in such a manner, that the tribunes and ambitious might not engross the votes, nor the people abuse their power.

The government of Rome was wonderful in this respect; ever since the foundation of that city, its constitution was such, either from the genius of the people, the strength of the senate, or the authority of certain magistrates, that every abuse of power might always be reformed in it.

Carthage was destroyed, because, when abuses were to be retrenched, the citizens could not bear the hand even of their Hannibal. Athens fell, because the errors of the people appeared so lovely in their own eyes, that they would not be cured of them: and among us, those Italian republics which boast the perpetuity of their government, ought to boast of nothing but the perpetuity of their abuses; nor indeed, do they enjoy greater liberty ‡ than Rome did under the Decemviri.

The British government is one of the wisest in Europe, because there is a body which examines it perpetually, and is perpetually examining itself; and its errors are of such

a nature, as never to be lasting, and are frequently useful by rousing the attention of the nation.

In a word, a free government, that is to say, one for ever in motion, cannot support itself, unless its own laws are capable of correcting the disorders of it.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. IX.

### Two Causes Which Destroyed Rome.

WHILST the sovereignty of Rome was confined to Italy, it was easy for the commonwealth to subsist: every soldier was at the same time a citizen; every consul raised an army, and other citizens marched into the field under his successor: as their forces were not very numerous, such \* persons only were received among the troops, as had possessions considerable enough to make them interested in the preservation of the city; the senate kept a watchful eye over the conduct of the generals, and did not give them an opportunity of machinating any thing to the prejudice of their country.

But after the legions had passed the Alps and crossed the sea, the soldiers, whom the Romans had been obliged to leave during several campaigns in the countries they were subduing, lost insensibly that genius and turn of mind which characterized a Roman citizen; and the generals, having armies and kingdoms at their disposal, were sensible of their own strength, and could no longer obey.

The soldiers therefore began to acknowledge no superior but their general; to found their hopes on him only, and to view the city as from a great distance: they were no longer the soldiers of the republic, but of Sylla, of Marius, of Pompey, and of Cæsar. The Romans could no longer tell, whether the person who headed an army in a province was their general or their enemy.

So long as the people of Rome were corrupted by their tribunes only, on whom they could bestow nothing but their power, the senate could easily defend themselves, because they acted consistently and with one regular tenor; whereas the common people were continually shifting from the extremes of fury to the extremes of cowardice; but when they were enabled to invest their favourites with a formidable exterior authority, the whole wisdom of the senate was baffled, and the commonwealth was undone.

The reason why free states are not so permanent as other forms of government, is, because the misfortunes and successes which happen to them, generally occasion the loss of liberty; whereas the successes and misfortunes of an arbitrary government, contribute equally to the enslaving of the people. A wise republic ought not to run any hazard which may expose it to good or ill fortune; the only happiness the several individuals of it should aspire after, is, to give perpetuity to their state.

If the unbounded extent of the Roman empire proved the ruin of the republic, the vast compass of the city was no less fatal to it.

The Romans had subdued the whole universe by the assistance of the nations of Italy, on whom they had bestowed various privileges at different times; most of those nations did not, at first, set any great value on the freedom of the city of Rome, and

some \* chose rather to preserve their ancient usages; but when this privilege became that of universal sovereignty; when a man, who was not a Roman citizen, was considered as nothing, and, with this title, was all things, the people of Italy resolved either to be Romans, or die; not being able to obtain this by cabals and intreaties they had recourse to arms; and \* rising in all that part of Italy opposite to the Ionian sea, the rest of the allies were going to follow their example: Rome being now forced to combat against those who were, if I may be allowed the figure, the hands with which they shackled the universe, was upon the brink of ruin: the Romans were going to be confined merely to their walls; they therefore granted this so much wished-for † privilege, to allies, who had not yet been wanting in fidelity; and they indulged it, by insensible degrees, to all other nations.

But now Rome was no longer that city, the inhabitants of which had breathed one and the same spirit, the same love for liberty, the same hatred of tyranny; a city in which a jealousy of the power of the senate and of the prerogatives of the great (ever accompanied with respect) was only a love of equality. The nations of Italy ‡ being made citizens of Rome, every city brought thither its genius, its particular interests, and its dependance on some mighty protector: Rome being now rent and divided, no longer formed one entire body, and men were no longer citizens of it, but in a kind of fictitious way; as there were no longer the same magistrates, the same walls, the same gods, the same temples, the same burying places; Rome was no longer beheld with the same eyes; the citizens were no longer fired with the same love for their country, and the Roman sentiments were obliterated.

Cities and nations were now invited to Rome by the ambitious, to disconcert the suffrages, or influence them in their own favour; the public assemblies were so many conspiracies against the state, and a tumultuous croud of seditious wretches were dignified with the title of Comitia \*. The authority of the people and their laws, nay that people themselves, were more than so many chimæras, and so universal was the anarchy of those times, that it was not possible to determine whether the people had made a law or not.

Authors enlarge very copiously on the divisions which proved the destruction of Rome; but their readers seldom discover those divisions to have been always necessary and inevitable. The grandeur of the republic was the only source of that calamity, and exasperated popular tumults into civil wars. Dissentions were not to be prevented, and those martial spirits, which were so fierce and formidable abroad, could not be habituated to any considerable moderation at home. Those who expect in a free state, to see the people undaunted in war and pusillanimous in peace, are certainly desirous of impossibilities; and it may be advanced as a general rule, that whenever a perfect calm is visible, in a state that calls itself a republic, the spirit of liberty no longer subsists.

Union, in a body politic, is a very equivocal term: true union is such a harmony as makes all the particular parts, as opposite as they may seem to us, concur to the general welfare of the society, in the same manner as discords in music contribute to the general melody of sound. Union may prevail in a state full of seeming commotions; or, in other words, there may be an harmony from whence results



prosperity, which alone is true peace, and may be considered in the same view, as the various parts of this universe, which are eternally connected by the action of some and the reaction of others.

In a despotic state indeed, which is every government where the power is immoderately exerted, a real division is perpetually kindled. The peasant, the soldier, the merchant, the magistrate, and the grandee have no other conjunction than what arises from the ability of the one to oppress the other, without resistance; and if at any time a union happens to be introduced, citizens are not then united, but dead bodies are laid in the grave contiguous to each other.

It must be acknowledged that the Roman laws were too weak to govern the republic: but experience has proved it to be an invariable fact, that good laws, which raise the reputation and power of a small republic, become incommodious to it, when once its grandeur is established, because it was their natural effect to make a great people, but not to govern them.

The difference is very considerable between good laws, and those which may be called convenient; between such laws as give a people dominion over others, and such as continue them in the possession of power, when they have once acquired it.

There is at this time a republic \* in the world, of which few persons have any knowledge, and which, by plans accomplished in silence and secrecy, is daily enlarging its power. And certain it is, that if it ever rises to that height of grandeur for which it seems preordained by its wisdom, it must inevitably change its laws, and the necessary innovations will not be effected by any legislator, but must spring from corruption itself.

Rome was founded for grandeur, and its laws \* had an admirable tendency to bestow it; for which reason, in all the variations of her government, whether monarchy, aristocracy, or popular, she constantly engaged in enterprizes which required conduct to accomplish them, and always succeeded. The experience of a day did not furnish her with more wisdom than all other nations, but she obtained it by a long succession of events. She sustained a small, a moderate, and an immense fortune with the same superiority, derived true welfare from the whole train of her prosperities, and refined every instance of calamity into beneficial instructions.

She lost her liberty, because she completed her work too soon.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. X.

### Of The Corruption Of The Romans.

I AM of opinion that the sect of Epicurus, which began to be propagated at Rome, towards the close of the republic, was very prejudicial to the minds and genius of the people †. The Greeks had been infatuated with its doctrines long before, and consequently, were corrupted much earlier than the Romans. We are assured by Polybius \*, that oaths, in his time, could not induce any person to place confidence in a Greek, whereas they were considered by a Roman as inviolable obligations upon his conscience.

There is a passage in one of Cicero's letters to † Atticus, which manifestly discovers how much the Romans had degenerated in this particular, since the time of Polybius.

“Memmius,” says he, “imparted to the senate the agreement he and his fellow candidate had made with the consuls, by which the latter stipulated to favour them in their solicitations for the consulship the ensuing year; and they obliged themselves to pay four hundred thousand sesterces to the consuls, if they did not furnish them with three augurs, who should declare they themselves were present when the people made the Curiatian law ‡, though in reality it had not been enacted; and two former consuls, who should affirm they had assisted at signing the edict of the senate which regulated the state of the provinces assigned to the present consuls, notwithstanding no such edict was in being.” What an admirable set of people we discover in a single contract!

As religion always furnishes the best security for the rectitude of human actions, so there was this peculiarity among the Romans, that the love they expressed for their country, was blended with some particular sentiment of devotion. That mighty city, founded in the most auspicious period; the great Romulus, at once their monarch and their god; the capitol, esteemed as eternal as the city; and the city, reputed as eternal as its founder, had anciently struck such impressions on the minds of the Romans, as might well be wished to have been constantly retained.

The grandeur of the state, in general, constituted the greatness of its particular members; but as affluence consists in conduct, and not in riches; that wealth of the Romans, which had certain limitations, introduced a luxury and profusion which had no bounds. Those who had been at first corrupted by their opulence, received the same taint in their poverty, by aspiring after acquisitions, that no way comported with private life; it was difficult to be a good citizen, under the influence of strong desires and the regret of a large fortune that had been lost: people, in this situation, were prepared for any desperate attempt; and, as Sallust \* says, there was, at that time, a generation of men, who, as they had no patrimony of their own, could not endure to see others less necessitous than themselves.

But as great soever as the corruption of Rome might then be, all its calamitous effects were not introduced among the people, for the efficacy of those institutions, by which they were originally established, was so extraordinary, that they always preserved an heroic fortitude, and devoted themselves, with the greatest application to war, amidst all the softenings of luxury and pleasure; which seems to me, to be a circumstance, in which they were never imitated by any nation in the world.

The Romans were not solicitous to improve commerce, or cultivate the sciences, but ranked them among the attentions proper for slaves \* ; we may except, indeed, some particular persons, who had received their freedom, and persisted in their former industry. But their knowledge, in general, was confined to the art of war, which was the only track † by which they could arrive at promotions in the magistracy, and other stations of honour; for which reason, their military virtues subsisted after all the rest were extinguished.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XI.

### Of Sylla, Pompey, And Cæsar.

I INTREAT the reader's permission to turn my eyes from the horrors of the wars between Marius and Sylla; Appian has collected all the dreadful particulars into this history: besides the jealousy, ambition, and barbarity of the two chiefs, each particular Roman was infatuated with fury; the new citizens †, and the ancient, no longer considered each other as members of the same republic, but gave a loose to a series of hostilities, so peculiar in their nature, as to comprehend all the miseries of a civil and foreign war.

Sylla made several good laws, and reduced the power of the tribunes; to which we may add, that the moderation or caprice which induced him to resign the dictatorship, re-established the senate, for some time; but in the fury of his success, he suffered himself to be hurried into actions, which in their consequences, made it impossible for Rome to preserve her liberty.

In his Asian expedition, he wholly destroyed the military discipline; he accustomed his army to rapine \*, and taught them wants to which before they were absolute strangers: he first corrupted the soldiers, who afterwards corrupted their leaders.

He entered Rome with an armed force, and taught the Roman generals to violate the asylum of liberty †.

He distributed † the lands of the citizens among his soldiers, and, by that proceeding, corrupted them for ever; because, from that moment, there was not one of the military profession who did not wait for an opportunity of seizing the effects of his fellow-citizens.

He was likewise the inventor of proscriptions, and set a price on the head of every man who had not embraced his party. From that time, it became impossible for any one to be devoted to the republic; for whilst two ambitious men were contending for superiority, those who observed a neutrality, or were attached to the cause of liberty, were sure to be proscribed by either of the competitors who should prove victorious; it therefore became prudent to engage in one of the two parties.

He was succeeded, says Cicero §, by a man, who in an impious cause, and a victory still more infamous, not only confiscated the effects of individuals, but involved entire provinces in the same calamity.

Sylla, when he abdicated the dictatorship, pretended, that he was unwilling to live in any other manner than under the protection of his own laws; but that action, which indicated so much moderation, was itself a consequence of his violences. He had given lands to forty-seven legions, in different parts of Italy. These forces, says

Appian, regarding their fortune as attached to his life, gave the greatest attention to his safety, and were always ready either to succour or avenge him \*.

As the republic was fated to destruction, the only material question was, who should have the credit of overwhelming it?

Two men equally ambitious, with this exception, that the one knew how to proceed directly to his purpose better than the other, eclipsed, by their reputation, their exploits, and their virtues, all the rest of the citizens. Pompey made the first appearance in the scene of action, and Cæsar immediately followed him.

Pompey, to render himself popular, had disannulled the law of Sylla, which limited the power of the people, and when he had sacrificed the most salutary laws of his country to his particular ambition, he obtained all he desired, and the rash indiscretion of the populace was altogether unbounded in his favour.

The Roman laws had wisely parcelled out the public power into several magistracies, which mutually supported as well as restrained and tempered each other; and as the power of all, who enjoyed those promotions, was confined to a proper extent, every citizen was qualified for a station of that nature; and the people, seeing numbers of such persons passing away in succession, were not habituated to any particular magistrate among them. But, in the times we are now describing the plan of government was changed; the most potent competitors obtained extraordinary commissions from the people, which annihilated the authority of the magistrates, and drew all the great affairs into the hands of one man, or a few.

Was war to be proclaimed against Sertorius? Pompey was nominated to command the army. Were the Romans to march against Mithridates? Every voice called aloud for Pompey. Did it become necessary to transinit corn to Rome? The people would have given it over for lost, had not Pompey been entrusted with the importation. Were the pirates to be destroyed? Who so proper for that expedition as Pompey? And when Cæsar himself threatened Rome with an invasion, the senators cried out, in their turn, and placed all their confidence in Pompey.

I am willing to believe (said Marcus \* to the people) that this Pompey, who is so much caressed by the nobility, is more inclinable to secure your liberty, than he is to countenance their authority over you: but there was a time, when each individual among you was protected by several, and not the whole body of the people by one person; and when it was never known, that a single man either gave or took away things of so much consequence.

As Rome was formed for grandeur, it became necessary to unite the honours and power in the same persons, which in unquiet times would six the admiration of the people on one particular citizen.

When honours are granted, the givers know exactly what they bestow; but when power is added to the donation, they can never be certain how far it will be extended.

Immoderate preferences given to a citizen, in a republic, are always productive of necessary effects; they either raise envy in the people, or make their affection overflow all bounds.

When Pompey returned twice to Rome, in a condition to enslave the republic, he had the moderation to disband his armies, before he entered the city; and then he made his appearance with the air of a common citizen: these instances of a disinterested behaviour, which completed all his glory, did not fail, in their consequences, to make the senate always declare in his favour, whenever he attempted any thing prejudicial to the laws.

The ambition of Pompey was more unactive and gentle than that of Cæsar. This warrior resolved, like Sylla, to open himself a passage to sovereign power by arms, but Pompey grew displeas'd at such a method of oppression; he aspir'd, indeed, to the dictatorship, but was willing to owe it to the suffrages of the people; he could not resolve to usurp power, but would have been glad to have had it tendered to him as a gift.

As the favour of the people is always in a fluctuating state, there were some seasons, wherein Pompey beheld his reputation in a declining condition \*; and it affected him in the most tender part, to see the very persons he despis'd, make advances in popularity, and then employ it against him.

This led him into three actions equally fatal; he corrupted the people with money, and fix'd a price, in the elections, on the suffrage of each citizen.

He employ'd the vilest of the populace to incommode the magistrates in the exercise of their functions, in hopes, that wise people growing weary of living in a state of anarchy, would be urg'd by despair to create him dictator.

In a word, he united his interests with those of Cæsar and Crassus: Cato said, their union and not their enmity destroy'd the republic; and in reality, it was then reduced to such an unhappy state, that it receiv'd less injury from civil wars than by a peace, which, as it united the views and interests of the leading men, so it naturally introduc'd tyranny in the government.

Pompey did not properly lend his reputation to Cæsar, but sacrific'd it to his cause, without knowing what he did; and Cæsar, in return, employ'd all the power he had receiv'd from Pompey to the prejudice of the donor, and even play'd off his own artifices against him he rais'd troubles in the city by his emissaries; he made himself master of all elections; and consuls, prætors, and tribunes purchas'd their promotions at their own price.

The senate, who easily penetrat'd into Cæsar's designs, had recourse to Pompey, and intreat'd him to undertake the defence of the republic, if that name might properly be given to a government which implor'd protection of one of its citizens.

I am of opinion, that what contribut'd most to Pompey's destruction, was the shame that affect'd him, when he grew sensible, that by raising Cæsar as he had done, he

had committed a fatal oversight; but he suffered this consideration to prevail as late as possible, and did not prepare for his defence, lest he should be obliged to acknowledge himself in danger. He asserted before the senate that Cæsar durst not engage in a war; and because he had made such a declaration several times, he always persisted in repeating it.

One circumstance seems to have capacitated Cæsar for any undertaking, and that was the unhappy conformity of names; the senate had added to his government of the Cisalpine Gaul, all that part of Gaul which was distinguished by the name of Transalpine.

As the politics of those times did not permit armies to be stationed near Rome, so neither would they suffer Italy to be entirely destitute of troops; for which reason, considerable forces were quartered in Cisalpine Gaul, a country which extends from the Rubicon, a little river in Romania, to the Alps: but, in order to secure the city of Rome against those troops, the senate passed that famous edict, which is still to be seen engraven in the road near Rimini, by which they solemnly devoted to the infernal gods, and branded with sacrilege and parricide, any person whatever, who should presume to pass the Rubicon, with an army, a legion, or a single cohort.

To a government of that importance as to keep the city in awe, another was added which proved still more considerable, and that was all the Transalpine Gaul, which comprehended the southern parts of France, where Cæsar had for several years an opportunity of prosecuting war against as many nations as he pleased; by which means his soldiers advanced in years as well as himself, and were conquered by him, in their turn, as well as the Barbarians. Had Cæsar not been entrusted with the government of Transalpine Gaul, he could not have corrupted his troops, nor rendered his name venerable to them by so many victories; and had he not enjoyed Cisalpine Gaul, Pompey might have stopped him at the pass of the Alps, whereas he was compelled to retire from Italy, when the war began, which made him lose among his own party that reputation which, in civil wars, is the very soul of power.

The same consternation, which Hannibal diffused through Rome, after the battle of Cannæ, was spread by Cæsar over all that city, when he had passed the Rubicon. Pompey was so confounded, that he became incapable, even in the first moments of the war, of forming any design but such as is usually suggested in the most desperate conjunctures. He could only retire, and trust to flight. Accordingly he left Rome and the public treasure; and as he was in no condition to retard the conqueror, he forsook part of his troops, abandoned all Italy, and crossed the sea.

Cæsar's fortune has been greatly celebrated; but this extraordinary man enjoyed to many great qualities, without the intermixture of a defect, though he had several vicious inclinations, that he would have been victorious at the head of any army he had commanded, and would have governed in any republic that had given him birth.

When he had defeated Pompey's lieutenants in Spain, he passed into Greece to seek Pompey himself; and this general, who had possessed himself of the seacoasts, and was master of a superior force, was on the point of beholding Cæsar's army destroyed

by misery and famine. But as the desire of approbation was his predominant frailty, he could not forbear giving attention to some vain speeches \* of those about him, who were perpetually blaming his conduct, and mortifying him with their jests. This general, says one, would perpetuate his command, and be a new king of kings, like Agamemnon: I assure you, replies another, we shall not eat any Tusculum figs this year. A few encounters in which he had succeeded, quite intoxicated the heads of this senatorial host; and Pompey, to avoid censure, gave into an indiscretion which posterity will ever blame; he resolved to sacrifice all the advantages he had then obtained, and marched at the head of undisciplined troops to engage an army that had been so frequently victorious.

When the shattered remains of Pharsalia were withdrawn into Africa, Scipio, who then commanded them, refused to follow Cato's advice for protracting the war. He grew elated with a few instances of success; he risked all, and immediately lost all he had risked; and when Brutus and Cassius re-established that party, the same precipitation destroyed the republic a third time † .

It is observable, that in the long course of these civil wars, the power of Rome was continually extending in foreign parts, under Marius, Sylla, Pompey, Cæsar, Antony, and Augustus; and that mighty city, growing daily more formidable, completed the destruction of all the kings who presumed to resist her.

No state threatens its neighbours with conquest so much as that which is involved in the horrors of civil war: in such a season, the nobility, the citizens, the artizans, the peasants, and, in short, the whole body of the people become soldiers; and when peace has united all the contending parties, this state enjoys great advantages over others, whose subjects are generally citizens. Besides, civil wars always produce great men, because in the universal confusion which then reigns, those who are distinguished by any particular merit, have a favourable opportunity of making themselves conspicuous: each of these persons ranges himself in a suitable situation; whereas, in times of peace, they are stationed by others, and generally very injudiciously. We shall pass from the Romans, and inquire for instances of this truth, in nations that are more modern; and among these, France was never so formidable abroad, as after the contentions between the houses of Burgundy and Orleans, after the troubles of the league, after the civil wars in the minority of Lewis the Thirteenth, and after the national dissensions in the nonage of Lewis the Fourteenth. England was never so much respected as in the time of Cromwell, after the wars of the long parliament. The Germans did not gain their superiority over the Turks, till after the civil wars of the empire. The Spaniards, under Philip the fifth, and immediately after the civil wars that were kindled by the succession, invaded Sicily with such a force as astonished all Europe; and we now see the Persians rising from the ashes of a civil war, and humbling the Ottoman power.

In a word, the republic was at last enslaved, and we are not to charge that calamity on the ambition of particular persons, but should rather impute it to the disposition of man in general, whose cravings after power are always most insatiable, when he enjoys the greatest share, and who only desires the whole, because he possesses a large part.



If the sentiments of Cæsar and Pompey had resembled those of Cato, others would have had the same ambitious thoughts as Pompey and Cæsar discovered; and since the republic was fated to fall, it would have been dragged to the precipice by some other hand.

Cæsar pardoned every mortal; but the moderation people discover when they have usurped all, seems to be no extraordinary accomplishment.

Though he has been much commended for being indefatigable, after the battle of Pharsalia, yet Cicero, very justly, accuses him of remissness. He tells Cassius \* they never could have imagined Pompey's party would have revived so considerably in Spain and Africa; and that if they could have foreseen that Cæsar would have amused himself in his Alexandrian war, they would not have made their peace with him as they did, but would have followed Scipio and Cato into Africa. And thus a weak passion for a woman made him engage in four wars, and by not foreseeing the two last, he hazarded all he had gained at Pharsalia.

Cæsar governed at first under the usual titles of magistracy, for nothing affects mankind more than names; and as the Asiatics abhorred those of consul and proconsul, the Europeans detested that of king; so that those titles constituted at that time, the happiness or despair of all the earth. He made some overtures to have the diadem placed on his head; but when he grew sensible that the people discontinued their acclamations, he thought fit to reject it. He likewise made other attempts \* , and it is not to be comprehended, how he could believe that the Romans, in order to suffer him to be a tyrant, should for that reason be in love with tyranny, or could even give credit to what they themselves had done.

One day, when the senate tendered him some particular honours, he neglected to rise from his seat, and from that moment, the gravest members of that body lost all patience.

Mankind are always most offended at any trespass on the ceremonials and punctilios they expect. If you endeavour to oppress them, it sometimes passes for a proof of the esteem you entertain for them, but a violation of their decorums is always an instance of contempt.

Cæsar, who was a constant enemy to the senate, could not conceal the mean opinion he entertained of that body, who had almost rendered themselves ridiculous, when they were no longer in possession of power: for which reason even his clemency was an insult, and it became evident that he only pardoned because he scorned to punish.

Cæsar formed the edicts of the senate himself, and subscribed them with the names of the first senators he happened to think on. Cicero, in the ninth book of his familiar letters, writes to this effect: "I have been sometimes informed, that an edict of the senate passed by my consent, has been transmitted to Syria and Armenia, before I had any knowledge that it was made; and several princes have sent me letters of acknowledgment for my consent, to allow them the title of kings, when, at the same

time, I was so far from knowing them to be kings till that moment, that I even had not heard there were any such persons in the world.”

We may see, in the letters \* of some great men of that time, though they passed under Cicero's name, because most of them were written by himself, into what dejection and despair persons of the first rank in the republic were sunk by this sudden revolution, which divested them of their honours, and even their employments; when the senate, having no longer any functions to perform, that reputation they had acquired through all the world, was now to be dispensed from the cabinet of one man. This state of affairs appears in a much better light in those letters, than in any relations of historians; and they are the most masterly representation of the ingenuous turn of mind of a set of people united by a common affliction, and give us a complete portrait of an age wherein a false politeness had not infected all society with insincerity and untruth. In a word, they are not written like out modern letters, with a view to deceive, but are the faithful intercourse of friends, who communicated all they knew.

It was hardly possible for Cæsar, in his situation, to preserve his life: the generality of the conspirators against him, were of his party †, or had received many great obligations from him, and the reason of their intention to assassinate him, is very natural; they had gained signal advantages by his conquest, but the more their fortune improved, the greater was their share of the common calamity, and to those who have not any thing they can properly call their own, it seems, in some particulars, to be of little consequence under what government they live.

Besides, there was a certain law of nations, or a settled opinion which prevailed in all the republics of Greece and Italy, and ascribed the character of a virtuous man to the person who should assassinate any one who had usurped the sovereign power. Rome had been extremely fond of this notion, ever since the expulsion of her kings: the law was very express; the examples had a general approbation; the republic put a sword into the hand of every citizen, constituted him their magistrate for a few moments, and acknowledged him for their defender.

Brutus \* was bold enough to tell his friends, that, should his own father return from the grave, he would sacrifice him to the public good, with as little remorse as he stabbed Cæsar; and though, by the continuance of tyranny, this surprising spirit of liberty had gradually lost its vigour, yet the conspiracies, at the beginning of Augustus's reign, were perpetually reviving.

The ancient Romans were animated by a predominant love for their country, which, acting by a variation from the common ideas of crimes and virtues, was only attentive to its own dictates, and in the fervors of its operation entirely disregarded friends and citizens, fathers and benefactors. Virtue seemed to have forgotten her own precepts, with a resolution to surpass herself, and when an action seemed too severe to be immediately considered with approbation, she soon caused it to be admired as divine.

In a word, did not the guilt of Cæsar, who lived in a free government, consist in placing himself out of the reach of all punishments but an assassination? And when

we ask why he was not opposed by open force, or the power of the laws, do we not at the same time demand satisfaction for his crimes?

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XII.

### Observations On The State Of Rome After The Death Of Cæsar.

SO impossible was it for the republic to accomplish its re-establishment, that a conjuncture then happened which was never known before; there was no longer any tyrant, and yet liberty was extinguished; for the causes which had contributed to its destruction, still subsisted to prevent its revival.

The Assassins had only formed the plan of a conspiracy, but had not taken any measures to render it effectual in the event.

When they had struck the blow, they all retired to the capital; the senate sordore to assemble, and, the next day, Lepidus, who was fond of commotions, took possession of the Forum, with a band of soldiers at his devotion.

The veteran troops, who were apprehensive that the immense donations they had received would be no longer repeated, had marched into Rome: this proceeding compelled the senate to approve all the acts of Cæsar, and then, by a faculty of reconciling extremes, they granted a general amnesty to the conspirators, which produced a false appearance of peace.

Cæsar, a little before his death, whilst he was preparing for his expedition against the Parthians, had appointed magistrates for several years, that he might secure himself a set of men who, in his absence, would maintain the tranquility of his government; so that, after his death, the party who had espoused his interest, were in a condition to support themselves for a considerable time.

As the senate had ratified all the acts of Cæsar without any restriction, and as the consuls were intrusted with the execution of them, Antony, who was then one of those magistrates, got possession of Cæsar's book of accounts, gained upon his secretary, and made him insert, in that book; all the articles he thought proper, by which means the dictator reigned more imperiously than when he was living; for what he could never have accomplished, Antony had the dexterity to effect; great sums of money, which Cæsar would never have bestowed, were distributed among the people by Antony, and every man who had any seditious designs against the government, was sure to find a sudden gratuity in Cæsar's books.

It unfortunately happened that Cæsar to make his expedition effectual, had amassed prodigious sums, and deposited them in the temple of Ops; Antony disposed of these as he thought fit, by the expedient of his book.

The conspirators had, at first, determined to cast the body of Cæsar into the Tyber \*, and might have executed that design without any interruption; for in those seasons of astonishment which succeed unexpected events, every intencion becomes practicable:

this however did not take effect, and we shall now relate what happened on that occasion.

The senate thought themselves under a necessity of permitting Cæsar's funeral obsequies to be performed; and indeed they could not decently forbid them, as they had never declared him a tyrant. Now the Romans, in conformity to a custom established among them, and much boasted of by Polybius, always carried, in their funeral processions, the images which represented the ancestors of the deceased, and made an oration over the body. Antony, who charged himself with this last province, unfolded the bloody robe of Cæsar to the view of all the people, read to them the particulars of his will, in which he had left them extraordinary legacies, and then wrought them into such violent emotions, that they immediately fired the houses of the conspirators.

Cicero, who governed the senate in this whole affair <sup>\*</sup>, makes no scruple to acknowledge that it would have been much better to have proceeded with vigour, and even to have exposed themselves to destruction, though indeed it was not probable that such a fate would have attended them; but he alledges for his excuse, that as the senate was then assembled, they had no opportunity in their favour; and he adds, that those who are sensible of the importance even of a moment, in affairs wherein the people have so considerable a part, will not be surprized at his conduct in that transaction.

Another accident happened at this time: when the people were celebrating funeral games in honour of Cæsar, a comet, with long flaming hair, appeared for the space of seven days, which made them believe the soul of Cæsar was received into heaven.

It was very customary for the people of Greece and Asia, to erect temples † to the kings, and even the proconsuls who had governed them; and they were indulged in this practice, because it was the greatest evidence they could possibly give of their abject servitude. Nay the Romans themselves might, in their private temples, where their lares were deposited, render divine honours to their ancestors; but I cannot remember, that from the time of Romulus to Julius Cæsar, any Roman ‡ was ever ranked among the gods of the republic.

The government of Macedonia was assigned to Antony, but he was desirous of changing it for that of Gaul, and the motives which so induced him are very evident: Decimus Brutus, who governed Cisalpine Gaul, having refused to resign that province to Antony, he was resolved to deprive him of it by force. This produced a civil war, in which the senate declared Antony an enemy to his country.

Cicero, to accomplish the destruction of Antony his mortal enemy, was so injudicious as to employ all his interest for the promotion of Octavius, and instead of defacing the idea of one Cæsar in the minds of the people, he placed two before their eyes.

Octavius, in his conduct to Cicero, acted like a man who knew the world; he flattered, he praised, he consulted him, and employed every engaging artifice, which vanity never distrusts.

Great affairs are frequently disconcerted, because those who undertake them seldom confine their expectations to the principal event, but look after some little particular success which soothes the indulgent opinion they entertain of themselves.

I am inclined to think, that, if Cato had reserved himself for the republic, he would have given a very different turn to affairs. Cicero had extraordinary abilities for the second class, but was incapable of the first. His genius was fine, but his soul seldom soared above the vulgar. His characteristic was virtue; that of Cato Glory \*. Cicero always beheld himself in the first rank; Cato never allowed his merit a place in his remembrance. This man would have preserved the republic for his own sake; the other that he might have boasted of the action.

I might carry on the parallel by adding, that when Cato foresaw, Cicero was intimidated; and when the former hoped, the latter was confident: Cato beheld things through a serene medium; Cicero viewed them through a glare of little passions.

Antony was defeated at Modena, where the two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, lost their lives: The senate, who thought themselves superior to their tumultuous affairs, began to think of humbling Octavius, who now ceased hostilities against Antony, marched his army to Rome, and caused himself to be declared consul.

In this manner did Cicero, who boasted that his robe had crushed the arms of Antony, introduce an enemy into the republic, the more formidable, because his name was much dearer to the people, and his pretensions, to all appearance, better founded \*.

Antony, after his overthrow, retired into Transalpine Gaul, where he was received by Lepidus. These two men entered into an association with Octavius, and gave up to each other the lives of their friends and their enemies †. Lepidus continued at Rome, whilst the other two went in quest of Brutus and Cassius, and found them in those parts where the empire of the world was thrice contended for in battle.

Brutus and Cassius killed themselves with a precipitation not to be vindicated; and it is impossible to read this period of their lives, without pitying the republic which was so abandoned. Cato closed the tragedy with his own murder; and these, in some measure, opened it with theirs.

Several reasons may be assigned for this custom of self-destruction, which so generally prevailed among the Romans; the progress of Stoicism which encouraged it; the establishment of triumphs and slavery, which induced several great men to believe they ought not to survive a defeat; the advantages accruing to the accused, who put an end to life rather than submit to a tribunal, which condemned their memory to infamy ‡, and their goods to confiscation; a point of honour, more rational perhaps, than that which now prompts us to stab our friend for a gesture or an expression; in a word, the convenience \* of heroism, which gave every one the liberty of finishing his part on the stage of the world, in what scene he pleased.

We might add, the great facility of putting such a principle in execution: the soul all attentive to the action she is preparing to commit, to the motives which determine her

resolution, to the dangers she avoids by it, does not properly behold death, because passion makes itself felt, but always blinds the eyes.

Self-love, and a fondness for our preservation, changes itself into so many shapes, and acts by such contrary principles, that it leads us to sacrifice our existence for the very sake of existence; and such is the estimate we make of ourselves, that we consent to die by a natural and obscure sort of instinct, which makes us love ourselves even more than our lives.

It is certain that we are become less free, less courageous, and less capable of grand enterprizes than they were formerly, by this love of ourselves.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XIII.

### AUGUSTUS.

SEXTUS POMPEIUS possessed Sicily and Sardinia, was master at sea, and saw himself at the head of a great multitude of fugitives, and persons devoted to death by proscriptions, whose last hopes depended on their valour. Octavius contended with him, in two very laborious wars; and after a variety of ill success, vanquished him by the abilities of Agrippa.

Most of the conspirators ended their lives in a miserable manner; and it was natural that persons who headed a party, so frequently harrassed by wars, in which no quarter was afforded, should die a violent death. That event was, however, interpreted into a consequence of divine vengeance, which punished the murderers of Cæsar, and in its turn proscribed their cause.

Octavius gained over the soldiers of Lepidus to his own interest, and divested him of his power in the triumvirate; he even envied him the consolation of passing the remainder of his days in obscurity, and compelled him to appear as a private man in the assemblies of the people.

It is impossible for any one to be displeas'd at the humiliation of this Lepidus; he was the most deprav'd citizen in all the republic, a constant promoter of disturbances, and one who perpetually form'd fatal schemes, wherein he was oblig'd to associate with people of more ability than himself. A modern author \* has thought fit to be large in his commendation, and cites Antony, who, in one of his letters, represents him as an honest man. But he, who had that character from Antony, could not have much title to it from other persons.

I believe Octavius is the only man of all the Roman generals, who ever gain'd the affections of the soldiers by giving them perpetual instances of a natural timidity of spirit. The soldiers, at that time, were more affected with the liberality of their commanders than their valour; perhaps it was even fortunate for him that he was not master of any qualities which could procure him the empire, and that his very incapacity should be the cause of his promotion to it, since it made him the less dreaded. It is not impossible that the defects which threw the greatest dishonour on his character, were the most propitious to his fortune. If he had discover'd, at first, any traces of an exalted soul, all mankind would have been jealous of his abilities; and if he had been spirited by any true bravery, he would not have given Antony time to launch into all the extravagances which prov'd his ruin.

When Antony was preparing to march against Octavius, he assur'd his soldiers, by a solemn oath, that he would restore the republic; which makes it evident, that even they were jealous of the liberty of their country, though they were the perpetual



instruments of its destruction; for an army is the blindest and most inconsiderate set of people in the world.

The battle of Actium was fought, Cleopatra fled, and drew Antony after her. It evidently appeared by the circumstances of her future conduct, that she afterwards betrayed him \*; perhaps that incomprehensible spirit of coquetry so predominant in her sex, tempted her to practise all her arts to lay a third sovereign of the world at her feet.

A woman, to whom Antony had sacrificed the whole world, betrayed him; many captains and kings, whom he had raised or made, failed him; and, as if generosity were connected with servitude, a company of gladiators remained heroically faithful to him. Load a man with benefits, the first idea you inspire him with, is to find ways to preserve them; they are new interests which you give him to defend.

The most surprising circumstance in those wars is, that one battle should generally decide the difference, and that one defeat should be irreparable.

The Roman soldiers were not, properly, under the prevalence of any party spirit; they did not fight for any particular acquisition, but for some particular person; they only knew their commander, who engaged their service by prodigious hopes; but when he was once defeated and consequently no longer in a condition to accomplish his promises, they immediately revolted to the other side. The provinces did not embark in the quarrel with any greater sincerity, for it was of little consequence to them, whether the senate or the people prevailed; and therefore, when one of the generals lost the day, they declared for the other; for every city was obliged to justify itself before the conqueror, who having engaged himself to the soldiery by immense promises, was constrained to sacrifice to their avidity those countries which were most obnoxious.

We have been afflicted, in France, with two sorts of civil war; one had religion for its pretext, and was of long duration, because the motive which first inflamed it, continued to subsist after victory; the other could not properly be said to have any motive, but was rather kindled by the caprice or ambition of some great men, and was soon extinguished.

Augustus (for that was the name offered by flattery to Octavius) was careful to establish order, or rather a durable servitude; for when once the sovereignty has been usurped in a free state, every transaction on which an unlimited authority can be founded, is called a regulation; and all instances of disorder, commotion, and bad government, are represented as the only expedients to preserve the just liberty of the subject.

All the Roman citizens who were ever actuated by ambitious views, have attempted to introduce a kind of anarchy in the republic; and Pompey, Crassus, and Cesar, succeeded to a miracle; they authorized an impunity for all public crimes, and abolished every institution calculated to prevent the corruption of manners, and every regulation accommodated to the best politics; and as good legislators endeavour to

improve their fellow citizens, these, on the contrary, were indefatigable to lead them into a degeneracy from every virtue. With this view they gave a sanction to the pernicious custom of corrupting the people by money, and when any persons were accused of undue practices for obtaining place of trust, the delinquents corrupted the judges who were to decide the cause. They interrupted the elections by every violent proceeding, and even intimidated the tribunal itself. The authority of the people was reduced to annihilation, witness Gabanius <sup>\*</sup>, who, after he had re-instated Ptolemy, by force of arms, on his throne, contrary to the inclinations of the people, very boldly demanded a triumph.

These leading men in the republic endeavoured to make the people disgusted at their own power, and to become necessary themselves, by rendering the inconveniences of the republican government as disagreeable as possible. But when Augustus had established himself in the supremacy, his politics were employed to restore order, that the people might be sensible of the happiness of being ruled by one man.

When Augustus was at the head of an armed power, he dreaded the revolt of his soldiers, and not the conspiracies of the citizens; for which reason he lavished all his caresses on the former, and was altogether inhuman to the latter: but when his arms had accomplished a peace, he was apprehensive of conspiracies, and the idea of Cæsar's untimely death being always present to his remembrance, he resolved to vary from his conduct that he might avoid his fate. We shall now give the reader a complete key to the whole life of Augustus: he wore a coat of mail, under his robe, in the senate house; he refused the title of dictator: and whereas Cæsar insolently affirmed the republic to be nothing, and that his words alone were the laws, Augustus was perpetually expatiating on the dignity of the senate and his veneration for the republic. He was solicitous therefore to establish such a form of government as should be most satisfactory, without incommoding his particular interest, and changing it into an aristocracy with relation to the civil, and into a monarchy with respect to the military administration; rendering it by these means an ambiguous system of government, which, being unsupported by its own power, could subsist no longer than the sovereign pleased; and consequently was a monarchy in all its circumstances.

A question has been started, whether Augustus had a real inclination to divest himself of the empire. But is it not apparent, that, had he been in earnest, he might easily have effected his design? But his whole proceeding, in that affair, was a mere artifice; because, though he expressed a desire every ten years, to be eased of the mighty load that encumbered him, yet he always thought fit to bear it. These were little refinements of low cunning, calculated to induce the people to give him what, in his opinion, he had not sufficiently acquired. I form my thoughts in this particular, by the whole life of Augustus; and though mankind are frequently fanciful and inconsistent, they are seldom known to renounce, in one moment, any enjoyment that has engaged the attention of all their life. Every action of Augustus, and each of his various regulations, visibly tended to the establishment of monarchy. Sylla resigned the dictatorship: but, amidst all his violent proceedings, a republican spirit is apparent in every part of his conduct; all his regulations, though executed with a tyrannical air, had an aspect to some certain form of a commonwealth. Sylla, who was a man of an impetuous temper, precipitated the Romans into liberty. Augustus, who was a smooth

and subtile tyrant <sup>\*</sup>, led them gently into slavery. When the republic regained its power, under Sylla, all the people exclaimed against tyranny; and whilst this became fortified, under Augustus, liberty was the general boast.

The custom of triumphs, which had so much contributed to the greatness of Rome, was abolished by Augustus, or, more properly, this honour became the prerogative of sovereignty <sup>\*</sup>. The greatest part of those customs which prevailed under the emperors, derived their origin from the republic <sup>†</sup>; and it will be proper to bring them together, that the similitude may be more apparent. That person alone under whose auspices a war had been conducted, was intitled to demand a triumph <sup>‡</sup>: now wars were always carried on under the auspices of a generalissimo, and consequently of the emperor, who was the generalissimo of all the forces.

As constant war was the reigning principle of the republic, the maxim under the emperors was altogether pacific. Victories were considered as so many opportunities of introducing disorder by armies, who might fix too great a valuation on their services.

Those who were advanced to any command, were apprehensive of engaging in enterprises of too great importance; they found it necessary to aim at glory with moderation, and were to engage the emperor's notice, and not raise his jealousy; in a word, they were not to appear before him with a lustre which his eyes could not bear.

Augustus was very cautious <sup>§</sup> of investing any one with the rights of a Roman citizen; he made laws <sup>¶</sup> to prevent the enfranchisement of too many slaves <sup>\*</sup>, and by his will recommended the observation of these two maxims, with a dissuasive against extending the empire by new wars.

These three particulars were very well connected; for when all war was discontinued, there was no need either of new citizens or enfranchisements.

When Rome was in a constant state of war, she was under a perpetual necessity of recruiting her inhabitants. At the beginning, part of the people were transplanted thither from the conquered cities, and in process of time several citizens of the neighbouring towns came to Rome to obtain a share in the rights of suffrage, and established themselves there in such numbers, that, upon the complaints of the allies, the Romans were obliged to remand them back. Multitudes at last arrived from the provinces; the laws favoured marriages, and even rendered them necessary. Rome, in all her wars, gained a prodigious number of slaves, and when the riches of the citizens became immense, they bought these unhappy people from all parts, and, from a principle of generosity, avarice, or ambition, enfranchised them without number <sup>†</sup>. Some intended by this proceeding to reward the fidelity of their slaves: others had a view by it to receive, in their name, the corn which the republic distributed among the poor citizens. In a word, others desired to have their funeral solemnity graced with a long train of attendance crowned with flowers. The people were generally composed of persons <sup>‡</sup> who had received their freedom, so that the lords of the universe, not only in their original, but through the greatest part of succeeding times, were of servile extraction.

The number of the populace being chiefly collected out of slaves who had been enfranchised, or the sons of such, became very incommodious, and were therefore transplanted into colonies; by which means the state effectually secured the obedience of the provinces. There was a general circulation of mankind through the world. Rome received them in the state of slaves, and sent them away Romans.

Augustus, under the pretence of some tumults in the elections, placed a garrison and a governor in the city, made the legions perpetual, stationed them upon the frontiers, and established particular funds for their pay. To which we may add, that he gave orders for veterans to receive their donations in money \*, and not in lands.

Many unhappy consequences resulted from the distribution of land after the time of Sylla. The citizens property in their estates grew precarious, and if all the soldiers of one cohort were not settled in the same place, they became dissatisfied with their allotments, neglected the cultivation of their lands, and degenerated into dangerous citizens †. But if they were distributed in entire legions, the ambitious could raise armies against the republic in a moment.

Augustus likewise established fixed provisions for the naval power, which was never done before his time; for as the Romans were masters of the Mediterranean, and as all navigation was then confined to that sea, they had not any enemy to fear.

Dion observes, very judiciously, that after the emperors had assumed the sovereign power, it became very difficult to write the history of those times. All transactions were industriously concealed, the dispatches from the provinces were transmitted to the cabinets of the emperors, and we know little more than what either the folly or rashness of tyrants divulged, or such events as fall within the conjectures of historians.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XIV.

### TIBERIUS.

AS a river, sometimes, with a slow and silent progress, undermines the banks that have been thrown up to restrain its current, and at last overwhelms them in a moment, and sheds an inundation over the fields they formerly preserved; in the same manner, the supreme authority, which gained an insensible growth under Augustus, bore down all before it in the succeeding reign of Tiberius.

A law at that time subsisted, which made it treason to form any injurious attempt against the majesty of the people: Tiberius assumed to himself the interpretation and enforcement of this law, and extended it not only to the cases for which it was originally calculated, but to every conjuncture that could possibly be favourable to his hatred or suspicions. And now, not only actions, but words and signs, and even thoughts were adjudged by this standard: for those expressions which drop from the overflowing of the heart, in the conversation of intimate friends, are always supposed to be their real sentiments. All freedom was therefore banished from their feasts, diffidence reigned among relations, there was no fidelity among the slaves: the gloomy disposition and insincerity of the prince were diffused through all ranks of men; friendship had the disrepute of a dangerous quicksand; a fine genius passed for a shining indiscretion, and virtue itself was only considered as an affectation, which officiously reminded the people of their lost happiness.

No tyranny can have a severer effect than that which is exercised under the appearance of laws, and with the plausible colours of justice; when the executors of cruel power would, if we may use the expression, drown the unhappy wretches on the very plank that before saved them amidst the troubled waves.

As a tyrant is never destitute of instruments to accomplish his designs, so Tiberius always found the senate tractable enough to condemn \* as many persons as he could possibly suspect; and this venerable body sunk at last into a degeneracy too low to be described. The senators even courted servitude, to gain the favour of Sejanus; and the most illustrious among them abandoned themselves to the dishonourable profession of informers.

It seems easy to discover several causes of that flavish disposition, which then prevailed in the senate. When Cæsar had entirely crushed the party who declared for the republic, all the friends as well as enemies he then had in the senate, concurred with equal unanimity, to remove the bounds with which the laws had limited his power, and at the same time they agreed to render him unparalleled honours; some came into these compliances with a view to please him, others intended by such means to make him odious. Dion informs us, that some even proposed that he might have the liberty to enjoy as many women as he should desire. This obsequious conduct freed him from all suspicions of the senate, and consequently was the cause

of his assassination; but then it prevented in the succeeding reigns, all flattery from rising to such wild and unexampled heights as might have created disaffection in the minds of the people.

Before Rome submitted to the dominion of one man, the riches of the nobility, in what manner soever acquired, were certainly immense, but those grandees were divested of the greatest part of their treasures by the emperors <sup>\*</sup>. The senators were no longer resorted to by those great and wealthy clients, who were the sources of their patrons affluence. The provinces produced nothing considerable, except for Cæsar; and especially when they were under the government of his præfects, whose office had some resemblance to that of the intendants in France. However, though the fountain from whence all this opulence flowed was at last exhausted; the expences were continued in their former profusion, and the track being once marked out, the men of rank could only pursue it now, by the emperor's favour.

Augustus had deprived the people of their legislative capacity, and abolished all their jurisdiction with respect to public offences; but he still left them the power of electing magistrates. Tiberius, who dreaded the assemblies of a people so numerous, divested them even of this privilege, and transferred it to the senate <sup>†</sup>, or rather to himself. Now it is impossible to conceive the abject lowness to which the declension of the people's power sunk the spirits of the grandees: when dignities were in the disposal of the populace, the magistrates, who solicited their interest, practised a number of mean condescensions; but these were intermixed with a certain magnificence that in some measure concealed them: for instance, they exhibited pompous games and recreations, they distributed sums of money, and quantities of corn among the people, and sometimes regaled them with splendid feasts. But though the motive was low, the manner seemed august, because it always comports with a great man to obtain the favour of the people by liberality; but when that people had nothing to bestow, and the prince, in the name of the senate, disposed of all employments, they were desired as well as obtained in a dishonourable manner, and could only be compassed by adulation, infamy, and a hateful train of crimes, that were made necessary arts by the iniquity of the age.

It does not indeed appear that Tiberius had any intention to make the senate contemptible; and he complained of nothing so much as the propensity of that body to slavery. His life was filled with dissatisfactions on that account, but he resembled the generality of mankind, and was fond of contradictory enjoyments. His general politics were inconsistent with his particular passions; he would willingly have seen a free senate, who, by their conduct, might have created a veneration for his government; but then he was also desirous of a senate that would every moment be tractable to his fears, his jealousies, and his aversions. In a word, the politician was perpetually subordinate to the man.

We have already intimated, that the people had formerly obtained from the patricians the privilege of electing, from their own body, a set of magistrates, who were to protect them from the insults and injustice that might be intended against them; and, in order to capacitate those magistrates for the exercise of such a power, their persons were declared sacred and inviolable, and whoever should presume to treat a tribune

injuriously, either by actions or language, was condemned by the law to suffer death on the spot. Now when the emperors were invested with the tribunitial power, they obtained the same prerogatives, and it was upon this principle that such a number of people were deprived of their lives: from this source flowed the impunity with which informers flourished in their profession \*; and hence it was, that the accusation of treason, that crime, says Pliny, which was charged on those to whom no real offence could be imputed, was at last extended to any one to whom the wantonness of tyranny pointed out.

I am inclinable however to believe, that some of those titles of accusation were not so ridiculous as they appear at present; and can never be persuaded that Tiberius would have caused a man to be accused for selling to one who bought his house, a statue of the emperor; that Domitian should condemn a woman to die for undressing herself before his image; or that he should proceed with the same severity against a citizen of Rome, for causing a description of all the earth to be delineated on the walls of his apartment; if such actions as these had not called up an idea in the minds of the Romans very different from that they now excite in us. For my part I am of opinion, that as Rome had changed the form of its government, those actions which now appear inconsiderable to us, might, when they were committed, have a very different aspect; and I judge in this manner, from my reflection on what is now customary in a nation which cannot with any justice be suspected of tyranny, and yet it is a capital crime there to drink to the health of a certain person.

I cannot omit any circumstance which tends to give a clear representation of the Roman genius. That people were so habituated to obedience, and so constantly placed their happiness in homaging their masters, that, after the death of Germanicus, they were affected with such inconsolable sorrow and despair, as never appears in our contemporaries. The descriptions given by historians \* of a desolation, so public, so universal and immoderate, deserve a reader's curiosity; and it is certain, that this scene of grief was not affected, since a whole people are never known to practise so much flattery and dissimulation.

The Romans, who had now no longer any share in the government, and were chiefly composed of persons who had received their freedom, or such indolent and unindustrious people who lived at the expence of the public treasure, were now sensible of nothing but their imbecility, and afflicted themselves like children or women, who, from a principle of weakness, abandon themselves to sorrow. These people were politically indisposed, they placed all their fears and hopes in the person of Germanicus, and when he was snatched from them by an untimely death, they sunk into despair.

No people are so apprehensive of calamity as those whom the misery of their condition should rather discharge from all fear, and who ought to say with *Andromache*, *Would to heaven I had any enjoyment I could dread to lose!* There are at this day, in Naples, fifty thousand men who have no food but herbs, and whose whole cloathing consists of a few miserable rags; and yet these people, who are the most wretched creatures upon earth, discover a dreadful consternation at the least irruption of Vesuvius, and are so infatuated as to fear they shall be miserable.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XV.

### Remarks On The Emperors, From Caius Calicula To Antoninus.

CALICULA succeeded Tiberius, and it was said of him, that there never was a better slave, nor a worse master: and indeed these two circumstances are very consistent; for the same turn of mind which inclines a person to be strongly affected at unlimited power in his sovereign, makes him to be no less in love with it, when he rises to empire himself.

Caligula restored the assemblies of the people, which Tiberius had prohibited; and abolished the arbitrary law and constructions of treason established by that emperor: from which proceeding we may observe, that the beginnings of a bad reign sometimes resemble the conclusion of a good one; for a wicked prince may, from a principle of contradiction to the motives of his predecessor's conduct, be spirited to actions which the other performed from a virtuous inducement; and we owe to this very principle a number of good as well as bad regulations.

But what did the Romans gain by these plausible beginnings? Caligula annulled the law which constituted the circumstantial of treason; but then he destroyed those who displeased him, by a military severity; and his vengeance, instead of pointing at some particular senators, hung over all their heads, like a sword that threatened them with extermination at one blow.

This formidable tyranny of the emperors arose from the disposition of the Romans in general; who, as they were suddenly enslaved to an arbitrary government, and were hardly sensible of any interval between dominion and subjection, were not prepared for such a transition by any gentle softenings. The fierce and untractable disposition still remained, and the citizens were used in the same manner as they themselves had treated their conquered enemies, and were governed altogether upon the same plan. When Sylla made his public entrance into Rome, he was still the Sylla who had done the same in Athens, and he governed with an uniform imperiousness. As to us who are natives of France, and have sunk into subjection, by insensible degrees, if we are destitute of laws, we are at least governed by engaging manners.

The constant view of the combatants of gladiators inspired the Romans with extraordinary fierceness; and it was observable, that Claudius became more disposed to shed blood, by being habituated to those spectacles. The example of this emperor, who was naturally of a gentle disposition, and yet degenerated into so much cruelty at last, makes it evident, that the education in those times, was very different from our own.

The Romans being accustomed to tyrannize over human nature, \* in the persons of their children and slaves, had a very imperfect idea of that virtue we distinguish by the name of humanity. Whence proceeds the savage cast of mind so remarkable in the



inhabitants of our colonies, but from their constant severity to an unfortunate class of mankind? When barbarity prevails in civil government, what natural justice or harmony of manners can be expected from the individuals?

We are fatigued and satiated with seeing in the history of the emperors such an infinite number of people whom they destroyed for no other end than to confiscate their goods: our modern accounts furnish us with no such instances of inhumanity. This difference, as we have already intimated, is to be ascribed to the milder cast of our manners, and the civilizing restraints of a more amiable religion. We may likewise add, that we have no opportunity of pillaging the families of senators who have ravaged the world, and we derive this advantage from the mediocrity of our fortunes, which are consequently in a safer situation. In a word, we are not considerable enough to be plundered † .

That class of the Roman people who were called Plebeians, had no aversion to the worst of their emperors; for since they had no longer any share of empire themselves, nor were any more employed in wars, they became the most contemptible and degenerate people in the world; they looked upon commerce and the sciences as only proper for slaves, and the distributions of corn which they received, made them neglect the cultivation of their lands: they had been familiarized to public games and splendid spectacles, and since they had no longer any tribunes to obey, or magistrates to elect, those gratifications which they were only permitted to enjoy, became necessary to them, and their indolence and inactivity stimulated their relish of those indulgences.

Caligula, Nero, Commodus, Carcalla, were lamented by the people for their folly, for whatever these loved, the others were as madly fond of, in their turn, and not only contributed their whole power, but even devoted their own persons to those pleasures; they lavished all the riches of the empire with the greatest prodigality; and when these were exhausted, the people without the least emotion, beheld all the great families pillaged. They enjoyed the fruits of tyranny, without the least intermixture of uneasiness, because their low obscurity was their protection. Such princes have a natural antipathy to people of merit and virtue, because they are sensible their actions are disapproved by such persons. The contradiction \* and even the silence of an austere citizen were insupportable to them; and as they grew intoxicated with popular applause, they at last imagined their government constituted the public felicity, and consequently that it could be censured by none but disaffected and ill-disposed persons.

Caligula was a true sophist in cruelty; for as he equally descended from Antony and Augustus, he declared he would punish the consuls if they celebrated the day appointed to commemorate the victory at Actium, and that they should likewise feel his severity if they neglected to honour that event; and Drusilla, to whom he accorded divine honours, being dead, it was a crime to bewail her because she was a goddess, and as great an offence to forbear that sorrow because she was a sister.

We have now ascended an eminence from whence we may take a view of human affairs: when we trace, in the Roman history, such a variety of wars, and their

prodigal effusion of human blood; when we view so many once flourishing nations depopulated, and see such a diversity of shining actions and triumphant processions: when we trace the masterly strokes of politics, sagacity, and fortitude, so conspicuous in that people, and reflect on their advances to universal monarchy by schemes so judiciously concerted, so successfully supported, and so happily accomplished; to what view are all these mighty preparations directed? Why, truly, to satiate the ambition of five or six monsters! Is it possible then, that the senate could divest so many kings of their power, only to plunge themselves into the most abject slavery to one of their unworthy citizens, and to exterminate itself by its own edicts? Did it rise to such a height of grandeur, to drop more splendidly into ruin, and do the sons of men only labour to augment their power, that they may sell by their own combinations into better hands?

When Caligula was assassinated, the senate assembled to form a new model of government; and whilst they were engaged in such deliberations, a party of soldiers rushed in to plunder the palace, and found, in some obscure place, a man trembling with fear; this man was Claudius, and they immediately saluted him emperor.

Claudius completed the subversion of the ancient form of government, by intrusting the dispensation of justice to his officers: the principal motive to the wars of Marius and Sylla, was to determine the competition of the senators and the equestrian \* order for this prerogative; and it was now wrested from both parties by the arbitrary fancy of a weak man. Surprising event indeed, of a dispute which had set the world in flames!

When the reign of a prince succeeds the dissolution of a republic, no authority can be more absolute than his own, for he then possesses all that power which before was distributed among the people, who exercised it without any limitations; and for this reason the kings of Denmark are the most despotic sovereigns in Europe.

The people were altogether as abject and unmanly as the senate, though they once were animated with such a martial spirit, that, when armies were levied in the city, before the time of the emperors, they gained the military discipline upon the spot, and immediately marched to the enemy. In the civil wars of Vitellius and Vespasian, Rome became a prey to the ambitious, and was full of timorous citizens, who were struck with consternation by any party of soldiers who could first approach them.

The emperors themselves were in no better a situation; for as the right of electing a sovereign was not appropriated to any single army, it generally happened, that when an emperor was chosen by one body of soldiers, that circumstance alone was sufficient to discredit him with the others, who immediately set up a competitor to oppose him.

As the grandeur therefore of the republic proved fatal to that form of government, so the mighty extent of the empire was altogether as pernicious to the monarchs. If the territories they were to defend had been confined to moderate limits, those sovereigns might have been effectually served by one principal army; and the soldiers, when they

had once elected their emperor, would have been dutiful enough to acquiesce in their choice.

The soldiers were attached to the family of Cæsar, under which they enjoyed every advantage that a revolution would have procured them. The time came, that the great families of Rome were all exterminated but that of Cæsar, which itself became extinct in the person of Nero. The civil power, which had been continually depressed, was unable to balance the military; each army wanted to make an emperor.

Let us here compare the times: when Tiberius began his reign, wherein did he not employ the senate \*? He was informed that the armies of Illyrium and Germany had mutinied: he granted some of their demands, and maintained, that it belonged to the † senate to judge of the rest. He sent them deputies of that body. Those who have ceased to fear the power, may still respect the authority. When it had been represented to the soldiers, that in a Roman army the children of the emperors, and the deputies of the senate, ran the risk of ‡ their lives, they might relent: and even proceed so far as to punish ? themselves: but when the senate was entirely depressed, its example moved no one. In vain did § Otho harangue his soldiers, to talk to them of the dignity of the senate: in vain did \*\* Vitellius send the principal senators to make his peace with Vespasian: they did not, for one moment, pay to the orders of the state that respect which they had so long lost. The armies looked on these deputies as the most abject slaves of a master whom they had already rejected.

It was an ancient custom at Rome, for those who obtained a triumph, to distribute some money to each soldier: it was not much \*. In the time of the civil wars these gratuities were augmented †. Formerly they were made with the money taken from the enemy; in these unhappy times, they gave that of the citizens, and the soldiers would have a share where there was no booty: these distributions had taken place only after a war; Nero made them in a time of peace: the soldiers were used to them, and they raged against Galba, who boldly told them, that he knew to choose, but not to buy them.

Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, ‡ made a very transient appearance in the imperial scene. Vespasian, who, like them, was elected by the army, devoted all his reign to the re-establishment of the empire, which had been successively possessed by six tyrants, all equally cruel, and most of them exceedingly furious and untractable; generally very weak, and to complete the public calamity, profuse even to infatuation.

Titus, who succeeded his father, was the darling of the people; but Domitian presented to their view an uncommon monster more inhuman in his disposition, or at least more implacable, than any of his predecessors, because he was more timorous.

His favourite freemen, and, according to some historians, the empress herself, finding his friendship as dangerous as his aversion, and that he allowed no bounds to his suspicions and accusations, turned their thoughts to a successor, and chose the venerable Nerva.

Nerva adopted Trajan, who proved the most accomplished prince in all history; it was a happiness to be born under his reign, which blessed the empire with more prosperity and true glory than it had ever enjoyed before. He was an admirable statesman, and a most accomplished general; the native sweetness of his disposition inclined him to universal humanity; and his unclouded penetration guided him through the best and purest tracts of government; he was actuated by a noble soul, to whose embellishment every virtue had contributed; his conduct was free from all extremes, and his amiable qualities were tempered with such exact proportion that the brightness of one was never lost in the lustre of another. To sum up all, he was the best qualified of mankind, to do honour to human nature, and to represent the divinity on earth.

He accomplished Cæsar's project of invading the Parthians, and was very successful in his wars with that mighty people; any monarch but himself would have sunk under the weight of such an enterprize, where danger was always present, and from whence the source of his necessary supplies was at a vast distance; in a word, where he could not be sure of victory itself would save him from destruction.

The difficulty consisted in the situation of the two empires, and the military discipline of both nations. If he directed his march through Armenia towards the sources of Tygris and Euphrates, he was sure to be incommoded with a mountainous and impracticable country, through which no convoy of provision could pass, so that the army would be half destroyed before they could penetrate into Media \*. On the other hand, if he should strike out a lower tract towards the south, through Nisibis, he would find himself bewildered in a ghastly desert that separated the two empires; and if he intended to proceed still lower, and march through Mesopotamia, he was then to cross a large country that was either uncultivated or laid under water; and as the Tygris and Euphrates flowed from north to south, he could not gain a passage into the country without quitting those rivers, which, if he did, he must inevitably perish.

As to the manner practised by the two nations in making war, the strength of the Romans consisted in their infantry, which was the most firm and best disciplined body of soldiers in the world.

The Parthians on the contrary, had no infantry, but then their horse were admirable, and always combated at such a distance, as placed them out of the reach of the Roman army, and the javelin was seldom launched far enough to wound them. Their own weapons consisted of a bow, and many formidable shafts, and they rather besieged an army than gave it battle; they were pursued to no purpose in their flight, for that was the same with them as an engagement. They carried off all the inhabitants of the country, and only left garrisons in their fortified places; and when these were taken, the conquerors were obliged to destroy them. The Parthians likewise set fire to all the country that lay round the Roman army, and did not leave them the least blade of herbage. In a word, they managed their wars in manner very much like that which is now practised on the same frontiers.

We may add to these disadvantages, that the Illyrian and German legions which were drawn out for this war, were no way capable to sustain it, \* because the soldiers, who

were accustomed to plentiful food in their own country, perished in these regions for want of many necessaries.

The Parthians by these means had accomplished that, for the preservation of their liberty, which had hitherto been impracticable to all other nations, against the victorious power of the Romans: but they owed this advantage not to any resistless valour, but to their inaccessible situation.

Adrian gave up the conquest of Trajan, and made Euphrates the boundary of his empire; and indeed it was surprizing that the Romans, after such a series of war, should lose nothing but what they were desirous to quit; and thus they resembled the ocean, whose expansion is never lessened but when it retires of itself.

This conduct of Adrian occasioned great dissatisfactions among the people. It was recorded in the sacred book of that nation \* that when Tarquin intended to build the capitol, he found the place most commodious for his purpose filled with the statues of other deities, upon which he employed his skill in augury to discover if they were inclinable to resign their places to Jupiter, and they all consented, except Mars, Hebe, and Terminus. This proceeding gave birth to three religious opinions, namely, that Mars would never resign his place to any other being; that the Roman youth would be always invincible; and that their god Terminus would never recede from his station; the contrary of which was however verified in the reign of Adrian.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XVI.

### Considerations On The State Of The Empire From Antoninus To Probus.

IN this period, the Stoics propagated their doctrines in the empire with great popularity; and it seems as if nature herself had been industrious to produce this admirable sect, which resembled those plants the earth causes to spring up in places never visited by the sunbeams.

This sect furnished the Romans with their best emperors; none but Marcus Aurelius could extinguish the remembrance of the first Antonine who adopted him; and we find ourselves affected with a secret pleasure when we speak of this emperor. We cannot read his life without some impressions of tenderness, and grow inclinable to think better of ourselves, because the history of that prince makes us entertain a more favourable opinion of mankind.

The wisdom of Nerva, the glory of Trajan, the valour of Adrian, and the virtue of the two Antonines, gained them the veneration of the soldiers; but when a set of new monsters became their successors, the abuse of military government appeared in its full enormity; and the soldiers, who had exposed the empire to sale, assassinated the emperors for the sake of new gratuities.

It has been a conceived opinion that there is a certain prince in the world, who, for the space of fifteen years, has been endeavouring to abolish the civil government in his dominions, and to substitute the military in its room. I have no intention to make odious reflections on such a design, and shall only observe, that from the nature of things in general, two hundred guards may be a better security to a prince than four thousand; and besides, an armed people are of all others the most dangerous to be opposed.

Commodus succeeded his father Marcus Aurelius, and was a monster who gave a loose to all his own passions, and those of his courtiers. The persons who delivered the world from such a Barbarian, transferred the imperial dignity to the venerable Pertinax, who was soon assassinated by the prætorian bands.

The empire was then exposed to auction, and Didius Julian carried it by a number of magnificent promises. This proceeding exasperated the whole body of the people; for though the empire had been frequently bought, it had never been sold upon credit before. Pescennius Niger, Severus, and Albinus, were saluted emperors; and Julian, not being in a condition to pay the immense sums he had promised, was abandoned by the soldiers.

Severus defeated Niger and Albinus: he was master of extraordinary qualities, but wanted that sweetness of disposition, which in princes is the most amiable quality they can possess.

The power of the Emperors might easily appear more tyrannical than that of modern princes; for as their dignity was a conjunction of the various authorities in the Roman magistracy, such as dictators, for instance, tribunes of the people, proconsuls, censors, supreme pontiffs, and sometimes consuls, they frequently assumed the dispensation of distributive justice, and it was easy for them to create suspicions that they had oppressed those whom they condemned; for the people usually judge of the abuse of power, by the greatness of its extent; whereas the kings of Europe, being legislators and not executors of the law, sovereign princes but not judges, are consequently discharged from the exercise of an authority that might prove odious; and have consigned the infliction of punishments to magistrates, whilst they reserved to themselves the distribution of pardons and other popular acts of mercy.

Few emperors have ever been more jealous of their authority than Tiberius and Severus, and yet they suffered themselves to be governed in a most dishonourable manner, the one by Sejanus, and the other by Plautian.

The unhappy custom of proscribing, introduced by Sylla, was still practised under the emperors; and the prince must have been distinguished by some virtue, if he discountenanced that severe proceeding; for as the ministers and favourites turned their thoughts to confiscations at the beginning of a reign, they were always representing to their sovereign the necessity of punishments, and the dangerous effects of clemency.

When Severus gave full play to his proscriptions, a great body of Niger's \* army retired for safety to the Parthians † and perfected them in every part of military discipline wherein they were any way defective; they habituated them to the Roman weapons, and even taught their workmen how to make their martial equipage; in consequence of which, that people, who till then had usually limited their exploits to defensive wars ‡, were generally aggressors for the future.

It is very remarkable, that in the long series of those civil wars that were continually raging, the chiefs, who were supported by the legions of Europe, generally defeated the leaders of the Asiatic legions ?; and we read, in the history of Severus, that he could not take the city of Atrah in Arabia, because the European legions having mutinied, he was obliged to employ those of Syria.

This difference became evident, when the levies were first made § in the provinces, and it appeared as considerable in the legions, as it did in the nations out of which they were raised, and who, by nature or education, were more or less formed for war.

Another unhappy consequence likewise ensued from these provincial levies; for the emperors, who were generally elected out of the soldiery, were for the most part strangers, and sometimes the worst of Barbarians. Rome was now no longer mistress of the world, but received laws from the whole universe.

Each emperor brought with him some peculiarity from his own country, relating to fashions, manners, politics, or religion; and Heliogabalus had even formed a resolution to destroy every object of religious veneration in Rome, and to banish all the gods from their temples, that he might place his own in their room.

This circumstance, even considered as independent on the secret operations of the Deity, which are obvious to his omniscience alone, greatly contributed to the establishment of Christianity; for nothing was now strange in the empire, and the people were prepared to relish every new custom which the emperors were inclinable to introduce.

It is well known, that the Romans received the gods of other nations into their city; but then they received them with the art of conquerors, and carried them in their triumphal processions: but when strangers attempted to establish them by their own authority, they were immediately rejected. It is likewise notorious, that the Romans gave foreign deities the names of such of their own gods as were most conformable to the others, in their attributes: But when the priests of other countries would introduce the adoration of their divinities, under the proper names, among the Romans, they were not permitted to accomplish that design; and this was the greatest obstacle to the progress of Christianity.

Caracalla, who succeeded Severus, may be called not only a tyrant, but the destroyer of mankind. Caligula, Nero, and Domitian limited their barbarities to Rome; but this monster endeavoured to extend his fury through the world like a pestilence.

Severus amassed prodigious treasures by the exactions of a long reign, and his proscriptions of those who declared for his competitors in the empire.

Caracalla having commenced his reign with murdering his brother Geta with his own hands, purchased, with those riches, a connivance at his crime from the soldiers who had an extraordinary regard for Geta; but the liberalities of Caracalla had such an effect upon them, that they declared they had taken oaths to both the children of Severus, and not to one alone.

The immoderate treasures which have been gathered by princes have commonly produced fatal effects: they generally corrupt the successor, who grows dazzled with the lustre they diffuse; and if they happen not to prevent his heart, they misguide his mind, and cause him to form plans of mighty enterprizes, by the ministration of a power that is only accidental, always transitory and unnatural, and an empty inflation instead of a real grandeur.

Caracalla augmented the soldiers pay; Macrinus wrote to the senate, that this augmentation amounted to \* seventy millions of drachms † . This prince seems to have magnified things; and if we compare our soldiers pay now-a-days with the rest of our public expences, and suppose that we kept the same proportion among the Romans we shall see that this sum was excessive.



Here we should enquire, what was a Roman soldier's pay? We learn from Orosius, that Domitian raised † it a fourth from what it was before. And it appears from a soldier's speech in Tacitus, that † at the death of Augustus it was ten ounces of brass per day. We find in Suetonius § , that Julius Cæsar doubled the pay of his time. In Pliny \*\*, at the second Punic war, it was diminished one fifth. It was then in the Punic war \* about six ounces of copper; in the second † , about five ounces; at ten, under Julius Cæsar; and thirteen and a third, under Domitian † . I shall make here some reflections.

The pay which the republic might easily advance, when it was only a small state, when it engaged in a new war every year, and received the spoils of it as often; it was not able to raise, without running in debt, under the first Punic war, when it carried its arms beyond Italy, when it maintained a long war, and supported great armies.

In the second Punic war, the pay was reduced to five ounces of brass; and this diminution might be made without danger at a time when the most of the citizens were ashamed to receive pay, and were willing to serve at their own charge.

The treasures of Persia † , and of so many other kings, which flowed into Rome, put an end to taxes there. In such public and private opulence, they had the prudence not to enlarge the former payment of five ounces of brass.

Though even from this pay they made a deduction for corn, cloaths, and arms; still it was sufficient, because they enrolled only those citizens who had patrimonies of their own.

Marius having enrolled people of no substance, and his example being afterwards followed, Julius Cæsar was obliged to augment the pay.

This augmentation having been continued after the death of Cæsar, they were obliged under the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa, to re-establish taxes.

The weakness of Domitian in adding one fourth to this pay, was a great blow to the state; the unhappiness of which was not that it brought in luxury in general, but infused it among people of that condition who ought to be supplied with no more than the bare necessities which nature requires. Lastly, by Caracalla's final augmentation, the empire was thrown into such a condition, that, not being able to subsist without soldiers, it could not subsist with them.

Caracalla, to soften the horror of his fratricide, instituted divine honours to his brother Geta; and, what was very peculiar, he himself received the same deification of Macrinus, who after he had caused him to be stabbed, and was desirous of appeasing the prætorian bands, who regretted the death of a prince whose liberalities they had so often enjoyed, erected a temple, and established a priesthood of Flamens in his honour.

This preserved his memory from all degrading imputations, \* and the senate not knowing to censure him, he was not ranked among the tyrants, like Commodus, who had not done more to deserve that title than himself.

As to the two great emperors Adrian and Severus † , one established and the other relaxed the military discipline, and the events exactly corresponded with their causes: the reigns which succeeded that of Adrian were a series of happiness and tranquility; but after the death of Severus, nothing was seen but a succession of calamities and horror.

Caracalla had confined himself to no limitations in his prodigality to the soldiers; and in that particular he acted conformably to the sentiments of his father, who, on his death-bed, advised him to enrich the army and disregard all the rest of mankind.

But these politics could be only accommodated to one reign; for the successor being no longer able to continue those expences, was soon assassinated by the army; so that the emperors who were eminent for wisdom, were always murdered by the soldiers; and those whose lives were infamous, were destroyed either by the conspiracies or edicts of the senate.

When a tyrant suffered himself to be entirely influenced by the war, and left the citizens exposed to their licentious depredations, such injurious proceedings could not be extended beyond the period of one reign; because the soldiers, in consequence of their devastations, impoverished the people, and defeated themselves of their pay by that event. It therefore became necessary to reform the military discipline, which was a project always fatal to the persons who presumed to attempt it.

When Caracalla lost his life by the treachery of Macrinus, the soldiers, in despair at the death of a prince, whose liberality had been dispensed to them with an unlimited flow, elected Heliogabalus \* ; and when he, by his prostitution to infamous pleasures, and the lawless extravagancies he suffered the army to commit, grew contemptible even in their eyes, they dispatched him by an assassination. The same sate attended Alexander, who was preparing to restore the true military discipline, and threatened to punish the soldiers for their misconduct † .

In this manner a tyrant, who instead of being solicitous for his safety, affected an ability to be criminal, perished with the fatal advantage of being murdered a few days before another who would willingly have been a better man.

After the death of Alexander, the imperial dignity was transferred to Maximin, who was the first emperor of Barbarian extraction, and had been distinguished by his strength and gigantic stature.

This prince and his son were likewise slain by the soldiers. The two first Gordians perished in Africa: Maximus, Balbinus, and the third Gordian were massacred: Philip, who had caused the young Gordian to be destroyed, was himself slain with his son; and Decius, who was chosen to succeed him, was murdered in his turn by the treason of Gallus \* .

The Roman empire was improperly so denominated at that time, and might rather be called an irregular commonwealth, nearly resembling the Aristocracy of Algiers, where the militia, who are invested with the sovereign power, elect and depose the

magistrate they called the Dey; and it may perhaps be taken for a general rule, that a military government is, in some respects, a republic rather than a monarchy.

But lest any one should imagine the soldiers had no other share in the government than what they extorted by their disobedience and insurrections, let it be asked whether the orations in which the emperors addressed themselves to the army, were not at last very correspondent to those which the consuls and tribunes formerly made to the people? And though the soldiers had no particular place to assemble in, nor were under the regulation of any certain forms; though the temper of their minds was not usually serene, their proceedings consisting of action rather than deliberation, did they not however dispose of the public fortune with a sovereign authority? What was an emperor but the minister of a violent and tumultuous government, and did not the soldiers elect him for their own particular convenience?

When the army associated into the empire <sup>\*</sup>, Philip, the prætorian prefect of the third Gordian, claimed the exercise of an undivided command, but did not succeed in his pretensions; he then requested the army to divide the power equally between them, but to as little effect; he next intreated them to leave him the title of Cæsar, and was still refused; he afterwards solicited them to create him prefect of the prætorian bands, and met with the usual repulse; till at last he was reduced to plead for his life. The army, in the instance before us, exercised the supreme magistracy in their several decisions.

The Barbarians were at first unknown to the Romans, and for some time afterwards only incommodious; but at last they became formidable to them, by an event altogether unparalleled at that time, and which perhaps may never be equalled hereafter. Rome had so effectually extinguished all nations, that when she at last was vanquished in her turn, the earth seemed to produce a new race of mankind, to accomplish her destruction.

Those princes who have large dominions, seldom find them bordered by any territories considerable enough to be the objects of their ambition; and should there be any such, they would naturally be swallowed up in a series of conquest. We will say they are bounded then by seas and mountains, and vast deserts, whose sterility rendered them contemptible. The Romans for this reason suffered the Germans to range in their forest and gloomy wilds, and let the northern nations shiver amidst the polar snow; and yet those inhospitable regions produced a people, who at last enslaved the conquerors of the world.

In the reign of Gallus, a mighty collection of nations, who afterwards became more celebrated, spread their ravages through all Europe; and the Persians having invaded Syria, abandoned their conquests only to preserve their booty.

We no longer see any of those swarms of Barbarians which the North formerly sent out. The violences of the Romans had made the people of the South retire into the North: while the force which confined them subsisted, they remained there: when it was weakened, they dispersed themselves into all parts <sup>\*</sup>. The same thing happened some ages after. The conquest and tyrannies of Charlemagne had again forced the

nations of the South into the North: as soon as this empire was weakened, they poured a second time from the North into the South. And if at present a prince made the same ravages in Europe, the nations driven into the North, with their backs to the limits of the universe, would maintain their ground, till the moment they should over-run and conquer Europe a third time.

The miserable disorders which had so long been springing up in the several successions of the emperors, were now come to their fatal maturity, and that period which was concurrent with the close of Valerian's reign, and the duration of that of his son Gallienus, produced thirty pretenders to the empire, the greatest part of whom being swept away by their mutual contentions, their devastations were limited to a short reign; and they gained nothing durable but the appellation of the thirty tyrants.

Valerian having been taken prisoner by the Persians, and his son Gallienus neglecting the public affairs, the Barbarians penetrated into all parts, and the empire was now in the same condition it was afterwards reduced to in the west \*, at the close of another century, and it would then have felt its last convulsions, had not a happy conjunction of events interposed for its preservation.

The terrible confusion in succeeding to the empire being come to its height, we find at the end of the reign of Valerian, and during that of Gallienus, his son, no less than thirty pretencers to the throne, most of whom having got possession of it, and reigned for a very short time, were called the tyrants.

Odenatus, prince of Palmyra, and one of the Roman allies, dislodged the Persians, who had invaded the greatest part of Asia: Rome furnished an army of its own citizens, and they effectually delivered it from the Barbarians who came to pillage their city: an innumerable army of Scythians, who put to sea in a fleet of five thousand ships, entirely perished by storms, fatigue, and famine, and even by their formidable grandeur; and Gallienus being at last slain, Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, and Probus, who happily succeeded him, and were four extraordinary princes, snatched the empire from the verge of ruin.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XVII.

### Changes In The STATE.

THE emperors, to prevent the continual treasons of the army, associated into the government proper persons in whom they might confide; and Dioclesian, under pretext of the weight and multiplicity of the public affairs, established a law, that there should always be two Emperors and as many Cæsars. He judged, that, by this proceeding, the four principal armies being possessed by the partners in the empire, would naturally intimidate one another, and that the inferior armies being too weak to have any thoughts of raising their chiefs to the imperial dignity, their custom of election would be gradually discontinued, and entirely abolished at last. Besides, the dignity of the Cæsars being always subordinate, that power, which, for the security of the government, was in the participation of four, would be exercised in its full extent by no more than two.

The soldiers were likewise restrained from their exorbitances by considering, that as the riches of particular persons as well as the public treasure were considerably diminished, the emperors were in no condition to offer them such large donations as formerly, and consequently the gratuities would be no longer proportionable to the danger of a new election.

We may add to this, that the prefects of the prætorian bands, whose power and employments rendered them the grand visirs of those times, and frequently tempted them to murder their emperors, in order to raise themselves to the throne, were greatly reduced by Constantine, who divested them of all but their civil functions, and augmented their number to four instead of two.

The lives of the emperors began now to be in greater security, and they might reasonably expect to die peaceably in their beds. This circumstance seems in some measure to have softened their dispositions, and they no longer shed human blood with the barbarous prodigality of their predecessors. But as the immense power they still possessed must needs have some particular tendency, it began to manifest itself in a species of tyranny less glaring than the former. The subjects were no longer affrighted with inhuman massacres, but then they were harassed by unjust sentences and forms of judicature, which seemed to defer death only to render life itself uncomfortable. The court governed, and was likewise swayed in its turn, by a greater variety of artifices and a more exquisite train of political resinements, which were conducted with greater silence than usual. In a word, instead of an unterrified disposition to form a bad action, and a cruel precipitation to commit it, those gigantic iniquities shrunk into the vices of weak minds, and could only be called languid crimes.

A new train of corruption was now introduced, the first emperors pursued pleasures, but *these* sunk into softness. They shewed themselves with less frequency to the

soldiers, were more indolent and fonder of their domestics, more devoted to the palace, and more abstracted from the empire.

The poison of the court grew more malignant in proportion to the disguise it assumed. All direct terms were disused in discourse, and distant insinuations became the dialect of the palace. Every shining reputation was sullied, and the ministers as well as the officers of the army were perpetually left to the discretion of that sort of people, who, as they cannot be useful to the state themselves, suffer none to serve it with reputation and glory.

In a word, that affability of the first emperors, which alone qualified them for an insight into their affairs, was now entirely discarded. The prince had no informations, but what were conveyed to him by the canal of a few favourites, who acted always in concert together, and even when they seemed to disagree in their opinions, were only in the province of a single person to their sovereign.

The residence of several emperors in Asia, and their perpetual competition with the kings of Persia, made them form a resolution to be adorned like those monarchs; and Dioclesian, though others say Galerius, published an edict to that effect.

This pompous imitation of the Asiatic pride being once established, the people were soon habituated to such a spectacle, and when Julian would have regulated his conduct by a modest simplicity of manners, that proceeding which was no more than a renovation of the ancient behaviour, was imputed to him as a reproachful inattention to his dignity.

Though several emperors had reigned after Marcus Aurelius, yet the empire was undivided; and as the authority of those princes was acknowledged in all the provinces, it was but one power though exercised by many persons.

But Galerius \* and Constantius Chlorus, being at variance with each other, divided the empire in reality; and this example, which was afterwards followed by Constantine, who pursuing the plan of Galerius and not that of Dioclesian, introduced a custom which might be called a revolution rather than a change.

We may likewise add, that the strong desire of Constantine to be the founder of a new city, and an impulse of vanity to distinguish it by his own name, determined him to transfer the seat of empire to the east. Though Rome was far from being so spacious within the walls as it is at present, yet the suburbs were prodigiously extensive † : Italy was filled with seats of pleasure, and might properly be called the garden of Rome. The husbandmen were in Sicily, Africa, and Egypt ‡ ; but the gardeners lived altogether in Italy. The lands were generally cultivated by the slaves of the Roman citizens, but when the seat of empire was established in the east, all Rome was in a manner transplanted to that situation. Thither did the Grandees send their slaves, or, in other words, the greatest part of the people, and Italy was almost exhausted of its inhabitants.

It was Constantine's intention that the new city should not be inferior in any particular to the old one; and therefore he took care to have it sufficiently supplied with corn, commanding all the harvest of Egypt to be sent to Constantinople, and consigning that of Africa to Rome, which does not seem to have been a very judicious proceeding.

Whilst the republic subsisted, the people of Rome, who were then the sovereigns of all other nations, became naturally entitled to a proportion of the tribute: this circumstance induced the senate to sell them corn, at first, for a low price, and afterwards to make a gratuitous distribution of it among them; and when monarchy itself was introduced, this latter custom was still continued, though entirely opposite to the principles of that form of government. It is true, the abuse remained unrectified through an apprehension of the inconveniences that would have risen from its discontinuance; but when Constantine founded a new city, he established the same custom without the least appearance of reason.

When Augustus had conquered Egypt, he conveyed the treasure of the Ptolomies to Rome; and this proceeding occasioned much the same revolution which the discovery of the Indies afterwards effected in Europe, and which some ridiculous schemes have since accomplished in our time. The revenue was doubled at Rome \*, and as that city continued to absorb all the riches of Alexandria, which was itself the repository of the treasures of Africa and the East; gold and silver by these means became very common in Europe, and the people were able to pay very considerable taxations even in money.

But when the empire was afterwards divided, all these riches flowed in a full tide to Constantinople; and we may add to this unhappy circumstance, that the mines in Germany † had not then been opened: that those of Italy \* and Gaul were very few and inconsiderable; and that the mines of Spain † had not been worked since the Carthaginians lost that country, or at least they were not so productive as formerly; Italy itself was now a continued waste of forsaken gardens, and consequently could not be in any condition to draw money from the East, whilst the West at the same time was drained of all its wealth, by the oriental merchants who supplied the inhabitants with their necessary commodities. Gold and Silver, by these means became extremely scarce in Europe; and yet the emperors extorted the same pecuniary tributes as formerly, which completed the general destruction.

When a government has been established in one certain form, and its political circumstances are adjusted to a particular situation, it is generally prudent to leave them in that condition; for the same causes which have enabled such a state to subsist, though they may frequently be complicated and unknown, will still continue to support it; but when the whole system is changed, remedies can only be accommodated to the inconveniences visible in the theory, whilst others, which nothing but experience can point out, are lurking without opposition in the new plan.

For these reasons, though the empire grew already too great, yet it was effectually ruined by the divisions into which it was parcelled, because all the parts of this vast body, had, for a long series of time, been arranged so as to become settled and steady, and were compacted by a mutual dependency through the whole.

Constantine †, after he had weakened the capital, proceeded to impair the frontiers by drawing off those legions which were stationed on the banks of great rivers, and distributing them into the provinces. This innovation was extremely prejudicial in more instances than one; for as the barrier which comprehended so many nations was now removed; so the soldiers \* passed all their time, and grew effeminate in the Circus and the theatres †.

When Julian was sent by Constantius into Gaul, he found that fifty towns on the Rhine † had been taken by the Barbarians, and that the provinces were all plundered, and that there was now no more than the shadow of a Roman army, which fled at the very mention of the enemies name.

This prince by his wisdom †, and preservance, joined with œconomy, conduct, and valour, and prospered by a noble series of heroic actions, chased the Barbarians out of their new settlements, and his name became a terror to them as long as he lived §.

The shortness of the reigns, the various political parties, the different religions, and the particular sects of these religions, have greatly disfigured the characters of the emperors; I shall give only two examples: that Alexander, who is a coward in Herodian, is a hero in Lampridius; that Gratian, so highly celebrated by the Orthodox, is compared to Nero by Philostorgius.

No prince saw the necessity of restoring the ancient plan, more than Valentinian. His whole life was employed in fortifying the banks of the Rhine, making levies, raising castles, placing troops in proper stations, and furnishing them with subsistence on those frontiers; but an event that afterwards happened, determined his brother Valents to open the Danube, and that proceeding was attended with very dreadful consequences.

That track of land which lies between the Palus Mæotis, the mountains of Caucasus and the Caspian sea, was inhabited by a numerous people who composed great part of the nation of the Huns, or that of the Alans. The soil was exceedingly fertile; the inhabitants were fond of wars and robberies; and were always either on horseback or in their chariots, and wandered about the country wherein they were inclosed: they sometimes made depredations on the frontiers of Persia and Armenia; but the ports of the Caspian sea were easily guarded, and it was difficult for them to penetrate into Persia by any other avenues; and as they imagined it impracticable to cross the Palus Mæotis, they were altogether unacquainted with the Romans; so that whilst other nations of Barbarians ravaged the empire, these confined themselves within the limits which their ignorance had drawn around them.

It has been the opinion of some, \* that the slime which was rolled down by the current of the Tanais had by degrees formed a kind of incrustation on the surface of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, over which these people are supposed to have passed. Others † inform us, that two young Scythians being in full pursuit of a hind, the terrified creature swam over that arm of the sea, upon which the youths immediately followed her in the same track, were exceedingly astonished to find themselves in a new world; and, at their return to the old one, they gave their countrymen \* a particular account of



the strange hands, and if I may be indulged the expression, in inviting Indies they had lately discovered.

Upon this information, an innumerable body of Huns immediately passed those streights; and, meeting first with the Goths, made that people fly before them. It should seem as if these mighty countries poured their nations out precipitately upon one another, and that Asia had acquired a new weight to make it ponderate equal to the European power.

The Goths in consternation presented themselves on the banks of the Danube, and with a suppliant air intreated the Romans to allow them a place of refuge. The flatterers † of Valens improved this conjecture, and represented it as a fortunate conquest of a new people, who, by the accession of their numbers, would defend and enrich the empire.

Valens ordered ‡ them to be admitted into his territories upon delivering up their arms; but his officers suffered them to re-purchase with their money as many as they pleased: they were afterwards distributed into several allotments of land; but the Goths, ¶ contrary to the custom of the Huns, did not cultivate the portions of ground assigned them. They were even left destitute of the promised supplies of corn, and were ready to perish amidst a land of plenty; they were armed for war, and yet unjustly insulted. In consequence of these provocations, they ravaged all the country from the Danube to the Bosphorus; they destroyed Valens and all his army, and repassed the Danube only to quit the hideous solitude they had effected by their devastations \* .

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XVIII.

### An Account Of Some New Maxims Received By The Romans.

SOMETIMES the pusillanimous spirit of the emperors †, and frequently the defenceless state of the empire made the people employ their money to appease the nations that threatened to invade them; but the desired peace could never be effectually purchased, because those who sold it could, whenever they pleased, oblige the Romans to buy it again.

It is much better to hazard an unsuccessful war, than to part with great sums for a precarious peace; for a prince is always suspected when it is known he will make a long resistance before he can be vanquished.

Besides, such gratifications as these were changed into tribute at last, and though they were free at the beginning, they became necessary in the event, and passed for an acquired property: for which reason, when an emperor refused them to some particular people, or was not disposed to give them so much as they demanded, they immediately declared themselves his mortal enemies. To produce an instance or two, from a thousand: the army which Julian led against the Persians, \* was pursued, in his retreat from the east, by the Arabians, to whom the customary tribute had been refused: and in a short time afterwards, in the reign of Valentinian, the Germans †, who had been offered more inconsiderable presents than usual, grew exasperated at that disobliging frugality, and these northern people being already influenced by a point of honour, avenged themselves of this pretended insult by a cruel war.

All those nations that surrounded the empire in Europe and Asia, exhausted it by degrees of its riches: and as the Romans derived their grandeur and power from the gold and silver which flowed into the empire from the coffers of so many kings; they now grew weak and despicable, † because the same gold and silver was drained from them by other nations.

The misconduct of politicians is not always voluntary, but happens frequently to be the unavoidable consequence of their particular situation; and therefore one inconvenience is generally the offspring of another.

The army, as we have already declared, became very expensive to the state, and the soldiers had three sorts of advantages; their ordinary pay, donations of recompence after their services, and accidental liberalities, which were often claimed as stated properties by a body of men who had both princes and people in their power.

The inability of the people to furnish these expences obliged them to employ a less chargeable soldiery, and treaties were struck up with barbarous nations, who had neither the luxury of the Roman army, nor the same spirit and pretensions.

There was another advantage besides this; for as the Barbarians poured their troops into a country with the greatest precipitation, the Romans being unprovided for their reception, and finding it sometimes difficult to raise levies in the provinces, were obliged to hire another party of Barbarians, who were always mercenary, and eager for battle and plunder. This expedient had its use in the present emergency; but when that was over, the Romans found it as difficult to rid themselves of their new allies, as of their enemies themselves.

The ancient Romans never suffered the auxiliary troops to outnumber their own, in their armies \*; and though their allies might properly be reputed their subjects, yet they had no inclination to let those subjects be better warriors than themselves.

But in the latter times, this proportion of the auxiliaries was not only disregarded, but even the national troops were composed of Barbarian soldiers.

Thus were customs established, quite opposite to those which had rendered the Romans masters of the world; and as the genius of their former politics always prompted them to reserve the military art to themselves, and exclude their neighbours from any participation of its principles, they now extinguished it in their own people, and established it among foreigners.

Take this compendium of the Roman history: They subdued all nations by their maxims, but when they had so far succeeded, their republic could not subsist any longer; the plan of their government must be changed, and maxims contrary to the first, being then introduced, they were divested of all their grandeur.

Fortune never interposes in the government of this world; and we may be convinced of this truth by the Romans, who enjoyed a continual series of prosperity when they regulated their conduct by one invariable plan, but suffered an uninterrupted train of calamities when they acted upon different principles. There are a set of general causes, either moral or physical, which operate in every monarchy, and either raise and maintain it, or else involve it in ruin. All accidental conjunctures are subordinate to these causes; and if the hazard of a battle, which, in other words, is no more than a particular cause, has been destructive of a state, some general cause presided, and made a single battle be the inevitable ruin of that state. In a word, the tendency of the main principle draws after it all the particular incidents.

We are sensible that for two centuries past, the Danish troops have been generally defeated by the Swedes; we may therefore conclude, that, independent of the bravery of the two nations, and the chance of war, either their civil or military government is disconcerted by some secret flaw which produces this effect, and I am of opinion it may easily be discovered.

In a word, the Romans lost their military discipline, and even neglected it in their very arms: Vegetius \* acquaints us, that the soldiers finding them too ponderous, obtained the emperor Gratian's permission to quit their coats of mail, and soon after their helmets; and when their bodies were thus defenceless, they grew attentive to nothing but flight.

The same author adds, they had lost the art of fortifying their camps, and that by this negligence they were easily overwhelmed by the Barbarian horse.

The cavalry of the first Romans was not numerous, it was but the eleventh part of the legion, and often less, and what is extraordinary, was made less use of by them than by us who are obliged to carry on so many sieges, where cavalry is of little service. When the Roman empire was in its decay, their forces consisted of little else but cavalry. I imagine, as a nation improves in the knowledge of the military art, it trusts the more to its infantry; and as that science decreases, it increases its cavalry in proportion: the reason is, because the infantry, whether light or heavy, is nothing without discipline, whereas, the cavalry is always of use, even in its disorder \*. The action of the latter consists chiefly in its impetuosity and sudden shock; that of the former in its resistance and impenetrable firmness, which is not so much action as reaction. Lastly, the force of the cavalry is momentaneous; that of the infantry of longer duration; now there is need of discipline to continue it in a persevering state.

The Romans arrived at universal monarchy not only by the arts of war, but likewise by their wisdom, their perseverance, their passion for glory, and their heroic love for their country: and when even these virtues disappeared under the emperors, and they had only the art military among them, yet this alone, notwithstanding the weakness and tyranny of their princes, enabled them to preserve their former acquisitions. But when corruption had at last insinuated itself among the soldiery, they became the prey of every nation.

An empire founded by arms, must likewise have arms for its support. But as a people, when their state is in confusion, are at a loss how to rectify their civil disorders; in the same manner, when they enjoy a profound peace, and are respected for their power, they never imagine this calm scene may change, and consequently neglect their military force, from whence as they have nothing more to hope, so they fancy they have all things to fear, and sometimes proceed so far as to weaken that basis of their welfare.

It was an inviolable law among the Romans, that whoever abandoned his post or quitted his arms in the combat, should be punished with death. Julian and Valentinian, had reinforced the ancient penalties in this particular; but the Barbarians who were taken into the Roman pay \*, and were accustomed to make war in the manner now practised by the Tartars, who fly in order to rally, and are more solicitous for plunder than martial reputation, were incapable of conforming to such severe regulations.

The discipline of the ancient Romans was so strict that they have had generals who sentenced their own children to die, for gaining a battle without their orders: but when they were intermixed with the Barbarians, they contracted, from that association, the same spirit of independence which marks out the character of those nations; and such as read the wars of Belifarius with the Goths, will see a general very frequently disobeyed by his officers.

Sylla and Sertorius amidst the fury of civil wars would rather die than connive at any thing from whence Mithridates might derive the least advantage; but in the succeeding

times, when a minister † or any grandee imagined it would be favourable to his avarice, his revenge, or ambition, to admit the Barbarians into the empire, he immediately permitted them to give a loose to their depredations.

No states are more necessitated for tributes than those which are weak, because this circumstance obliges them to augment their charges in proportion to the people's inability to defray them; and therefore the tributes in the Roman provinces became insupportable.

It would not be improper to read Salvian's \* account of the horrible exactions that were made upon the people. The citizens were so harrassed by the farmers of the revenue, that they were obliged either to seek refuge among the Barbarians, or surrender their liberty to the first of their insatiable countrymen who would accept of such a present.

This may account for the relations we find in our French history, of the patience with which the Gauls supported a revolution calculated to establish that shocking distinction between a gallant nation, and a community of servile wretches; I say, between a nation who retained their liberty and military privileges, and an ignoble body of people. The Barbarians, in making so many citizens slaves to till the earth, that is, the country to which they were attached, introduced no services which were not more cruelly exacted before † .

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XIX.

### Some Particulars Of The Grandeur Of Attila. The Establishment Of The Barbarians Accounted For. Reasons Why The Western Empire Was Overturned Before That In The East.

AS christianity was established when the empire was in a declining condition, the professors of this religion reproached the Pagans for that decay, and these retorted the charge on the religious doctrines of their antagonists. The christians replied, that Dioclesian \* ruined the empire, by associating his three colleagues; because each emperor would be altogether as expensive, and maintained as great armies as could have subsisted had there been but one sovereign; in consequence of which, those who furnished the contributions being unequally proportioned to the number of the receivers, the charges became so excessive that the lands were forsaken by the husbandmen, and for want of cultivation lay waste, and were covered with wild and barren forests.

The Pagans, on the other hand, were perpetually exclaiming against the strange innovations in religion, introduced by their adversaries, and never heard of till those days. And as the overflowings of the Tyber, and other prejudicial effects of nature, were, in the flourishing state of Rome, ascribed to the displeasure of the gods; so the calamities of declining Rome were imputed to a religious novelty, and the subversion of the ancient altars.

Symmachus the prefect, in a letter † to the emperors, relating to the altar of Victory, attacked the christian religion with arguments extremely popular, and consequently very seducing, and had art enough to set them off with all the plausibility invention could furnish.

“What circumstance, says he, can lead us more effectually to the knowledge of the gods, than the experience of our former prosperity? We ought to be faithful to such a series of ages, and pursue the same track in which our fathers so happily followed their ancestors. Imagine Rome herself speaks to you in this manner: O imperial princes! compassionate fathers of your country! Look with eyes of veneration on those years of mine, wherein I always conformed to the ceremonies of my predecessors. Those sacred institutions have made the universe obedient to my laws. These were the allies that chased Hannibal from my walls, and drove the Gauls in confusion from the capitol. We fervently ask peace for the gods of our country, nay, we solicit it in the anguish of our souls, for our compatriot deities! We have no inclination to engage in disputes which are only proper for idle persons, and we would express ourselves in the language of supplication, and not of war.”

Symmachus was answered by three celebrated authors. Orosius composed his history to prove there had always been calamities in the world, as great as those complained of by the Pagans. Salvian likewise wrote his book \*, wherein he maintains, that the

ravages of the Barbarians were to be imputed to the degenerate behaviour of the christians: and St. Austin † demonstrates, that the city of heaven is very different from that city on earth in which the ancient Romans received, for a few human virtues, a recompence as vain as the virtues themselves.

We have already observed, that part of the politics of the ancient Romans consisted in dividing all the powers that gave them any umbrage; but that scheme was deseated in after times, and Rome could not prevent Attili from conquering all the northern nations: he extended his victories from the Danube to the Rhine, demolished all the forts and military works on the banks of those rivers, and made both the empires tributary.

“Theodosius, says he \* , with an insolent air, is descended from a father as noble as mine; but the moment I compelled him to pay tribute to me, he fell from the grandeur of his extraction, and became my vassal: and therefore it is unjust in him to act like a base slave, and endeavour to prejudice his master by treachery.”

“An emperor, said he, upon an other occasion, ought not to be a liar; he promised one of my subjects to give him the daughter of Saturninus in marriage; and I will immediately declare war against him, if he presumes to depart from his word; but if the disobedience of those about him puts it out of his power to be punctual, I will march to his assistance.”

It is not to be imagined that Attila was induced by any moderation and lenity of temper, to let the Romans subsist; he only conformed himself to the genius of his nation, which prompted them to awe, and not to conquer foreign states. This prince retiring from the splendor of majesty to his mansion built of wood, according to the representation of Priscus † , though at the same time he was lord of all the barbarous nations, and, in some degree, master of the chief part of those who were civilized ‡ , was one of the geeatest monarchs recorded in history.

Ambassadors were dispatched to his court, both from the eastern and western empires of the Romans, to receive his laws and implore his favour. Sometimes he commanded them to deliver up the Huns who had deserted from his armies, or the Roman slaves who had escaped from the vigilance of his officers. At other times he would not be satisfied till some minister of the emperor was surrendered into his power. He charged the empire of the east with a tribute of two hundred thousand pounds of gold; he received the yearly sum allowed to a Roman general, and sent those he intended to reward to Constantinople, that they might be gratified to their utmost wish, making by these means a constant traffic of the apprehensions of the Romans.

He was feared by his subjects \* , but we have no reason to believe they entertained any aversion to his person: he was surprizingly fierce and impetuous, and at the same time exceeding politic and artful. He appeared violent in his rage, but had a sufficient presence of mind to know when to pardon an offence, or deser a punishment as the circumstances were more or less agreeable to his interest. War was never his choice, when he could derive sufficient advantages from peace. He was faithfully served even by the kings who were subordinate to his power, and had collected into his own

conduct all the ancient simplicity of the northern manners. In a word, we can never sufficiently admire this gallant sovereign of a people, whose very children were warmed with enthusiastic rage, at the relation of their father's bravery; whilst those fathers shed manly tears, because they were incapacitated by age to imitate their martial children.

All the Barbarian nations, after his death, were divided into several independent bodies; but the Romans were then so weak, that the most inconsiderable people were in a condition to molest them.

The empire was not ruined by any particular invasion, but sunk gradually under the weight of the several attacks made upon it, after that general assault it sustained in the time of Gallus. It seemed indeed, to be re-established, because none of its territories were dismembered from the main body; but it was stooping to its fall by several degrees of declension, till it was at once laid low in the reigns of Arcadius and Honorius.

In vain did the Romans chase the Barbarians from their settlements in the empire; that people, without any compulsion, would have retired to deposit their spoils in their own country. With as little success did Rome endeavour to exterminate that nation, since her cities were still sacked \*, her villages consumed with flames, and her families either slaughtered or dispersed.

When one province had been wasted, the Barbarians who succeeded the first ravagers, meeting nothing for their purpose, proceeded to another. Their devastations at first were limited to Thrace, Mysia, and Pannonia; and when these countries were ruined, they destroyed Macedonia, Thessaly and Greece; from thence they expatiated to Noricum. The empire, that is to say, those tracts of land which were not depopulated, was continually shrinking, and Italy at last became the frontier.

The reason why the Barbarians established themselves in no fixed settlements in the reigns of Gallus and Gallienus, was, because the countries about them had something left that was worth plundering.

Thus the Normans, who in some measure resembled the conquerors of the empire, ravaged France for several centuries, and when at last they could find no more booty, they thought fit to accept of a depopulated province, and parcelled it into † several properties.

Scythia, in those times, lying waste and uncultivated \*, the inhabitants were frequently subject to famine, and subsisted in a great measure by their commerce with the Romans †, who furnished them with provisions from the provinces bordering on the Danube. The Barbarians, in return, gave them the booty and prisoners they had taken, and the gold and silver which the Romans paid them for their friendship. But when the empire could no longer afford them a sufficient tribute for their subsistence ‡, they were obliged to fix themselves in some settlement.

The western empire was destroyed before that in the East, for these reasons:



When the Barbarians passed the Danube, they found themselves blocked up, on the left hand, by the Bosphorus of Thrace, the city of Constantinople, and all the forces of the eastern empire. This made it necessary for them to bend their march to the right, towards Illyria, and so proceed westward. That part of the country was crowded with a vast conflux of several nations; and, as the passages into Asia were the best guarded, the whole body of the people bore with a full tide into Europe; whereas the forces of the Barbarians were separated in their first invasion.

The empire being parcelled out into two great portions [?](#), the eastern emperors who were then in alliance with the Barbarians [\\*](#), would not break it to assist the princes of the west: this division of the administration, says Priscus [†](#), was very prejudicial to the affairs of the West. Thus the Romans of the East, refused those of the West a naval armament [‡](#), because they had entered into alliance with the Vandals. The Visigoths, in conjunction with Arcadius, made an irruption into the West, and Honorius [?](#) was obliged to fly to Ravenna: lastly, Zeno, to get rid of Theodoric, persuaded him to fall upon Italy, which had been already laid waste by Alaric.

There was a very strict alliance [§](#) between Attila, and Genseric, king of the Vandals. The last stood in fear of the Goths [\\*\\*](#); he had married his son to a daughter of their king; and afterwards slitting her nose, had sent her back to her father. For which reason he united with Attila. The two empires enslaved by these two potentates, had no power to shake off their chains. The situation of that of the West was more particularly deplorable: it had no forces at sea [††](#), they being all dispersed in Egypt, Cyprus, Phœnicia, Ionia, and Greece, the only countries where at that time commerce subsisted. The Vandals and other nations attacked the West from all sides: an embassy came from Italy to Constantinople, says Priscus [‡‡](#), representing that it was impossible they should keep their ground, unless peace was made with the Vandals.

Those that presided in the West were not mistaken in their politics. They judged it necessary to save Italy, which was in some respects the head, and in others the heart of the empire. They removed the Barbarians to the extremities, and settled them there. The design was well laid, and as well executed. These nations asked for nothing but subsistence: they gave them the plains, and reserved to themselves the mountainous parts of the country, the defiles, the passes over rivers, and the strong forts upon them, they kept in their own hands the sovereignty. It is probable these people would have been forced to have become Romans; and the facility with which these ravagers were themselves destroyed by the Franks, by the Greeks, and the Moors, is a proof of this conjecture. This whole system was overthrown by one revolution more fatal than all the rest: the army of Italy, composed of strangers, demanded that which had been granted to nations still greater strangers; it formed, under Odoacer, an aristocracy, which claimed the thirds of the lands in Italy; and this was the most fatal blow to the empire.

Amongst so many misfortunes it is natural to enquire, with a melancholy curiosity, after the fate of Rome: it was, we may say, without defence, and could easily be starved by an enemy. The extent of its walls made it almost impracticable for the inhabitants to defend them; and, as it was situated in a plain, it might be stormed without much difficulty. Besides this, no recruits were to be expected; for the number

of the people was so extremely diminished, that the emperors were obliged to retire to Ravenna, a city once fortified by the sea as Venice is at this time.

The Romans being generally abandoned by their princes, began to take the sovereign power into their own hands, and stipulated for their safety by treaties <sup>\*</sup>, which is the most likely method of acquiring the supreme authority <sup>†</sup>.

Armorica and Brittany, seeing themselves forsaken, began to regulate themselves by their own laws.

This was the fatal period of the western empire. Rome ascended to such a height of grandeur, because the scenes of her former wars opened successively, and by an incredible felicity of affairs she was never attacked by one nation till another had been first destroyed; but Rome herself was overpowered at last, because she was invaded at once by all the nations around her.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XX.

### The Conquests Of Justinian. Some Account Of His Government.

AS this vast body of people broke all at once like a flood into the empire, they mutually incommoded one another, and all the politics of those times consisted in setting them at variance together: this was a circumstance easy to accomplish, their avarice and fierce disposition greatly contributing to make it practicable. The largest part of them was therefore destroyed before they could fix themselves in any settlement; and this was the reason why the empire of the East still subsisted for some time.

The northern regions were likewise exhausted at last, and no longer poured out those innumerable armies they originally produced; for, after the first invasion by the Goths and Huns, and especially since the death of Attila, these people and their successors appeared in the field with force much inferior to the former in number.

When the nations, who assembled together in the form of an army, were distributed into peaceful partitions of lands, much of their martial vivacity was abated; and as they were scattered through the countries they had conquered, they were exposed themselves to the same invasions.

In this situation of affairs, Justinian undertook the recovery of Africa and Italy, and accomplished the same designs which the French so happily executed against the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Lombards, and the Saracens.

When Christianity was first planted among the Barbarians, the Arian sect was predominant in the empire, and Valens sent priests to them, who were their first apostles. Now, in the interval, from their conversion to their establishment, this sect fell into disreputation among the Romans; for which reason, when the Barbarians of this persuasion found all the country orthodox, and could never insinuate themselves into the affections of the people, it was easy for the emperors to incommode them.

We may likewise add, that the Barbarians being unqualified for the siege of towns, and much more so for their defence, suffered the walls to drop into ruins. Procopius informs us, that Belisarius found all the Italian cities in this condition; and those of Africa had already been dismantled by Genseric <sup>\*</sup>, with a Gothic view of fortifying the inhabitants.

The generality of these northern people, after they had established themselves in the provinces of the south, soon degenerated into the unmanly softness of those regions, and became incapable of the fatigues of war <sup>†</sup>. The Vandals were emasculated with pleasures; a luxuriant table, an effeminate habit, the delicacy of baths, the enervating lull of music, gay dances, florid gardens, and splendid theatres were now become their necessary gratifications.

They no longer disquieted the Romans ‡ , says Malchus ¶ , when they discontinued those armies which Genseric perpetually kept prepared for any expedition, and with which he prevented the vigilance of his enemies, and astonished all the world with the rapidity of his enterprizes.

The cavalry of the Romans, and that of the Huns their auxiliaries, were very expert at drawing the bow; but that of the Goths § and Vandals sought only with the sword and lance, and were unpractised in the distant combat; for which reason Belisarius ascribes part of his success to this difference \* .

Justinian received signal services from the Huns, a people from whom the Parthians sprung, and these descendants combated like their ancestors. When the Huns lost all their power by the divisions which the great number of Attila's children occasioned, they served the Romans in the quality of auxiliaries, and formed their best cavalry.

Each of these barbarous nations † was distinguished by their particular manner of combating as well as by their arms. The Goths and Vandals were formidable at the drawn sword; the Huns were admirable bowmen; the Suevi were serviceable infantry; the Alans were heavily armed; and the Heruli were a flying troop. The Romans selected from all these people, the different bodies of troops which were serviceable to their designs, and sought against one nation with the joint advantage of all the rest.

It is remarkable, that the weakest nations have been those that made the greatest establishments; we should be much deceived if we judged of their force by their conquests. In this long train of irruptions, the Barbarians, or rather the swarms which issued from them, were vanquishers or vanquished; every thing depended on circumstances: and while one great nation was defeated or engaged, a body of new adventurers finding a country open, carried desolation into it. The Goths, who by reason of the disadvantage of their arms, were obliged to fly before so many nations settled in Italy, Gaul, and Spain: the Vandals, too weak to keep their possessions in Spain, passed into Africa, where they founded a great empire.

Justinian could not fit out more than fifty ships against the Vandals; and when Belisarius embarked, he had but five thousand soldiers. This was undoubtedly a bold expedition; and Leo, who before that time had sent against the same people a fleet of all the ships in the east, and manned with a hundred thousand soldiers, could not conquer Africa, and was even in danger of losing the whole empire.

These great fleets have been as little successful as very numerous land armies; for as they impoverish and depopulate a state, so, should the expedition be of a considerable length, or any misfortune befall them, they can neither be succoured nor recruited; and if one part be lost, the other becomes insignificant; because ships of war, as well as transports, cavalry, infantry, ammunition, in a word all the particulars, have a necessary dependance on the whole. The tardiness of an enterprize makes those who engage in it always find the enemy prepared to receive them: besides, such an expedition is seldom made in a proper season, and generally overtaken by the stormy months, because such a vast number of preparations are hardly ever completed till the season is too far advanced.

Belisarius invaded Africa, and very advantageously supplied himself with provisions from Sicily, in consequence of a treaty made with Amalasontha queen of the Goths. When he was sent to attack Italy, he took notice that the Goths received their subsistence from Sicily, and therefore began his expedition with the conquest of that island; by which proceeding he at the same time starved his enemies, and plentifully supplied his own army with all accommodations.

Belisarius took Carthage, Rome, and Ravenna, and sent the kings of the Goths and Vandals captives to Constantinople, where the ancient triumphs were renewed after a long interval of years \* .

The extraordinary qualities of this great man \* , naturally account for his success. A general, who was master of all the maxims of the first Romans, was then at the head of such an army as that brave people anciently composed.

Virtues that are very shining are generally concealed or lost in servitude; but the tyrannical government of Justinian could not oppress the grandeur of that soul, nor the noble superiority of such a genius.

Narses the eunuch was thrown into this reign to make it still more illustrious: as he had received his education in the palace, he was honoured with a greater share of the emperor's confidence; for princes always esteem their courtiers the most faithful of their subjects.

On the other hand, the irregular conduct of Justinian, his profusions, tyranny, and rapine, his intoxicated fondness for building, changing, and reforming, his inconstancy in his designs, a severe and weak reign, made still more incommensurable by a lingering old age, were a train of real calamities, intermixed with unprofitable success, and a false glitter of unsubstantial glory.

These victories were not the effect of any solid power subsisting in the empire, but resulted from the lucky conjunction of some particular circumstances, and were soon rendered ineffectual; for whilst the army was pursuing its fortunate beginnings, a new swarm of barbarous nations passed the Danube, and spread desolation through Illyria, Macedonia, and Greece, and the Persians, in four invasions, weakened the empire with incurable wounds † .

The more rapid these conquests appeared, the less durable was their foundation: and Italy and Africa were hardly wrested from the enemy, before it became necessary to recover them a second time by new victories.

Justinian had taken from the theatre a \* woman who had long prostituted herself to immodest pleasures, and she governed him with an authority that has no parallel in history, perpetually intermixing his affairs with the passions and fanciful inconsistencies of her sex; in consequence of which, she defeated the victorious progress of his arms, and disconcerted the most favourable events.

The eastern people were always accustomed to a plurality of wives, in order to deprive the sex of that strange ascendant they maintain over man in our climates; but

at Constantinople the prohibition of Polygamy made the empire subject to the will of a female, or, in other words, threw a natural weakness into the government.

The people of Constantinople had for many years been divided into two factions, donominated the Blue and the Green: they derived their original from the approbation usually given in the theatres to some particular actors; and when races were exhibited in the circus, the charioteers who were dressed in green, disputed the prize with those who were habited in blue; and each of these spectators became interested even to madness, in the competition of those colours.

These two factions being diffused through all the cities of the empire, proportioned their animosities to the rank and grandeur of those cities, or, as we may justly say, to the indolence and idle lives of the generality of the people.

But though such divisions are always necessary in a republic, and may be considered as essential to its support, they are insallibly destructive to an arbitrary government, because they can only change the person of the sovereign, but never contribute to the establishment of the laws, or the discontinuance of abuses.

Justinian, who favoured the faction of the Blue <sup>\*</sup>, and denied all justice to the Green, increased the mutual inveteracy of both parties, and consequently strengthened them in the state.

These contending parties proceeded so far as even to disannul the authority of the magistrates; the Blues were in no apprehension of the laws, because the emperor protected them against their severity; and the <sup>†</sup> Greens began to disregard them, because they could not defend them from insults.

All the bands of friendship, affinity, and gratitude, were cut asunder, and whole families destroyed each other: every villain who intended to be remarkably wicked, belonged to the faction of the blue, and every man who was either robbed or assassinated, was a partisan for the Green.

We may add, that the government was, if possible, more cruel than senseless; and the emperor, not satisfied with a general injustice of loading his subjects with excessive impositions, resolved to ruin them in their private affairs by all imaginable tyrannies.

I am far from entertaining an implicit belief of all the particulars related by Procopius in his secret history, because the pompous commendations he, in his other works, bestows on this prince, may make his veracity a little questionable in this, where he paints him out as the most stupid and inhuman tyrant that ever lived.

On the other hand, there are two circumstances which incline me to pay some regard to this secret history; for, in the first place, the particulars seem better connected with the astonishing weakness which discovered itself at the latter end of this reign, and in those of the succeeding emperors.

The other circumstance is that monument which still exists among us, and is a collection of the laws of this emperor, which, in the course of a few years, present us

with greater variations than are to be found in our laws for the three last centuries of our monarchy.

These variations \* generally relate to matters of so little importance, that we can see no reason to induce a legislator to make them, unless we refer to the secret history for a solution, and acknowledge that this prince exposed his judgment and his laws equally to sale.

But the political state of the government received the greatest injury from his project of establishing a general uniformity of opinion in matters of religion, and in circumstances that rendered his zeal as indiscreet as possible.

The ancient Romans fortified their empire by indulging all sorts of religious worship; but their posterity destroyed it by rooting out the various sects, whose doctrines were not predominant.

These sects were composed of entire nations, some of which, as the Jews and Samaritans, had retained their ancient religion after they were conquered by the Romans; others were dispersed through the country, as the followers of Montanus, in Phrygia, the Manichees, the Sabbatarians, the Arians, in the other provinces; besides which, the generality of the people in the country continued in idolatry, and were insatuated with a religion as gross as their understandings.

These sects Justinian caused to be extirpated by the military as well as the civil power; and the persecuted people, revolting in their own defence, he thought himself obliged to exterminate them from the empire; in consequence of which, he depopulated several provinces, and whilst he imagined himself increasing the number of the faithful, he was only diminishing the race of mankind.

Procopius assures us, that Palestine, by the destruction of the Samaritans, was changed into a desert; and this proceeding was the more singular, because the very zeal which weakened the empire, in order to establish religion, sprung out of the same quarter from whence the Arabians afterwards sallied with an intention to subvert it.

But nothing could be more aggravating, than that the emperor, whilst he was so averse to all toleration himself, should yet disagree with the empress in the most essential points; he followed the council of Chalcedon, and she favoured its opposers; whether, as Evagrius says \*, they were sincere in this proceeding or not, is uncertain.

When we read Procopius's description of Justinian's buildings, and the forts and other places of defence he erected in all parts, it naturally raises in our minds the idea of a flourishing state; but that idea happens to be very delusive.

The ancient Romans had none of these fortifications, but placed all their security in their armies, which they distributed along the banks of rivers, and raised towers at proper distances for the lodgment of the soldiers.

Afterwards, indeed, when they had but very indifferent armies, and frequently none at all, the frontiers † could not defend the countries they limited, and therefore it became

necessary to strengthen them; the consequence of which was, they had more fortifications, and less force; many places for retreat, and very few for security; the country was only habitable about the fortifications, and these were built in all parts. The condition of the empire resembled that of France in the time of the Normans, \* which was never so defenceless as when all its villages were girt around with walls.

We may venture to affirm, therefore, that the whole catalogue of Justinian's forts, which fills several pages in Procopius, only exhibits to us so many monuments of the weakness of the empire.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XXI.

### Disorders In The Eastern Empire.

THE Persians, during this period, were in a much happier situation than the Romans; they had little reason to be apprehensive of the northern people †, because that part of mount Taurus which extends between the Caspian and Euxine seas separated them from those nations, and they effectually shut up a very narrow pass ‡, which was the only practicable avenue for the cavalry; in every other part the Barbarians were obliged to descend from frightful precipices §, and to quit their horses in which all their military strength consisted; and besides these impediments they were blocked in by the Araxes, a river of great depth, and which flows from west to east, all the passages of which were easy to be defended.

With all these advantages the Persians were in perfect tranquility with respect to the eastern nations; on the south they were bounded by the sea; and the Arabian princes, who were partly their allies, and partly in confederacy with the Romans, were totally engaged in pillaging one another. The Persians therefore had none whom they could properly call their enemies but the Romans. We are sensible, said an ambassador of Hormisdas \*, that the Romans are engaged in several wars, and are at variance with almost all nations, whilst we, as they well know, have no hostilities with any people but themselves.

The Persians had cultivated the military art to as great a degree as it was neglected by the Romans. Belisarius said to his soldiers, The Persians are not your superiors in courage, and only surpass you in the discipline of war.

They had likewise the same superiority in the cabinet as they preserved in the field, and demanded tribute of the Romans, under a pretence that they maintained garrisons in the Caspian streights, as if each nation had not a right to guard its frontiers. They obliged them to pay for peace, and every cessation of arms; and did not scruple to make them purchase the very time employed either in negotiations or war.

The Avari having crossed the Danube, the Romans, who had seldom any troops to oppose them, being engaged against the Persians when they should have given battle to the Avari, and having full employment from these when they ought to have faced the Persians, were still obliged to submit to a tribute; and thus the majesty of the empire bowed down before all nations.

Justin, Tiberius, and Maurice were very sedulous to defend the empire; the last of these princes had some virtues, but they were all sullied by an avarice almost incredible in a great monarch.

The king of the Avari offered to restore all his Roman prisoners to Maurice, if he would ransom, them at an inconsiderable price for each man; and this proposal being

rejected, he caused them all to be inhumanly murdered. The Roman army was greatly exasperated at this proceeding, and the faction of the Greens making an insurrection at the same time, a centurion named Phocas was raised to the imperial dignity, and he ordered Maurice and his children to be put to death.

The history of the Grecian empire, for so we shall denominate the monarchy of the Romans for the future, is little more than a series of revolts, seditions, and persidy. The subjects had no idea of the loyalty due to princes, and there were so many interruptions in the successions of the emperors, that the title of Porphyrogenitus, which signifies one born in the apartment where the empress reposed, was an appellation which few princes of the several imperial families could with any propriety assume.

All the paths that could be struck out to empire were unexceptionable; and the candidates were conducted to the diadem by the clergy, the senate, the peasants, the inhabitants of Constantinople, and the people of the provincial cities.

Christianity being now the prevailing religion of the empire, was intermixed with several successive heresies, which called aloud for condemnation. Arius having denied the divinity of the Word; the Macedonians that of the Holy Spirit; Nestorius the unity of the person of Jesus Christ; the Eutychians his two natures; the Monothelites his two wills; it became necessary to convene councils against them: but their decisions not being universally received, several emperors, who had been seduced into these heretical opinions, relapsed into the same persuasions after they had been condemned; and as no nation was ever so implacable against heretics as the Greeks, who even imagined themselves polluted when they conversed with any of that class, or had any cohabitation with them, several emperors, in consequence of that popular aversion, lost the affections of their subjects, and the people became persuaded that princes who were so frequently rebellious against God, could never be chosen by Providence to be their sovereigns.

A new opinion, formed by an idea that it was unlawful to shed christian blood, and which daily grew more popular when the Mohammedans appeared upon the stage of military action, was the cause that offences, in which religion was not directly interested, were punished with great moderation. Those who had spirited up an insurrection, or framed any attempt against the person of the prince, were only sentenced to lose their eyes, to have their hair or noses cut off, or to suffer some other mutilation. As these offences might be committed with very little hazard, they might likewise be attempted without much courage \*.

A certain veneration for the regalia of imperial majesty drew the eyes of all the people on those who presumed to wear them, and it was criminal to be either habited in purple, or to keep it in a wardrobe; but when a man had once the resolution to appear in that dress, the multitude immediately flocked after him, because their respect was more attached to the apparel than the person.

Ambition received greater provocatives still, from the surprising infatuation of those times; and there was hardly a man of any considerable consequence who could not accommodate to himself some prediction that promised him the empire.

As the indispositions of the mind are generally incurable †, judicial astrology, and the art of pointing out futurity by objects seen in a basin of water, succeeded among the christians, to the solemn imposture of divination by the entrails of victims, or the flight of birds, which had been abolished with paganism its parent; and vain promises became the motives to most of the rash actions of particular persons, and constituted the wisdom of princes councils.

The calamities of the empire daily increasing, it was natural to impute ill success in war, and dishonourable treaties in peace, to the injudicious conduct of those at the helm.

One revolution was now pregnant with another, and the effect itself became a cause: and as the Greeks had seen such a succession of different families on the throne, they were not devoted to any; and since fortune had created so many emperors out of all classes of people, no birth was so obscure, and no merit so inconsiderable as to be destitute of hope.

Several examples which had been familiar to the nation, modelled the genius of the people in general, and formed a system of manners which reigned as imperiously as the laws.

It should seem that great enterprizes among us, are more impracticable than they were to the ancients; it is very difficult to conceal them, because intelligence is now become so manageable that every prince has ministers in each court, and traitors may possibly be lurking in all the cabinets of majesty.

The invention of posts has given wings to information, and can immediately waste it to all parts.

As great undertakings are not to be accomplished without money, and as merchants are masters of it since the invention of bills of exchange, their affairs are always connected with the secrets of state, and they neglect nothing to penetrate into those depths.

The fluctuations in exchange, without any visible cause, entice numbers of people to search after it, and some of them find it at last to their cost.

The invention of printing, which has put books into the hands of all the world; the improvements in engraving, which have made geographic charts so common; in a word, the establishment of political papers, give every individual a knowledge of a general interests, sufficient enough to instruct him in all the private transactions.

Conspiracies in a state are now become very difficult, because, since the establishment of posts, all the secrets of particular persons are in the power of the public.

Princes may act with promptitude, because all the power of the state is in their possession. Conspirators must proceed with caution, because they are destitute of expedients; and, since at present all transactions are more easily discovered, those who form designs against a government, are generally detected before they can adjust their schemes.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XXII.

### The Weakness Of The Eastern Empire.

PHOCAS, amidst the general confusion of affairs, being unsettled in his new dignity, Heraclius came from Africa, and caused him to be murdered; at the same time he found the provinces invaded, and the legions destroyed.

As soon as this prince had, in some measure, remedied these disasters, the Arabians quitted their own country, to extend the empire and religion which Mohammed had founded by their co-operation.

No people ever made so rapid a progress; for they immediately conquered Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Africa, and then turned their hostilities against the Persians.

God permitted his religion to be laid low, in so many places where it once had been predominant; not that it now ceased to be the object of his providential care, but because it always either in its state of glory or depression produces its natural effect, which is the sanctification of the soul.

The welfare of religion has no similitude to the prosperity of empires, and we are told by a celebrated author, that it may well be distempered, since malady itself is the true state of a christian; to which we may add, that the humiliations and dispersion of the church, the destruction of her temples, and the persecutions of her martyrs, are eminent seasons of her glory; but when she appears triumphant to the eyes of the world, she is generally sinking in adversity.

We are not to have recourse to enthusiasm alone to clear up this memorable event of the Arabian conquests, which spread through so many countries: the Saracens had been long distinguished among the auxiliaries of Rome and Persia; and they, as well as the Osroanians, were the expertest archers in the world. Alexander Severus and Maximin had engaged them as much as possible in their service, and they were extremely useful in the wars with the Germans, to whom their arrows were fatal at a great distance. The Goths themselves [\\*](#), in the reign of Valens, were incapable of resisting them: in a word, they at that time were the best cavalry in the world.

We have already observed, that the legions raised in Europe were much preferable to those of Asia, but it was directly contrary with respect to the cavalry; I mean that of the Parthians, the Osroanians, and the Saracens. This was the power that stopped the full career of the Roman conquests, because, after the death of Antiochus, a new nation of Tartars, who had the best cavalry of any people, made themselves masters of the Upper Asia.

This cavalry was heavy [†](#), and that of Europe light, quite contrary to the present nature of their military equipage. Holland and Friseland were not as yet won from the

waters; and \* Germany was full of woods, lakes, and marshes, where the cavalry were of little importance.

When a free passage was opened to the great rivers, the stagnant waters shrunk from those marshes, and Germany assumed a new surface. Many changes were effected by the works of Valentinian † on the Necker, and those of the Romans on the Rhine; and commerce being once established, those countries which did not originally produce horses ‡ began to propagate the breed, and the inhabitants made great use of those animals.

Constantine ? , the son of Heraclius, having been poisoned, and his son Constance slain in Sicily, Constantine the bearded, his eldest son, succeeded to the empire; but the grandees of the eastern provinces being assembled on this occasion, were determined to crown the other brothers of this prince jointly with himself; alledging, that as it was indispensably necessary for them to believe in the Trinity, so it was reasonable they should be governed by three emperors.

The Grecian history is crouded with proceedings as extraordinary as this, and a low turn of mind being then characteristic of that nation, the former wisdom was no longer conspicuous in their actions, and the empire became a scene of troubles and revolutions, to which it was impossible to assign any preparatory motives.

An universal bigotry had stupified and emasculated the whole empire. Constantinople was the only place in the east where christianity was predominant, and likewise, where the pusillanimous indolence, and degrading softness of the Asiatic nations, were blended with devotion itself. Of a thousand instances that might be alledged, I shall only mention the conduct of Philippicus the general of Maurice's army, who being on the point of charging the enemy in the field, burst into tears \* when he suddenly considered what numbers of mankind were then to be destroyed.

The tears of the Arabians † flowed from a very different source, when they wept with regret that their general had agreed to a truce which frustrated their intended effusion of Christian blood.

There is a total difference between an army of fanatics, and another of bigots; and it evidently appeared in a late memorable revolution, in which Cromwell's army resembled the Arabians, whilst the Irish and Scottish forces were like the Greeks.

A gross superstition which debases the mind as effectually as true religion exalts it, had reduced all virtue and devout confidence in the deity, to a stupid veneration for images; and history presents us with generals who would raise a siege, ‡ or surrendered a city for ? the gallant acquisition of a relick.

Christianity degenerated under the Grecian empire into as many corruptions as were intermixed with it in our time by the Muscovites, till the Czar Peter the first, new modelled that nation, and introduced more changes into the dominions he governed than are usually established in those which conquerors usurp.

We may easily believe the Greeks were infected with idolatry. There can be no suspicion that the Italians and Germans were but coldly devoted to external worship; and yet when the Greek historians take notice of the contempt expressed by the Italians for images and relies, one would be apt to compare them with the modern zealots against Calvin. Nicetas informs us, that the Germans, in their march to the Holy Land, were received by the Armenians as friends, because they did not offer any adoration to images. Now, if the Italians and Germans did not sufficiently reverence images, in the apprehension of the Greeks, what an enormous veneration must then be paid to them by this people?

The east was on the point of being made the scene of such a revolution as happened about two centuries ago in the west, when, upon the revival of learning, the abuses and corruptions in religion became evident to all, and as every person was inquisitive after a proper remedy, so there were some so bold and untractable as to rend the church by divisions, instead of restoring it to its original purity by a due reformation.

Leo Isaurus, Constantine Copronymus, and Leo his son were implacable against images, and when the worship of them had been re-established by the empress Irene, Leo the Arminian, Michael the Stammerer, and Theophilus abolished them again. These princes imagined they could not moderate that worship unless they destroyed it effectually; they likewise turned their hostilities against the Monks <sup>\*</sup>, who incommoded the state, and as their proceedings were always carried to extremes, they endeavoured to exterminate that fraternity instead of regulating them in a proper manner.

The monks <sup>†</sup> being accused of idolatry by those who favoured the new opinions, retorted, in their turn, upon their adversaries, and accused them of magic practices, <sup>‡</sup> and then calling upon the people to behold the churches that were divested of images, and the other furniture, which till that time had been the objects of adoration, they created a belief in their flock, that these holy places must certainly be profaned by daily sacrifices to Dæmons.

The controversy relating to images, was connected with very delicate circumstances, which kindled it into a raging flame, and in the event made persons of solid judgment incapable of proposing a moderate worship. The dispute included the tender article of power, and the monks having seized it, in consequence of their spiritual usurpations, they could neither enlarge nor maintain it, but by making daily additions to the acts of external adoration, wherein they were so considerably interested. For this reason all oppositions to the establishment of images were considered as so many hostilities against themselves, and when they had succeeded in their pretensions, their power was no longer limitable.

This period was remarkable for such a conjuncture as happened some centuries afterwards in the warm disagreement between Barlaam and the Monks of that time, which brought the empire to the verge of destruction. The subject of the dispute was, whether the light which encircled Jesus Christ on Mount Tabor was created or not. The Monks indeed were indifferent as to either part of the question in debate, but as

Barlaam made a direct attack upon that fraternity, they found it consistent with their interest to assert that light to be uncreated.

The war which those emperors who were called Iconoclasts, declared against the Monks, revived some particular principles of government, and offered a plausible pretence for employing the public revenue, for the public advantage, and for disengaging the state from every inconvenience that encumbered it.

When I consider the profound ignorance into which the Grecian priests had plunged the laity, it seems natural to compare the former to those Scythians mentioned by Herodotus, \* who caused the eyes of their slaves to be plucked out, that their attention might not be diverted, when they were churning milk for their masters.

When the empress Theodora had re-established the use of images, the Monks immediately began to corrupt the public devotion, and proceeded even to oppress the secular clergy: they thrust themselves into every beneficial see, † and gradually excluded all ecclesiastics from episcopal promotion. By this proceeding they became unsupportable; and if we draw a parallel between them and the Latin clergy, and compare the conduct of our popes with that of the patriarchs of Constantinople, we shall see in our pontiffs and clergy, a set of men altogether as judicious as the others were irrational.

We are presented with a surprizing contradiction in human nature, when we consider that the ministers of religion among the ancient Romans, when they were not made incapable of public employments and civil society, were but little solicitous about either; and that after the establishment of christianity, the ecclesiastics who were most secluded from temporal affairs, engaged in them with the greatest moderation; but when the Monks, in the declension of the empire, became the sole clergy, these people who were forbidden by a more particular profession, to intermeddle with the transactions of state, embraced all opportunities that could possibly introduce them into the government, and never ceased to fill every place with confusion, and to discompose the world which they pretended to renounce.

There was not any affair of the empire, any particular peace or war, any truce or negociation, or any private treaty of marriage capable of completion without the ministration of these Monks; they crowded into the cabinets of princes, and composed the greatest part of the national assemblies.

The calamities which resulted from this irreligious officiousness are inconceivable: these ecclesiastic statesmen infused an indolent insignificance into the minds of princes, and communicated a taint of imprudence to their best actions. Whilst Basilius employed his naval forces in erecting a church to the honour of St. Michael \* ; he abandoned Sicily to the depredations of the Saracens, and suffered them to take Syracuse; but lest he should be singular in that proceeding, Leo, his successor, consigned his fleet to the same employment, and permitted the Barbarians to possess themselves of Tauromenia and the island of Lemnos.



Andronicus Palæologus † entirely neglected his maritime power, because he had been assured God was so well satisfied with his zeal for the church's peace, that his enemies would never presume to invade his dominions by sea. He was even apprehensive that the Deity would call him to a strict account for the time he devoted to the necessary affairs of state, and deducted from spiritual attentions.

The Greeks being very loquacious, great disputants, and naturally inclined to sophistry, were perpetually incumbering religion with controversial points; and as the Monks were in great reputation in a court which was always weak in proportion to its corruption, that court, and those Monks mutually communicated infection to each other; in consequence of which, the emperors devoted all their thoughts, sometimes to calm, and frequently to inflame theological disputes, which were always observed to be most frivolous when they were debated with the greatest warmth.

Michael Palæologus ‡, whose reign was so infested with controversies in religion, growing sensible of the melancholy devastations committed by the Turks in Asia, said with a sigh, that the rash zeal of some persons, who by exclaiming against his conduct, had exasperated his subjects against him, made it necessary for him to employ all his cares to accomplish his own preservation, and compelled him to be a tame spectator of the ruin of several provinces. "I contented myself, said he, with providing for the security of those distant parts, by the ministration of governors, who being either corrupted by the enemy, or apprehensive of punishment, never acquainted me with the unhappy situation of the people with whose welfare they were intrusted."

The Patriarchs of Constantinople had assumed an unlimited power; and as the emperors and their grandees generally retired to the churches, when the people were spirited up to insurrections, the patriarchs had consequently an opportunity of delivering them up to the popular fury, and never failed to exercise this power as they were directed by any particular fancy, by which means they always became the arbiters of public affairs, though in a very indirect manner.

When the elder Andronicus \* caused the Patriarch to be admonished not to intermeddle with the transactions of state, but to confine his attention to spiritual affairs, "such a request, replied that imperious priest, is as if the body should say to the soul, I do not claim any community with you, and have no occasion for your assistance in the exercise of my functions."

Such monstrous pretensions became insupportable to princes, and the patriarchs were frequently divested of their sees. But such a proceeding, in a superstitious nation, who detested all the ecclesiastical functions of the Patriarch whom they considered as an intruder, produced continual schisms, each particular Patriarch, the old, the new, and the last elected, being supported by his own set of partizans.

Such conditions as these were much more pernicious than any disagreements on points of doctrine, because they resembled an hydra to whom every defeat was a renovation.

The rage of disputation became so natural to the Greeks, that Cantacuzenus <sup>\*</sup>, when he took Constantinople, found the emperor John and his empress engaged in a council which had been summoned against some adversaries of the Monks; and when Mohammed the second besieged that city <sup>†</sup>, the emperor could not suppress the theological animosities, and the council of Florence <sup>‡</sup> engaged the general attention much more than the Turkish army.

As every person, in common disputes, is sensible he may be deceived, a tenacious and untractable spirit seldom prevails to any extreme but in those controversies where religion is the subject; for there, as every person from the nature of the point in debate becomes persuaded that his own opinion is true, he grows exasperated against those, who, instead of concurring with his sentiments, endeavour to make him a convert to their own.

Those who may happen to read the history written by Pachymerus, will be effectually convinced of the unalterable inability of divines to accommodate their own disagreements, and will see an emperor <sup>?</sup> who spent his days in assembling people of that class listening to their disputations and reproaching them for the inflexibility of their opinions: they will likewise behold another engaged with a hydra of controversies that were perpetually rising to new life, and will be sensible that the same pacific methods and persevering patience, the same inclination to finish their contentions; in a word, the same artless pliancy to their intrigues joined with the same deference to their aversions will never reconcile these implacable ecclesiastics while the world endures.

We shall present the reader with a remarkable instance of the disposition we have been describing. The Partisans of the patriarch Arsenus <sup>\*</sup>, were prevailed upon, by the solicitations of the emperor, to come into a treaty with those who were in the interest of the patriarch Joseph. This treaty specified that both parties should write down their several pretensions, and then throw the two papers which contained them into a pan of live coals, and if one of them should remain unconsumed, they were then to acquiesce with that determination from heaven; but if both should happen to be burnt, the parties were no longer to persist in their demands. The fire destroyed the two papers, the factions were reconciled, and the peace continued for a day. The next morning they pretended that the renunciation of their claims ought to flow from an internal persuasion, and not from chance; and from that moment the contention was renewed with greater animosity than ever.

The disputes of divines should always be considered with great attention; but at the same time this ought to be concealed as much as possible; because, any visible solicitude to calm the contending parties never fails to credit their singularities, and consequently tempts them to believe their sentiments are of such importance as to comprehend the welfare of the state and the security of the sovereign.

It is altogether as impracticable to decide the disagreements of clergymen by attending to their affected subtilties, as it would be to abolish duels by erecting a court, with a delegation to trace a point of honour through all its refinements.

Such was the imprudence of the Greek emperors, that when a religious controversy had been lulled asleep by time, they again awakened it in all its rage. Justinian, Heraclius, and Manual Comnenus proposed articles of faith to their ecclesiastics and laity who would certainly have been deceived in the truth, though it had flowed from the lips of those princes in all its purity. And as they were always defective in forms, and generally in essentials, and grew desirous of displaying their penetration, which they might have manifested to more advantage in other affairs confided to their judgment; they engaged in vain disputes on the nature of God, who, as he withdraws himself from the proud curiosity of the learned, so he veils the Majesty of his existence, as effectually from the great men of the earth.

It is an error to believe any human power can be absolute and insallible in these respects, for such there never was, nor ever will be imparted to any mortal. The largest extent of temporal authority is confined to certain limitations, and when the Grand Seignior ordains a new taxation at Constantinople, the universal murmurs of his subjects make him sensible of those restrictions of his power which till then were concealed from his observation. A Persian monarch may indeed compel a son to murder his father, or oblige a parent to plunge his dagger into the heart of his child, but he can never force his subjects to drink wine. There is a general principle in every nation which is the invariable basis of power, and when once this principle is too much loaded, it infallibly shrinks into smaller dimensions.

An unacquaintedness with the true nature and limits of ecclesiastical and secular power, was the most pernicious source of all the calamities that befel the Greeks, and involved both priests and people in perpetual errors.

This great distinction, which constitutes all the tranquillity of a nation, is founded not only on religion, but on reason and nature, which never confound things really distinct in themselves, and which can only subsist in consequence of that very distinction.

Though the priesthood among the ancient Romans did not form a separate body, yet the distinction we have been representing, was as well known to them as it can be to us. Clodius had consecrated the house of Cicero to the goddess of liberty, but when that great orator returned from his exile, he did not fail to demand it as his lawful property: the Pontiffs were of opinion, that if it had been so consecrated without an express order obtained from the people, it might be restored to him without any violation of religion. They have declared, says Cicero \*, that they only examined the validity of the consecration and not the law enacted by the people, and that they had decided the first article as pontiffs, and the second in the quality of senators.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## CHAP. XXIII.

### The Duration Of The Eastern Empire Accounted For. Its Destruction.

AFTER this account of the Grecian empire, it seems natural to enquire how it could possibly subsist so long, and I believe sufficient reasons may be assigned for that duration.

The Arabians having invaded the empire and conquered several provinces, their chiefs became competitors for the Khalisat, and the flame of their first zeal only burst out in civil dissensions.

The same people having conquered Persia, and afterwards divided and weakened themselves in that country, the Greeks were no longer obliged to keep the principal forces of the empire stationed on the banks of the Euphrates.

Callinicus, an architect, who came from Syria to Constantinople, invented an artificial flame, which was easily ventilated into a point by means of a tube, and was of such a peculiar nature, that water and every other substance which extinguish common fire did but increase the violence of this. The Greeks were in possession of it for several years, and managed it in such a manner as made it capable of firing their enemies ships, particularly the Arabian fleet which sailed from Africa or the Syrian coasts to invade them even in Constantinople.

This flame was ranked among the secrets of state, and Constantine Porphyrogenitus in his treatise on the administration of the empire, and which he dedicated to his son Romanus, advises him to tell the Barbarians, when they should desire him to give them any of the Grecian fire, that he was not permitted to part with it, because an angel, who presented it the emperor Constantine, commanded to refuse it to all other nations, and that those who had disobeyed that injunction were consumed by a fire from heaven the moment they entered the church.

Constantinople was the greatest, and almost the only city of commerce in the world; for the Goths on the one side, and the Arabians on the other, had ruined all manner of traffic and industry in every other part. The silken manufactures were brought thither from Persia, and were even neglected in that country since the Arabian invasion. We may add to this that the Greeks were masters at sea, which opened an immense flow of riches into the state, and proved an inexhaustible source of relief in all its emergencies; and if at any time there seemed to be any declension of the public affluence, it was immediately recruited by a new accession.

We shall justify this observation by a remarkable instance: the elder Andronicus Comnenus, though he was the Nero of the Greeks, yet amidst all his vices he was indefatigable in the suppression of injustice and vexations in the grandees, and it is a

known fact, that during the three years of his reign, he restored several provinces to their ancient splendor.

In fine, the Barbarians having once fixed their settlement on the banks of the Danube, were no longer so formidable to the empire as before, but rather became useful to it as a barrier against other barbarous nations. And thus whilst the empire was harassed by any bad government, some particular incidents were always in reserve for its relief. Thus we see Spain and Portugal in a condition, amidst all their weakness, to support themselves with the treasures of the Indies: the temporal dominions of the Pope owe their safety to the respect paid to their sovereign, and the rovers of Barbary derive their security from the obstructions they fasten upon the commerce of lesser \* nations, and the very piracies of these people on inferior states, make them serviceable in their turn to the greater.

The Turkish empire is at present in the same state of declension to which that of the Greeks was formerly † sunk, but in all probability it will still subsist a long time; for should any prince endanger it by pursuing his conquests to an immoderate extent, it will always be desended by the three trading powers of Europe, who are too sensible of their own interests ever to be unconcerned spectators of its fall.

It is happy for these trading powers, that God has permitted Turks and Spaniards to be in the world, for of all nations they are the most proper to enjoy a great empire with insignificance.

In the time of Basilius Porphyrogenitus, the Arabian power came to its period in Persia. Mohammed the son of Sambreal, who was then sovereign of that empire, invited four thousand Turks from the North, in the quality of auxiliaries; but upon a sudden dissatisfaction conceived by this prince, he sent an army against them, which was soon put to flight by the Turks. Mohammed, in the height of his indignation against his pusillanimous soldiers, gave orders, that they should pass before him habited like women; but they disappointed his anger and joined the Turks: upon which the united army immediately dislodged a garrison which was stationed to guard a bridge over the Araxes, and opened a free passage to a vast body of their countrymen.

When they had extended their conquests through Persia, they spread themselves from east to west over the territories of the empire, and Romanus Diogenes, who endeavoured to oppose their progress, became their prisoner; after which they subdued all the Asiatic dominions of the Greeks down to the Bosphorus.

Some time after this event the Latins invaded the western regions in the reign of Alexis Commenus. An unhappy schism had for a long time infused an implacable hatred between the nations of two different communions, and would have produced fatal effects much sooner, had not the Italians been more attentive to check the German emperors whom they feared, than they were to distress the Greek emperors whom they only hated.

Affairs were in this situation, when all Europe imbibed a religious belief that the place where Jesus Christ was born, as well as that where he accomplished his passion, being profaned by the infidels, the surest atonement they could make for their own sins, would be to dispossess those Barbarians of their acquisitions by force of arms. Europe at that time swarmed with people who were fond of war, and had many crimes to expiate, and as it was proposed to them to obtain their remission by indulging their prevailing passion, every man armed himself for the crusade.

When this consecrated army arrived in the east, they besieged and made themselves masters of Nice, which they restored to the Greeks; and, whilst the infidels were seized with a general consternation, Alexis and John Commenus chased the Turks to the banks of Euphrates.

But as advantageous as these crusades might be to the Greeks, the emperors trembled to see such a succession of fierce heroes and formidable armies marching through the heart of their dominions.

This induced them to leave nothing unattempted that might create a dissatisfaction in Europe at these expeditions; and the votaries to the cross were continually ensnared by every instance of treachery that could possibly be expected from a timorous enemy.

It must be acknowledged that the French, who promoted these expeditions, had not practised any conduct that could render their presence very supportable; and we may judge by the invectives of Anna Comnena against our nation, that we act without much precaution in foreign countries, and were at that time chargeable with the same exceptionable freedoms we are reproached for at this day.

A French nobleman was going to seat himself upon the emperor's throne, but earl Baldwin caught him by the arm: "You ought to know, said he, that when we are in any country whatever, it is proper to comply with the customs that prevail there." "What a clown is He, replied the other, to sit whilst so many captains are standing?"

The Germans, who came after the French, and were the most civil and undesigning people in the world <sup>\*</sup>, suffered very severely for our follies, and were continually embarrassed with a set of dispositions that had been sufficiently irritated by our countrymen against all foreigners.

In fine, the aversion of those eastern people was worked up to the highest extreme; and this, with some incivilities offered to the Venetian merchants, operating upon the ambition, avarice, and false zeal of that nation as well as the French, determined them to form a crusade against the Greeks.

The united army of these two European nations found their enemies altogether as pusillanimous and unwarlike as the Chinese appeared to the Tartars in our time. The Frenchmen ridiculed their effeminate habit <sup>†</sup>, and walked through the streets of Constantinople dressed in flowered mantles, and carrying pens and paper in their

hands, in derision of that nation, who had degenerated from all military discipline; and when the war was over, they refused to admit any Greeks into their troops.

The Venetians and French soon after declared for the western empire, and transferred the imperial throne to the earl of Flanders, whose dominions being very distant, could not create any jealousy in the Italians. The Greeks still supported themselves in the east, being separated from the Turks by a chain of mountains, and divided from the Italians by the sea.

The Latins, who found no obstacles in their conquests, met with many in their settlement. The Greeks returned from Asia into Europe, retook Constantinople, and seized the greatest part of the east.

This new empire, however, was but a feint shadow of the former, and had no solid power for its basis.

It comprehended few territories in Asia, besides the provinces on this side the Meander and Sangar, and most of those in Europe were parcelled out into small sovereignties.

We may add to this, that during the sixty years the Latins were possessed of Constantinople, the conquered people being dispersed, and the victors engaged in war, all commerce was transferred to the cities in Italy, and Constantinople became divested of its riches.

The commerce even of the inland countries was carried on by the Latins. The Greeks \*, who were but newly re-established, and were likewise alarmed with innumerable apprehensions, became desirous to ingratiate themselves with the Genoese, by granting them a permission to traffic without paying any duties; and as they were unwilling to irritate the Venetians, who had not accepted of peace, but only consented to a truce, these were likewise discharged from the same payments.

Though Manuel Comnenus had suffered the navigation of the empire to decline before Constantinople was taken, yet it could be easily re-established, since commerce still subsisted; but when all maritime affairs became entirely neglected under the new empire, the mischief grew remediless, because the power of the empire was daily declining.

This state, which extended its dominion over many islands, and was intersected by the sea, which likewise surrounded several of its territories, was entirely unprovided of ships. The former communication no longer subsisted between the provinces: the inhabitants \* were obliged to shelter themselves in the inland parts from pirates; and when they thought themselves safe in such a sanctuary, they soon found it necessary to retire into the fortresses, to preserve themselves from the hostilities of the Turks.

These barbarous people were at that time engaged in a peculiar war against the Greeks, and might properly be called hunters of men. They sometimes marched two hundred leagues into a country to accomplish their depredations; and as they were in subjection to several sultans †, it was impossible to purchase a peace from every

tribe; and to procure it from any particular parties was altogether insignificant. These Barbarians had embraced Mohammedism, and their zeal for that religion strangely prompted them to ravage the Christian territories: besides, as they were the most unamiable people on earth † , and married to wives as disagreeable as themselves, the moment they were acquainted with the Grecian women, all the rest of that sex became insupportable to them; and those beautiful females were continually exposed to the brutal passion of these Barbarians ‡ . In fine, they had been always accustomed to invade the properties of other people, and were the same Huns who had formerly involved the Roman empire in so many calamities.

The Turks broke in, like a deluge, upon the shattered remains of the Grecian empire in Asia; and those of the inhabitants who were happy enough to escape their fury, fled before them to the Bosphorus, from whence such as could accommodate themselves with ships, sailed to those parts of the empire that were situated in Europe, which occasioned a considerable addition to the number of the inhabitants, though they were diminished in a short period of time: for civil wars began to rage with so much fatality, that the two factions invited several Turkish sultans to their assistance \* , with this extravagant and inhuman stipulation, that all the people of the country, who were made captives from the opposite party, should be carried into slavery; by which means each of those factions concurred in the destructions of their own country with a view of ruining their adversaries.

Bajazet having conquered all the other sultans, the Turks would then have acted agreeably to their future Behaviour in the reign of Mahommed II. had not they been in danger of extermination by the Tartars.

I am now afraid to describe the miseries which resulted from these revolutions; and shall only intimate, that the empire under its last monarchs, being contracted within the suburbs of Constantinople, finished its progress like the Rhine, which shrinks into a rivulet before it loses itself in the ocean.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## A DIALOGUE BETWEEN SYLLA AND EUCRATES.

SOME days after Sylla had resigned the dictatorship, I was told the reputation I had among the philosophers made him desirous of seeing me. He was at his house on the Tiber, enjoying the first peaceful moments he had ever known. On coming before him, I felt nothing of that confusion which the presence of great men generally occasions in us. And when we were alone, Sylla, said I to him, you have then voluntarily reduced yourself to that middle condition of life, which to most men is an affliction. You have resigned that command which your glory and your virtues gave you over all men. Fortune seems to be vexed, that she could not raise you to higher honours.

Eucrates, said he, if the eyes of the whole universe are no longer fixed on me, it is the fault of human things, which have their prescribed limits, and not owing to me. I imagined I had fulfilled my destiny, when I no longer had great things to achieve. I was not made for governing in quiet an enslaved people. I love to obtain victories, to found or overturn states, make alliances, punish usurpers: but as to the little subordinate branches of government, wherein middling geniuses shew themselves to so much advantage, the slow execution of the laws, the discipline of a tame militia, my soul could not employ itself in them.

It is very singular, said I, that you should have mixed so much delicacy with your ambition. We have seen many great men unaffected with the vain pomp and splendor which wait on rulers; but there have been very few insensible of the pleasure of governing, and of having that respect, which is due only to the laws, paid to their humour.

And I, Eucrates was never less satisfied, than when I saw myself absolute master in Rome; when I looked round me, and found neither rival nor enemy. I thought it would be one day said, that I had only chastised slaves. Would you, said I to myself, have no more men in your country capable of being affected with your glory? And since you establish despotism, do not you clearly see, that no prince can come after you so cowardly and despicable, whom flattery will not equal to you, and adorn with your name, your titles, and even your virtues?

My Lord, you have quite changed the idea I had formed of your conduct. I thought you had ambition, but not a love of glory: I saw very well that you had a high spirit, but I did not suspect that you had a great soul: your whole life seemed to discover you to be one preyed on by lust of power, and who, full of the most destructive passions cheerfully loaded himself with the shame, the remorse, and even the meanness attached to despotism. For, after all, you sacrificed every thing to your power; you were feared by all the Romans; you discharged, without pity, the functions of the most terrible magistracy that ever subsisted. The senate looked with dread on a defender so relentless. Some one said to you, Sylla, how much Roman blood will you shed; do you want to command bare walls? You then published those tables by which the life and death of every citizen were determined.

And it is the shedding so much blood that has enabled me to do the greatest action of my whole life. Had I ruled the Romans with gentleness, what wonder, that weariness, disgust or caprice should make me resign the government? But I laid down the dictatorship at a time when every one thought I entirely owed my safety to my being invested with it. I appeared before the Romans a citizen in the midst of my citizens, and had the boldness to say to them, I am ready to give account of all the blood which I have shed for the republic; I will answer all who shall come to demand of me their fathers, their sons, or their brothers. Every Roman was silent before me.

This great action which you speak of, appears to me very imprudent. The astonishment, indeed, into which you had just thrown the Romans, was of service to you: but how could you dare to talk of vindicating yourself, and taking for judges persons who had so much to revenge on you? supposing your actions had been only severities while you were in power, they became frightful crimes the moment you were out of power.

Do you call crimes, said he, what saved the republic? Would you have had me quietly see senators betray the senate, for that people, who, imagining that liberty ought to be as extreme as slavery can be, wanted to abolish all authority? The people, kept under by the laws and the weight of the senate, have always endeavoured to overturn both. But he who is so ambitious as to serve them against the senate and the laws, has always ambition enough to become their master. It is thus we have seen an end put to so many republics of Greece and Italy.

To prevent a like evil the senate hath always been obliged to employ this untractable people in war. It has been forced, against its inclination, to ravage the earth, and reduce so many nations, whose subjection is a burden to us. At present, when the universe can furnish no more enemies against us, what would be the fate of the republic? And, without me, would the senate have been able to prevent the people, in their blind fury for liberty, from delivering themselves up to Marius, or to the first tyrant who should have given them hopes of independence?

The gods, who have given to most men a cowardly ambition, have attached to Liberty almost as many evils as to Slavery. But whatever may be the price of this noble liberty, the gods must be paid it.

The sea swallows up vessels, and lays under water whole countries; yet it is useful to man.

Posterity will decide of what Rome has not as yet ventured to examine: it will find, perhaps, that I have not shed blood enough, and that all the partizans of Marius have not been proscribed.

I must own, Sylla, you astonish me; How! was it to serve your country, that you spilled so much blood? and had you no attachment but to her?

Eucrates, said he to me, I had never that predominant love for my country, of which we find so many examples in the first ages of the republic: and I love Coriolanus, who

carried fire and sword to the very walls of his ungrateful city, and made every citizen repent the affront which every citizen had given him, as much as I do him who drove the Gauls from the capitol. I never piqued myself on being the slave, or the worshipper of a society of my equals: and this so much boasted love is a passion too popular for such a high spirit as mine. All my actions proceeded from reflexion, and principally from the contempt which I entertained for men. You may judge by the manner in which I treated the only great people in the world, how high my contempt was of all others.

I thought that while I was on the earth, I ought to be free. Had I been born among Barbarians, I should have sought to usurp the throne less to obtain command than to avoid obedience. Born in a republic, I have acquired the glory of a conqueror, in seeking only that of a free man.

When I entered Rome with my troops, I breathed neither rage nor revenge. I passed sentence without hatred, but also without pity, on astonished Romans. You were free, said I; and you want to live slaves. No. Die; and you will have the advantage of dying citizens of a free city.

To deprive of its liberty a city of which I was a citizen, I looked on as the greatest of crimes. I punished that crime; and was little concerned whether I should be the good or the evil genius of the Republic. However, the government of our ancestors has been re-established; the people have expiated all the indignities they put on the nobles; fear has suspended animosities, and Rome never enjoyed such perfect tranquility.

This it was which determined me to all the bloody tragedies you have seen. Had I lived in those happy days of the Republic, when the citizens, quiet in their houses, presented to the Gods a free soul, you would have seen me pass my whole life in this retreat, which has cost me so much blood and toil.

My lord, said I to him, it is well for mankind, that Heaven has been sparing in the number of such men as you. Born for a middling station, we are over-powered by sublime geniuses. One man's being raised above humanity, costs all the rest too dear.

You looked on the ambition of heroes as a common passion; and made no account of any but a reasoning ambition. The insatiable desire of ruling, which you found in the hearts of some citizens, made you resolve to be an extraordinary man: love of liberty determined you to be terrible and cruel. Who would have thought, that a heroism founded on principle would be more destructive than a heroism founded on fury and impetuosity? The Roman people, you say, beheld you unarmed, and made no attempt on your life. You have escaped one danger; a greater may await you. A grand offender may one day take advantage of your moderation, and confound you in the crowd of a subjected people.

I have acquired a name, said he, which suffices for my safety and the safety of the Roman people. That name prevents all attempts; there is no ambition which does not stand in awe of it. Sylla lives; and his genius is more powerful than that of all the Romans. Sylla is surrounded by Chæronea, Orchomenus, and Signion: Sylla hath

given every family in Rome a terrible example within itself: Every Roman will have me always before him, and even in his sleep I shall appear to him covered with blood; he will imagine he sees the fatal tables, and reads his name at the head of the proscribed. My laws are murmured at in secret; they can never be effaced but by floods of Roman blood. Am not I in the midst of Rome? You will still find with me the javelin I had at Orchomenus, and the buckler I wore on the walls of Athens. Because I have no lictors, am I the less Sylla? I have the senate, justice, and the laws for me; my genius, fortune, and glory are for the senate.

I own, said I, that when a person has once made any one tremble, he almost always retains something of the advantage he had over him.

Undoubtedly, said he, I struck men with astonishment, and that was a great deal. Review in your mind the story of my life: you will see that I have drawn all from that principle; and that it has been the soul of all my actions. Call to mind my quarrel with Marius: I was stung with indignation to see a man of no name, proud of the meanness of his birth, attempt to pull down the first families in Rome, and confound them with Plebeians; and at this time I bore all the weight of a great soul. I was young, and I resolved to put myself in a condition to call Marius to account for his insults. For this end, I fought him with his own weapons, that is to say, by victories over the enemies of the Republic.

When I was forced, by the caprice of chance, to leave Rome, I pursued the same plan: I went to make war on Mithridates; and laboured to destroy Marius by vanquishing the enemy of Marius. While I left that Roman to enjoy his power over the populace, I multiplied his mortifications, and forced him to go every day to the Capitol to return thanks to the Gods for successes which drove him to distraction. I waged a war of reputation against him, a hundred times more cruel than what my legions made on the Barbarian king. Every word I spoke shewed my daringness, and my most inconsiderable actions, always full of haughtiness, were fatal presages for Marius. At last Mithridates sued for peace; the terms were reasonable; and had Rome been in quiet, and my fortune not still wavering, I would have accepted them. But the bad state of my affairs obliged me to make the terms still harder. I demanded that he should destroy the fleet, and restore to the kings his neighbours the territories he had taken from them. I leave to you, said I, the kingdom of your ancestors; to you, who ought to thank me that I leave you the hand with which you signed an order for the execution of 100,000 Romans in one day. Mithridates was struck motionless, and Marius trembled in the midst of Rome.

This boldness, which was of such service to me against Mithridates, against Marius, against his son, against Thelisinus, against the people, which supported my dictatorship, also protected my life the day I resigned the dictatorship; and that day insures my liberty for ever.

My lord, said I, Marius reasoned in the same manner, when, covered with the blood of his enemies and of the Romans, he gave proofs of that boldness which you have punished. You have, it is true, a few more victories, and greater excesses on your side. But, in assuming the dictatorship, you set an example of the crime which you

punished. This is the example which will be followed, and not that of your moderation which will only be admitted.

When the Gods suffered Sylla with impunity to make himself Dictator at Rome, they proscribed Liberty from it for ever. They must work too many miracles now to root out of the heart of every Roman leader the ambition of reigning. You have taught them, that there is a much surer way to arrive at despotism, and to maintain it without danger. You have divulged the fatal secret, and removed what alone makes good citizens in a republic too rich and too great, to despair of being able to oppress it.

He changed colour, and was silent for a moment. I am only afraid, said he, with emotion, of one man, in whom I think I see many Marius's. Chance, or perhaps a more powerful destiny, made me spare him. My eyes are ever on him, I study his soul, where he hides deep purposes. But if he dares to form the design of commanding men whom I have made my equals, I swear by the Gods, I will punish his insolence.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## PERSIAN LETTERS.

By M. DE MONTESQUIEU.

### PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS ON THE PERSIAN LETTERS, By M. DE MONTESQUIEU.

Prefixed To The Quarto Edition.

THERE is nothing in the Persian Letters that has given readers so general a satisfaction, as to find in them a sort of romance, without having expected it. It is easy to discern in them the beginning, the progress, and the conclusion of it: the several different persons introduced, are connected together by a sort of a chain. The longer they reside in Europe, the less marvellous and extraordinary the manners of that part of the world begin to appear to them; and they are more or less struck with the marvellous and extraordinary, according to their different characters. Add to this, that the Asiatic seraglio grows disorderly in proportion to the time of Usbek's absence; that is to say, according as phrenzy increases in it, and love abates. There is another reason why these romances, generally speaking, succeed, and that is, because the persons introduced give themselves an account of what happens to them, which causes the passions to be felt more sensibly than any narrative made by another could do. This is likewise one of the causes of the success of some admirable works which have appeared since the Persian Letters. To conclude, in common romances digressions can never be admitted, except when they themselves constitute another romance. Reasoning cannot be intermixed with the story, because the personages not being brought together to reason, that would be repugnant to the design and nature of the work. But in the form of letters, wherein personages are introduced at random, and the subjects treated of do not depend upon any design, or plan, already formed, the author has the advantage of being able to blend philosophy, politics and morality with romance, and to connect the whole by a secret, and, as it were, undiscoverable chain. So great a call was there for the Persian Letters, upon their first publication, that the booksellers exerted their utmost efforts to procure continuations of them. They pulled every author they met by the sleeve, and said, 'Sir, I must beg the favour of you to write me a collection of Persian Letters.' But what has been said, is sufficient to convince the reader, that they do not admit of a continuation, and still less of a mixture with letters wrote by another hand, how ingenious soever. There are in them some strokes, which many have looked upon as too bold. But these are requested to take the nature of the work into consideration. The Persians, who were to play so considerable a part in it, were all on a sudden transplanted to Europe, that is, removed to another world, as it were. At a certain time, therefore, it was necessary to represent them as full of ignorance and prejudices. The author's chief design was to display the formation and progress of their ideas. Their first thoughts could not but have a dash of singularity in them: it was apprehended that there is nothing to be done but to give them that sort of singularity which is not incompatible with understanding. It was only to represent their situation of mind at seeing any thing that appeared extraordinary to them. The author, far from having a design to strike at any principle of our religion,

thought himself even free from the imputation of indiscretion. These strokes appear always connected with a manifestation of surprize, or astonishment, and not with the idea of inquiry, much less with that of criticism. In speaking of our religion, these Persians should not appear better informed than when they talk of our manners and customs. And if they sometimes seem to look upon the tenets of our religion as singular, the singularity they discover in them fully shews their ignorance of their connection with the other truths thereof. The author justifies himself in this manner, as well on account of his attachment to these important truths, as through respect for the human species, which he certainly could not have had an intention to wound in the tenderest part. The reader is therefore requested not to cease one moment to consider these strokes as the effects of surprize in persons who ought to be surprized, or as the paradoxes of men who spoke of what they did not understand. He is likewise requested to consider that the whole beauty of the invention consisted in the constant contrast between the real state of things and the singular, or whimsical manner in which they were contemplated. Certain it is, that the nature and design of the Persian Letters are so apparent and obvious, that none can mistake them, but such as have a mind to impose upon themselves.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST FRENCH EDITION.

I SHALL neither write a dedicatory epistle, nor solicit protection for this work; if it is good, it will be read, if bad, I am not anxious that it should be read by any. I have adventured the first of these letters to try the public taste; I have a great number more, which I may hereafter give. But this depends upon my not being known, for from the moment that happens, I am silent. I know a lady who walks very well, but limps if observed. There are faults enough in the work for the critics, without subjecting myself to them. If I was known, it would be said, his book is his true character; he might have engaged himself to a better purpose; it is unworthy of a grave man. The critics are never deficient in these kinds of reflections, because little wit is necessary to make them.

The Persians, who wrote these letters, lodged with me, and we passed our time together; as they regarded me as one of another world, they hid nothing from me. In fact, persons removed to such a considerable distance, could have no secrets. They communicated to me the most of their letters, which I copied; others I took which they were desirous not to entrust me with, as they exposed the jealousy and vanity of the Persian. I am no more than a translator: my whole care has been to suit this work to our manners. I have relieved the reader, as much as I could, from the Asiatic stile, and have exonerated him from the trouble of an infinite number of sublime and elevated expressions. But this is not all the service I have rendered him; I have retrenched those long compliments, of which the orientals are not less profuse than ourselves, and have passed over a great many particulars too trifling to be made public, and which ought only to live from friend to friend. If this had been observed by most of those who have published epistolary collections, many of their works would have disappeared. There is one circumstance which has often excited my admiration; that these Persians were frequently as well instructed as myself in the manners and customs of our nation, even to a knowledge of the most minute particulars, taking notice of some things which I am sure have escaped many of the Germans who have visited France. This I attribute to the long stay they made here, without considering that it is less difficult to an Asiatic to inform himself of the manners of the French in one year, than it would be to a Frenchman to acquire a knowledge of those of Asia in four years; because the one are as open as the other are reserved. Translators have been indulged by custom, even the most barbarous commentators, to decorate the head of their version, or glossary, with a panegyric on the original, and to expatiate on the usefulness, merit, and excellency of it; but this I have not done. The reasons are obvious; one of the best is, that it would be tedious, in a part of a work already too much so; I would say in a preface.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER I.

### Usbëk To His Friend Rustan At Ispahan.

AT Com we remained only one day, when, having paid our devotions at the tomb of the virgin who brought forth twelve prophets, we renewed our journey, and yesterday, the twenty-fifth since we left Ispahan, came to Tauris. Probably Rica and I are the first among the Persians, whose thirst after knowledge made them leave their own country, and renounce the pleasures of a life of ease, for the laborious search of wisdom. Though born in a flourishing kingdom, we did not think that its boundaries were those of knowledge, and that the oriental light could only enlighten us. Inform me what is said of our journey, without flattery; I do not expect that it will be generally approved. Address your letter to me at Erzeron, where I shall rest some time. Farewel, my dear Rustan; be assured that in whatever part of the world I may be, thou hast there a faithful friend.

Tauris, the 15th of the moon Saphar, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER II.

### Usbek To The First Black Eunuch, At His Seraglio In Ispahan.

THOU art the trusty keeper of the finest women in Persia: I have considered in thee what I have in the world most dear: thou holdest in thy hands the keys of the fatal doors, which are never unlocked but for me. Whilst thou watchest over this precious deposit of my heart, it reposes itself, and enjoys a perfect security. Thou keepest watch in the silence of the night as well as in the hurry of the day. Thy unwearied cares sustain thy virtue when it wavers. If the women whom thou guardest, would swerve from their duty, thou destroyest the very hope of it. Thou art the scourge of vice and the pillar of faithfulness. Thou commandest them, and thou obeyest them; thou implicitly fulfillest all their desires, and thou makest them conform to the laws of the seraglio with the same obedience: thou takest a pride in rendering them the meanest services; thou submittest to their just commands with an awful respect; thou servest them as if thou wert the slave of their slaves. But again thou resumest thy power, commandest like a master as myself, when thou fearest the relaxation of the laws of chastity and modesty. Ever remember the obscurity from which I took thee when thou wast the meanest of my slaves, to put thee in that place, and intrusted to thee the delights of my heart; observe then the deepest humility towards those who share my love; yet, at the same time, make them sensible of their very dependant state. Procure them every innocent pleasure; beguile their uneasiness, entertain them with music, dancing, and the most delicious liquors; induce them to meet together frequently. If they have a mind to go into the country, you may carry them thither; but destroy any man who attempts to come into their sight. Exhort them to observe that cleanliness, which is an emblem of the soul's purity; talk to them sometimes of me. I wish to see them again in that charming place which they adorn. Farewel.

Tauris, the 18th of the moon Saphar, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER III.

### Zachi To Usbek, At Tauris.

WE commanded the chief of the Eunuchs to remove us into the country; he will inform you that no accident happened. When we were to leave our litters to pass the river, two slaves, as usual, bore us on their shoulders, and we were so hidden as not to be at all observed. How can I be able to live in thy seraglio at Ispahan? which incessantly reminds me of my past happiness; which every day renews my desires with fresh violence? I range from apartment to apartment, ever in search of thee, and never find thee, but through the whole, meet with an afflictive remembrance of my past happiness. I sometimes behold myself in the place where I the first time received thee to my arms; again I view thee on the spot where thou didst decide that famous quarrel amongst thy wives; each of us pretending to the superiority of beauty; we presented ourselves before thee, after having exerted our imaginations to the utmost, to provide ourselves with every advantageous ornament; thou contemplatedst with pleasure, the prodigies of our art; you admired to what a height we had carried our desires to please thee. But thou soon madest those borrowed charms give place to those of nature; thou destroyedst all our labours, we were obliged to despoil ourselves of all those ornaments, which were become incommodious to thee; we were obliged to appear to thy view in the simplicity of nature. I thought nothing of modesty, glory was my only thought. Happy Usbek! What charms were then exposed to thy eyes! We beheld thee a long time, roving from enchantment to enchantment; long thy wavering soul remained unfix'd; each new grace demanded a tribute from thee; we were in a manner covered all over with thy kisses; thou carriedst thy curious looks to the most secret places; thou madest us change, in a moment, to a thousand various attitudes; thy commands were always new, and so was our obedience. I confess to thee, Usbek, a more lively passion than ambition made me hope to please thee. I saw myself insensibly become the mistress of thy heart; thou tookest me; thou quittedst me, thou tookest me again; and I knew how to retain thee; the triumph was all my own, and despair my rivals; it seemed, to us, as if we only were in the world, and all around us unworthy of our attention. Would to heaven that my rivals had had the courage to have remained to have been witnesses of all those proofs of love that I received from thee! Had they well observed my transports, they would have been sensible of the disparity between their love and mine: they would have found that though they might dispute with me for charms, they could not in sensibility. But where am I? Where does this vain recital lead me? Not to have been beloved is a misfortune; but to be so no more, an affront. Thou abandonest us, Usbek, to wander through barbarous climes But why dost thou esteem the advantage of being beloved as nothing? Alas! thou dost not know thyself what thou lovest. I utter sighs which are never heard; my tears flow and thou dost not enjoy them; it seems that love breathes in this seraglio, and thy insensibility hath removed thee from it. Ah! my dear Usbek, if thou knewest how to be happy!

From the seraglio at Fatme, the 21st of the moon Maharram, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER IV.

### Zephis To Usbek At Erzeron.

AT length the black monster has determined to make me despair. He would, forcibly, deprive me of Zelida, my slave, who served me with so much affection, and who is so handy at every graceful ornament. He was not satisfied that this separation should be grievous, he would have it also dishonourable. The traitor would treat as criminal the motives of my confidence; and because he was weary of waiting behind the door, where I always placed him, he dared to imagine that he heard or saw things which I cannot even conceive. I am very unhappy! Neither my retreat nor my virtue can secure me from unreasonable suspicions: a vile slave assaults me even in thy heart, and it is there I must justify myself. No; I have too much regard to myself to descend to a justification: I will have no other guardian of my conduct but thyself; thy love and mine, and if I must tell thee so, dear Usbek, my tears.

From the seraglio at Fatme, the 29th of the moon Maharram, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER V.

### Rustan To Usbek, At Erzeron.

THE whole conversation of Ispahan turns upon thee, thy departure is the only thing about which people talk. Some ascribe it to levity of mind, others to some disgust; thy friends only justify thee, but they persuade no one. They cannot conceive that thou canst forsake thy wives, thy relations, thy friends, and thy country, to explore climes unknown to the Persians. The mother of Rica is not to be comforted; she demands her son of thee, whom she saith thou hast carried away. As to me, dear Usbek, I am naturally led to approve of all thy proceedings, yet I know not how to pardon thy absence, and whatever reasons thou mayest offer to me, my heart will never relish them. Farewel, Love me always.

Ispahan, the 28th of the moon Rebiab, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER VI.

### Usbek To His Friend Nessir, At Ispahan.

AT the distance of one day's journey from Erivan we quitted Persia, and entered those territories subject to the Turks. Twelve days after we reached Erzeron, where we continued three or four months. I must confess to thee, Nessir, I suffered a secret concern when I lost sight of Persia, and found myself surrounded by faithless Osmanlins; and, as I advance into the country of the profane, I think I become such myself: my country, my family, my friends, present themselves to my mind, my tenderness is revived; a certain uneasiness hath completed my sorrow, and makes me sensible that I have ventured too much for my quiet. But my wives are my chief affliction; I cannot think of them but I am swallowed up in grief. It is not, Nessir, that I love them; with respect to that, I am in a state of insensibility, which leaves me no desires. The number of women I saw in the seraglio hath prevented love, and I have defeated him by himself, but this coldness itself is a kind of secret jealousy that devours me. I behold a number of women trusted almost to themselves; for I have none but some base spirited wretches to answer for their conduct. I should scarcely think myself secure though my slaves were faithful; how would it be then if they should not be so? What distressing accounts may I receive in the distant countries through which I am to pass! It is a malady for which my friends can afford no remedy; the causes of my disorder arise from a place, the melancholy secrets of which they ought to be ignorant of; and, if they could discern them, what could they do? Had not I a thousand times better let them die with silence and impunity, than make them public by correction? In thy heart, my dear Nessir, I confide all my griefs, which is the only consolation that remains to me in my present state.

Erzeron, the 10th of the moon of the second Rebiab, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER VII.

### Fatme To Usbek, At Erzeron.

THOU hast been gone two months, my dear Usbek, and, in the trouble that I am in, I cannot yet persuade myself that it is so. I run all over the seraglio, as if thou wert there, nor is my fancy disabused. What wouldest thou have become of a woman who loves thee; who hath been accustomed to hold thee in these arms; whose only concern was to give thee fresh proofs of her affection; free by the advantage of her birth, but by the violence of her love a slave? When I married thee, my eyes had never seen the face of man, thou yet art the only one they have ever been permitted to see \*; for I do not place in the order of men these hideous eunuchs, whose least imperfection is to have nothing of man. When I compare the beauty of thy countenance with their deformity, I cannot forbear esteeming myself happy. My imagination cannot supply me with a more ravishing idea than the enchanting charms of thy person. I swear to thee, Usbek, that if I should be permitted to quit this place, where I am shut up from the necessity of my condition; could I escape from the guard that surrounds me; if I were allowed to chuse from among all men who live in this capital of nations, Usbek, I swear to thee, I should chuse none but thee. Think not that thy absence has made me neglect a beauty dear to thee. Though I must not be seen by any person, and though the ornaments with which I deck myself do not contribute to thy happiness, yet I endeavour to amuse myself by a habit of pleasing; I never go to rest till I am perfumed with the most agreeable essences. I recal to my mind the happy time when you came to my arms: a flattering dream deceives me, shews me the dear object of my love; my imagination loses itself in its desires, as it flatters itself in its hopes. I sometimes think that, disgusted at a toilsome journey, thou wilt return to us; the night wears away in these kind of dreams, which are not verified either waking or asleep; I seek for thee at my side, and it seems to me that thou fliest from me; at length the fire itself which burns me, disperses these delusions, and recals my spirits; I then find myself reanimated—Thou wilt not believe it, Usbek, it is impossible to live in this condition; the fire burns in my veins. Why cannot I express to thee what I so sensibly feel? and how can I so sensibly feel what I cannot express? In these moments, Usbek, I would give the empire of the world for one of thy kisses. How unhappy is the woman who has such strong desires, when she is deprived of him who only can satisfy them, who, left to herself, has nothing that can divert her; she must live in a course of sighs, and in the fury of an irritated passion; who, far from being happy, has not the privilege of promoting the felicity of another, an useless ornament of a seraglio, kept for the honour, and not the happiness of her husband. You men are very cruel! you are delighted that we have passions which we cannot gratify, yet you treat us as if we were insensible and would be sorry if we were so; you think, that our desires, though a long time mortified, will be quickened at the sight of you. It is very difficult to make one's self be beloved; it is the best way to obtain by doubting of our understanding, what you dare not expect from your own merit. Farewel, my dear Usbek, farewel: be assured that I live only to adore thee; my soul is full of thee, and

thy absence, far from making me forget thee, would quicken my love, if it were capable of becoming more vehement.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 12th of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1711.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER VIII.

### Usbek To His Friend Rustan, At Ispahan.

THY letter was delivered to me at Erzeron, where I now am: I thought indeed my departure would make a noise, but it gives me no trouble. What wouldest thou have me follow? what my enemies think prudent, or what I myself think to be so? I appeared at court when I was very young. I may say, my heart was not at all corrupted there; I formed to myself a vast design; I dared to be virtuous there. When I knew vice, I kept at a distance from it; but I afterwards approached it to pluck off its mask. I carried truth to the foot of the throne, I spoke a language till then unknown; I disconcerted flattery, and astonished at the same time the worshippers and the idol. But when I saw my sincerity had created me enemies; that I had attracted the jealousy of the ministers, without obtaining the favour of the prince; I resolved to retire, since my feeble virtue could no longer support me in a corrupt court. I feigned to be strongly attached to the sciences, and, in consequence of that pretence, became really so. I no longer engaged myself in any affairs, but retired to a house in the country; but even this retreat had its inconveniences; I was continually exposed to the malice of my enemies, and was almost deprived of the means of safety. Some secret advice disposed me to think more seriously of myself; I resolved to banish myself from my country, and my retreat from court provided me with a plausible pretence. I waited on the king, and acquainted him with my desire to inform myself of the sciences in the west; I insinuated to him that he might be benefited by my travels; I found favour with him; I departed, and stole a victim from my enemies: see, Rustan, the true motive of my travelling. Let Ispahan talk, defend me only to those who love me; leave with my enemies their malicious interpretations; I should be happy if that were the only hurt that they could do to me; they talk of me at present, probably I shall be too much forgotten hereafter, and my friends—No, Rustan, I will not resign myself to these melancholy suspicions, I shall always be dear to them, I reckon upon their fidelity, as on thine.

Erzeron, the 20th of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER IX.

### The Chief Eunuch To Ibbi, At Erzeron.

THOU attendest thy ancient master in his travels; thou passest through provinces and kingdoms, no chagrin affects thee, each moment presents thee with fresh objects, every thing thou seest amuses thee, and makes thee pass away thy time imperceptibly. It is otherwise with me, who am shut up in a horrible confinement, surrounded continually by the same objects, and perplexed with the same cares. I groan beneath the burden of fifty years of cares and pains; and through the period of a long life, I cannot say I have seen a day's ease or a moment's quiet. When my first master formed the cruel design of confining me to the care of his wives, and induced me by promises, enforced by a thousand threats, to part with myself for ever, tired of being employed in a most toilsome service, I reckoned upon sacrificing my passions to ease and plenty. Unhappy that I was! my mind was prepossessed with the evils I should escape, but not with the loss I should sustain: I expected that an incapacity to gratify the attacks of love would secure me from it. Alas! the gratification of the passions is extinguished, but the foundation of them remained, and far from being freed from them, I found myself encompassed by objects which continually excited them. I entered the seraglio, where every thing filled me with regret for what I had lost; I felt myself provoked to love each instant, a thousand natural beauties seemed to shew themselves to my view only to torment me; and to complete my misfortune, I had always before me the happy master of these beauties. During this unhappy time, I never led a woman to my master's bed, I never undress'd one but I returned back enraged in my heart at myself, and my soul filled with a horrible despair. See how miserably I passed my youth, I had no confidant but myself, loaded with grief and care I must needs be destroyed; and those women, whom I was tempted to regard with the most tender looks, I could only behold with the most stern attention. I was ruined had they penetrated my thoughts; what advantages would they not have taken? I remember once as I put a lady into a bath, I felt myself so ravished that I entirely lost my reason, and ventured to clap my hand upon a most formidable part. On the first reflection I thought that day would be my last, I was so happy however, to escape the thousand deaths I feared; but the beauty whom I had made witness of my weakness, made me buy her silence very dear. I lost entirely my power over her, and she forced me, from that time, to compliances which, a thousand times exposed me to hazard the loss of my life. At length the fire of youth is extinguished; I am old, and I find myself, with respect to these things, in an easy condition; I regard women with indifference, and I reward them well for their contempt and all the torments which they made me feel. I always remember that I was born to govern them; and it seems to me as if I recovered my manhood, on every occasion that I have yet to command them. Since I can behold them with coldness, and my reason permits me to see all their foibles, I hate them: though it is for another I watch them, the pleasure of being obeyed affords me a secret joy, and it is as if I did it for myself, and it always gives me an indirect happiness, when I can deprive them of their pleasures. I am in the seraglio as in a little empire; and my ambition, my only remaining passion, receives some satisfaction; I

see with pleasure that all depends upon me, and that I am necessary on every occasion; I charge myself willingly with the hatred of all these women, which establishes me the more firmly in my post. So they do not find me in any affair an ungrateful man, I always prevent them in their most innocent pleasures; I ever present myself to them as a fixed barrier, they form schemes, and I suddenly frustrate them. I am armed with refusals, full of scruples, I never open my mouth but with lectures of duty, virtue, chastity, and modesty. By continually talking to them of the weakness of their sex, and of the authority of my master, I drive them to despair; afterwards I complain of the necessity I am under to be thus severe, and seem as if I would have them suppose their proper interest, and a strong attachment to them, to be my only motives. Not but that, in my turn, I suffer a number of disagreeable things from these vindictive women, who daily endeavour to repay me the evils I heap on them; there is between us a kind of interchange of empire and obedience; they are always imposing upon me the most humiliating offices; they affect an exemplary contempt, and regardless of my age, make me rise ten times in a night, on the most trifling occasion. I am continually tired with orders, commands, employments and caprices; it looks as if they alternately relieved each other to weary me with a succession of whimsies. They take a pleasure, sometimes, in making me redouble my attention, they pretend to make me their consistent; at one time they run to tell me, that a young man is seen about the walls; another time that a noise is heard, or a letter delivered, and delight themselves with laughing at the trouble and torment these things give me. Sometimes they fix me behind a door, and make me continue there night and day; they well know how to feign sickness, swoonings, or frights, and never want a pretence to gain their will of me. On these occasions I am forced to yield an implicit obedience, and boundless complaisance, for a refusal from such a man as I, would be an unheard of thing, and if I were to hesitate about obeying them, they would take a right to correct me. I would much rather, my dear Ibbi, lose life than to submit to such a mortifying state: but this is not the whole, my master's favour is not sure to me for a moment; I have too many enemies in his heart, who are all watching to ruin me, they enjoy certain seasons when I cannot be heard, seasons in which he can refuse them nothing, times in which I am ever in the wrong. I conduct women enraged to my master's bed, can you imagine they will serve me? or that my interest will be the strongest? From their tears, their sighs, their embraces, and from their very pleasures, I have every thing to fear. It is then they triumph, and that their charms become terrible to me; their present services, in an instant efface all my past ones, and to a master no longer himself, by me nothing can be answered. How frequently has it happened to me to sleep in favour, and a wake to disgrace! The day I was so disgracefully whipt round the seraglio, what had I done? I had left in my master's arms a woman, who, when she saw he was inflamed, burst into a flood of tears; she lamented, and so successfully managed her complaints, that they arose with the love she excited in him; in so critical a moment, how was I able to support myself? I was ruined when I least expected, I was the victim of an amorous intrigue, and a treaty made by figs. See, dear Ibbi, the wretched state in which I have ever lived; how happy art thou! thy cares are confined to the person of Usbek only. It is easy to please him, and to support thyself in his favour to thy latest day.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the last of the moon Saphar, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER X.

### Mirza To His Friend Usbek, At Erzeron.

IT is thou only who couldest recompense to me the absence of Rica, and there is no person but Rica who could console me for thine. We want thee, Usbek, thou wast the soul of our society; how difficult is it to dissolve the engagements which friendship and reason have formed! We have here many disputations; which turn commonly on morality. The question yesterday was, Whether the happiness of mankind consists in pleasure and sensual gratifications, or in the exercise of virtue? I have frequently heard you maintain, that virtue is the end for which we were born, and that justice is a quality as necessary to us as existence; explain to me, pray, what you mean by this. I have conversed with the Moilocks, who distract me with their quotations from the Koran; for I speak no otherwise to them than as a man, a citizen, and a father of a family, and not as a believer. Farewel.

Ispahan, the last day of the moon Saphar, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XI.

### Usbek To Mirza, At Ispahan.

THOU renoucest thy own reason to try mine: thou condescendest even to consult me; thou think est me capable of instructing thee. My dear Mirza, there is one thing which flatters me more than the good opinion thou hast conceived of me; it is what has procured it me, thy friendship. I do not think that there is need to use very abstracted reasons, to sulfil the task which thou hast prescribed to me. There are some certain truths, of which it is not sufficient to be persuaded, but men must be made even to feel them; moral truths are of this kind. Probably this historical piece may affect thee more than a philosophical subtlety. In Arabia there were a few people, named Troglodites, descendants of the ancient Troglodites, who, if we can believe our historians, resembled beasts rather than men. They were not so deformed; they were not hairy like bears; they did not hiss; they had two eyes: yet they were so wicked and brutish, that they were strangers to the principles of justice and equity. A foreign king, who reigned over them, willing to correct their natural wickedness, treated them with severity; but they conspired against him, murdered him, and exterminated all the royal family. Having struck this blow, they met to chuse a government, and after much dissention, appointed magistrates, but they were scarcely elected when they became intolerable, and were massacred. The people, freed from this new yoke, consulted only their own savageness. Every one agreed to submit to no person: that each should follow his own interest, without any attention to that of others. This general resolution was extremely pleasing to all.—They reasoned thus: “Why should I destroy myself in labouring for those who do not concern me; I will take care for myself only; I shall live happily; what is it to me how others live? I shall provide for my own wants; and if they are satisfied, what care I if all the rest of the Troglodites are miserable?”—This was seed-time: each man said, “I will only manure as much land as will supply corn sufficient for myself; a greater quantity would be useless to me; I shall not take the trouble to work in vain.” The lands of this little kingdom were not all alike; some parts were dry and mountainous; others, in the low grounds, were well watered by rivulets. This year there was a great drought, insomuch that the upper grounds failed greatly, whist those which were watered proved very fertile; the consequence was, that almost all the people who lived in the mountains perished by famine, through the hard-heartedness of those who refused to share their harvest with them. The following year was very rainy; the higher grounds proved extraordinary fruitful, whilst the lower grounds were drowned. Now the other half of the people complained of famine; but these miserable people found the mountaineers as hard-hearted as they themselves had been. One of the chief inhabitants had a very handsome wife, of whom his neighbour became in love, and forced her from him; this occasioned a strong contest, and, after many blows and outrages, they consented to submit the decision to a Troglodite, who, whilst the republic subsisted, had been in some esteem. They came to him, and were going to plead their cause before him.—“What does it concern me, said the umpire, whose wife she is, yours, or yours; I have my land to till; I cannot spend my time in determining your quarrels, not busy myself in your affairs to the

neglect of my own; pray let me be quiet, and do not trouble me with your disputes.”—Having so said, he left them, and went to work on his land. The ravisher, who was the stronger man, swore he would sooner die than restore the woman; whilst the husband, penetrated with the injustice of his neighbour, and the hardness of his judge, returned home in despair; when meeting in his way a handsome young woman, returning from a fountain, and having now no wife of his own; being pleased with her, and much more so, when he learned she was the wife of him whom he had chosen for his judge, and who had been so little sensible of his affliction; he seized on her, and forced her to go to his house. There was another man who possessed a fruitful field, which he had cultivated with great labour; two of his neighbours united together, forced him out of his house, and took possession of his field; they formed a compact to defend themselves against all those who should endeavour to take it from them, and did really support themselves several months. But one of them, tired of sharing what he might possess alone, murdered the other, and became sole master of the field; his reign was not long; two other Troglodites attacked him; and he was massacred, being too weak to defend himself. Another Troglodite, who was almost naked, asked the price of some cloth, which he saw, and wanted to buy; the draper reasoned thus with himself: “I indeed ought not to expect more money for my cloth than will buy two measures of wheat; but I will sell it for four times that advantage, that I may purchase eight measures.”—The man must needs have the cloth, and pay the price demanded; “I am very well contented, said the draper, I now shall have some wheat.” “What is it you say, replied the buyer, do you want wheat? I have some to sell, however the price perhaps may surprise you; for you know wheat is extremely dear, and that the famine is extended almost every where; but return me my money and you shall have a measure of wheat, and though you should perish by the famine, you should not have it otherwise.” In the mean time the country was ravaged by a mortal distemper; a skilful physician arrived from a neighbouring country, who administered his medicines so properly, that he cured all who put themselves under his care. When the distemper ceased, he went to those whom he had cured, to demand his pay, but refusals were all he received. He returned to his own country, tired with the fatigue of so long a journey. But a short time after, he heard that the same distemper had returned again, and more grievously afflicted those ungrateful people. They did not now wait for his coming, but went to him themselves. “Unjust men, said he, go; you have in your souls a more deadly poison than that of which you desire to be cured; you are unworthy to enjoy a place upon earth, for you are void of humanity, and the laws of equity are unknown to you. I should think it an offence against the gods, who punish you, should I oppose their just anger.”

Erzeron, the 3d of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XII.

### Ushek To The Same, At Ispahan.

THOU hast seen, my dear Mirza, how the Troglodites were destroyed by their own wickedness, and fell the victims of their own injustice. Of so many families, two only remained, who escaped the miseries of this people. There were in this country two very extraordinary men; they possessed humanity, were acquainted with justice, and loved virtue. They were as much united by the uprightness of their hearts, as by the corruption of those of others they saw the general desolation, and only shewed their sense of it by their pity; this was a new motive to union. A common solicitude, and a common interest, engaged their labours; there was no difference between them but what owed its birth to a sweet and tender friendship. In a retired part of the country, separate from their unworthy countrymen, they led a life of peace and happiness; cultivated by their virtuous hands, the earth seemed to yield its fruits spontaneously. They loved their wives, and were affectionately beloved by them. The training up their children to virtue engaged their utmost care. They continually represented to them the miseries of their countrymen, and placed their melancholy example before their eyes. They especially inculcated upon their minds, that the interest of individuals was always to be found in that of the community, and that to attempt to seek it separately, was to destroy it; that virtue is by no means a thing that ought to be burdensome to us, nor the practice of it considered as painful; that doing justice to others is acting charitably to ourselves. They soon enjoyed the consolation of virtuous parents, which consists in having children like themselves. These young people, who grew up under their care, were increased by happy marriages, and their number augmented; the same union continued, and virtue, far from being weakened by the multitude, was, on the contrary, strengthened by a greater number of examples. Who is able to represent the happiness of the Troglodites at this period! A people so just could not but be dear to the gods. They learned to reverence them as soon as they had a knowledge of them, and religion improved their morals, and softened their natural roughness. In honour of the gods they instituted feasts. The young women dressed with flowers, and the youths danced to the sound of rural music; then followed banquets, which were not less joyful than frugal. In these assemblies pure Nature spoke; it was here they learned to give and receive hearts; it was here that virgin modesty, blushing, confessed its alarms; but its wishes were soon established by the consent of fathers; and here affectionate mothers delighted themselves with the foresight of a loving and faithful union. They went to the temple to ask the favour of the gods; it was not for riches, or a burdensome superfluity; such kind of wishes were unworthy to be desired by the happy Troglodites, except only for their fellow-countrymen. They only bowed before the altars to pray for the health of their parents, the unity of their brethren, the affection of their wives, and the love and obedience of their children. Maidens came thither to offer up the tender sacrifice of their hearts, and that they might make a Troglodite happy was the only favour they asked. When the flocks at evening left the fields, and the weary oxen returned home with the plough, then these happy people met together, and, during a frugal repast, sang the crimes of

the first Troglodites, and their punishment; and the revival of virtue with a new race. They also sang the power of the gods, their favour, ever present to those who worship them, and their inevitable displeasure at those who fear them not: they afterwards described the pleasures of a rural life, and the happiness with which innocence is always adorned. They soon after resigned themselves to a repose never interrupted by any cares or uneasiness. Nature equally provided for their cares and their pleasures. In this happy country, covetousness was unknown: they made presents to each other, and the donor always supposed he had the advantage. The Troglodites ever considered themselves as one family; their flocks were mingled together, and the only trouble they excused themselves was that of separating them.

Erzeron, the 16th of the moon of the second Gemmadi, 1711.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XIII.

### Usbek To The Same.

THE virtue of the Troglodites is what I cannot speak to thee enough of. One of them once said: "My father to-morrow should labour in the field, I will rise two hours before him, and when he comes into the field he shall find all his work done."—Another said to himself: "My sister seems to like a young Troglodite, a relation of ours, I must speak to my father, that he may terminate it by a marriage."—Another being told, that some robbers had carried off his herd, "I am very sorry, said he, for there was a white heiffer, which I intended to have offered up to the gods."—Another was once heard saying; "I must go to the temple to return the gods thanks, that my brother, who is so greatly beloved by my father, and who is so dear to me, has recovered his health."—Or else: "Adjoining to a field of my father's there is another, and those who work in it are continually exposed to the heat of the sun; I must plant some trees there, that those poor men may sometimes rest themselves under the shadow of them."—One time, several Troglodites being together, an elderly man reproached a younger, whom he suspected of having committed a base action: "We do not think he has done such an action, said the others, but if he has, may his death happen the last of his family!—A Troglodite being informed, that some stranger had pillaged and carried every thing off, replied, "I could wish the gods would give them a longer use of them than I have had, were they not unjust men."—Such great prosperity was not regarded without envy. The neighbouring people gathered together, and, under a frivolous pretence, determined to take away their flocks. As soon as this resolution was known, the Troglodites sent ambassadors to them, who addressed them to this purpose: "What have the Troglodites done to you? Have they taken away your wives, stolen your cattle, or ravaged your country? No; we are just, and fear the gods. What then do you demand of us? Would you have wool to make you clothes? Would you have the milk of our flocks, or the fruits of our lands? Lay down your arms, come among us, and we will give you all these; but we swear by that which is most sacred, that if you enter our lands as enemies, we will treat you as wild beasts."—This address was treated with contempt, and the savage people entered armed into the country of the Troglodites, who, they supposed had no other defence besides their innocence. But they were well prepared for a defence; they had placed their wives and children in the midst of them, and were surprised at the injustice, but not dismayed at the numbers of their enemies. Their hearts were seized with a fresh ardour; one would lose his life for his father, another for his wife and children; this for his brethren, and that for his friends, and all of them for their country. The place of him who was killed was instantly taken by another, who besides the common cause had also a private death to revenge. Such was the combat between injustice and virtue. These base people, who sought nothing but the spoil, were not ashamed to fly, and submit to the virtue of the Troglodites, and even without being touched with a sense of it.

Erzeron the 9th of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER. XIV.

### Usbek To The Same.

AS these people, the Troglodites, every day grew more numerous, they thought it necessary to elect a king; they determined to offer the crown to him who was the most just; and cast their eyes on one venerable for his age, and a long course of virtue; but he would not attend the assembly, and retired to his own house with a heart oppressed with grief. They then sent deputies to him, to acquaint him of the choice they had made of him. “The gods forbid, said he, that I should so wrong the Troglodites, as that they should believe that there is not a more just person among them than myself. You offer me the crown, and if you will absolutely have it to be so, I must accept it; but be assured I shall die of grief, at having seen the Troglodites born free, now to see them become subject.”—At these words he lamented with a torrent of tears. “Miserable day! said he, why have I lived so long?” Then cried he, in a severer accent, “I very well perceive what is the cause, O ye Troglodites; your virtue begins to be too heavy for you. In the state you are, without a head, you are constrained to be virtuous in spite of yourselves, or you cannot subsist, but must sink into the miseries of your ancestors. But this seems too hard a yoke for you; you like better to be subject to a king, and to obey his laws, less rigid than your morals. You know that then you may gratify your ambition, gain riches, and languish in slothful luxury, and, provided you avoid falling into great crimes, you will have no want of virtue.” He ceased a little, and his tears flowed more than ever.—“And what do you expect me to do? How can it be that I should command a Troglodite any thing? Would you have him act virtuously because I command him, which he would do wholly of himself without me, and purely from a natural inclination? Oh Troglodites, I am at the end of my days, my blood is frozen in my veins, I shall soon go to revisit your holy ancestors; why would you have me afflict them, and why must I be obliged to inform them that I left you under any other yoke than that of virtue?”

Erzeron, the 10th of the moon of the 2d Gammadi, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XV.

### The First Eunuch, To Jaron, The Black Eunuch, At Erzeron.

I PRAY heaven that it may bring thee back to these parts, and defend thee from all danger. Though I have scarcely ever been sensible of that engagement which is called friendship, and am entirely swallowed up in myself, yet thou hast however made me feel that I have a heart, and at the same time that I was as brass to the rest of the slaves who lived under my command, I saw with pleasure thy infancy grow up. The time when my master cast his eyes on thee approached. Nature had not then inspired thee with its dictates, when the iron separated thee from what is natural. I will not confess whether I bewailed thee, or whether I was sensible of the pleasure of seeing thee brought into the same condition with myself. I appeased thy tears and thy cries. I imagined I saw thee undergo a second birth, and passing from a state of servitude, in which thou must always have obeyed, to engage in one in which thou oughtest always to command. I took upon myself the care of thy education. That severity, which is ever inseparable from instruction, kept thee long ignorant that thou wast dear to me. However, thou wast so to me; and I assure thee that I loved thee as a father loves his son, if the words, father and son, are compatible with our condition. Thou art to pass through countries inhabited by Christians, who have never believed: it is impossible but that thou must there contract some impurities. How can the prophet behold thee in the midst of so many millions of his enemies? I wish my master, on his return, would undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca; you would be purified in that land of angels.

From the seraglio, the 10th of the moon Gemmadi, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XVI.

### Usbek To Mollak Mehemet Ali, Guardian Of The Three Tombs, At Com.

WHY dost thou live, divine Mollak, in the tombs? Thou art better made for the abode of the stars. Thou doubtless hidest thyself through fear of obscuring the sun; thou hast no spots like that star, yet like him thou art covered with clouds. Thy knowledge is an abyss deeper than the ocean; thy wit more piercing than Zufagar, the sword of Hali, which had two points; thou art acquainted with what passes in the nine choirs of the celestial powers. Thou readest the Koran on the breast of our holy prophet, and when thou findest any obscure passage, an angel, at his command, spreads his rapid wings, to descend from the throne, to reveal to thee the secret. I may, by thy means, have an intimate correspondence with the seraphim, for, in short, thou thirteenth Iman, art thou not the centre where heaven and earth meet, the point of communication between the abyss and the empyreal heaven? I am in the middle of a profane people; permit that I may purify myself with thee; suffer me to turn my face towards thy holy place where thou dwellest. Distinguish me from the wicked, as the white thread is distinguished from the black; at the rising of Aurora, aid me with thy councils; take care of my soul; make it to drink of the spirit of the prophets; feed it with the science of Paradise, and permit that I display its wounds at thy feet. Address thy holy letters to me at Erzeron; where I shall continue some months.

Erzeron, the 11th of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XVII.

### Usbek To The Same.

I CANNOT, divine Mollak, quiet my impatience; I know not how to wait for thy sublime answer: I have doubts which must be satisfied; I perceive that my reason wanders; restore it to the right path; enlighten me, thou source of light; drive away, with thy divine pen, the difficulties I am now going to propose to thee; make me commiserate myself, and even blush at the questions I am about to ask. Why does our legislator restrain us from swine's flesh, and from all those meats which he calls unclean? Why are we forbidden to touch a corpse? And why, for the purification of our souls, are we commanded continually to wash our bodies? these things appear to me to be, in themselves, neither pure nor impure; for that they should be rendered such by any inherent quality in them, I cannot conceive. Dirt appears filthy to us, only because it is offensive to our sight, or to some other of our senses, yet in itself it is no more so than gold or diamonds. The idea of filthiness contracted by touching a dead body, arises only from a certain repugnance which we have to it. If the bodies of those who do not wash themselves neither offended our smell nor sight, how could we imagine them to be impure? Therefore the senses, divine Mollak, ought to be the only judges of the purity or impurity of things; yet, as the same objects do not affect all men in the same manner, as that which yields an agreeable sensation to some, affords an unpleasant one to others, it follows that the evidence of our senses cannot in this case serve as a rule, unless we allow that each person may, according to his own fancy, determine the point, and distinguish, for what relates to himself, what things are pure or impure. But would not this, divine Mollak, overturn all the distinctions established by our holy prophet, and the fundamental points of that law which was written by the fingers of angels?

Erzeron, the 20th of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XVIII.

### Mollak Mehemet Ali To Usbek, At Erzeron.

THOU art always offering questions which have a thousand times been proposed to our holy prophet. Why dost thou not read the traditions of the doctors? Why dost thou not go to that pure fountain of all intelligence? Thou wouldest there find all thy doubts resolved. Unhappy man! who art continually embarrassed with worldly things; having never fixed thy attention on the things of heaven; and who reverencest the order of the Mollaks, without daring to embrace or follow it! profane beings! who never enter into the secrets of the Eternal; your lights resemble the darkness of the abyss, and the reasonings of your mind are as the dust, which your feet throw up when the sun reaches the meridian in the scorching month of Chahban. Nor does the zenith of your understanding reach to the nadir of the meanest Imaum. Your vain philosophy is that lightning which foretels tempests and darkness; thou art in the midst of the storm, and carried to and fro with every gust of wind. The solution of your difficulty is very easy; nothing more is necessary but to relate to you what one day happened to our holy prophet, when being tempted by the Christians, and tried by the Jews, he equally confounded each of them. Abdias Ibesalon <sup>\*</sup>, the Jew, asked the prophet, why God had prohibited the eating of swine's flesh? "Not without reason, replied Mahomet, it is an unclean animal, and that it is so I will instantly convince you." He moulded some dirt in his hand into the figure of a man, threw it upon the ground, and cried, "Arise thou!" Immediately a man arose, and said, "I am Japhet, the son of Noah." To whom the holy prophet said, "Was thy hair as white at the time of thy death?" "No, replied he; but when thou didst awake me, I thought the day of judgment was come, and I felt so great a terror, that my hair was changed to white in a moment."—"Now relate to me, said the Sent of God, the entire history of what happened in Noah's ark." Japhet obeyed, and gave an exact account of the events of the first months, and then continued as follows: <sup>\*</sup> "All the dung of the beasts we cast to one side of the ark, which made it lean so much, that we were all terribly frightened, especially our wives, who made an horrible lamentation. Our father Noah, having taken counsel of God, he ordered him to remove the elephant to that part, and to turn his head toward the side which leaned. This huge animal made such plentiful evacuations that a hog was produced from them." Dost thou not believe, Usbek, that from this time we have abstained from this animal, and regarded it as unclean? But as this hog wallowed daily in the dung, he raised such a stench in the ark, that he himself could not help sneezing, and a rat fell from his nose, which immediately ghawed every thing he met with, and thereby he became so intolerable to Noah, that he once more thought it necessary to consult God. He ordered him to strike the lion a great blow on his forehead, who also sneezed, and from his nose leaped a cat. Dost thou not believe these animals also to be unclean? How does it appear to thee? Therefore when thou dost not comprehend the reason why certain things art unclean, it is because thou art ignorant of many other things, and hast not a knowledge of what has passed between God, the angels, and men. Thou knowest not the history of eternity; thou hast not read the books which were written in heaven; that which hath been revealed to

thee is only a small portion of the divine library; even those who, like us, have  
approached much nearer, so as to be in this kind of life, are nevertheless in obscurity  
and darkness. Farewel. May Mahomet be in thy heart.

Com, the last day of the moon Chahban, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XIX.

### Usbek To His Friend Rustan, At Ispahan.

AT Tocat we continued but eight days; after a journey of five and thirty days, we reached Smyrna. Between Tocat and Smyrna we saw only one city, which merited that name. I was surprised to see the weak state of the Osmalin empire. This distempered body does not support itself by a mild and temperate government, but by such violent remedies as incessantly exhaust and destroy it. The bashaws, who procure their employments only by the power of money, enter those provinces in a ruined condition, and ravage them as conquered countries. An insolent militia, subject only to its own caprice; the towns dismantled, the cities deserted, the country desolated, the culture of the land and commerce entirely neglected. Under this severe government impunity reigns; the Christians, who cultivate the lands, and the Jews, who collect the tribute, are exposed to a thousand outrages. The property of the lands is uncertain, and consequently the desire of increasing their value diminished; as neither title nor possession are a sufficient security against the caprice of those who have the government. These barbarians have so far abandoned the arts, that they have even neglected the military art. Whilst all Europe grows daily more refined, they remain in their ancient ignorance, and rarely think of improving by their new inventions, till they have been a thousand times employed against them. They have gained no experience at sea; no skill in naval affairs; a mere handful of Christians, the possessors of a barren rock \*, are a terror to the Ottoman race, and distress their whole empire. It is with anxiety they suffer the Christians, always laborious and enterprising, to carry on for them that commerce for which themselves are unfit; they imagine they are granting a favour, when they permit these foreigners to enrich themselves. Through this vast extent of country that I have passed, Smyrna is the only rich and powerful city that I have observed; it is the Europeans that have rendered it such, and it is no fault of the Turks that it is not in the same miserable condition with the others. See, dear Rustan, a just representation of this empire, which in less than two centuries will be the theatre of triumph to some new conqueror.

Smyrna, the 2d of the moon of Rahmazan, 1711.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XX.

### Usbek To Zachi, His Wife, At The Seraglio At Ispahan.

THOU hast offended me, Zachi, I feel emotions in my heart at which you ought to tremble, if the distance I am at did not afford thee time to alter thy conduct, and allay the excessive jealousy with which I am tormented. I am informed, that you were caught alone with Nadir, the white eunuch, whose head shall pay for his infidelity and treachery. How could you forget yourself so far as not to be sensible that it is not allowed you to receive a white eunuch into your chamber, whilst you have black ones appointed to serve you? You may say what you will to me; that these eunuchs are not men; and that your virtue raises you above all thoughts that an imperfect likeness might give birth to. This is not sufficient either for you, or for me; not for you, because you have done what the laws of the seraglio forbid; nor for me, in that you rob me of my honour, in exposing yourself to the looks; to the looks, did I say? it may be, to the attempts of a traitor, who may have defiled you by his crimes, and yet more by the repinings of his despair, and of his impotence. Perhaps you will say, that you have always continued faithful. How had you a power to be otherwise? How could you deceive the vigilance of those black eunuchs, who are astonished at the life you lead? How could you break through those bolts and doors with which you are locked up? You glory in a virtue which is not free, and perhaps your impure desires have robbed you a thousand times of the merit and value of that fidelity of which you so much boast. I will admit that you have not done all that I might reasonably suspect; that this traitor has not laid his sacrilegious hands upon you; that you have refused to indulge him with a sight of the delights of his master; that, covered with your habit, you let that weak barrier between you and him remain; that, struck with a reverential awe, he cast his eyes to the ground; that, failing in his courage, he trembled at the chastisement he was preparing for himself. Though all this should be true, it is nevertheless so, that you have acted contrary to your duty. And if you have broken through your duty for nothing, without fulfilling your irregular desires, what would you have done to gratify them? What would you do, if you could leave that sacred place, which seems to you a melancholy prison, though it is an happy asylum to your companions against the attacks of vice; an holy temple, where your sex loses its weakness, and finds itself invincible, in opposition to all the disadvantages of nature? What would you do, if, abandoned to yourself you had no other defence but your love to me, which is so grievously injured, and your own duty, which you have so basely acted against? How sacred are the manners of the country in which you live, which secure you from the attempts of the meanest slaves! You ought to thank me for the restraint I make you live under, since it is by that only that you even merit to live. The chief of the eunuchs is intolerable to you, because he is always attentive to your conduct, and affords you his sage advice. You cannot look at him, you say, without uneasiness, because he is so extremely ugly, as if the handsomest objects should be appointed to such kind of posts as his. The not having in his place the white eunuch, who dishonours you, is what afflicts you. But what has your chief slave done to you? She has told you, that the familiarities you take with young Zelida are not decent; this

is the cause of your aversion. I ought, Zachi, to be a severe judge, but I am a kind husband, who desire to find you innocent. The love I bear to Roxana, my new spouse, has not deprived me of that tenderness which I ought to entertain for you, who are not less beautiful. I divide my love between you two, and Roxana hath no other advantage but what beauty receives from the addition of virtue.

Smyrna, the 12th of the moon Zilcade, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXI.

### Usbek, To The Chief White Eunuch.

WHEN you open this letter you ought to tremble; or rather you ought to have done so when you permitted the treachery of Nadir. You who, in a cold languishing old age, may not guiltless raise your eyes to the dreadful objects of my love; you, to whom it is never allowed to put your sacrilegious foot over the threshold of the tremendous place which conceals them from the view of every human eye; you suffer those whose conduct is intrusted to your care to do what you have not boldness enough to do yourself; and are you not sensible of the thunder just ready to break on you and them? And what are you but vile instruments which I can destroy according to my humour, who exist only as long as you obey; who were born only to live under my laws, or to die at my pleasure; who do not breathe longer than my happiness, my love, and even my jealousy, have need of your servility; in short, who have no other portion but submission, no other will but my pleasure, and no hope but my happiness. Some of my wives, I know, bear with impatience the strict laws of duty; the continual presence of a black Eunuch disgusts them; they are tired with those frightful objects which are appointed to confine their affections to their husband; all this I know. But you, who have taken part in this irregularity, you shall be punished in such a manner as to make all those who have abused my confidence tremble. By all the prophets in heaven, and by Hali, the greatest of them all, I swear, that if you swerve from your duty, I will regard your life but as the life of those insects which I crush under my feet.

Smyrna, the 2d of the moon Zilcade, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXII.

### Jaron To The First Eunuch.

USBEK, in proportion as he removes further from his seraglio, turns his mind towards those women who are devoted to him: he sighs; he sheds tears; his grief augments; his suspicions gain strength. He wants to encrease the number of their guardians. He is going to send me back again, with all the blacks who attend him. His fears are not for himself, but for what is dearer to him a thousand times than himself. I return then to live under thy laws, and to divide thy cares. Alas! how many things are necessary to the happiness of one man! At the same instant that nature placed women in a dependent state, it seemed to deliver them from it; disorder arose between the two sexes, because their rights were mutual. The plan of harmony we have engaged in is new: we have put hatred between the women and us, love between the men and women. My brow is becoming stern, I shall contract a gloomy air, joy shall fly from my lips. I shall outwardly appear calm, and my mind disturbed. I shall not wait for the wrinkles of old age to shew its peevishness. I should have taken pleasure in attending my master to the west, but my will is his property. He will have me guard his women; I will watch them faithfully. I know how I ought to carry myself with the sex, which, when not allowed to be vain, becomes proud; and which it is more easy to destroy than to humble. I prostrate myself in thy presence.

Smyrna, the 12th of the moon Zilcade, 1711.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXIII.

### Usbek To His Friend Ibben, At Smyrna.

AFTER a sail of forty days, we have reached Leghorn. It is a new city, a proof of the great genius of the dukes of Tuscany, who have raised the most flourishing city in Italy from a marshy village. Here the women are greatly indulged: they may look at men through certain windows, called *jealousies*; they may go out every day, accompanied only by some old women; they wear only a single veil \*. Their brothers-in-law, uncles, and nephews may visit them; at which the husband is scarcely ever offended. The first view of a Christian city is a great sight to a Mahometan. I do not mean such things as at first view strike every spectator, as the difference of buildings, dress, and principal customs; there is, even to the minutest thing, a singularity which I know not how to describe, though I can feel it. We set out for Marseilles tomorrow; our continuance there will be short; for Rica and I design to go immediately to Paris, which is the seat of the European empire. Great cities are always the desired objects of travellers; for they are a kind of common country to all strangers. Farewel; be assured I shall always love you.

Leghorn the 12th of the moon Saphar, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXIV.

### Rica To Ibben, At Smyrna.

WE have been this month at Paris, and all the while in a continual motion. There is a good deal to be done before one can be settled, meet with all the persons one has business with, and procure every thing necessary, all which are wanted at once. Paris is as large as Ispahan. One would imagine the houses were only inhabited by astrologers, they are so lofty. Thou wilt easily judge, that a city built in the air, which has six or seven houses one on another, must be extremely populous, and that when all this world of people are come down into the streets, there must be a fine bustle. Thou wilt not, perhaps, believe, that during the month I have been here, I have not yet seen one person a walking. There is no people in the world who make better use of their machines than the French; they run; they fly; the slow carriages of Asia, the regular pace of our camels, would make them fall asleep. As for my own part, who am not made for such expedition, and who often go on foot without altering my pace, I am sometimes as mad as a Christian; for, passing over the splashing me from head to foot, I cannot pardon the punches of elbows, which I receive regularly and periodically. A man comes behind me, and passes me, turns me half round, and another who crosses me on the other side, in an instant returns me back again into my first place; and I am more bruised before I have walked a hundred paces than if I had travelled ten leagues. Thou must not expect that I can as yet give thee a perfect account of the European manners and customs; I have myself only a faint idea of them, and have scarcely had more than time to wonder. The king of France is the most puissant prince in Europe. He has not, like his neighbour the king of Spain, mines of gold; but his riches are greater than his; for he supplies them from the vanity of his subjects, more inexhaustible than those mines. He has engaged in, and supported, great wars, without any other fund than the sale of titles of honour, and his troops have been paid, his towns fortified, and his fleets fitted out, by a prodigy of human pride. This prince is, besides, a great magician; he exercises his empire even over the minds of his subjects, and makes them think as he pleases. If he has but only a thousand crowns in his treasury, and has occasion for two, he needs only tell them that one crown is worth two, and they believe it. If he has a difficult war to maintain, and has no money, he has only to put it into their heads that a piece of paper is money, and they are presently convinced of the truth of it. He even goes so far as to make them believe that he can cure them of all kinds of evils by touching them; so great is the power and influence which he has over their minds. Thou needest not be astonished at what I tell thee of this prince; there is another magician more powerful than he, who is no less master of his mind than he is of those of others. This magician is called the Pope: sometimes he makes him believe, that the bread which he eats is not bread, or that the wine which he drinks is not wine, and a thousand other things of the same nature. And, to keep him always in breath, and that he may not lose the habit of believing, he gives him, from time to time, to exercise him, certain articles of faith. It is two years since he sent him a large scroll, which he called *constitution*, and would needs oblige, under great penalties, this prince and all his subjects, to believe

every thing it contained. He succeeded with the king, who instantly submitted, and set an example to his subjects; but some among them revolted, and declared they would believe nothing of all that was contained in the scroll. The women are the movers of this rebellion, which divides the whole court, all the kingdom, and every family in it. This *constitution* prohibits the women reading a book, which all the Christians say was brought down from heaven; which is properly their Koran. The women, enraged at this affront offered to their sex, raise all their force against the *constitution*; they have gained the men to their party, who, on this occasion, will not receive their privilege. The Mufti, it must be owned, does not reason amiss; and, by the great Hali, it must be, that he has been instructed in the principles of our holy faith; for, since the women are an inferior creation to ours, and our prophets inform us, that they will not enter into Paradise, for what end should they concern themselves in reading a book, which is only designed to teach the way to Paradise? Some miraculous things I have heard related to the king, which I doubt not but you will hesitate to believe. It is said, that whilst he made war against his neighbours, who were all leagued against him, he had in his kingdom an infinite number of enemies, who surrounded him. They add, that he searched for them above thirty years, and that, notwithstanding the unwearied pains of some dervises, who have his confidence, he could never discover one. They live with him; are in his court, in his capital, in his troops, in his tribunals; yet it is said, he will have the mortification to die without finding one of them. They may be said to have a general existence, and to have nothing of individuality; it is a body, but without members. Doubtless it is heaven that would punish this prince, for not having been sufficiently moderate towards his conquered enemies, since it hath raised up against him invisible ones, whose genius and appointment are superior to his own. I shall continue to write to you, and to acquaint you with things extremely remote from the character and genius of the Persians. It is indeed the same earth that bears us both; yet the men of the country in which I live, and those of that which thou inhabitest, are very different kinds of men.

Paris, the 4th of the moon of the 2d Rebiah, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXV.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

I HAVE received a letter from thy nephew Rhedi, who acquaints me with his design to see Italy, and that the sole view of his voyage is to improve himself, and thereby to render himself more worthy of thee. I congratulate thee, on having a nephew who will one day be the comfort of thy old age. Rica writes thee a long letter; he tells me that he gives thee a large account of this country. The quickness of his understanding makes him apprehend every thing with ease; as to me, who conceive more slowly, I cannot at present inform thee of any thing. Thou art the subject of our most tender conversations; we can never talk enough of the kind reception you afforded us at Smyrna; nor of the friendship thou renderedst us. Mayest thou, generous Ibben, find every where friends, as grateful and as faithful as we! May I soon see thee again, and once more enjoy with thee those happy days, which pass so sweetly between two friends. Farewel.

Paris, the 4th of the moon of the 2d Rebiab, 1712.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXVI.

### Usbek To Roxana, At The Seraglio At Ispahan.

HOW happy art thou, Roxana, to be in the delightful country of Persia, and not in these poisoned climes, where neither virtue nor modesty are known! How happy art thou! Thou livest in my seraglio, as in the abode of innocence, secure from the attempts of all mankind! you, with pleasure, experience a happy inability to go astray; never did man pollute you with his lascivious looks; during the freedom of festivities even your father-in-law never saw your fine mouth; you never neglected to cover it with a holy veil. Happy Roxana! whenever you have gone into the country, you have always had eunuchs to march before, to punish with death the temerity of those who did not fly from your sight. Even I myself, to whom heaven gave you to make me happy, how much trouble have I had to render myself master of that treasure, which with so much constancy you defended! How distressing to me, during the first days of our marriage, not to see you! And how impatient when I had beheld you! Yet you would not satisfy it; on the contrary you increased it, by the obstinate refusals of your bashful alarms; you did not distinguish me from all other men, from whom you are always concealed. Do you recollect the day I lost you among your slaves, who betrayed me, and hid you from my searches? Do you remember another time, when, finding your tears insufficient, you engaged the authority of your mother, to stop the eagerness of my love? Do you remember, when every other resource failed you, those you found in your own courage? You took a dagger, and threatened to sacrifice a husband who loved you, if he persisted in requiring of you what you prized more than your husband himself. Two months passed in the struggle between love and modesty. You carried your modest scruples too far; you did not even submit after you were conquered. You defended to the last moment a dying virginity; you regarded me as an enemy who had done you a wrong, not as a husband who had loved you; you was above three months before you could look at me without a blush; your bashful looks seemed to reproach me with the advantage I had taken. I did not enjoy even a quiet possession; you deprived me of all those charms and graces that you could; and without having obtained the least favours, I was ravished with the greatest. If your education had been in this country, here you would not have been so troublesome. The women here have lost all modesty; they present themselves before the men with their faces uncovered, as though they would demand of them their defeat; they watch for their looks; they see them in thier mosques, their public walks, and even by themselves; the service of eunuchs is unknown to them. In the room of that noble simplicity, and that amiable modesty which reigns amongst you, a brutal impudence prevails, to which it is impossible to be accustomed. Yes, if thou wert here, Roxana, you would be enraged at the wretched shamefulnes to which your sex is degenerated; you would fly these polluted places, and sigh for that sweet retreat, where you find innocence, and yourself secure, and where no dangers terrify you: in a word, where you can love me without fear of ever losing that love for me which is my due. When you heighten your beautiful complexion with the finest colours; when you presume your whole body with the most precious effences, when you deck yourself with the

richest dresses, when you endeavour to distinguish yourself from your companions by your graceful motions in dancing, and when, by the sweetness of your voice, you pleasingly dispute with them charms, affability, and gaiety, I cannot imagine you have any other object to please but myself; and when I see your modest blush, that your eyes seek mine, that you insinuate yourself into my heart by your soft alluring speeches, I cannot, Roxana, suspect your love. But what can I think of the European women? The art which forms their complexion, the ornaments they use in dress, the pains which they take with their persons, the constant desire to please that possesses them, are blemishes in their virtue, and affronts to their husbands. It is not, Roxana, that I suspect they carry their incroachments upon virtue to such a length as their conduct might lead one to believe; or that they carry their defection to such a horrid excess, that makes one tremble, as really to violate the conjugal vow. There are few women abandoned enough to go this length; they all bear in their hearts a certain impression of virtue, naturally engraved on them, which though their education may weaken, it cannot destroy. Though they may decline the external duties which modesty exacts; yet when about to take the last step, nature returns to their help. Thus when we shut you up closely, when we make you be guarded by so many slaves, when we so strongly restrain your desires when they would range too far; it is not that we fear the least infidelity; but because we know that purity cannot be too great, and that by the least stain it may be polluted. I pity you, Roxana; your chastity, so long tried, merited a husband who would never have left you, and who might himself have satisfied those desires which can be subdued by your virtue alone.

Paris, the 7th day of the moon Regeb, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXVII.

### Usbek To Nessir, At Ispahan.

WE are at present at Paris, that proud rival of the city of the Sun \*. I engaged my friend Ibben, when I left Smyrna, to send a box to thee, containing some presents for thee; by the same means thou wilt receive this letter. Though removed at so great a distance from him, as five or six hundred leagues, I send my letters to him, and receive his, with as much facility as if he was at Ispahan, and myself at Com. My letters I send to Marseilles, from whence there are vessels going continually to Smyrna; from thence, those intended for Persia, he sends by the Armenian caravans, which are constantly departing for Ispahan. Rica enjoys perfect health; his strong constitution, youth, and natural chearfulness, render him superior to every affliction. But, for my own part, I am not well; my body and mind are both depressed; I give myself up to reflections which every day become more melancholy; my health, which is impaired, turns my mind towards my own country, and renders this country still more foreign to me. But I conjure thee, dear Nessir, take care that my wives may be ignorant of the condition I am in; for if they love me, I would spare their fears; and if they love me not, I would not increase their boldness. If my eunuchs believed me in danger, if they could hope their base compliance would pass unpunished; they would soon cease to be deaf to the flattering voice of that sex, which can melt rocks, and move things inanimate. Farewel, Nessir; it is a happiness to me to afford thee proofs of my confidence.

Paris, the 5th day of the moon of Chahban, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXVIII.

Rica To \* \* \*.

YESTERDAY I saw a very extraordinary thing, though it happens every day at Paris. After dinner, towards evening, all the people assemble to act a kind of mimicry, which I heard called a play. The performance is in a place called a theatre; on each side are little nooks, called boxes, in which the men and women act together dumb scenes; something like those in use in Persia. Here you see a languishing love-sick lady; another more animated eagerly ogling her lover, whose returns are as ardent; all the passions are painted in their faces, and expressed by an eloquence which, though dumb, is not the less lively. Here, the actresses expose but half their bodies, and commonly, cut of modesty, wear a muff to conceal their arms. In the lower part of the theatre is a troop of people standing, who ridicule those who are above, and they in their turn, laugh at those below. But those who put themselves to the greatest trouble, are some who take the advantage of their youth to support the fatigue of it. They are forced to be every where, they go through passages known only to themselves, they mount, with extraordinary activity from story to story; they are above, below, and in every box; they dive, if I may so speak; they are lost this moment, and appear again the next; they often leave the place of scene, and go to play in another. Now there are others, though such a prodigy is not to be expected, seeing they use crutches, who walk and move about like the others. You come, at length, to some rooms where they act a private comedy. This commences with low bows, continued by embraces; the slightest acquaintance, they say, gives a man a right to squeeze another to death. This place seems to inspire tenderness; in fact, they say, that the princesses who reign here are not cruel, and excepting two or three hours a day, in which they are hard-hearted enough, one must allow that they are very tractable, and that the other humour is a kind of drunkenness which they easily quit. All that I have been relating to you, is pretty nearly transacted in another place, called the Opera-house; all the difference is, that they speak at the one, and sing at the other. A friend of mine, the other day, took me into a room where one of the principal actresses was undressing; we became so intimate, that the next day I received from her the following epistle.

“Sir,

“I am the most unhappy woman in the world. I have been always the most virtuous woman in the whole opera. Seven or eight months ago, as I was dressing myself for a priestess of Diana, in the same room you saw me in yesterday, a young abbot came in, and regardless of my white habit, my veil, or my frontlet, deprived me of my innocence. I have in vain remonstrated to him the sacrifice I made to him, he only laughs, and maintains he found me a very profane woman. In the mean time I dare not come upon the stage I am so big; for I am, with respect to honour, inconceivably delicate, and I always insist, that to a woman well born it is more easy to lose her virtue than her modesty. With this delicacy, you may readily judge, that the young

abbot had never succeeded, if he had not made to me a promise of marriage; such a lawful motive induced me to pass over those little usual formalities, and to begin where I ought to have concluded. But since his infidelity has dishonoured me, I will no longer continue at the opera, where, between you and me, they scarcely give me sufficient for my support; for, at present, that I advance in years, and lose the advantage of charms, my salary, though the same, seems to diminish daily. I have learned from one of your attendants, that in your country a good dancer is highly esteemed, and that if I was at Ispahan, my fortune would be quickly made. If you would take me under your protection, you would have the praise of doing good to a woman, who by her virtue and prudent conduct, would not render herself unworthy of your generosity. I am, &c.”

From Paris the 2d of the moon of Chalval, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXIX.

### Rica To Ibben At Smyrna.

THE Pope is the head of the Christians; an old idol whom they reverence through custom. He was heretofore terrible even to princes themselves; for he deposed them as easily as our magnificent sultans do the kings of Iremetta and Georgia; but he is no longer feared. He says he is the successor of one of the first Christians, named Saint Peter; and it is certainly a rich succession, for he hath immense treasures, and a large country under his dominion. The bishops are the men of the law, who are subject to him, and have, under his authority, two very different functions. Articles of faith are constituted by them as well as by himself, when they are assembled together. When they are separated, the business of their function is no other, than to dispense with the fulfilment of the law. For the Christian religion, thou must know, is loaded with a vast number of very difficult practices, and as it is judged less easy to fulfil those obligations, than to have bishops to dispense with them, they have, for the public benefit, taken the latter method, in such a manner, that if they are not willing to observe the fast of Rahmazan \*, if unwilling to subject them to the formalities of marriage, if they would break their vows, if they would marry contrary to the appointment of the law; nay, sometimes if they are desirous not to abide by their oath, they go to the Bishop or Pope, who presently grants a dispensation. The bishops do not make articles of faith of their own proper accord. There is a prodigious number of doctors, for the most part dervises, who raise among themselves new questions in religion, which are lest in dispute a long time, and the contention subsists until a decision comes to terminate it. I can also affirm to thee, that there never was a kingdom where there has been so many civil wars as in that of Christ. Those who publish any new proposition, are at once called heretics; each heresy has its own name, which is used in ridicule to those who engage in it. But no man need to be an heretic unless he will; he has only to divide the difference in the middle, and admit a distinction to those who charge him with heresy, and provided there be a distinction, intelligible or not, he purifies himself as white as snow, and may make himself esteemed orthodox. What I tell you does very well in France and Germany; but I have heard that in Spain and Portugal the dervises do not relish jesting, and will burn a man as readily as they would straw. When a man comes into the hands of these people there, it is happy for him if he has always prayed to God with little wooden balls in his hands, that he has carried about with him pieces of cloth fastened to two ribbons, and that he has been sometimes in the province of Galicia; otherwise the poor devil is terribly embarrassed. Though he should swear like a pagan that he is orthodox, it is possible they may not admit his plea, and may burn him for an heretic, it is to no purpose for him to make distinctions, away with distinctions, he shall be in ashes before they even think of hearing him. The judges here commonly presume upon the innocence of the accused; there they always suppose the party culpable. If in doubt, it is their custom to determine on the side of severity; probably because they think badly of mankind; but the others conceive so well of them that they never judge them capable of a lie, for they receive the testimony of mortal enemies, of loose women, of

such who follow an infamous calling. The others in their sentence pay a slight compliment to those whom they dress up in a shirt painted with flames of fire; and assure them that they are extremely concerned to see them so badly habited; that their own disposition is to mercy; that they abhor blood, and that they are grieved at having condemned them. But for their own consolation, they confiscate to their own emolument all the effects of the miserable sufferers. Happy the land which is possessed by the children of the prophets! There these melancholy spectacles are unknown \*. The holy religion brought there by angels, maintains its power by truth itself; it needs no cruel means for its support.

Paris, the 4th of the moon Chalval, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXX.

### Rica To The Same, At Smyrna.

THE people of Paris are curious to an extravagant degree. When I came here I was stared at as if I had been sent from heaven; old and young, men, women, and children, all must have a peep at me. If I went out, every body was at their window; if I walked in the Thuilleries, I was presently surrounded by a circle; the women formed a rainbow about me, variegated with a thousand colours; if I attended the public shows, my strange figure attracted a hundred spying glasses; in short, never was a man so much looked at as myself. I smiled sometimes at hearing persons, who but scarcely ever stirred from their chamber, whispering to each other, it must be allowed he has much of the air of a Persian. But what is very wonderful, I met with my own picture every where, saw myself multiplied in every shop, upon every chimney-piece; so fearful were they of not seeing me sufficiently. All these honours however are only burdensome; I did not imagine I was so curious, or so extraordinary a person; and though I think very well of myself, I never imagined I should have disturbed the quiet of a great city where I was wholly unknown. This determined me to quit my Persian dress, and put on that of an European, to try if my physiognomy would yet retain any of the wonderful. This experiment convinced me of what I really was; divested of these foreign ornaments I found myself properly rated. I had occasion enough to be displeased with my taylor for making me lose all public regard and attention, for I at once sunk into a contemptible nothingness. I was sometimes an hour in company without being the least noticed, and without any body's giving me occasion to speak. But if by chance any one informed the company that I was a Persian, there was a buz around me; ha! ha! the gentleman a Persian! very strange, that any one should be a Persian!

Paris, the 6th of the moon Chalval, 1712.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXI.

### Rhedi To Usbek, At Paris.

I AM at present, my dear Usbek, at Venice. After seeing all the cities in the world, a person may be surprised on his arrival at Venice; it will always excite wonder to see a city whose spires and mosques rise out of the water, and to meet with an innumerable people in a place where naturally fishes ought only to be found. But this profane city wants the most precious treasure in the world, that is, pure water; it is impossible here to perform a single legal ablution. This city is an abomination to our holy prophet, who never beholds it from the height of heaven but with indignation. Was it not for this, my dear Usbek, I should be delighted to spend my life here, where my understanding is every day improved. I gain a knowledge of commercial secrets, the interests of princes, their method of government; nor do I even despise the European superstitions; I apply to medicines, physics, astronomy; I study the arts; in short, I get out of the clouds in which I was enveloped in my native country.

Venice, the 16th of the moon Chalval, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXII.

Rica To \* \* \*.

THE other day I went to see a house where a mean provision is made for about three hundred persons. I had soon done, for the church and the buildings are not worth regarding. The inhabitants of this house are very chearful, many of them play together at cards, or at other games that I do not understand. As I was coming away, one of these men was going out also, and hearing me enquire the way to Murais, which is the most extreme quarter of all Paris, "I am going there, said he to me, and I will conduct you there; follow me." He guided me admirably, cleared me from crouds, and saved me very dextrously from coaches and carriages. Our walk was pretty near at an end when my curiosity prompted me: "My good friend, said I to him, may I not know who you are?" "I am, Sir, replied he, a blindman." "How? said I to him, are you blind? And why did you not desire the honest man you was playing at cards with to conduct us?" "He is blind also, replied he; there hath been for this four hundred years, three hundred blind persons in the house where you met with me; but I must leave you, there is the street you asked for; I must join the crowd to go into that church, where I dare swear I shall be a greater obstruction to others than they to me."

Paris, the 17th of the moon Chalval, 1712.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXIII.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

AT Paris, wine is so extremely dear, on account of the duties laid on it, that it seems as if it was designed to fulfil the commands of the divine Koran, which prohibits the drinking of it. When I think upon the melancholy, fatal effects of this liquor, I cannot avoid considering it as the most dreadful present that nature hath made to mankind. If any thing ever disgraced the lives and characters of our monarchs, it hath been their intemperance; it hath been the most empoisoned spring from whence have issued all their injustice and cruelty. I must needs say, to the disgrace of these men, the law prohibits our princes the use of wine, and yet they drink it to an excess that degrades them of humanity; this custom, on the contrary, is indulged to the Christian princes, and never observed to lead them into any crime. The mind of man is a contradiction to itself. During a licentious debauch they transgress the precepts, and the law made to render us just, serves only to render us more culpable. Yet when I disapprove of the use of this liquor, which destroys our reason, I do not at the same time condemn those beverages which exhilarate the mind. The Orientals are so wise, as to inquire after remedies against melancholy, with the same solicitude as for more dangerous disorders. When any misfortune happens to an European, he hath no other resource but to read a philosopher called Seneca: but the Asiatics, more sensible than they, and in this case better naturalists, drink a liquor capable of chearing the heart, and of charming away the remembrance of its sufferings. There is nothing so distressing as the consolations drawn from the necessity of evil, the inefficacy of medicines, the irreversibleness of fatality, the decrees of providence \*, and the miserable condition of humanity. It is mockery to attempt to soften evils by the consideration, that it is the consequence of our being born; it is much better to divert the mind from its reflections, and to treat man as a being susceptible of sensation, rather than reason. The soul united to a body is continually under its tyrannical power. If the blood moves too slowly, if the spirits are not sufficiently pure, if they are not enough in quantity, we become dejected and melancholy; but if we make use of such liquors that can change the disposition of our bodies, our soul again becomes capable of receiving pleasing ideas, and is sensible of a secret pleasure in perceiving its machine recover, as it were, its life and motion.

Paris, the 25th of the moon Zilcade, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXIV.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

THE women of Persia are finer than those of France, but those of this country are prettier. It is difficult not to love the first, and not to be pleased with the latter; the one are more delicate and modest, and the others more gay and airy. What in Persia renders the blood so pure, is the regular life the women observe, they neither game nor sit up late, they drink no wine, and do not expose themselves to the open air. It must be allowed that the seraglio is better adapted for health than for pleasure; it is a dull uniform kind of life, where every thing turns upon subjection and duty; their very pleasures are grave, and their pastimes solemn, and they seldom taste them but as so many tokens of authority and dependence. The men themselves in Persia are not so gay as the French; there is not that freedom of mind, and that appearance of content, which I meet with here in persons of all estates and ranks. It is still worse in Turkey, where there are families in which from father to son, not one of them ever laughed from the foundation of the monarchy. The gravity of the Asiatics arises from the little conversation there is among them, who never see each other but when obliged by ceremony. Friendship, that sweet engagement of the heart, which constitutes here the pleasure of life, is there almost unknown. They retire within their own house, where they constantly find the same company; insomuch that each family may be considered as living in an island detached from all others. Discoursing one time on this subject with a person of this country, he said to me, that which gives me most offence among all your customs is the necessity you are under of living with slaves, whose minds and inclinations always savour of the meanness of their condition. Those sentiments of virtue which you have in you from nature are enfeebled and destroyed by these base wretches who surround you from your infancy. For, in short, divest yourself of prejudice, and what can you expect from an education received from such a wretch, who places his whole merit in being a jailer to the wives of another man, and takes a pride in the vilest employment in society? who is despicable for that very fidelity which is his only virtue, to which he is prompted by envy, jealousy, and despair? who, inflamed with a desire of revenging himself on both sexes, of which he is an out-cast, submitting to the tyranny of the stronger sex, provided he may distress the weaker; a wretch who, deriving from his imperfection, ugliness, and deformity, the whole lustre of his condition, is valued only because he is unworthy to be so; who, in short, rivetted for ever to the gate where he is placed, and harder than the hinges and bolts which secure it, boasts of having spent a life of fifty years in so ignoble a station, where, commissioned by his master's jealousy, he exercises all his cruelties.

Paris, the 14th of the moon Zilhade, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXV.

### Usbek To Gimchid, His Cousin, Dervise Of The Shining Monastery Of Tauris.

WHAT dost thou think, sublime dervise, of the Christians? Dost thou believe, that at the day of judgment it will be with them as with the unbelieving Turks, who will serve the Jews for asses, and to carry them in a high trot to hell? I well know that their abode will not be with the prophets, and that the great Haly is not come for their sakes. But dost thou believe they will be sentenced to eternal punishment, because they have been so unhappy as to find no mosques in their country? and that God will punish them for not practising a religion that he never made known to them? I can assure thee I have frequently examined these Christians; I have questioned them, to see if they had any idea of the great Haly, who was the most excellent of mankind, and have found that they have never so much as heard him mentioned. They are not like those infidels whom our holy prophet put to the sword, for refusing to believe in the miracles of heaven; but rather like those unhappy people who lived under the darkness of idolatry, before the divine light illuminated the face of our great prophet. Again, if you search their religion closely, you will find some seeds of our doctrines. I have often admired the secret dispositions of providence, which seems thereby willing to prepare them for a general conversion. I have heard speak of a book of their doctors called *Polygamy Triumphant*, in which is proved, that polygamy is enjoined to Christians. Their baptism is an emblem of our legal washings; and the Christians only mistake in the efficacy that they ascribe to this primary ablution, which they believe sufficient for every other. Their priests and monks, like us, pray seven times a day. They hope to enjoy a paradise, where they shall taste a thousand delights, by the means of the resurrection of their bodies. They have, as well as we, set fasts, and mortifications, by which they hope to incline the divine mercy. They worship good angels, and fear the evil. They pay a holy credulity to the miracles which God works by the ministry of his servants. They acknowledge, as we do, the insufficiency of their own merits, and the need they have of an intercessor with God. I see Mahometism throughout the whole, though I do not there find Mahomet. Do all we can, truth will prevail and shine through the cloud that surrounds it. A day will come, when the Eternal will see none upon earth but true believers. Time, which consumes all things, will destroy even errors themselves. All mankind will be astonished to find themselves under the same standard. All things, even to the law itself, shall be done away; the divine examplers will be taken up from the earth, and carried to the celestial archives.

Paris, the 20th of the moon Zilhage, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXVI.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

COFFEE is very much used at Paris; here are a great many public houses where they sell it. In some of these houses they talk of news, in others they play at draughts. There is one where they prepare the coffee in such a manner, that it inspires the drinkers of it with wit; at least, of all those who frequent it, there is not one person in four who does not think he has more wit after he has entered that house. But what offends me in these wits is, that they do not make themselves useful to their country, and that they trifle away their talents on childish things. For instance, at my arrival in Paris, I found them very warm about the most trifling controversy imaginable; they were disputing about the character of an old Greek poet, of whose country, and the time of his death, they have been ignorant these two thousand years. Both parties allowed he was an excellent poet; the question was only whether he had more or less merit ascribed to him than he deserved. Each was for settling the value, but amidst these distributors of reputation, some made better weight than others; such was the quarrel. It has been very fierce, for they so heartily abused each other, and were so bitter in their raillery, that I did not less admire the manner of their dispute, than the subject of it. If any one, said I to myself, should be giddy-headed enough in the company of these defenders of this Greek poet, to attack the reputation of an honest citizen, he would be but badly received! and surely this zeal, so delicate for the reputation of the dead, would be inflamed in defence of that of the living! But however that may be, added I, may I ever be defended from the censors or this poet, whose abode of two thousand years in the grave has not defended him from so implacable an hatred; they now do but beat the air, but how would it be, if their fury was animated by the presence of an enemy? These I have been speaking of, dispute in the vulgar tongue, and must be distinguished from another kind of disputants, who make use of a barbarous language, which seems to augment the fury and obstinacy of the combatants. There are particular quarters of the town where these people engage as in a battle, night and day; they, as it were, feed themselves with distinctions, and live upon obscure reasonings, and false consequences. This trade, by which it should seem no bread could be got, yet does not fail answering. A whole nation, expelled their own country, hath been seen to pass the seas, to settle in France, bringing nothing with them to ward off the necessities of life, but a formidable talent for disputation. Farewel.

Paris, the last day of the moon of Zilhage, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXVII.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

THE king of France is old; we have not one instance in our history, of a monarch who reigned so long. He is said to possess to a very great degree the art of making himself obeyed; he governs with the same spirit, his family, his court, and his kingdom; he hath often been heard to say, that of all the governments in the world, that of the Turks, or of our august Sultan, pleased him best; so highly does he esteem the politics of the East! I have studied his character, and have discovered in it contradictions impossible for me to solve: for example, he hath a minister who is not above eighteen years old, and a mistress turned of fourscore; he loves his religion, and yet cannot bear those who say it ought to be rigorously observed; though he avoids the tumult of cities, and is little communicative, yet he is busy from morning to evening, what he may do to be talked of; he is very fond of trophies and victories, but he fears as much to see a good general at the head of his troops as he would have cause to do one at the head of his enemies troops. It never happened, I believe, but to himself, to be at the same time loaded with more riches than a prince could wish to be, and to be oppressed with a poverty that a private person could not be able to sustain. He loves to reward those who serve him; but he rewards as liberally the assiduity, or rather the idleness of his courtiers, as the laborious campaigns of his generals. He oftentimes prefers a man who undresses him, or gives him a napkin when he sits down to table, preferable to another who takes cities, or gains battles for him; he does not think that the grandeur of a sovereign ought to be restrained in the distribution of favours, and without examining whether the man he loads with his favours hath real merit, he thinks his choice capable of rendering him such; accordingly he hath been known to bestow a small pension on a man who run away two leagues from the enemy, and a good government to another who run twice that length. He is magnificent above all in his buildings; he has more statues in his palace-gardens than there are inhabitants in a great city. His guard is as strong as that of the prince before whom all other thrones are debased; his armies are equally numerous, his resources as many, and his finances as inexhaustible.

Paris, the 7th of the moon Maharan, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXVIII.

### Rica To Ibben, At Smyrna.

WHETHER it is better to deprive women of their liberty, or to permit it them? is a great question among men; it appears to me that there are good reasons for and against this practice. If the Europeans urge that there is a want of generosity in rendering those persons miserable whom we love: our Asiatics answer, that it is meanness in men to renounce the empire which nature has given them over women. If they are told that a great number of women, shut up, are troublesome, they reply, that ten women in subjection are less troublesome than one who is refractory. But they object in their turn, that the Europeans cannot be happy with women who are faithless to them; they reply, that this fidelity, of which they boast so much, does not hinder that disgust, which always follows the gratification of the passions; that our women are too much ours; that a possession so easily obtained, leaves nothing to be wished or feared; that a little coquetry provokes desire, and prevents disgust. Perhaps a man wiser than myself would be puzzled to decide this question; for if the Asiatics do very well to find out proper means to calm their uneasiness, the Europeans also do as well to have uneasiness. After all, say they, though we should be unhappy as husbands, we should always find means to recompence ourselves as lovers. For that a man might have reason to complain of the infidelity of his wife, it must be that there should be but three persons in the world, they will always be at even hands when there are four. Another question among the learned is, Whether the law of nature subjects the women to the men? No, said a gallant philosopher to me the other day, nature never dictated such a law. The empire we have over them is real tyranny, which they only suffer us to assume, because they have more good nature than we, and in consequence more humanity and reason. These advantages, which ought to have given them the superiority, had we acted reasonably, have made them lose it, because we have not the same advantages. But if it is true that the power we have over women is only tyrannical, it is no less so that they have over us a natural empire, that of beauty, which nothing can resist. Our power extends not to all countries, but that of beauty is universal. Wherefore then do we hear of this privilege? Is it because we are the strongest? But this is really injustice. We employ every kind of means to reduce their spirits. Their abilities would be equal with ours, if their education was the same. Let us examine them in those talents which education hath not enfeebled, and we shall see if ours are as great. It must be acknowledged, though it is contrary to our custom, that among the most polite people, the women have always had the authority over their husbands; it was established among the Egyptians, in honour of Isis, and among the Babylonians, in honour of Semiramis. It is said of the Romans, that they commanded all nations, but obeyed their wives. I say nothing of the Sauromates, who were in perfect slavery to the sex, they were too barbarous to be brought for an example. Thou seest, my dear Ibben, that I have contracted the fashion of this country, where they are found of defending extraordinary opinions, and reducing every thing to a paradox. The prophet hath determined the question, and settled the rights of each sex; the



women, says he, must honour their husbands, and the men their wives; but the husbands are allowed one degree of honour more.

Paris, the 26th of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XXXIX.

### Hagi\*Ibbi To The Jew Ben-Joshua, A Mahometan Proselyte, At Smyrna.

IT appears to me, Ben-Joshua, that there are always some amazing prodigies preparative to the birth of extraordinary persons, as if nature suffered a kind of crisis, and the celestial power could not bring forth without a struggle. There is nothing of this kind so marvellous as the birth of Mahomet. God, who had determined by the decrees of his providence from the beginning, to send to mankind this great prophet, to chain up Satan, created a light four thousand years before Adam, which descending from elect to elect, from ancestor to ancestor of Mahomet, descended at length to him, as an authentic testimony, of his descent from the patriarchs. For the sake of this very prophet it was, that God decreed that no child should be conceived, but the woman should cease to be unclean, and the man should be circumcised. He was born circumcised, and joy smiled on his face from his birth; thrice the earth trembled as if she herself had brought forth; all the idols prostrated themselves, and the thrones of kings were overturned; Lucifer was cast down into the bottom of the sea, and it was not till after forty days, that he immersed from the abyss, and fled to Mount Cabes, from whence, with a terrible voice, he called upon the angels. This same night God fixed a bound between the man and woman, which neither of them can pass. The art of the magicians and necromancers failed; a voice was heard from heaven speaking these words: "I have sent into the world my faithful friend." According to the testimony of Isben Aben, an Arabian historian, the generation of birds, clouds, winds, and all the host of angels met together to bring up this child, and disputed the preference. The birds, in their warbling, said they were best fitted to educate him, because they could more easily collect together the several fruits from different parts. The winds murmured, and said, it is rather us, because we can convey to him from all places the most delightful odours. No, no, said the clouds, no; it is to us the care of him ought to be consigned, for we will continually bear to him the coolness of the waters. From above the angels, indignant, cried out, what will there remain for us to do? But a voice from heaven was heard, which determined all disputes; he shall not be removed out of the hands of mortals, because happy are the breasts that shall give him suck, the hands that shall hold him, and the bed on which he shall rest! after so many striking evidences, my dear Joshua, the heart of man must be steeled not to believe his holy law. What could heaven do more to authorize his divine mission, unless nature itself had been overturned, and all mankind had been destroyed whose conviction it designed?

Paris, the 20th of the moon Rhegeb, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XL.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

ON the death of a great man they assemble in a mosque to pronounce his funeral oration, which is a discourse in praise of him; from which it is very difficult to determine justly the merit of the deceased. I would abolish these funeral pomps. The birth, not the death of men should be mourned. To what end do these ceremonies serve, and all their mournful show to a dying man in his last moments? even the tears of his family, and the grief of his friends, do but exaggerate to him the loss he is about to sustain. We are so blind, that we know not how to time our sorrow nor our joy; we have scarcely ever any but false joys and false sorrows. When I see the Mogul, who every year goes to weigh himself in a balance, to be weighed like an ox; when I see the people rejoice that their prince is become more gross, that is, less fit to govern them, I have pity, Ibben, on human extravagance.

Paris, the 20th of the moon Rhegeb, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLI.

### The Chief Black Eunuch To Usbek.

ISMAEL, one of thy black eunuchs, magnificent lord, is just dead, and I was unwilling to neglect filling up his place; but as eunuchs are extremely scarce at present, I intended making use of a black slave that thou hast in the country; but I have not as yet been able to bring him to submit to be initiated into this office. As I considered that this was really for his good, I was willing the other day to use a little violence, and with the assistance of the intendant of thy gardens, I ordered, against his will, that he should be put into a state capable of rendering thee those services most pleasing to thy heart, and to live, as I do, within this formidable palace, which he dares not even to look at; but he fell a-roaring as if he was going to be skinned, and struggled so that he got out of our hands, and escaped the fatal knife. I have just now been informed that he intends writing to thee, to ask thy favour, affirming that I formed this design only from an insatiable desire to be revenged for some sharp railleries of his against me. However, I swear to thee by the hundred thousand prophets, that I acted only for the good of thy service, the only thing dear to me, and beyond which there is nothing that I regard. I prostrate myself at thy feet.

From the seraglio at Fatme, the 7th of the moon Maharran, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLII.

### Pharan To Usbek, His Sovereign Lord.

IF thou wert here, magnificent lord, I should appear before thee covered all over with white paper, and that would not be sufficient to write all the abuses which thy chief black eunuch, the wickedest of all men, hath exercised towards me since thy departure. On account of some jokes which he pretends. I made on his miserable condition, he hath incensed the cruel intendant of thy gardens against me, who, since thy departure hath imposed upon me the most intolerable labours, under which I have a thousand times thought I should lose my life, without abating for a moment of my zeal for thy service. How many times have I said to myself, I have a master full of goodness, and yet am I the most unhappy slave upon earth! I confess to thee, magnificent lord, I did not believe myself destined to greater miseries, but this traitor of an eunuch was willing to fill up the measure of his wickedness. Some days ago, of his own authority, he determined that I should guard thy sacred women, that is, that I should suffer an execution, which to me would be a thousand times more severe than death. Those who have had the unhappiness to suffer such kind of treatment from their cruel parents, at their birth, have this to comfort them, that they never knew a different state; but for me to be degraded, and deprived of manhood, I should die with grief, if I did not of the barbarity itself. I embrace thy feet, sublime lord, in the most profound humility. Grant that I may experience the effects of thy virtue, so highly respected, and that it may not be said, there is upon earth one unhappy man the more by thy order.

From the gardens of Fatme, the 7th of the moon Maharran, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLIII.

### Usbek To Pharan, At The Gardens Of Fatme.

LET thy heart receive joy, and reverence these sacred characters; let the chief eunuch and the intendant of my gardens kiss them. I forbid their attempting any thing against thee; tell them to buy the eunuch I want. Do you discharge your duty, as though I was always present with thee; for know that the greater my kindness is, if thou abusest it, the greater shall be thy punishment.

Paris, the 25th of the moon Rhegeb, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLIV.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

IN France there are three kinds of professions; the church, the sword, and the long robe. Each hath a sovereign contempt for the other two: for example, a man who ought to be despised only for being a fool, is often so because he is a lawyer. There are none, even to the meanest mechanic, who does not contend for the excellency of the trade they have chosen; each values himself above him who is of a different profession, according to the idea he has formed to himself of the superiority of his own. These men are, more or less, like that woman in the province of Erivan, who having received a favour from one of our monarchs, wished a thousand times, in the blessings she bestowed upon him, that heaven would make him governor of Erivan. I have read, that a French ship putting in upon the coast of Guinea, some of the crew went on shore to buy sheep. They were carried to the king, who administered justice to his subjects under a tree. He was seated on a throne, that is to say, a piece of timber, as stately as though he had sat upon the throne of the Great Mogul, attended by three or four guards armed with hedge stakes; an umbrella in the form of a canopy, secured him from the heat of the sun; his whole regalia, and that of the queen his wife, consisted in their black skins and some rings. This prince, yet more vain than miserable, asked these strangers if he was not much talked of in France. He imagined that his name could not but have reached from pole to pole; and different from that conqueror of whom it is said, that he had silenced the whole earth, he fancied that the whole world must talk of him. When the Cham of Tartary hath dined, a herald proclaims, that all the princes of the earth may go to dinner, if they please: and this barbarian who feeds only upon milk, who hath no house to dwell in, and who lives only by murder and robbery, regards all the potentates in the world as his slaves, and formally insults them twice a-day.

Paris, the 28th of the moon Rhegeb, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLV.

### Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

AS I was in bed, yesterday morning, I heard a violent rapping at my door, which was soon opened, or rather sorced open, by a man with whom I had made some acquaintance, and who seemed to me to be beside himself. His dress was far from being decent, his peruke, all awry, had not been so much as combed; he had not had leisure to get his black waistcoat mended; and, for this time, had neglected those wise precautions with which he was used to conceal the tattered condition of his dress. “Get up, says he to me, I have business with you all day; I have a thousand implements to buy, and should be glad to have you with me. We must go first to the street St. Honoré, to speak to a notary, who is commissioned to sell an estate of five hundred thousand livres, and I am willing he should give me the preference. As I came here, I stopt a moment in the suburbs of St. Germain, where I have hired a house for two thousand crowns, and hope to execute the contract to-day.” As soon as I was drest, or pretty near so, my gentleman made me hastily go out with him. “Let us, said he, first buy a coach, and settle our equipage.” Indeed we bought not only the coach, but also an hundred thousand livres worth of goods, in less than an hour; all this was done presently, for my gentleman haggled about nothing, paid no money, nor was he ever out of his way. I reflected upon all this, and when I examined my gentleman, I found in him so strange a mixture of riches and poverty, that I knew not what to think. But at last I broke, silence, and taking him on one side, I said to him, “Sir, who is to pay for all these things?” “Myself, says he; come to my chamber, I will shew you immense treasures, and riches that might excite the envy of the greatest monarchs, but not yours, who shall always share them with me.” I followed him; we clambered up to his fifth floor, and by a ladder hoisted ourselves to the sixth, which was a closet, open to the four winds, in which there was nothing but two or three dozen of earthen basons, filled with different liquors. “I got up early, says he, and, as I have done these five and twenty years, went immediately to visit my work; I saw that the great day was come which was to render me the richest man upon earth. Do you see this fine red liquor? It hath now all those qualities which the philosophers require to make a transmutation of metals. I have gathered these grains which you see, which are true gold by their colour, though a little imperfect as to their weight. This secret, which Nichola’s Flammel found out, but Raymond Lully, and a million of others, have been always seeking after, is at length come to me, and I this day find myself an happy adept. May heaven grant that I may never make use of the treasures it hath bestowed upon me but to its glory!” I left him, and came, or rather tumbled down the ladder, transported with anger, and left this very rich man in his hospital.—Farewel, my dear Usbek, I will come and see you to morrow, and if you please we will return together to Paris.

Paris, the last day of the moon Rhegeb, 1715.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLVI.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

I MEET here with people who are continually disputing about religion; but it seems as if they contended at the same time who should least observe it. But they are neither better Christians, nor even better citizens; and this is what hurts me: for whatever religion we profess, the observation of the laws, the love of mankind, duty to our parents, are ever the principal duties of it. And indeed, ought not the first object of a religious man to be, to please the deity who hath established the religion he professes? But the surest way to do so is, without doubt, to obey the laws of society, and to discharge the duties of humanity; for whatever religion a man professes, the moment any religion is supposed, it must also necessarily be supposed, that God loves mankind, since he establishes a religion to render them happy: that if he loves men, we are certain of pleasing him in loving them also; that is, in exercising toward them all the duties of charity and humanity, and not breaking the laws under which they live. By these means we are much surer of pleasing God, than by observing such and such a ceremony; for ceremonies in themselves have no degree of goodness, they are only relatively good, and upon a supposition that God hath commanded the observance of them. But this is a nice point to discuss, about which we may easily be deceived; for the ceremonies of one religion must be chose from among those of two thousand. A certain man daily offered up to God this prayer:—Lord, I understand none of those disputes which are continually made concerning thee: I would serve thee according to thy will, but every person I consult would have me do so according to his will. When I would pray to thee, I know not what language I should use; nor do I know in what posture I ought to put myself; one says I ought to pray standing, another that I should sit, and a third requires me to kneel. This is not all: there are those who pretend that I ought to wash myself every morning with cold water: others maintain, that thou wilt regard me with abhorrence, if I do not cut off a small piece of my flesh. The other day I happened to eat, at a caravansary, a rabbit: three men who were present made me tremble; they all three maintained that I had grievously offended thee: one \*, because this was an unclean animal; the other †, because it was strangled, and the third ‡, because it was not fish. A Brachman who was passing by, whom I desired to judge between us, says to me, they are all wrong, for certainly you yourself did not kill the creature: but I did, said I: ah! then you have committed an abominable action, and God will never forgive you, says he to me in a severe tone: how do you know that the soul of your father hath not passed into this animal? All these things, Lord, greatly embarrass me; I cannot move my head that I am not threatened with having offended thee: though all the while I desire to please thee, and to that end to employ the life I hold from thee. I know not whether I deceive myself; but I believe the best way to please thee is, to be a good citizen in the community thou hast made me to live in, and a good father of the family which thou hast given me.

Paris, the 8th of the moon Chahban, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLVII.

### Zachi To Usbek, At Paris.

I HAVE great news to communicate to you; I am reconciled to Zephis; the seraglio that was divided between us is reunited. There is nothing wanting in this place, where peace reigns, but thee: come then, my dear Usbek return, and make love triumph here. I gave Zephis a grand entertainment, to which thy mother, wives, and principal concubines, were invited; there were also thy aunts, and several of thy female cousins; they came on horseback, covered with the dark cloud of their veils and habits. The next day we set out for the country, where we hoped to be more at liberty: we mounted our camels, and went four and four under a covering. As it was a party suddenly made, we had not time to send round the neighbourhood to publish the Courouc \* : but the chief eunuch, ever attentive to his duty, took another precaution, for he added to the cloth which covered us so thick a curtain, that we could really see nobody. When we arrived at the river, which we were to cross, we each of us, according to custom, placed ourselves in a box, for we were informed there were a great many people on the river. One more curious than the rest, who approached too near to where we were shut up, received a mortal blow, which for ever deprived him of the light of the day; another who was bathing himself quite naked near the shore, suffered the same fate! and thy faithful eunuchs sacrificed to thine and our honour, these two unhappy creatures. But attend to the rest of our adventures; we had scarcely reached the middle of the river, when so violent a wind arose, and so frightful a cloud covered the sky, that the sailors began to despair. Affrightened at this danger, we almost all of us swooned away. I remember I heard our eunuchs talking and disputing, some of whom said we ought to be acquainted with our danger, and released from our confinement; but their chief constantly maintained that he would rather perish than let his master be so dishonoured, and that he would force a dagger into his breast who should make such a bold proposal. One of my slaves, out of her wits, came running to my assistance, all undrest; but a black eunuch brutishly forced her back to the place she came from. I then swooned away, and did not come to myself until the danger was over. How dangerous are journies to women! men are exposed to no dangers but such as threaten their lives; but we are every instant in fear of losing our lives, or our virtue. Adieu, my dear Usbek; I shall adore thee always.

From the seraglio at Fatme, the 2d of the moon Rhamazan, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLVIII.

### Usbek\* To Rhedi, At Venice.

THEY who love to inform themselves, are never idle. Though I have no business of consequence to take care of, I am nevertheless continually employed. I spend my life in examining things: I write down in the evening whatever I have remarked, what I have seen, and what I have heard in the day: every thing engages my attention, and every thing excites my wonder: I am like an infant, whose organs, as yet tender, are strongly affected by the slightest objects. Perhaps you will not believe we are agreeably received into all companies, and into all kinds of societies. I believe much of this is owing to the sprightliness and natural gaiety of Rica, which leads him to search through the whole world, and makes him equally searched after. Our foreign air no longer offends any body; we even take pleasure at the surprise our politeness occasions; for the French do not imagine that our climate produces men, yet it must be confessed, they are worthy the trouble of convincing them. I have passed some days at a country house near Paris, with a man of some consequence, who delighted in having company with him. He hath a very lovely wife, who hath, joined to a great share of modesty, a liveliness which the constant retired life of our Persian ladies deprives them of. As I was a stranger I had nothing better to employ me, than to observe the company who were continually coming there, and always affording me something new. I observed at first a man, whose simplicity pleased me, I attached myself to him, and he to me, insomuch that we were continually together. As we were one day conversing together, amidst a large circle, leaving the general conversation to themselves: “You find perhaps in me, said I to him, more curiosity than politeness, but pray allow me to ask you some questions; for I am tired with doing nothing, and of living among people, among whom I cannot mix. My mind hath been at work above these two days: there is not one of these men here, who hath not put me to the torture above two hundred times; and I should not be able to comprehend these people in a thousand years; they are more invisible to me than the wives of our great monarch.” “You have only to ask, said he to me, and I will acquaint you with all you wish to know, and the more willingly, because I believe you are a discreet man, and that you will not abuse my confidence.” “Who is that man, said I to him, who talks so much to us of the great entertainments he has given to great men, who is so familiar with your dukes, and who converses so frequently with your ministers, who I am informed are difficult of access? He certainly must be a man of quality; but his aspect is so mean, that he does not much honour to men of that rank; and besides I do not find he has any education. I am a foreigner, but it seems to me, that there is in general a certain politeness common to every nation; I find none of this in him: is it that your men of quality are worse educated than other men?” “This man, answered he laughing, is a farmer of the king’s revenues, he is as much above others in riches, as he is below all the world in birth. He would have the best table in Paris, could he persuade himself never to dine at home; he is very impertinent, as you see, but he excels in a cook, nor is he very ungrateful, for you have heard how he has praised him all day.” “And who is that big man in black, said I to him, who the lady hath placed

next herself? how comes he to wear so grave a dress, with so gay an air, and so florid a countenance? He smiles graciously at every thing said to him, his apparel is more modest, but more formal, than that of your women.” “He is a preacher, and what is worse, a director. Notwithstanding his looks, he knows more than the husbands; he knows the weak side of the women, and they also know that he hath his weak side too.” “How, says I, he is always talking of something which he calls grace?” “No; not always, replied he; at the ear of a pretty woman he talks more freely of the fall of man; he thunders in public, but in private he is as gentle as a lamb.” “It seems to me, says I, that he is greatly distinguished, and highly respected. How comes it that he is so distinguished?” “He is a necessary man; he sweetens a retired life, petty councils, officious cares, set visits; he removes the head-ach better than any man in the world; he is excellent.” “But if I am not too troublesome to you, tell me who is that man over against us, so badly dressed, who makes so many faces, and speaks a language different from the rest, who hath not wit enough to talk, but talks that he may have wit? “He is a poet, replied he, a grotesque figure of the human kind. These kind of creatures, they say, are born what they are; it is true, and no less so that they will continue the same all their lives, that is to say, for the general part the most ridiculous of mankind; accordingly nobody spares them; contempt is liberally poured on them by all. Hunger hath driven him to this house, and he is here well received by both the master and mistress of the house, whose good nature and politeness do not permit them to descend to personal prejudices. He wrote an epithalamium when they were married, it is the best thing he ever did; for the marriage hath proved as happy as he predicted it would be. You will perhaps not believe, added he, possessed as you are of oriental prejudices, that there are among us happy marriages, and women whose virtue is their strict guard. The couple we are talking of enjoy an uninterrupted peace; they are beloved and esteemed by all the world. There is but one thing amiss; their good-nature makes them admit all kinds of people, which occasions their having bad company. Not that I dislike them, we must live with people as we find them; those who are called good company, are often such whose vices are more refined; and perhaps it is as with poisons, of which the most subtle are the most dangerous.” “And who is this old man, said I to him softly, who looks so morose? I took him at first for a foreigner; for besides that he is dressed different from the rest, he censures every thing done in France, and disapproves of your government.” “He is an old warrior, said he, who makes himself memorable to all his auditors, by the tedious relation of his exploits. He will not allow France hath gained any battle at which he was not present, or that any siege should be boasted of where he did not mount the trenches. He fancies himself of so much importance to our history, that he imagines it ended where he concluded his actions; he looks upon some wounds he received, as he would upon the dissolution of the monarchy; and different to those philosophers, who say that we enjoy only the present time, and that the past is nothing, he, on the contrary, enjoys only the past, and exists not but in the campaigns he hath made: he breathes in the times that are passed away, as heroes ought to live in those which are to come.” “But why, said I, did he quit the service?” “He did not quit it, replied he, but it quitted him; he is employed in a little garrison, where he will recount his adventures the remainder of his life, but he will get no further; the road of honour is shut up from him.” “And why? said I:” “We have a maxim in France, replied he, never to promote officers whose patience hath languished in subaltern offices; we regard them as persons whose understandings are straitened by a narrow sphere of action; and who,

accustomed to little things, are become incapable of greater. We think that a man who at thirty hath not the qualifications of a general, will never have them; that he who has not that cast of eye, as to shew him at once a tract of several leagues in all its various situations, that presence of mind which enables him to improve all the advantages of a victory, and, in a defeat, to help himself by every possible resource, will never acquire these talents. Therefore we have high employments for great and elevated persons, to whom heaven has not only given the heart, but also the genius of heroism; and inferior stations for those whose talents are also inferior. Of this class are those who are grown old in an obscure warfare: at best they succeed only in doing what they have done all their lives; and we ought not to begin loading them at a time when they begin to be enfeebled.” A moment afterwards the spirit of curiosity re-seized me, and I said to him, “I promise to ask no further questions, if you will allow of this one more. Who is that big young man in his own hair, with so little wit, and so much impertinence? How comes he to talk louder than the rest, and seem so pleased that he is alive?” “He is a man of good fortune, replied he.”—As he said this, some company came in, others went away, and all got up; somebody came to speak to my companion, and I remained as ignorant as before. But a moment afterwards this young man happened to sit by me, and began talking to me: “It is fine weather, Sir, will you take a turn in the garden?” I answered him as civilly as possible, and we went out together. “I am come into the country to please the mistress of this house, with whom I am upon no bad terms. There is a certain woman in the world who will not be in the best humour; but what can be done? I visit the handsomest women in Paris; but I do not confine myself to one, and they have need to look sharp after me; for, between you and I, I am a sad fellow.” “Probably then, Sir, said I, you have some post, or employment, that prevents you from attending them more constantly.” “No, Sir, I have nothing else to do but to provoke an husband, or drive a father to despair: I love to alarm a woman who thinks she is secure of me, and reduce her within a finger’s breadth of losing me. Here is a set of us young fellows who in this manner divide all Paris, and make it take notice of the least step we take.” “By what I learn from you, said I, you make a greater noise than the most valiant warrior, and are more observed than a grave magistrate. You would not enjoy all these advantages if you were in Persia; you would be thought fitter to guard our women than to give them pleasure.” I began to grow warm, and I believe if I had talked a little more, I could not have helped affronting him.—What sayest thou of a country where these kind of wretches are tolerated, and where they suffer a man to live who employs himself in such a manner? Where infidelity, treason, rapes, persidy and injustice, conduce to render a man considerable. Where a man shall be esteemed because he has stole away a man’s daughter, or a wife from her husband, and troubled the happiest and most sacred societies? Happy the children of Hali, who protect their families from infamy and debauchery! The light of the day is not more pure than the fire which warms the hearts of our women; our daughters think not, without trembling, of the day that is to deprive them of that virtue which renders them like angels and incorporeal powers. O my dear native country, whom the sun honours with his first regards, thou art unsullied by those horrible crimes, which obliges this luminary to hide himself as soon as he approaches the black west!

Paris, the 5th of the moon of Rhamazan, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XLIX.

Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

AS I was in my chamber the other day, in came a dervise very strangely dressed. His beard reached quite down to his hempen girdle; he was barefooted, his habit grey, coarse, and in some parts folded into points. The whole of him appeared so odd to me, that I thought at first of sending for a painter to draw a sketch of him. He addressed me with a long compliment, in which he acquainted me, that he was a person of merit, and also a capuchin. "I am informed, Sir, added he, that you are to return shortly to the court of Persia, where you possess a distinguished rank. I come to ask your protection, and to desire you to obtain for us a small settlement near Casbin, for two or three religious." "My father, said I, will you go then to Persia?" "I, Sir! cried he; I shall take better care of myself; I am provincial here, and would not change my condition for that of all the capuchins in the world." "What in the name of wonder then do you want of me?" "Why, replied he, if we had this settlement, our fathers of Italy would send thither two or three monks." "You then certainly know these monks, said I." "No, Sir, I do not know them." "My stars! what then will their going into Persia signify to you? It is a wondrous fine project indeed, for two capuchins to breathe the air of Casbin! it will be of extreme advantage to Europe, and to Asia! and highly necessary to interest monarchs about it! indeed they are what are called noble colonies! Begone! you and your fellows are not made for transplantation; and you will do much better to remain crawling about the places where ye were first ingendered."

Paris, the 15th of the moon Rhamazan, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER L.

Rica To \* \* \*.

I HAVE known some people to whom virtue was so natural, that they themselves were scarcely sensible of it. They have applied themselves to their duty without any constraint, and been carried to it as by instinct; far from raising in their conversation, an opinion of their own great qualities; it is as if they themselves were insensible of them. Such are the men I love, not those virtuous persons who themselves seem so surprised at their being so, and who consider a good action as a prodigy, the report of which ought to astonish every body. If modesty is a virtue necessary to those whom heaven hath endowed with the greatest talents, what must be said of those insects who dare to shew a pride capable of dishonouring the greatest men? I every where meet with people whose conversation is continually about themselves; their discourse is a mirror which always presents their own impertinent figure; they will talk of the most trifling things which have happened to themselves, and think their interest in them must make them of consequence in your sight; they have done every thing, seen every thing, thought every thing; they are an universal model; an inexhaustible subject of comparison, a spring of examples never to be dried up. Oh how despicable is praise, when it bounds back from whence it comes! A man of this character some days ago overwhelmed us for two hours, with himself, his merit, and his talents; but as there is no perpetual motion in the world, he stopt at last. The conversation then came to us, and we took possession of it. One who seemed to be a little splenetic, began by complaining of the wearisomeness some people occasioned in conversation. What! fools for ever, who give their own characters, and bring every thing home to themselves! “Your observation is just, replied our talker abruptly, there is nobody acts as I do; I never praise myself; I have riches, and am well-born; I spend freely; my friends say I have some wit, but I never talk of all this; if I have some good qualities, that which I make the most account of is my modesty.” I greatly wondered at this impertinent; and while he was talking very loud, I said very low: happy the man who hath vanity enough never to speak well of himself; who is in awe of those who hear him; and never opposes his merit to the pride of others!

Paris, the 20th of the moon Rhamazan, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LI.

### Nargum The Persian Envoy Residing At Muscovy, To Usbek At Paris.

THEY write to me from Ispahan, that thou hast quitted Persia, and art now actually at Paris. Why must I learn news of thee from others, and not from thyself? The command of the king of kings hath detained me in this country these five years, where I have concluded several important commissions. Thou knowest that the Czar is the only Christian prince whose interests are mingled with those of Persia, because he is an enemy to the Turks as well as we. His empire is greater than that of ours; for it is computed to be a thousand leagues from Moscow to the utmost limits of his territories, on the side of China. He is absolute master of the lives and effects of his subjects, who are all slaves, four families excepted. The lieutenant of the prophets, the king of kings, does not use his power more dreadfully. To see the horrible climate of Muscovy, none would ever think it a punishment to be exiled; nevertheless when a great man is disgraced, he is banished to Siberia. As the law of our prophet forbids us to drink wine, that of this prince prohibits the Muscovites the use of it. They have a custom of receiving their guests, which has nothing at all of Persian in it. On the entrance of a stranger into the house, the husband presents him to his wife, and the stranger kisses her, and this passes as a compliment to the husband. Though the fathers in the marriage contract of their daughters, generally covenant that their husbands shall not beat them; yet it is not to be believed how much the Muscovite women love to be beaten \*; they cannot conceive that they possess their husband's heart, if he does not beat them. A contrary treatment from him, is a mark of indifference not to be forgiven. See a letter which one of these wives lately wrote to her mother:

‘My Dear Mother,

‘I am the most unhappy woman in the world, there is nothing that I have not done to make my husband love me, but I cannot obtain it Yesterday I had a thousand household affairs to do; I went out and staid abroad all day; I expected at my return that he would beat me severely; but he did not say one word to me about it. My sister is much otherwise treated, her husband beats her every day; she cannot look at a man but he knocks her down in a moment; they love one another very dearly, and there is the best understanding in the world between them. This it is that makes her so proud; but I will not long give her occasion to despise me. I am determined to procure my husband's love, let it cost what it will; I will so provoke him that he must needs give me some proofs of his love. It shall never be said, that I was never beat, and that I lived in the house without ever being thought of: the least slap he gives me I will cry out with all my might, that the neighbourhood may imagine that all goes well, and I believe that if any of them should come to my assistance, I should strangle them. I beseech you, my dear mother, that you would represent to my husband, that he treats me in an



unworthy manner. My father, who was a good man, did not carry himself so; and I remember, when I was a little girl, I thought he sometimes loved you too much. I embrace you, my dear mother.'

The Muscovites must not leave the kingdom, even to travel. Thus, separated by the laws of their country from all other nations, they have retained their ancient customs with so much the more constancy, as they did not think it was possible to have any others. But the now reigning prince was resolved to change the whole; he had a great struggle with them about their beards; the clergy and the monks did not contend less in favour of their ignorance. He employs himself in making the arts flourish, and neglects nothing to spread the glory of his nation throughout Europe and Asia, not observed hitherto, and scarcely known to any but themselves. Restless, and continually busied, he wanders through his extensive dominions, leaving behind him in every place, marks of his natural ferocity. As if not sufficient to contain him, he quits them, to explore in Europe other provinces and new kingdoms. I embrace thee, my dear Usbek, I beg I may hear of thee.

Moscow, the 2d of the moon Chalval, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LII.

### Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

THE other day I was in some company, where I was very well diverted. There were women of every age, one of fourscore years, one of sixty, one of forty, who had a niece between twenty and two and twenty. A certain instinct led me to go near the last, who whispered in my ear: “What do you say to my aunt, who at her years is desirous of having lovers, and still endeavours to be thought handsome?” “She is in the wrong, said I, it is a design only suitable to you.” A moment afterwards I happened to be near her aunt, who says to me, “What do you say to that woman, who, at least, is threescore, and yet spent an hour to-day at her dressing table?” “It was time lost, said I, and she ought to have had your beauty to excuse her.” I went to this unhappy threescore, and pitied her in my heart, when she whispered me: “Is there any thing so ridiculous? Look at that woman of fourscore, who yet wears flame-coloured ribbons; she would fain make herself young, and indeed she has succeeded, for this borders upon infancy.” “Oh heavens! said I to myself, shall we never be sensible but of the folly of others?” “It is perhaps a happiness, said I, afterward, that we can reap comfort from the weaknesses of another.” However, being in a humour to be merry, Come, said I, we have mounted high enough, let us now go downward, and begin with the old lady who is at the top.” “Madam, you are so very like the lady I just now left to speak to you, that it seems as if you were sisters; I fancy you are both of the same age.” “Truly, Sir, said she, when one dies of age, the other will quake for fear; I do not believe there is two days difference between us.” When I had quitted my decrepid lady, I went to her of sixty. “Madam, said I, you must decide a wager I have laid; I have ventured a wager that you and this lady are of an age, shewing her the lady of forty.” “Truly, said she, I believe there is not above six months difference.” Good, so far; let us go on. I still descend, and go to the lady of forty. “Madam, do me the favour to inform me, if it is not in jest, when you call the lady, who is at the other end of the table, your niece? You are as young as she is; besides, she has something of a decay in her face, which you certainly have not; and the lively colours in your cheeks”—“No, hear me, said she, I am her aunt; but her mother was at least five and twenty years older than myself; we were not by the same venter; I have heard my late sister say, that her daughter and myself were both born in the same year. “I then said right, madam, and was not wrong in being surprised.” My dear Usbek, when the women find themselves near their end by the loss of their charms, they would willingly steal back again towards youth. How should they but endeavour to cheat others, who make every effort to deceive themselves, and to dispossess their minds of the most afflicting of all thoughts?

Paris, the 3d of the moon Chalval, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LIII.

### Zelis To Usbek, At Paris.

NEVER was there a more strong and lively passion than that of Cosrou, the white eunuch, for my slave Zelida, he hath so earnestly desired her in marriage, that I am not able to deny him. And why should I make any opposition, when her mother does not, and that even Zelida herself appears satisfied with the idea of this mock marriage, and this empty shadow with which she is presented? What will she do with this unhappy creature, who will have nothing of a husband besides his jealousy; who can only exchange his coldness for an unavailing despair; who will always be calling to mind what he hath been, to put her in mind of what he now no longer is; who, always ready to enjoy, and never enjoying, will always be cheating himself, and cheating her, and make her continually sensible of the wretchedness of her condition? And then! to be always in dreams and fancies! to live only in imagination! to find one's self ever near, but never tasting, pleasure! languishing in the arms of an unhappy wretch! instead of answering to his sighs, to answer only to his repinings! What a contempt must such a kind of man inspire, formed only to guard, and never to possess? I seek for love, and I find it not!—I speak freely to thee, because thou lovest my frankness and disposition for pleasure, more than the affected reserve of my companions. I have heard thee say a thousand times that eunuchs taste a kind of pleasure with women that is unknown to us; that makes up their loss; that nature hath resources which repair the disadvantage of their condition; that they may indeed lose their manhood, but not their sensibility; and that in this state, they enjoy a kind of third sense; so that they only change, as one may say, one pleasure for another. If it be so, I shall think Zelida less to be pitied. It is some consolation to live with people less unhappy. Give me thy orders on this affair, and let me know if thou wilt have this marriage consummated in thy seraglio. Farewel.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 5th of the moon Chalval, 1713.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LIV.

Rica, Usbek At \* \* \*.

THIS morning as I was in my chamber, which, as thou knowest, is only divided from the next by a slight partition, and full of cracks, so that one may hear every thing that is said in the adjoining room, a man, walking hastily up and down it, said to another, “I know not how it is, but every thing goes against me. It is above three days since I have said any thing that hath done me honour, and I have been confounded indiscriminately in the general conversation, without the least attention, or being spoken to twice. I had prepared some witty expressions to embellish my discourse, but they would not let me introduce them. I had a good story, but every time I endeavoured to tell it, they avoided it, as though they had done it on purpose. I was provided with some clever jests, which for these four days have lain like old lumber in my head, without the least occasion to use them. If this continues, I shall be a fool at last; it seems that my stars will have it so, and drive me to despair. Yesterday I had hopes of shining among three or four old ladies, who certainly had no design to impose upon me, and I had some mighty pretty things to say; I was above a quarter of an hour labouring to turn the conversation, but they would not follow, but, like the fatal sisters, cut off the thread of my discourse. Shall I tell you? It is very difficult to support the character of a wit. I do not know how you have managed to obtain it.”—“I have a thought, replied the other, let us jointly endeavour to support each other’s wit; let us make a partnership. We will every day tell each other what we will say, and support each other so well, that let what will happen, our thoughts shall never be interrupted; we will draw every body to us, and if they will not come over freely, we will force them. We will agree when to approve, when to smile, and when to burst out a laughing. You shall find we will give a turn to all conversations, and nothing shall be admired but the quickness of our wit, and the good things we say; we will protect each other upon a nod. You shall shine to-day, to morrow you shall second me. I will go into a house with you, and cry out, as I introduce you, I must tell you a witty reply this gentleman made just now, to one we met in the street; and then, turning to you, he did not expect any such thing, he was quite confounded. I will repeat some of my verses, and you must say, I was present when he made them, it was a supper, he did not study a moment for them Nay, you and I will sometimes rally each other; and people will say, observe how they attack one another, how they defend themselves; they do not spare each other; let’s see how he will get off that; wonderful! what presence of mind! a downright battle indeed!—But they cannot tell we have been skirmishing beforehand. We must get some works full of jests, composed for the use of those who have not wit, and are willing to counterfeit it; but all depends upon copying from originals. I see that in less than six months we shall be able to maintain a conversation of an hour long, all composed of witticisms. But we must be very careful to support our good fortune; it is not enough to say a good thing, it must be spread abroad, and dispersed every where, or else it will be lost; and I must confess that there is nothing so mortifying as to have said a smart thing, and to have it expire in the ear of the fool who heard it. It is true this is sometimes compensated, by having

a good many foolish things we say passed over in silence; and this is the only thing that can console us on such an occasion. See, my dear friend, the scheme we must pursue. Act as I have directed you, and I promise you in less than six months you will have a seat in the academy; this is to let you know your labour will be soon over; for thou mayest then give up thine art; for you will then be a man of wit, in spite of yourself. It is observed in France, that when a man enters himself of any society, he instantly catches what is called the spirit of the body; you will experience this; and I am in no fear for you, but for the applauses you will be loaded with.”

Paris, the 6th of the moon Zilcade, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LV.

### Rica To Ibben At Smyrna.

THE first quarter of an hour after marriage, among the Europeans, smooths every difficulty; the last favours are always of the same date with the nuptial blessing: the women here do not behave like ours in Persia, who sometimes dispute the ground for whole months: there is nothing so indulging; if they lose nothing, it is because they have nothing to lose: but you may always know, O shameful! the moment of their defeat; and, without consulting the stars, the birth of their children may be predicted to the very hour. The French seldom or ever speak of their wives; it is for fear of talking of them before people who know them better than themselves. There is a set of very miserable creatures among them, whom nobody comforts; these are jealous husbands; there are some whom all the world hates, jealous husbands; there are some whom every body despises, these are the same, jealous husbands. Therefore there is no country where there are so few of them as among the French. Their tranquility is not placed upon the confidence they have in their wives, it is on the contrary, upon the bad opinion they entertain of them. All the wise precautions of the Asiatics, the veils that cover them, the prisons that secure them, the vigilance of eunuchs, appear to them more likely means to put the sex upon contriving, than to weary it out. Here, the husbands bear their part with a good grace, and consider the infidelity of their wives as an inevitable stroke of fatality. An husband who would keep his wife to himself, would be regarded as a disturber of the public peace, and as a madman, who would enjoy the light of the sun to the exclusion of every body else. Here, an husband who loves his wife, is considered as a man who hath not merit enough to make himself beloved by any other woman; and as one who makes a bad use of the necessity of the law, to supply the perfections he wants; who makes use of his rights to the prejudice of the whole community; who appropriates that to himself which was only lent to him; and who endeavours, as much as in him, to break that tacit compact which constitutes the happiness of both sexes. The report of being married to a very handsome woman, which in Asia is concealed with so much care, is borne here without uneasiness; they find themselves able to divert themselves every where. A prince comforts himself upon the loss of one place, by the taking of another. At the time the Turks took Bagdad from us, were not we taking from the Mogul the sortress of Candahar? In general, a man who bears with the infidelity of a wife, is not disapproved of; on the contrary, he is praised for his prudence: there are only some particular cares which are dishonourable. It is not that there are no virtuous women here; it may be said they are distinguished; my conductor hath constantly made me take notice of them: but they were all so ugly, that a man must be a saint not to hate such virtue. After what I have told thee of the manners of this country, thou wilt easily imagine, that the French do not pique themselves much on their constancy. They think it as ridiculous to swear to a woman, that they will love her always, as to maintain that they will always continue in good health, or that they will always be happy. When they promise a woman that they will always love her, they suppose that she on her

part, engages to be always amiable; and if she breaks her word, they think themselves no longer bound to their word.

Paris, the 7th of the moon Zilcade, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LVI.

### Usbek To Ibbin, At Smyrna.

IN Europe gaming is much used; to be a gamester is sufficient to hold the place of birth, riches, or honesty, and, without examination, admits him to the rank of a gentleman; though there is nobody who does not know, that in judging in this manner, they are often deceived; but they have agreed to be incorrigible. The women, above all, are greatly given to it. It is true, they do not practise it much in their youth, to favour a dearer passion; but as they advance in years, their passion for play revives, and seems to supply the vacancy of the rest. They are determined to ruin their husbands, and to that end they have means suited to every stage of life, from the tenderest youth to the most decrepid old age; the destruction commences with dress and equipage, gallantry continues it, and it is finished with gaming. I have often seen nine or ten women, or rather nine or ten centuries, set round a table; I have watched them in their hopes, their fears, their joys, especially in their transports of anger: you would swear they could never have time to appease themselves, and that their lives would end before their rage; thou wouldest have been in doubt, whether those they paid were their creditors or their legatees. It seems that our holy prophet principally intended to restrain us from every thing that might disturb our reason: He forbid us the use of wine, which as it were buries our reason: he hath, by an express command, prohibited all games of chance; and where it was impossible to take away the cause of our passions, he hath deadened them. Love, amongst us, brings no trouble, no fury; it is a languid passion, which leaves our soul in peace: a plurality of wives saves us from their dominion; and moderates the violence of our appetites.

Paris, the 10th of the moon Zilhade, 1714.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LVII.

### Usbek, To Rhedi, At Venice.

A PRODIGIOUS number of women of pleasure are maintained here by the libertines, and an innumerable quantity of dervises by the bigots. The dervises take three oaths, of obedience, poverty, and chastity. The first is said to be observed best of all; as to the second, I can assure you it is not regarded; I leave thee to judge of the third. But as rich as these dervises are, they will never quit the character of poverty; our glorious sultan would sooner resign his sublime and noble titles: they are in the right, for this pretence to poverty prevents them from being so. The physicians, and some of these dervises, called confessors, are here always too much esteemed, or too much despised: yet it is said the heirs are better reconciled to the physicians than to the confessors. The other day I was in a convent of dervises, one of them, venerable for his grey hairs, received me very courteously; having shewn me all the house, we went into the garden, and fell into discourse. “My father, said I to him, what is your employment in the community?” “Sir, replied he, with an air of pleasantry at my question, I am a casuist.” “Casuist! replied I; from the time of my being in France, I have never heard of this employment.” “How! do you not know what a casuist is? attend; I will give you an idea of it that shall thoroughly inform you. There are two kinds of sins, mortal sins, which absolutely exclude from Paradise, and venal sins, which though indeed offensive to God, do not so provoke him as to deprive us of beatitude. Now our whole art consists in rightly distinguishing these two kinds of sin; for except some libertines, all Christians are willing to obtain Paradise; but there is scarce any person would not willingly gain it upon as easy terms as possible. When they are well acquainted what sins are mortal, they take care not to commit them, and their business is done, These are persons who do not aspire to a great degree of perfection, and as they have no ambition, are not solicitous for the first places; so as they can but get into Paradise they desire no more; provided they are there, that’s enough for them. These are those who take heaven by violence, rather than not obtain it, and who say to God, Lord, I have rigorously fulfilled the conditions, thou canst not refuse to keep thy promise; as I have done no more than what thou didst demand of me, I do not expect thou shouldst grant me more than thou hast promised. We are therefore, Sir, a very necessary kind of people. This, however, is not all; you shall hear something further. It is not the act that constitutes the sin, it is the knowledge of him who commits it; he who doth evil, if he can believe that it is not an evil, his conscience is safe: and there are a vast number of actions of a doubtful nature, a casuist can give them a degree of goodness that they have not, and pronounce them good; and provided he can persuade the man to believe they are harmless, he entirely takes away all their evil. I have here told you the secret of a trade I am grown old in: I have made you sensible of the nicety of it: there is a turn to be given to every thing, even to things which appear the least capable of it.” “My father, said I to him, all this is very well, but how do you yourself settle matters with heaven? If the grand sophi had in his court a man who was to act with respect to him as you do towards your God, who should put a distinction between his orders, and should teach his subjects in

what case they ought to obey them, and in what case they might violate them, he would instantly impale him.”—I bowed to my dervise, and left him without waiting for his reply.

Paris, the 23d of the moon Maharran, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LVIII.

### Rica To Rhedi, At Venice.

THERE are a great many trades, my dear Rhedi, at Paris. A man there will be so obliging, as to offer you, for a little silver, the secret of making gold. Another promises that you shall lie with the spirits of the air, providing you will only abstain from women thirty years. You may also meet with able diviners, who will tell you your whole life, if they have had but one quarter of an hour's conversation with your servants. There are some ingenious women, who make virginity a flower which dies and revives every day, and is gathered the hundredth time with more pain than the first. There are others, who by the power of their art, repair all the injuries of time; who know how to re-establish the fading beauty of a complexion, and even to bring back a woman from the extremity of old age, to return again to the tenderest youth. All these people live, or endeavour to do so, in a city which is the mother of invention. The revenues of the citizens cannot possibly be farmed: they consist only in ingenuity and industry; each person hath his talent, which he renders as profitable as he can. Whoever would number the men of the law, who seek after the revenue of some mosque, might as soon count the sands of the sea, and the slaves of our monarch. A vast number of masters of languages, arts, and sciences, teach what they themselves are ignorant of; and this is a very extraordinary talent, for a great understanding is not necessary to teach what one knows, but a person must have a very great understanding to teach another what he himself is ignorant of. Nobody can die here, except suddenly; death hath no other way to exercise his power: for there are here in every corner, people who have infallible remedies against every imaginable distemper. All the shops are spread with invisible nets, in which they catch their customers. However a good bargain is sometimes made: a young female dealer will wheedle a man for a whole hour, to make him buy a packet of tooth-pickers. There are none but who leave this city more cautious than when they entered it, by having squandered away part of their subsistence amongst others, they learn how to take care of the remainder; the only benefit which strangers gain in this enchanting city.

Paris, the 10th of the moon Saphar. 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LIX.

### Rica To Usbek, At A \* \* \*.

THE other day I was in a house where there was a circle of all sorts of people; I found the conversation engrossed by two old ladies, who had laboured in vain all the morning to make themselves young again. “It must be allowed said one of them, that the men of these times are very different from those whom we saw in our youth; they were polite, well bred, complaisant, but now they are intolerably brutish.” “Every thing is changed, said a man, who appeared crippled with the gout; times are not as they were: forty years ago all the world behaved well, they walked, were gay, they desired nothing but to dance and sing, but now all the world is insupportably dull.” Soon after the conversation turned to politics.—Said an old lord, “The state is no longer governed; point me out now, such a minister as monsieur Colbert; he was one of my friends, he always ordered the pay of my pension before it was due: in what good order did he keep the finances! every body was at ease, but now I am ruined.” Sir, said an ecclesiastic, you are speaking of the most wonderful times of our invincible monarch; was there any thing so great as what he then did to extirpate heresy?” “And do you reckon for nothing his putting an end to duels?” said another with an air of satisfaction, who had not spoke a word before. “That remark is very judicious, said another in a whisper to me. This man is charmed with the edict, and he observes it so strictly, that six months ago he suffered himself to be heartily caned, rather than violate it.” It appears to me, Usbek, that we never judge of things but with a private view to ourselves. I do not wonder that the negroes paint the devil in the most glaring whiteness, and their gods as black as a coal; that the Venus of some nations should be represented with breasts pendant to her thighs; nor indeed that all idolators have made their gods of human figures, and have ascribed to them all their own passions. My dear Usbek, when I see men who creep upon an atom, the earth, which is but as a point to the universe, propose themselves as the immediate models of Providence, I know not how to reconcile so much presumption with so much insufficiency.

Paris, the 14th of the moon Saphar, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LX.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

THOU asketh me if there are any Jews in France? Know that throughout the world wherever there is money, there are Jews. Thou inquirest what they do here? The very same they do in Persia: nothing more resembles a Jew in Asia, than a Jew in Europe. They shew among the Christians, as among us, an invincible obstinacy for their religion, which they carry to the height of folly. The religion of the Jews is an old trunk which hath produced two branches, which have covered all the earth, I mean Christianity and Mahometism; or rather it is a mother who hath brought forth two daughters, who have covered her with a thousand wounds: for with respect to religion, its nearest friends are its greatest enemies. But as ill as she hath been treated by these, she doth not cease to glory in having produced them; she serves herself of both to encompass the whole world, whilst on her own part, her venerable age embraces all ages. The Jews consider themselves as the source of all holiness, and the origin of all religion: they on the other hand, look upon us as heretics, who have changed the law, or rather as rebellious Jews. If the change had been gradually effected, they think they might have been easily seduced; but as it was suddenly changed, and in a violent manner, as they can point out the day and the hour of the birth of the one and the other, they are offended at finding us reckoning our religion by ages, and therefore adhere firmly to a religion, not preceded in antiquity by even the world itself. They never enjoyed in Europe a calm equal to the present. Christians begin to lay aside that intolerating spirit which formerly influenced them. Spain hath experienced the bad consequence of having expelled the Jews, and France of having worried the Christians, whose faith differed a little from that of the prince. They are now sensible that a zeal for the progress of religion is different from that attachment which ought to be preserved towards her; and that in order to love and obey her, it is not necessary to hate and persecute those who do not regard her. It is to be wished that our Mussulmans would think as rationally upon this subject as the Christians, that we might, in good earnest, make peace between Hali and Abubeker, and leave to God the care of deciding the pretensions of these holy prophets. I would have them honoured by acts of veneration and respect, and not by vain preferences, and to endeavour to merit their favour, whatever place God may have assigned them, whether at his right hand, or quite under the footstool of his throne.

Paris, the 18th of the moon Saphar, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXI.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

THE other day I went into a famous church, called Notre-Dame; whilst I was admiring this superb edifice, I had an opportunity of conversing with a churchman, whom, as well as myself, curiosity had drawn thither. Our conversation fell upon the ease enjoyed in his profession. “The generality of people, said he, envy the happiness of our condition, and with reason. However it hath its uneasinesses; we are not so divided from the world, as not to be called into it upon a thousand occasions, and there it is very difficult to support our part. The people of the world are surprising, they can neither bear our approbation, nor our censures; if we attempt to reprove them, we are ridiculous; if we approve their conduct, we are considered as acting beneath our character. There is nothing so humbling, as the thought of having given scandal even to the impious. We are therefore obliged to use a doubtful kind of conduct, and deal with libertines, not in a decisive way, but by the uncertainty in which we leave them to judge of the manner in which we received their conversation. There must be a good deal of ingenuity to this purpose; this neutral state is very difficult: the men of the world, who hazard every thing, who indulge all their flights, and who, according to their success, pursue or drop them, succeed much better. This is not all. This state, so happy and so quiet, so much boasted of, is not to be kept up in the world. As, on our appearance there, we are forced to dispute: we are obliged to undertake, for example, to prove the efficacy of prayer, to a man who does not believe in God; the necessity of fasting, to another, who all his life time hath denied the immortality of the soul; the enterprize is difficult, and the laughs are not with us. Further, a strong desire to draw others to our opinion, perpetually torments us, and is, as I may say, fixed to our profession. This is as ridiculous, as it would be for the Europeans to labour, for the honour of human nature, to wash the Africans white. We trouble the state, we torment even ourselves, to make men receive the nonessential points of religion; and we are like that conqueror of China, who forced his subjects into a general revolt, because he wanted to oblige them to cut their hair and their nails. That zeal even which we have, to make those who are under our immediate care, fulfil the duties of our holy religion, is often dangerous, and cannot be attended with too much prudence. Theodosius, the emperor, put to the sword all the inhabitants of a certain city, even the women and children! afterwards offering to go into a church, Ambrose, a bishop, shut the doors against him, as a sacrilegious murderer; and in this he did a noble action. This emperor having afterwards submitted to the penance such a crime required, being admitted into the church, going to place himself among the priests, the same bishop turned him out; and in this he acted like a fanatic: so true it is that we ought to be diffident of our zeal. What did it import to religion, or the state, whether this prince had, or had not, a place among the priests?”

Paris, the first of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXII.

### Zelis To Usbek, At Paris.

THY daughter having attained to her seventh year, I thought it was time to remove her into the inner apartments of the seraglio, and not to wait till she should be ten years old, to entrust her to the care of the black eunuchs. We cannot too soon deprive a young person of the liberties of childhood, and bestow on her an holy education, within the sacred walls where modesty dwells. For I cannot be of the opinion of those mothers, who do not shut their daughters up, till they are upon the point of marrying them, who rather condemn them to a seraglio, than consecrate them in it; making them embrace by violence, a kind of life they ought to have inspired them with the love of. Is all to be expected from the force of reason, and nothing from the sweetness of custom? It is in vain to talk of the state of subjection in which nature hath placed us: this is not sufficient to make us sensible of it; we must be made to practise it, that it may support us at the critical time when the passions shoot forth, and provoke us to independence. If by our duty only we were attached to you, we might sometimes forget it; if drawn only by our inclination, perhaps a stronger might weaken it. But when the laws have devoted us to one man, they deprive us of all others, place us as distant from them, as if we were an hundred thousand leagues off. Nature, industriously favourable to men, hath not bounded itself in giving desires to men, she was willing that we should have them too, and that we should be the animated instruments of their felicity: she hath put in us the flame of the passions, to make them live easy: if they ever quit their insensibility, she hath destined us to make them return to it again, without our ever being able to taste that happy state in which we place them. Yet, Usbek, do not imagine that thy situation is happier than mine: I have tasted here a thousand pleasures unknown to you. My imagination hath incessantly laboured to make me sensible of their value: I have lived, and you have only languished. In the very prison where thou hast confined me, I am more free than thou. Thou only knowest how to redouble thy cautions, to have me guarded, yet I shall enjoy thy fears, and thy suspicions, thy jealousy and thy uneasiness are so many marks of thy dependence. Continue, dear Usbek, to have me watched night and day; nay, do not trust to common precautions: augment my happiness, by securing thy own: and know that I dread nothing but thy indifference.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 2d of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXIII.

Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

THOU intendest, I think, to pass thy life in the country. I was not to have lost thee at first, for more than three or four days, and here are fifteen gone, and I have not seen thee. It is true, thou art in a delightful house, where you find company suitable to your taste, and can reason at thy ease: there is nothing more necessary to make thee forget the whole universe. I, for my part, lead my life pretty nearly in the same manner, as when you saw me. I launch into the world, and endeavour to know it. My mind insensibly loses all that remained of the Asiatic, and easily conforms to European manners. I am no longer surprised at the sight of five or six women in one house, with as many men; and I begin to think it is not improper. I may say I knew nothing of women till I came here: I have learned more of them here in a month, than I should have done in thirty years in a seraglio. With us there is an uniformity of character, as it is all forced: we do not see people as they are, but as they are obliged to appear: in this state of slavery, both of body and mind, it is their fears only that speak, which have but one language, and that not of nature, which expresses herself so differently, and which appears under so many forms. Dissimulation, an art among us universally practised, and so necessary, is unknown here: they speak every thing, see every thing, and hear every thing: the heart, like the face, is visible: in their manners, in their virtue, even in their vices, there is always something genuine and native to be perceived. To please the women here, a certain talent is necessary, different from that which contributes more to their pleasure: it consists in a kind of witty playing of the fool, that amuses them, as it seems to promise them every minute what they can only hope to enjoy at too long intervals. This playing of the fool, naturally adapted to the toilet, seems to constitute the general character of this nation; they thus play the fool in the council, at the head of an army, and do the same with ambassadors. No profession appears ridiculous but in proportion to the gravity mixed with it; a physician would not be so ridiculous, if his dress was less affectedly grave, and if he killed his patients with more pleasantry.

Paris, the 10th of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1714.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXIV.

### The Chief Of The Black Eunuchs To Usbek At Paris.

I KNOW not how, magnificent lord, to express the perplexity I am in; the seraglio is in terrible confusion and disorder: war reigns among thy wives: thy eunuchs are divided: nothing is heard but complaints, murmurings, and reproaches: my remonstrances are despised, every thing seems allowable in their licentious moments, and I bear no more than an empty title in the seraglio. There is not one of thy wives who does not judge herself superior to the rest for her birth, beauty, riches, wit, or thy love; and who does not make one of these pretences a sufficient ground to claim the whole respect. I at this instant lose my long-continued patience, with which I have always had the misfortune to make them displeas'd at me; my prudence, even my complaisance, a virtue so rare and uncommon in the post I hold, have been ineffectual. Shall I discover to thee, magnificent lord, the source of all this disorder? It is wholly in thy heart, and in the tender regard thou hast for them. If thou didst not restrain my hand; if, instead of the liberty of remonstrating, thou wouldst allow me that of chastising: if, instead of suffering thyself to be softened by their complaints and tears, thou wouldst send them to weep before me, which should never soften me, I would soon fashion them to the yoke they ought to bear, and I should weary out their imperious and independant humour. Being stol'd away at the age of fifteen years, from the remotest part of Africa, my native country, I was at first sold to a master, who had above twenty wives or concubines, who judg'd from my gravity and taciturnity, that I was fit for a seraglio; he order'd I should be made so, and made me submit to an operation painful at first, but which afterwards made me happy, as it brought me to the ear and confidence of my masters. I enter'd the seraglio, which was a new world to me. The chief eunuch, a man the most severe I ever saw, govern'd there with an absolute power. There was no talk heard there of divisions or quarrels: a profound silence reign'd throughout; all the women retir'd to rest at the same hour, from one end of the year to another, and rose again always at a certain hour: they enter'd the baths by turns, and came out at the least signal we made: they were shut up in their chambers almost the rest of their time. He had one rule, which was to make them observe the greatest neatness, and it is impossible to express his care for this purpose: he punish'd without mercy the least refusal of his orders. "I am, said he, a slave, but it is to a man who is your master as well as mine; and I only use the power he hath given me over you; it is he who corrects you, and not I, who do no more than lend my hand. These women never enter'd my master's chamber, unless they were call'd; they receiv'd this favour with joy, and saw themselves deprived of it without murmuring. In short, I who was the meanest black in this peaceful seraglio, was a thousand times more respect'd than I am in thine, where I command every body. As soon as this chief eunuch understood my genius, he regard'd me; spok'd of me to my master, as a man fit to pursue his methods, and to succeed him in the post he fill'd: he was not prejudic'd at my youthfulness; he thought my attention would supply the want of experience. Shall I tell thee! I grew so much in his confidence, that he made no difficulty to put into my hands the keys of those tremendous places, which he for so

long a time had guarded. It was under this able master that I learned the difficult art of commanding, and formed to myself the maxims of an inflexible government; I studied under him, the hearts of women; he taught me to take advantage of their weaknesses, and not to be confounded by their haughtiness. Often did he please himself with seeing me force them to the utmost verge of obedience; he then made them return again by degrees, and made me seem myself to give way for a time. You should have seen him in those moments, when they were driven almost to despair, between intreaties and reproaches; he bore their tears without being moved himself, and experienced a pleasure in this kind of triumph. See, said he, with an air of complacency, how women must be governed; their number does not incommode me; I could govern in the same manner, all those of our great monarch. How can a man captivate their hearts, if their trusty eunuchs did not first break their spirits? He was not only possessed of a firm resolution, but also of as great penetration. He read their thoughts, and saw through their dissimulations: their studied looks, their fictitious countenances concealed nothing from him. He gained a knowledge of all their most private actions, and their most secret words. he made use of some to gain intelligence of others, and delighted to reward the least confidence placed in him. As they never approached their husbands but when they had notice, the eunuch introduced whom he pleased, and directed his master's regards according to his own views; and this distinction was the reward of some secret intelligence. He had persuaded his master that it was necessary to leave this choice to him, in order to preserve good order, and to make his authority the greater. Such was the government, magnificent lord, in a seraglio which was, I believe, better regulated than any other in Persia. Leave my hands at liberty, permit me to make myself obeyed; one week shall put this confusion into order: this is what thy honour demands, and what thy security requires.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 9th of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXV.

### Usbek To His Wives, At The Seraglio At Ispahan.

I UNDERSTAND that the seraglio is in disorder, and that it is filled with quarrels and intestine divisions. What did I recommend at my departure, but peace and good understanding? You promised me this, was it to deceive me? It is you who would be deceived, if I was willing to follow the advice given me by the chief eunuch; if I would use my authority to make you live as my exhortations required you to do. I know not how to make use of such violent methods, until I have tried every other. Do then, in consideration of yourselves, what you would not be willing to do for my sake. The chief eunuch hath great occasion to complain: he says you have no respect for him. How can you reconcile this conduct with the modesty of your condition? Is it not to him that, during my absence, your virtue is intrusted? This is a sacred treasure, of which he is the depository. But the contempt you shew him, makes it appear, that those who have the care of making you live according to the law of honour, are burthensome. Change therefore your conduct, I desire you, that I may yet reject the proposals made to me against your liberty and repose. For I would make you to forget that I am your master, and that you may only remember that I am your husband.

Paris, the 5th of the moon Chahban, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXVI.

Rica To \* \* \*.

THE sciences are here very much studied; but I know not if those who study them are very learned. He who doubts of every thing as a philosopher, dares to deny nothing as a divine; this contradictory man is always satisfied with himself, provided qualities are agreed to. The passion of most of the French is to be taken for wits, and the passion of those who would be thought wits, is to write books. And yet there is nothing so badly imagined: nature seems to have provided, that the follies of men should be transient, but they by writing books render them permanent. A fool ought to content himself with having wearied those who lived with him: but he is for tormenting future generations; he is desirous that his folly should triumph over oblivion, which he ought to have enjoyed as well as his grave; he is desirous that posterity should be informed that he lived, and that it should be known for ever that he was a fool. Of all kind of authors there are none I despise more than compilers, who search every where for shreds of other men's works, which they join to their own, like so many pieces of green turf in a garden: they are not at all superior to compositors in a printing house, who range the types, which, collected together, make a book, towards which they contribute nothing but the labours of the hand. I would have original writers respected, and it seems to me a kind of profanation to take those pieces from the sanctuary in which they reside, and to expose them to a contempt they do not deserve. When a man hath nothing new to say, why does not he hold his tongue? What business have we with this double employment? But I will give a new order. You are an ingenious man; you come into my library, and you remove those books which were at the top to the bottom, and put those which were lowermost at top; this is a masterly work indeed! I write to thee on this subject, \* \* \*, because I am angry at a book which I have just left, which is so large, that it seems to contain universal science, but it hath almost split my head, without teaching me any thing. Farewel.

Paris, the 8th of the moon Chahban, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXVII.

### Ibben To Usbek, At Paris.

THERE are three ships arrived here, without bringing me any news of thee. Art thou sick? or dost thou take a pleasure in making me uneasy? If thou dost not love me in a country where thou art tied to nothing, what wouldst thou do in the middle of Persia, and in the bosom of thy family! But may be I deceive myself: thou art amiable enough to find friends every where; the heart is a citizen of every country; how can a well-formed mind hinder itself from entering into engagements? I confess to thee I respect old friendships, but I am not displeas'd at making new ones every where. In whatever country I have been, I have lived as though I was to pass my life there: I have had the same warm affection for virtuous people, the same compassion, or rather the same tenderness, for the unhappy; the same regard for those whom prosperity hath not blinded. This is my disposition, Usbek: wherever I shall meet with men, I shall chuse friends. There is a certain Guebre here, who, I think, after thee, enjoys the first place in my heart: he is probity itself. Some particular reasons have oblig'd him to retire to this city, where he lives at ease, with his wife, whom he loves, on the product of an honest traffic. His whole life is remarkable for generous actions; and though he seeks to be private, he hath more heroism in his soul, than in that of the greatest monarchs. I have talk'd a thousand times to him of thee, I shew him all thy letters; I observe they give him pleasure, and I already perceive that thou hast a friend who is unknown to thee. Thou wilt find here his chief adventures; though he wrote them with reluctance, he could refuse nothing to my friendship, and I intrust them to thine.

### The History Of Apheridon And Astarte.

I WAS born among the Guebres \*, of a religion which is, perhaps, the most ancient in the world. I was so unhappy, that love came to me before reason. I was scarce six years of age when I could not live without my sister: my eyes were always fix'd on her; and if she left me but a moment, she found them at her return bathed in tears: every day did not add more to my age than to my love. My father, astonish'd at so strong a sympathy, wish'd indeed to marry us together, according to the ancient custom of the Guebres, introduced by Cambyses, but the fear of the Mahometans, whose yoke we live under, restrains those of our nation from thinking of such holy alliances, which our religion rather commands than forbids, and which resemble so much the natural union constituted by nature. My father, seeing it would be dangerous to follow his inclination and mine, determin'd to extinguish a flame which he thought in its infancy, but which was at its height; he pretended to make a voyage, and took me with him, leaving my sister in the hands of one of his relations, for my mother had been dead two years. I will not tell you what my despair was at this separation: I embraced my sister, all bathed in teats, but I shed none; for grief had rendered me insensible. We arriv'd at Tefflis, and my father, having intrusted my education to one of our relations, left me there, and return'd home. Some time after I learn'd, that, by the interest of one of his friends, he had got my sister into the king's seraglio, where

she attended a sultana. If I had been informed of her death, I could not have been more affected; for, besides that I had no hopes of seeing her again, her entering into the seraglio had made her a Mahometan; and she could no more, according to the prejudice of that religion, regard me but with horror. However, not being able to live longer at Tefflis, weary of myself and of life, I returned to Ispahan. My first words to my father were bitter; I reproached him with having put his daughter in a place, into which none can enter without changing their religion. “You have brought upon your family, said I to him, the wrath of heaven, and of the sun that lights you: you have done worse than if you had sullied the elements, since you have defiled the soul of your daughter, which is not less pure: I shall die of grief and love, but may my death be the only punishment that God may make you feel!” At these words I went out; and, during two years, I passed my life in looking at the walls of the seraglio, and considering the part where my sister might be; exposing myself a thousand times every day to be killed by the eunuchs, who keep their round about these dreadful apartments. At last my father died; and the sultana, whom my sister waited on, observing her beauty increased every day, became jealous of her, and married her to an eunuch, who passionately wished for her. By this means my sister left the seraglio, and took with her eunuch an house at Ispahan. I was above three months without an opportunity of speaking to her; the eunuch, the most jealous of all men, always putting me off with frivolous excuses. At last, I entered this seraglio, and was obliged to talk through a latticed window. The eyes of a lynx could not have discovered her, so hid was she with her dress and veils; and I only knew her by her voice. What was my emotion when I saw myself so near her, and so far from her! I restrained myself, for I was observed. As to her, it seemed to me that she shed some tears. Her husband offered to make some trifling excuses, but I treated him as the most contemptible of slaves. He was quite confounded, when he found I talked to my sister in a language unknown to him; this was the ancient Persic, which is our sacred language. “What, my sister, said I, is it true that you have renounced the religion of your fathers? I know that on entering the seraglio you must have made profession of Mahometism; but tell me, hath your heart consented like your mouth, to quit the religion which permits me to love you? And for whom have you quitted that religion which ought to be so dear to us? For a wretch yet marked with the chains he wore; who, if he was a man, would be the last of mankind.” “My brother, said she, this man of whom you speak is my husband: I must honour him, all unworthy as he appears to you; and I should also be the last of women, if—” “Ah, my sister! interrupted I, you are a Guebre; he is not your husband, nor can he be; if you was a believer, like your forefathers, you could not but regard him as a monster. Alas, said she, at what a distance does that religion shew itself to me! Scarce had I known its precepts, when I was obliged to renounce it. You must observe, that the language I speak is not very familiar to me, and that I take the utmost pains to express myself: but be assured, that the remembrance of our childhood always gives me pleasure; but, since that time, I have known only false joys; that there hath not passed a day of my life in which I have not thought of you; that you have a greater share in my marriage than you can believe; and that it had not been concluded but from a hope of seeing you again. But this day, which hath cost me so much, will yet cost me more! I see you are quite beside yourself; my husband foams with rage and jealousy: I shall see you no more; I, without doubt, speak to you for the last time of my life: if so, my brother, it will not be long.” At these words she wept; and finding herself incapable of talking, she left

me, the most disconsolate of all men. Three or four days after, I desired to see my sister; the barbarous eunuch would indeed have hindered me; but, besides that these kind of husbands have not the same authority over their wives as others, he loved my sister so passionately, that he knew not how to refuse her any thing. I saw her again in the same place, and with the same veils, attended by two slaves, which made me have recourse to our own language. “My sister, said I, how comes it that I cannot see you, without finding myself in this terrible situation? These walls which keep you shut up, these bolts and iron gates, these miserable attendants who watch you, put me in a rage. How have you lost that sweet liberty which your ancestors enjoyed! Your mother, who was so chaste, did not give herself to her husband to guard her virtue, but her virtue itself was her guard: they both lived happy together in mutual confidence; and the simplicity of their manners was to them a treasure a thousand times more precious than that false splendor which you seem to enjoy in this sumptuous house. In losing your religion you have lost your liberty, your happiness, and that precious quality which constitutes the honour of your sex. But what is yet worse, is, that you are not the wife, for that you cannot be, but a slave to a slave, who hath been degraded of manhood. “Ah, my brother! said she, respect my husband, respect the religion I have embraced; according to which religion I cannot hear you, nor speak to you, without guilt.” “What, my sister! cried I, quite in a transport, do you then believe this religion to be true?” “Ah, said she, how well would it be for me if it was not! I have made too great a sacrifice to it, not to believe in it; and, if my doubts”—At these words she was silent. “Yes, your doubts, my sister, are well founded, whatever they are. What can you expect from a religion which renders you unhappy here in this world, and leaves you no hope of another? Consider, our religion is the most ancient in the whole world; that it hath always flourished in Persia, and hath no other origin but with that empire, whose beginning is not known; it was nothing but chance which introduced Mahometism there; that sect was established there, not by the power of persuasion, but by that of conquest. If our natural princes had not been weak, you would have seen the worship of the ancient Magi flourishing yet. Review those ages which are passed, every thing informs you of Magism, and nothing of the Mahometan sect, which, many thousand of years after, was but then in its infancy.” “But, said she, though my religion should be of a more modern date than yours, it is at least more pure, since it adores none but God; whereas you also adore the sun, the stars, fire, and even the elements.” “I see, my sister, that you have learned among the Mussulmans to calumniate our holy religion. We worship neither the stars nor the elements, and our fathers never worshipped them: they never raised temples to them, they never offered sacrifices to them. They only paid them a religious worship of an inferior kind, as to the works and manifestations of the divinity. But, my sister, in the name of him who enlightens us, receive this sacred book which I have brought you; it is a book of our legislator Zoroaster, peruse it without prejudice; receive in your heart the rays of light, which will enlighten you as you read it; remember your fathers, who for so long a time honoured the sun in the city of the Holy Balk; and lastly, do thou remember me, who hope neither for ease, happiness, nor life, but from your change.” There, quite transported, I quitted her, and left her alone to determine the most important affair that I could have in my life. I came there again two days after; I said nothing to her, waiting with silence the sentence of my life, or of my death. “Thou art beloved, my brother, said she to me, and by a Guebre. I have struggled a long time; but, Gods! what difficulties doth love remove! How relieved am I! I fear nothing now but loving

you too much; I can fix no bounds to my love: but the excess is lawful. Ah, how well does this suit the state of my heart! But you who have known how to break the chains which my mind itself had forged, how will you break those that tie my hands? From this moment I give myself to thee; show by the readiness with which you receive me, how dear this present is to you. My brother, the first time that I embrace you, I believe I shall die in your arms.” I can never fully express the joy I felt at these words: I did believe, and actually saw myself, in a moment, the most happy of all mankind: I saw all the wishes which I had been five and twenty years of my life in forming, nearly accomplished, and all those uneasinesses vanished, which had rendered my life so burthensome. But when I had a little enjoyed these delightful thoughts, I found that I was not so near my happiness, as I had so hastily imagined within myself, though I had surmounted the greatest of all obstacles. The vigilance of her guardians was to be deceived: I did not dare to confide this secret of my life with any body; I had nobody but my sister, and she nobody but me, to consult: if my scheme failed, I ran the risque of being imprisoned; but I saw no pain more tormenting than that of miscarrying. We agreed that she should send to me for a cloak that her father had left her, and that I should put a file into it, to saw the lattice of her window, which opened to the street, and a rope-ladder to descend by, and after that not to visit her; but that I should walk every night under the window, to wait till she could execute her design. I passed fifteen whole nights without seeing any body, because she had not found a favourable opportunity. At length, the sixteenth night, I heard a saw at work: from time to time the work was discontinued, and in those intervals my fear was inexpressible. After an hour’s labour I saw her fasten the cord, she then put herself on it, and slid down into my arms. I thought no more of danger, and staid some time without moving from thence; I then conducted her out of the city, where I had a horse ready; I placed her behind me, and rode with all the haste possible, from a place which might have been very fatal to us. We reached, before day, the house of a Guebre, in a desert place, where he lived retired by the labour of his hands. Not thinking it proper to stay with him, by his advice we entered into a thick forest, and hid ourselves in the hollow of an old oak tree, till the noise of our flight should be over. We lived both together in this place, without being seen, continually repeating how we would always love one another, waiting an opportunity when some Guebre priest should perform the ceremony of our marriage, ordered by our sacred books. “My sister, said I to her, how holy is this union! Nature hath united us, our holy law will again unite us. At length a priest came to satisfy our impatient love; he performed, in the house of a peasant, the whole marriage ceremony: he blessed us, and wished us a thousand times all the vigour of Gustaspe, and the sanctity of Hohoraspe. Soon after we quitted Persia, where we were not in safety, and retired to Georgia. We lived there a year, every day more delighted with each other. But as my money was near expended, and as I feared the distress of my sister more than of myself, I left her, to seek some assistance from our relations. Never was there a parting so tender. But my journey was not only unprofitable, but fatal: for finding, on one hand, our whole estate confiscated, on the other, my relations in a manner incapable of assisting me, I brought away no more money than was sufficient for my journey back. But what was my despair at not finding my sister! Some days before my arrival, the Tartars had made an incursion into the town where she was; and, as they found she was beautiful, they took her, and sold her to some Jews, who were going into Turkey, and left only a little girl, of whom she had been delivered a few months before. I followed these Jews, and got up to



them three leagues off: my prayers, my tears, were in vain; they demanded of me thirty tomans for her, and would not abate one. After I had asked every body, implored the help of both Christian and Turkish priests, I applied to an Armenian merchant; sold both my daughter and myself to him, for five and thirty tomans. I went to the Jews, paid them thirty tomans, and carried the other five to my sister, whom I had not yet seen. "Thou art at liberty, my sister, said I to her, and I may embrace you; here are five tomans, which I bring you; I am sorry the sale of myself would fetch no more." "What! cried she, are you sold?" "Yes, replied I." "Ah, unhappy man, what hast thou done? Was I not miserable enough without your endeavouring to make me more so? Your liberty consoled me and your slavery will send me to the grave. Ah! my brother! how cruel is your love! and where is my daughter? I have not seen her" "I have sold her also, said I." We both melted into tears, and were no more able to talk. I went afterwards to wait upon my master, and my sister got there almost as soon as myself: she fell down upon her knees before my master; "I ask slavery of you, said she, as others do liberty; take me, you may sell me at a higher price than my husband." This then occasioned a struggle between us, which drew tears from my master. "Unhappy man! said she, did you think I would accept of my liberty at the expence of thine? Sir, behold here two unfortunate persons, who must die if you separate us. I offer myself to you, pay me, perhaps that money, and my services, may one day obtain from you what I dare not ask of you. It is your interest not to separate us; be assured that his life is at my disposal." The Armenian, who was a good tempered man, was touched with our misfortunes. "Both of you serve me, said he, with fidelity and zeal, I promise you, that in a year you shall have your liberty. I see that neither of you merit the misfortunes of your condition. If, when at liberty, you should be as happy as you deserve to be, if fortune should smile upon you, I am certain you will recompence me for the loss I shall sustain." We both embraced his knees, and went the voyage with him. We mutually assisted each other in the labours of servitude, and I was always delighted when I had done that work which belonged to my sister. The end of the year at length arrived; our master kept his word, and gave us our liberty. We returned to Tefflis; there I found an old friend of my father, who practised physic in that city with success. He lent me some money, with which I trafficked. Some affairs afterwards called me to Smyrna, where I settled. I have lived here six years, and I enjoy here the most delightful and most agreeable society in the world: unity reigns in my family, and I would not change my condition for that of all the kings in the world. I have been so happy as to find out the Armenian merchant, to whom I owe every thing, and I have rendered him some considerable services.

Smyrna, the 27th of the moon of the 1st Gemmadi, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXVIII.

Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

THE other day I went to dine with a man of the long robe, by whom I had been often invited. After we had talked upon a variety of subjects, I said to him, "Sir, your profession appears to me to be very troublesome." "Not so much as you imagine, answered he, in the manner we conduct it, it is no more than an amusement." "But how? Have not you your head always filled with the affairs of another? Are not you perpetually busied with affairs that do not concern you?" "You are right, those affairs do not give us any concern, because we do not interest ourselves the least in them; and this is the reason that the profession is not so fatiguing as you supposed it to be." "When I saw he treated the matter with so much ease, I added, "Sir, I have not yet seen your study." "I believe not, for I have none at all. When I took this office. I wanted money to pay for it; I sold my library; and the bookseller, who purchased it, out of the great number of volumes it contained, left me only my account book. But this gives me no concern: we judges do not puff ourselves up with useless knowledge. What business have we with so many volumes of law? Almost all cases are hypothetical, and out of the general rule." "But may not that be, Sir, said I, because you put them out of the general rule? For, in short, why have all the people in the world laws, if they do not make use of them? And how can they be used if they do not know them?" "If you was but acquainted with the courts of justice, answered the magistrate, you would not talk in this manner: we have living books, who are the counsellors, they study for us, and take upon themselves our instruction." "And do not they sometimes take upon themselves to deceive you? replied I. You would do well to guard yourselves against their arts. They have arms, with which they attack your equity, it would be well you had some to defend it; and not to suffer yourselves to be placed in the middle of a battle, slightly armed, among men dressed in armour to the very chin."

Paris, the 13th of the moon Chahban, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXIX.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

THOU couldst never have imagined that I should become a greater metaphysician than I was; however so it is, and you will be convinced of it, when you have endured this inundation of my philosophy. The most sensible philosophers, who have reflected upon the nature of God, have declared him to be a being most absolutely perfect; but they have very greatly abused this idea. They have enumerated all the different perfections that man is capable of possessing, or imagining; and with these they load this idea of the divinity, not considering that these attributes are frequently opposite to one another, and that they cannot subsist in the same subject without destroying themselves. The poets of the west say, that a painter, desirous to make a portrait of the goodness of beauty, assembled the handsomest Grecian women, and selected from each what was most agreeable, of which several beauties he composed one whole, to resemble the most beautiful of all the goddesses. If a man from hence should conclude that she was fair and brown, that she had black eyes and grey, and that her countenance was mild and fierce, he would pass for a fool. God often wants a perfection which would render him very imperfect: but he is never limited but by himself; he is his own necessity. Thus, though God is all powerful, he cannot break his promises, nor deceive man. Very often too, the inability is not in him, but in relative things; and this is the reason why he cannot change the essence of things. So that it is not a matter of wonder, that some of our divines have dared to deny the infinite foreknowledge of God; upon this foundation, that it is incompatible with his justice. As bold as this opinion may be, there is in metaphysics, what favours it greatly. According to the principles of that, it is not possible that God can foresee what depends upon the determination of free agents: because what hath not existed, is not in being, and consequently cannot be known, which having no properties, cannot be perceived: God cannot read in the will what is not in it, or see in the soul a thing which is not yet existing in it: for, till she hath determined, the action which she determines upon is not in her. The soul is the maker of her own determination: but there are some circumstances in which she is so irresolute, that she knows not on which side to determine. Sometimes she may even do it, only to make use of her liberty! in such a manner, that God cannot see this determination beforehand, neither in the action of the soul, nor in the actions which the objects make upon her. How then can God foresee those things which depend upon the determination of free agents? He could foresee them but in two ways; by conjecture, which is irreconcilable with infinite foreknowledge; or otherwise he must see them as necessary effects, which infallibly follow a cause which produces them as infallibly; for the soul must be free upon this supposition; and yet in the act, she would be no more so than one billiard ball is free to lie still when it is pushed by another. However, do not think I would set bounds to the knowledge of God. As he makes his creature act according to his own mind, he knows all that he wills to know. But though he can see every thing, he does not always make use of that power; he commonly leaves the creature at liberty to act, or not to act, that he may leave him a

power to merit or demerit: it is for this end then, that he renounces his right which he hath to act upon her, and to determine her actions. But when he wills to know any thing he always knows it; because that he needs only to will that it happen as he sees it, and to determine his creatures according to his will. Thus it is, that he brings forth what shall happen, from a number of things merely possible, by fixing by his decrees, the future determinations of the minds of his creatures, and depriving them of that power which he hath given them to act, or not to act. If the comparison may be used, with respect to what is above all comparison, a monarch is ignorant of what his ambassador will do in a certain important affair; if he would know it, he need only order him to act in such a manner; and he may be assured the thing will happen as he directs. The Koran, and the books of the Jews, constantly oppose this doctrine of absolute foreknowledge. God appears there throughout ignorant of the future determination of human minds; and it seems that this was the first truth Moses taught mankind. God places Adam in a terrestrial paradise, upon condition that he should not eat of a certain fruit: an absurd command from a being who knew the future determination of the soul: for in short, could such a being make that the condition of his favour, without rendering it ridiculous? It is as if a man who knew of the taking of Bagdad, should say to another; I will give you an hundred tomans, if Bagdad is not taken. Would not this be a very bad jest? My dear Rhedi, why so much philosophy? God is above, whom we cannot perceive, even in the clouds. Indeed we have no knowledge of him, but in his precepts. He is immense, spiritual, infinite. What his greatness is, we may conclude from our own weakness. Always to humble ourselves, is always to adore him.

Paris, the last day of the moon Chahban, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXX.

### Zelis To Usbek, At Paris.

SOLIMAN, whom thou lovest, is driven to despair, by an affront he hath just received. A giddy-headed young man, called Suphis, hath been seeking these three months to marry his daughter; he seemed pleased with her figure, from the report and description that he had of her, from the women who had seen her from her infancy; the portion was agreed on, and every thing passed without any difficulty. Yesterday, after the first ceremonies, the maid went on horseback, attended by her eunuch, and covered according to custom, from head to foot. But, when she was arrived at the house of her intended husband, he shut the door, and swore he would never receive her, unless her fortune was augmented. Her relations run there from all parts, to accommodate the matter; and after a good deal of disputing, Soliman agreed to make his son-in-law a small present. The ceremonies of the marriage were finished, they conducted the young woman to bed with a good deal of violence; but an hour after, this giddy-headed young man got up in a fury, cut her face in several places, and asserting that she was not a virgin, sent her back to her father. Nobody can be more confounded than he is at this injury. There are many persons who maintain, that his daughter is innocent. Fathers are very unhappy to be exposed to such affronts! If my daughter should receive such treatment, I believe I should die of grief. Farewel.

From the seraglio at Fatme, the 9th of the moon of the 1st Gemmadi, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXI.

### Usbek To Zelis.

I AM sorry for Soliman, and the more, because this distress is without remedy, and his son-in-law hath done no more than taking advantage of the power of the law. I think this law is very hard, thus to expose the honour of a family to the caprice of a madman. It is easy to say there are certain signs to know the truth by: it is an old error which we have now quitted; and our physicians have given invincible reasons of the uncertainty of these proofs. There are none even among the Christians, who do not regard them as chimerical, though they are plainly established in their sacred books, and though their antient legislator hath made the innocence, or condemnation of all their daughters to depend upon them. I hear with pleasure, the care thou takest of the education of thine. May her husband find her as beautiful, and as pure, as Fatima; may she have ten eunuchs to watch her; may she be the honour and ornament of the seraglio for which she is decreed; may she always have gilded cielings over her head, and never walk but upon rich tapestry! And, to fill up my wishes, may my eyes see her in all her glory!

Paris the 5th of the moon Chalval, 1714.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXII.

Rica To Ibben, At \* \* \*.

THE other day I was in company, where I saw a man who was highly pleased with himself. He had decided, in a quarter of an hour, three questions in morality, four historical problems, and five points in natural philosophy. I never saw so universal a decider; his mind was never suspended by the least doubt. We left the sciences; talked of the news of the times. He decided the news of the times. I was willing to catch him, and said to myself, I must get into my strong fort; I will take refuge in my own country; I talked to him of Persia; but I had scarce spoke four words to him, but he contradicted me twice, upon the authority of Tavernier and Chardin. Hah! said I to myself, what a man is this here? He will presently know all the streets in Ispahan better than myself; I soon determined what part to take; I was silent; I left him to talk; and he yet decides.

Paris, the 8th of the moon Zilcade, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXIII.

Rica To \* \* \*.

I HAVE heard much talk of a kind of tribunal, called the French academy \*. There is not in the whole world a tribunal less respected; for as soon as it makes a decision, the people break its decrees, and impose on its laws which it is obliged to follow. Some time since, in order to fix their authority, they published a code † of their decisions. This babe of so many fathers, was nearly in its old age when born; and, though legitimate, a bastard ‡, who had got into the world before him, was very near stifling him in the birth. Those who compose this tribunal, have no other employment but to be continually a-prating; panegyric, of its own accord, takes place in their incessant babbling; and as soon as they are initiated into their mysteries, this fury of panegyric seizes them, and never more leaves them. This body hath forty heads, all filled with figures of metaphors and antitheses; so that their mouths hardly ever open but with an exclamation; their ears always expect to be struck with cadence and harmony. As to their eyes, they are out of the question; these people seem as if they were made to hear, and not to see. It does not yet stand firm upon its feet; for time, which is its scourge, shakes it every moment, and destroys every thing it doth. Its hands were said formerly to have been griping \*; I shall say nothing of this, but leave it to be decided by those who know more of it than myself. Such vagaries, \* \* \*, are not to be found in our country. Our genius does not bend us to such odd singularities: we always seek after nature in our plain customs and native manners.

Paris, the 27th of the moon Zilhage, 1715.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXIV.

### Usbek To Rica, At \* \* \*.

SOME time ago, a man of my acquaintance said to me, "I promised to bring you to the best houses in Paris; I will take you now to a great lord, who supports his dignity better than any man in the kingdom." "What do you mean, Sir? is it that his behaviour is more polite, more affable than that of others?" "No," said he. "Oh! I understand; he takes all opportunities to make every body who comes near him sensible of his superiority: If it be so, I have no business to go there: I allow him his whole demand, and acquiesce in the inferiority he condemns me to." Yet I must go there, and I saw a little man, so lofty; he took a pinch of snuff with so much dignity; he blowed his nose so unmercifully; he spit with so much phlegm, and caressed his dogs in a manner so offensive to the company, that I could not but wonder at him. "Ah, said I to myself, if, when I was at the court of Persia, I behaved so, I behaved like a great fool!" We must, Rica, have been naturally very bad, to have practised a hundred little insults towards those people who came every day to shew their good will to us. They knew very well our superiority over them; and, if they had been ignorant of it, the favours we every day conferred on them, must have convinced them of it. Having no necessity to do any thing to make ourselves respected, we did all to render ourselves beloved: we were accessible to the meanest; amidst those honours, which commonly harden the heart, they experienced the sensibility of ours; they found only our souls superior to them; we descended to their wants. But when it was necessary to support the dignity of our prince in public ceremonies, when it was proper to make our nation respectable to strangers; or lastly, when in cases of danger it was necessary to animate our soldiers, we ascended a hundred times higher than we had before descended; recalled all our dignity into our looks; and it was found that we sometimes properly represented ourselves.

Paris, the 10th of the moon Saphar, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXV.

### Uskek To Rhedi, At Venice.

I MUST needs confess to thee, I have not observed among the Christians, that lively persuasion of their religion, that is to be found among the Mussulmans. There is hence among them a great difference between profession and belief, between belief and practice. Religion is less a matter of holiness than of dispute, in which every body is concerned. Courtiers, soldiers, even the women oppose themselves against it to the clergy, demanding from them a proof of what they are determined not to believe. It is not because they would be determined by reason, and that they have taken the pains to examine the truth or falsehood of the religion which they reject; they are rebels who have felt the yoke, and have shook it off before they knew what it was. Nor are they better fixed in their incredulity than in their faith: they live in a fluctuating state, which leads them continually from one opinion to another. One of them once said to me, "I believe the immortality of the soul six months together; my opinions absolutely depend upon the temperature of my body; as I have more or less animal spirits, as my digestion is good or bad, as I breathe a finer or grosser air, as my food is light, or solid, I am a spinosist, a socinian, a catholic, an atheist, or a bigot. When the physician is at my bedside, the confessor always finds me at his disposal. I know very well how to hinder religion from distressing me when I am in health, but I allow it to comfort me when I am sick: when I have no longer any thing to hope for from another quarter, religion offers herself to me, and gains me by her promises: I am very willing to resign myself to her, and to die on the hopeful side. It is a long time since the Christian princes set free all the slaves in their kingdoms; because, say they, Christianity makes all men equal. It is true, this act of religion hath been very serviceable to them. They destroyed, by this means, the power of the nobility, by which they kept the people in subjection to themselves. They afterwards made conquest in countries where they found it was to their advantage to have slaves; they allowed of buying and selling them; forgetting those principles of religion, which had so much touched them. What shall we call this? Truth at one time, error at another. Why do we not act like Christians? We are very foolish to refuse settlements, and easy conquests, in happy climates, because the water is not pure enough to wash us \*, according to the principles of the holy Koran. I render thanks to the most high, who hath sent Haly, his great prophet, from whence it is that I profess a religion which renders itself preferred to all worldly interest, and which is pure as the heavens, from which it descended.

Paris, the 13th of the moon Saphar, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXVI.

### Usbek To His Friend Ibben, At Smyrna.

IN Europe the laws are very severe against self-murderers. They put them to death, if I may so say, a second time; they are ignominiously dragged through the streets, marked with infamy, and their effects confiscated. It seems to me, Ibben, that these are very unjust laws. When I am loaded with grief, misery, and contempt, why should I be restrained from putting an end to my pains, and be cruelly deprived of a remedy that I have in my power? Why would they have me labour for a society of which I consent no longer to be a member? Why to hold, in spite of myself, a compact made without my agreement? Society is founded upon mutual advantage; but when it becomes burthensome to me, what should hinder me from quitting it? Life was given to me as a favour; I may then return it, when it is no more so; the cause ceasing, the effect then ought also to cease. Would a prince desire that I should be his subject, when I reap none of the advantages of subjection? Can my fellow-citizens ask this unequal division of their benefit, and my despair? Will God, contrary to all other benefactors, condemn me to accept of favours which oppress me? I am obliged to obey the laws, whilst I live under the laws, but when I no longer live under them, can they still bind me? But, 'tis said, you disturb the order of providence. God hath united your soul to your body, and you separate them; you then oppose his designs, and you resist his will. What would they say by this? Do I disturb the order of providence, when I alter the modifications of matter, and render square a bowl, which the first laws of motion, that is to say, the laws of creation and preservation, have made round? No, without doubt. I do but use the right which hath been given me; and, in this sense, I may disturb, according to my fancy, all nature, without its being said, that I oppose myself to providence. When my soul shall be separated from my body, will there be less order, and less regularity in the universe? Do you believe that this new combination would be less perfect and less dependent upon the general laws? That the world can thereby lose any thing? that the works of God would be less great? or rather less immense? Do you think that my body, when become a blade of grass, a worm, a green turf, would be changed into a work of nature less worthy of her? and that my soul, disengaged from all its earthy part, would become less pure? These ideas, my dear Ibben, have no other source but our pride. We are not at all sensible of our littleness; and however it may be, we are willing to be reckoned of consequence in the universe, and to be there an object of importance. We imagine, that the annihilation of such a perfect being as ourselves would degrade all nature; and we do not conceive, that one man more or less, in the world; what did I say one? all mankind together, a hundred millions of heads such as ours, are but one small minute atom, whom God perceives not but from the immensity of his knowledge.

Paris, the 15th of the moon Saphar, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXVII. \*

### Ibben To Usbek, At Paris.

IT appears to me, my dear Usbek, that to a true Mussulman misfortunes are not so much chastisements as warnings. Those are valuable days indeed, which lead us to expiate our offences. It is the time of prosperity which ought to be shortened. To what end does all our impatience serve, but to make us see that we would be happy, independently of him who bestows happiness, because he is happiness itself. If a being is composed of two parts, and that the necessity of preserving their union is the greatest mark of submission to the decrees of the Creator, this then may be made a religious law: if this necessity of preserving that union is a better security of human actions, it may be made a civil law.

Smyrna, the last day of the moon Saphar, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXVIII.

### Rica To Usbek, At \*\*\*.

I SEND thee a copy of a letter, which a Frenchman, who is in Spain, wrote to his friend here: I believe you will be pleased to see it.—I have, in six months time, run through Spain and Portugal; and I have lived among a people, who despising all others, do the French alone the honour of hating them. Gravity is the shining character of these two nations, it shows itself chiefly there two ways, by spectacles and mustachios. The spectacles demonstratively show, that he who wears them is a man consummate in the sciences, and buried in profound reading, to such a degree as to have impaired his sight: and every nose that is thus ornamented, or loaded, may pass, without contradiction, for the nose of a learned man. As to the mustachio, it is respectable in itself, and independently of any consequences; though great benefits have been sometimes drawn from it, for the service of the king, and the honour of the nation, as hath been made appear by a famous Portuguese general \* in the East-Indies; for, being in want of money, he cut off one of his mustachios, and sent to demand of the inhabitants of Goa twenty thousand pistoles upon this pledge: they very readily accepted it, and he afterwards honourably redeemed his mustachio. It is easily conceived that such grave and phlegmatic people as these may be proud; and so they are. They commonly found it upon these two considerable points. Those who live upon the continent of Spain and Portugal, find their hearts greatly elated, if they are those who are called the Old Christians; that is to say, not originally descended from those, who, in the latter centuries were forced by the inquisition to embrace Christianity. They who live in the Indies are no less elated, when they consider that they have the sublime merit to be, as they say, men with white skins. There never was in the seraglio of the Grand Signior, a Sultana so proud of her beauty, as the oldest, great ugly cur born, is of his olive-white complexion, when in the town of Mexico, sitting at his door, with his legs crossed. A man of such consequence, so compleat a creature, would not work for all the treasures in the world, nor ever persuade himself, by a vile mechanic industry, to venture the honour and dignity of his skin. For you must know, that when a man hath a certain merit in Spain, as for example, when he can add to the qualities I have been speaking of, that of being the proprietor of a long sword, or hath learned of his father the art of making a wretched noise on an ill tuned guitar, he works no more; his honour is interested in the repose of his limbs. He who sits still ten hours a day, acquires exactly one moiety more of respect than one who rests but five; because honour is here to be acquired upon a chair. But though these invincible enemies to labour make a show of philosophical tranquility, they have yet none in their heart; for they are always in love. They are the first men in the world to die languishing under the window of their mistresses: and every Spaniard who hath not a cold, cannot pass for a gallant. They are in the first place bigots, in the next jealous. They take great care not to venture their wives to the attacks of a soldier disabled with wounds, or to a decrepid magistrate: but they will shut them up with a servent novice, who meekly casts his eyes down to the earth, or a robust Franciscan, who as devoutly turns them upwards. They allow their wives to appear with their

bosoms naked: but they will not let their heel be seen, lest they should be caught by the foot. The rigours of love are universally admitted to be great; they are much more so to the Spaniards. The women relieve their pains, but they only do so to change them; and frequently a long and troublesome remembrance of an extinguished passion continues with them. They observe little pieces of politeness, which in France would appear oddly applied: for example, a captain never corrects his soldier without first asking his leave; and the inquisition never burns a Jew without making an apology to him. The Spaniards who are not burned appear so fond of the inquisition, that it would be ill-natured to deprive them of it. I would only have another erected, not for heretics, but for heresarchs, who attribute to some little monkish tricks the same efficacy as to the seven sacraments, who worship every thing which they should only reverence: and who are so extremely devout, that they are hardly Christians. You may meet with wit and good sense among the Spaniards, but look for neither in their books. View but one of their libraries, romances on this side, and school divines on the other; you would say that they had been made, and collected together, by some secret enemy to human reason. The only good one of all their books, is that which was wrote to show the ridiculousness of all the others. In the new world they have made immense discoveries and as yet know not their own continent: they have not yet discovered there what they have upon their rivers and in their mountains, nations \* unknown to them. They say that the sun rises and sets in their country: but it may also be said, that, in passing his course, he reckons only ruined countries, and deserted lands.—I should not be sorry. Usbek, to see a letter written at Madrid by a Spaniard who had travelled in France; I believe he might thoroughly revenge himself on this nation. What a vast field for a phlegmatic pensive man! I imagine he would commence the description of Paris in this manner: here is a house in which mad folks are put; it might at first thought be expected larger than the whole city; no: the remedy is insufficient for the malady. Doubtless the French, extremely despised by their neighbours, shut up some madmen in this house, that it may be thought that those who are at liberty are not such.—There I leave my Spaniard. Farewel, my dear Usbek.

Paris, the 17th of the moon Saphar, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXIX.

### The Chief Black Eunuch To Usbek, At Paris.

SOME Armenians, yesterday, brought to the seraglio a young Circassian slave, whom they desired to sell. I made her enter the private apartments, there I undressed her, I examined her with the eyes of a judge, and the more I observed her, the more beauties I discovered. A virgin modesty seemed to conceal them from my view; I saw how much it cost her to submit; she blushed at seeing herself naked, even before me, who, exempt from those passions which might alarm her modesty, am unmoved under the empire of that sex; and who, the minister of modesty, in the freest actions, bring only chaste looks, and can inspire nothing but innocence. From the moment I judged her worthy of thee, I bent my eyes downwards; I threw a scarlet mantle over her; I put upon her finger a ring of gold; I prostrated myself at her feet; I adored her as the queen of thy heart. I paid the Armenians; I shut her up from every eye. Happy Usbek, thou possessest greater beauties than are enclosed in all the palaces of the east. What pleasure to thee, to find at thy return, all that Persia hath most delightful! and to see in thy seraglio all the graces re-born, as fast as time and possession labour their destruction.

From the seraglio at Fatme, the 1st of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXX.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

SINCE I have been in Europe, Rhedi, I have seen a variety of governments. It is not here as in Asia, where the rules of policy are every where found the same. I have often enquired which government is most conformable to reason. It appears to me, that the most perfect is that which arrives at its end with the least difficulty; of this kind, that which leads men in a way which best suits their disposition, is the most perfect. If under a mild government, the subjects are as obedient as under a severe one; the first is preferable, because it is most conformable to reason, and because severity is a foreign motive. Be assured, Rhedi, that in a state, punishments, more or less cruel, do not procure greater obedience to the laws. In a country where chastisements are moderate, they are as much dreaded as in those where they are tyrannical and dreadful. Let the government be mild, let it be cruel, the punishment is always gradual; the punishment inflicted is greater or less, as the crime is greater or less. The imagination conforms itself to the manners of the country in which we live: eight days imprisonment, or a lighter punishment, affects the mind of an European, brought up under a mild government, as much as the loss of an arm intimidates an Asiatic. Men affix a certain degree of fear to a certain degree of punishment, and each makes the distribution in his own way: a Frenchman shall be driven to despair at the infamy of a punishment to which he is condemned, which would not deprive a Turk of his sleep for one quarter of an hour. Besides, I do not observe that policy, justice, and equity, are better observed in Turkey, Persia, or under the Mogul, than in the republicks of Holland, Venice, and even in England: I do not find that less crimes are committed in the former countries, or that men intimidated by severe punishments are more submissive to the laws. I have, on the contrary, remarked, a foundation for injustice and distress in the midst of the very same states. I have even found the prince, who is himself the law, less master than in any other state. I observe, that these times of rigour have always been attended with tumultuous commotions, in which nobody is chief; and that, when once a violent authority is despised, there remains no longer sufficient power with any per on to restore it. That the very despair of impunity strengthens the disturbance, and renders it greater. That, in such states, they never make a flight revolt; and that there never is any interval between murmurings and insurrections. That there is no necessity that great events should there be prepared for by great causes; on the contrary, a great revolution hath been produced by the least accident, often also as unforeseen by those who effected it, as by those who suffered from it. When Osman, emperor of the Turks, was deposed, each of those concerned in that attempt thought nothing of what they effected: they demanded only, in a supplicant manner, that they might have justice done with regard to a particular grievance: a voice, that none had ever known, from among the multitude pronounced, by accident, the name of Mustapha, and immediately Mustapha was emperor.

Paris, the 2d of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1715.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXI.

### Nargum, Envoy From Persia In Muscovy, To Usbek At Paris.

OF all the nations in the world, Usbek, there is not one that hath exceeded the Tartars, in glory, or in the greatness of their conquests. This nation is truly the Lord of the universe: all others seem made to serve it: it is alike the sounder and destroyer of empires: in all ages it afforded the world marks of its power; in all ages it hath been the scourge of nations. The Tartars have twice conquered China, and to this time keep it in subjection to them. They rule those vast countries which form the empire of the Mogul. Master of Persia, they sit upon the throne of Cyrus and Gustaspes. They have subdued Muscovy. Under the name of Turks, they have made immense conquests in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and they reign over these three parts of the universe. And, to speak of more remote times, it was from them that issued forth some of those people who overturned the Roman empire. What are the conquests of Alexander, in comparison to those of Genghiscan? This victorious nation hath only wanted historians, to celebrate the memory of its marvellous achievements. What immortal actions have been buried in oblivion! What empires founded by them, of whose original we are ignorant! This warlike nation, wholly taken up with her present glory, sure of conquest at all times, never thought of signaling herself in time to come, by the remembrance of her past conquests.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXII.

### Rica To Ibben, At Smyrna.

THOUGH the French talk much, there is yet among them a kind of mute dervises, called Carthusians. It is said, that they cut out their tongues at their admittance into the convent; and it is much to be wished, that all the other dervises would retrench, in the same manner, every thing that their profession renders useless to them. Now I am mentioning these silent people, there are some much more remarkable than they, and who have a very extraordinary talent: These are such as know how to talk without saying any thing; and who support a conversation two hours together, without its being possible to discover their meaning, to retale what they say, nay, to retain one word of what they have been talking. These kind of people are adored by the women; but not so much as some others, who have received from nature the amiable talent of smiling at proper times, that is, every moment, and who assume the grace of a pleasing approbation for every thing that comes from the ladies. But these are high accomplished wits, who can discover a fine thought in every thing, and find out a thousand little ingenious strokes in the most common discourse. I know others, who are so happy as to introduce into their conversation things inanimate, and to make their embroidered coat, their white peruke, their snuff-box, their cane, and their gloves, speak for them. It is a good way to begin in the street to make one's self heard by the rattling of a coach, or by the loud thunder of a knocker at the door: this prologue gives a prepossession in favour of the rest of the discourse; and when the introduction is good, it renders all the folly that follows afterwards supportable, but which, by good fortune, arrives too late. I can assure thee that these little talents, which are made of no value to us, are of great use here to those who are so happy as to possess them; and a man of good sense shines not at all among such people.

Paris, the 6th of the moon of the 2d Rabiab, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXIII.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

IF there be a God, Rhedi, he must necessarily be just; if he was not such, he would be the worst and most imperfect of all beings. Justice is a relation of congruity which really subsists between two things: this relation is always the same, whatever being considers it, whether it be God, or an angel, or lastly a man. It is true, men do not always see these relations: often indeed, when they do see them, they deviate from them; and their interest is always what they see best. Justice raises her voice, but it is with difficulty she makes herself heard amidst the tumult of the passions. Men may do injustice, because it is their interest to commit it, and because they prefer their own private satisfaction to that of others. It is always with a view to themselves that they act: nobody is wicked for nothing; he must have some reason that determines him; and this reason is always a reason of interest. But it is impossible that God should ever commit any injustice: from the instant that we suppose he sees justice, it must necessarily be that he follows it: for, as he hath no want of any thing, and is all-sufficient in himself, he would be the most wicked of all beings, because he would be such without gaining any thing. Thus, though there was no God, we ought always to love justice; that is, we should endeavour to resemble that being, of whom we have so amiable an idea, and who, if he exists, must necessarily be just. Though we should be free from the yoke of religion, we ought not to be so from that of equity. This it is, Rhedi, that makes me believe that justice is eternal, and depends not upon human compacts. And, if it was dependent upon them, it would be a terrible truth, which should be concealed even from ourselves. We are surrounded by men stronger than we are; they can injure us in a thousand different ways; three times in four they might do it with impunity. What a satisfaction to us, to know that there is in them, in the heart of all these men, an inward principle which fights in our favour, and secures us from their attempts? If it was not for this, we should be in continual fear; we should pass by men as by lions, and we should not be assured one moment of our goods, honour, and life. All these considerations make me angry at those doctors, who represent God as a being who exercises his power with tyranny; who make him act in a manner that we ourselves would not, for fear of offending him; who charge him with all those imperfections that he punishes in us, and, by their contradictory opinions, represent him as an evil being, by and by as a being who hates evil, and punishes it. When a man searcheth himself, what a satisfaction is it to him to find that he hath a just heart! This pleasure, as severe as it is, must delight him: he beholds himself a being as much above those who have not such a consciousness, as he sees himself superior to tygers and bears. Yes, Rhedi, if I was sure always to pursue, inviolably, that equity that I have before my eyes, I should think myself the first of mankind.

Paris, the 1st of the moon of the 1st Gemmadi, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXIV.

Rica To \* \* \*.

YESTERDAY I was at the hospital of the Invalids: I had rather have founded that establishment, if I was a prince, than have gained three battles. In every part of it there appears the hand of a great monarch. I think that it is the most respectable place in the world. What a sight to see assembled in one place all the victims of their country, who only breathed for its defence; and who, still finding the same heart, but not the same power, only bewail themselves for the inability they are under, of sacrificing themselves again for their country. What can be more pleasing, than to see these disabled warriors, observing in this retreat as exact a discipline as if they were in fear of the presence of an enemy, taking their last satisfaction in this picture of the war, and dividing their hearts and minds between the duties of religion, and those of the military art! I would have the names of those who die for their country preserved in temples, and written in registers, that should be, as it were, the foundation of glory and nobility.

Paris, the 15th of the moon of the 1st Gemmadi, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXV.

### Usbek To Mirza, At Ispahan.

THOU knowest, Mirza, that some of the ministers of Cha Soliman, had formed a design to oblige all the Armenians in Persia to quit the kingdom, or to embrace Mahometism, from a conceit that our empire would be always defiled as long as she protected these infidels in her bosom. This had finished the Persian greatness, if, on this occasion, blind devotion had been listened to. It is unknown how this affair failed. Neither those who made the proposal, nor those who rejected it, were sensible of the consequences: chance did the office of reason and policy, and saved the empire from a greater danger than it would have gone through from the loss of a battle and of two cities. By banishing the Armenians, it is supposed they would have rooted out, at once, all the traders, and very near all the artificers in the kingdom. I am certain that the great Chah-Abbas would rather have cut off both his arms, than have signed such an order; and he would have been of opinion, that by thus sending to the Mogul, and the other kings of the Indies, the most industrious of his subjects, he had given them half his dominions. The persecution which our Mahometan zealots exercised against the Guebres, obliged them to remove in multitudes into the Indies: and deprived Persia of that people, so much given to tillage, and who alone, by their industry, were in a way to get the better of the sterility of our lands. There remained but one thing more for bigotry to do, that was, to destroy industry; and then the empire had fallen of itself, and with it, as a necessary consequence, that very religion it wanted to render so flourishing. If we could reason without prejudice, I know not, Mirza, but it may be good for a state, that there should be several religions in it. It is observable, that the members of the tolerated religions commonly make themselves more useful to their country, than those of the established religion; because, being excluded from all honours, they can only render themselves considerable by their opulence; they are led to acquire it by their industry, and to embrace the most toilsome employments in the society. Besides, as all religions contain precepts useful to society, it is good that they should be observed with zeal. Now what is there more capable of animating this zeal than a multiplicity of religions? They are rivals who never forgive any thing. This jealousy descends to individuals: each keeps upon his guard, and is cautious of doing any thing that may dishonour his party, and expose it to the contempt and unforgiving censures of the opposite party. Accordingly it hath always been observed that a new sect introduced into the state, hath been the most certain means of reforming all the abuses of the old one. It signifies nothing to say, that it is not the prince's interest to permit several religions in his kingdom. Tho' all the sects in the world were to get together in it, it would not be any prejudice to it; for there is not one which doth not enjoin obedience, and that doth not preach up submission. I acknowledge that history is full of religious wars; but we must take care to observe, it was not the multiplicity of religions that produced these wars, it was the intolerating spirit which animated that which thought she had the power of governing. It was the spirit of proselytism, which the Jews contracted from the Egyptians, and which from them hath passed, like an epidemic and popular disease, to Mahometans and Christians. It is, in short, the spirit

of enthusiasm, the progress of which can be considered only as a total eclipse of human reason. For indeed if there was nothing of inhumanity in forcing the conscience of another, though there did not arise from it any of those bad effects which spring from it by thousands, it would be folly to advise it. He who would have me change my religion, no doubt, desires me to do so, because he would not change his own if he was forced to it: he yet thinks it strange, that I will not do a thing which he himself would not do, perhaps, for the empire of the world.

Paris, the 26th of the moon of the first Gemmadi, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXVI.

Rica To \* \* \*.

IT seems as if every family here governed itself separately. The husband hath only the shadow of an authority over his wife, the father over his children, and the master over his slaves. The law interferes in all differences, and you may be sure, that it is always against a jealous husband, a peevish father, or an ill-tempered master. The other day I went to the court where justice is administered. Before I could arrive there, I was obliged to suffer the attacks of a prodigious number of young shop-women, who invite you with a deceitful voice. This sight at first is diverting enough, but it becomes melancholy, when you enter the great halls where you see none but persons whose dress is even more solemn than their countenances. At length you come into the sacred place, where all the secrets of families are revealed, and where the most private transactions are brought into open light. Here a modest girl comes to confess the torments of a virginity too long preserved, her struggles, and her sorrowful resistance; she is so little proud of her victory, that threatened every moment with an approaching defeat; and that her father may be no longer ignorant of her wants, she exposes them to every body. Next comes an impudent wife to publish the insults she hath committed against her husband, as a reason to be separated from him. Another, with equal modesty, says she is weary of bearing the title of wife, without the enjoyments of one; she reveals the hidden mysteries of the marriage night; she desires to be put under the inspection of the most able artists, and by a decree to be re-established in all the rights of virginity. There are even some who dare desy their husbands, and challenge them to a public trial, which witnesses renders so difficult; a trial as disgraceful to the wife who stands to it, as to the husband who is cast by it. A vast number of girls, ravished or debauched, represent mankind much worse than they are. This court echoes with love, there no talk is heard but of enraged fathers, abused daughters, faithless lovers, and discontented husbands. By the law observed here, every child born in wedlock is counted the husband's: he may have good reasons to believe it is not his; the law believes it for him; and frees him from his scruples and examination. In this tribunal they follow the majority of voices; but they say it hath been found by experience, that it would be the surer way to determine by the minority; and this is natural enough; for there are very few just reasoners, and all the world agrees that there is a very great number of false ones.

Paris, the first of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXVII.

Rica To \* \* \*.

MAN, they say, is a sociable animal. In this respect, the French appear to me to be more men than others: they may be called men by way of excellence; for they seem to be only made for society. But I have observed among them, persons who are not only sociable, but who are themselves an universal society. They multiply themselves in every corner; they people, in an instant, the four quarters of the town: a hundred men of this fort make a greater shew than two thousand citizens. They might repair, in the eyes of a stranger, the devastation made by a plague or famine. It is a question in the schools, whether the same body can be at one instant in several places: these men are a proof of what the philosophers propose as a doubt. These men are always in haste, as they have upon their hands the important business of asking every body they meet—where they are going—and where they have been. You can never put it out of their heads, but that it is a part of good breeding to visit the public every day, separately, exclusive of the visits they make in general, at places where every body meet; but as this is too short a way, it is reckoned as nothing in the rules of their ceremonial. They injure the doors more with knocking at them, than the winds and storms. If all the porters visiting lists were to be examined, their names would be found every day mangled a thousand ways in Swiss \* scrawls. They pass their lives in attending funerals, compliments of condolance, or in matrimonial congratulations. The King never confers a favour on any of his subjects, that it does not put them to the expence of a carriage to go and wish the party joy. At last they return home, vastly fatigued, to rest themselves, that they may be able the next day to resume their tiresome employment. The other day one of them died of weariness, and this epitaph was put upon his tomb.—Here is a man at rest who never rested before. He walked at five hundred and thirty burials. He made himself merry at the birth of two thousand six hundred and fourscore children. The pensions on which he congratulated his friends, always in different terms, amounted to two millions six hundred thousand livres; the ground he walked in town, to nine thousand six hundred furlongs; his walks in the country to thirty-six. His conversation was pleasing; he had a fund ready made, of three hundred sixty five stories: he possessed besides, from his youth, an hundred and eighteen apothegms collected from the ancients, which he made use of upon extraordinary ocasions. He at last died, in the sixtieth year of his age. I hold my tongue, passenger, for when should I finish telling thee every thing that he said, and every thing that he saw?

Paris, the 3d of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1715.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXVIII.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

AT Paris, liberty and equality reign. Birth, virtue, nor even military service, how great soever it may be, do not distinguish a man from the croud in which he is confounded. Jealousy about rank is unknown here. They say the first person in Paris is he who hath the best horses in his chariot. A great man is he who sees the king, who talks with the ministers, hath ancestors, debts, and pensions. If he can, with all this, hide his idleness by an air of business, or a feigned attachment to his pleasures, he esteems himself the happiest of all mankind. In Persia, no person is reckoned great, but such on whom the monarch confers some part of his government. Here, there are persons who are great by their birth, but without interest. Kings act like those able artificers, who, to execute their works, always make use of the plainest tools. Favour is the great divinity of the French; the minister is the high priest, who offers her many victims: those who attend upon her are not dressed in white; sometimes the sacrificers, and sometimes the sacrifices devote even themselves to their idol, with the whole nation.

Paris, the 3d of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER LXXXIX.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

A THIRST after glory is not different from instinct, which every creature hath for its own preservation. We seem to extend our existence, when we can make it to be remembered by others; this is a new life which we acquire, and which becomes as precious to us as that which we received from heaven. But as all men are not equally fond of life, neither are they equally sensible to glory. This noble passion is indeed always engraved upon their hearts; but imagination and education mould it a thousand ways. This difference, which is founded between man and man, is more perceivable between nation and nation. It may be laid down as a maxim, that, in every state, the desire of glory increases with the liberty of the subjects, and diminishes with it: glory is never the companion of slavery. A sensible man said to me, the other day; we are in France, in many respects, more free than you are in Persia; and therefore, here there is a greater love of glory. This happy delusion makes a Frenchman do with pleasure and inclination what your sultan obtains only from his slaves, by continually setting before their eyes rewards and punishments. Therefore, among us, the prince is jealous for the honour of the meanest of his subjects. There are for the support of it, the most respectable tribunals; this is the sacred treasure of the nation, and the only one of which the sovereign is not master; for he could not be so without acting against his own interest. So that when a subject finds himself injured in his honour by his prince, either by an unjust preference, or by the smallest mark of contempt, he quits immediately his court, his employment, and his service, and retires to his estate. The difference between the French troops and yours is, that the one, composed of slaves, naturally cowards, only surmount the fear of death by that of punishment; which rails in the soul a new kind of terror, which renders them insensible: instead of which the others present themselves to dangers with delight, and banish fear, by a satisfaction which is superior to it. But the sanctuary of honour, reputation, and virtue, seems to be seated in republics, and in those states where the word *country* may be pronounced. At Rome, at Athens, at Lacedæmon, honour was the only payment for the most signal services. A crown of oak, or laurel, a statue, or an inscription, was an immense recompence for a battle won, or a city taken. There a man who had performed a brave action, found himself sufficiently recompensed by the action itself. He could not behold one of his countrymen, without being sensible of the pleasure of having been his benefactor he reckoned the number of his services by that of his fellow-citizens. Every man is capable of doing good to another; but it is being like to God, to contribute to the happiness of a whole society. But must not this noble emulation be wholly extinct in the heart of your Persians, among whom employments and honours are only derived from the caprice of the sovereign? Reputation and virtue are there only considered as imaginary, if not accompanied by the favour of the prince, with which alone they spring up, and die. A man who enjoys the public esteem, is never sure that he shall not be dishonoured the next day. You see him to day the general of an army; it may be the next the prince makes him his cook, and leaves him no other praise to hope for, but that of having made a good ragout.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XC.

### Usbek To The Same, At Smyrna.

FROM this general passion which the French nation have for glory, there is sprung up in the minds of the people, a certain—I know not what, which they call a point of honour: this is properly the character of every profession, but more remarkable in the men of the sword; and among them it is the point of honour by way of excellence. It will be very difficult to me to make thee understand what this is, because we have not a right idea of it. The French, formerly, especially the nobility, followed scarcely any other laws than those of this point of honour: they regulated the whole conduct of their lives; and they were so strict, that they could not, without suffering what was worse than death, I do not say infringe, but not even elude, the least punctilio of them. When they had occasion to settle any difference, they seldom prescribed more than one method to decide it, that was by duel, which cut off all difficulties. But what was the worst part of it, was, that frequently the trial was made between other parties besides those who were interested in the affair. How little soever a person might know another, he was obliged to enter into the dispute, and to expose his person in the same manner as if he himself was in anger. Such a one always thought himself honoured by the choice, and so flattering a distinction: one, who would not have been willing to give four pistoles to a man to save him and all his family from the gibbet, would make no difficulty to run the risque of his life for him a thousand times. This manner of decision was badly enough contrived; for if one was more dextrous, or stronger than another, it does not follow that he had more reason on his side. Therefore the kings have forbidden it under very severe penalties; but this is in vain: honour, which will always reign, rebels, and will acknowledge no laws. So that the French are in a great state of violence: for these laws of honour oblige a well-bred man to revenge himself when he hath been affronted; but on the other hand, justice punishes him with the severest penalties when he hath done so. If men follow the laws of honour, they die upon a scaffold; if those of justice, they are banished for ever from the society of men: there is then only this cruel alternative, either to die, or to be unworthy to live.

Paris, the 18th of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCI.

### Usbek To Rustan, At Ispahan.

A PERSON hath appeared here who hath travested the character of an ambassador from Persia; who insolently ridicules the two greatest kings in the world. He brings to the French monarch presents which ours would not offer to a king of Irimetta or Georgia: and by his base avarice he hath disgraced two empires. He hath made himself contemptible before a people who pretend to be the politest in Europe: and hath given occasion to have it said in the West, that the king of kings reigns over none but barbarians. He hath received honours which he seemed to wish had been denied him: and, as if the court of France had had the Persian grandeur more at heart than himself, she hath made him appear with dignity before a people whose contempt he is. Do not tell this at Ispahan; spare the head of an unhappy wretch. I am not willing that our minister should punish him for their own imprudence, and the unworthy choice which they have made.

Paris, the last day of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCII.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

THE monarch who reigned so long, is no more \*. He made many people talk of him during his life: all the world is silent at his death. Firm and courageous to the last moment, he seemed to submit only to destiny. Thus died the great Cha-Abas, after having filled the whole earth with his name. Do not imagine that this great event hath only given occasion to moral reflections. Every one thought of his own affairs, and to take his advantage of this change. The king, great grandson to the deceased monarch, being but five years old, a prince, his uncle, hath been declared regent of the kingdom. The late king made a will, which limited the power of the regent. This wise prince went to the parliament, and, there laying before them all the prerogatives of his birth, he made them break the regulations of the monarch, who, desirous to survive himself, seemed to have claimed the power of governing, even after his death: The parliaments resemble those ruins which we tread under foot, but which always recal to our mind the idea of some temple famous for the ancient religion of the people. They seldom now interfere in any thing more than in affairs of justice; and their authority will continually decline, unless that some unforeseen event should arrive, to restore life and strength to it. These great bodies have followed the common course of human affairs: they yielded to time, which destroys every thing, to the corruption of manners, which hath weakened every thing, to the supreme, which hath overturned all things. But the regent, who wished to render himself agreeable to the people, seemed at first to respect this shadow of public liberty; and, as if he had an intention to raise from the ground the temple and the idol, he was willing that they should regard it as the support of monarchy, and the foundation of all legal authority.

Paris, the 4th of the moon Rhegeb, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCIII.

### Usbek To His Brother, Santon \* In The Monastery Of Casbin.

I HUMBLE myself before thee, sacred Santon, and prostrate myself upon the earth: I regard the prints of thy footsteps as the apple of my eye. Thy sanctity is so great, that it seemeth as if thou hadst the heart of our holy prophet; thy austerities astonish even heaven itself: the angels have beheld thee from the summit of glory, and have cried out, how can he yet be upon earth, when his spirit is with us, and flies about the throne which is supported by the clouds? How then can I but honour thee; I who have learned from our doctors, that the dervises, even the infidel ones, have always a sacred character, which renders them respectable to true believers; and that God hath chosen to himself, out of every part of the earth, some souls more pure than others, whom he hath separated from the wicked world, to the end that their mortifications and fervent prayers may suspend his wrath, ready to fall upon so many rebellious people? The Christians tell wonders of their first Santons, who took sanctuary by thousands in the frightful deserts of Thebais, and had for their chiefs, Paul, Anthony, and Pacomus. If what they say of them be true, their lives were as full of prodigies as those of our most sacred Imaums. They sometimes passed ten entire years without seeing a single person: but they dwelt night and day with dæmons; they were continually tormented by these evil spirits; they found them in their beds, at their tables, they never had any place of security from them. If all this be true, venerable Santon, it must be acknowledged that no person ever lived in worse company. The more sensible Christians regard all these accounts only as a natural allegory, which serves to make us sensible of the miserable state of humanity. In vain do we seek in deserts for a state of ease; temptations follow us every where; our passions, represented by the dæmons, never wholly quit us: these monsters of the heart, these illusions of the mind, these vain phantoms of error and falsehood, appear continually to us, to mislead us, and attack us even in our fasts and hair-cloths, that is, even in our greatest strength. For my part, venerable Santon, I know that the messenger of God hath chained Satan, and precipitated him into the abyss: he hath purified the earth, formerly filled with his power, and hath rendered it worthy of the abode of his angels and prophets.

Paris, the 9th of the moon Chahban, 1715.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCIV.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

I NEVER heard any body talk of the law of nations, but he carefully begun with inquiring into the origin of society; which appears ridiculous to me. If men did not form themselves into societies, if they avoided and fled from each other, it would be right to ask the reason, and to inquire why they kept themselves separate: but they are born all united to one another, a son is born near his father, and there he continues; here is society and the cause of it. The law of nations is better understood in Europe than in Asia, yet it must be acknowledged, that the passions of princes, the patience of nations, the flattery of authors, have corrupted all the principles of it. This law, as it is at present, is a science which teaches princes to what degree they may violate justice without hurting their own interest. What a knavish distinction this! Rhedi, to harden their consciences, by reducing iniquity to a science, by giving rules for it, by settling the principles of it, and drawing consequences from them! The unlimited power of our sublime sultans, which hath no rule but itself, doth not produce more monsters than this base art, which can make justice bend, all inflexible as it is. It seems, Rhedi, there are two kinds of justice entirely different, one which regulates the affairs of private persons, which reigns in the civil law; another which regulates the differences that arise between people and people, which tyrannizes in the law of nations: as if the law of nations was not a civil law, not indeed of a particular country, but of the world. I shall in another letter explain my thoughts further to thee upon this subject.

Paris, the 1st of the moon Zilhage, 1716.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCV.

### Usbek To The Same.

THE magistrates ought to administer justice between citizen and citizen, every nation ought to do the same between themselves and another nation. In this second distribution of justice, no other maxims ought to be employed but those in the first. For nation and nation there is seldom need of a third to judge between them, because the subjects of their disputes are for the most part always plain and easy to be determined. The interests of the two nations are generally so separate, that nothing more is necessary but a love of justice to find it out; they can scarcely mistake the proper cause. It is not the same with the differences that happen between private persons. As they live in society, their interests are so mixed and so confounded, and there are so many different kinds of them, that it is necessary for a third person to clear up what the covetousness of the parties endeavour to obscure. There are but two kinds of just wars: one which is waged to repulse the attack of an enemy, the other to succour an ally who is attacked. It would not be justice to enter into a war upon the private quarrel of a prince; unless the case was so heinous as to merit the death of the prince or the people who committed it. Thus, a prince should not engage in a war because he hath been refused an honour which was his right, or for any unsuitable demeanor towards his ambassadors, and such similar cases; no more than a private person ought to kill him who refuses him precedence. The reason is this, as a declaration of war ought to be an act of justice, wherein the punishment should always be in proportion to the fault, it should be inquired whether the party against whom war is declared merits death. For to make war against any person, is to be willing to punish him with death. In the law of nations the severest act of justice is war, since the effect of it is the destruction of society. Reprisals are of the second degree. To proportion the punishment to the offence, is a law which no tribunals could ever avoid observing. The third act of justice, is to deprive a prince of the advantages that he might derive from us, always proportioning the punishment to the offence. The fourth act of justice which ought to be the most frequent, is the renunciation of the alliance of a people against whom we have reason to complain. This punishment answers to that of banishment, appointed by courts of justice, to cut off delinquents from the community. Thus a prince, whose alliance we renounce, is cut off from our society, and is no longer one of its members. A greater affront cannot be done to a prince than to renounce his alliance, nor a greater honour than to contract one with him. There is nothing among men, that can be more honourable, or more useful to mankind, than to be always attentive to their preservation. But that the alliance may be binding it must be just; so that an alliance concluded between two nations to oppress a third is not lawful, and may be broke without a fault. It is not suitable to the honour and dignity of a prince to ally himself to a tyrant. An Egyptian monarch once remonstrated to a king of Samos, upon his cruelty and tyranny, and called upon him to amend; as he did not, he sent him word that he renounced his friendship and alliance. Conquest of itself gives no right. When a society subsists, it is a security for peace and for reparation of injuries; and if it is destroyed, or dispersed, it is a monument of



tyranny. Treaties of peace are so sacred among men, that they seem as if they were the dictates of nature, which reclaims its rights. They are always lawful, when the conditions of them are such, that both parties may preserve themselves: without which that of the two societies which would perish, deprived of its natural defence by peace, may seek it by war. For nature, which hath established different degrees of strength and weakness among men, hath yet often made weakness equal to strength, by despair. This, Rhedi, is what I call the civil law; the law of nations, or rather the law of reason.

Paris, the 4th of the moon Zilhage, 1716.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCVI.

### The Chief Eunuch To Usbek At Paris.

THERE are a great many yellow women arrived here, from the kingdom of Visapour: I have bought one for thy brother, the governor of Mazenderan, who, about a month ago, sent me his sublime commands, and a hundred tomans. I understand women the better, because they do not surprize me, and my eyes are not troubled by the motions of the heart. I have never seen so regular and perfect a beauty: her sparkling eyes enliven her face, and heighten the lustre of a complexion, capable of eclipsing all the beauties of Circassia. The chief eunuch of a merchant of Ispahan treated with me for her; but she disdainfully avoided his sight, and seemed to court mine, as if she would have told me, that a mean merchant was unworthy of her, and that she was destined for a more illustrious husband. I confess to thee, I feel a secret joy within myself, when I think of the charms of this beautiful person: I fancy I see her entering into the seraglio of thy brother; I please myself with a foresight of the astonishment of all his wives; the haughty grief of some; the silent, yet more mournful, distress of others; the malicious pleasure of those who have nothing further to hope for, and the enraged ambition of those who yet have hope. I am travelling from one end of the kingdom to another, entirely to change the face of the seraglio; what passions am I going to provoke; what fears and troubles am I preparing! Yet notwithstanding all this inward distress, there shall not be less outward tranquillity; great revolutions shall be hid in the bottom of the heart; they shall be consumed with grief, and their joys restrained; their obedience shall be not the less exact, nor the government less severe; that mild behaviour they are always obliged to shew, shall spring up from the depth of their very despair. We have observed, the more women we have under our care, the less trouble they give us. A greater necessity of pleasing, less convenience for caballing, more examples of submission; all these form their chains. Each of them continually watches the steps of the others; it seems as if, in consort with us, they strived to render themselves more dependent; they do part of our work for us, and open our eyes when we shut them. What shall I say? They continually stir up their master against their rivals, and see not how near they themselves are to be punished next. But all this, magnificent lord, all this is nothing without the master's presence. What can we do with this vain phantom of authority, which can never be entirely communicated? We do but faintly represent the half of thyself; we can only shew them an hateful severity. Thou temperest fear with hopes; more absolute when thou caressest, than when thou only threatenest. Return thou, magnificent lord, return to these mansions, and carry through the whole of them thy empire. Come and assuage their despairing passions; come and remove every pretext to stray; come and appease murmuring love, and make even duty itself amiable; come, lastly, and relieve thy faithful eunuchs from a burthen which every day grows more heavy.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 8th of the moon Zilhage, 1716.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCVII.

### Usbek To Hassein, Dervise Of The Mountain Of Jaron.

O THOU, sage dervise, whose curious mind is resplendent with such a variety of knowledge, hearken to what I am going to say to thee. There are philosophers here, who indeed have not arrived at the pinnacle of oriental wisdom: they have not indeed been caught up to the throne of light: they have not heard the ineffable words echo from the comforts of angels, nor felt the awful impressions of a divine fury: but, left to themselves, deprived of these holy assistances, they follow, in silence, the traces of human reason. Thou canst not believe how far this guide hath led them. They have dispersed the chaos, and have explained, by a simple mechanism, the order of the divine architecture. The author of nature hath given motion to matter; there was nothing more wanting to produce that prodigious variety of effects which we see in the universe. The laws which common legislators offer to us to regulate human society, are subject to alteration, like the minds of those who form them, and the people who observe them: these men here talk of nothing but of laws general, immutable, eternal, which are observed without any exception, with order, regularity, and an infinite readiness, in the great immensity of space. And what dost thou think, divine man, that these laws are? Thou imaginest, perhaps, that penetrating into the councils of the Eternal, thou shalt be astonished with the sublimity of deep mysteries; thou renoucest beforehand, the power of comprehending; thou promisest thyself only admiration. But thou wilt soon change thy thoughts; they do not dazzle us with a false parade; the plainness of them have made them long misunderstood; and it was not till after much reflection, that all their fruitfulness and extensiveness were discovered. The first law is, that all bodies tend to form right lines, unless they meet with some obstacle which turns them out of them; and the second, which is no more than a consequence of the former, is that all bodies which move round a center, have a tendence to fly from it; because that the farther it is removed, the more the line which it moves in, approaches to a right line. See, divine dervise, the key of nature; here are the fruitful principles, from which they draw consequences which extend beyond our sight. The knowledge of five or six truths hath filled their philosophy full of wonders; and hath enabled them to effect more marvellous miracles than all those which are related to us of our holy prophets. For in short, I am persuaded that there is none of our doctors who would not have been embarrassed, if he had been asked to weigh in a balance, all the air which surrounds the earth, or to measure all the water which falls every year upon the surface of it; and who must not have thought more than once, before he could have told how many leagues sound travels in an hour? What time a ray of light takes up in its journey from the sun to us? How many fathoms it is from hence to Saturn? What is the curve according to which a ship should be cut to make the best sailer that can possibly be? Perhaps if some divine man had embellished the works of these philosophers with losty and sublime expressions; if he had mixed bold figures and mysterious allegories, he would have composed a noble work, which would have been inferior to none except the holy Koran. However, if it be necessary to tell thee what I think, I rarely give into the figurative stile. Our Koran abounds with

trifles, which to me always appear as such, although they rise with strength and liveliness of expression. At first it seems as if these inspired writings were only the divine ideas cloathed in the language of men. On the contrary, we often meet in the Koran, the language of God, and the ideas of men, as if, by a marvellous caprice, the supreme Being had dictated the words, and man had furnished the sentiments. Perhaps thou wilt reply, I talk too freely of things which are deemed most holy among us; this thou wilt believe is the fruit of that liberty which distinguisheth the people of this country. No; heaven be praised, my head hath not corrupted my heart; and, while I breath, Hali shall be my prophet.

Paris, the 15th of the moon Chahban, 1716.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCVIII.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

THERE is no country in the world where fortune is so inconstant as in this. A revolution of ten years shall precipitate the rich man into misery, and exalt the poor man with rapid wings to the summit of affluence. The new-made rich man admires the wisdom of providence, the poor man the blind disposal of fate. Those who collect the taxes, swim in the midst of treasures: there are among them a few Tantaluses. Yet they come into this employment from extreme wretchedness. They are despised like dirt whilst they are poor; when they are rich, they are well enough esteemed, as they neglect nothing to acquire respect. At present they are in a terrible situation. They are going to erect a chamber of justice, called so, because it is to strip them of all their riches. They cannot transfer their effects, nor conceal them; for they are obliged to render a just account, upon pain of death; so that they are compelled to pass a very narrow straight, as I may say, between their lives and their money. To fill up their misfortune, there is a minister remarkable for his wit, who honours them with his jokes, and is very merry upon all the deliberations of the council. They will not always find ministers disposed to make the people laugh; and they ought to take it kindly of him for behaving so. The body of footmen is more respectable in France than any where else: it is a seminary of great lords; they fill up the vacancies in the other states. Those who compose it take place of the unfortunate great, of ruined magistrates, of gentlemen killed by the fury of war; and when they cannot supply them from among themselves, they raise up all the great families by the help of their daughters, who are a kind of a dung by which mountainous and barren lands are fattened. I find providence, Ibben, wonderful in her manner of distributing wealth. If she granted it only to good men, it would not have been sufficiently distinguished from virtue, and men would never have been sensible of the insignificancy of riches. But when we examine who are the people most loaded with them, by despising of the rich, we shall come at last to contemn riches themselves.

Paris, the 26th of the moon Maharran, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER XCIX.

### Rica To Rhedi, At Venice.

THE caprices of fashion among the French are astonishing; they have forgot how they were dressed in the summer: they are even more ignorant how they shall dress this winter: but, above all, it is not to be believed how much it costs a husband to put his wife in the fashion. What should I get by giving thee a full account of their dress and ornaments? A new fashion would destroy all my labour, as it does that of their works; and before thou hadst received my letter, the whole would be changed. A woman who quits Paris, to go and pass six months in the country, is as antiquated at her return, as if she had been forgotten thirty years. The son does not know the portrait of his mother; so strange does the dress she was drawn in appear to him: he imagines it is some American who is there represented, or that the painter had a mind to express some fancy of his own. Sometimes the head-dresses mount up gradually to a great height, and a sudden revolution makes them descend again at once. There was a time when the immense loftiness of them left the face of a woman in the middle of her body; another time, the feet occupied the same situation; the heels formed a kind of pedestals, which raised the women into the air. Who will credit this? The architects have often been obliged to raise, lower, and enlarge the doors, as the dress of the women required these changes; and the rules of their art have been subjected to their caprice. You shall sometimes see, upon one face, a prodigious quantity of patches, and next day they all disappear again. The women formerly had shapes and teeth, at present they are not regarded. In this changeable nation, whatever an unlucky joker may say to the contrary, the daughters are differently formed from their mothers. It is the same in their behaviour and manner of life, as with their fashions: the French change their customs according to the age of their king. The monarch might even be able to render this nation grave, if he would undertake it. The prince communicates his own sentiments to the court, the court to the city, the city to the provinces. The soul of the sovereign is a mold in which all the rest are formed.

Paris, the 8th of the moon Saphar, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER C.

### Rica To The Same.

THE other day I wrote to thee about the great inconstancy of the French in their fashions. Yet it is inconceivable to what a degree they are infatuated with them; they determine every thing by them: they are the rules by which they judge of the transactions of other nations: whatever is foreign appears to them ridiculous. I confess to thee, I know not how to reconcile this madness for their customs, with the inconstancy with which they are daily changing them. When I tell thee that they despise every thing that is foreign, I speak only of trifles; for, upon important occasions, they seem to be diffident even of themselves, to their own degradation. They are very ready to allow other nations are wiser, provided they will allow that they are better dressed: they are quite willing to submit themselves to the laws of a rival nation, provided French peruke-makers may decide, like legislators, the shape of foreign perukes. To them nothing appears so glorious, as to see the taste of their cooks reign from north to south, and the ordonnances of their tire-women extended through all the toilettes of Europe. With these noble advantages what does it signify to them if their good sense comes to them from abroad, and that they have taken from their neighbours every thing that relates to their government, political and civil? Who would think, that a kingdom, the most ancient, and the most powerful in Europe, should have been governed about ten ages by laws which were not made for them? If the French had been conquered it would not be difficult to comprehend this: but they are the conquerors. They have abandoned the ancient laws made by their first kings, in the general assemblies of the nation; and what is more extraordinary, the Roman laws, which they have taken instead of them, were partly made, and partly digested by the emperors cotemporary with their legislators. And, that the theft might be complete, and that all their good sense might be derived from others, they have adopted all the constitutions of the popes, and made them a new part of their law; a new kind of slavery. In these latter times they have, it is true, digested in writing some statutes of cities and provinces; but they are almost all taken from the Roman law. This multitude of adopted, and, if I may say, naturalized laws, is so great, that it oppresses equally justice and the judge. But these volumes of laws are nothing in comparison to that terrible army of glossers, commentators, and compilers: a set of men as weak, as to the justness of their understanding, as they are strong from their number. This is not all: these foreign laws have introduced formalities, whose excess is a disgrace to human reason. It would be very difficult to determine whether formality hath been more hurtful when it got into the law, or when it took place in physic: whether it hath ravaged more under the robe of the lawyer, than under the large hat of the physician; and whether, in the one, it hath ruined more people, than it hath killed under the other.

Paris, the 17th of the moon Saphar, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CI.

Usbek To \* \* \* .

THEY are always talking here of the constitution. The other day I went into a house, where the first person I saw was a great fat man, with a ruddy complexion, who said, with a loud voice, I have published my mandate; I shall make no further answer to what you say; but read that mandate, and you will find that I have resolved all your doubts. I sweated much to do it, said he wiping his forehead with his hand; I had need of all my learning, and I was obliged to read many a Latin author. I believe so, said a man who was by; for it is a curious work, and I desy even the Jesuit, who comes so often to see you, to compose a better. Read it then, replied the other, and you will be better instructed in these matters in a quarter of an hour, than if I had talked to you a whole day. Thus he avoided entering into a conversation, and exposing his insufficiency. But as he saw himself pressed, he was obliged to quit his entrenchments; and began to say, with a theological energy, a great many foolish things, supported by a dervise who shewed the utmost respect to what he said. When two persons who were present denied him any of his principles, he presently cried out it is certain, we have so determined it, and we are infallible judges. And how came you, said I to him then, to be infallible judges? Do not you perceive, replied he, that the holy spirit hath enlightened us? That is happy, returned I; for from the manner of your talking to-day I perceive you have great need to be enlightened.

Paris, the 18th of the moon Rebiab, 1717.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CII.

### Usbek To Ibben, At Smyrna.

THE most powerful states in Europe, are those of the emperor, the kings of France, Spain, and England. Italy, and a large part of Germany, are divided into a great many little states, the princes of which are, strictly speaking, the martyrs of Sovereignty. Our glorious sultans have more wives than some of these petty princes have subjects. The states of Italy, which are not so united, are more to be pitied, their dominions are as much exposed as so many caravanseras, they are forced to admit the first who come: they are therefore obliged to attach themselves to some great prince, and give him a share of their fears, rather than of their assistance. The greater part of the governments in Europe are monarchical, or rather they are so called: for I do not know whether there ever was one truly so; at least it is difficult that they should subsist long without being corrupted. It is a state of violence, that always degenerates into despotism, or into a republic. The power can never be equally divided between the people and the prince; the balance is too difficult to be preserved: the power must decrease on one side, whilst it increases on the other; but the balance is generally in favour of the prince, who is at the head of the armies. Accordingly the power of the European kings is very great, and it may be said they have as much as they please: but they do not exercise it so extensively as our sultans; first, because they are not willing to offend the manners and religion of the people; secondly, because it is not their interest to extend it so far. Nothing more reduces princes to the condition of their subjects, than the immense power they exercise over them; nothing subjects them more to the turns and caprices of fortune. The custom, in some states, of putting to death all those who offend them, upon the least signal that they make, destroys that proportion which ought to be observed between crimes and punishments, which is in a manner the soul of a state, and the harmony of empires; and this proportion, carefully observed by the Christian princes, hath given them a very great advantage over our sultans. A Persian who hath, by imprudence or misfortune, drawn upon himself the displeasure of his prince, is sure to die: the smallest fault, or the least caprice, reduces him to this necessity. But, if he had attempted the life of his sovereign, if he had designed to give up places of importance into the hands of the enemy, he still would but lose his life; he runs no greater risque in this latter case than in the former. So that under the least disgrace, seeing certain death before him, and nothing worse to fear, he is naturally led to disturb the state, and to conspire against his sovereign, the only resource he hath left. It is not the same with the great men in Europe, from whom their disgrace takes away only the good will and favour of their prince. They retire from court, and think of nothing but enjoying a quiet life, and the advantages of their birth. As they seldom lose their lives but for hightreason, they are fearful of falling into it, from a consideration of how much they have to lose, and how little to gain: this is the reason that we see few rebellions here, and few princes perish by violent deaths. If in that unlimited power our princes have, they did not take so many precautions for the security of their lives, they would not live a day; and if they had not in their pay a great number of troops to tyrannize over the rest of their subjects,

their empire would not subsist a month. It is not above three or four ages ago, that a king of France took guards, contrary to the custom of those times, to secure himself from some ruffians, whom a petty prince of Asia had sent to assassinate him: till then kings lived quiet in the midst of their subjects, as fathers amidst their children. Though the kings of France cannot, of their own motion, take away the life of any of their subjects, like our sultans, they have however always the power of extending mercy to all criminals: it is sufficient that a man hath been so happy as to see the august countenance of his prince, to remove his unworthiness to live. These monarchs are like the sun, who carries warmth and life every where.

Paris, the 8th of the moon of the 2d Rebiab, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CIII.

### Usbek To The Same.

TO pursue the subject of my last letter, hear what a sensible European said to me the other day. The worst method the Asiatic princes could take, is to shut themselves up as they do. They think to render themselves more respected: but they make the royalty respected, and not the king; and attach the minds of the subjects to a certain throne and not to a certain person. That invisible power which governs, is always the same to the people. Though ten kings, who are known only by name, have their throats cut one after another, the subjects are sensible of no difference; it is just as if they had been governed by their spirits. If the detestable parricide of the great king Henry IV. here, had given his blow to one of the Indian kings, master of the royal signet, and of a great treasure which would have seemed to have been heaped up for him, he would quietly have assumed the reins of the empire, without any person's thinking to inquire after his king, or his family and children. We wonder that there is scarcely ever any change in the governments of the eastern princes: whence comes this, if it is not that they are tyrannical and terrible? Changes cannot be effected but by the prince, or by the people. Now, there, the princes will take care not to make a change, because, being in so high a degree of power, they have all they can have; if they were to make any change, it could not but be to their own prejudice. As to the subjects, if any one of them forms such a design, he cannot execute it upon the state; it would be necessary he should counterbalance immediately a power formidable, and always the only one; he wants time as well as the means: but he has no more than to go to the source of this power; and he wants nothing but an arm and a moment. The murderer mounts the throne, whilst the monarch descends, falls, and expires at his feet. A malecontent, in Europe, thinks of carrying on some private intelligence; to go over to the enemy: to get some strong place into his power; to excite murmurings among the subjects. A malecontent, in Asia, aims directly at the prince, surprises, strikes, and overthrows: he blots out his very memory; in an instant slave and master, in an instant usurper and lawful. Unhappy the king who hath but one head! he seems to collect all his power upon it, only to point out to the first ambitious rebel the part where he may meet with it all together.

Paris, the 17th of the moon of the 2d Rebiab, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CIV.

### Usbek To The Same.

ALL the people of Europe are not equally subject to their princes: for instance, the impatient humour of the English seldom give their king time to make his power heavy. Passive obedience and non-resistance are no virtues in their esteem. They say upon this head very extraordinary things. According to them, there is but one tie that can bind men, which is that of gratitude: a husband, a wife, a father and son, are not bound to each other, but either by the love they bear to one another, or by mutual services: and these different motives of acknowledgment are the origin of every kingdom, and of all societies. But if a prince, very far from making his subjects live happy, endeavours to oppress and ruin them, the foundation of obedience ceases; nothing ties them, nothing attaches them to him, and they return to their natural liberty. They maintain that no unlimited power can be lawful, because it never could lawfully commence. For we cannot, say they, give to another more power over us, than we have ourselves: now we have not an unlimited power over ourselves; for instance, we cannot take away our own lives, no person then upon earth, conclude they, hath a right to such a power. High treason is nothing, according to them, but a crime committed by the weaker against the stronger, by disobeying him, in whatever manner he does so. Accordingly the people of England, when they found themselves strongest in opposition to one of their kings, declared it to be high treason in a king to make war upon his subjects. They have therefore good reason to say, that the precept in their Koran, which enjoins obedience to the powers, is not very difficult to be followed, as it is impossible for them not to observe it; since it is not to the most virtuous that they are obliged to submit, but to the strongest. The English say, that one of their kings having overcome, and taken prisoner, a prince who disputed the crown with him, and reproaching him with his treachery and perfidiousness; it is not above a moment, replied the unfortunate prince, since it was decided which of us two is the traitor. An usurper declares all those to be rebels, who have not, like him, oppressed their country: and, believing there are no laws where he sees no judges, forces respect to the caprices of chance and fortune, as to the decrees of heaven.

Paris, the 20th of the moon of the 2d Rebiab, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CV.

### Redi To Usbek, At Paris.

THOU talkest much to me in one of thy letters, of the arts and sciences cultivated in the west. Thou wilt be ready to regard me as a barbarian: but I know not if the benefit derived from them hath made amends to mankind, for the bad use to which they are daily applied. I have heard say, that the single invention of bombs, hath destroyed the liberty of all the people of Europe. The princes being no longer willing to intrust the guard of towns to the citizens, who would surrender them at the first bomb, made that a pretext for keeping a large body of regular troops, with which they afterwards oppressed their subjects. Thou knowest, that since the invention of gun-powder, there is no place impregnable; that is to say, Usbek, that there is not any longer an assylum upon earth against injustice and violence. I always tremble, lest they should arrive at last at the discovery of some secret which may furnish them with a shorter way to destroy mankind, and to depopulate whole nations and whole kingdoms. Thou hast read the historians; reflect seriously upon them; almost all monarchies have been founded only upon the ignorance of arts, and have only been destroyed by their being too much cultivated. The ancient empire of Persia may furnish us with a domestic example. I have not been long in Europe; but I have heard wise men talk of the ravages of chymistry. It seems to be a fourth scourge, which ruins mankind, and destroys them singly, but continually; whilst that of war, plague, and famine, destroys them in large bodies, but by intervals. How have we been benefited by the invention of the compass, and the discovery of so many nations, who have rather communicated to us their distempers, than their riches? Gold and silver have been established, by a general agreement, to be the price of all merchandizes, and the measure of their value, because these metals were scarce, and unfit for other uses: what benefit was it to us, then, that they should become more common? and that to mark the value of any commodity, we should have two or three tokens instead of one? This was only a greater inconvenience. But, on the other hand, this invention hath been very hurtful to the countries that have been discovered. Whole nations have been discovered; and those who have escaped death, have been reduced to so cruel a slavery, that the relation of it makes the Mussulmans tremble. Happy ignorance of the children of Mahomet! amiable simplicity, so dear to our holy prophet; thou dost always recal to my mind the plain honesty of antient times, and that tranquility which reigned in the hearts of our first fathers.

Venice, the 5th of the moon Rhamazan, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CVI.

### Usbek To Redi, At Venice.

THOU dost not think as thou sayest, or else thy actions are better than thy thoughts. Thou hast quitted thy country to gain knowledge, and thou despisest all instruction: thou travellest to improve thyself, in a country where they cultivate the polite arts, and lookest upon them as hurtful. Shall I tell thee, Rhedi? I agree with thee more than thou dost with thyself. Hast thou well reflected on the barbarous and unhappy condition into which we should be sunk by the loss of the arts? There is no need to imagine it, we may see it. There are yet people upon earth among whom an ape, tolerably well taught, might live with honour; he would be nearly upon a level with the rest of the inhabitants; he would not be thought an odd being, nor a whimsical character; he would pass as well as another, and would even be distinguished for his politeness. Thou sayest, that almost all the founders of empires have been ignorant of the arts. I will not deny that these barbarous people may have, like an impetuous torrent, spread themselves over the earth, and covered with their savage armies the most polite states: but, observe, they learned the arts, or made those they conquered exercise them, otherwise their power would have passed away like the noise of thunder and tempests. Thou sayest, thou art afraid lest they should invent some crueller method of destruction than that now used. No: if such a fatal invention should be discovered, by the law of nations it would be prohibited, and by the unanimous consent of nations it would be suppressed. It is not the interest of princes to conquer by such means: it is their business to gain subjects and not lands. Thou dost complain of the invention of gun-powder and bombs; you think it is bad that no place is any longer impregnable, that is, you think it is a bad thing that wars should be sooner terminated than they were before. Thou must have observed, in reading of history, that, since the invention of gun-powder, battles are much less bloody than formerly, because armies hardly ever mix among one another. And, if an art in some particular case should be found prejudicial, ought it, on that account, to be rejected? Thou thinkest that the arts render the people effeminate, and by that means are the cause of the fall of empires. Thou mentionest the ruin of the antient Persians, which was the effect of their effeminacy: but this example is far from being decisive, since the Greeks who conquered them so often, and subdued them, cultivated the arts with much greater assiduity. When they say, the arts make men effeminate, they do not in the least speak of those people who work at them; because they are never idle, which, of all vices, is that which weakens courage most. The question then is, as to those who enjoy the fruits of them. But as in a polite country, those who reap the benefits of one art, are obliged to cultivate another, lest they should be reduced to a shameful poverty; it follows, that idleness and luxury are incompatible with the arts. Paris is, perhaps, the most luxurious city in the world, and refines the most upon her pleasures; and yet, perhaps, no people live harder than there. That one man may live in luxury, a hundred must be continually labouring. A lady takes it into her head, that she must appear at an assembly in a certain dress; from this moment fifty artificers have no leisure either to eat, drink, or sleep: she commands, and is more readily obeyed than our monarch, for interest is the

greatest monarch upon earth. This great application to labour, this thirst to grow rich, runs through every rank, from the artificers up to the greatest men. Nobody loves to be poorer than him who is next beneath him. You may see at Paris, a man who hath sufficient to live upon to the end of the world, who continually labours, and ventures the shortening of his days, to scrape up, as he says, wherewith to live. The same spirit prevails through the whole nation, nothing is seen there but labour and industry. Where then is the effeminate people of whom you talk so much? I will suppose, Rhedi, that in some kingdom they should suffer no arts but such as are absolutely necessary for the manuring of the lands; which are nevertheless very numerous; and that they should expel all those which only administer to pleasure, or curiosity: I will maintain, that this would be one of the most miserable states that hath ever been in the world. Though the inhabitants should have resolution enough to shift without so many things as their wants require, the people would decay daily, and the state would become so weak, that there would be no state so little that could not conquer it. It would be easy to discuss this at large, and to make thee sensible that the revenues of the subjects would be almost absolutely at an end, and consequently those of the prince. There would hardly be any of those mutual relations between citizens of the same faculties: they would see an end to that circulation of riches, and that increase of the revenues which arise from the dependance of the arts one upon another: every one would live upon his land, and raise no more than what would be precisely necessary to keep him from starving. But as this sometimes is not the twentieth part of the revenue of the state, the number of the inhabitants must diminish in proportion, and there would be but a twentieth part of them remaining. Consider to how much the revenue of industry arises. Land produces annually to the owner but the twentieth part of its value; but with a pistole worth of colours a painter will draw a picture that will produce him fifty. The same may be said of goldsmiths, workers in wool and silk, and every kind of artificers: from all which we conclude, Rhedi, that, for a prince to be powerful, it is necessary his subjects should live in affluence, it is necessary he should endeavour to procure them every kind of superfluities, with as much attention as the necessaries of life.

Paris, the 14th of the moon Chalval, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CVII.

### Rica To Ibben At Smyrna.

I HAVE seen the young monarch. His life is very valuable to his subjects, it is not less so to all Europe, because of the great troubles his death might occasion. But kings are like the gods; and whilst they live, we must believe them immortal. His countenance is majestic, but pleasing; a good education concurs with a happy disposition, and already promises a great prince. They say we can never know the character of these western princes, till they have passed these two trials, their mistress and their confessor. We shall soon see the one and the other labouring to possess the mind of this, and he on this account will be the subject of great contentions. For, under a young prince, these two powers are always rivals; but they agree and unite together under an old one. A dervise hath a difficult part to support with a young prince: the king's strength is his weakness; but the other triumphs equally in his strength and weakness. At my arrival in France, I found the late king entirely governed by women: and yet, considering his age, I believe he had less occasion for them than any monarch upon earth. I one day heard a woman say, I must do something for this young colonel, I know his valour: I must speak to the minister. Another said, it is astonishing this young abbot hath been forgot; he must be a bishop; he is a man of birth, and I can answer for his conduct. However, thou must not imagine that these women who held this conversation were favourites of the prince: they had not perhaps spoke to him twice in their lives; which yet is a very easy thing to do with European princes. But there is not a person who hath any employment at court, in Paris, or in the provinces, who hath not some woman through whose hands all the favours, and sometimes all the injustice he can do, always pass. These women are constantly connected together, and make a kind of republic, the members of which are always busy mutually to succour and serve each other: it is a new kind of state within another: and a person at the court at Paris, or in the provinces, who sees the ministers, magistrates, and prelates, acting in their several stations, if he knows nothing of the women who govern them, is like a man indeed who sees a machine at work, but who is unacquainted with the springs that move it. Dost thou think, Ibben, that a woman agrees to be a mistress to a minister for the pleasure of lying with him? What a strange thought this would be! It is that she may every morning present him with five or six petitions: and the goodness of their natural disposition appears in the zeal which they have to do good to a great number of unhappy people, who procure them a hundred thousand livres a year. They complain in Persia, that the kingdom is governed by two or three women: but it is much worse in France, where the women in general govern, and not only assume the authority in gross, but even divide it among themselves by retail.

Paris, the last of the moon Chalval, 1717.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CVIII.

Usbek To \* \* \*.

THERE are a kind of books here not at all known to us in Persia, and which seem to be much in fashion here: these are the Journals. Lazy people are mightily pleased with reading them: they are hugely delighted with being able to run through thirty volumes in a quarter of an hour. In most of these books, the author hath hardly paid his usual compliments, but the reader is at his last gasp: he leads him half dead into a subject drowned in the midst of an ocean of words. One man hath a mind to immortalize himself in a *duodecimo*, this in a *quarto*, another in a *folio*: it is necessary then he should extend his subject in proportion; this he does without mercy, esteeming the labour of the poor reader as nothing, who kills himself in reducing what the author took so much pains to enlarge. I cannot find, \* \* \*, what merit there is in composing such kinds of work: I could do the same easily enough, if I had a mind to ruin my health, and a bookseller. The great fault of these journalists is, that they speak only of new books; as if truth was always novel. It seems to me, that, till a man hath read all the ancient books, he hath no reason to prefer the new ones to them. But, when they impose it as a law upon themselves, never to speak of works but such as are just hot from the forge, they likewise lay themselves under another which is, to be very tiresome. They take care not to criticise those books from which they make their extracts, for this reason, because they are not able; and indeed, what man is bold enough to make ten or a dozen enemies every month? The generality of authors are like the poets, who will bear a hearty caning without complaining: but who, little under [Editor: illegible?] of their shoulders, are so much more so of their works, that they know not how to bear the least criticism. A person therefore must take great care how he attacks them in so sensible a part; and the journalists are well acquainted with this. They therefore do just the contrary; they begin with praising the subject treated on; this is their first folly: from thence they go on to praise the author, with forced encomiums; for they have to do with people who are always in breath, ever ready to do themselves justice, and to attack, with a stroke of their pens, a fool-hardy journalist.

Paris, the 5th of the moon Zilcade, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CIX.

Rica To \* \* \*.

THE university of Paris is the eldest daughter of the Kings of France: and the eldest by much; for she is above nine hundred years old, so that she now and then doats; I have been told, that she had sometimes a great quarrel with some doctors about the letter Q \*, which she would have pronounced like a K. The dispute grew so warm, that some were stript of their estates: the parliament was obliged to determine the difference; and it granted permission, by a solemn arret, to all the subjects of the King of France, to pronounce this letter according to their own fancy. It was certainly very diverting to see the two most respectable bodies in Europe, employed in deciding in so vehement a manner about a letter in the alphabet! It looks, my dear \* \* \*, as if the heads of the greatest men idiotized when they meet together; and that where there are most people, there is so much the less wisdom. Great bodies always attach themselves so strongly to little things, and foolish customs, that essentials never come to be considered till afterwards. I have heard say, that a king of Arragon having assembled \* the states of Arragon and Catalonia, the first meetings were employed in deciding what language the deliberations should be held in: the dispute was warm, and the states would have broke up a thousand times, if they had not thought of an expedient, which was, that the questions should be put in the Catalonian tongue, and the answers in that of Arragon.

Paris, the 25th of the moon Zilhage, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CX.

Rica To \* \* \*.

THE part a pretty woman hath to conduct, is more important than may be imagined. Nothing is more serious than what passes every morning at her toilet, amidst her servants: a general of an army does not make use of more consideration how to place his right, or his *corps de reserve*, than she does to place a patch, which may fail of its end, but of which she hopes or foresees the success. What perplexity of mind, what thought, continually to be reconciling the interests of two rivals; to appear neuter to both, while she is resigned to the one and to the other; and makes herself the mediatrix in all the causes of complaint that she gives them! How busy in settling the order, and to appoint parties of pleasure, and to prevent every accident that may interrupt them! With all this, the greatest trouble is not to be, but to appear, diverted. Be as dull as you please, they will excuse you, provided they can but be thought to have been very merry. Some days ago, I was at a supper which some ladies gave in the country. All the way thither they were continually saying, however we must make ourselves very merry. We were very ill paired, and consequently grave enough. I must confess, says one of the women, that we are very merry: there is not to-day in Paris so gay a party as ours. As I grew heavy, a woman jogged me, and said, "Well, are not we in a charming good humour?" "Yes, answered I yawning, I believe I shall burst myself with laughing." However, gravity got the better of our resolutions; and, as to myself, from one gape to another, I sunk into a lethargic sleep, which put an end to all my mirth.

Paris, the 1st of the moon Maharran, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXI.

Usbek To \* \* \* .

THE late king's reign was so long, that the end had made the beginning to be forgot. At present the fashion is, to be taken up with nothing but with the events that happened in his minority: and no body reads any thing now but the memoirs of those times.—See a speech which one of the generals of the city of Paris made in a council of war: though I must confess I can conceive nothing very great in it.

‘Gentlemen,

‘Though our troops have been repulsed with loss, I believe it will be very easy for us to repair this misfortune. I have composed six couplets of a song ready to be published, which, I am persuaded, will restore all our affairs to an equilibrium. I have made choice of some excellent voices, which, issuing from the cavity of certain strong breasts, will wonderfully move the people. They are set to an air, which hitherto hath had a singular effect. If this does not do, we will publish a print of Mazarine as hanged. Luckily for us, he does not speak good French \*, and so murders it that it is impossible but that his affairs must decline. We do not fail making the people observe, with what a ridiculous accent he pronounces †. A few days ago we made such a ridicule of a blunder that he made in grammar, that it hath been made a joke of in every street. I hope, that before eight days, the people will make the name of Mazarine a general word to express all beasts of burden and carriage. Since our defeat, our music about original sin ‡, hath so vexed him, that not to see all his party reduced to one half, he hath been obliged to send back all his pages. Recover yourselves then; take courage; and be assured that we will make him repass the mountains by the force of our hisses.’

Paris the 4th of the moon Chahban, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXII.

### Rhedi To Esbek, At Paris.

DURING my stay in Europe, I employ myself in reading the antient and modern historians: I compare one age with another: I have the pleasure of seeing them pass, as it were before me: and my mind is particularly engaged to those great changes which have made so great a difference between times and times, and the earth so little like itself. Thou hast perhaps considered a thing which is a continual subject of wonder to me. How comes the world to be so thinly peopled, in comparison to what it was formerly? How hath nature lost the prodigious fruitfulness of the first ages? Is she already in her old age, and sunk into a state of feebleness? I staid above a year in Italy, where I saw nothing but the wrecks of the ancient Italy, so famous in past times. Though all the inhabitants live in the cities, yet are they entire deserts, and wholly depopulated: they seem to subsist now only to show the places where those potent cities stood, so much talked of in history. Some persons here pretend, that the city of Rome alone contained formerly more people than the greatest kingdom in Europe does at this day. There were some Roman citizens who had ten, and even twenty thousand slaves, without counting those who worked at their country houses: and as they reckon that there were four or five hundred thousand citizens, we cannot fix the number of its inhabitants, without shocking imagination itself. In Sicily there were formerly powerful kingdoms, and numerous nations, who have since disappeared: This island is now considerable for nothing but its volcanoes. Greece is so deserted, that it doth not contain the hundredth part of its ancient inhabitants. Spain, formerly so crouded, now shows us only uninhabited countries; and France is nothing in comparison of that ancient Gaul described by Cæsar. The northern countries are greatly stript; they are now far from being obliged, as formerly, to divide themselves, and to send out, like swarms, colonies and whole nations to seek for new habitations.—Poland, and Turkey in Europe, have hardly any people. We cannot find in America the fiftieth part of the men who once formed there such great empires. Asia is scarcely in a better state. That Asia Minor, which contained so many powerful Monarchies, and such a vast number of great cities, hath now but two or three. As to the greater Asia, that part of it which is subject to the Turk, is not more populous: as to that under the dominion of our kings if compared with the flourishing state it formerly enjoyed; we shall find it hath but a very small share of those numberless inhabitants which it had in the times of the Xerxeses and Dariuses. As to the petty states on the borders of these great empires, they are really desarts: such are the kingdoms of Irimetta, Circassia, and that of Guriel. These princes with vast dominions, can hardly reckon up fifty thousand subjects. Egypt is not less deficient than other countries. In fine, I survey the whole earth, and I find nothing there but ruin and decay: I think I see her just emerging from the ravages of plague and famine. Africa hath always been so little known, that we cannot speak so exactly of it as of other parts of the world: but if we consider only the Mediterranean coasts, which have been always known, we shall see that it hath greatly fallen from what it was under the Carthaginians and the Romans. At present her princes are so weak, that they are the

most petty potentates in the world. According to a calculation, as exact as can be made in matters of this nature, I find there is hardly upon the earth the tenth part of the people that there was in ancient times. And what is very astonishing, is, that it becomes every day less populous: and, if this continues, in ten ages it will be no other than a desert. This, Usbek, is the most terrible catastrophe that ever happened in the world. But we have hardly perceived it, because it hath arrived by degrees, and through the course of a great number of ages, which denotes an inward defect, a secret hidden poison, a languishing disease which afflicts human nature.

the 10th of the moon Rhegeb, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXIII.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

THE world, Rhedi, is not incorruptible; the heavens themselves are not; the astronomers are eye-witnesses of their changes; which are indeed the natural effects of the universal motion of matter. The earth is subject, like the other planets, to the laws of motion: and she suffers within herself, a perpetual conflict among her own principles: the sea and land seem engaged in an eternal war; every instant produces new conjunctions. Mankind, in an abode so subject to changes, are in a state likewise uncertain: a hundred thousand causes may act, capable of destroying them, and much more of increasing or diminishing their number. I shall not mention to thee those particular catastrophes, so frequent among historians, which have destroyed cities and whole kingdoms: there are general ones, which have often put the human species within an inch of destruction. History is full of those universal plagues, which have, by turns, desolated the whole earth; of one, among others, that was so violent that it blasted the very roots of the plants, and infected the whole known world, to the very empire of Cathai: one degree more of corruption would perhaps, in a single day, have destroyed all human nature. It is not two centuries ago that the most shameful of all distempers was felt in Europe, Asia, and Africa; it wrought in a little time prodigious effects, that would have destroyed mankind, if it had continued its progress with the same fury. Depressed with disease from their birth, incapable of sustaining the weight of the duties of society, they must miserably have perished. What if the venom had been a little more exalted? and without doubt it would have become so, if they had not been so happy as to find out so powerful a remedy as that which hath been discovered. This disease, perhaps, attacking the parts of generation would have affected generation itself. But why talk I of the destruction which might have happened to human nature? Hath it not in fact arrived? and did not the deluge reduce it to one single family? There are philosophers who maintain two creations; that of things, and that of man: they cannot conceive that matter and things have been created but six thousand years; that God deferred his works during all eternity, and did not use but yesterday his creative power. Was it because he could, or because he would not? But, if he could not at one time, neither could he at another. It must be then because he would not: but as there is no succession of time in God, if we admit that he willed any thing once, he willed it always, and from the beginning \*. However all historians mention a first father: they present us with the birth of human nature. Is it not natural to think that Adam was saved from some common destruction, as Noah was from the deluge; and that these great events have been frequent upon earth since the creation? But all these destructions have not been violent. We see many parts of the earth grown weary, as it were, of furnishing subsistence to man; how do we know if the whole earth hath not in it general causes, slow and imperceptible, of this weariness? I was willing to give thee these general ideas, before I answered more particularly to thy letter of the decrease of mankind, which hath happened within these seventeen or eighteen centuries. I shall show thee in a succeeding letter, that independent of physical causes, there are moral ones by which this effect may have been produced.

Paris, the 18th of the moon Chahban, 1718.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXIV.

### Usbek To The Same.

THOU inquirest from what cause the earth is less populous than it was formerly; and if thou considerest carefully, thou wilt find that this great difference comes from that which hath happened in our manners. Since the Christian and Mahometan religions have divided the Roman world, things have been greatly changed: these two religions have been far from being so favourable to the propagation of our species, as that of those lords of the universe. Among the Romans, polygamy was prohibited; and by that law it had a very great advantage over the Mahometan religion: divorces were also allowed, which gave it another, and no less considerable advantage over the Christian. I find nothing so contradictory as this plurality of wives permitted by the holy Koran, and the order of satisfying them commanded in the same book. Converse with your wives, says the prophet, because ye are as necessary to them as their vestments, and they are as necessary to you as your own vestments. See here a precept which renders the life of a true Mussulman very laborious. He who hath the four wives settled by law, and only as many concubines, or slaves, must not he be weighed down with so many vestments? Your wives are your tillage, saith the prophet; apply yourselves therefore to your tillage: do good for your souls, and you shall one day find your recompence. I consider a good Mussulman as a champion, destined always to be fighting; but who, soon weakened and weighed down with his first fatigues, saints in the very field of battle, and finds himself, as may be said, to be buried beneath his own triumphs. Nature evers acts slowly, and as one may say, sparingly; her operations are never violent, even in her productions she requires temperance: she constantly goes on by rule and measure: if she is precipitated, she falls into a languor; she employs all her remaining strength for her own preservation, quite losing her productive virtue and generative power. It is to this state of debility we are always reduced by so great a number of women, who are fitter to exhaust, than satisfy us. It is very common among us, to see a man with a very great seraglio, and yet a very small number of children; these children too are generally weak and unhealthy, and feel the imbecility of their fathers. This is not all: these women, obliged to a forced continence, have need of people to guard them, who can be none but eunuchs: religion, jealousy, reason itself will permit no others to approach them: these guardians must be numerous, to the end they may maintain peace within doors amidst the continual contentions of these women, and prevent attempts from without. So that a man who hath ten wives, or concubines, must have no fewer eunuchs to guard them. But what a loss to society, so great a number of men, dead as it were from their birth! What depopulation must follow! The female slaves kept in the seraglio, to wait with the eunuchs upon this great number of women, almost always growing old in an afflicting virginity: they cannot marry while they stay there; and their mistresses, when once used to them, will hardly ever dismiss them. See how many persons of both sexes a single man employs for his pleasures; they are dead to the state, and rendered useless in the propagation of the species. Constantinople and Ispahan are the capitals of the two greatest empires in the world: it is there that every thing ought to

terminate, and where every body, drawn by a thousand different ways, should come from all parts. Yet even these cities decay of themselves, and would soon be destroyed, if the sovereigns did not, almost every century, make whole nations remove thither to repeople them. I will continue this subject in another letter.

Paris, the 13th of the moon Chahban, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXV.

### Usbek To The Same.

THE Romans had not a less number of slaves than we; they had even more: but they made a better use of them. So far from hindering by violent means, the multiplication of their slaves, they on the contrary favoured it all in their power; they coupled them, as much as they could, by a kind of marriage; by this means, they filled their houses with servants of both sexes, of all ages, and the state with an innumerable people. These children, who made in time the riches of their master, were born around him without number; he alone had the charge of their maintenance and education: their fathers, freed from this burden, follow'd wholly the inclination of their nature, and multiplied without the fear of having too numerous a family. I have observed to thee, that among us, all the slaves are employed in guarding our women, and in nothing more; that they are, with respect to the state, in a perpetual lethargy; so that the cultivation of the arts, and of the land, is necessarily confined to some freemen, and some heads of families, who apply themselves to it as little as possible. It was not the same among the Romans. The republic served itself with very great advantage, by this generation of slaves. Each of them had his *peculium*\*, which he enjoyed upon such conditions as his master imposed upon him; with this *peculium*, he laboured, and applied himself in that way to which his ingenuity led him. This made himself a banker; another applied himself to commerce by sea; one sold goods by retail; another gave himself to some mechanic art, or else farmed and cultivated some lands; but there was none who did not apply himself, to his utmost power, to improve his *peculium*, which procured him, at the same time, comforts in his present state of servitude, and the hope of being able, in some future time, to purchase his liberty; this made a laborious people, and encouraged arts and sciences. These slaves became rich by their care and labour, bought their freedom, and became citizens. The republic was thus continually replenished, and received into her bosom new families as fast as the old ones failed. I may, perhaps in my following letters, have an opportunity to prove to thee, that the more men there are in any state, there commerce flourishes the more; I may also as easily prove, that the more commerce flourishes, the more the number of people increases: these two things mutually assist and favour each other. If this is so, how much must this very great number of slaves, always at work, have grown and increased! Industry and plenty gave them birth, and they in return gave birth to plenty and industry.

Paris, the 16th of the moon Chahban, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXVI.

### Usbek To The Same.

HITHERTO we have spoken only of the Mahometan countries, and inquired into the reason why they are less populous than those which were subject to the government of the Romans: let us now examine what hath produced this effect among the Christians. Divorces were allowed in the Pagan religion, and forbidden to the Christians. This change, which at first may appear of so little consequence, had by degrees terrible effects, and such as are not easily to be believed. This not only took away all the sweets of marriage, but struck at its very end: desirous to tie the knot faster, they loosened it; and, instead of uniting hearts, as they pretended, they separated them for ever. In so free an action, and in which the heart ought to have so great a part, they put torment, necessity, and even fate itself. They reckoned for nothing disgusts, caprices, and unsociable humours: they wanted to fix the heart, that is to say, that which is the most variable and inconstant thing in nature; they joined together, without the hope of a change, people tired of one another, and almost always ill matched; and did by them like those tyrants who used to tie living men to dead bodies. Nothing contributed more to a mutual attachment, than the power of divorce; a husband and a wife were induced to bear patiently domestic troubles, knowing they were masters of the power of ending them; and they often retained this power in their hand all their life-time, without using it, from this single consideration, that they were at liberty to do so. It is not the same with the Christians, their present vexations drive them to despair at the apprehension of those which are to come. They see nothing in the discomforts of marriage, but their continuance, or rather their eternity; hence arise disgusts, contentions, contempt; and this is so much loss to posterity. Three years of marriage are scarcely past, but the essential design of it is neglected: thirty years of coldness follow: private separations are formed as strong, and perhaps more hurtful, than if they had been public: each lives apart his own way: and all this to the prejudice of future generations. A man, disgusted at having a wife for ever, soon gives himself up to loose women; a commerce shameful, and contrary to nature, which, without answering the end of marriage, represents at most but the pleasures of it. If, of two persons thus linked together, one be unfit to answer the design of nature, and the propagation of the species, either from constitution or age, that party buries the other with itself, and renders the other equally useless. We are not therefore to wonder that we see, among the Christians, so many marriages produce so small a number of citizens. Divorce is abolished; marriages ill formed are not to be rectified; the women do not pass, as among the Romans, successively through the hands of several husbands, who, for the time, make the best they can of them. I dare say, if in a free state, like that of Lacedæmon, where the citizens were continually tormented by odd and subtle laws, and in which there was but one family, that of the republic, if it had been there established that the husbands might change their wives every year, it would have produced an innumerable people. It is very difficult to comprehend the reason that led the Christians to abolish divorces. Marriage, among all the nations of the world, is a contract capable of every kind of settlement; and none ought to be

excluded from it but such as would have weakened the design of it. But the Christians do not consider it in this point of view; and they are at a good deal of trouble to explain themselves upon this subject. They do not make it to consist in the pleasure of sense; on the contrary, as I have already told thee, it seems as if they were desirous to banish it as much as they can; but it is with them an image, a figure, and some mysterious thing that I cannot at all comprehend.

Paris, the 19th of the moon Chahban, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXVII.

### Usbek To The Same.

THE scarcity of people in the Christian countries is not to be ascribed solely to the prohibition of divorces: the great number of eunuchs which they have among them, is not a less considerable occasion of it. I mean the priests and dervises of both sexes, who devote themselves to perpetual continence: this is, among the Christians, a virtue of virtues; in which I cannot comprehend any virtue, not knowing how that can be a virtue which is productive of nothing. I find their doctors plainly contradicting themselves, when they say that marriage is holy, and that celibacy, which is opposite to it, is more holy; without considering, that in a matter of precepts and dogmas, the good is always the best. The number of these people professing celibacy is prodigious. Fathers used formerly to condemn their children to it from their infancy; at present they devote themselves to it at fourteen years of age, which comes very near to the same point. This practice of continence hath been the loss of more men than ever have been destroyed by the plague, or the most bloody wars. We see in every religious house an endless family, where nobody is born, and who are maintained at the expence of every body else. These houses are always open, like so many pits, wherein future generations are buried alive. This is very different policy from that of the Romans, who established penal laws against those who avoided the law of marriage, and who wanted to enjoy a liberty so opposite to the public good. I have yet only spoken of Catholic countries. In the Protestant religion every body enjoys the right of propagation; it allows neither of priests nor dervises \* : and if, at the establishment of this religion, which brought back every thing to the standard of the primitive times, its founders had not been continually reproached with incontinence, it is not to be doubted but that, after having rendered the practice of marriage universal, they would likewise have softened the yoke, and have concluded with entirely removing the barrier which in this case separates the Nazarene from Mahomet. But however that might have been, it is certain that the religion of the Protestants gives them a very great advantage over the Catholics. I might venture to say, that, in the present state of Europe, it is not possible the Catholic religion should subsist there five hundred years. Before the reduction of the power of Spain, the Catholics were greatly stronger than the Protestants. The latter are gradually come to an equality with them. The Protestants are grown richer and more powerful, and the Catholics weaker. The Protestant countries ought to be, and really are, better peopled than those of the Catholics; from whence it follows, first, that their public revenues are more considerable, because they are augmented in proportion to the number of those who pay them: secondly, that their lands are better cultivated: lastly, that trade flourishes better there, because there are more people who have their fortunes to make; and where there are more wants, there will be more resources to supply them. When there are only a sufficient number of people to cultivate the lands, trade must needs perish; and where there are no more than necessary for carrying on of trade, the cultivation of the lands must be neglected; which is indeed to say, that both must sink together, because no person can apply himself to one but the other must suffer. As to

the Catholic countries, not only the cultivation of their lands is neglected, but even their industry is hurtful; it consists only in learning five or six words of a dead language \*. With this attainment, a man need not trouble himself about his fortune; he will find in a cloister a life of ease, which in the world would have cost him labour and pains. This is not all: the dervises have in their hands all the riches of the state; they are a society of misers, who are always receiving, but never restore; they are continually heaping up their revenues, to acquire a large capital. So much wealth, if we may be allowed the expression, falls into a dead palsy; and there is no more circulation, no more trade, no more arts, no more manufactories. There is no Protestant prince who does not raise from his people much greater taxes than the pope does from his subjects: yet these latter are poor, whilst the former live in affluence. Trade gives life to every thing among the one, but monkery carries death among every thing belonging to the others.

Paris, the 26th of the moon Chahban, 1716.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXVIII.

### Usbek To The Same.

AS we have nothing further to say of Asia and Europe, let us pass on to Africa. But as we do not know the innermost parts of it, we can hardly say any thing of it, except of the coasts. Those of Barbary, where the Mahometan religion is established, are not so well peopled, as they were in the times of the Romans, for the reasons I have already mentioned. As to the coasts of Guinea, they must have been terribly stript in two hundred years, that the petty kings, or heads of villages, sell their subjects to the European princes, to be transported to their colonies in America. What is very extraordinary is, that this very America, which receives every year so many new inhabitants, is itself a desert, and gains no advantage by the continual losses of Africa. The slaves who are removed into another climate, perish there by thousands; and the labour of the mines, in which the natives of the country and the strangers are continually employed, the malignant vapours that arise from them, the quicksilver which they are obliged always to use, destroy them without remedy. Nothing can be more ridiculous than to destroy an innumerable number of men, to take out of the bowels of the earth gold and silver: those metals in themselves absolutely useless, which are only riches because they have been fixed upon for the marks of riches.

Paris, the last of the moon Chahban, 1718.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXIX.

### Usbek To The Same.

SOMETIMES the fruitfulness of a people depends upon the minutest circumstances in the world; in such a manner that often nothing is necessary but a new turn in the imagination, to render them much more numerous than they were. The Jews so frequently exterminated, and always multiplying, have repaired their continual losses and destructions, by this single hope, which reigns amongst all their families, of seeing the birth of a powerful king, who shall be lord of the whole earth. The ancient kings of Persia had not had so many thousand subjects, but on account of this dogma in the religion of the Magi, that the most pleasing acts to God that men can do, are, to get a child, manure a field, and to plant a tree. If China contains such a prodigious number of people, it arises only from a certain way of thinking: for as the children regard their fathers as Gods, whom they respect as such in this life, whom they honour after their deaths by sacrifices, in that they believe that their souls extinguished in the Tyen \*, resume a new life; every one therefore is induced to increase a family so dutiful in this life, and so necessary in the next. On the contrary, the countries of the Mahometans every day become deserts, from an opinion, which, all holy as it is, yet is not without very hurtful consequences, when it is rooted in the mind. We should consider ourselves as travellers who ought to have all our thoughts fixed upon another country: but all useful and permanent labours, every care to secure fortunes for our children, schemes which reach beyond this short and transitory life, appear as things extravagant. Indolent to the present, and unsolicitous for what is to come, we take no trouble to repair public buildings, to clear uncultivated lands, nor to manure those that are deserving of our cares; we live in a general state of insensibility, and leave every thing to be done by Providence. It was a spirit of vanity that established among the Europeans the unjust law of primogeniture, so unfavourable to propagation, in that it directs the attention of a father to only one of his children, and turns his eyes from all the others; in that it obliges him, in order to make a solid fortune for one only, to hinder the settlement of the rest; lastly, in that it destroys the equality of citizens, which constitutes all their wealth.

Paris, the 4th of the moon Rhamazan, 1717.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXX.

### Usbek To The Same.

COUNTRIES inhabited by savages are usually thinly peopled, from the aversion they almost always have to labour and the cultivation of lands. This unhappy aversion is so strong, that when they would make an imprecation against one of their enemies, they wish nothing more than that he may be obliged to manure a field; thinking no exercise noble and worthy of them, except hunting and fishing. But as there are often years in which hunting and fishing afford very little, they are desolated by frequent famines: besides that there is not any country where game and fish is so plentiful, as to afford subsistence to a numerous people, because animals always fly from places too much inhabited. Besides the hords of the savages, with two or three hundred inhabitants in each, separated from one another, and having interests as different as those of two empires, can never support themselves; because they have not the resources of great states, whose parts all unite and mutually assist each other. There is another custom among the savages, not less prejudicial than the first; the cruel custom among the women of procuring abortions, that their bigness may not render them disagreeable to their husbands. There are terrible laws here against this crime; they carry them even to excess. Any woman who does not declare her pregnancy to a magistrate, is punished with death if her fruit is lost: shame and modesty, nay accidents themselves, do not excuse them.

Paris, the 9th of the moon Rhamazan, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXI.

### Usbek To The Same.

THE ordinary effect of colonies is the weakening of the countries from which they are drawn, without peopling that to which they are removed. Men ought to remain where they are: there are disorders contracted by changing a good for a bad air; and others which come from changing at all. The air, like plants, is charged with the particles of each country. It so acts upon us, that our constitution is fixed by it. When we are removed into another country we grow sick. The fluids being accustomed to a certain consistency, the solids to a certain habit, and both to a certain degree of motion, cannot admit of others, and resist a new habit. When a country is a desert, it is a sign that there is some particular bad quality in the nature of the earth or climate: so that when we take men from a happy climate, to send them into such a country, we act directly contrary to the end we designed. The Romans knew this by experience; they banished all their criminals into Sardinia, and made the Jews go there too. They were obliged to be contented with their loss; which the contempt they had for those wretches made very easy to them. The great Cha-Abbas, inclined to deprive the Turks of the means of supporting great armies upon his frontiers, transported almost all the Armenians out of their own country, and sent more than twenty thousand families into the province of Guilan, who almost all perished in a little time. All the removals of people to Constantinople have never succeeded, the vast numbers of Negroes, whom we have already mentioned, have not filled America. From the destruction of the Jews, under Adrian, Palestine hath been uninhabited. It must then be allowed that great depopulations are scarcely to be repaired; because a people reduced to a certain degree, continue in the same state: and if, by chance they are re-established, it must be the work of whole ages. But if, in a state of decay, the least of the circumstances already mentioned, happens to occur, it not only can never repair itself, but decays every day, and approaches to its utter destruction. The expulsion of the Moors out of Spain is now as much felt as at the first day: so far is that vacancy from being filled up, that it becomes greater every day. Since the devastation of America the Spaniards, who have taken place of its ancient inhabitants, have not been able to re-people it: on the contrary, by a fatality, which I might better call the divine justice, the destroyers destroy themselves, and daily consume away. Princes therefore must not think of peopling large countries by colonies. I do not say they never succeed: there are some climates so very favourable, that the inhabitants multiply there continually, witness those islands \* which were peopled by some distempered people whom some ships left there, and where they soon recovered their health. But though such colonies should always succeed, instead of increasing the power, they only divide it; unless they are but of small extent; as those are, where they send some to inhabit a place for the convenience of trade. The Carthaginians, as well as the Spaniards, discovered America, at least some large islands in which they carried on a very great trade: but when they found the number of their inhabitants decreased, this wife republic forbid their subjects that trade and navigation. I may venture to say, that instead of sending Spaniards into the Indies, they ought to make all the Indians and all the Metifs remove

into Spain: and if only half of those great colonies were preserved, Spain would become the most formidable power in Europe. We may compare empires to a tree, whose branches if extended too far, draw all the sap from the trunk, and serve only for a shade. Nothing is properer to cure the arduous desire in princes of making distant conquests, than the examples of the Portugueze and Spaniards. These two nations having conquered, with inconceivable rapidity, immense kingdoms, more astonished at their own victories, than the conquered people were at their own defeat, considered of the means to preserve them, and took each for that end a different way. The Spaniards, despairing of keeping the conquered nations in subjection, determined to exterminate them, and send thither more loyal people from Spain; never horrible design was more punctually executed. A people as numerous as all those of Europe together, were cut off from the earth, at the arrival of these barbarians, who seemed, in discovering the Indies, to have thought only of discovering to mankind the utmost reach of cruelty. By this barbarity they kept the country under their government. Judge by this what fatal things conquests are, since the effects are such as these: for, in short, this terrible expedient was the only one. How was it possible they could have kept so many millions of men in their obedience? How could they have supported a civil war at such a distance? What would have become of them, if they had given time to those people to have recovered from the consternation they were in at the arrival of these new gods, and at the terror of their thunder? As to the Portuguese, they took a quite contrary method; they did not make use of cruelties: therefore they were soon drove out of all the countries they had discovered. The Dutch favoured the rebellion of those nations, and profited themselves by it. What prince would envy the lot of these conquerors? Who would enjoy these conquests upon such conditions? The one were soon driven out, the others made nothing but deserts, and rendered their own countries the same. It is the fate of heroes to ruin themselves by conquering of countries which they suddenly lose again, or by subduing of nations which they themselves are obliged to destroy; like that madman who ruined himself by buying statues which he threw into the sea, and glasses which he broke as soon as he had purchased them.

Paris, the 18th of the moon Rhamazan, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXII.

### Usbek To The Same.

THE propagation of mankind is vastly promoted by a mild government. All republics are certain proofs of this; and above all others, Swisserland and Holland, which are the two worst countries in Europe, if we consider the nature of their land, and which are nevertheless the best peopled. Nothing invites strangers more than liberty and wealth, which always follow the former: the first is searched after for its own sake; and we are led by our wants into the country where the latter is to be acquired. The species increase itself in a country where the plenty of it supports the children without diminishing the substance of their fathers. The equality of citizens, which commonly produces an equality in their fortunes, brings plenty and life into every part of the body politic, and extends them through the whole. In countries subject to an arbitrary power it is not the same: the prince, the courtiers, and some private persons, possess all the riches, whilst all the rest groan beneath extreme poverty. If a man is in bad circumstances, and is sensible that his children would be poorer than himself, he will not marry; or if he does marry, he will be afraid of having too great a number of children, who may complete the destruction of his fortune, and sink into the condition of their father. I own that the rustic or peasant, being once married, will people that state alike, whether he be rich or poor; this consideration does not affect him, he hath always a sure inheritance to leave to his children, which is a plough, and nothing prevents him from blindly following the instinct of nature. But what purpose, in a state, do those numbers of children answer, who languish in misery? Almost all of them perish as soon as they are born: they seldom thrive; weak and seeble they die by retail, a thousand different ways, whilst others are carried away wholesale by frequent popular distempers, which poverty and a bad diet always produce: those which escape, reach the age of manhood without having the strength of it, and languish all the remainder of their lives. Men are like plants, that never flourish if they are not well cultivated: among a miserable people, the species loses, and even sometimes degenerates. France can supply us with a sufficient proof of this. In the late wars, the fear all the youths were in of being enrolled in the militia, forced them to marry, and this at too tender an age, and in the bosom of poverty. From so many marriages sprung such numbers of children, which are now looked for in vain, and whom misery, famine, and sickness, have destroyed. Now, if in so happy a climate, in a kingdom of so much policy as France, such remarks as these may be made, what may be done in other states?

Paris, the 23d of the moon Ramazan, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXIII.

### Usbek To Mollak Mahomet Ali, Keeper Of The Three Sepulchres, At Com.

THE fastings of the Imaums, and the sackcloths of the Mollaks, what do they profit us? Twice hath the hand of God been heavy upon the children of the law: the sun is obscured with clouds, and seems to give light only to their defeats; their armies assemble, and they are dispersed like the dust. The empire of the Osmalins is shaken by two such blows as it never before received: A Christian Mufti \* supports it with difficulty: the Grand Vizier of Germany is the Scourge of God, sent to chastise the followers of Omar: he carries every where the wrath of heaven, incensed by their rebellion and perfidiousness. Sacred spirit of the Imaums, night and day thou weepest over the children of the prophet, whom the detestable Omar hath misled: thy bowels are moved at the sight of their misfortunes: thou desirest their conversion, and not their destruction; thou wouldst willingly see them united under the banner of Hali, by the tears of the saints; and not dispersed among the mountains, and in the deserts, by the terror of the infidels.

Paris, the 1st of the moon Chalval, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXIV.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

WHAT can be the motives of those immense liberalities which princes lavish upon their courtiers? Would they attach them to them? They have already gained them as much as they can. And, besides, if they gain some of their subjects by bridging them, they must by that very means lose a prodigious number of others by impoverishing them. When I think on the situation of princes, always surrounded with avaritious and insatiable men, I cannot but pity them: and I commiserate them the more, when they have not courage enough to refuse demands always burthensome to those who ask nothing. I never hear talk of their liberality, of the favours and pensions which they grant, without indulging myself with a thousand reflections: a crowd of ideas offer themselves to my mind: I think I hear this ordinance published: ‘The indefatigable courage of some of our subjects, in asking pensions from us, having, without ceasing, fatigued our royal magnificence, we have at last consented to the multitude of requests presented to us, which have hitherto been the greatest uneasiness of the throne. They have represented to us, that they have never failed, since our accession to the throne, attending at our levee; and that we have always seen them as we passed along, immoveable as the boundaries of land; and that they have greatly raised themselves above the shoulders of others, to behold our serenity. We have even received several petitions from some of the fair sex, supplicating us to observe, that it is notorious that they are of a very reserved conversation: and some of them, who are very ancient, shaking their heads, have intreated us to consider, that they have been the ornaments of the courts of the kings our predecessors; and that if the generals of our armies rendered the state formidable by their military actions, they no less rendered the court celebrated by their intrigues. Therefore, desirous to treat these suppliants graciously, and to grant them all their petitions, we have commanded what follows:—That every labourer having five children, shall daily retrench the fifth part of the bread he gives them.—We also enjoin fathers of families to make a diminution from each in their house, as justly as can be made. We expressly forbid all those who apply themselves to improve their estates, or who let them out in farms, to make any repairs in them of what kind soever. We also order, that all persons who exercise low trades and mechanics, who have never been at the levee of our majesty, shall hereafter purchase no clothes for themselves, their wives, and their children, but once in every four years: further, strictly forbidding them those little rejoicings which they were accustomed to make in their families upon the principal festivals in the year. And, forasmuch as we are informed, that the greatest part of the citizens of our good towns are wholly engaged in providing an establishment for their daughters, who have made themselves respectable in our state, only by a dull joyless modesty; we order that they delay marrying them, till they, having attained to the age appointed by ordinances, may have it in their power to oblige them to it. We charge our magistrates not to take care of the education of their children.’

Paris, the 1st of the moon Chalval, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXV.

Rica To \* \* \*.

IN all religions men are at a great loss, when they attempt to give an account of the pleasures appointed for those who have led good lives. The wicked may be easily terrified by a long detail of pains and torments, with which they are threatened; but as for the virtuous they know not what to promise them. It seems to be the nature of pleasures to be of short duration, the imagination can hardly form to itself any others. I have heard descriptions of Paradise capable of disgusting every sensible person. The happy shades, according to the fancy of some, are continually playing on the flute, others condemn them to the punishment of eternally walking about; others, in short, make those above to be always raving after their mistresses here below, not thinking a hundred millions of years long enough to make them get quit of their amorous inquietudes. I remember, on this occasion, a story I heard told by a person who had been in the country of the Mogul; which shows that the Indian priests are no less fruitful than others in the ideas they have of the pleasures of Paradise.—A woman who had just lost her husband, went in form to the governor of the city to ask his leave to burn herself; but as in the countries subject to the Mahometans they abolish this cruel custom as much as they can, he absolutely refused her. When she saw her prayers were in vain, she flew into a furious passion. “How tormenting, said she, is this! A poor woman is not even permitted to burn herself when she hath a mind to it! Was ever the like seen? My mother, my aunt, my sisters, they all were happily burnt. And when I come to beg leave of this cursed governor, to be permitted to burn myself, he falls into a passion, and raves like a madman.” There happened to be present a young Bonze: “Insidel, said the governor to him, is it you who have instilled this madness into the mind of the woman?” “No, replied he, I never spoke to her; but if she will be guided by me, she shall perform her sacrifice; she will do an action agreeable to the god Brama: and she shall also be well recompensed; for she shall find in the other world her husband, and be joined to him again by a second marriage.” “What do you say? cried the woman in a fright—I shall find my husband again? Ah! I will never burn myself.—He was jealous, stupid, and besides so old, that, if the god Brama hath made no reformation in him, he certainly hath no need of me.—Burn myself for him!—not even the end of my finger to take him out of the bottom of hell. Two old Bonzes deceived me, who knew what kind of life I led with him, and took care not to tell me this: but, if the god Brama hath no other present to make me, I renounce this blessedness, Mr. governor, I turn Mahometan. And for you, said she, looking at the Bonze, you may, if you please, go tell my husband I find myself extremely well.”

Paris, the 2d of the moon Chalval, 1718.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXVI.

Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

I EXPECT thee here to-morrow: mean time I send thee thy letters from Ispahan. Mine bring word that the ambassador from the great Mogul hath received orders to quite the kingdom. They add, that they have arrested the prince, uncle to the king, and who had the care of his education, that they have carried him to a castle, where he is closely guarded; and have deprived him of all his honours. I am touched with the misfortune of this prince, and pity him. I own to thee, Usbek, I never saw the tears of any person trickle down, without being moved to compassion: I have the feelings of humanity for the unhappy, as if none but they were men: and even the great, towards whom I find my heart as stone whilst they are in prosperity, I love them when they are fallen. And indeed, during their prosperity what need have they of tenderness? It looks too much like equality. They are fonder of respect, which requires no return. But as soon as they are fallen from their high station, nothing but our lamentations can make them recal the idea of their greatness. I think there is something very natural and very great in the speech of a prince, who, being very near falling into the hands of his enemies, seeing his courtiers round about him weeping: I find, said he to them, by your tears, that I am still your king.

Paris, the 3d of the moon Chalval, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXVII.

### Rica To Ibben, At Smyrna.

A THOUSAND times thou hast heard talk of the famous king of Sweden; he was besieging a place, in the kingdom of Norway; as he was visiting the trenches, with only one engineer, he received a shot in his head which killed him. They immediately arrested his prime minister \*, the states assembled, and condemned him to lose his head. He was accused of a very great crime; namely, of calumniating the nation, and depriving them of the confidence of their king: an offence that in my opinion merits a thousand deaths. For in short it is a bad action to blacken the lowest subjects in the mind of their king; what is it then to traduce a whole nation, and to deprive them of the goodwill of him whom providence hath made choice of to render them happy? I would have men speak to kings, as the angels spoke to our holy propher. Thou knowest that, in the sacred banquets, where the Lord of Lords descends from the most sublime throne in the world, to communicate himself to his slaves, I made a severe law to myself, to restrain an unruly tongue. They never heard me utter a single word that might have been disagreeable to the meanest of his subjects. Though I happened to lose my sobriety, I never lost my honesty; and in that trial of our fidelity, I ventured my life, but never my virtue. I know not how it happens, but there is scarcely a king so bad, but his minister is still worse; if he commits a bad action, he is almost always prompted to it: insomuch, that the ambition of princes is never so dangerous, as the baseness of soul in his counsellors. But can you comprehend, that a man, who was a minister but yesterday, who may be deprived of his place tomorrow, can become in a moment an enemy to himself, his friends, his country, and to the people who are to be born of those whom he is about to oppress? A prince hath passions; the minister works upon them: it is by their means that he directs his ministry; he hath no other aim, nor will he observe any other. The courtiers mislead him by their flattery, and he flatters him more dangerously by his counsels, by the designs he inspires him with, and by the maxims he proposes to him.

Paris, the 25th of the moon Saphar, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXVIII.

Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

THE other day, as I was passing over the *Pontneuf*, with a friend of mine, he met a man of his acquaintance, who, he told me, was a geometrician, and indeed every thing in him showed him such: for he was in a deep meditation; my friend was obliged to pull him a long time by the sleeve, and to jog him, to make him descend from his sublime speculations; he was so busied with a curve, which he had been perhaps eight days about. Great civilities passed between them, and they mutually informed each other of the literary news. This conversation led them to the door of a coffee-house, into which I went with them. I observed that our geometrician was received there with the utmost officiousness, and that the coffee-house boys paid him much more respect than to two musqueteers, who were in a corner of the room. As for him, he seemed as if he thought himself in an agreeable place: for he unwrinkled his brow a little, and laughed, as if he had not the least tincture of the geometrician in him. In the mean time he measured every thing that was said in conversation. He resembled a person in a garden, who with a sword cuts off all the heads of the flowers that rise up above the rest. A martyr to regularity, he was offended at every start of wit, as a tender eye is by too strong a light. Nothing was indifferent to him, if so be it were true; accordingly his conversation was singular. He was come that day out of the country, with a person who had been to view a noble seat and magnificent gardens; but he saw nothing but a building of sixty foot in front, by five and thirty in depth, and a wood of ten acres: he wished that the rules of perspective had been so observed, that the walks of the avenues might have appeared throughout of one and the same breadth; and he would have laid down for that end, an infallible method. He seemed very well satisfied with a dial he found there, of a very singular make, and was mighty angry at a learned man, who sat next me, who unhappily asked if the dial showed the Babylonian hours. A newsmonger talked of the bombardment of the castle of Fontarabbia: and he presently informed us what kind of lines the bombs described in the air; and delighted with the knowledge of this, he was contented to remain entirely ignorant of the success of the bombardment. A gentleman complaining, that the winter before he had been ruined by an inundation: what you say pleases me much, said the geometrician, I find I am not mistaken in the observation I made, and that at least, there fell upon the earth two inches of water more than the year before. A moment after, he went out, and we followed him. As he walked very fast, and never looked before him, he run full against another man: it was a rough rencounter, and, from the percussion, each rebounded back, in proportion to his velocity and bulk. When they were a little recovered from their dizziness, the man, with his hand on his forehead, said to the geometrician, I am very glad you run against me, for I have great news to tell you: I have just now published my *Horace*. How! replied the geometrician, *Horace* hath been published these two thousand years. You do not understand me, says the other, it is a translation of that ancient author, which I have just now published: I have been twenty years engaged in translations. How, Sir! answered the geometrician, have you been twenty years without thinking? You speak for others, and they think for you?

Sir, says the learned man, do not you believe that I have rendered a great service to the public, by making the reading of good authors familiar to them? I do not say absolutely so: I esteem as much as another the sublime genius whom you have travestied: but you do not at all resemble him; for, if you should translate for ever, you will never be translated yourself. Translations are like copper money, which bear in proportion, an equal value with a piece of gold, and are even sometimes of far greater use to the people, but they are always light, and of a bad alloy. You are desirous, you say, to revive among us these illustrious dead; and I own that you give them indeed a body: but you do not restore life to them, there is still wanting a spirit to animate them. Why do not you rather apply yourself to the search of a thousand glorious truths, which an easy calculation discovers to us every day? After this advice, they parted, I suppose, not much pleased with each other.

Paris, the last of the moon Rebiab, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXIX.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

THE greater part of the legislators were men of confined understandings, whom chance put at the head of others, and who scarcely consulted any thing but their own prejudices and fancies. They appear not to have known the greatness and dignity of their employment: they amused themselves in forming childish institutions, by which, indeed, they conformed themselves to weaker understandings, but disgraced themselves with men of good sense. They plunged themselves into disadvantageous circumstances; and run into particular cares: which is the sign of a narrow genius, which sees things only by parts, incapable of taking a general view. Some affected to make use of a language different from the vulgar; an absurd thing in a maker of laws; for how should the people observe what they do not understand? They often abolished needlessly, those laws that were established; thereby plunging the people into disorders inseparable from changes. It is true, that on account of a strange turn that springs rather from the head than the heart, it is sometimes necessary to change certain laws. But it is an uncommon case; and when it happens, it should be touched with a timorous hand: they ought to observe much solemnity in doing it, and conduct it with such precautions, that the people may naturally conceive that the laws are very sacred, since so many formalities are necessary to be observed in repealing them. They have often made them too refined, and have followed logical ideas, rather than natural equity. In process of time they were found to be severe; and men thought themselves obliged in equity to deviate from them; but this remedy was a new inconvenience. Be the laws of what nature they will, they should be always punctually adhered to, and considered as the conscience of the public, to which that of individuals should always be conformable. We should however acknowledge, that some legislators have by one regulation discovered great prudence, they have given fathers a great share of authority over their children. Nothing contributes more to the ease of the magistrates; nothing more prevents the courts of justice from being crowded; nothing more firmly establishes tranquility in a state, where morality always makes better citizens than laws can make. Of all sorts of authority this is the seldomest abused: this is the most sacred sort of magistracy; it is the only one which does not owe its origin to any contract, but has even preceded all contracts. It has been observed, that in the countries where the greatest share of power is lodged in the hands of parents, the families are always best regulated: fathers are representatives of the Creator of the Universe, who, though he might bind men to serve him through love alone, has thought proper to attach them to him still stronger by the motives of hope and fear. I cannot finish this letter, without putting you in mind of the capriciousness of the French. It is said that they have retained many things in the Roman laws, which are either useless, or worse; and they have not borrowed from them the parental authority, which they represent as the basis of all lawful authority.

Paris, the 4th day of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXX.

Rica To \* \* \*.

I SHALL in this letter give thee an account of the race of Quidnuncs, who assemble in a magnificent garden, where their leisure finds constant employment. They are of no manner of use to the state; and were they to talk fifty years without pausing, their discourse would produce no greater effect than a silence of the same duration: yet they think themselves men of importance, because they harangue upon glorious projects, and talk of grand interests. A curiosity at once frivolous and ridiculous is the basis of their conversation: no cabinet can be so mysterious, but they pretend to dive into its secrets: they will not allow themselves to be ignorant of any thing; they know how many wives our august Sultan has, how many children he begets every year; and though they are at no expence to hire spies, they are acquainted with the measures to humble the emperor of the Turks and the Great Mogul. Scarcely have they exhausted the present, but they plunge deep into futurity; and taking the lead of providence, they prevent it in all its conduct towards man. They lead a general by the hand, and after having praised him for many follies of which he never was guilty, they make him commit a thousand more, which will never come to pass. They make armies fly like cranes, and the walls of cities fall as easily as the walls of a card-house: they have bridges upon all the rivers, secret roads upon every mountain, immense magazines upon burning sands: in fine, they want but one thing, and that is good sense. A man who lodges in the same house with me, received the following letter from a Quidnunc: as it appeared somewhat extraordinary, I kept it, and shall give it to you in this place.

‘Sir,

‘I am seldom mistaken in my conjectures upon public affairs. Upon the first of January, 1711, I foretold that the emperor would die within the year: it is true, as he was then in good health, I was apprehensive of becoming an object of ridicule, if I declared my sentiments in express terms; for which reason I used expressions somewhat enigmatical; but all rational people easily guessed my meaning. He died of the small-pox in the same year, upon the 17th of April. As soon as war was declared between the emperor and the Turks, I went through every corner of the Tuilleries in quest of our gentlemen: I assembled them near the bason, and prophesied to them that Belgrade would be besieged and taken. I had the happiness of seeing my prediction fulfilled. It is true, about the middle of the siege, I laid a wager of 100 pistoles, that it would be taken on the 18th of August: it was however taken the day after: is it not provoking to lose when so near the mark? When I saw the Spanish fleet invade Sardinia, I imagined they would reduce the island; I said so, and my conjecture was justified by the event. Encouraged by this success, I added, that this victorious fleet would make a descent at Final, in order to reduce the Milanese. As this opinion met with opposition, I was resolved to support it nobly: I laid a wager of 50 pistoles, and I

lost a second time: for that confounded cardinal Alberoni, in violation of the faith of treaties, sent his fleet to Sicily, and proved at once too hard for two great politicians, I mean the duke of Savoy and myself. All this, Sir, has so greatly disconcerted me, that I have formed a resolution to foretel henceforward without ever betting. Formerly the practice of betting was unknown at the Tuilleries, and the count de L— would never suffer them; but since a considerable number of petit maîtres has mixed with our society, we scarce know what to do. Scarce can we open our lips to tell a piece of news, but one of these youngsters offers to lay a wager that it is not true. The other day, as I was opening my manuscript, and settling my spectacles upon my nose, one of those flashy gentlemen, catching at the pause I made between the first and second word, told me, I'll hold a hundred pistoles to the contrary. I affected not to have taken notice of this extravagance, and speaking in more emphatical terms, I said, the marshal of \* \* \* having learned — that is false, said he, you always propagate extravagant intelligence; there is not common sense in what you say. Sir, you would greatly oblige me by lending me fifty pistoles, for these wagers have been the occasion of great perplexity to me. I herewith send you the copy of two letters, which I have wrote to the minister.'

### The Letter Of An Intelligencer To The Minister.

'My Lord,

'I am one of the most loyal subjects the king ever had. It was I that prevailed on a friend to put in execution the project I had formed of a book to prove to a demonstration, that Lewis the Great was by all means the greatest Prince that ever was surnamed the great. I have been moreover a long time employed in another work, which will contribute to raise our national glory still higher, if your eminence will grant me a privilege; my design is to prove that since the foundation of the monarchy, the French never lost a battle; and that what historians have hitherto said of our having been sometimes worsted, is utterly false and groundless. I am obliged to set them right upon many occasions; and I think I may say, without vanity, that I have great talents for criticism.

'I Am, My Lord,' &C.

'My Lord,

'As we have lost the Count de L— we beg you will be so kind as to give us leave to elect a president. Great confusion begins to prevail in our conferences; and state affairs are not in them treated with as much method and regularity as they have been formerly: our young men live without the least respect for the old, and without any subordination amongst themselves; it is a true council of Roboam, in which the young keep the old in awe. It is in vain for us to remonstrate to them, that we were in possession of the Tuilleries long before they were born. I am inclined to think they will at last drive us out of it; and that being deprived of the assylum where we had

often called up the shades of our French heroes, we shall be obliged to assemble in the king's garden, or in some more remote place.

'I Am,' &C.

Paris, the 7th day of the moon of the 2d Gemmadi, 1719.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXI.

### Rhedi To Rica, At Paris.

SINCE my arrival in Europe, nothing has more engaged my curiosity, than the history and origin of republics. You are not ignorant that most of the Asiatics have not even an idea of this form of government, and that the powers of imagination have not yet enabled them to conceive that there can be on earth any other form but the despotic. The first governments of which we have any knowledge were monarchical; it was merely by accident, and the succession of ages, that republics were at length formed. Greece having been overflowed by a deluge, new inhabitants came to people it: it drew all its colonies from Egypt and the neighbouring countries of Africa: and as those were governed by kings, the people who came from thence were governed in the same manner. But the tyranny of these princes becoming insupportable, they shook off the yoke; and from the ruins of so many kingdoms sprung those republics which caused Greece so greatly to flourish, and rendered it the model of politeness, whilst surrounded with barbarous nations. The love of liberty, and the aversion to kings, long preserved Greece in a state of independence, and made the republican form of government become every day more extensive. The cities of Greece made alliances with some cities of Asia Minor, they sent thither colonies as free as themselves, which served them as ramparts against the enterprises of the kings of Persia. This is not all; Greece peopled Italy; Italy, Spain, and perhaps Gaul. It is well known that the great Hesperia, so much renowned among the ancients, was at first the Greece considered by neighbouring nations as a blissful abode; the Greeks who could not find that happy place of residence at home, went in quest of it to Italy; those of Italy to Spain; those of Spain to Bettica or Portugal. So that these regions went by that appellation amongst the ancients. These Greek colonies brought with them a spirit of liberty, which they had contracted in that mild country. It is for this reason we do not meet with any example of a monarchy in Italy, Spain, or Gaul, during these ancient ages. It will be soon seen, that the people of the North, and of Germany, were no less free: and if any traces of kingly government are thought to be found amongst them, this may easily be accounted for, as the commanders of armies, and the chief magistrates of republics, have frequently been taken for kings. All this happened in Europe, for Asia and Africa have always groaned beneath the yoke of despotism, excepting only the cities of Asia Minor, which have been spoken of above, and the republic of Carthage in Africa. The empire of the world was shared by two powerful republics, I mean those of Rome and Carthage: no part of history is less known than that of the origin of the republic of Carthage. We are totally in the dark with regard to the succession of African princes, from the time of Dido, as well as of the manner in which they were deprived of their power. The prodigious grandeur of the Roman commonwealth would have been an advantage to the world in general, if there had not been that unjust distinction between the citizens of Rome and the conquered nations, if the governors of provinces had not been invested with an authority so considerable, if the just laws, established in opposition to their tyranny, had been always put in execution, and if they had not, in order to render them of no effect, availed themselves

of the very treasures which they had amassed by their injustice. Cæsar destroyed the Roman commonwealth, and made it subject to an arbitrary power. Europe long groaned under a military and violent government, and the mild sway of the Romans was converted into a cruel oppression. In the mean time, an infinite number of nations, never before heard of, poured out of the north, and spread like torrents all over the Roman provinces; as these found it equally easy to make conquests, and to exercise piracy, they dismembered the empire, and founded other kingdoms upon its ruins. These people were free; and the authority of their kings was so limited, that they could properly be called only their chiefs, or generals. Thus these kingdoms, though founded by force, never once felt the conqueror's yoke. When the people of Asia, for example, the Turks and Tartars, made conquests whilst under the command of a single person, they had nothing else in view but to procure him new subjects, and to establish his violent authority by the force of arms; but the people of the north, free in their own country, when they seized upon the Roman provinces, did not allow their chiefs much authority; nay some of these people, as the Vandals in Africa, and the Goths in Spain, went so far as to depose their kings, when they were dissatisfied with their conduct; and amongst others, the authority of the prince was limited in a variety of manners: a great number of the nobility shared it with him; wars were never waged without their concurrence; the spoils were divided between the chief and the soldiers; no tax was levied in favour of the prince; the laws were made in the national assembly, and upon this fundamental principle were formed all the states that rose out of the ruins of the Roman empire.

Venice, the 20th of the moon Rhegeb, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXII.

Rica To \* \* \*.

I HAPPENED to be five or six months ago in a coffee-house: there I observed a gentleman tolerably well dressed, who had got an audience about him; he spoke of the pleasure of living at Paris; he lamented the necessity he lay under of retiring to languish away his life in the country. I have, said he, an estate of fifteen thousand livres a-year in land; and I should think myself much more happy, if I had one quarter of it in money and portable effects. It is to no purpose for me to bear hard upon my tenants, and put them to expence by frequent law-suits, this only makes them less able to pay. I can never see a hundred pistoles at a time. If I was to owe ten thousand livres, all my land would be seized on, and I should be reduced to an hospital. I went out without giving much attention to all this conversation; but happening to be yesterday in the same part of the town, I entered the same house, and I there saw a grave man, with a long pale visage, who sat melancholy and pensive in the midst of five or six praters; at length beginning somewhat abruptly, he said, with a loud voice, Gentlemen, I am ruined, I have nothing left to live upon; for I have now at home two hundred thousand livres in bank-bills, and a hundred thousand crowns in money: I am in a most melancholy situation; I thought myself rich, and now I find myself reduced to beggary; if I had but a small estate in the country to retire to, I should at least be secure of a subsistence; but I have not the breadth of this hat in land. Happening to turn my head on the other side, I saw a man who made such grimaces, that one would have thought him possessed. Who can we trust for the future? exclaimed he. There is a villain whom I had so good an opinion of, and thought so sincerely my friend, that I lent him money: he paid me again! what black persidy and ingratitude is this? let him do what he will, he will never be able to retrieve my good opinion. Near him was a man very ill dressed, who listing up his eyes to heaven, said, God prosper the projects of our ministers, may the actions rise to two thousand livres, and the footmen of Paris be richer than their masters! I had the curiosity to ask his name. The answer I received was, he is a very poor man, and has a poor trade: he is a genealogist, and he hopes that his art will become profitable, if these changes of fortune continue, and that all the new rich will have occasion for him to reform their names, furbish up their ancestors, and adorn their coaches. He has a notion that he will have it in his power to make as many persons of quality as he thinks proper, and he exults within himself to think, that the number of his customers will increase. At last I saw an old man enter, pale and thin, whom I knew to be a coffee-house politician before he sat down: he was not one of those who are never to be intimidated by disasters, but always prophecies of victories and success; he was one of those timorous wretches who are always boding ill. Our affairs, said he, are in a very bad situation in Spain, we have no horse upon the frontiers; and it is to be feared that the prince Pio, who has a considerable body, will levy contributions upon the whole province of Languedoc. There sat opposite to me a philosopher of a tolerably shabby appearance, who seemed to despise the politician, and shrugged his shoulders in token of contempt, whilst the other elevated the tone of his voice. I approached him, and he whispered in my ear, you see how that coxcomb

talks of his apprehensions for Languedoc: and I for my part yesterday perceived a spot  
in the sun, which, if it should increase, might cause a general dissolution of nature,  
and yet I did not say a single word about it.

Paris, the 17th of the moon Rhamazan, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXIII.

Rica To \* \* \*.

I WENT the other day to see a great library at a convent of dervises, who are in some measure the proprietors of it, but who are obliged to give admittance to all comers at stated hours. Upon entering, I beheld a serious personage, who walked amidst a prodigious number of surrounding volumes. I went up to him, and begged he would be so kind as to inform me what those books were which I saw so much better bound than the rest. “Sir, says he, I am here as the inhabitant of a foreign country, I know nobody. Many besides you have proposed such questions to me; but you cannot think it reasonable that I should read all these books, in order to give them information; my librarian here can satisfy your curiosity, for he is busied night and day in decyphering what you see here; he is a very worthless member, and a great burthen to us, because he does nothing for the convent. But the bell rings to call me to the refectory. Those who, like me, are at the head of a society, should be the first to assist at all the exercises peculiar to it. The monk having spoken thus, pushed me out, shut the door, and disappeared, just as if he had possessed the art of flying.

Paris, the 21st of the moon Rhamazan, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXIV.

### Rica To The Same.

I YESTERDAY returned to the same library, where I met with a man very different from him whom I had seen before. His air was simple, his countenance lively, and his address affable. As soon as I signified to him my curiosity, he prepared to gratify it, and even to instruct me, as I appeared to be a stranger. “Reverend father said I, what are those books with which all that side of the library is filled?” “Those are the works of the interpreters of scripture,” answered he. “There is a prodigious number of them, replied I; scripture must have been formerly very obscure, but very perspicuous at present. Can there possibly be any doubts remaining? Can there possibly be any uncontroverted points?” “Can there possibly! answered he, good God! can there possibly! There are almost as many doubts as verses.” “Indeed, said I, what good then have the writings of these authors done?” “These authors, answered he, have not searched the scriptures, for what should be believed, but what they believed themselves; they did not consider the scriptures as books containing the opinions they were bound to embrace, but as a work which might give a sanction to their own opinions: for this reason, they have every where corrupted its sense, and put forced constructions upon every passage. It resembles a country, which men of every sect invade, and to which they go as it were to pillage; it is a field of battle, where the hostile nations that meet have frequent engagements, where they attack each other, and where they have skirmishes of various sorts. Not far from these you see the ascetic books, or books of devotion; then follow the books of morality, which are of much greater utility; theological tracts, doubly intelligible, both on account of the subject there treated of, and the manner in which it is treated; the works of the mystics, that is, of such devotees as have hearts addicted to love and tenderness.” “Hold, reverend father, one moment, said I; let me hear something of those mystics.” “Sir, said he, devotion warms a heart naturally inclined, and causes the animal spirits to mount up to the brain, so as to warm it in the same manner: from hence proceed ecstasies and ravishing visions. This state may be called the delirium of devotion; it often attains to the perfection of, or rather degenerates into quietism: you cannot be ignorant that a quietist is nothing else but a man that is at once mad, devout, and a libertine. Behold there the casuists who reveal the secrets of the night; who form in their imagination all the monsters that the dæmon of love is capable of producing, combine, compare them, and make them the constant objects of their thoughts; happy is it for them if their heart is not caught in the snare, and does not itself become an accomplice in so many debaucheries, so exactly and so plainly described. You see, Sir, that I think freely, and that I freely discover my thoughts. I am naturally of an open disposition, and more with you who are a stranger, and who desire to understand things, and know their true nature. If that was my way of thinking, I should speak of all these things with a tone of astonishment; I should every moment use the terms, that is divine, that is excellent; this abounds with the marvellous; and the consequence would be, that I should either impose upon you, or lessen myself in your opinion.”

There our conversation ended, it was suddenly interrupted by the dervise's being called upon about some business of the convent.

Paris, the 23d of the moon Rhamazan, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXV.

### Rica To The Same.

I RETURNED at the appointed hour; and my new acquaintance conducted me to the very place where we parted. “Behold here, said he, the grammarians, the glossary makers, and the commentators.” “My reverend father, said I, have not all these a dispensation from having common sense?” “Yes, answered he, they have, and nobody is ever the wiser: their works are neither the better nor the worse for it; and this is a great privilege they are invested with.” “That is very just, said I, and I know many philosophers who would do wisely to attach themselves to sciences of this nature.” “Here, continued he, you may see the orators who are endowed with the talent of persuading without ratiocination; and the geometricians who force a man to assent to their arguments whether he will or no, and convince him by downright force. Here you see the metaphysical treatises which turn upon interests so important, and in which infinity every where occurs; and the treatises upon natural philosophy, the authors of which can discover no more of the marvellous in the œconomy of the vast universe, than in one of the most simple machines made by human art. Books of physic, those monuments of the frailty of human nature, and the power of art; which fill us with terror even in treating of the slightest disorders, they bring death so near our view, but which renders us equally secure when they treat of the virtues of remedies, as if they could confer immortality upon us. Near them are the books of anatomy, which do not so properly contain the description of the parts of the human body, as the barbarous names by which they are called; which can never cure the sick man of his disease, nor the physician of his ignorance. Here are the chymists, who sometimes inhabit hospitals, and sometimes madhouses, which are dwellings equally well suited to them. Here again are the books which treat of the occult science, or rather of occult ignorance; such are those which contain something concerning the magic art: these are execrable in the opinion of many, altogether contemptible in mine. Such likewise are the books of judicial astrology.” “How can you say that, father, the books of judicial astrology, replied I, with vivacity. These are the very books which are most esteemed in Persia, they regulate all the actions of our lives, and determine our will in all our undertakings: the astrologers may properly be called our directors: they do more than direct us, they are concerned in the government of the state.” “If that be the case, said he, you live under a government much more severe than that of reason: this must be the most capricious government imaginable: I greatly pity a family, and much more a nation, that suffers the planets to have such powerful influence over it.” “We use astrology, answered I, just in the same manner as you use algebra. Every nation has a peculiar science, according to which it regulates its politics. All our astrologers put together never committed so many absurdities in our Persia, as a single algebraist has done here. Can you think that the fortuitous meeting of the stars is not as sure a rule of conduct as all the fine reasoning of your builder of systems? If the votes upon that subject were to be reckoned up both in France and Persia, astrology would soon triumph over algebra; you would soon see



the calculators greatly humbled, what terrible inferences might be drawn against them from hence?" Our dispute was interrupted, and we were under a necessity of parting.

Paris, the 26th of the moon Rhamazan, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXVI.

### Rica To The Same.

AT our next interview, my learned instructor conducted me into a separate apartment. “Here, said he, are the books of modern history. Behold here the authors of church history, and the lives of the popes; these are books which I read for edification, but which in me often produce a quite opposite effect. In that place are those who have wrote concerning the decline of the formidable empire of the Romans, which sprung from the ruin of so many monarchies, and upon the ruins of which so many new ones were founded; an infinite number of barbarous nations, as little known as the countries which they inhabited, appeared all of a sudden, over-run it, ravaged it, tore it to pieces, and founded all the kingdoms which you now see in Europe. These people cannot properly be called barbarians, because they were free, since being universally subjected to a despotic power, they lost that delightful liberty which is so conformable to reason, humanity, and nature. Here you will see the historians of the German empire, which is only a shadow of the first empire; but which is, I think, the only power upon earth which has not been weakened by faction; the only power, I must repeat it, which acquires strength from its losses, and which, slow in availing itself of its success, becomes invincible by its defeats. Here are the French historians, in which we first see the regal power form itself, perish twice; then recover itself again, and languish during a succession of ages; but collecting strength, and being increased in every particular, at last arrives at its final period; like those rivers which in their course lose their waters, or hide themselves under the earth; then, shewing themselves again, and swelled by the rivers which flow into them, rapidly hurry away whatever opposes itself to their passage. There you see the Spanish nation pour itself forth from certain mountains: The Mahometan princes subdued as slowly as they had rapidly conquered: so many kingdoms united into one vast monarchy, which became almost the only one; till overwhelmed by its own greatness, and its false opulence, it lost its forced reputation, and retained nothing but the pride with which it was inspired by its former power. Here are the English historians, in which we constantly see liberty rekindled by the flames of discord and sedition, the prince always tottering upon a throne not to be shaken, a nation impatient, but prudent even in its sallies of passion, and which, being possessed of the empire of the sea (a thing unheard of till then) unites commerce with power. Not far from thence are the historians of that other queen of the sea, the republic of Holland, so much respected in Europe, and so formidable in Asia, where its merchants see so many kings fall prostrate before them. The Italian historians represent to us a nation once mistress of the world, become the slave of all the others; its princes divided and weak, and having nothing of sovereignty to boast, besides its vain policy. Here are the historians of the republics of Switzerland, which is the emblem of liberty; of Venice, whose only refuge is in its œconomy; and of Genoa, that has nothing to boast of but its buildings. Here are those of the north, and amongst others, of Poland, which makes so bad a use of its liberty, and the right it is possessed of, of electing its kings, that one would think its intention

is thereby to console the neighbouring nations, which have lost both.” Hereupon we parted till the next day.

Paris, the 2d of the moon Chalval, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXVII.

### Rica To The Same.

THE next day he conducted me into another apartment. “These, said he, are the poets, whose chief merit consists in putting good sense in shackles, and in overwhelming reason by a heap of ornaments, as the women were formerly incumbered by the parade of dress. You are no stranger to them, they are common amongst the Orientals, where a hotter sun seems to warm the imagination of the natives. Here are the epic poems”—“What,” said I, somewhat surprised, “is an epic poem?” “To deal plainly with you, answered he, “I do not know: the critics tell us, that there never were more than two, and that the others which go by the same name, are by no means worthy of it: I cannot judge of this neither. They say besides, that it is impossible to compose any more; this to me appears still more surprising. Here are the dramatic poets, who, I think, hold the first place amongst those of their profession, and may be justly looked upon as the masters of our passions. There are two different species of dramatic poets; the comic poets, who stir our passions so gently, and the tragic poets, who rouse and agitate us with so much violence. Here are the lyric poets, whom I despise as much as I esteem the others, who convert their art into an harmonious extravagance. Next in order follow the authors of Idyllium and Eclogues, who please even courtiers, by exciting in them an idea of a certain tranquility which they do not possess, which they present to their view in the condition of shepherds. But here are authors more dangerous than any you have yet seen: these are they who point epigrams, little sharp arrows which make a deep wound that admits of no cure. Here you behold romances, the authors of which may be in some measure considered as poets who are equally extravagant in their wit, and in their representations of passion; they pass their whole lives in seeking after nature, and their research is always equally vain; their heroes are no more in nature than the winged dragons, and the hippocentaurs.” “I have,” answered I, “seen some of your romances, and if you had seen any of ours, you would have been still more disgusted. They are full as void of nature, and lie under great constraints on account of our manners: an amorous passion must have lasted ten years before the lover can see so much as his mistress’s face; yet the authors are under a necessity of making their readers pass through all these tedious preliminaries; now as it is impossible to invent new incidents for ever, these authors have recourse to an artifice, which has a worse effect than the inconvenience they mean to obviate by it; they avail themselves of prodigies. I am convinced that you cannot approve of a sorceress making an army rise out of the earth by the power of her art; that a single hero should destroy a fleet consisting of an hundred thousand men. Yet in this taste our romances are wrote: these cold adventures, so often repeated, appear to us altogether insipid, and give us the highest disgust.”

Paris, the 6th of the moon Chalval, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXVIII.

### Rica To Ibben At Smyrna.

MINISTERS here succeed to and destroy each other, just as the seasons do: during the space of six years I have seen the system of the finances changed four times. Taxes are now levied in Turkey and Persia, exactly in the same manner as they were levied by the founders of those empires: this is far from being the case here. It must indeed be owned that we do not levy them with so much address as the inhabitants of the West. It is our opinion, that there is no more difference between managing the revenues of a prince, and the fortune of a private person, than between reckoning an hundred thousand tomans, and reckoning only an hundred: but this affair is much more mysterious and refined than we think it. Geniuses of the first rank must labour night and day, they must without ceasing, and with the most painful efforts, invent continually new projects; they must hear the voice of an infinite number of persons, who meddle with their business without being desired; they must retire and live reclusely in a closet impenetrable to great folks, and awful to the little; they must always have their heads full of important secrets, wonderful designs, new systems; and being quite absorbed in meditation, they must be deprived of the use of speech, and sometimes even void of politeness. No sooner were the eyes of the late king closed, but it was judged proper to establish a new administration. It was easy to perceive that the kingdom was in a bad situation, but how to remedy the inconveniences it laboured under, was the question. The unlimited authority of former ministers, had not been found advantageous to the state; and therefore it was judged proper to divide it among several. For this purpose, five or six counsels were created, and perhaps France was never more wisely governed, than by that ministry: it did not last long, no more than the good of which it was productive. France, at the late king's death, resembled a body sinking under a thousand disorders: N— took the knife in hand, cut off some of the useless flesh, and applied a few topical remedies. But there still remained an internal vice to be cured: a foreigner who came over, undertook to effect the cure: after the application of many violent remedies, he thought that he had restored the state to its former vigour, whereas it was only become bloated. Those who were in affluence about six months ago, are now reduced to the most extreme poverty; and those who were in want of the necessaries of life, are now wallowing in opulence. The two extremities never made so near an approach before. This foreigner has turned the kingdom with as much ease as a taylor turns a coat; he makes that which was under appear upwards, and what was uppermost he turns down. Such unexpected fortunes have been made, as appeared incredible to those who acquired them; God does not with greater ease create men out of nothing. How many footmen are now attended by their fellow-servants, and may perhaps to-morrow be attended by their masters? This is sometimes productive of very odd accidents. Footmen who acquired their fortunes in the last reign now boast of their birth, they revenge themselves upon those who have just laid aside their liveries, of all the contempt which others expressed for them about six months before: they exclaim aloud the nobility is ruined; what disorder prevails in the state! what confusion is there in all

ranks! none but mean persons now make fortunes! Depend upon it these will take ample revenge upon those who come after them; and that in thirty years these new people of quality will make a great noise in the world.

Paris, the 1st of the moon Zilcade, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXXXIX.

### Rica To The Same.

THERE cannot be a greater example of conjugal affection, and that not in a private woman, but in a queen, than that which I now relate. The queen of Sweden being positively resolved that her husband should be her partner in the government, to remove all obstacles to this her purpose, sent a declaration to the states, whereby she renounces the regency, provided they elect him. Somewhat above sixty years ago, another queen, named Christina, abdicated the throne to devote herself entirely to philosophy. I do not know which of these examples should excite our admiration most. Though I would by all means have every body firmly maintain the post and dignity to which he has been raised by fortune; and though I cannot approve of the weakness of those, who finding themselves inferior to their station, basely forsake it by a sort of desertion; I am notwithstanding struck with the greatness of soul of these two queens, when I see that the mind in the one, and the heart in the other, were more elevated than their fortune. Christina aspired to know at a time when others think of nothing but the enjoyment of present pleasures; and the other desires to enjoy empire only with a view of putting it into the hands of her august husband.

Paris, the 27th of the moon Maharran, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXL.

Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

THE parliament of Paris has been just banished to a little town called Pontoise. The council sent orders to it either to register, or approve, a declaration by which it might be dishonoured, and the parliament has registered it in a manner that reflects dishonour upon the council. Some other parliaments of the kingdom are threatened with the same treatment. These assemblies are always hated: they approach kings only to tell them unwelcome truths; and whilst a crowd of courtiers constantly represent to them that the people are quite happy by their administration; they contradict the slattery, and bear to the foot of the throne the complaints and lamentations of a distressed nation. Truth, dear Usbek, is a grievous burden, when we are obliged to carry it into the presence of princes; they should therefore consider, that those who undertake the office are constrained to it, and that they would never have resolved to take a step so invidious and ungrateful, if they had not been forced to it by their duty, their respect, and even their love.

Paris, the 21st day of the moon of the 1st Gemmadi, 1720.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLI.

### Rica To The Same.

AT the end of the week I will pay you a visit: How agreeably shall I pass my time with you! I was introduced some days ago to a certain court lady, who had a fancy to see my foreign figure. I thought her beautiful, worthy the affection of our monarch, and of a distinguished rank in the sacred place where his heart reposes. She proposed me many questions concerning the manners of the Persians, and the sort of life led by the women of Persia. It appeared to me that the seraglio was not to her taste, and that it gave her great disgust to think that a man should be shared by ten or twelve women. She could not think of the happiness of the men without envy, nor of the wretched condition of the women without the utmost compassion. As she loves reading in general, but chiefly poems and romances, she was desirous to hear some account of ours. The account I gave her doubled her curiosity: she begged the favour of me to translate a fragment of one of those I had brought with me. I did so, and sent her a few days after an oriental tale; perhaps you will not be displeased to see it in disguise. “In the time of Cheick ali Can, there was in Persia a woman named Zulima: she had the sacred Koran quite by heart; no dervise could understand the traditions of the holy prophets better than she; the Arabian doctors never said any thing so mysterious, but she could easily comprehend it, and to such knowledge she joined a certain chearfulness of temper, which put it out of the power of those she conversed with to guess whether she intended to instruct or please them. One day whilst she was with her companions in one of the apartments of the seraglio, one of them asked her what her sentiments were concerning a life to come; and whether she believed that ancient tradition of our doctors, that paradise was made only for the men. It is the general opinion, said she; they have done all that they could to degrade and villify our sex. There is even a nation dispersed all over Persia, called the Jewish, that maintain by the authority of their sacred books, that women have no souls. These injurious opinions take their rise entirely from the pride of men, who would willingly preserve their superiority over our sex, even after death, and do not consider, that at the last great day, all the creatures will appear as nothing before God, and that one shall have no prerogative over another, but that which it has acquired by superior virtue. God will be unbounded in his recompenses: and as the men who have lived a virtuous life, and made a good use of their power over us upon earth, will be admitted into a paradise filled with celestial and ravishing beauties; beauties so brilliant, that if a mortal could get a sight of them, he would immediately put an end to his life, through impatience to enjoy them; in like manner, virtuous women will enter a delightful abode, where they will be glutted with the most exquisite enjoyments of all sorts, with men of a divine nature, who will be subjected to their command: each of them will possess a seraglio, in which they will be shut up; and have eunuchs, much more faithful than ours, to guard them. I have read, continued she, in an Arabian author, that a man named Ibrahim, was of a temper most insupportably jealous. He had twelve women of the greatest beauty, whom he treated with a brutality unparalleled: he would not trust even his eunuchs, or the walls of his seraglio; he generally kept

them under lock and key in their respective apartments, so that they could neither see nor speak to each other; for even an innocent friendship roused his jealousy: all his actions discovered a tincture of his natural brutality: his mouth never pronounced an obliging word, and his most trifling gestures never failed to aggravate the bitterness of their slavery. One day, when he had assembled them all in an apartment of his seraglio, one of them, more bold than the rest, reproached him with his ill-nature. Those who take such pains to make themselves feared, said she, are, generally speaking, successful only in making themselves hated. We are so very unhappy, that we cannot possibly avoid wishing for a change of condition: others would, in my situation, wish your death, I only wish for my own; and, as I cannot hope to be separated from you, except by death, it will notwithstanding be a great happiness to me to be separated from you. This discourse, which should have given him some compunction, made him on the contrary fly into a furious passion; he drew his poignard, and plunged it into her breast. ‘My dear companions, said she, with a dying voice, if heaven has compassion for my virtue, your sufferings will be revenged.’ Having uttered these words, she left this unhappy world, and passed immediately into that blessed abode, where such women as have lived virtuous lives, enjoy a never-fading happiness. The first sight that presented itself to her eyes, was a beautiful meadow, whose verdure was set off by an enamel of flowers, whose variegated colours vied with each other in loveliness; a stream, whose waters were more clear than chrystal, ran there in a variety of meanders. She then entered into delightful groves, where nothing was heard but the harmonious songs of tuneful birds. The finest gardens imaginable then offered themselves to her view: nature had bestowed upon them all its lustre with its simplicity. At last she came to a magnificent palace, which was prepared for her, and filled with men of a divine nature, destined to be subservient to her pleasures. Two of them immediately advanced, in order to undress her: others conducted her to a bath, and persumed her with the most delicious essences: they then presented her with clothes, much more rich than her own: after which they led her into a spacious hall, where she found a fire made of odoriferous wood, and a table covered with viands of the most exquisite flavour. All things seemed to concur to fill her senses with rapture; she heard on one side musick, so much the more divine, as it was more tender; on the other she saw dances performed by those divine men, whose sole occupation was to please her, and yet such a variety of pleasure was intended only to conduct her, by insensible degrees, to pleasures infinitely greater. They then conducted her to her apartment; having again undressed her, they then put her into a bed extremely rich, where two divine men immediately received her in their arms. She was then completely happy, her ecstasy surpassed even her desires. ‘I am quite transported, said she to them, I should think myself dying if I was not sure of my immortality. It is too much, leave me; I sink through the excess of pleasure. Yes, you again restore a calm to my senses; I am beginning to revive and come to myself. Why have they taken away the slambeaux? Why am I not permitted still to contemplate your divine charms? Why am I not allowed to see?—But why do I talk of seeing? You make me once more enter into my former transports. Gods, how delightful this darkness is! What, shall I be immortal, and immortal in your company! I shall—but no—I beg a moment’s rest, for I see you are but little disposed to ask it.’ After reiterated commands, she was at last obeyed, but it was not till she appeared to desire it in good earnest. She then gave way to soft repose, and slumbered in their arms. Two moments of sleep restored her wasted strength: twice they embraced her,

and thus the flame of love was rekindled. She opened her eyes, and said, 'I am quite uneasy to find myself neglected thus, I fear you have ceased to love me.' This was a doubt in which she was unwilling to remain long: and indeed she soon received convincing proofs of her mistake. 'I am conscious of my error, exclaimed she, excuse me, I now see I may depend upon you. You do not utter a single word, but your actions prove your love more strongly than it is in the power of words to do. Yes, yes, I own it, no love could ever equal yours. But how you vie with each other in endeavouring to convince me! ah, if you vie with each other, if you join ambition to the pleasure of defeating me, I am lost; you will both be conquerors, and I the only vanquished party; but the victory shall cost you dear, that you may depend upon.' Their pleasures were not discontinued till day appeared; her faithful and amiable domestics entered her apartment, and caused the two young men to rise, they were thereupon re-conducted to the places wherein they were kept for her pleasures. She then arose, and made her appearance at that court by which she was idolized, in the charms of a simple dishabille, and then richly attired in the most sumptuous ornaments. The past night had added new lustre to her beauties; it had enlivened her complexion, and given a stronger expression to her graces. The whole day was divided between dances, concerts, festivals, sports, and other amusements of that kind; and it was observed, that Anais often stept aside, and flew to the embraces of her two lovers; after having a short interview with them, she returned to the company she had quitted, always with a countenance more lively than before. But about evening the company lost sight of her entirely: she went and shut herself up in the seraglio, where she was desirous, as she said, of cultivating her acquaintance with these immortal captives, who were to live with her for ever. She therefore visited the most retired and the most delightful apartments of these places, where she reckoned fifty slaves of a most extraordinary beauty: she wandered all day from apartment to apartment, receiving every where a different homage, but one that was always of the same nature. It was thus the immortal Anais passed her days, sometimes in all the dissipation and gaiety of pleasure, and sometimes in solitary pleasures, admired by a brilliant assembly, or adored by an ardent lover: she often quitted an enchanted palace, to repair to a rural grotto: flowers seemed to spring under her feet, and pleasures offered themselves to her in crowds. She had been above eight days in this happy place, in the hurry of a constant round of pleasure, and without having ever made a single reflection; she had enjoyed her felicity without knowing it, and without having one of those moments of tranquility in which the soul settles with itself, if I may be allowed the expression, and attends to its own report in the silence of the passions. Happy souls have pleasures so lively, that they can seldom enjoy that freedom of mind: wherefore being invincibly attached to present objects, they lose all memory of things past, and have no longer the least concern about what they have loved, or known, in the other world. But Anais, whose mind was of a truly philosophical turn, had passed almost her whole life in meditation: she had carried her reflections a great deal further than could be expected from a woman left to herself. The close retirement in which her husband had left her, had deprived her of every other advantage. It was that strength of mind which had made her despise the fear that filled the souls of her companions with consternation, as well as death, by which her sufferings were to be terminated, and her felicity to commence. She therefore by degrees quitted the intoxication of pleasure, and retired to an apartment in her palace. She gave herself up to pleasing reflections upon her past condition, and her present happiness; she could

not help compassionating the misery of her companions. We are always affected with ills which we have partaken of. Anais did not stop within the limits of simple compassion: such was her tenderness for these unfortunate creatures, that she found herself inclined to assist them in their distress. She ordered one of the young men that was with her, to assume the form of her husband, to enter his seraglio, to make himself master of it, and to turn the former possessor out of doors, and to remain there in his place, till such time as she should think proper to recal him. Her orders were quickly put in execution; he cut the air with rapid wings, and quickly arrived at the door of Ibrahim's seraglio: Ibrahim happened not to be there. The young man knocked, every door flew open to him, the eunuchs fell at his feet. He flew to the apartments where the women of Ibrahim were shut up; he had as he passed stolen the keys from this monster of jealousy; to him he found means to render himself invisible. He entered, and at first surprised them by his mild and affable air, but soon after surprised them much more by his ardour, and by his reiterated warm embraces. They were all equally astonished at this event, and they would have taken it for a dream, had there been less reality in it. Whilst this extraordinary scene was played in the seraglio, Ibrahim knocked at it, told his name, and made a terrible outcry and disturbance. After having surmounted a great many difficulties, he entered, and threw the eunuchs into a most terrible fright. He walked on with great rapidity, but he started back with great astonishment, when he beheld the counterfeit Ibrahim, his perfect image, taking all the liberties of master of the seraglio. He calls out for help; he calls upon the eunuchs to assist him in killing the impostor; but he was not obeyed. He has now but one refuge left, and that a weak one; he refers it to the judgment of his wives. In the course of one hour the counterfeit Ibrahim had corrupted all the judges. The other was ignominiously dragged out of the seraglio, and would inevitably have suffered death, if his rival had not given positive orders that his life should be spared. In a word, the new Ibrahim remaining master of the field of battle, gave every day new proofs that he was worthy of such a preference, and signalized himself by feats unheard of before in the seraglio. You are not like Ibrahim, said the women. Say rather, answered the triumphant Ibrahim, that that impostor is not like me; what must be done to deserve your favours, if what I do is insufficient? "Ah, we shall take care how we doubt," answered the women, "if you are not the true Ibrahim, it is enough for us that you have so well deserved to be so; you show yourself more Ibrahim in one day than he did in ten years." "You promise then," returned he, "to declare in my favour, and against that impostor." "Doubt not of that," answered they all with one unanimous voice; "we swear to be eternally faithful to you; we have been too long imposed upon; the villain did not suspect our virtue, all his suspicions were occasioned by his own impotence: we now see plainly that men are not made alike, it is you doubtless they resemble: if you but knew how much you make us hate him!" "Ah," replied the counterseit Ibrahim, "I will often give you fresh reasons to hate him, you do not yet know how great an injury he has done you." "We judge of his injustice by the greatness of your revenge," answered they. "You are in the right," answered the divine man; "I have proportioned the expiation to the crime; I am glad you like my manner of punishing." "But," said the women, "if that impostor should return, what shall we do?" "I believe it would be a hard matter for him to deceive you," answered he; "in the station which I hold with you, no man can support himself by artifice: besides, I will send him so far off, that you will never hear more of him. I then will take upon myself the care of your happiness. I will not be jealous; I know how to

secure your affections, without laying you under any restraint; I have not so bad an opinion of my merit, to think that you will not be faithful to me: if your virtue is not secure with me, with whom can it be secure?" The conversation lasted a long time between him and the women, who, more struck with the difference of the two Ibrahims, than with their resemblance, were not in the least solicitous to have so many mysteries cleared up. At last the husband, quite desperate, came again to disturb their repose: he found his whole family in joy, and his women more unwilling to believe him than ever. It was become now no place for a jealous man; he went away in a rage; the very next moment the counterfeit Ibrahim followed him, seized him, hurried him through the air, and left him at the distance of two thousand leagues from thence. Gods, how disconsolate were the women in the absence of their dear Ibrahim! Their eunuchs had already resumed their natural severity, the whole family was in tears, they thought sometimes that all that had happened to them was but a dream; they looked often upon each other, and recalled to their memories the most minute circumstances of these strange adventures. At length the divine Ibrahim returned more amiable than ever; it appeared to the women that he had not been in the least fatigued by his journey. The new master observed a conduct so opposite to that of the old one, that all the neighbours were surprised at it. He dismissed all the eunuchs, made his house accessible to every body: He would not even suffer the women to use veils. It was something extraordinary to see them at feasts amongst the men, and as free as they. Ibrahim thought, and with reason, that such citizens as he, were not bound to observe the customs of the country. Yet he spared no expence; he with the utmost profusion squandered the wealth of the jealous man, who returning three years after from the remote countries to which he had been carried, found nothing at home but his women, and thirty-six children.

Paris, the 26th of the moon Gemmadi, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLII.

Rica To Usbek, At \* \* \*.

I SEND you herewith a letter, which I received from a man of learning; you will think it somewhat extraordinary.

“Sir,

“About six months ago I succeeded to the fortune of a very rich uncle, who left me five or six hundred thousand livres, and a well furnished house. It is a pleasure to be possessed of wealth, when one knows how to make a good use of it. I have no ambition nor taste for pleasures; I am almost always shut up in a closet, where I lead the life of a studious man. It is in such a place as this, that a virtuoso, who loves venerable antiquity, is to be found. When my uncle expired, I would gladly have had him interred with the ceremonies observed by the Greeks and Romans, but I had neither antique mourning, urns, or lamps. But since that time, I have provided myself well with those precious rarities. I not long ago sold my plate, to purchase an earthen lamp, that had been used by a stoic philosopher. I have disposed of all the pier-glasses with which my uncle had covered his apartments, to buy a little cracked looingglass, that formerly belonged to Virgil: I am highly delighted to see it reflect my face, instead of that of the swan of Mantua. This is not all; I have given an hundred louis d’ors for five or six pieces of copper coin, which were current a thousand years ago. I do not think I have now in my house, a single moveable, which was not made before the decline of the Roman empire. I have a little closet filled with manuscripts, as precious as dear: though by reading them I destroy my eye-sight, I had much rather use them than printed books, which are not so correct, and which are moreover in the hands of every body. Though I scarce ever stir out of my house, I am extremely solicitous to know all the ancient roads which were made in the time of the old Romans. There is one not far from my house, which was made by the orders of a proconsul of Gaul, twelve hundred years ago. When I go to my country-house, I always take care to pass it, though it is very inconvenient, and adds almost a league to my journey: but what provokes me, is, that in several places, they have fixed wooden posts, to show the distances of the neighbouring towns. I am quite in despair, to see these miserable erections, in the room of those military columns which were there before. I doubt not but I shall cause them to be replaced by my heirs, and shall be able to make a will of such a nature, as will induce them to do it. If you have got ever a Persian manuscript by you, Sir, I would be obliged to you for it; I will pay you your own price for it, and I will give you into the bargain some works of my own composing, which will convince you that I am not an useless member of the republic of letters. Amongst others, you will see a differtation, in which I prove, that the crown used in triumphs, was made of oak leaves, and not of laurel: you will be in raptures with another, in which I prove by learned conjectures, taken from the greatest Greek authors, that Cambyses was wounded in the left leg, and not in the right: another, in

which I prove that a short forehead was a beauty highly esteemed by the Romans. I will send you moreover a volume in quarto, which contains an explanation of a verse of the sixth book of Virgil. It will be a few days before I can send you these; at present all I can do is to send you this fragment of an ancient Grecian mythologist, which has not hitherto appeared in print, and which I found in the dust of a library. I must take my leave of you, on account of an important affair that I have upon my hands; the business is to restore a beautiful passage of Pliny the naturalist, which the copyists of the fifth century have strangely disfigured.

I Am, &C.

### Fragment Of An Ancient Mythologist.

‘IN an island near the Orcades, a child was born who had Æolus for his sire, and for his mother a nymph of Caledonia. It is said of him, that he, without assistance, learned to reckon upon his fingers; and that even at four years of age, he distinguished metals so well, that his mother once offering him a tin ring instead of a gold one, he perceived the deceit, and threw it upon the ground. As soon as he was grown up, his father taught him to shut up the wind in buckets, which he afterwards sold to the travellers who passed that way: but as commerce was not much esteemed in his country, he quitted it, and began to roam the world, in company with the blind god of chance. In the course of his travels, he had learned, that gold glitters every where in Betica, he repaired thither with the utmost expedition. He was very ill received by Saturn, who reigned there at that time; but that god having left the earth, he took it into his head to go about the streets every where, crying continually with a hoarse voice, People of Betica, you think yourselves rich, because you are possessed of gold and silver: your error raises my contempt. Be ruled by me, quit the country of base metals; enter the empire of imagination, and I promise you riches, which will fill even you with astonishment. He immediately opened several of the buckets which he had brought with him, and he distributed his commodity to whoever was willing to take it. The next day he entered the same streets, and cried out, People of Betica, do you desire to be rich? Fancy to yourselves that I am extremely rich, and that you are so also: take it for granted every morning, that your wealth has been doubled during the night: then rise, and if you have creditors, go and pay them with the imaginary treasure, then bid them imagine in their turn. He appeared again in a few days after, and he spoke thus: People of Betica, I see very well that your imagination is not as lively as it was yesterday; let me regulate your imagination by mine: I will every day place before your eyes a scroll, which will be to you the source of great riches: it will contain but four words; but these words will be extremely significant; for they will determine the portions of your wives, the fortunes of your children, and the number of your servants. And as for you, said he, to such of the croud as were nearest to him; as to you, my dear children (I may call you by that name, for from me have you received a second birth) my scroll shall decide the grandeur of your magnificent equipages, the sumptuousness of your feasts, and the number and pay of your mistresses. A few days after he came into the public streets, quite out of breath, and in a violent passion cried out: People of Betica, I advised you to imagine, and I see that you do not follow my advice: well then, now I command you to do so. Thereupon he quitted them abruptly;

but reflection made him soon come back. I hear, said he, that some of you are so detestable as to keep your gold and silver. For the silver it is no great matter, but gold, gold—ah! that makes me quite mad. I swear by my sacred buckets, that if they do not bring it to me, I will punish them severely. He then added, with the most persuasive air imaginable, do you think I ask you for these wretched metals in order to keep them? A proof of my candour is, that when you brought them to me a few days ago, I immediately returned you one half. The next day they saw him at a distance, they perceived that he endeavoured to insinuate himself into their favour, by smooth and complaisant discourse: People of Betica, I am informed that part of your treasure is in foreign countries; I intreat you to send for them, you will greatly oblige me, and I shall eternally acknowledge the favour. The son of Æolus happened then to speak to people, who were by no means in a merry mood; they could not however help laughing, which made him sneak off in great confusion. He was not however quite discouraged, he returned again, and ventured to make another petition. I know that you have precious stones; dispose of them in the name of Jupiter; nothing can possibly impoverish you more than keeping such baubles. Dispose of them by all means: if you cannot do it yourselves, I will procure you excellent agents. How you will wallow in riches, if you but follow my advice! I do assure you you shall have the richest treasures of my buckets. At last he mounted a scaffold, and with a more resolute voice spoke thus: People of Betica, I have compared the happy state in which you are at present, with that in which I found you upon my arrival in this country; you are now the most opulent people upon earth; but that I may make your good fortune compleat, permit me to ease you of one half of your wealth. Having uttered these words, the son of Æolus soared up into the air, and fled away upon rapid wings, leaving his auditors in a consternation not to be expressed, which occasioned his coming again the next day, when he delivered himself in these terms: I perceived yesterday, that my conversation displeased you highly. Well then, suppose all I said, unsaid. It is true, one half is too much. Let us have recourse to other expedients to attain the proposed end. Let us deposit all our riches in the same place; it will be easily done, for they will not take up much room. At that instant three parts of their wealth out of four vanished away.’

Paris, the 9th of the moon Chahban, 1720.

*N. B.* Mr. Law is alluded to in this satire, who was a goldsmith in Edinburgh, and many years a professed gamester; by Saturn is meant Lewis XIV.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLIII.

### Rica To Nathaniel Levi, A Jewish Physician At Leghorn.

YOU ask my opinion concerning the virtue of charms, and the power of talismans; why do you apply to me upon this occasion? you are a Jew, and I am a Mahometan, consequently we must both be extremely superstitious. I always carry with me above a thousand passages of the holy Koran: I tie to my arms a paper, upon which are written the names of above two hundred dervises: those of Hali, of Fatme, and all the personages renowned for their sanctity, are concealed in my clothes in above twenty places. However, I cannot entirely disapprove of the opinion of those who will not admit of this virtue annexed to certain words. It is much more difficult for us to answer their arguments, than for them to oppose our experience. I carry all these sacred scrolls about me, merely through habit, and in order to conform to a received custom: I am of opinion, that if they have not a greater virtue than rings and other ornaments of dress, they cannot possibly be inferior to them in this respect. But you put entire confidence in a few mysterious letters; and, without that defence, you would be under continual apprehensions. Men are indeed unhappy! they constantly float between fallacious hopes and absurd fears: and, instead of adhering to the dictates of reason, they either form to themselves monsters that intimidate them, or phantoms that seduce and mislead them. What effect do you think the placing of a few letters can produce? What evil can result from their being put into disorder? What influence have they over the winds, to calm tempests; over gun powder to resist its force; or over what physicians call peccant humour, or the morbid cause of diseases, to cure them? What is most extraordinary, is, that those who puzzle their brains to account for certain events, by occult virtues, are obliged to take equal pains to avoid seeing the true cause. You will tell me, that certain enchantments have caused a battle to be won: but for my part, I cannot help telling you, that you must be blind not to see in the situation of the field, the number, or courage, of the soldiers, or the experience of the generals, causes capable of producing this effect, whose real cause you wilfully shut your eyes to. I will grant you for a moment, that there may be enchantments; grant me for a moment that there are none, for that is possible. It will not follow from your concession, that two armies may not engage: will you then maintain, that in that case neither of the two can be victorious? Do you think their fate will continue doubtful, till an invisible power comes to decide it? That all their blows will be ineffectual, all their conduct vain, and all their courage fruitless? Do you think that death, rendered present in a thousand different ways, cannot produce those panics, which you find it so difficult to account for? Do you think, that there may not be one coward in an army of two hundred thousand men? Do you think that the terror which may seize this one, may not excite terror in another? That the second, who quits a third, will not make him quit a fourth? Even that would be sufficient to throw a whole army into despair; and the more numerous the army, the more quickly it spreads. All the world knows, and all the world is sensible, that men, like all other creatures, who are directed by nature to preserve their being, are passionately fond of life; this is a truth generally known; how then can it be asked, how they can be afraid of losing it

upon a particular occasion? Though the sacred books of all nations abound with accounts of such panics, or supernatural terrors, I think there cannot be a more ridiculous notion; for before we should admit that an effect which may be produced by an hundred thousand natural causes, is supernatural, one should before have examined, whether none of these causes has operated; which is impossible. I shall say no more to you upon this subject, Nathaniel; in my opinion it does not deserve to be treated in so serious a manner.

Paris, the 20th of the moon Chahban, 1720.

*P. S.* As I was just concluding, I heard cried about the streets, a letter from a country physician, to a physician at Paris; (for here the greatest trifles are printed, published, and bought). I thought I should do well to send it to you, because it has some relation to the subject we have been upon \*.

### A Letter From A Country Physician, To A Physician At Paris.

‘THERE was formerly a sick person in our town, who never once slept for thirty-five days together. His physician prescribed him opium; but he would never consent to take it; and whilst he held the cup, he was as little inclined to take it as ever. At last he said to his physician, Sir, I beg you will give me quarter till to-morrow: I know a man who does not practise physic, and yet he has an infinity of remedies against want of sleep. Give me leave to send for him; and if I do not sleep to-night, I will send for you again to-morrow. The physician being gone, the sick man ordered his curtains to be drawn, and said to his footman, Go to Mr. Anis, and tell him, I should be glad to see him. Mr. Anis came. My dear Mr. Anis, I am in a dying condition, I cannot sleep; have you not in your shop the C. of G. or some book of devotion, composed by some reverend father, which still lies upon your hands? for the remedies that have been the longest kept are generally the best. Sir, answered the bookseller, I have in my shop the Holy Court of father Caussin, at your service; I will send it to you directly, and I hope you will find yourself the better for it. If you have a mind for the works of the reverend father Rodriguez, a Portuguese Jesuit, they are very much at your service. But take my advice, and stick to father Caussin. I hope that, with the assistance of God, one period of father Caussin will do you more good than a whole leaf of the C. of G. Having spoke thus, Mr. Anis went out, in order to search his shop for the remedy. He soon returned with the Holy Court, after having caused the dust to be rubbed off; the patient’s son, a school-boy, began to read: he was the first to feel the effects of it; at the second page he could scarce pronounce with an articulate voice, and all present began to feel themselves drowsy: a few moments after they all began to snore, except the sick man, who, after having long continued to listen to it awake, at last was overpowered by sleep himself. Early in the morning the physician arrived. Well, said he, has my opium been taken? To this question he received no answer; but the wife, the daughter, and the child, in transports of joy, showed him father Caussin’s work. He asked what it was; they answered, O bless father Caussin, his book well deserves to be bound. Who would have said it? who would have thought it? It is a perfect miracle. See here, Sir, see father Caussin’s treatise; it was this that made my father sleep. Hereupon they informed him of all that had happened \*. The physician was a subtle man, greatly attached to the mysteries of the Cabala, and who had much

faith in the power of words and spirits: this struck him so, that, upon mature deliberation, he resolved to change his method of practice. This is a very extraordinary effect, said he, this experiment is worth carrying further. Why may not a spirit have power to communicate to its works the qualities which it is itself possessed of? Do not we see this happen every day? At least the experiment is very well worth trying. I am tired of apothecaries; their syrups, their juleps, and all their galenical drugs, destroy the sick, and quite ruin their health. Let us change the method of practice; let us try the virtue of spirits. With this view, he drew up a new system of pharmacy, as you will see by the account which I shall give of the new remedies which he made use of.'

### Purgative Ptisan.

'Take three leaves of Aristotle's logic in Greek, two leaves of one of the most crabbed theological treatises; as for instance, that of the subtile Scotus; four of Paracelsus, one of Avicenna; six of Avenoes; three of Porphyry; as many of Plotinus, as many of Jamblicus. Mix them all together, and let them stand for four-and-twenty hours; then take four doses of them at a time.'

### A More Violent Purgative.

'Take ten A \* \* \* of C \* \* \*, concerning the B and the C of the J \* \*; cause them to be distilled in balnea marina; put a drop of the sharp humour which it produces, in a glass of water to deaden it; then drink off the whole with confidence.'

### A Vomit.

'Take six harangues; the first dozen of funeral orations that comes to hand; with this one restriction however, that you do not make use of those of M. de N.; a collection of new operas, fifty romances, and thirty sets of new memoirs; put all these ingredients into a large glass bottle, with a big belly and a little neck; leave it to settle during two days; then cause it to be distilled by a fire of ashes; and if all this should prove ineffectual,

### Another More Powerful Vomit.

'Take a leaf of marble paper, which has served as a cover to a collection of the pieces of J. F. let it be infused during the space of three minutes; cause a spoonful of that infusion to be made hot, and drink it up.'

### A Very Simple Remedy For An Asthma.

'Read all the works of the reverend father Maimbourg, heretofore Jesuit; but take care not to stop till the conclusion of each period; and you will find a freedom of breathing return by degrees, without being under any necessity of repeating the remedy.'

## A Preservative From The Itch, Scabs, And Other Cutaneous Disorders.

‘Take three categories of Aristotle, three prædicables of three different degrees in the metaphysical scale, one distinction, six verses of Chapelain, one phrase extracted from the letters of the Abbe de St. Cyran: write the whole upon a bit of paper, fold it up, tie it to a ribband, and carry it about your neck.’

## Miraculum Chymicum De Violentâ Fermentatione, Cum Fumo, Igne Et Flammâ.

‘Misce Quesnellianam infusionem, cum infusione Lallemanianâ; fiat fermentatio cum magnâ vi, impetu, et tonitru, acidis pignantibus, et invicem penetrantibus alcalinos sales fiet evaporatio ardentium spirituum. Pone liquorem fermentatum in alembica; nihil indè extrahes, et nihil invenies, nisi caput mortuum.’

## Lenitivum.

‘Recipe Molinæ anodini chartas duas; Escobaris relaxativi paginas sex; Vasquii emolientis folium unum: infunde in aquæ communis, *lib.* iiij. Ad consumptionem dimidiæ partis colentur et exprimantur; et, in expressione, dissolve Bauni deterativi et Tamburini abluentis, folia iii.’

## Fiat Clister.

In chlorosin, quam vulgus pallidos-colores, aut febrim-amatoriam, appellat.

‘Recipe Aretini figuras iiij. R. Thomæ Sanchii de matrimonio folio ij. infundantur in æque communis libras quinque.’

## Fiat Ptisana Aperiens.

‘These drugs our physician applied with extraordinary success; he would not, as he said, for fear of destroying his patients, employ remedies very hard to come at: as for instance, a dedication which had never made any body yawn; too short a preface; a bishop’s order, wrote by himself, and the work of a janesenist, either despised by a janesenist, or much admired by a jesuit. It was his opinion, that these remedies were calculated for nothing, but to promote quackery, which he professed to hold in the utmost abhorrence.’

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLIV.

### Usbek To Rica.

YESTERDAY at a country-seat, where I happened to visit, I met with two learned men, who have a great name in this part of the world. I thought their characters somewhat singular. The conversation of the first, well weighed, might be reduced to this; what I have said is true, because it is I that have said it. The conversation of the second, seemed to be founded upon another maxim; what I have not said, is not true, because I have not said it. The first I was tolerably well pleased with, for it is nothing to me if another person shows himself to be quite positive and obstinate, but the impertinence of another is not so easily borne with. The first maintains his opinions, they may be considered as his property: the second attacks those of others, that is to say, he invades the property of all mankind. Dear Usbek, how fortunate are those who have more vanity than is absolutely necessary for self-preservation! These people aspire to be admired, by means which must make them give offence. They aim at superiority, and they can scarce ever attain to an equality with others. Oh you modest men approach, that I may embrace you! From you spring all the charms of society. You think yourselves destitute of all sorts of merit; but I cannot help saying, that every merit is yours. You think you humble nobody, though you humble all the world. And when I, in idea, compare you to those assuming persons whom I meet with every where, I immediately pull them from their tribunal, and make them fall prostrate at your feet.

Paris, the 22d of the moon Chahban, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLV.

Usbek To \* \* \*.

A MAN of parts is generally untractable in society. He chooses but few companions; he is disgusted with that numerous body of people, whom he is pleased to call bad company: this disgust he cannot thoroughly conceal, which brings upon him the hatred of numbers. Being sure to please, whenever he thinks proper to exert himself, he frequently neglects to do so. He has a turn to criticising, because he sees many things that escape another, and is more sensibly affected by them. He generally ruins his fortune, because the fertility of his genius furnishes him with a variety of means so to do. His enterprises miscarry, because he risks a great deal. His penetration, which generally causes him to see too far, makes him often give attention to objects that are extremely remote. Add to this, that at the formation of a project, he is less occupied by the difficulties that grow out of the business, than with the remedies to them, which are of his own inventing. He neglects minute particulars, tho' upon them the success of most great affairs depends. On the other hand, the man of more confined abilities endeavours to avail himself in every thing: he is thoroughly sensible, that he must not neglect even trifles. The man of moderate abilities oftener meets with general esteem. Every body takes pleasure in raising the one, whilst all are equally delighted to depress the other. Whilst envy falls foul upon one, and excuses him nothing, all the defects of the other are overlooked; the vanity of others declares in his favour. But if a man of genius lies under so many disadvantages, what must we think of the wretched condition of the learned? I can never think of it, without recollecting the following letter, wrote by one of them to his friend. I send it to you herewith:

‘Sir,

‘I am one of those who pass whole nights in contemplating through telescopes of thirty feet long, those vast bodies that roll over our heads; and when I am disposed to unbend my mind, I take up a microscope, and examine a maggot or a mite; I am not rich, and I have but one room: I dare not even make a fire in it, lest the warmth should make the mercury rise in my thermometer, which I keep there. Last winter the cold almost killed me: and though my thermometer was at the lowest, and though my hands were almost frozen, I still went on my own way. Thus I have the pleasure of knowing with the greatest exactness, all the most inconsiderable changes of the weather for last year. I am very reserved, and scarce know any body that I see. But there is a person at Stockholm, another at Leipsick, and another at London, whom I neither ever saw, nor ever expect to see, with whom I keep up a constant correspondence; I write to them every post. But though I have no connection with any body in the street where I live, I have got so bad a character all over the neighbourhood, that I believe I must soon change my lodging. About five years ago, I was treated very roughly by a woman in the neighbourhood, for having dissected a dog, which, she said, belonged to her. The wife of a butcher, who happened to be

present, took her part; and whilst one poured out a torrent of abuse against me, the other pelted me with stones as well as Dr.—, who was with me, who received a terrible blow upon the os frontal and os occipital, by which the seat of reason is very much injured. Ever since that time, if a dog happens to be missing in the street, it is immediately taken for granted that it has passed through my hands. A worthy citizen's wife, that had lost a lap-dog, which, as she said herself, was more dear to her than her own children, came the other day, and fainted away in my room, and not having found her dog, summoned me before a magistrate. I believe I shall be for ever persecuted by the malice of these women, who, with their shrill voices, stun me every day, by making funeral orations upon all the automates who have died these ten years.

‘Yours, &C.’

All men of learning were accused of being magicians, some ages past. I am not at all surprized at it. Every one of them said within himself, I have acquired as much knowledge as can be attained by the power of natural abilities, and yet another philosopher has the advantage of me; he must certainly deal with the devil. As accusations of this nature are out of date in the present age, other means have been made use of, and a man of learning can never escape being reproached with irreligion or heresy. It avails him little to be deemed innocent by the people; the wound once made, will never perfectly close. It remains a sore place ever after. An adversary may come thirty years after, and address him in these modest terms: “God forbid that I should imagine that the accusation against you is just; but you have lain under the sad necessity of vindicating your character.” Thus is his very justification turned against him. If he writes a history, and discovers an elevation of mind, or integrity of heart, he is liable to a thousand persecutions. There will not be wanting persons to irritate the magistrate against him, on account of a fact which has passed a thousand years ago; and if his pen is not venal, they would have it restrained. Their condition is, however, more happy than that of those men who violate their faith for an inconsiderable pension, who by all their numerous impostures hardly gain a single farthing; who subvert the constitution of an empire, diminish the prerogatives of one power, increase those of another; give to princes, take from their subjects, revive antiquated duties, encourage the passions which are in vogue in their age, and such vices as receive a sanction from the throne; imposing upon posterity in the more scandalous manner, as it is not provided with means to detect their impostures. But it is not enough that an author has all these insults to suffer, it is not enough that he has lived in constant anxiety for the success of his work. At length the work that cost him so much pains and trouble comes out; it involves him in a thousand quarrels, and how is it possible to avoid them? The author has an opinion, he maintains it in his writings, without knowing that another man of learning, who lives two hundred leagues distant from him, had asserted the reverse. Yet this gives rise to a paper war. It would indeed be some consolation to him, if he had any prospect of becoming famous. But he has not even this alleviation of his distress. He is at most esteemed by those who have applied themselves to the same studies with himself. A philosopher holds nothing more in contempt, than a man whose head is loaded with facts, whilst he, in his turn, is considered as a visionary by the man that has a good memory. With regard to those who take pride in their ignorance, they would willingly have all mankind buried in

that oblivion to which they are themselves consigned. When a man is destitute of any particular talent, he indemnifies himself, by expressing his contempt for it; he removes that obstacle which stood between merit and him, and by that means raises himself to a level with those whom he before feared as rivals. Thus is an author obliged to abstain from pleasures, and endanger his health, to acquire a doubtful and precarious reputation.

Paris, the 26th of the moon Chahban, 1720.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLVI.

### Usbek To Rhedi, At Venice.

IT is a maxim of long standing, that sincerity is the soul of a great ministry. An individual may avail himself of the obscurity in which he is placed; his character is lessened only in the opinion of some particular persons; he keeps himself masked before others; but a minister, who acts contrary to the rules of probity, has witnesses of his bad conduct, and judges as many in number as the people he governs. Shall I hazard a bold assertion? The greatest mischief done by a minister without principle, does not arise from his serving his prince unfaithfully, or from his ruining the people, it arises from the bad example he sets. You are not ignorant that I have a long time travelled up and down the Indies. I have there known a nation, by nature generous, debauched in an instant, as it were, by the bad example of a minister; I have seen a whole people, amongst whom generosity, probity, candour, and uprightness, had long been considered as qualities natural to them, become all on a sudden the most despicable people upon the face of the earth; I have seen the contagion spread, and not spare even the most sacred members of the community; I have known men famous for their virtue, guilty of the most unworthy actions; I have known them violate the first principles of justice, alledging in excuse, the frivolous pretext that they had been violated with respect to themselves. They justified the basest actions by odious laws, and made necessity a plea for their base and perfidious conduct. I have seen faith banished from contracts, the most solemn compacts rendered void, and all the laws of families subverted. I have seen avaritious debtors puffed up with pride, in the midst of poverty, unworthy instruments of the severity of the laws, and the public distress, pretend payment, without ever having made it, and plunge a dagger in the breast of their benefactors. I have seen others, still more unworthy, buy for a trifle, or rather, as it were, pick up oak leaves from the ground, in order to supply the place of the substance of widows and orphans. I have known an insatiable thirst for riches spring up on a sudden in the hearts of all men. I have seen a detestable confederacy formed by several persons to enrich themselves, not by an honest industry, but by the ruin of the prince, the state, and their fellow citizens. I have known a worthy citizen, in these times of distress, never go to bed without saying to himself, I have ruined a family to day, I will ruin another to-morrow. I am going, says another, with a man in black, who carries an inkhorn in his hand, to ruin all those to whom I have had an-obligation. Another said, I find I am beginning to thrive; true it is, when I went about three days ago to pay off some money, I left a whole family in tears, that I squandered the portions of two girls of condition, that I deprived a young lad of the means of acquiring education; his father will die of grief, his mother pines away with sorrow: but I have done nothing but what is allowed by the law. What crime can be greater, than that which a minister commits, when he corrupts the manners of a whole nation, debases the most noble souls, stains the lustre of dignities, makes virtue itself obscure, and confounds the noblest birth, in the general contempt? What will posterity say, when it finds itself under a necessity of blushing for the shame of its ancestors? What will the people of the next age say, when they compare the iron of their ancestors to

the gold of those from whom they immediately derived their birth? I doubt not but the nobility will retrench from their coats of arms, an unworthy distinction, which dishonours them, and leave the present generation in the despicable state to which it has reduced itself.

Paris, the 11th of the moon Rhamazan, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLVII.

### The Chief Eunuch To Usbek At Paris.

THINGS are come to such a pass here, that the state they are in is almost desperate; your wives have taken it into their heads, that your departure has left them entirely at liberty, and that they may do what they please with impunity: most shocking things are done here, I cannot write the dreadful account of them without trembling. Zelis, as she was the other day going to the mosque, let drop her veil, and appeared with her face almost entirely uncovered before the people. I found Zachi in bed with one of her female slaves, a thing positively forbidden by the laws of the seraglio. I, by meer accident, surprised the letter which I now send you; I could not possibly discover who it was intended for. Yesterday a young lad was found in the garden of the seraglio, but he made his escape over the walls. To this add all that has escaped my knowledge; you must doubtless have been betrayed. I wait for your orders, and till the happy moment that I receive them, shall remain in constant anxiety. But if you do not give me an arbitrary power over all these women, I cannot answer for any of them, but shall every day have news equally afflicting to send you.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 1st of the moon Regeb, 1717.

### Usbek To The Chief Eunuch At The Seraglio Of Ispahan.

RECEIVE, by virtue of this letter, an unlimited power over the whole seraglio: command with as much authority as I do myself: let fear and terror accompany you every where; visit every apartment with correction and punishment; let consternation seize upon all; let all shed tears in thy presence: question all that belong to the seraglio: begin with the slaves; do not spare even my love: let all be subject to your awful tribunal: discover the most hidden secrets; purify the infamous place, and make banished virtue return once more to it. For, from this moment, I will place the smallest faults committed there to your account. I suspect that Zelis is the person to whom the letter you intercepted was addressed: pry into that affair with the eyes of a lynx.

From \* \* \*, the 11th of the moon Zilhage, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CXLIX.

### Narsit To Usbek, At Paris.

HONOURED Lord, the chief of the eunuchs is just dead: as I am the eldest of your slaves, I have taken his place, till you signify to me whom you have chosen for it. Two days after his death, one of your letters, directed to him, was brought me; I took care not to open it; I folded it with respect, and locked it up till you think proper to inform me of your sacred pleasure. Yesterday a slave came in the midst of the night, to tell me, that he had found a young man in the seraglio; I got up, made a strict search, and found that it was the effect of his imagination. Ever honoured lord, I kiss thy feet; and beg thou wilt put confidence in my zeal, my experience and my age.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 5th of the moon of the 1st Gemmadi, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CL.

### Usbek To Narsit, At The Seraglio Of Ispahan.

WRETCH that thou art! thou hast in thy hands letters which contain orders that require to be carried into execution with the utmost speed; the least delay may reduce me to despair, and you remain inactive under a frivolous pretext! Terrible things happen in the seraglio: perhaps one half of my slaves deserve death. I send you herewith the letter which the chief of the eunuchs wrote to me upon that subject, just before he died. If you had opened the packet which is directed to him, you would have found bloody orders in it. Read therefore those orders, and execute them punctually, or thou shalt perish.

From \* \* \*, the 25th of the moon Chalval, 1718.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLI.

### Solin To Usbek, At Paris.

WERE I to keep silence any longer, I should be as guilty as any of those wicked wretches in the seraglio. I was the confidant of the chief eunuch, the most faithful of your slaves. When he saw himself near his latter end he sent for me, and addressed me in these terms: I am dying, but the only thing that gives me uneasiness at leaving the world, is that with my dying eyes I have beheld the guilt of my master's wives. May heaven preserve him from all the misfortunes which I foresee! After my death, may my threatening shade return, to put these perfidious women in mind of their duty, and intimidate them even then: here are the keys of those awful places; go, carry them to the oldest of the black eunuchs. But if after my death, he should be deficient in diligence, take care to let your master know. Having uttered these words he expired in my arms. I am not ignorant of what he wrote to you concerning the conduct of your wives, a little before his death; there is a letter in the seraglio, which would have occasioned general terror, if it had been opened. That which you wrote since, was intercepted, three leagues from hence. I do not know what it is owing to; but all things turn out unhappily. Your wives however no longer keep within the bounds of decency: since the death of the chief eunuch, their behaviour is altogether licentious; Roxana is the only one that does her duty, and continues to retain her modesty. Their morals grow more corrupt every day. One can no longer discover in the countenances of your wives, that severe and rigid virtue which might so easily be discerned there before: an unusual joy which reigns in this place, in my opinion, proves some new satisfaction in those who live here. In the most trifling circumstances, I observe, that they take liberties unknown to this place before. There prevails, even amongst your slaves, an indolence in the discharge of their duty, and a remissness in observing the rules of the seraglio, which I am quite surprised at; they are no longer inspired by that warmth of zeal, which seemed to animate the whole seraglio. Your wives have been eight days in the country, at one of your most neglected seats. It is said, that the slave who takes care of it, was gained over by them, and that two days before their arrival, he caused two men to be hid in a hollow place in the wall of the principal chamber, which they came out of in the evening, after we had retired. The old eunuch, who is at present at the head of the seraglio, is a dotard, who believes whatever he is told. Such horrid perfidy excites my indignation: and if heaven, for the good of your service, would make you think me capable of ruling, I can answer for it, that if your wives did not prove virtuous, they would at least prove faithful.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 6th of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLII.

### Narsit To Usbek, At Paris:

ROXANA and Zelis had a desire to go to the country: I thought it would not be proper to refuse them. Happy Usbek! your wives are faithful, and your slaves vigilant: I command in a place which seems to be the asylum of virtue. Depend upon it nothing is done there, but what you would willingly behold yourself. An unhappy accident has happened, which gives me great uneasiness. Certain Armenian merchants, lately arrived at Ispahan, brought one of thy letters to me; I sent a slave in quest of it; he was robbed at his return, and the letter is lost. Write to me therefore speedily, for I take it for granted, that in this change of affairs, you have something important to enjoin me.

From the seraglio at Fatme, the 6th of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLIII.

### Usbek To Solin, At The Seraglio Of Ispahan.

I PUT the sword into your hand, I entrust you with what is of all things most dear to me, that is my revenge. Enter upon this employment, but enter upon it without either compassion or feeling. I have wrote to my wives to obey you implicitly; in the confusion which so many crimes have made them obnoxious to, they will not be able to stand even your looks. To you I must be indebted for my happiness and ease. Restore me my seraglio in the condition I left it. Begin by purifying it; destroy the guilty, and make those who propose to become so, tremble. What may you not expect from your master in recompence for such signal services! It will be in your own power to rise above your condition, and all the rewards you could ever have wished for.

Paris, the 4th of the moon Chahban, 1719.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLIV.

### Usbek To His Wives, At The Seraglio Of Ispahan.

MAY this letter have the effect of thunder, which falls in the midst of lightning and tempests! Solin is now the chief eunuch, but his business is not so much to guard as punish you. Let the whole seraglio humble itself before him. He is to pass a judgment upon your past actions; and for the future he will make you live under so rigorous a yoke, that you will regret your liberty, if you do not regret your virtue.

Paris, the 4th of the moon Chahban, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLV.

### Usbek To Nessir, At Ispahan.

HAPPY the man, who being fully convinced of the value of a life of ease and tranquility, deposits his heart in the midst of his own family, and never knows any country but that in which he was born. I live in a barbarous country, whatever offends me being present, whatever I have a regard for being at a distance from me: a deep melancholy seizes upon me; I sink into a most shocking depression of spirits: I think myself almost annihilated; and I do not become sensible of my existence, till a dismal jealousy comes to kindle and produce in my heart, fear, suspicions, hatred and regret. You know me, Nessir, you are as well acquainted with my heart as your own. You would pity me, if you knew in how deplorable a condition I am. Sometimes I am obliged to wait six whole months for news from the seragho; I reckon every moment as it passes, my impatience makes them appear to me of a tedious length; and when the long expected moment is approaching, a sudden revolution arises in my heart; my hand trembles at opening the fatal letter; that anxiety which made me despair, I look upon as the happiest state I can be in, and I dread being forced from it, by a stroke that would, to me, be more cruel than a thousand deaths. But whatever reasons I may have had to leave my country, though I owe my life to absenting myself, I can no longer, Nessir, bear this dismal banishment. Must I not die equally a victim to my grief? I have a thousand times importuned Rica to quit this foreign country: but he thwarts all my resolutions; he confines me here upon a thousand pretexts: he seems to have quite forgot his country; or rather he seems to have forgot me; so insensible does he seem to my uneasiness. Unhappy wretch that I am, I wish to see my country again, yet perhaps it is to become still more unhappy: What can I do there? I shall expose my life again to my enemies. This is not all, I shall enter the seraglio; I must there exact an account of what passed in the fatal time of my absence; and if I find my wives guilty, what will become of me? If the very idea is insupportable to me at this distance, what must the effect be, when my presence renders it so much more lively? How great must my trouble be, if I am obliged to see and hear what I cannot even think of without shuddering? How dreadful will it be, if punishments, which I must myself cause to be inflicted, should be the eternal marks of my confusion and despair? I shall go and shut myself up within walls, more terrible to me than to the women who are there confined; I shall carry with me all my suspicions, the ardour of their caresses will not in the least diminish them; in my bed, in their very arms, I shall feel all my inquietudes; at a time so improper for reflections, jealousy will be a constant source of the most uneasy ones. Worthless out-casts of human nature, vile slaves, whose hearts are for ever shut to all the sentiments of love; you would no longer lament your condition, if you knew the misery of mine.

Paris, the 4th of the moon Chahban, 1719.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLVI.

### Roxana To Usbek, At Paris.

HORROR, darkness, and terror reign throughout the seraglio, a dismal melancholy surrounds, a tyger there gives a loose to all his rage at every moment. He caused two white eunuchs to be tortured, but they did not make confession of any crime; he has sold some of our slaves, and obliged us to change those those that remained among ourselves. Zachi and Zelis have in the darkness of the night, received in their chamber the most unworthy treatment; the villain has been so audacious as to lay his sacrilegious hands upon them. He keeps us all locked up in our respective apartments; and though we are alone, obliges us to wear our veils. We are not allowed to speak to each other; to write would be deemed highly criminal; we are free in nothing but our tears. A croud of new eunuchs has entered the seraglio, where they watch us night and day; our sleep is every moment interrupted by their real, or feigned distrusts. My only comfort is, that this cannot last long, and that all these troubles must end with my life: it will not last long, cruel Usbek; I will not give you time to put a stop to all these outrages.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 2d of the moon Maharran, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLVII.

### Zachi To Usbek, At Paris.

O HEAVENS! a barbarous wretch has outraged me; in the very manner of punishing, he has inflicted upon me that kind of punishment which shocks modesty; that chastisement which gives rise to the deepest humiliation; that chastisement which brings us back, as it were, to a state of infancy. My soul at first sinking with shame, recovered sentiment of itself, and began to be seized with indignation, when my cries made the vaults of the seraglio resound. I was heard to beg for mercy, from the lowest of human kind, and to endeavour to excite his compassion as he grew inexorable. Ever since his insolent and servile soul has got the ascendant over mine, his presence, his looks, his words, drive me to distraction. When I am alone, I at least have the consolation of shedding tears: but whenever he appears, I am seized with a transport of rage, and finding my rage impotent, I sink into despair. The tyger dares to tell me, that you are the causer of all these barbarities. He would even deprive me of my love, and profane the sentiments of my heart. When he pronounces the name of the man I love, I can no longer complain; I can only die. I have borne your absence, and preserved my love by the force of my passion. Nights, days, and moments, were all dedicated to you. I even valued myself upon my love, and yours for me caused me to be respected here. But now—no, I can no longer bear the abject condition to which I am fallen. If I am innocent, return and restore me to yourlove; if I am guilty, return, that I may expire at your feet.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 2d of the moon Maharran, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLVIII.

### Zelis To Usbek, At Paris.

THOUGH thirty leagues distant from me, you pronounce me guilty; though thirty leagues distant from me, you punish me. If a barbarous eunuch lays his vile hands upon me, he does it by your orders: it is the tyrant that outrages me, and not the tyrant's instrument. You may, if you think proper, add to your cruel treatment. My heart is quite at ease, now that it loves you no longer. Your soul degrades itself, and you are grown cruel. Depend upon it, you are not possessed of my affections. Farewel.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 2d of the moon Maharran, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLIX.

### Solin To Usbek, At Paris.

HONOURED Lord, I am equally afflicted upon my own account and yours; never was faithful servant reduced to so deep a despair as I am. I send you here a narrative of your own misfortunes and mine, which I write with a trembling hand. I swear by all the prophets in heaven, that since thou didst entrust me with thy wives, I have watched over them night and day; that I never for one moment remitted of my vigilance in the least. I began my office with correction, and discontinued it, without departing from my natural austerity. But what am I saying? Wherefore do I boast of a fidelity which has been of no service to thee? Forget all my past services; consider me as a traitor, and punish me for all the crimes I have not been able to prevent. Roxana, the haughty Roxana—Heavens, in whom can we henceforward place any confidence! you suspected Zelis, and you were perfectly secure with regard to Roxana, but her fierce virtue was a most odious impostor; it was only a veil to her perfidy. I surprized her in the embraces of a young man, who, as soon as he saw himself discovered, run at me; he gave me two stabs with a poignard; the eunuchs, who ran together upon hearing the noise, surrounded him: he defended himself a long time, and killed several; he would even have re-entered the chamber, in order, as he said, to die in the presence of Roxana. But being at last oppressed by numbers, he fell dead at our feet. I know not, honoured Sir, whether I shall wait your severe orders. You have entrusted me with your revenge, and I ought not to defer it.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 8th of the moon of the first Rebiab, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLX.

### Solin To Usbek, At Paris.

MY resolution is taken, thy misfortunes will shortly vanish; I am preparing to punish. I already feel a secret joy: my soul and thine will shortly be appeased; we will exterminate the criminal, and even the innocent shall shudder. O you, who seem to be made for nothing but to be ignorant of your own senses, and offended at your desires, eternal victims of shame and modesty, why cannot I make you enter this unhappy seraglio, to see your surprize at the torrents of blood I am going to shed!

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 8th of the moon of the first Rebiab, 1720.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER CLXI.

### Roxana To Usbek, At Paris.

IT is true, I have imposed upon thee, I have suborned thy eunuchs; I have made sport of thy jealousy; and I have found means to make thy frightful seraglio an abode of bliss and delight. I am upon the point of death; poison will soon put an end to my life; for why should I live, when the only man who rendered life desirable is no more! I die: but my shade will be well attended. I have just sent before me the sacrilegious guards, who have shed the most precious blood in the world. How couldst thou think me weak enough to consider myself as born only to adore thy caprice? that whilst you allowed yourself the full indulgence of all your desires, you had a right to thwart mine in every respect? No, though I have lived in a state of servitude, I contrived means to be always free: I reformed your laws by the laws of nature; and my mind has always continued in a state of independency. Thou oughtest even to thank me for the sacrifice which I have made thee; for having descended so low as to counterfeit a passion for you; for having basely concealed within my breast, what I should have published to thee; in fine, for having profaned virtue, by suffering my bearing with your humours to be called by that name. You were surprized at never observing in me the transports of love: had you known me well, you would have discovered in me all the violence of hatred. But you have long enjoyed the happy deception of thinking yourself possessed of such a heart as mine: we were both satisfied; you thought me deceived, whilst I deceived you. You must doubtless be surprized at my addressing you in such a stile as this. Is it possible then, that after having overwhelmed thee with my affliction, I should still have it in my power to make thee admire my resolution? But all this is over now, the poison wastes me away, my strength forsakes me, the pen drops from my hand; I find even my hatred grow weaker: I die.

From the seraglio at Ispahan, the 8th of the moon of the 1st Rebiab, 1720.



[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## THREE LETTERS OF M. DE MONTESQUIEU TO M. LE CHEVALIER DE BRUANT.

### LETTER I.

I WAS not at \* \* \* when your letter came; you embarrass me greatly; I shall only answer you for the pleasure of entertaining myself with a man, who is much better able to resolve the doubts which he proposed, than the person to whom he sent them.

I am not of your opinion with regard to despotism, and despotic princes. It appears to me horrible and absurd to the last degree, that a whole people should blindly subject themselves to the caprice of one, even if he were an angel. For my own part, I would not live under him a single day. This angel may become, in a moment, a monster thirsting after blood. Despotism is, to me, the most abominable and disgusting of all bad governments; man is perpetually crushed, debased, and degraded by it. Look into history, ancient and modern, if ever there was one upon earth that was not an insult on mankind, and the disgrace of human nature. Monarchy would, doubtless, be the best of governments, if it was possible to find such kings as Henry IV. the only one who ever deserved the homage and veneration of his subjects. Kings should always be brought up in a school of affliction, as this great man was; such alone are truly great, and the lovers of mankind. Before we can feel for the misfortunes of others, we must ourselves have been unfortunate. But, on the other hand, the hearts of princes corrupted by prosperity, and the slaves of pride and folly, are inaccessible to pity, and insensible to true glory.

I am not at all surprized, that in monarchies, and especially in our own, there should be so few princes worthy of esteem. Incircled by corrupters, knaves and hypocrites, they accustom themselves to look upon their fellow-creatures with disdain, and set no value on any but the sycophants, who caress their vices, and live in perpetual idleness and inactivity. Such is generally the condition of a monarch; great men are always scarce, and great kings still more so. Add to this, that the splendor of a monarchy is short and transitory. France is already sunk into misery and disgrace; an age more will annihilate her, or she will fall a prey to the first intrepid conqueror.

The English government has nothing to support it but a delusive outside, extremely flattering to the people, who fancy themselves the sole governors. I do not know any country where it is more easy to create such open dissensions, as may overthrow the state. A man of sense and generosity may, in ten years time, erect himself into a despotic prince with more safety at London than at Moscow; remember Cromwell. Money alone is sufficient to corrupt the whole parliament.

The great, ever fond of riches and power, and prostrate at the feet of fortune, who always attend the throne, will promote the views of their master; and the great once gained over, this phantom of liberty, which appeared at intervals in the convulsive

motions of the commons, which awakens, shakes itself, and soon vanishes, will be totally annihilated at the first signal given by the supreme ruler.

I know indeed of no monarchy that is fixed, constant, and perfect, the wisest kings oppress their subjects to arrive at despotism. Adieu, my friend; live in freedom and obscurity. Solitude will procure you the best and truest pleasure, self-content. The foolish and the wicked, seen afar off, will only excite your compassion; to look nearly upon them would raise your contempt and indignation.

I write this in haste; we will treat this matter more fully in the free intercourse of guiltless friendship.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

## LETTER II.

YOU ask me in what country a man may enjoy the most perfect liberty? In every place, my dear Philintus, where there are men and laws. The wise man is free even in the court of a tyrant, because his happiness depends on himself. Reason and conscience are the throne of his liberty. It is not in the power of fortune, injustice, or any thing else, to unhinge his soul, or disturb his repose. He rejoices in himself, and his joy is always calm, permanent, and delightful.

Would you, my friend, because you see violence and iniquity every day committed by wicked ministers, by the rich and great, by almost every man in place and power, would you therefore entirely banish yourself from that society to which you are indebted for every thing, and for which every honest and good member of it should yield up all, without repining at the injuries which he suffers from it? Because a prince buries himself in sloth and debauchery, because he persecutes, oppresses and destroys, shall you become an exile from your country, leave your friends, and desert the poor and afflicted, who apply to you for relief, and rend your heart with their complaints? No, my friend, you have too much sensibility. Despise the unjust and cruel prince; but love mankind, and, above all, the unfortunate and distressed. Avoid the impetuous whirlwinds of a court; forget, if possible, that your king is surrounded with perverse, wicked, and oppressive men, who laugh at his ignorance, and avail themselves of his weakness. Fly to retirement, in search of that repose, friendship, and felicity, which are never to be found in the seats of power and grandeur, or in the dangerous and delusive tumults of a noisy metropolis. Bring with you a few friends, as worthy and sensible as yourself. Read Plato, Montagne, Charron, and Rabellais; exercise yourself in acts of kindness to the poor labourers, the only creatures upon earth who are always miserable, perpetually toiling to supply the necessities of nature, and victims to the cruel rapacity of the farmers in general, who grind and oppress them.

Thus will you enjoy the most delicate and lively of all pleasures, the pleasure of doing good, the only consolation that can reconcile us to the miseries of human life. When once you are habituated to a country life, joy and peace will revive in your disquieted and uneasy mind, which will grow strong and great, raising itself by degrees to the celestial regions of genius and philosophy. There, free as the air you breathe, throw out your thoughts as they arise, your soul will then shoot forth such divine flames as shall warm and enlighten even the cold and ignorant. When you have filled your paper, arrange and correct the whole, and I will tell you with the utmost freedom my opinion of it. Adieu, my dear friend; with a heart of such delicate sensibility as yours is, youth, health, and a tolerable fortune, you must be happy, if happiness is the portion of virtue.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

### LETTER III.

YOU are right, my dear Philintus, in believing and asserting to all your friends, that education makes the man. That alone is the parent of every virtue; it is the most sacred, the most useful, and, at the same time, the most neglected thing in almost every country, and in every station of life. But too many vague and impracticable rules have been laid down on this important subject. Even the wise Locke, the great instructor of mankind, is sometimes mistaken, like other writers. All education should have an eye to government, or we lose our aim. The man of patience and understanding will consider well the mind he has to form and instruct; he will infuse, by little and little, maxims adapted to his age, and suited to his genius, rank, and capacity. I know that there are some soils barren and ungrateful, and which will never answer the labour of the cultivator. But besides that such are very uncommon, I am inclined to suspect, that frequently the tiller has neither strength nor skill enough to dig into and improve it as he ought.

There is one radical vice in France, which may, perhaps, never be extirpated, because it comes from the women, who, amongst us, interfere in every thing, and, in the end, ruin and destroy every thing. A child is soon spoiled in their hands, from two years old to six, when he is delivered up, without consideration, to a man whom he has neither seen nor known. The tutor, perhaps a fellow of no character, takes charge of him, not from inclination, but merely for his own interest. For ten succeeding years he vegetates in the narrow circle of a college, or in the unimproving converse and society of prating females of quality. These tutors are generally appointed by the women, who seldom look any further than the outside; never considering personal merit, which they have not sense enough to distinguish, having never habituated themselves to reflect one moment on any thing serious or useful.

Another circumstance highly prejudicial to education, and which disgusts and deters men of merit from engaging in it, is the little regard paid to the tutor, or preceptor, who ought to be respected as a father, whose place he is in a great measure intended to supply; he to whom is intrusted the heir of an illustrious name and family; he who is to form the worthy citizen, and the good subject; who is to do honour to his rank and character, and become the glory of his country. Such are the men, charged as they are with so important an office, who, in the fashionable world, are so often despised and ill treated, and even sometimes suffered to perish for want. Such abuses, if they become general, must point out a shameful and universal depravity of manners. Our nobility indeed are free from this reproach; if they pay but indifferently, they make amends by the weight of their interest, and a thousand engaging civilities, for the small appointment which their fortune will permit them to allow. Your rich financiers, on the other hand, who are naturally morose, proud, and ostentatious, seldom pay a man without affronting him: having nothing but money to give, they gorge you with it.

In France the women ruin every thing, because they think themselves fit for every thing, and the men are weak and childish enough to humour their caprice. Nature,

notwithstanding, made them but to obey, and the weakness of their constitution every day points out to us the weakness of their sex. With regard to education, it is worse at court than in any other place, the governor having a despotic power over his pupil, suffers him to grow up in ignorance and idleness, fills his head with the nonsense of fashion, and puffs him up with the notion of his own rank, and a contempt of the insignificant creatures that crawl beneath him. Every thing around him is made subservient to his pleasure and advancement. Every thing is to fall down before him on the first notice. He never talks to him concerning the royal virtues that adorn a throne, justice, courage, beneficence, intrepidity, and the love of glory; therefore it is, that, amongst our kings, we never see a great man; for I call not the conqueror by that name, but rather consider him as the terror, scourge, and disgrace of human kind; one whom the people are bound by their own interest to destroy, as soon as the flame of his ambition breaks forth in projects of slaughter and oppression.

Lewis XII. was honest and just, but weak and ignorant. Francis I. a vain boaster, cruel, and a pretender to wit. Henry IV. brave and magnanimous, but too much given to women ever to become a philosopher. Lewis XIV. at once the greatest and meanest of mankind, would have excelled all the monarchs in the universe, if he had not been corrupted in his youth by base and ambitious flatterers. A slave during his whole life to pride and vain-glory, he never really loved his subjects even for a moment; yet expected at the same time, like a true arbitrary prince, that they should sacrifice themselves to his will and pleasure. Intoxicated with power and grandeur, he imagined the whole world was made but to promote his happiness. He was feared, obeyed, idolized, hated, mortified, and abandoned. He lived like a sultan, and died like a woman. His reign was immortalized by the lowest of his subjects.

It is therefore, my dear Philintus, impossible there should ever be a great man amongst our kings, who are made brutes and fools of all their lives, by a set of infamous wretches, who surround and beset them from the cradle to the grave.

end of the third volume.

[\*] See the astonishment of Dionysius Halicarnassus, on the aquæducts built by Tarquin, Ant. Rom. lib. iii. They are still subsisting.

[\*] Plutarch's life of Romulus.

[†] This appears throughout the history of the kings of Rome.

[\*] The senate named a magistrate in the interregnum, who was to make choice of a king. This election was to be confirmed by the people. Dion. Halicarn. lib. ii. iii. iv.

[\*] See Polybius, lib. x.

[\*] The Romans considered foreigners as enemies: Hostis, according to Varro, De Lingua Lat. lib. iv. signified at first a foreigner who lived according to his own laws.

[\*] It is not known whether they were originally of that country, or only a colony; but Dion. Halicarnassus is of the former opinion, lib. i.

[†] D. Halicarnass, declares so expressly, lib. ix. and this appears by history: they used to attempt the scalade of cities with ladders. Ephorus relates that Artemon the engineer invented large machines to batter the strongest wall. Pericles was the first who made use of them at the siege of Samos, as Piutarch tells us in the life of that general.

[\*] As appears from the treatise entitled *Origo Gentis Romanæ*, ascribed to Aurelius Victor.

[†] D. Halicarnass.

[‡] See in D. Halicarn ss. lib. vi. one of the treaties concluded with this people.

[\*] These Decemviri, upon pretence of giving written laws to the people, seized upon the government. See D. Halicarnass. lib. xi.

[\*] Lib. ii. cap. 1.

[†] See in Polybius, and in Josephus, *De bello Judaico*, lib. ii. a description of the arms of the Roman soldiers. There is but little difference, says the latter, between a Roman soldier and a loaded horse. "They carried (says Cicero) provision for fifteen days, necessaries of all sorts, and whatever they should have occasion for in throwing up trenches. As to their arms, they were no more incumbered with them than with their hands.

[\*] Lib. ii. cap. 25.

[†] Particularly the throwing up of the ground.

[‡] See in Vegetius, lib. i. and in Livy, lib. xxvi. the exercises which Scipio Africanus made the soldiers perform after the taking of Carthago Nova. Marius used to go every day to the Campus Martius even in his extreme old age. It was customary for Pompey, when fifty eight years of age, to arm himself cap-a-pee, and engage in single combat with the Roman youths. He used to exercise himself in riding, when he would run with the swiftest career, and hurl the javelin. Plutarch in the lives of Marius and Pompey.

[§] Vegetius, lib. 1.

[\*] Vegetius, lib. i.

[†] *Cum alacribus saltu, cum velocibus cursu cum validis recte certabat.* Fragm. of Sallust by Vegetius, B, i. cap. 9.

[\*] Frontin. *Stratagem.* lib. i cap. 11.

[†] Lib. x. cap. 8.

[\*] The Romans used to present their javelins, when the Gauls struck at them with their swords, and by that means blunted them.

[†] At the time that they warred against the lesser nations of Italy, their horse was superior to that of their enemies, and for this reason the cavalry were composed of none but the ablest bodied men, and the most considerable among the citizens, each of whom had a horse maintained at the public expence. When they alighted, no infantry was more formidable, and they very often turned the scale of victory.

[\*] These were young men, lightly armed, and the most nimble of all the legion. At the least signal that was given, they would either leap behind a horseman, or fight on foot. Valerius Maximus, hb. ii. Livy, lib. xxvi.

[†] Fragm, of Polybius cited by Suidas in the word [*Editor: illegible Greek word*].

[†] De bello Judaico, lib. ii.

[\*] This is the survey mentioned by Dionysius of Halicarnasseus, lib. ix. art. 25. and which seems to me to be the same he speaks of at the end of his sixth book, made six years after the expulsion of the kings.

[†] Ctesicles in Athenæus, lib. vi.

[†] See Piutarch's life of Cleomenes.

[\*] Livy, I decad. lib. vii. This was sometime after the taking of Rome, under the consulship. of L. Furius Camillus, and App. Claudius Crassus.

[†] Appian.

[\*] In his life of Pyrrhus.

[†] Justin. lib. xx.

[\*] Hannibal's presence put an end to all the feuds and divisions which till then prevailed among the Romans; but the presence of Scipin irritated those which already subsisted among the Carthaginians, and shackled, as it were, the strength of the city; for the common people now grew diffident of the generals, the senate, and the great men; and this made the people more furious. Appian has given us the history of this war, carried on by the first Scipio.

[Polybius tells us, that there was this inconveniency at Carthage in the second Punick war, that the senate had lost almost all their authority. We are informed by Livy, that when Hannibal returned to Carthage, he found that the magistrates and the principal citizens had abused their power, and converted the public revenues to their own emolument. The virtue therefore of the magistrates, and the authority of the senate, both fell at the same time; and all was owing to the same causes, the dissolution of principles. *L'Esprit des Loix*, lib. viii. chap. 14.]

[\*] Flor. lib i.

[†] See Polybius. According to the epitome of Florus they raised three hundred thousand men out of the city and among the Latins.

[‡] See Livy, lib. xxxii.

[\*] See Apian, lib. Libycus.

[†] This punishment which was inflicted on those who had run from their colours, on mutineers, &c. was thus: The names of all the criminals being put together in a vessel or shield, were afterwards drawn out, every tenth man being to die without reprieve. By this means, though all were not put to death, yet all were terrified into obedience.  
*Note by the translator,*

[‡] See what is related by Polybius concerning their exactions.

[\*] [See more of this hereafter in chap. vi.]

[†] Book vi.

[‡] The circumstance which gave the Romans an opportunity of taking a little breath in the second Punic war, was this, whole bodies of Numidian cavalry went over into Scicily and Italy, and there joined them.

[\*] Hence we may judge of the imperfection of the antient navies, since we have laid aside a practice in which we had so much superiority over them.

[\*] See *L'Esprit des Loix*, l. xxi. c. 9.

[†] Lewis XIV.

[‡] Spain and Muscovy.

[\*] Antiq. Rom. lib. viii.

[\*] [How was it possible for Carthage to maintain her ground? When Hannibal, upon his being prætor, attempted to hinder the magistrates from plundering the republic, did they not complain of him to the Romans? Wretches, that wanted to be citizens without a city, and to be beholden for their riches to their very destroyers! *L'Esprit des Loix*, l. iii. c. 3. See likewise l. x. c. 6.]

[\*] It is surprizing, as Josephus observes in his treatise against Appion, that neither Herodotus nor Thucydides make the least mention of the Romans, though they had been engaged in such mighty wars.

[\*] The magistrates, to please the multitude, did not open the courts of justice: and the dying bequeathed their effects to their friends, to be laid out in feasts. See a fragment of the xxth book of Polybru, in the *Extract of Virtues and Vices*.



[\*][Justin lib. vi. attributes the extinction of Athenian virtue to the death of Epaminondas. Having no further emulation, they spent their revenues in feasts, *frequentius cœnam quam castra visentes*. Then it was that the Macedonians emerged out of obscurity. *L'Esprit de Loix*, l. viii. c. 6.]

[†]They were not engaged in any alliance with the other nations of Greece. Polyb, lib. viii.

[\*]See Polyb. who relates the unjust and cruel actions by which Philip lost the favour of the people.

[\*]I have given the reason of this in the xv. chapter, borrowed partly from the geographical disposition of the two empires.

[\*]Lewis XIV.

[\*]They had before observed this political conduct with regard to the Carthaginians, whom they obliged, by the treaty concluded with them, to employ no longer auxiliary troops, as appears from a fragment of Dion.

[\*]See an example of this, in their war with the Dalmatians. See Polybius.

[\*]See particularly their treaty with the Jews in the 1st book of the Maccabees, chap. viii.

[†]Ariarathes offered a sacrifice to the gods, says Polybius, by way of thanks for having obtained their alliance.

[\*]See Polybius on the cities of Greece.

[†]The son of Philopator.

[†]This was Antiochus's case.

[\*]The order sent to Antiochus, even before the war, for him not to cross into Europe, was made general with regard to all other kings.

[†]Appian, *de Beils Mithridat*.

[†]A fragment of Dionysius, copied from the extract of embassies, made by Constantine Porphyrogenneta.

[\*]To enable themselves to ruin Syria, in quality of guardians, they declared in favour of the son of Antiochus, who was but a child, in opposition to Demetrius, who was their hostage, and conjured them to do him justice, crying, That Rome was his mother and the senators his fathers.

[\*]This was their constant practice, as appears from history.

[†][That is, to save the corporation, but not the city.]

[\*]After Claudius Glycias had granted the Corsicans a peace, the senate gave orders for renewing the war against them, and delivered up Glycias to the inhabitants of the island, who would not receive him. Every one knows what happened at the Furcæ Caudinæ.

[†]They acted the same part with regard to Viriatus after having obliged him to give up the deserters, he was ordered to surrender up his arms, to which neither himself nor his army could consent. Fragment of Dion.

[\*]The presents which the senate used to send kings were mere trifles, as an ivory chair and staff, or a robe like that worn by their own magistrates.

[†]*Divitiarum tanta fama erat, says Florus, ut victor gentium populus, & donare regna conjuetus, socii virique regis confiscationem mandaverit.* lib. iii. c. 9.

[\*]They did not dare to venture their colonies in those countries; but chose rather to raise an eternal jealousy between the Carthaginians and Masinissa, and to make both these powers assist them in the conquest of Macedonia and Greece.

[\*]See Dionys. Halicarn. lib. vi. cap. 95. Edit. Oxon.

[\*]Frontin. Stratagena. lib. ii. tells us, that Archelaus, lieutenant of Mithridates, engaging against Sylla, posted, in the first rank, his chariots armed with scythes, in the second his phalanx, in the third his auxiliaries armed after the Roman way; *mixtis fugitivis Italia, quorum pervicaciæ multum fidebat.* Mithridates even made an alliance with Sertorius. See also Plutarch, life of Lucullus.

[\*]Mithridates had made him king of the Bosphorus. News being brought of his father's arrival, he dispatched himself.

[†]See Appian, *de Bello Mithridatico.*

[‡]See Plutarch in the life of Pompey; and Zonaras, lib. ii.

[\*]The patricians were invested, in some measure, with a character, and they only were allowed to take the auspices. See in Livy, book vi. the speech of Appius Claudius.

[†]As for instance they alone were permitted to triumph, since they alone could be consuls and generals.

[\*]Zonaras, lib. ii.

[†]Origin of the tribunes of the people.

[\*]The people had so great a veneration for the chief families, that although they had obtained the privilege of creating plebeian military tribunes, who were invested with

the same power as the consuls, they nevertheless always made choice of patricians for this employment. They were obliged to put a constraint upon themselves, and to enact, that one consul always should be a plebeian; and when some plebeian families were raised to offices, the way was afterwards open to them without intermission. It was with difficulty that the people, notwithstanding the perpetual desire they had to depress the nobility, depressed them in reality; and when they raised to honours some person of mean extraction, as Varro and Marius, it cost them very great struggles.

[†] The patricians, to defend themselves, used to create a dictator, which proved of the greatest advantage to them; but the plebeians having obtained the privilege of being elected consuls, could also be elected dictators, which quite disconcerted the patricians. See in Livy, lib. viii. in what manner Publius Philo depressed them in his dictatorship. He enacted three laws, by which they received the highest prejudice.

[\*] The patricians reserved to themselves only a few offices belonging to the priesthood, and the privilege of creating a magistrate called *interrex*.

[†] As Saturninus and Glaucias.

[‡] [When the people of Rome had obtained the privilege of sharing the patrician magistracies, it was natural to think that the flatterers of them would immediately become arbiters of the government. But no such thing.—It is observable, that the very people who had rendered the plebeians capable of public offices, fixed, notwithstanding, their choice constantly on the patricians. Because they were virtuous, they were magnanimous; and because they were free, they had a contempt of power. But when their morals were corrupted, the more power they were possessed of, the less prudent was their conduct; till at length upon becoming their own tyrants and slaves, they lost the strength of liberty to fall into the weakness and impotency of licentiousness. *L'Esprit des Loix*, lib. viii. c. 12.]

[§] The census, or survey of the citizens, was a very prudent institution in itself; it was a survey of the state of their affairs, and an inquiry into their power. It was founded by Servius Tullius; before whom, according to Eutropius, book i. the census was unknown.

[\*] The reader may see in what manner those were degraded who, after the battle of Cannæ, were for leaving Italy; those who had surrendered to Hannibal; those who by an insidious and false interpretation, had forfeited their word.

[†] The Plebeians obtained, in opposition to the patricians, that the laws and elections of magistrates should be made by the people assembled by tribes and not by centuries. There were thirty-five tribes, each of whom gave its vote; four belonging to the city, and thirty-one to the country. As there were but two professions among the Romans that were honourable, war and husbandry, the country tribes were had in greatest consideration; and the four remaining ones admitted into their body that contemptible part of the citizens, who having no lands to cultivate, were, if we may so say, but citizens by halves; the greatest part of them did not even go to war, for in the enlisting of soldiers the divisions of centuries was observed; and those who were members of

the four city tribes, were very near the same with those who in the division by centuries were of the sixth class, in which no person was enrolled. Thus, it was scarce possible for the suffrages to be in the hands of the populace, who were consined to their four tribes; but as every one committed a thousand frauds, for the sake of getting out of them, the censors had an opportunity of reforming this abuse every five years; and they incorporated into any tribe they pleased, not only a citizen, but also bodies and whole orders. See the first remark of chapter xi. See also Livy, lib. i. Decad. I. in which the different divisions of the people, made by Servius Tullius, are very well explained: it was the same body of the people, but divided in various respects. [—In such a manner, that property rather than numbers determined elections. *L'Esprit des Loix*, lib. ii. c. 2.]

[\*]Livy, lib. xxix.

[†]Valer. Max. lib. ii.

[‡]The dignity of senator was not a public office or employment.

[?]Tit. Liv. lib. i.

[§]Lib. iv. act 15. &c.

[\*]Called *turba forensis*.

[†]Tit. liv. lib. ix.

[‡]Nor even greater power.

[\*]The freedmen, and such as were called *capite censi*, (because, being possessed of little or nothing, they were subject to the poll-tax only) were not at first enrolled among the land forces, except in cases of urgent necessity: Servius Tullius had ranked them in the sixth class, and soldiers were levied out of the five first only. But when Marius set out against Jugurtha, he enlisted all without distinction. *Milites scribere*. says Sallust, *non modo majorum neque ex classibus, sed, uti cujusque libido erat, capite censos plerosque*.—De Bello Jugurthin.

[\*]The Æqui said in their assemblies, Those in whose power it was to chuse, have preferred their own laws to the freedom of the city of Rome, which was a necessary penalty upon such as could not refuse it. Liv. lib. ix.

[\*]The Asculani, the Marsi, the Vestini, the Marrucini, the Frentani, the Hirpini, the Pompeians, the Venusini, the Iapyges, the Lucani, the Samnites and other nations. Appian, de Bello civil. lib. i.

[†]The Tuscans, the Umbri, the Latins. This prompted some nations to submit themselves; and as these were also made citizens, others likewise laid down their arms, so that at last there remained only the Samnites, who were extirpated.

[†] Let the reader figure to himself this monstrous head, formed of all the nations of Italy, which by the suffrage of every individual, governed the rest of the world.

[\*] [It is an essential point to fix the number of citizens that are to form the public assemblies; otherwise it might be uncertain whether the whole body or only a part of the people have voted. At Sparta, the number was fixed to ten thousand. But at Rome, a city designed by providence to rise from the weakest beginning to the highest pitch of grandeur; Rome, a city fated to experience all vicissitudes of fortune; Rome, that had sometimes all its inhabitants without its walls, and sometimes all Italy, and a great part of the world within them; at Rome, I say, this number was never fixed, which was one of the principal causes of its ruin. *L'Esprit des Loix*, book ii. ch. 2. Our author observes from Cicero, de Leg. lib. i. and iii. that another cause of its ruin was, in making, towards the close of the republic, the suffrages secret. The people in a democracy ought always to be public, who are to be directed by those of higher rank. But when the body of the nobles are to vote in an aristocracy, or in a democracy the senate, as the business is then only to prevent intrigues, the suffrages cannot be too secret. *L'Esprit des Loix*, *ibid*]

[\*] The canton of Bern.

[\*] The Roman government has been thought defective by some, because it was an intermixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and popular authority. But the perfection of a government does not consist in its conformity to any particular plan to be sound in the writings of politicians: but in its correspondence to the views every legislator ought to entertain for the grandeur and felicity of a people. Was not the government of Sparta composed of three branches?

[†] Cyneas having discoursed of the doctrines of this sect, at the table of Pyrrhus, Fabricius said, He wished the enemies of Rome would all embrace such kind of principles. *Life of Pyrrhus*.

[\*] If you lend a talent to a Greek, and bind him to the repayment, by ten engagements, with as many securities, and witnesses to the loan, it is impossible to make them regard their word; whereas, among the Romans, whether it be owing to their obligation of accounting for the public and private money, they are always punctual to the oaths they have taken. For which reason, the apprehensions of infernal torments were wisely established, and it is altogether irrational that they now oppose them. *Polyb. lib. vi.*

[†] *Polyb. lib. iv. let. 18.*

[†] The Curiatian law disposed of the military power, and the edict of the senate regulated the troops, the money, and officers that were to be allotted to the governors: now the consuls, in order to accomplish these particulars, to their own satisfaction, contrived a false law and a false edict of the senate.

[\*] *Ut merito dicatur genitos esse, qui nec ipsi habere possent vos familiares, nec alios pati.* Fragment of Sallust [Editor: illegible word?] cited by Augustin, in his book of the City of God, lib. ii. c. 18.

[\*] Cic. Offic. lib. i. c. 42. *Illiberales & sordidi quæstus mercenariorum omnium, quorum operæ, non quorum artes emuntur: est enim illis ipsa merces auctoramentum servitutis.* The merchants, adds that author, raise no profit unless they falsify their word. Agriculture is the noblest of all arts, and most worthy of a man in a state of freedom.

[†] They were obliged to serve ten years, between the age of sixteen years and forty-seven. Polyb. lib. vi.

[†] Marius in order to obtain a commission for carrying on the war against Mithridates, in prejudice of Sylla's pretensions, had, by the concurrence of Sulpicius the tribune, incorporated the eight new tribes of the people of Italy, into the ancient, which rendered the Italians masters of the suffrages; and the generality of that people espoused the party of Marius, whilst the senate and the ancient citizens engaged in the interest of Sylla.

[\*] See in Catiline's conspiracy, the description of Sallust has given us of that army.

[†] *Fugatis Marii copiis, primus urbem Romam cum armis ingressus est.* A fragment of John of Antioch, in his extract of the virtues and vices.

[†] At the beginning of the wars, the lands of the vanquished enemies were parcelled among the army; but Sylla made the same division of those which belonged to the citizens.

[§] Offices, lib. ii. c. 8.

[\*] Agreeably to what happened after the death of Cæsar.

[\*] Fragment of Sallust.

[\*] See Plutarch.

[\*] See Plutarch's life of Pompey.

[†] This is well cleared up in Appian's history of the civil war, lib. iv. The army of Octavius and Antony would have perished by themselves, if their enemies had not given them battle.

[\*] Familiar letters, lib. xv.

[\*] He abolished the office of tribunes of the people.

[\*] See the letters of Cicero and Servius Sulpicus.

[†] Decanus, Brutus, Caius Casca, Trebonius, Tullius Cimber, Minutius, Basilius, were Cæsar's friends. Appian. De bello civili, lib. ii.

[\*] See the letter of Brutus, in the collection of Cicero's letters.

[\*] That action would not have been unprecedented; for when Tiberius Gracchus was slain, Lucretius the edile, who was afterwards called Vesalio, threw his body into the Tyber. Aurel, Victor, de viris illust.

[\*] Letters to Atticus, lib. xiv. c. 6.

[†] See more on this subject, in the letters of Cicero to Atticus, lib. v. and the remark of the abbé de Mongaut.

[‡] Dion. relates that the triumviri, who all expected the same deification, took all imaginable care to enlarge the honours paid to Cæsar.

[\*] *Esse quam videri bonus malebat : iatque quo minus gloriam petebat [Editor: illegible word] magis illam assequebatur.* Sallust. bell. Catil.

[\*] He was Cæsar's heir, and his son by adoption.

[†] So inveterate was their cruelty, that they commanded every individual among the people to rejoice at the proscriptions on pain of death. Dion.

[‡] *Eorum qui de se statuebant humebantur corpora, manebant testamenta; pretium festinandi.* Tacit. An. vi.

[\*] If Charles I. and James II. had been educated in a religion which would have permitted them to destroy themselves, the one would not have submitted to such a death, nor the other to such a life.

[\*] The abbé de St. Real.

[\*] Dion. lib. i.

[\*] Cæsar made war with the Gauls, and Crassus with the Parthians, without any previous deliberation of the senate, or any decree of the people. Dion.

[\*] I use this word in the sense of the Greeks and Romans, who gave this name to all those who had subverted a democracy, for in all other particulars Augustus was a lawful prince, after the law enacted by the people: *Lege regia, quæ de ejus imperio lata est, Populus ei & in eum omnia imperium transtulit.* instit. lib. 1.

[\*] Triumphal ornaments were all the honours now granted to any particular general. Dion. in Aug.

[†] The Romans having changed their government, without sustaining any invasion from an enemy, the same customs continued as were practised before the alteration of

the government, the form of which still remained though the essentials were destroyed.

[†] Dion in Aug. lib. liv. acquaints us that Agrippa neglected, out of modesty, to give the senate an account of his expedition against the people of the Bosphorus, and even refused a triumph; since which time it was not granted to any person of his class; but it was a favour Augustus intended to afford Agrippa, though Antony would not allow it to Ventidius, the first time he conquered the Parthians.

[§] Sueton. in August.

[?] Justin. Institut. lib. i. & Suet. in Aug.

[\*] Dion. in Aug.

[†] Dionys. Halicarnass. lib. iv.

[‡] See Tacit. Annal. lib. xiii.

[\*] He ordered that the prætorian soldiers should have five thousand drachmas a piece after sixteen years service, and the others three thousand drachmas after twenty years. Dion. in Aug.

[†] See Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv.

[\*] Before the time of the emperors, the senate confined their attention to public affairs, and never decided the causes of private persons in a full body.

[\*] The great men were impoverished even in the time of Augustus, and no longer solicited for the office of ædile, or tribune of the people; and many of them had not any inclination to have a seat among the senators.

[†] Tacit. Annal. lib. i. Dion. lib. liv. They were afterwards reestablished, and then annulled by Caligula.

[\*] [Under the reign of Tiberius, statues were erected to, and triumphant ornaments conferred on informers, which debased these honours to such a degree, that those who had merited them, disdained to accept of them. Fragn. of Dio, lib. lviii. L'Esprit des Loix, lib. viii. c. 7.

[\*] See Tacitus.

[\*] See the institutes of Justinian, where they treat of the power of parents and masters.

[†] The duke of Braganza had an immense estate in Portugal; and when he first revolted, the king of Spain was congratulated by his nobility for the rich confiscation he was to derive from that event.



[\*] The Greeks had games in which it was decent to fight, and glorious to conquer: the Romans had little more than spectacles; and the infamous gladiators were peculiar to them. But for a great person to descend into the Arena or mount the stage, was what the Roman gravity did not admit of. How should a senator submit to it; he, who by the laws could not contract any alliance with men who had been disgraced by the disgusts or even the applauses of the people? Some emperors, however, appeared in these places; and this folly which indicated an extreme irregularity of the heart, a contempt for all that is, great, decent, and good, historians ever brand with the mark of tyranny.

[\*] See Tacitus.

[\*] Tacitus Annal. lib. i.

[†] *Cætera senatui servanda*, ibid.

[‡] See the oration of Germanicus. ibid.

[?] *Gaudebat cædibus miles. quasi semet absolveret*: Tacitus, ibid. The privileges which had been extorted, were afterwards revoked. Tacitus ibid.

[§] Tacitus, lib. i.

[\*\*] Idem, lib. iii.

[\*] See in Livy the sums distributed in the several triumphs. It was the humour of the generals to carry a great deal of money into the public treasury and give but little to the soldiers.

[†] Paulus Æmilius, at a time when the greatness of the conquests had occasioned there liberalities to be augmented, gave only one hundred denarii to each private man; but Cæsar gave two thousand, and his example was followed by Antony and Octavius, by Brutus and Cassius. See Dio and Appian.

[‡] *Suscepere duo manipulares imperium populi Romani transferendum, et transtulerunt*. Tacit. lib. i.

[\*] The country did not produce any trees large enough to be wrought into engines proper for the siege of towns. Plut. life of Antonin is.

[\*] See Herodian's life of Alexander.

[\*] Augustin. *De civit. Dei*. lib. iv. c. 23 & 29.

[\*] Herodian's life of Severus.

[†] This fatality continued in the reign of Alexander. Artaxerxes, who re-established the Persian empire, made it formidable to the Romans, because their soldiers, either

through caprice or a libertine disposition, deserted in great multitudes to the king of Persia.

[‡] Namely, the Persians, who followed their example.

[?] Severus defeated the Asiatic legions of Niger, Constantine those of Licinius; Vespasian, though proclaimed by the armies of Syria, made war against Vitellius only with the legions of Mœsia, Pannonia, and Dalmatia. Cicero, when he was at his province, wrote to the senate, that they should not reckon on the levies raised in this country. Constantine defeated Maxentius, says Zozimen, by his cavalry only. See hereafter chap. xxii.

[§] Augustus fixed the legions to particular stations in the provinces. The levies were originally raised at Rome, after that among the Latins, in Italy next, and last of all in the provinces.

[\*] Seven thousand myriads. Dion. in *Macrinus*.

[‡] The Attic drachm was the same with the Roman denarius, the eighth part of an ounce, and the sixty-fourth part of our maic.

[‡] He raised it in proportion as seventy-five is to an hundred.

[?] Annal. lib. i.

[§] Life of Jul. Cæs.

[\*\*] Hist. Nat. xxxiii. 13. Instead of giving ten ounces of copper for twenty, they paid sixteen. [The author should have said, instead of ten *asses* of brass of two ounces each, they paid only xvi *asses* of one ounce each [Editor: illegible]

[\*] A soldier in the *Mostellaria* of Plautus, says it was three asses; which can be understood only of asses of ten ounces. But if the pay was exactly six asses in the first Punic war, it was not diminished in the second a fifth, but a sixth, and the fraction was omitted

[‡] Polybius, who reduces the pay to Greck money, differs only by a fraction.

[‡] See Orosius and Suetonius in *Domitian*. They say the some thing under different words I have reduced the terms to ounces of brass, that I might be understood without having recourse to the several species of the Roman Money.

[?] Cic. Offic. lib. 2.

[\*] Ælius Lampridius in vita Alexandri Severi.

[‡] See the abridgment of Xiphil. in the life of Adrian, and Herodian in the life of Severus.

[\*] At this time every one thought himself good enough to rise to empire. See Dial. lxxix.

[†] See Lampridius.

[\*] Casaubon observes, on the *Historia Augusta*, that during the period of 160 years which it comprehends, there were seventy persons, who justly or otherwise, had the title of Cæsar. *Adeo erant in illo Principatu, quem tamem omnes mirantur, comitia Imperii semper incerta.* So uncertain, to the astonishment of all, were the elections in that empire. Which circumstance sufficiently manifests the difference between the Roman government and that of France, where, for the long space of twelve hundred years, no more than sixty three kings have reigned.

[\*] See Julius Capitolinus.

[\*] This may serve for an answer to the famous question, Why the North is no longer so populous as formerly?

[\*] An hundred and fifty years after this event, the Barbarians invaded the empire, in the reign of Honorius.

[\*] See Orosius, lib. vii. and Aurelius Victor.

[†] *Expatiantia tecta multos addidere urbes*, says Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. iii.

[‡] Coin, says Tacitus, was formerly exported from Italy to the distant provinces, and it is not a barren land now; but we cultivate Africa and Egypt, and choose to expose the lives of the Roman people to danger.

[\*] Seuton. in August. Oros. lib. vi. Rome often met with these revolutions. I have before observed, that the treasures brought hither from Macedonia, superseded all farther tribute. Cicero in his *Offices*, lib. ii.

[†] Tacitus, *De moribus Germanorum*, declares this in express terms. Besides, We know pretty nearly the time in which most of the mines of Germany were opened. See Thomas Sesreiberus of the origin of the mines of the Harts. Those of Saxony are thought to be less ancient.

[\*] See Pliny Nat. Hist. xxxvii. 77.

[†] The Carthaginians, says Diodorus, understood very well the art of making an advantage of them; and the Romans that of hindering others from making such advantage.

[‡] This account of Constantine's proceedings no ways contradicts the ecclesiastical writers, who declare they confine themselves to those actions of this prince which had any relation to religion, without concerning themselves with the political transactions in that reign. Euseb. Life of Constantine, lib i. c. 9. Socrates, lib. 1. c. 1.

[\*] Zozimus, lib. ii.

[†] After the establishment of Christianity, the combats of gladiators were very seldom exhibited, and Constantine prohibited them by his authority; but this barbarous custom was not entirely abolished till the time of Honorius. The Romans retained nothing of their ancient shews, but what tended to emasculate their minds, and allure them to pleasure. In former times, the soldiers before they took the field, were entertained with a combat of gladiators, to familiarise them to the fight of blood and weapons of war, and to inspire them with intrepidity when they engaged the enemy. Jul. Capit. Life of Maximus and Balbinus.

[†] Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xvi. xvii. and xviii.

[?] Ammian. Marcellin. *ibid.*

[§] See the noble panegyric made by Ammianus Marcellinus on this prince, lib. xxv.

[\*] Zozimus, lib. iv.

[†] *Jornandes de rebus Geticis*. The Miscellaneous Hist. of Procopius.

[\*] Vide Sozomen, lib. vi.

[†] Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xxix.

[†] Several of those who had received these orders abandoned themselves to a brutal passion for some of the male refugees; others were ensnared by the beauty of the young barbarians of the other sex, and became the captives of their female slaves; a third sort were corrupted by presents in money, linen habits, and fringed mantles; and all their thoughts only tended to enrich their houses with slaves, and to stock their farms with cattle. Hist. of Dexippus.

[?] See the Gothic history by Priscus, who has set this difference of customs in a clear light. It may be asked perhaps, how it was possible for nations who never cultivated their lands, to be so powerful, when those of America are so very weak: it is because people who follow a pastoral life are furnished with a better subsistence than those who live by the chase.

It appears by the account given by Ammianus Marcellinus, that the Hune, in their first settlements, did not manure their lands, and only subsisted on their flocks and herds, in a country that abounded with rich pastures, and was watered with many rivers; such is the practice of the inhabitants of little Tartary, which is part of the same country. And it is probable that the nations we have been speaking of, having, after their emigrations from their native land, settled in countries that afforded little or no pasture for their cattle, applied themselves to the cultivation of the soil.

[\*] See Zozimus, lib. iv. See also Dexippus's Extract of the Embassies of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

[†] At first they gave all to the soldiers; afterwards all to the enemy.

[\*] Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xxiv.

[†] Idem, lib. xxvi.

[‡] You would willingly be rich, *said Julian to his mutinous army*, there is Persia for your purpose, let us march thither; for, believe me, all the riches of the Roman republic are now no more: our poverty is owing to those who persuaded our princes to purchase peace from the Barbarians. Our treasury is exhausted, our cities are in ruins, and our provinces look dreadful with desolation. An emperor who knows no riches but those of the mind, is not ashamed to acknowledge a virtuous and irreproachable poverty. You may revolt if you are so disposed; for my part, either death shall relieve me, for I scorn a life of which the least fever can deprive me as effectually as my sword, or I will retire from the world; for I have not passed my days in such a manner, as to be incapable of a private life. Amm. Marcell. lib. xxiv.

[\*] This observation is made by Vegetius; and it appears from Livy, that if the auxiliaries sometimes exceeded the Romans in number, the superiority was very inconsiderable.

[\*] *De re Militari*, lib. i. c. 20.

[\*] The cavalry of the Tartars, without observing any of our military maxims, has at all times performed great things. See the histories, and particularly those of the conquest of China.

[\*] They would not submit to the Roman discipline. See Ammianus Marcellinus, lib xxiii. who relates it as an extraordinary circumstance, that they condescended in one instance to please Julian, who intended to fortify several places belonging to the state.

[†] This was not to be wondered at, in that mixture of nations who had been used to a wandering life, and had no knowledge of any country of their own, since entire bodies of them would frequently side with the enemy who had conquered them, even against their own nation. See Procopius's account of the Goths under Viliges.

[\*] See his whole fifth book, *De Gubernatione Dei*. See also in the account of the Embassy written by Priscus, the speech of a Roman who had settled among the Huns, on his happiness in that country.

[†] See Salvian, lib. v. and the laws of the Code, and the Digest on them.

[\*] Lactantius, *De morte persecutor*.

[†] Letter of Symmach. lib. x. 4.

[\*] Of God's government.

[†] Of the city of God.

[\*] History of the Goths, and relation of the embassy written by Priscus. This emperor was Theodosius the younger.

[†] History of the Goths. *Hæ sedes regis barbariem totam tenentis; bæc captis civitatibus habitacula præponebat.* This was the mansion in which the monarch of all the Barbarian nations resided; this the habitation which he preferred to the stately cities he had conquered Jornandes, *De rebus Geticis.*

[‡] It appears by the account given by Priscus, that the court of Attila had some thoughts of subjecting even the Persians.

[\*] Jornandes and Priscus have drawn the character of this prince, and described the manners of his court.

[\*] The Goths were a very destructive nation, they destroyed all the husbandmen in Thrace, and cut off the hands of every charioteer. Byzantine history of Malchus, in the extract of the embassies.

[†] See in the chronicles, collected by Andrew du Chesne, the condition of this province, towards the end of the ninth, or beginning of the tenth century. Script. Norman Hist. Veteres.

[\*] The Goths, as we have intimated, did not cultivate their lands.

The Vandals called them Trulli, which was the name of a small measure, because they once sold them such a measure of corn very dear, in a famine. Olimpiador in Biblioth. Phot. lib xxx.

[†] Priscus relates in his history, that markets were established by treaties on the banks of the Danube.

[‡] When the Goths sent to desire Zeno to receive Theuderic the son of Triaries into his alliance, on the terms accorded by him to Theuderic the son of Balamer, the senate being consulted on this occasion, said, the revenues of the empire were not sufficient to support two Gothic nations, and that the alliance of only one of them was to be consented to. Malchus's history, in the extract of the embassies.

[?] This partition of the empire was very prejudicial to the affairs of the western Romans. Priscus, lib. ii.

[\*] Honorius was informed, that the Visigoths had made a descent into the western empire, after an alliance with Arcadius. Procop. of the Vandal war.

[†] Lib. ii.

[‡] Priscus, *ibid.*

[?] Procopius, in his war with the Vandal.

[§] Priscus, lib. ii.

[\*\*] See Jornandes, *De rebus Geticis*, c. xxxvi.

[††] This appeared more especially in the war between Constantinus and Licinius.

[‡‡] Priscus, lib. ii.

[\*] In the time of Honorius, Alaric, who besieged Rome, obliged that city to enter into an alliance with him, even against the emperor, who was in no condition to oppose it. Procop. War of the Goths, lib. i. Zozim. lib. vi.

[†] Zozim. lib. vi.

[\*] Procop. war of the Vandals, lib. i.

[†] Ibid. lib. ii.

[‡] In the time of Honorius.

[?] Byzantine history, in the extract of the embassies.

[§] See Procopius's history of the wars of the Vandals, lib. i. and his war of the Goths. lib. i. The Gothic bowmen sought on foot and were but indifferently disciplined.

[\*] The Romans, having suffered their infantry to be weakened, placed all their force in the horse, and the more so because they were obliged to spring suddenly to every part, to check the incursions of the Barbarians.

[†] A remarkable passage of Jornandes tells us all these discriminating circumstances, having occasion to mention the battle between the Gepidæ and the sons of Attila.

[\*] Justinian only granted him a triumph for Africa.

[\*] See Suidas, under the article Belisarius.

[†] The two empires ravaged each other the more, because they had no hopes of securing their conquests.

[\*] The empress Theodora.

[\*] This political distemper was of ancient date; for Seutonius tells us, that Caligula, because he was attached to the Green faction, hated the people who applauded the other.

[†] the reader may form a good idea of the spirit of those times, by consulting Theophanes, who relates a long conversation in the theatre between the emperor and the Greens.

[\*] See the Institutes of Justinian.

[\*] Lib. iv. c. 10.

[†] Augustus established nine such frontiers, the number of which increased in the following reigns, when the Barbarians began to appear in several parts; and Dion. lib. iv. says, that in his time, when Alexander was emperor, there were thirty, as appears by the *Noritia Imperii*, written since the reigns of Arcadius and Honorius: there were fifteen even in the eastern empire, and the number was perpetually increasing. Paphlagonia, Lycaonia, and Pisidia were made frontiers, and the whole empire was covered with fortifications, till at last Aurelian was obliged to fortify Rome itself.

[\*] And the English.

[†] The Huns.

[‡] Called the Caspian Streights.

[§] Procopius of the Persian war, lib. i.

[\*] Meranda's embassies.

[\*] Zeno greatly contributed to this mean relaxation of justice. See the Byzantine history of Malchus, cited in the extracts of the embassies.

[†] See the life of Andronicus Comnenus, compiled by Nicetas.

[\*] Zozim. lib. iv.

[†] See the account given by Zosimus of the cavalry of Aurelian, and that of Palmyra. See likewise what Ammianus Marcellinus relates of the Persian cavalry.

[\*] The greatest part of that country was then covered with water, but the art of man has since made it habitable and commodious.

[†] See Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xxvii.

[‡] Cæsar represents the German horses as too small, and good for little.

[?] Zonaras's life of Constantine the Bold.

[\*] History of the emperor Maurice by Theophylact, lib. ii. c. iii.

[†] Ockley's history of the conquest of Syria, Persia, and Egypt, by the Saracens.

[‡] Life of Lecapena by Zonaras.

[?] Life of John Comnenus, by Nicetas.



[\*] Valens, many years before this events, made a law to compel the Monks to serve the government in the army in times of war, and caused all who disobeyed that injunction, to be slain

[†] These circumstances relating to the monks, cannot fix any criminal imputation on their order in general; for it would be unjust to represent an institution as pernicious, because it may happen to be abused in some particular countries and at certain periods of time.

[‡] Leo the grammarian's lives of Leo the Arminian, and Theophilus. Suidas, under the article of Constantine the son of Leo.

[\*] Lib. iv.

[†] Vide Pachymer, lib. viii.

[\*] See the lives of Basilus and Leo by Zonaras and Nicephorus.

[†] Pachymer. lib. vii.

[‡] Pachymer. lib. vii. c. 29. We have had recourse to the translation of the president Cousin.

[\*] Palæologus. See the history of the two emperors of this name written by Cantacuzenus, lib. i. c. 50.

[\*] Cantacuzen. lib. iii. c. 99.

[†] Hist. of the last Palæologi by Ducas.

[‡] The question in debate was, whether a congregation, who heard mass from a priest who had consented to pacific measures, ought not to have sied from him as if he had been a destructive flame. The great church was accounted a prophane temple, and the monk Gennadius hurled his anathemas against all who were desirous of peace.

[?] Andronicus Palæologus.

[\*] Pachymer. lib. vii.

[\*] Epist. ad Attic. lib. iv.

[\*] They inset the navigation of the Italians in the Mediterranean.

[†] All projects of this nature against the Turks, and particularly such as have any similitude to that which was formed in the papacy of Leo tenth, by which it was concerted, that the emperor should march to Constantinople through Bosnia; the king of France through Albania and Greece, whilst the maritime powers were to embark at their several ports; I say, such projects were never seriously intended, or were framed

at least by those who were altogether unacquainted with the true constitution of Europe.

[\*] History of Manuel Comnenus by Nicetas, lib. i.

[†] Nicet. History of the eastern transactions, of the taking of Constantinople, c. 3.

[\*] Cantacuzen. lib. iv.

[\*] Pachymer. lib. vii.

[†] Catakuzen. lib. 3. c. 96. Pachymer. lib. xi. c. 9.

[‡] This circumstance gave birth to a northern tradition related by Jornandes the Goth: that Phillimer, king of the Goths, having made an inroad into the Celtic territories, found several women who were sorceresses and drove them to a great distance from his army; after which, those female magicians wandered in the deserts, where that species of Dæmons called Incubi, consorted with them, and by their amorous familiarities, produced the nation of the Huns. *Genus ferocissimum, quod fuit primum inter paludes, minutum, tetrum, atque exile, nec aliud vce notum, nisi quæ humani scrmonis imaginem assignabat.* i. e. A fierce and savage people, who lived sequestered from the rest of mankind, among sens and marshes, ghastly and haggard in their persons, and whose voices were only an imperfect articulation of human speech.

[?] Michael Ducas's hist. of John Manuel, John and Constantine, c. b. Constantine Porphyrogenitus observes, at the beginning of his extract of the embassies, that when the Barbarians came to Constantinople, the Romans ought to have been very cautious of shewing them the grandeur of their riches, and the beauty of their wives.

[\*] See the history of the emperors John Palæologus and John Cantacuzenus, written by Cantacuzenus.

[\*] The Persian women are much more closely kept than those among the Turks and Indians.

[\*] A Mahometan tradition.

[\*] This is likewise a Mahometan tradition.

[\*] These are probably the knights of Malta.

[\*] The Persian women wear four.

[\*] Ispahan.

[\*] Lent.

[\*] The Persians are of a more tolerating spirit than the other Mahometans.

[\*] This may be true according to the absurd ideas of them which Mahometism teaches; but by no means so with respect to that idea which the Christian revelation gives of them.

[\*] Hagi signifies one who hath been on pilgrimage to Mecca.

[\*] A Turk.

[†] A Jew.

[‡] An Armenian.

[\*] An order which they publish in Persia, when women of quality are removed, to forbid any man's being in the way.

[\*] M. de Montesquien speaks of himself here in the person of Usbek.

[\*] These customs are altered.

[\*] A sect of fire-worshippers among the Persians. The curious reader may see a farther account of them in Prideaux's Connection, and Calmet's Dictionary.

[\*] This letter is not only a satire on the French academy, but on all others, who pretend to fix the standard of a living, and consequently a fluctuating language.

[†] The author means the great French dictionary, published by that academy.

[‡] The dictionary of Mr. Nuretiere, which he stole from the academy, and published before theirs came out; for which base action they expelled him.

[\*] This is supposed to allude to Mr. Granier, another member of the academy, who defrauded an orphan of a large sum of money: for which they likewise expelled him.

[\*] The Mahometans have no desire to take Venice, because they would not have water there proper for their purifications.

[\*] This letter, not in the former edition, seems to be added by the author, in answer to the former, in which he appears as a defender of suicide.

[\*] Juan de Castro.

[\*] Las Batuecas.

[\*] The porters at the noblemens houses in France being generally Swiss.

[\*] Louis XIV, who died September 1, 1715.

[\*] A kind of Mahometan monk.

[\*] He means the quarrel of Ramus.

[\*] A. D. 1610.

[\*] Cardinal Mazarine was an Italian by birth.

[†] The Cardinal being to pronounce the edict of the Union, he called it, before the deputies of the parliament, the edict of the Onion, which made the public very merry.

[‡] The fin of his being born a foreigner.

[\*] The former editions had here as follows:—‘We must not therefore pretend to count the years of the world; the number of the grains of sand upon the sea-shore, is no more to be compared to them than one instant.’

[\*] *Peculium* (from *peculum*, a little stock): this was among the Romans the stock of him who was in subjection to another, as a child of the family, or a slave; it consisted of what he was able to acquire by his own industry, without any assistance from his father, or master, but with his permission only.

[\*] I suppose he means monks and nuns.

[\*] I suppose he means that small portion of Latin necessary to say mass.

[\*] The original is very obscure; *ancantes: dans le Tyen*.—As by *Tyen*, the Chinese not only mean the Sovereign Lord of all things, but also call the father of a family *Tyen*; perhaps the sense of the passage is this; ‘they believe that their parents souls extinct in the *Tyen*,’ that is, in the father, ‘refume a new life.’ I hazard this conjecture, and if mistaken, should be glad of better information from any intelligent reader.

[\*] The author perhaps means the island of Bourbon.

[\*] Cardinal Alberoni, who persuaded the king of Spain to fall upon the emperor, A. D. 1717, when he was engaged in a war with the Turks.

[\*] Baron Gortz.

[\*] A former edition had here as follows: ‘There are many things in it which I do not understand; but you, who are a physician, must be acquainted with the language of your brethren.’

[\*] See the last note.