

whole services that were superfluous. But the European merchants do no longer trade with the good workmen, and, having no skill in them themselves, they accept whatsoever the Chinese export to sell, for they vend them in the Indies. Besides nobody takes care to furnish them with examples of draughts, or to bespeak particular pieces of work beforehand. If Mr. Constance had lived, we should quickly have known in France that China had not lost the secret of making porcelain: but this is not the greatest loss we have sustained by his death; what religion suffers by it, through all the East, will scarce give us leave to take notice of the alterations it hath caused in arts and trading.

There is yet another reason that makes the curious porcelain so rare; the emperor has confined it to the province, where the manufacture chiefly is, a particular Mandarin, whose care it is to make choice of the fairest vases for the court; he buys them at a very reasonable rate, so that the workmen, being but ill paid, do not their best, and are not willing to take any pains for that which will not enrich them. But should a private man employ them, who would not spare for cost and charges, we should have at this day as curious pieces of workmanship, as those of the ancient Chinese.

The China ware that is brought to us from Fokien does not deserve the name of it; it is black, coarse, and is not so good as our Fayence. That which is most look'd upon is that which is made in the province of Quamsi, the clay is found in one place and the water in another, because it is clearer and cleaner; perhaps also, this water they make use of before any other, because it is impregnated with some peculiar salts, proper to purify and refine the clay, or by the more strictly uniting the parts, as it happens in lime, which is good for nothing, if it be not dissolved in some certain waters, whereas others make it more compact, strong, and adhering. In

In brief, it is a mistake to think that there is requisite one or two hundred years to the preparing the matter for the porcelain, and that its composition is so very difficult; if that were so, it would be neither so common nor so cheap. It is a clay stiffer than ordinary clays; or rather a kind of a soft white stone, that is found in the quarries of that province. After having wash'd the pieces of it, and separated the heterogeneous earth that may chance to be mix'd with it, they beat it small till it be reduc'd to a subtil powder. How fine soever it may appear, yet they continue pounding it for a long time; altho' by this touch no difference is to be perceived, yet they are perswaded that it is indeed made much more subtil, that the insensible parts are less mix'd, and that the work thereby comes to be whiter and more transparent. Of this subtil powder they make a paste, which they knead, and beat a long while likewise, that it may become softer, and that the water may be the more perfectly incorporated therewith. When the earth is well moulded, they endeavour the figuring of it. It is not likely that they use moulds, as they do in some other sorts of pottery; it is more probable that they fashion them upon the wheel like us. So soon as their work pleases them they expose it to the sun, morning and evening, but take it away again when the sun grows too hot, for fear of warping it. So the vases dry by degrees, and they apply the painting at their leisure, when they judge the ground proper to receive it; but because neither the vases nor the colours have sufficient lustre, they make a very fine broth out of the matter of the same porcelain, whereon they pass several strokes upon the work, that gives them a particular whiteness and lustre; this is what they call the varnish of the porcelain. They assured me in the kingdom of Siam, that they mix'd with the common varnish, with the com-
positio

position made of the white of an egg, and shining bones of fish; but this is but a mixt, and the workmen of Fokien, who work just as those of Quamsi, don't do otherwise. After all these preparations, they put the vases in a furnace, whereon they kindle a gentle and constant uniform fire, that bakes them without breaking; and for fear lest the exterior air should do them damage, they do not draw them out till a long while after, when they have acquired their due consistence, and have been gradually cooled.

This is all, madam, I have to say to the mystery of porcelain, that they have so long sought after in Europe. Providence, and the prosperity of religion, that oblig'd me to run over the greatest part of China, did not carry me into the province of Quamsi, where the earth is found whereof they make it; so that I do not sufficiently know it, as to my own particular, so far as to be able to describe the nature and particular qualities thereof; perhaps it is not much different from some soft stones that are found in several provinces of France. And if so be the ingenious would please to make some experiments, and operate diligently, by making use of several sorts of waters, after the above-mentioned manner, it might not be impossible to succeed.

Besides these varnish'd cabinets and vessels of porcelain, the Chinese adorn likewise their apartments with pictures: they do not excel in this art, because they are not curious in perspective; notwithstanding they diligently apply themselves to painting; they take delight in it; and there are a great company of painters among them: some paint the ceiling, representing, upon the chamber-walls, an order of architecture without symmetry, by bands or fillets continued all along around at the top and bottom of the wall, and above the capital of the column, which contains only single columns, placed at an equal distance,

distance, without any other ornament of architecture. Others only, paint the chamber, or gild paper upon it. They hang the pictures of their ancestors up and down, with some maps and pieces of white satin, on which are painted flowers, fowls, mountains and palaces; upon some others they write in capital letters sentences of morality, that explain the maxims and rules of perfect government. Some chairs, varnished tables, some cabinets, flower-pots, and lanterns, well ordered, and placed in due proportion, make a pretty handsome apartment.

When you do not enter the bed-chamber, yet are there, you see very fine; in summer they have taffaty curtains powdered with flowers, trees, and birds, in gold and silk embroidery. The sort of work that comes from the province of Nankim is in request, and this is the most noble and fine of all the Chinese furniture. Others have curtains of the finest gaze, which is no security against the weather, but close enough to defend them against flies and gnats, that are intolerable in the night. In winter they make use of coarse satin stitched with dragons and other figures, according as their fancy guides them: the colouring is in a manner the same. They do not use leather-beds, but their cotton quilts are very thick: their bedstead ordinarily is of joiners work, decorated with figures. I have seen some very fine and exquisite.

By all that I have said, you may judge, madam, that these people have shut themselves up within the bounds of necessity and profit, without being over-solicitous about magnificence; their houses are not splendid, but not fine: they seem still more negligent about their gardens; they have in that respect conceptions much different from ours; for except places designed for the sepulchre of their ancestors, which they leave untilled, they would think themselves out of their wits to put the ground to

no other use than to make alleys and walks, to cultivate flowers, and plant groves of useful trees. The benefit of the commonwealth commands that all should be sowed; and their own particular interest, that more nearly concerns them than the public good, doth not permit them to prefer pleasure to profit.

'Tis true, the flowers of the country do not deserve their looking after; they have no curious; and tho' many may be met with like the *shibub* rope, yet they cultivate them so industriously, that one has much ado to know them. Nevertheles, there are trees in some places that would afford great ornament in their gardens, if they knew how to order them. Instead of fruit, they are almost all the year long laden with flowers of a florid complexion; the leaves are small, like those of the *shibub*, the trunk irregular, the branches crooked, and bark smooth. If alleys were made of them, mingling them with (which might easily be done) some orange tree, it would be the most pleasant thing in the world; but, seeing the Chinese walk not much, alleys do not agree with them.

Amongst other trees they might suppose in gardens, there is one they call the *Canton-chu*, resembling the sycomore; the leaves are six or a diameter between eight or nine inches, fastened to a stalk a foot long, it is extremely tufted, and laden with clusters of flowers, so thick set, that the sun cannot pierce it with his rays: the fruit, which is extraordinary small, notwithstanding the tree is very large, is produced after this manner: Toward August, or the end of July, there spring, out of the new boughs of the branches, little bunches of leaves different from the other; they are whiter, softer and broader, and are in lieu of flowers; upon the border of each of these leaves grow three or four small grains or kernels, as big as green pease, that incline to a white substance,



Artemisia. A Tree in China.



substance, very pleasant to the taste, like to that of an hazelnut, but is not yet ripe. This tree being fruitful, and the manner of bearing its fruit being something extraordinary, I was apt to believe, madam, you might be desirous to see the figure of it, which I have caused to be engraven.

The Chinese, who so little apply themselves to order their gardens, and give them real ornaments, do not delight in them, and are at some cost about them. They make grotto's in them, raise little artifices and eminences, transport thither by pieces whole rocks, which they heap one upon another, without any other design than to imitate nature. If they could, besides all this, have the convenience of so much water as is necessary to water their cabbage and leguminous plants, they would desire no more. The emperor hath fountains, after the European manner; but private persons content themselves with their ponds and wells.

But altho' the Chinese neglect the ornaments of their houses, yet no people affect more to appear magnificent in publick. The government, that condemns, or rather does not allow, but regulates expences as to other matters, does not only approve of this, but contributes to it on these occasions, for reasons that I shall tell you in the sequel of the history.

When persons of quality receive visits, or make any, when they go along the streets, or when upon their journey, but especially at such time when they appear before the emperor, or make their address to the viceroys, they are always accompanied with a train and air of grandeur that fills one with astonishment.

The Mandarines, richly habited, are carried in a sedan gilded, and open, borne upon the shoulders of eight, or sixteen persons, accompanied with all the officers of their tribunal, who surround them with umbrells and other marks of their dignity. Some walk

walk before them two and two, bearing chains, tasses, escutcheons of varnish'd wood, upon which may be read, in large gold characters, all the titles of honour annex'd to their places of trust, together with a brazen bason, upon which they beat a certain number of strokes, according to the rank they bear in the province; they continually speak aloud, and threaten the people to make way. Other officers follow in the same order, and sometimes four or five gentlemen on horseback bring up the rear. Some Mandarines never appear in publick without a train of three or fourscore domesticks.

Those that belong to the army go commonly on horseback, and, if of any considerable rank, they are evermore at the head of twenty-five or thirty cavaliers. The princes of the blood at Peking are preceded by four of their officers, and follow themselves in the midst of a squadron that marches without order. But then they wear armouries in China, but the domesticks are habited according to the quality of their masters in black satin, or painted linnen. Altho the horses be neither fine nor well managed, yet are the trappings and harness very magnificent; the bits, saddle, and stirrups are gilded, or else of silver. Instead of leather, they make bridles of two or three twills of coarse pink'd sattin, two fingers broad. Under the horse's neck, at the beginning of the breast-plate, hang two great tassels of that curiously curie hair wherewith they cover their bonnets, which are fastened to two huge buttons of brass gilded or wash'd with silver, hung at rings of the same metal; this shews fine in a cavalcade, but upon a long journey, especially upon a course, it is cumbersome.

Not only the princes and persons of the highest rank appear in publick with a train, but even those of a meaner quality go always on horseback along the streets, or in a close sedan, followed by several foot-

when the Tartarian ladies do often make use of calashes with four wheels, but they have not the use of the coach.

The magnificence of the Chinese Mandarines principally displays itself in the journeys they take by water: the prodigious bigness of their barges, that are little inferior to ships, the finery, carving, painting and gilding of the apartments, the great number of officers and seamen that serve aboard, the different badges of their dignity every where displayed, their many flags, streamers, and the like, do abundantly distinguish them from the Europeans, who are never more accounted, or more careless than when they travel.

Besides, the Chinese have their solemn feasts, which they celebrate with great pomp and charges; the first three days in the year are spent in rejoicing throughout the whole empire; they array themselves magnificently, they visit one another, they send presents to all their friends, and to all the persons whom in any way concerns them to observe. Gaming, feasting, and comedies take up every body's time. Ten or twelve days before abundance of little robberies are committed, because those, who are destitute of money, seek how to come by it, and are resolved to have some whoever goes without, to supply them in these divertisements.

The 15th day of the first month is still more solemn: they call it the Day or Feast of Lanthorns; because they hang them up in all the houses, and in all the streets, in such a great number, that it is a madness rather than a festival: they light up, it may be, that day two hundred millions. You will see, madam, by what I am going to relate, that they have run into extremes in this ceremony, which otherwise might have been tolerated, as several other customs are, to comply with that people's humour,

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but which now are become the most persons delight
of persons of quality.

They expose to view that day lanterns of all
prices; some of them cost two thousand crowns;
and some of the nobility retrench every year some
thing from their table, apparel or equipage, to ap-
pear magnificent in lanterns. It is not the materials
that are dear, the gilding, sculpture, the painting,
filk and varnish make all the show. As for the big-
ness it is immense. There are some of them to be
seen of upward of twenty seven feet diameter. These
are halls, or chambers, and three or four of these
machines would make pretty handsome apartments;
insomuch that you will admire, madam, when I
tell you that in China we may eat, we receive gifts,
represent comedies, and dance balls in a lantern.

A publick bonfire is little enough to enlighten it;
but because it would be inconvenient, they are satis-
fied with an infinite number of wax candles or lamps,
which at a distance shew very pretty. There are also
represented divers shows to gratify the vulgar; and
there are persons concealed, who, by the help of
several little machines, make puppets to play of, the
bigness of men and women, the actions of which
are so natural, that even those, who are acquainted
with the trick, are apt to be mistaken. For my part,
madam, I was not deceived, because I was never
present at these spectacles. What I relate is upon
the report of the Chinese, and upon the credit of some
relations whose authors are well known, and whom
I should be loth to condemn.

Besides these prodigious lanterns, there are an
infinite number of a middle size, of which I can
more safely speak; I have seen of them not only
neat, but magnificent; they are commonly compo-
sed of six faces, or pains, each of which makes a
frame four feet high, a foot and an half broad,
of varnish'd wood, and adorned with some gild-
ings.

hills. They hang it on the inside with a web of fine transparent silk, whereon are painted flowers, trees, rocks, and sometimes human figures. The painting is very exact, the colours lively, and when the wax-candles are lighted, the light disperseth a splendor that renders the work altogether agreeable.

Those sixannels join'd together compose an hexagon, closed at the top by six carved figures, that make the crown of it. There are hung round about broad strings of sattin of all colours, like ribbons, together with divers other silken ornaments that fall upon the angles, without hiding any thing of the light, or pictures. We sometimes use them for an ornament to our churches. The Chinese hang them in windows, in their halls, and sometimes in publick places.

The feast of lanthorns is also celebrated by bonfires that are kindled at that time in all quarters of the city, and by fireworks; for there is no body but lets off squibs and crackers. Some have spoken of these as the finest fireworks in the world. We are told that there appear figures of whole trees covered with leaves and fruit, you may there distinguish the cherries, raisins, apples and oranges, not only by their figures, but also by their particular colour; every thing is painted to the life, insomuch that one would really imagine that they are naturally trees that are enlightened in the night, and not an artificial fire, on which they have bestowed the figure and appearance of trees.

These descriptions, in some relations of China, excite in those who travel thither, a real passion to behold all these miracles; I should have been very glad, as others are, to have upon my own personal knowledge been able to have related them. I have often sought for an occasion, but all in vain. These fires are not so ordinary as people imagine, and to revive them it will perhaps be necessary to

go back to their time who writ of them. The several missionaries that sojourn at Peking, who have been eye-witnesses of what was performed on this account in the emperor's palace, have often told me, that it was not at all as they imagined it to be, and at the bottom, that there was nothing very extraordinary in it.

Nevertheless, madam, it is not justly why to condemn these authors, as persons of no credit; they are good honest missionaries, who would not impose upon us at pleasure, and what I have seen in India, and especially upon the coast of Coromandel, may justify them in some respect; they do there really represent all sorts of figures, not by artificial works that burst in the air like our squibs (for to me it seems not possible to reduce flame to such determined figures as would be necessary to distinguish raisins and leaves, and much less to imitate every respective colour that is natural to fruits) but by means of a combustible matter compounded of sulphur, camphire, and some other ingredients, wherewith they dawb pieces of wood in form of a cross, of trees, and flowers, or in any other form they please.

As soon as they have given fire to it, that expanded gum is set on fire on all sides, like coal, and represents, till it be totally consumed, the figure of the wood on which it was applied, so that it is no great wonder that they should make trees and fruits of fire; and I do imagine that, they so much magnify in China, may be some such thing.

Not but that these sorts of fires have their beauty; for, besides their particular colour, the most splendid, and withal the most pleasant to the eye imaginable, it is no mean ornament in a publick illumination, to be able to represent men, cities, heries of fire, palaces all on fire, with their order of architecture, cartouches, and armories of light, and

a great company of other representations, that might be made in Europe with a great deal more exactness than in the East, where the artificers neither have ingenuity to contrive great designs, nor dexterity enough perfectly to execute them.

I think, madam, you will have the curiosity to learn what might have given occasion to the Chinese to ordain such an extravagant festival as this, whereof I have the honour to speak to your grace. As it is very ancient, for the original seems very obscure. The vulgar ascribe it to an accident that happened in the family of a famous Mandarin, whose daughter, walking one evening upon the banks of a river, fell in, and was drowned; the afflicted father, with his family, run thither, and the better to find her, he caused a great company of lanthorns to be lighted. All the inhabitants of the place thronged after him with torches, they searched for her all night to no purpose, and the Mandarin's only comfort was to see the willingness and readiness of the people, every one of which seem'd, as if he had lost his own sister, because they look'd upon him as their father.

The year ensuing they made fires upon the shore on the same day, they continued the ceremony every year, every one lighted his lanthorn, and by degrees it compos'd into a custom. The Chinese are pretty superstitious in this respect; but there is no probability that such a small loss should have such a mighty influence upon a whole empire.

Some Chinese doctors pretend that this festival deduceth its origin from a story which they report in the manner following: Three thousand five hundred and eighty three years ago, China was governed by a prince named Mi, the last emperor of the first race, whom Heaven was pleas'd to endue with qualities capable of constituting an hero, if love to women, and the habit of debauchery, that took possession of

his heart, had not reduced him to a monster in the empire, and an object of abhorrence to his nature.

He had rare parts, a winning, pleasing way with him, great courage, and was of such extraordinary strength of body, that he broke iron with his hand. But this Sampson had his mistresses and grew weak; amongst other extravagancies, they relate, that he exhausted all his treasures in building a tower of precious stones to honour the memory of a concubine; and that he filled a pool with wine for him and three thousand young men to bath in, after a lascivious manner. These excesses, and many other abominations, prevailed with the wisest of his court to offer him some advice, according to the custom, but he put them to death; yea, and he imprisoned one of the kings of the empire, who endeavoured to divert him from these disorders: at length he committed a fact that consummated the destruction of himself and all his family.

One day, in the heat of his debaucheries and jealousy, complaining that life was too short, *I should be content*, says he to the queen whom he devoted to, *if I could make you eternally happy; but alas few years, nay in a few days peradventure death will, in spite of us, put an end to our pleasures; and all my power will not suffice to give you a life longer than that which the lowest of my subjects hope to have; this thought continually troubles my spirit, and disperses over my heart a bitterness that hinders me from relishing the sweetness of life: why cannot I make you reign for ever? and seeing there are stars that never cease shining, must you needs be subject to death? you that shine more bright upon earth, than all the stars do in heaven.*

'Tis true, my lord, saith this foolish princess, that you cannot make your life eternal, but it depends on you to forget the brevity of it, and to live as tho' you should never die: what need have we of the sun and moon to

What is the duration of our life? The morning star
 about rises every morning, and the night that comes
 every evening, so continually put us in mind of the be-
 ginning and end of our days; as those begin and end,
 so do ours, that are begun, advance with precipitation
 and will speedily be at an end.

Come, now, sir, let us no longer cast our eyes upon
 these things that roll over our heads: have you a mind
 once for all to fire your imagination? build yourself a
 new heaven, ever enlightened, always serene, always
 favourable to your desires; where we shall perceive
 not the least footsteps of the instability of human things.
 You may easily do it, by erecting a great and magnifi-
 cent palace, shut up on all sides from the light of the
 sun; you may hang up all around magnificent lanterns,
 whose constant splendor will be preferable to that of the
 sun.

Cause to be transported thither whatsoever is capa-
 ble of contributing to your pleasure; and, for fear of
 being one moment distracted by them, break off all cor-
 respondence with other creatures. We will both of us
 enter into this new world that you shall create: I will
 be to you in lieu of all things; you alone will there
 receive more pleasure than all the old world can offer;
 you, nature itself, that will be renewed for our sakes,
 will render us more happy than the gods are in hea-
 ven. 'Tis there that we will forget the vicissitude of
 days and nights; time shall be no more in respect of
 us: no more incumbrance, no more shadow, no more
 clouds nor change in life; and provided, my lord, that
 you on your part will be always constant, always pas-
 sionate, my felicity will seem to me unalterable, and
 your happiness will be eternal.

The emperor, whether it was that he thought
 he could deceive himself, or whether he had a mind
 to please the queen, I cannot tell; but he caused
 this enchanted castle to be built, and there immured
 her and himself. There he pass'd several months

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immersed in delights, and wholly taken up with his new life; but the people, not being able to endure such excess, obliged one of the wisest kings of the empire to declare against him.

So soon as the emperor had notice of the conspiracy, he appeared presently in the old world, which, whether he would or no, stuck more to his heart than the new: he appears at the head of an army to punish this rebel; but seeing himself abandoned by the people, whom he had so foolishly deserted, he thought it his wisest course to abdicate, and betake himself to flight. During the three remaining years of his life, he wandered from province to province incognito in a poor condition, always in danger of being discovered, as if God, by this disquiet and continual agitation, had a mind to punish him for that soft and effeminate repose, wherein he thought to have found constant delights and eternal felicity. In the mean time they destroyed his palaces, and to preserve the memory of such an unworthy action to posterity, they hung up lanterns in every quarter of the city. This custom became an anniversary, and since that time a considerable festival in the whole empire; it is solemnized at Hangchow, with more magnificence than any where else; and the report goes that the illuminations there are so splendid, that an emperor once, not daring openly to leave his court to go thither, committed himself, with the queen, and several princesses of his family, into the hands of a magician, who promised him to transport them thither in a trice. He made them in the night to ascend magnificent thrones that were borne up by swans, which in a moment arrived at Hamcheu.

The emperor saw at his leisure all the solemnities, being carried upon a cloud, that hovered over the city, and descended by degrees; and came back again with the same speed and equipage, no more at

could perceive his absence. This is not the first tale the Chinese have told; they have stories upon every thing, for they are superstitious to excess. And in point of magick, be it feigned or true, there are no people in the world that have come near them.

However that be, certain it is, that they take huge delight in publick illuminations; and one of their kings, who for his good qualities was become the darling of the people, once thought he could not better demonstrate to them his reciprocal affection, than by inventing for their sakes such like feasts. So that once a year, for eight nights one after another, he opened his palace, which they took care to illuminate by abundance of lanthorns and fireworks. He appeared in person without any guards, and mixed in the middle of the croud, not suffering them to distinguish him from others, to the end that every one might enjoy the liberty of speaking, playing, and hearing divers concerts of music there performed.

This action hath rendered this prince renowned in the Chinese history; but what would they have said if they had choiced to be in the apartment of Versailles, where the best and most potent of kings so often assembles all the innocent pleasures that christianity allows, to make his court, if possible, as happy as himself; if they did but behold those illuminations, those concerts, those sports, those magnificent banquets, and the prince himself striving to mix with the multitude, nay, and would be unknown, were he not distinguished by an air of grandeur independent on his dignity, whereof he cannot divest himself.

Since I am speaking, madam, of the magnificence of the Chinese, I cannot, without being wanting in a material point, pass over in silence what relates to their emperors, who never appear in publick, but as to many deities, environed with all the splendour that may attract the respect and veneration of

of the people. Heretofore they rarely showed themselves; but the Tartars, who reign at present, are much more popular, and the late king did not stand so much upon nice punctilio's. The present emperor in that, as well as in all things else, observes a medium, which contents his own nation, without totally displeasing the Chinese. Nevertheless, as moderate as he is, in comparison of the ancients, one may boldly say, he never marches but at the head, or in the midst of an army.

At such time he is accompanied with all the lords of the court: there is nothing but silk, goldings, and precious stones, every thing there is splendid and pompous; the arms, the horses, harness, the umbrello's, the streamers, and a thousand other badges of royal dignity, or of the particular quality of every prince, every where sparkle at that time. In a word, there is nothing more regular on these occurrences than this crowd; every one knows his respective rank; and the head of that man, or at least his fortune, lies at stake, who shall presume indiscreetly to discompose the order of the march.

When he takes a progress to visit the provinces of the empire, he goes commonly post, followed by a few guards and some trusty officers; but in all the cities upon the road, and in all the difficult passages, there are so many troops drawn up into battalia, that he seems to ride post with an army.

He goes sometimes into Tartary to take the divertisement of hunting, but yet always accompanied as if he went to the conquest of some new empire. He carries along with him no less than forty thousand men, who endure a great deal of hardship, whether the weather be hot or cold, because they encamp in a very inconvenient manner; and it sometimes happens, that, in one of these troublesome huntings, there die more horses than he would lose

in a pitch'd battle; but he counts the destruction of ten thousand horses as nothing.

The fathers that accompany him thither say, that never does his magnificence more display itself than upon this occasion; there he sees sometimes thirty or forty petty Tartar kings, that come to address him, or pay him tribute; yea, there be some of them that bear the name of Ham or Cham, that is to say, emperors; they are all of them just as the Mandarines of the first order, his pensioners; he gives them his daughters in marriage; and, to make them the more sure to his interest, he declares himself their protector against all the western Tartars, who often annoy them; nay, and have sometimes forces enough to attack China itself with some face of good success.

Whilst the grand of these petty sovereigns appears in the emperor's camp, the court is wonderful sumptuous, and so the emperor may possess these Barbarians with some idea of the power of China, the train, habits, and tents of the Mandarines are rich and glorious even to excess. This is what the missionaries, who have been witnesses of the same, do report; and I suppose we may give credit to their relations not only because they all unanimously agree in this matter, but also because what they say does altogether comport with the genius of the Chinese.

That, which the relation of father Magalhen's, newly translated with learned and useful notes, says, concerning the pompous march of the emperor, when he goes to the temple to offer sacrifices to Heaven, hath something odd in it, and deserves here to be repeated; and so much the more, because these things are neither false nor magnified; for the order observed in publick ceremonies are known to every body to be so regular, that the very emperor does not add or diminish the least article.

This

This pompous ceremony begins with twenty four trumpets, adorned with golden coronets; with 24 drums ranked, each of them in two files; 24 men armed with truncheons varnish'd and gilt, four feet long, follow them in the same order and rank; after that follow 100 soldiers bearing noble halberds, armed with a semicircle of iron, in stead of a crescent, followed with 100 serjeants at arms, and two officers whose pikes are painted with red varnish in different places, with flowers and golden figures.

Next after this first file are borne 400 curiously wrought lanthorns, 400 flambeaux of polished wood that flame like our torches, 200 lances charged with huge tufts of silk, 24 banners, whereon are painted the signs of the zodiack, and 56 others that represent the celestial constellations: there are to be seen moreover 200 fans with figures of dragons, and other animals; 24 umbrello's still more magnificent, and a livery cupboard borne by the officers of the palace, whose utensils are of gold.

All this does immediately precede the emperor, who at last appears on horseback, gloriously attired, surrounded with six white led horses, whose harness is covered with gold and precious stones with 100 life-guards and pages of honour; they bear up before him an umbrello that shades him and the horse, and dazzles the sight with all the ornaments that man could possibly invent to enrich it.

The emperor is followed by all the prince of the blood, by the Mandarines of the first order, by the viceroys and principal lords of the court, all in their formalities: immediately after come 500 young gentlemen of quality, which may be called the band of gentlemen pensioners, attended by 2000 footmen, array'd in carnation silk, bordered with flowers, stitced with little stars in gold and silver. This is properly the king's household.

This retinue is still more extraordinary by what follows, than by what went before: for immediately 16 men bear an open sedan that resembles a triumphal chariot, 200 bearers support another close one, so big, that one would take it for an intire apartment. Afterwards there appear four chariots, the two first of which are drawn by elephants, and the other two by horses. Each sedan and chariot hath a company of 50 men for its guard: the charioteers are richly apparelled, and the elephants, as well as the horses, are covered with embroidered housings.

Then 2000 Mandarin officers, and 2000 officers of the army, all most richly cloathed, marching in order, and according to their custom, with a gravity that commands respect, bring up the rear of this stately show. It is not needful that the court should be at great charges for this pomp, and as soon as ever the emperor is pleased to go offer sacrifice, they always are in a readiness to attend him in this order. I do not know that, in our entertainments and solemn festivals, we have any thing more splendid and magnificent.

But the emperor of China never appears greater than when he gives audience to foreign ambassadors; that prodigious number of troops who are at that time in arms, that incredible number of Mandarines in their formalities, distinguished according to their rank and quality, placed in order, without confusion, without noise, without disturbance, in such order as they would appear in the temples of their gods; the ministers of state, the lord chief justices of all the sovereign courts, the petty kings, the princes of the blood, the heirs of the crown, more humble before this prince, than they are exalted above the people: the emperor himself seated on a throne, who beholds prostrate at his feet all this crowd of adorers; all this, I say, bears an air of sovereignty and grandeur in it, that is to be found

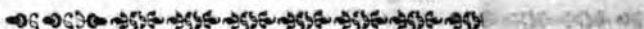
no where but in China, which *chastity* does not so much as permit kings to desire in the most glorious courts of Europe.

I should never make an end, if I had a mind to descend to all the particulars of the publick ceremonies, where the Chinese display all their magnificence; I suppose, madam, I have spoken enough to give you a just idea of it; now if you please to permit me, in the close of this letter, to add what I think of it myself, in reference to France, where the riches and ambition of private persons have carried stateliness to a higher pitch, than in any other realm in Europe; it seems to me that the Chinese do almost ever surpass us in common and publick actions, by a more glorious and specious outside; but that in domestick things, our apartments are incomparably richer, the retinue of persons of quality more decently cloathed, tho' not so numerous, the equipages more commodious, the tables better served, and generally speaking, the expence more constant, and better regulated. I am with a most profound respect,

Madam,

Your most humble
and most obedient Servant.

L. J.



LETTER VII.

To the Archbishop of Rheims, first Peer of France.

*Of the Language, Characters, Books, and Morality
of the Chinese.*

My Lord,

AFTER having had the honour to entertain your grace at your spare hours, concerning

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The different customs of the empire of China, I believed you would not take it amiss to see from me an account of what relates to their language, characters, books, and morals.

There are certain points of history that one cannot enter upon without much caution, and especially when one has to explain them to such a person as yourself. whole character it is, to know exactly and most perfectly whatever you study; to satisfy such a mind, there is requisite an exactness and method, where the looseness and looseness of discourse will not admit of.

I well know, my lord, that it is difficult to add, upon this subject, any new knowledge to that which hath rendered you one of the most knowing prelates of the age, how good and diffusive soever the morality of China may be, yet are they but the faint glimpses of nature and imperfect reason, which disappear as soon as they are brought near those divine lights that religion discovers to us, and whereinto you have so much improved by the continual reading of fathers, councils, and councils.

Nevertheless, altho' all the philosophy of that renowned nation be not able to instruct us, yet is it worth our inquiry to know, to what pitch of perfection it heretofore brought sciences, and that too at a time when other people in the world were either ignorant or barbarous. Their chief learning lies in their writings and their language, wherefore I will first speak of that: what I have observed most remarkable therein is this:

The Chinese language hath no analogy with any of those that are in vogue in the world, no affinity neither in the words, in the pronounciation of the words, nor yet in the disposing and ranging of the conceptions. Every thing is mysterious therein, and you will, no question, stand amazed, my lord, to understand that all the words of it may be learnt in

two hours, altho' there is required several years study to speak it: that one may be ready to read all the books, and to understand them perfectly, without apprehending any thing, if another read it: that a doctor may compose a book with all the elaborateness possible, and this very same doctor may not know enough of it to explain himself in ordinary conversation; that a mute, instructed in the characters, might with his fingers, without writing, speak as fast as his auditors can conveniently hear him; in a word, that the self same words do often signify quite different things, and that two persons that shall pronounce them, it will be a compliment in the mouth of the one, and foul language in the mouth of the other. These paradoxes, now surprising soever they may seem, are very true, notwithstanding; and your grace will grant it, if you please to give yourself never so little trouble, to cast your eyes upon what I shall write you about it.

This tongue contains no more than three hundred and thirty words, or thereabouts, all of one syllable, or at least they seem to be so, because they pronounce them so succinctly, that a man can scarce distinguish the syllables: although it be a tedious thing to read the whole series of them, yet shall I describe them in this place, as well to let you understand the tone, as to give you the satisfaction to see, at one view, comprised in one single page, a language so ancient, so famous, and I may say, so eloquent as this is.

These few words would not be sufficient to express a man's self aptly upon all subjects, if they were only words for arts and sciences, to maintain discourse in discourse, or in writing, which is very different among the Chinese, if they had not an art to multiply the sense, without multiplying the words. This art chiefly consists in the accents they give them; the same word pronounced with a stronger or weaker inton-

of the voice hath divers significations; so that the Chinese language; when it is spoken exactly, is a kind of music, and contains a real harmony, which comprehends the essence and particular character of it.

There are five tones that are applied to each word, according to the sense one means to give it. The first is an uniform pronunciation without lightening or raising the voice, as if one should continue for some time the first note of our musick; the second raiseth the voice notably higher; the third is very acute; the fourth you descend all on a sudden to a grave note; in the fifth you pass to a more deep note, if you please so to express myself, by hollowing and raising a kind of base. It is very hard to explain my meaning herein any other way than by the language itself.

However, you already see, my lord, that, by this diversity of pronunciation, 333 words are made 1665; besides, one may pronounce smoothly, or asperate each word, which is very usual, and does still increase the language by half. Sometimes these monosyllables are joined together, as we put our letters together, thereby to compose different words: nay, they do more than all that, for sometimes a whole phrase, according as it follows or goes before another, hath a quite different sense; so it plainly appears, that this tongue, so poor, so seeming barren, yet for all that, is indeed very rich and copious in furnishing us with variety of words.

But these riches cost foreigners dear to come by them. And I cannot tell whether some missionaries had not better have laboured in the mines than to have applied themselves for several years to this labour, one of the hardest and most discouraging that man can experience in matter of study. I cannot apprehend how any one can have other thoughts; and I must confess I admir'd to read the new relation of father Magalhen, that the Chinese language

is easier than the Greek, Latin, and all the languages in Europe. He adds, one cannot doubt this, if it be considered, that the difficulty in tongues proceeds from the memory ; now, one hath no trouble at all in this, that hath but very few words in comparison of others, nay, and may be learn'd in a day's time.

To argue as this father does, musick must cost us but an hour's time, seven words and seven tones do not much burthen the memory, and, if our voice have but a voice never so little flexible, one would think it were no hard matter to learn them ; nevertheless, we see by daily experience, who so be it, at thirty or forty years, unless he have a more than ordinary inclination for musick, scarce ever learn it to purpose ; nay, and after much application and long exercise, is still, to his dying day, but a poor musician. How will it fare with a person who hath six tones to combine with above 300 words, that he does not know by the writing, which he must call to mind extempore, when he would speak fluently, or when he is to distinguish in another person that precipitates his words, and who scarce observes the accent and particular tone of each word.

It is not the memory that is put to a stress upon this occasion, but the imagination and ear, which in some certain persons never distinguish one tone from another ; the turn of the tongue also conduces infinitely thereto ; and there are certain persons that have memory sufficient to learn a book in a few days, who will tug at it for a month together to pronounce only one word, and all to no purpose. How happens it, that, let him take what care he will, a man has never a good accent in our language, when he is born in certain provinces, if he lives in them till he is grown up.

Nevertheless, to make yourself understood in Chinese, you must give each word its peculiar ac-

may vary but never so little; and you fall into another tone that makes a ridiculous counter-sense; thus, if you have not a care, you may call a man *Beast*, when you mean to call him *Sir*; because the word, that is common to them both, hath a different sense, only by the different tone they give it: so that it is properly in this language; that one may say, the tone is all in all.

This is that also, that makes the Chinese tongue more difficult than others. When a stranger that hath but a smattering intends to speak French, if he pronounces some words but never so little well, we easily guess at those he speaks ill; and we know his meaning, but in China, one single word, badly pronounced, is enough to render the whole phrase unintelligible; and one phrase at the beginning, that is not well heard and understood, hinders the understanding of what follows. So when one chanceth to come into a congregation, where they have already begun to speak on some business, one stares about a good while without understanding, till such time as by degrees they put him in the way, and till he gets hold of the thread of the discourse.

Besides what I have been saying, this tongue hath particular characters that distinguish it from all others. First of all, they do not speak as they write; and the most quaint discourse is barbarous, harsh, and unpleasant when spoken. If you would write well, you must use more proper terms, more noble expressions, more particular turns, than do occur in common discourse, and which are proper only for writing, the style of which is more different from the common elocution, than our obscurest Latin poets are from the smoothest and most natural prose.

Secondly, eloquence does not consist in a certain disposition of words, such as orators affect, who, to expose ideas to the auditors, stuff it sometimes only with words, because they have but few things to tell

them. The Chinese are eloquent in their expressions, noble metaphors, bold and nice comparisons, and above all, by abundance of sentences and passages taken from the ancients, which amongst them are of great moment: They deliver a great many things in a few words, their stile is close and mysterious, obscure and not connected, they seldom make use of those particles that illustrate and connect our discourse. They seem sometimes to speak not to be understood, oftentimes they expect you should understand several things, when they do not mention them; so much sense and thought do they inclose in few words!

It is true, this obscurity almost quite vanishes in respect of those who have a perfect knowledge in the characters; and a learned man that reads a work, is seldom mistaken in it, but in speaking, one is often at a stand: and I have conversed with some doctors, who, to understand one another in familiar discourses, were obliged to describe with their finger in the air the particular sense that expressed their words, whose sense could not be determined by the pronunciation.

Thirdly, the sound of words is pretty pleasing to the ear, especially in that province of Nankim, where the accent is more correct than in any other part; for there, many pronounce the different tones so fine and delicately, that a stranger hath much ado to perceive it. Besides, they never use R, which contributes not a little to mollify that language; yet must it be allowed, that most part of the Chinese that pretend to speak correctly, speak very unmusically, they draw out their words intolerably; and tho' they be all monosyllables, yet by meer extending them, they make words infinite and like to intire phrases.

They have moreover a termination which often occurs, which we express commonly by a double H.

Fourthly, from the bottom of the *aspera ar-*
guta, to speak and unnatural, that that alone is ca-
 pable of sounding language : but as certain forced as-
 piration in the Castilian tongue do notwithstanding
 please the Spaniards, so the Chinese are persuaded that
 these same gutturals that displease us are a real grace ;
 and that these more masculine and stronger tones
 give a body to their language, without which it
 would be apt to degenerate into an effeminate soft-
 ness, which would at best have no grace but in the
 mouths of women and children.

Fourthly, the want abundance of sounds which
 we express by our letters ; for example, they do not
 pronounce *a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, x, z*, after the same manner
 as we do in France ; and when any one forces them
 to pronounce them, they always make some altera-
 tion, and use sounds that in their language come the
 nearest to them, never being able almost to express
 them exactly : which proved formerly a great diffi-
 culty for the Chinese priests in consecrating the host,
 who could not say mass in Latin without falling into
 a ridiculous argot. Yet there was so much pains
 taken to frame their tongue, that at length they have
 succeeded to admiration ; so that the Latin in their
 mouths is not much more different from that of the
 Portuguese, than that of the Portuguese is from ours.

All that I have been saying, my lord, is to be un-
 derstood of the Mandarin language, that is current
 all over the empire, which is universally understood
 every where ; but the common people at Fokien, be-
 sides that, speak a particular tongue, that hath no
 affinity with the same, who look upon it in China,
 as we do upon the Biscay language, or Basbetron in
 France.

What relates to the China character is no less sin-
 gular than their tongue ; they have not any alphabet
 as we have, tho' contains the elements, and, as it
 were, the principles of the words ; nay, they cannot

so much as comprehend how we are able, with a small number of figures, each of which signifies nothing, to express upon a piece of paper all our conceptions, to compose such an infinite number of books, as to stock whole libraries. This art of putting letters together, to compose words of them, to combine them both into a prodigious number of senses, is to them a hidden mystery; and that, which is so common amongst other nations, never obtained amongst them, either thro' the little converse they have had with other neighbouring nations, or thro' the small account they made of foreign inventions.

Instead of characters, at the beginning of their monarchy, they us'd hieroglyphicks; they painted rather than wrote; and by the natural images of things, which they drew upon paper, they endeavour'd to express and convey their ideas to others: To signify a bird, they painted its figure, and to signify a forest, they represented a great company of trees. A circle signified the sun, and a crescent the moon.

This sort of writing was not only imperfect, but very inconvenient; for besides that one expressed his thoughts but by halves, even those that were express'd, were never perfectly conceived, and it was, besides, utterly impossible to avoid mistakes: moreover, there needed whole volumes to express a few things, because the painting took up a great deal of room; insomuch, that the Chinese, by little and little changed their writing, and compos'd more simple figures, tho' less natural: They invent'd many to express some things that painting could not represent, as the voice, smell, tastes, conceptions, passions, and a thousand other objects that have neither body nor figure; and several simple draughts they after made compound, and at this rate they multiplied their characters, and assigned one or more of them for each particular word.

This study of letters is, in my opinion, the source of the Chinese ignorance, because they employ all their days in this study, and have no leisure so much as to think of other sciences, fancying themselves learned enough if they can but read. However, they are far from understanding all their letters: it is very much, if, after several years insatiable study, they are able to understand fifteen or twenty thousand. The vulgar sort of the learned content themselves with less; and I cannot believe, that there was ever any doctor that understood the third part, for they reckon upwards of twenty four thousand.

As for strangers, it is scarce credible how much this study disgusts them; it is an heavy cross to be forced all a man's life long (for commonly it is not too long for it) to stuff his head with this horrible multitude of figures, and to be always occupied in deciphering imperfect hieroglyphicks, that have in no manner no analogy with the things they signify: there is not the least charm in this, as in the sciences of Europe, which, in fatiguing, do not cease to recompense the weary mind with delight. It is not in China, that a man may not be discouraged, to seek out more sublime motives, to excite his tired inclination; to make a virtue of necessity, and to please one's self to think, that this study, how crabb'd and ingrateful soever it seems, is not fruitless, because it is a sure way to bring men to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

It is that way whereby we make ourselves understood by the learned; whereby we insinuate ourselves into their spirits, and thereby prepare them for the great truths of the christian religion; there is not any person, whom this hope of preaching the gospel does not encourage and inspirit. We cannot also doubt, but that our blessed Lord may accompany the effects of our good will, with a particular

ticular blessing ; and it is more than possible, that if it had not been for the assistance of the missionaries, they would never have been so great proficient, as to make such a progress, that has enabled the ablest doctors of the empire.

Amongst these characters, there are some of different sorts. The first are almost out of use, and they preserve them only out of veneration. The second, not so ancient by far, take place very in publick inscriptions ; when there is occasion for them, they consult books, and, by the help of a dictionary, it is easy to decypher them. The third, much more regular and fair, serve for the impression, and also for the ordinary writing ; nevertheless, the strokes and draughts of them being very exact and curious, there needs a considerable time to write them. And for that reason, they have contrived a fourth kind of writing, the characters whereof being more joined, and less distinguished from another, facilitate the writing faster. For that reason, they are called Voluble Letters. These three last characters do much resemble one another, and do answer to our capital letters, to the printed letters, and ordinary writing.

Instead of a pen, they use a pencil held in the hand, not obliquely, as our painters, but directly, as if the paper were to be prick'd. The Chinese always write from top to bottom, and begin their first letter where ours end ; so that, to read their books, the last page must first be sought for, which with them is the beginning : Their paper being very thin and almost transparent, they are fain to double it, for fear lest the letters do run into one another when they write on the backside : but these doubled leaves are so even, that one can hardly perceive it.

To write a bad hand was never in China, as formerly in France, a sign of nobility ; every body is ambitious to write fair ; and, before one finds any

is admitted to the first degree of learning, he must give a specimen of his fair hand. A letter in a composition, in a work, in a petition, is a considerable fault; and because one stroke often alters the whole sense, there needs no more to make one, upon examination, to lose the degree of doctor, and consequently to ruin his fortune. So that all the mandarins write fair, and the emperor excels at that, as in all other things.

Printing, which is but an art in its infancy in Europe, hath been, from all antiquity, in use in China; however it is something different from ours; we have but few letters, from which we can compose huge volumes, by putting them together, few characters suffice, because those that have served for the first, last are still employed for all the others. The prodigious number of China characters hinder you from using this way, except only in some restrictions that concern the palace, and title pages, into which few letters can come in: on all other occasions they find it more easy to engrave their letters upon wooden boards, and the charge is much less.

This is the way they go to work. He, who intends to print a book, gets it fair written over by a master scribe, the engraver glews each leaf upon an even smooth table, and then the draughts with the graving tool are done so exactly, that the characters have a perfect resemblance with the original; so that the impression is good or bad, according as a good or bad scribe hath been employed; this skill of the graver is so great, that one cannot distinguish that which is imprinted from what was written by the hand, when they have made use of the same paper and ink.

It must be confess'd that this sort of printing is somewhat inconvenient, inasmuch as the boards must be multiplied as much as the leaves, so that
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an indifferent big chamber will serve to contain all the little tables, that served for the impression of a large volume; yet when the engraving is done, one is not obliged at the same time to draw off all the copies, by running a venture of not selling above half, and ruin his estate by a needless charge. The Chinese print their leaves, according as they put them off; and the wooden plates, which they easily fill over again, after they have drawn off two or three hundred copies, serve for many other different impressions. Besides that, they have no occasion for a corrector of the press; for, provided that the leaf be exactly written, it is very rare that the engraver makes any faults, which is none of the least advantages.

The paper of China seems so fine, that they imagined in France that it was of silk, or cotton; but cotton is not so proper for that purpose as people imagine; and the artificers have assured me, that the little threads of silk cannot be so small enough to compose an uniform paste, sufficient for the leaves. All the China paper is made of the bark, or inward rhind of Bamboo, which is twice more even, thicker, straiter, and stronger than the paper they throw away the first rhind, as too hard and thick; the undermost, as being whiter, softer, pounded with fair water, serves for the matter whereof they compose paper, which they take up with frames or moulds, as long and broad as they think fit, as we do here: there are some of ten or twelve feet long; and the paper of the leaves is white, and much more even and finer than ours.

Instead of gléw they pass also upon it, which does not only hinder it from fading, but renders it also so shining, that it appears as if it were silver, or impregnated with varnish. It is extremely smooth under the pen, but especially under the pencil, that requires an even ground.

and sticky, like our paper, the little threads separate, and the letters are never well terminated.

For all that the China paper is not lasting, it is subject to fret; any moisture or dust sticks to it; and, by reason of its being made of the bark of a tree, worms infestably breed in it, if care be not taken to wash the books now and then, and expose them to the sun, so that they cannot preserve in China, as we do in Europe, ancient manuscripts; and they continually renew the libraries, which are therefore only curiosities, because they consist of authentick copies of ancient originals.

Since I have told your grace all things that concern the books and printings of China, I hope you will not take it amiss if I speak a word or two concerning the particular quality of their ink: It is most excellent; and they have hitherto vainly tried in France to imitate it; that of Nankim is most set by; and the sticks made of it so very curious, and of such a sweet scent, that one would be tempted to keep some of them tho' they should be of no use at all.

I say sticks of ink, for it is not a liquor like ours; it is solid, and resembles our mineral colours, tho' lighter by far: they make it into all figures; the more usual are four-square, but not so broad as long, about half an inch thick. There are some of them gridded with figures of dragons, birds, and flowers; they contrive for that purpose pretty moulds of wood so curiously wrought, that one would have much ado to make any thing more compleat upon them.

When one has a mind to write, they have a little polish'd marble upon the table, made hollow at the end proper to hold water; they infuse one end of the stick therein, which they rub gently upon the smooth part of the marble; and in a moment, according as they rub, there is produced a liquor, more

or less black, wherein they dip the point of the pencil to write with. This ink is shining, extremely black, and altho' it sinks when the paper is so fine, yet does it never extend further than the pencil, so that the letters are exactly terminated, how gross soever the strokes be.

It hath moreover another quality, that makes it admirable good for designing, that is, it admits of all the diminutions one can give it; and there are many things that cannot be represented, the life, without using this colour. In a word, it is not so difficult to be made as people imagine, altho' the Chinese use lamp-black, drawn from divers matters, yet the best is made of hogs grease, burnt in a lamp; they mix a sort of oil with it, to make it softer, and pleasant odours, to suppress the oil smell of the grease and oil. After having reduced it to a consistence, they make of the paste little lozenges, which they cast in a mould; it is at first very heavy; but when it is very hard, it is not so weighty by half, and that, which they give for a pound, weighs not above eight or ten ounces.

The binding of books in China is likewise very pretty and curious, tho' it comes much shorter off our; they don't gild upon the edges, nor so much as colour them. The ordinary books are covered with a grey pasteboard, handsome enough. They bind others according as they please; in a fine satin, or a kind of flower'd taffaty, that is very cheap, and is commonly made on purpose for this use. I have seen some covered with rich silk, & cover'd with gold and silver; the form is always the same, but they are at cost, according to the matter they are willing to employ. I should never have presumed, my lord, to take the liberty to set down all these ridiculous circumstances, if I were not persuaded, that a true account is not always disagreeable to learned men, who, like you, are acquainted beforehand with

and essential matters. But I now present you with something more solid, which, without doubt, you may have read: but I add it in this place briefly, only to refresh your memory.

The first history, that was in the world, was, without controversy, the book of Genesis; but it must be added, that, of all the books that have reached our knowledge, those of China are the first that have been published: they name them by way of excellence, The Five Volumes; and the Chinese hold nothing more sacred than the doctrine therein taught. It is about four thousand three hundred years since the emperor Hoamti, after he had invented the characters, composed treatises of astronomy, arithmetic, and medicine.

Near upon three hundred years after, they made a collection of all the ordinances, and writ the history of king Yao, a prince recommendable for his piety, prudence, and the mighty care he took to establish a model of government in the state. Chun and Shu, his successors, were no less famous; they regulated the ceremonies of the sacrifices, that they were bound to offer to the supreme Master of heaven, and to the inferior spirits that presided over rivers and mountains; they divided the empire into provinces; they fix'd their different situation, with respect to the constellations of heaven; they regulated the taxes that the people were to pay; they made several other constitutions very wholesome and proper for introducing good manners, and very necessary for the publick quiet. All these things were written; and whatever, these three emperors have left behind them to posterity, hath been always considered by the Chinese as oracles.

Nevertheless, because some things ever escape the notice of the first laws, the emperors who reigned a thousand seven hundred and seventy six years before our Saviour, upon mature deliberation, and by the prudent

prudent counsel and advice of their ministers, and put themselves obliged to make an addition of new ones. They report that Caotson, a prince in whom piety and zeal in religion did infinitely increase the noble qualities he had received from nature, saw in a dream the figure of a man coming from heaven: after he awoke, the image remained so lively engraven upon his mind, that he caused him to be sought for, and found him at length amongst the nations. Scarcely as this man apply'd himself to the government, he seemed to be inspired, and made several beneficial regulations, that perfected the ancient ordinances, which were again augmented under succeeding reigns, insomuch that, being all collected together, there was a book composed of them which the Chinese call * Chu-kim, which amongst them is of as great authority, in reference to the political state, as Moses and the prophets are amongst the Jews, as to what concerns the worship of God, and form of religion.

The second book, which the Chinese reverence for its antiquity, is a long continuation and series of odes and poems, composed under the reigns of the third race †: where are described the manners and customs of the petty kings of China, who governed the provinces under the emperor's jurisdiction. Confucius mentions them with great marks of respect; which makes us incline to judge, that in process of time they had been corrupted by a mixture of several bad pieces, since several things are found in them very ridiculous, not to say, impious. Fohi, founder of the monarchy, composed before that time poems of this nature; but they were so obscure, that what care soever they took to put a good construction on them, yet have they been forced to confess that they were not intelligible. This obscurity, so unfathomable to the most learned heads

* The first book called *Chu-kim*.

† The second book *Chi-kim*.

had given occasion to many superstitions. The Bonzes wrogt them to a wrong use, and make them say what they please; they are to them an inexhaustible fountain of fables and chimeras, which they make use of, to cause the people to pin their faith upon their lies. However, they have compiled some of them, which holds the third rank amongst classic authors.

The fourth contains the history of several princes, their virtues, vices, and maxims of the government, that have been collected by Confucius, and commented upon by his disciples.

The fifth treats of customs and ceremonies. There is mention made of temples, sacred vessels; of the duty of children to their parents, and wives to their husbands; rules of real friendship, civilities, of hospitality, musick, war; of funeral honours, and of a thousand other things that regard society.

These five books are very ancient, and all the others, that have authority in the empire, are nothing but copies or interpretations of them. Amongst abundance of authors who have taken pains about these famous originals, none is so conspicuous and eminent as Confucius; they have a great esteem, especially for that work he compiled in four books, upon the ancient laws, which are look'd upon as the rule of perfect government. There he treats of the great art of reigning, of mediocrity, virtues, and vices, of the nature of things, and of common duties. This last tome, notwithstanding, is not so much the work of Confucius, as of Mencius his disciple, whose life was less regular than that of his master, but his stile more eloquent and pleasant.

Besides

The third book *Kim.*

† The fourth *Tchun-tzion.*

The fifth *Jing.*

Besides these nine books, there be some others much in vogue, as the universal history of the empire, the truth of which is more confirmed in China, than it is in our most noted histories in Europe. The books that treat of the education of children, of obedience, of loyalty, are ascribed to Confucius. You have some which discourse of medicine, agriculture, plants, of the military art, of arts liberal and mechanick, of particular histories, astronomy, philosophy, and a great number of other parts of mathematicks. In short, they have their romances, comedies, and, what place in the same rank, an abundance of treatises composed by the Bonzes, concerning the worship of the deities of the country, which they alter, diminish, and increase, according as they find it necessary to inveigle the people, and swell their revenue.

Of all these books they have compiled numerous libraries, some whereof were composed of above forty thousand volumes; but all these brave works that antiquity took so much pains to bring forth, which private persons had amassed with so vast expences, were well-nigh all destroyed by the tyrannical order of one emperor. Three hundred years, or thereabouts, after the death of Confucius, that is to say, two hundred years before the birth of our Saviour, the emperor Chihoamti, illustrious by his valour and military science, of which he was master beyond all his predecessors, and still more famous for the prodigious wall he caused to be built, to secure his territories from the interruptions of the Tartars, resolved to extirpate all sciences; and not satisfied with putting a great number of doctors to death, he ordered his subjects, upon pain of death, to set fire on all the books in the empire, except those that treated on agriculture, medicine, and surgery.

This conflagration, the most remarkable that ever the republick of letters suffered, had like to have

ruined the empire, and would in time have turned the most polite and accomplished state, into the most barbarous and ignorant kingdom in the world, if, after the tyrant's death, the love of sciences, that began to revive in all mens breasts, had not in some measure repaired this loss.

The old men, who according to custom had, during their youth, learned almost all these books by heart, received orders to write them faithfully over : They found some of them in the tombs, that the zealous had concealed, to which they gave a resurrection, by publishing them in another edition. Some of them they fetch'd from the graves, and holes of walls, that indeed suffered great damage by moisture and worms ; however, very serviceable to those who laboured after their restoration, for what was defaced in some was intire in others.

All this care did not keep the new edition from defects ; there remain in some places several breaks ; and there have been inserted into others some pieces by the bye, that were not in the originals. The Chinese themselves take notice of these faults, and of some others of less moment ; but they are so superstitious in preserving what was handed down to them from antiquity, that they pay reverence even to its faults.

I should not, my lord, afford you a light diffusive enough into the Chinese literature, should I not speak more particularly of Confucius, who makes the principal ornament of it. He is the most pure source of their doctrine ; he is their philosopher, their law giver, their oracle ; and, albeit he was never king, one may nevertheless avouch, that, during his life, he governed a great part of China, and that he hath had, since his death, a greater share than any one in the administration of the affairs of state, by the maxims that he had promulgated, and the fair examples that he had exhibited ; so that he is still the model of all honest men :

men: his life hath been writ by several persons. I shall report what they commonly say of it.

Confucius, whom the Chinese name Koon-tse, was born in the province of Quammun, the thirty-seventh year of the reign of the emperor Kün, four hundred fourscore and three years before the incarnation of our Saviour; the death of his father, that preceded his birth, made them call him Tceffe, which signifies Child of Sorrows; he derived his pedigree from Tiny, twenty-seventh emperor of the second race: how illustrious ever this family might be by a long series of kings, it became much more so by the life of this great man: He eclipsed all his ancestors, but he gave his posterity a lustre that still continues, after more than two thousand years. China acknowledges no true nobility but in this family, mightily respected by sovereigns, who have derived from thence, as from the source, the laws of perfect government, and no less beloved by the people, to whose happiness he hath so successfully contributed.

Confucius did not proceed by the ordinary degrees of childhood, he seemed rational a great deal sooner than other men; for he took delight in nothing that other children are fond of: Playing, going abroad, amusements proper to his age, did not at all concern him; he had a grave, a serious deportment, that gained him respect, and was, at that very time, a preface of what one day he was like to be: but that, which distinguished him the most, was his exemplary and unbiaſed piety. He honoured his relations; he endeavoured in all things to imitate his grandfather, who lived then in China, respected and admired by all for his exemplary sanctity; and it was observable, that he never eat any thing but he prostrated himself upon the ground, and offered it to the Supreme Lord of heaven.

When he was a child, hearing his grandfather sigh a deep sigh, he came up to him, and when he had saluted him, bowing several times to the very ground, *May I be so bold, says he, without injuring the respect I owe you, to ask you the occasion of your grief? Perhaps, you are afraid that your posterity may neglect the care of virtue, and dishonour you by their vice. What put this thought into your head?* says Coum-tse to him, and where have you learned to speak after this manner? *From yourself, replied Confucius; I attentively hear you every time you speak, and I have often heard you say, that a son, who by his manner of living does not keep up to the reputation of his ancestors, degenerates from them, and does not deserve to bear their name. When you spoke after that manner, did not you think of me? and might not that be the thing that troubles you?* This good old man was overjoyed at this discourse, and after that seemed not to be disquieted.

Confucius, after his grandfather's death, was a constant adherer to Tsem-se, a famous doctor of those times; and under the conduct of so great a master, he became in a short time a mighty proficient in the knowledge of antiquity, which he look'd upon, even then, as the most perfect model. This love for the ancients had like one day to have cost him his life, tho' he was then but sixteen years of age: for, discoursing with a person of the highest quality, who spoke of the obscurity and unprofitableness of the Chinese books, this child read him somewhat too severe a lecture concerning the subject that is due to them.

The books you speak of, says Confucius, contain profound doctrine: the sense of which ought not to be understood by the learned: the people would misunderstand them, could they comprehend them of themselves. Your dependence of judgments, by which the

stupid are subject to the learned, is very prejudicial and useful in human society: were all families equally rich, and equally powerful, there would remain no form of government: but there would happen yet a more strange disorder, if men were equally knowing, every one would be for governing, and nobody would believe himself obliged to obey.

Some time ago, added this writer, one of the vulgar spoke to me as you do. I did not wonder at it; but I admire at present that a doctor, as you are, should speak to me like that man of the dregs of the people. This discourse, one would think, should gain the affection and respect of the Mandarin: but confusion, that possessed him to be thus gravelled by a child, did so irritate him, that he resolved to be revenged. He caused his house to be invested by his menial servants, and, without doubt, he would have committed some violence, had not the king, who had notice of it, given him orders to withdraw.

When Confucius was a little more advanced in years, he made a collection of the most excellent maxims of the ancients, which he intended to follow, and inspire into the people. Each province was at that time a distinct kingdom, which a prince, in subjection to the emperor, governed by particular laws: he levied taxes, disposed of all places of trust, and made peace as he judged expedient. These petty kings had sometimes differences among them; the emperor himself stood in fear of them, and had not always authority enough to make himself be obey'd by them.

Confucius being persuaded that the people would never be happy, so long as interest, ambition, and false policy should reign in all these petty courts, resolved to preach up a severe morality, to prevail upon men to condemn riches and worldly pleasures, and esteem temperance, justice, and other virtues.

to involve them with grandeur and magnanimity, to root against all the temptations of this life, a sincerity incapable of the least disguise, even in respect of the greatest princes; in fine, to teach them a kind of life that should oppose the passions, and should intirely cultivate reason and virtue.

That which is most to be admired is, That he preached more by his example than by his words; so that he every where reaped very considerable fruit from his labours. Kings were governed by his counsels, the people revered him as a saint; every body commended him, and even those, who could not be brought to imitate his actions, did nevertheless admire them: but sometimes he took upon him such a severity, as his greatest friends and admirers could never comply with.

Being chosen to fill a considerable place of trust in the kingdom of Lou, inless than three months time, after he exercised the charge, he introduced such a prodigious change, that the court and provinces were quite another thing than they were before. The neighbouring princes began to be jealous; they perceived, that a king, ruled by a man of this character, would quickly render himself too powerful, since nothing is more conducive to make a state flourish than order, and an exact observance of laws. The king of Tci assembled his ministers, and propounded to them an expedient to put a stop to the carriere of this new government: after a long deliberation, this was the expedient they bethought themselves of.

They chose a great company of young maids, handsome, well educated, and perfectly well instructed in whatsoever might please. Then, under pretence of an ambassy, they presented them to the king of Lou, and to the principal officers of his court; the present was joyfully accepted, and obtained its desired effect; they thought of nothing but of diverting the fair strangers;

for several months together there was nothing but feasting, dancing, and comedies, and pleasure was the only business of the court.

Confucius, perceiving that the publick affairs would suffer by it, endeavoured to bring men to themselves again; but this new kind of life had so charmed them, that all his exhortations proved ineffectual: there was no remedy, the severity of the philosopher, whether he would or no, must give place to the gallantry and irregularities of courtiers. So that he thought it did not stand with his reputation to remain any longer in a place where reason was not listened to, and he resigned up his place to the prince, and sought other kingdoms more inclinable to follow his maxims.

But he met with great obstacles, and run from province to province, almost without reaping any advantage; because the politicians dreaded him, and the ministers of princes had no mind to have a competitor, who was able to lessen their authority, or deprive them of their credit. So that, forsaken by all the world, he was often reduced to the utmost extremity, in danger of being starved, or to lose his life by the conspiracy of mischievous men. Nevertheless, all these disgraces did not move him; and he would often say, *That the cause he defended was too good to apprehend any evil consequences from it; that there was not that man so powerful, that could hurt him; and that, when a man is elevated to heaven by a sincere desire of perfection, he is so far from fearing a tempest, that he does not so much as bear the noise in the lower world.*

So that he was never weary of instructing those who loved virtue. Amongst a great company of disciples that put themselves under his tuition, he employ'd some to write a fair hand; others apply themselves to argue exactly, and to deliver them-

He would eloquently in publick. He would have others study to frame to themselves a true idea of a good government: but he counselled those, for whom he had a more particular kindness, to govern themselves well, to cultivate their minds by meditation, and to purify their hearts by virtue.

Human nature, would he often say, *came from Heaven to us most pure and perfect, in process of time, ignorance, the passions and evil examples have corrupted it, all consists in the re-instating it, and giving it its primitive beauty: and, that we may be perfect, we must re-ascend to that point, from whence we have descended. Obey Heaven, and follow all the orders of him who governs it. Love your neighbour as yourself; never suffer your senses to be the rule of your conduct, but be taught to reason in all things: it will instruct you to think well, to speak discreetly, and to perform all your actions holily.* He sent six hundred of his disciples into different places of the empire, to re-form the manners of the people; and not satisfy'd to benefit his own country, he often took a resolution to pass the seas, and extend his doctrine to the extremity of the universe. There is scarce any thing can be added either to his zeal, or to the purity of his morality, they were so superlative. Methinks he sometimes speaks like a doctor of the new law, rather than like a man that was brought up in the corruption of the law of nature: and that, which persuades me, that hypocrisy had no share in what he said, is, That his actions never bely'd his maxims. In fine, his gravity and mildness in the use of the world, his rigorous abstinence (for he pass'd for the soberest man of the empire) his contempt of the good things of the world, that continual attention and watchfulness over his actions, and then (which we find not among the sages of antiquity) his humility and modesty would make a man apt to judge that he was not a meer philosopher formed by reason,

reason, but a man inspired by God for the reformation of this new world.

The Chinese report, that he had frequently been saying in his mouth, *It is in the West where the true saint is found*: and this sentence was so imprinted upon the spirit of the learned, that sixty-five years after the birth of our Saviour, the emperor Hwang-ti, touched with these words, and determined by the image of a man that appeared to him in a dream coming from the West, sent ambassadors that way, with strict orders to continue their journey till they should meet the saint whom Heaven had acquainted him with.

It was much about the same time that St. Thomas preached the christian faith in the Indies; now, if these Mandarines had followed his orders, peradventure China might have received benefit from the preaching of this apostle. But the danger of the sea, that they feared, made them stop at the first island, where they found the idol Fo, or Foe, who had corrupted the Indies several years before, with his damnable doctrine: they learnt the superstitions of the country, and, at their return, propagated idolatry and atheism in all the empire.

Confucius lived secretly three years, but spent the latter end of his days in sorrow, in seeing the wickedness that reigned amongst the people. He has been often heard to say, *The mountain is fallen, and an high edifice was destroyed*; to denote that the grand system of perfection, that he had erected with so much care in all the realm, was as good as overthrown. Kings, said he, one day, during his last sickness, *do not follow my maxims; I do no good in the world; wherefore it is time I should depart out of it*. At that very moment he fell into a lethargy that continued seven days, at the end of which, he gave up the ghost in the embraces of his disciples.

He was honoured by the whole empire, that from
 all provinces, they honoured him as a saint, and influ-
 with a veneration of him, which in
 will never have an end but with the
 world. They have built palaces for him after his
 death in all the provinces, whither the learned at
 go to pay him honours. There are to
 in several places these titles of honour writ
 in large characters, *To the great Master. To the head*
Teacher. To the Saint. To him who taught Emperors
and Kings. However, which is very extraordinary,
 the Chinese do never deify him; they, I say, who
 have given the quality of God, or, as they speak,
 the quality of pure spirits to many Mandarines, much
 inferior to him, as if Heaven, that had given him
 birth for the reformation of manners, was unwilling
 that such a well-ordered life, should, after his death,
 administer occasion of superstition and idolatry.

They preserve to this day in China mimicks that
 represent him to the life, and pretty well agree with
 what history hath left us concerning him. He was
 no handsome man; he had moreover upon his fore-
 head a swelling, or a kind of wen, that disfigured
 him, which made others often to take notice of
 to humble him, otherwise his stature was so comely
 and proportionable, his behaviour so grave, his
 voice so strong and shrill, that if he spoke with never
 so little warmth, one could not chuse but be affected,
 and hear him with respect: but the maxims of mo-
 rality he hath scattered here and there in his works,
 or which his disciples took care to collect, draw a
 much more lively and advantageous portraiture of
 his soul. I have need an intire volume to re-
 late them all. I have taken the few following out
 of a book composed by one of the principal Manda-
 rines of the empire, who rules at present in Pekin.

Maxim I.

Beauty is not to be desired by a wise man.

Confucius, going to see the king of a province, found him with a lord his favourite who was mighty beautiful. The king, so soon as he saw him come, said to him smiling, *Confucius, if thy countenance could be changed, I would willingly give you all the beauty of this young courtier.* Sir, answered the philosopher, *that is not the thing I wish; the exterior form of a man is of little use to the publick good. What do you desire then,* said the prince? *I desire,* my lord, says he, *in all the members of the empire that just symmetry that makes up the beauty of the government, and keeps the body of the state from deformity.*

Maxim II.

A man must keep within bounds, if he means to be happy.

So soon as he understood that his mother was dead, he came into his country to pay his last duties to her; he wept for her bitterly, and spent three days without eating, which was perhaps too much; yet a philosopher of that country thought it not enough, who said to Confucius: *As for me, I have been seven days without taking sustenance, upon the death of my relations; and you, who are grandson to a saint, on whom all the world casts their eyes to see how you will imitate him, you have satisfied yourself with three days abstinence.* Confucius answered him, *Excesses have been enjoined by the ancients to restrain the indiscreet, and stir up the backward. It is our duty to be obedient to the laws, if we would not go astray; it is in this golden mean that wisdom consists. That you may never stray out of it, remember that virtue is not an excess, and that perfection hath its limits.*

Maxim III.

A man ought to change often, if he would be excellent in wisdom.

A person of quality said one day to Confucius, *Your grandfather was never wanting in any duty.*

in respect of great persons; nevertheless his
 ambition, tho' long, never obtained, or got footing: How
 do, all mankind, follow yours should be followed, seeing
 you have a magnificent gravity which is very rough to
 all men, and produces sometimes to haughtiness? This
 is not the way to be welcome at princes courts. Every
 one has answered Confucius, in my grand-
 father's time princes and officers were polite; they de-
 lighted in order, every one kept his station; to insinuate
 a man's self in their affections, it behoved a man to be
 polite, and regular, like them. At this day men value
 nothing but courage and haughtiness, wherewith princes
 encourage to inspire their officers; a man ought to
 change with the world, that he may be in a capacity to
 win it: A wise man would cease so to be, should he
 always act as the wise men of former times acted.

Maxim IV.

The nobility are not always the greatest men in the
 kingdom.

Confucius, coming to the court of one of the kings
 of China, was very well received. This prince al-
 lowed him an apartment in his palace, and came to
 visit him there himself; at the end of the visit he
 said to him, You come not for nothing into my state;
 probably you have a design to do me some good. My lord,
 replied Confucius, I am but an unprofitable man, yet
 I would, if your majesty will but follow my counsel,
 you will not be the worse for it: my intent is to present
 to you wise men, to fill the principal places of your state.
 With all my heart, says the prince, Who are they?
 My lord, Li-tzu, the son of a husbandman, is a man on
 whom you may rely. The king burst out a laughing;
 How, says he, can a husbandman? I have not employ-
 ment enough for the lords of my court, and would you
 have me take a labourer into my service.

The philosopher, without being moved, replied,
 Pictures of all grades and conditions, altho' it is more
 easily applied to a mean condition; we have two
 kingdoms

kingdoms in the empire that have labourers*. What inconvenience of that character govern yours? The court hath hitherto supply'd you of evil ministers; suffer a country with a wise man. You want employment for all the lords that encompass the court; if you were rewarded, you would find more places than officers; nay, and perhaps would be forced to call for labourers to supply them. When the body of the nobility does not furnish great men, the great men that may be chosen from the people must be chosen, and of them must be composed the body of the nobility.

Maxim V.

A small fault often denotes great qualities.

He one day advis'd the king of Ouz to fix a certain great officer at the head of his army; but the king excus'd himself for not doing it, because that, being formerly a Mandarin, he took a couple of eggs from a country fellow. *A man who hath abus'd his authority, says he, deserves not to be longer to command. These sentiments of equity, are very laudable in a king; but perhaps the Mandarin's moderation, that stole but two eggs, is no less to be admired. Such a small fault, in the whole life of a man, denotes in him great qualities. In a word a prudent prince makes use of his subjects in the government, as a carpenter uses timber in his works, he does not reject one good beam, because there is a flaw in it, provided it be strong enough to support a whole edifice. I would not advise your majesty, for the loss of a couple of eggs, to turn off a captain, who may conquer you two realms.*

Maxim VI.

A wise prince will be no great speaker, nor deliver his opinion first.

The same king one day held a council in presence of Confucius, where he spoke of some affairs with such a show of wit, that his ministers applauded him, and forthwith allowed him to be in the right, and comply'd with him, without more ado. At the close the king said to Confucius, *What's your judgment of the course we have taken in our last deliberation?* Sir, says the philosopher, *I do not perceive that they have yet deliberated: you spoke with a great deal of wit; your ministers, very desirous to please you, have fawningly repeated the discourse; they have told your opinion, and not their own; and, when you adjourned the assembly, I still expected the beginning of the council.*

Some days after the same king asked him his advice concerning the present government: He answered him, *No body speaks ill of it. That is my desire,* says the king. *And that, sir, is what you ought not to desire,* replies Confucius: *When a sick person is forced to be fed with flattering promises of perfect health, he is not far from death; a man is bound to discover to the prince the defects of the mind, with the same liberty men discover to the physician the maladies of the body.*

Maxim VII.

The wise man goes forward apace, because the right way is always the shortest; on the contrary, the crafty politician arrives later at his end, because he walks in by turns and crooked paths.

The king of Ouei confessed to Confucius, that there was nothing so fine as wisdom; but the difficulty of acquiring it discouraged the most resolute, and diverted the best disposed minds. *As for my part,* added he, *I have used endeavours, but all in vain; I am resolv'd to torment myself no longer about it, and a small parcel of policy will supply the defect of that wisdom that is necessary to good governing.* Sir, answered Confucius, *'tis true, wisdom is seated on a lofty*

lofty place, but the road to it is not so difficult as you imagine, it grows plainer and plainer as you go on; and, once got at it, one cannot get back without running great danger to fall down the precipice in such a sort, that a wise man cannot be going so, without doing violence to himself in some respect.

But do you think that a prince hath any visible when he marches in the indirect paths of an artificial and knavish policy? All these refinements and subtilties perplex the spirit: and how shall one disengage one's self? None enter into a maze without danger, since you will lose your way there; and, if you choose to get out, it is after a great many wanderings, and errors, and disquiets of mind. Take you which way you please, for me, sir, I am persuaded, that in a popular government, solid and constant virtue goes further than the most subtle and refined policy.

Maxim VIII.

Those, who desire the most perfect state, do not always search the perfection of the state, but the necessity. *Would you be fix'd in the world?* Fix this in your mind, that to take up a new course of life is nothing else but to pass from one trouble to another.

A prince, being wrought upon by the life that Confucius led, perceived those first desires of wisdom springing up in his heart, that a good education and good examples are wont to infuse into young persons when they have not been yet corrupted by the commerce of the world. He went to find him out and told him, That he was resolved to abandon all things to become one of his disciples; for, the truth is, there are a thousand sorrows to be undergone in that roughness of life, wherein my birth engageth me, whereas yours seems to me full of sweetness and delight.

Since 'tis the sweetness you look for in my state, answered Confucius, I should not advise you to enter upon it: a man oftentimes meets with trouble, the more

Heaven, which hath inspired me with the love of a public life, hath been pleased to send me into the world to rule. Be a king, and do not seek after peace too much; but rather, if you be not willing to lose your states, behave yourself gallantly against your enemies; but fight more courageously against your passions, and against being in love with a sweet and easy life, if you have not a mind to destroy yourself.

Maxim IX.

Those who are diligent, and would do all, put off many things till the next day.

His own son said to him one day, I carefully apply myself to all sorts of study, I omit nothing whereby to become a good scholar, and yet I make small progress. His wife father said to him, Omit something, and you will make a great progress. Amongst all those that take long journeys a foot, did you ever see one that ran? In all things you must go orderly to work, and not desire to embrace that which is not suitable to your abilities, otherwise your labour will be useless. The saints first of all apply themselves to the most easy things; success gives them courage and strength to grapple with more difficult things, by little and little they become perfect. Those who like you would do all in one day, do nothing all their life: On the other hand, those who never apply themselves but to one thing, find at the long run that they have done all.

Maxim X.

One might not wonder that the wise man walks slower in the way of virtue, than the ill man does in that of vice, passion hurries, and wisdom guides.

One of his friends complained of the small progress he made in virtue; I have labour'd, said he, for several years to imitate the primitive saints, and I am still imperfect; had I but never so little applied myself to imitate the wicked, and follow their example,

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I should have rid a great deal of ground in a little space; why is it not so easy to attain to perfection in virtue as in vice?

This is no wonder, says Confucius, virtue is on high, and vice is in the lowest place. It requires pains and time to go upward, one minute suffices to fall down the precipice. However, let me intreat you not to let yourself be abused by this seeming easiness. It is true, that one is sooner determined to evil than to good; but seeing one repents of it at length, it is a certain sign that there is less trouble to do well, than to persevere in evil.

Maxim XI.

True nobility does not consist in blood, but in merit: we are truly high and great, when virtue prevents our groveling with the rest of mankind.

Confucius, seeing a man carry a fish, sighted, and told them who demanded the reason of it: This fish, that might have easily preserved its life, has lost it notwithstanding, by complying with the enticing pleasures of a deceitful bait; yet this fish has a good piece, because she has not reason; but are men excusable, to lose virtue that is much more precious than life, in letting themselves be caught by the baits that the good things and vanity of the world present them with? If we knew what we wanted, we should pursue other courses to obtain it. Would you be rich? condemn every thing, nay, even the contempt and scorn men cast upon you: That man is raised to a pitch far above others, when calumny and reproaches cannot reach him.

Maxim XII.

In the state wherein we are, perseverance in well-doing consists not so much in not falling, as in rising again as often as we fall.

You are very happy, Confucius, said some Mandarines that he instructed, because arrived at the highest degree of virtue; it is a long time, I'll warrant you, since you left sin; as for us, what efforts forever we

mak

that to become good men; there passes not a day but that we commit considerable faults. Altho' every fault be pardonable. Says Confucius, you are not so unhappy as you think, in committing many: your life, as well as mine, is a long journey; the way is difficult; and our reason, half obscured by passions, furnishes but little light to guide us: what means is there to avoid stumbling sometimes in the dark? when one gets up again, the fall retards our journey, but does not quite put it off and interrupts it. It would be an unhappiness for us, to commit no more but one, like the wicked that fall but once, because the first precipice stops them; but honest good men, who continue their walking, fall often.

Maxim XIII.

No man knows half of his own faults; he would blush to appear to the eyes of others, what he appears to himself.

One complained one day, That nature, in bestowing two eyes upon men to behold the beauty of bodies, had neglected upon them that are able to see minds, and discover the secrets of hearts: thus virtue and vice, for they are confounded in the world.

Confucius said, You and I should be in a woful taking, if we were not cut short as to that matter; for we should not secure our own failings and weaknesses, we gain more by it than you are aware of; for I maintain that the philosopher would suffer more to appear weak, than the wicked man to appear vicious.

Maxim XIV.

Never speak of yourself to others, neither good nor bad; not good, because they will not believe you; nor evil, because they know more already than you would have them.

Thus he spoke one day to his disciples, who took a side eye and anon to blame themselves: to which he added,

For a man to confess his faults, when he is reproved for them, is modesty.

To lay them open to his friend is integrity, and confidence.

To reprove himself for them is humility.

But to go preach them to every body is, if one have not a great care, a piece of pride.

By this scantling of Confucius's philosophy you may judge, my lord, that reason is of all times, and of all places. Seneca hath spoken nothing better; and had I the leisure, as I have a design to make an intire collection of the maxims of our philosopher, peradventure no requisite would be wanting to give him a place amongst our sages of antiquity. I wish, at least, my lord, that the portraiture I have offered, may not displease you: were he still alive at this day, as much a philosopher as he is, I am sure he would be sensible of the approbation you should afford him. Such a testimony as yours, always clear, always sincere, must needs do a kindness to the greatest men. Perhaps hitherto in France they have not justly valued what is so much honoured in the East: but, so soon as you shall please to honour him with your esteem, every body will be persuaded that antiquity hath not flattered him, and that China, in choosing him for a master and a doctor, hath done justice to his merit. I am with a most profound respect,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most humble

and most obedient Servant

L E T T E R VIII.

To my Lord Philippeaux, Secretary of State.

*Of the particular Character of the Wit and Temper
of the Chinese.*

My Lord,

I F in this letter, which I have the honour to write to you, I confine myself only to treat of what concerns the particular character and genius of the Chinese, it is not because I forget the obligation I lie under, to give you an exact account of all the other things we are acquainted with in our voyages; yet I supposed that I could not more fitly begin to discharge this duty, than by entertaining you, at the first sight, with that which naturally ought to be pleasant to you; a captain would more willingly hear a discourse of wars, and of the bravery of the Tartars, and a countryman of the gentility of the Chinese; but when a man has such extraordinary parts as you have, and is heir to a family that has always signalized itself by its insight into sciences, and penetration in the management of the most important affairs, I was apt to believe that one could not treat of a subject that can be more proper, and more delightful to you.

Of all the people of the habitable world, there is not any one that does not stand upon his wit and ingenuity, and oftentimes the most barbarous prefer themselves before the most polite and accomplished. The inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope, whom we cannot represent to ourselves, but with a kind of horror, whom we can scarce give ourselves leave to rank amongst men, even the blacks look upon the Europeans as slaves, and upon the Hollanders as no other than a

company of stupid fellows, not versed in the method of government. The people of Siam, whose physiognomy is well enough known in France, who have in the Indies souls adapted to their bodies, do usually say, That Heaven, in distributing its benefits and natural qualities, hath granted to the French the bravery and science of war; to the English, the art of navigation; to the Hollanders, a particular knack in trading; to the Chinese, the wisdom of well-governing; but that it hath given wit to the people of Siam. Had not they imparted it to us, perhaps we should not have made such a reflexion, for it is a discovery that we owe to them. After all, we must not wonder if the Chinese, who term all the people of the East blind, have reserved to themselves the preeminence, and have believed themselves to be, without all dispute, the most intelligent nation in the world.

There is no question to be made but they are an ingenious people, but methinks no body yet hath been truly acquainted with their character. To see their libraries, universities, the prodigious number of their doctors, their observatories, and the care they take to be exact in their observations, one would be apt to conclude, that this nation is not only ingenious, but perfectly well vers'd in all sorts of sciences; that they have a vast reach, invention, and a genius for every thing. Nevertheless, altho' for these four thousand years, they have allowed recompences to learned and expert men; and tho' the fortune of an infinite number of men depends upon their good parts; yet have they not had one single man, of great achievements in speculative science: they have discovered all these precious mines, without troubling themselves to dig for them; enjoying peaceably, for so many ages, the reputation of the most knowing men in the world, because they had no body but who are more ignorant than themselves.

So that I suppose I may safely aver, without offering them any injury, that amongst the qualities which Heaven hath respectively enriched the People of the world, they have not shewed that spirit of penetration and exactness which is so necessary to those who add themselves to the search of nature. Not have they that logick which we have so much improved, that geometry that we in France have brought to such a high degree of perfection, which may pass for the master-piece of human understanding, which yet will never get admittance into their academies; and, maugre all the natural pride that possesses them, they will not stick to confess, That, as to these matters, the Europeans will in all human probability be their masters.

It is true, a philosophy they have; it is likewise true, that they lay down certain principles for the explaining the composition of bodies, their propriety, their effects. Neither are they altogether ignorant in anatomy; nay, they grant a circulation of the blood and humours; but all their notions are so generally confused, and most an end so false, that I am loath in this place to particularize them.

Their arithmetick is more perfect, altho' they do not make use of the cypher, as we do, which is notwithstanding of great use. They do not practise the rules of arithmetick by calculation; but they use an instrument composed of a little board a foot and an half long, cross which they score ten or twelve little parallel lines or sticks, upon which are strung several moveable buttons; by putting them together, or by separating them one from another, they reckon, almost as we do, by counters; but with such great dexterity and easiness, that they will keep pace with a man, let him read a book of arithmetic never so fast. At the end they find the operation performed, which they have a certain way to prove.

Their geometry is very superficial, it is reduced to a very few propositions, and to some problems of algebra, which they resolve without essentially principles, and that only by induction.

They pretend to be the inventors of musick, and to have heretofore carried it to the utmost of perfection: but either they are mistaken, or they have quite lost it; for that they practise at this day is so imperfect, that it does not so much as deserve the name of musick.

As for astronomy, it must be confessed, that never did people in the world addict themselves so constantly to it. This science is beholding to them for abundance of observations; but the court, that reports them in general, hath not been careful to descend to particulars, which would be necessary for the reaping all the benefit such mighty observations to promise. However, it hath not been unprofitable to posterity. We have above four observations, as well of the eclipses and comets, as conjunctions, that make good their chronology, and may conduce to the perfecting of ours.

Altho' their tables were imperfect, yet have they been very serviceable to regulate the time: but, when a certain continuance of years, their astronomers were obliged to make some amendments therein, because they did not exactly agree with the heavens till, in the beginning of this century, they attained some skill in our astronomy. The Europeans since have every way reformed their calendar, which business has made them so famous, and so necessary in that state, that nothing hath so much contributed to settle religion in that country, and also to defend it in the various circumstances of persecution it hath lain under.

If China hath been deficient in excellent mathematicians, they have at least had perfect astrologers: because, for the well succeeding in judicial astrology,

sumeth to be a able deceiver, and to have a
 gift of lying handiome, which no nation can
 dispute with China. There have been for these ma-
 ny ages cheating mountebanks by profession, who
 promise, by the insight they have in the motion and
 influence of the stars, the philosophers stone, and
 immortality. They mark in the almanack, every
 year, the good and bad days for building, mar-
 riages; for undertaking journies and voyages, and
 for such like actions, the success whereof depends
 more upon the wisdom and discretion of men, than
 upon the influence of the heavens.

The missionaries fearing lest they might ascribe
 the follies and ridiculous superstitions to them,
 because they make them the authors of the kalen-
 dar, thought themselves obliged to make a publick
 declaration how little hand they have in the mat-
 ter, they protested that they absolutely condemned
 them, and the emperor, that is not subject to these
 weaknesses, was willing they should explain them-
 selves, as to that business, for his particular satis-
 faction.

Medicine hath not been quite neglected and laid
 aside, but because they wanted physicks, or natural
 philosophy and anatomy, the foundation of it, they
 never made any great progress therein; yet must it
 be confessed that they have acquired a particular
 skill in pulses, that hath made them famous in the
 world. The emperor Hoampti composed a treatise
 of the famous above four thousand years ago*. Ever
 since that time the physicians of China have look'd
 upon that science as the foundation of all medicine.

They feel the pulse after such a manner as would
 make a man smile that is not accustomed to it.
 After they have apply'd their four fingers along the
 artery, and have press'd strongly and uniformly the
 patient's

patient's wrist, they relax their fingers by degrees till the blood, that was stopp'd by the pressing, hath retaken its usual course ; then a moment after they begin again to press the artery close, which they continue a considerable time ; then they, just like men that intended to touch the keys of a musical instrument, they rise and fall their fingers successively one after another, pinching softly, or hard, sometimes slower, sometimes faster, till such time as the artery answers to the touch, which the physician moves, and till the strength, weakness, disorder, and other symptoms of the disease be manifest.

They pretend that there never happens any extraordinary accident in the constitution, but does alter the blood, and consequently causes a different impression upon the vessels. It is not so much by reasoning and arguing that they are instructed in this point, as by a long experience, which much better discovers to them all these wonderful changes than theory and speculation.

When they have a long time been attentive to the voice of nature, that explains itself by the beatings of the pulse, they perfectly and only perceive those differences, which to others seem unperceptible. The pervigilium and lethargy, loss of appetite, or desire to eat, the head-ach, weakness of stomach, fulness or emptiness ; all these are the cause or the effect of some distemper in the mass of blood.

So that its motion will be at that time less frequent or quicker, fuller or weaker, uniform or irregular. Sometimes there will be an undulation or trembling, caused by the ebullition of the whole mass of the humours ; which may be perceived like to a bell that trembles after it hath been rung ; sometimes also the artery will not bear a stroke, but will swell by little and little. By pressing it, one will moreover be able to perceive several effects that do not declare themselves to the bare touch, as for as they

at time the course of the circulation, which is suspended or lessened, which begins again immediately after, with more force, will give occasion to judge differently and differently of the disposition of the heart, of the fermentation there performed, of the quality of the blood there prepared, of the obstacles that impede its passages, of gross and crude matter that overcharges it, of the nature of the spirits that too much rarify it, and precipitate transpiration. The Chinese physicians pretend to have, by a long experience, distinguished all these differences of pulses, and to have been able to know all the distempers that are incident thereto; so that they hold the patient's hand a quarter of an hour at least; sometimes the right, sometimes the left, and sometimes both of them at the same time. And after all, as if they were inspired, they play the prophet: *You are never troubled with the head-ach, say they, but it is an heaviness that bath made you drowsy; or else, You have lost your appetite, you will recover it again within three days precisely. This evening, about sunset, your head will be freer; your pulse indicates pain in the belly, unless you have eaten such meat; this indisposition will last five days, after which it will cease.* And so for other symptoms of the malady, which they find out or prognosticate pretty exactly, when they are expert in the science; for, as for others, they are commonly false prophets.

It is not to be questioned after all these testimonies we have, but that in this respect they have something extraordinary, nay, and even wonderful: however, a man should always mistrust them, and not put too much upon his guard against them, because they make use of all means imaginable to get themselves secretly instructed concerning the patient's condition before they visit them. Nay, they are so cunning (to get themselves reputation)

as to feign a kind of distemper, which sometimes they themselves procure afterwards. A person told me, that, sending for a physician and a chyrurgeon to cure him of a wound, one of them told him, *That the malady was occasioned by a small worm, that was insinuated into the flesh, which would infallibly produce a gangrene, if by some remedy or other it were not fetch'd out: that he was the only man in all the country that had this arcanum, and would put it in practice for his sake, provided he would not grudge him a considerable sum of money.* The sick person promised him he would not; and paid him part of it beforehand. But this cheating sophister, after divers unprofitable medicines, entangled, at last, a little worm in his plaister, which he pulled out an hour after in triumph, as if it came out of the very wound. His companion, that gain'd nothing by the management of this business, afterwards detected it, but it was too late; and the chyrurgeon comforted up himself more easily for the loss of his reputation, than the sick person for the loss of his money.

However the case may stand as to the capacity of the Chinese physicians, yet certain it is, that they predict the distemper easier than they cure it; and men die in their hands as they do elsewhere. They prepare their own remedies: that ordinarily consist of pills; which, according as they are prepared, are either sudorifick, purge the blood and humours, fortify the stomach, suppress vapours; or are restringent, dispose to evacuation; but seldom work by stool. They do not let blood, nor know the clyster, but since they have had correspondence with the physicians of Macao. They do not disapprove the remedy, but name it *The Remedy of the Barbarians*. They apply cupping-plasters, not only upon the scapulæ, but also upon the belly to allswage the pain of the cholick.

They are in a manner also persuaded, that the malignancy of diseases are caused by malignant and corrupted wind that hath slipp'd into the muscles, and doth ill affect all the parts of the body : the most sure means to dissipate them is to apply, in different places, red-hot needles, or buttons of fire : this is their ordinary remedy. Once I seemed to be surprized at this practice, when a Chinese said, alluding to phlebotomy, *They treat you in Europe with the sword, but here they martyr us by fire ; this mode will probably never alter, because physicians feel not the mischief they do us, and are not worse paid for tormenting us, than for curing us.*

I cannot tell whether or no they might have learnt this violent remedy of the Indians ; or whether the Indians themselves might not have received it from the Chinese physicians ; but they pretend in the Indies that fire cures all diseases : this persuasion, which they persist in, makes every day a great number miserable persons, whom they cauterize upon the slightest illness.

Yet there be some maladies that are not curable, but by this means. The people of the country, but especially the slaves, are much troubled with a violent flux, which the Portuguese call Mordetchin, occasioned by the indigestion of the stomach, and accompanied, for the most part, with continual vomitings ; the gripes it produceth are cruel, and the grief and anguish often deprives them of their wits. This grief is infallibly mortal, if they do not remedy it after the following manner : They lightly apply an iron peal red-hot to the soles of the feet ; if the patient shows any signs of feeling, they pass no further, and he is cured : if he be insensible of this first operation, they lay it on harder, and still continue to pass the peal, burning unmercifully to the very bone without desisting, till the patient complain, which puts an end to the malady and remedy. But
if

if the fire, how violent soever, makes not itself be felt, they despair of healing, and in a short time the patient dies.

Amongst all the China remedies, there are none so much esteemed as cordials; they are provided with all sorts of them, and very natural ones; for they consist for the most part of herbs, leaves, and roots. Their simples are numerous; and, if the people of the country may be believed, they have all of them sovereign and experienced virtues. I brought along with me hither near four hundred, designed in their natural colours and figures, according to those the emperor caused to be painted for his closet. Father Visdelou, one of the six jesuits his majesty sent thither Anno 1688, is very intent upon the translation of the Chinese Herbal; wherein are all the virtues and qualities of all those plants explained. This father, who hath accomplished himself in the knowledge of books, will thereto add particular reflexions of his own; and I make no question but what, he supplies us with thereupon, will enrich our botany, and satisfy the ingenious and curious.

Amongst these simples there are two that I may speak of beforehand: the first is the leaf of * *Thee*, as they call it in China; they are much divided in their opinions, touching the properties they ascribe to it. Some do maintain that it hath admirable ones; others, that it is but a fancy and meer whim of the Europeans, that are always in love with novelties, and put a value upon that which they do not understand: in that, as in all other things where men do not agree, I think we ought to take the middle path.

* *Thee* is a corrupt word of the province of Fokien, it shall be called *Tcha*; it is the term of the Mandarin language.

In China they are subject neither to gout, sciatica, nor stone; and many imagine, that Thee preserves them against all these distempers. The Tartars, that feed upon raw flesh, fall sick, and suffer continual indigestions, by soon as ever they give over drinking of it; and that they may have plenty of it, they began to furnish the emperor with almost all the horses that serve to remount his cavalry; when any one is troubled with a vertigo that overcharges the brain, he finds himself extremely relieved so soon as he acquaints himself to Thee. In France there are abundance of people that find it good for the gravel, crudities, head-aches; nay, some pretend to have been cured of the gout by it, almost miraculously; so quick and sensible has been its effect. All this proves that Thee is no chimera and conceit. Nay, some after drinking of it sleep the better, which argues that it is not proper to suppress fumes: some there be who never take it after meals, without experiencing mischievous effects; their digestion is interrupted and disturbed; and they find, a long time after, crudities, and a troublesome repletion. Others find no benefit by it neither in gout nor sciatica. A great many say, that it dries, makes lean, and that it obstructs; and that, if there be any good qualities in it, the most part of other leaves would in a manner produce the same effect. These experiments evince, that its virtue is not so universal as people imagine.

So that, in my opinion, one should speak moderately of it, both as to its good and bad qualities. Perhaps warm water alone is a good medicine against distempers, the cure of which they attribute to Thee; and there are several people that are exempt from these inconveniencies, because they are used to drink warm liquors. Nevertheless, it is certain, that Thee is of a corrosive nature, for it attenuates hard victuals, when with it is boiled, and consequently is proper

per for digestion, that is to say, for dissolution, which also proves, that it relieves obstructions, and that liquors, impregnated with its particles and salts, carry off, and more easily separate whatsoever adheres to the tunics of the vessels. This very quality is proper to consume superfluous humours, to put into motion those that stagnate and corrupt, and to evacuate others, that cause the gout and scurvy: so that Thee, with caution, is a very good remedy, altho' it be not so effectual, nor universal, but that the temperament of certain persons, the height of the distemper, together with certain occult dispositions, may many times retard the effect, or even frustrate its virtue.

To use it with benefit, it is requisite to know it, for there is more than one sort of it. That of the province of Xensi is coarse, harsh, and unpleasant. The Tartars drink of it: there is necessary to them a stronger menstruum than to the Chinese, because they feed on raw flesh. It is exceeding cheap in the country, a pound of it will cost three pence. In this same province there is found a particular species of it, more resembling moss, than the leaves of a tree, and they pretend that the oldest is of excellent use in acute distempers. They likewise administer to sick people a third sort, whose leaves are very long and thick, and its goodness increases in proportion to its being kept; but that is not the Thee in use.

That which they commonly drink in China hath no particular name, because it is gathered any where in different territories and soils: it is good, the infusion is reddish, the taste faint and somewhat bitter: the people use it indifferently at all hours of the day, and it is their most usual drink.

But persons of quality use two other kinds that are in request in China. The first is called *Theo Soumlo*; it is the name of the place where it is gathered; the leaves are somewhat long, the infusion

When it is fresh, the taste pleasant ; it smells, as they say in France, a little of violets, but this taste is not natural ; and the Chinese have often assured me, that, to be good, it ought to have no taste at all. This is that they commonly present at visits ; but it is exceeding corrosive ; perhaps the sugar they mix with it here corrects its acrimony ; but in China, where it is drunk pure, too great a use of it would be apt to spoil the stomach.

The second kind is called Thee Voui ; the leaves that are little, and inclining to black, tinge the water with a yellow colour. The taste is delicious, and even the weakest stomach always agrees with it. In winter it is to be used temperately, but in summer one cannot drink too much. It is especially good in sweetening, after travelling, running, or any other violent exercise. They give of it also to sick people ; and those, who have any care of their health, drink no other. When I was at Siam, I heard them often talk of the flower of Thee, of imperial Thee, and of several other sorts of Thee, the price of which was yet more extraordinary, than the properties they ascribe to it : but in China I heard no such thing.

Generally speaking, that the Thee may prove excellent, it ought to be gathered early, when the leaves are yet small, tender, and juicy. They begin commonly to gather it in the months of March and April, according as the season is forward ; they afterwards expose them to the steam of boiling water to soften them again ; so soon as they are penetrated by it, they draw them over copper-plates kept on the fire, which dries them by degrees, till they grow brown, and roll up of themselves in that manner we see them. If the Chinese were not such great cheats, their Thee would be better ; but they oftentimes mix other herbs with it, to swell the size at a small charge, and so get more money by it :

so that it is a rare thing to meet with any pure without mixture.

It commonly grows in vallies, and at the foot of mountains; the choicest grows in stony soils, that which is planted in light grounds holds the second rank. The least valuable of all is found in yellow earth; but in what place soever it is cultivated, care must be taken to expose it to the south; it gets more strength by that, and bears three years after being sown. Its root resembles that of a peach tree, and its flowers resemble white wild roses. The trees grow of all sizes, from two feet to an hundred, and some are to be met with that two men can scarce grasp in their arms: this is what the Chinese Herbal relates. But from my own observation I can give you the following account.

Entering upon the province of Fokien, they first made me observe Thee upon the declining of a little hill: it was not above five or six feet high, several stalks, each of which was an inch thick, joined together, and divided at the top into many small branches, composed a kind of cluster, much what like our myrtle. The trunk, tho' seemingly dry, yet bore very green branches and leaves. These leaves were drawn out in length at the point, pretty straight, an inch or an inch and an half long, and indented in their whole circumference. The oldest seemed somewhat white without, they were hard, brittle, and bitter. The new ones, on the contrary, were soft, pliable, reddish, smooth, transparent, and pretty sweet to the taste, especially after they had been a little chewed.

It being the month of September I found three sorts of fruit. In the new branches there were little slimy pease, green without, and full of yellow grains within. In others, the fruit is as big as beans, but of different figures; some round, containing a pease; others drawn out in length, that contained two: some others of a triangular figure like those very like to those that bear the tallow-berries.

in China. The first membrane or skin, wherein these seeds are inclosed, is green, very thick, and somewhat even. The second is white, and thinner; under which a third very fine pellicle covers a kind of gland, or small but perfectly round, that sticks to the bark by a little fibre, from whence it derives its nourishment. When this fruit is young, it hath bitterness in it; but, a day or two after it has been gathered, it withers; grows long and yellow, and wrinkles like an old hazel-nut; at length it becomes unctuous and very bitter. Besides that, I found a third sort of hard, old fruits, the first skin of which, between open and shut, shewed within a hard bark, brittle, and altogether resembling that of a chesnut. After I had broken it, scarce did I find any sign of fruit, so dry and flat was it grown. In some others the same fruit was pulverized, in others was found a little nut quite dried up, and covered with its first pellicle.

Amongst these fruits, a great number of them have no germ or bud, which they call females; those that have any may be sown, and produce trees; but the Chinese do commonly make use of grafts to plant. The better to understand the nature of this tree, I had the curiosity to taste the bark of the trunk and branches. I chewed likewise some of the wood and leaves; both of them seemed to me not at all bitter, so far from it, they left a relish sweet like that of liquorish, which yet one does not taste till some time after the chewing. Altho' this particular account may displease those that are not concerned in the knowledge of plants, yet I am sure that the more curious could wish a more nice and exact account, as to the delicate mixture of colours in the flower, the orderly disposition of their fibres, the conformation of the small branches and roots, and a thousand other particulars relating to the anatomy of them; but that is the business of time and leisure:

Q

leisure: I had but a quarter of an hour to examine the tree of which I have the honour to write to you.

There is in China another simple much more scarce than Thee, and upon that very account more valued which they call Gin-Sem: *Gin* signifies a man, and *Sem* a plant, or simple, as much as to say, The human simple, or the simple that resembles a man. Those who till this time have given another construction to these words are excusable, because they do not understand the emphasis of the Chinese characters, which do alone contain the true signification of terms: the learned give it abundance of other names in their writings, that sufficiently declare how much they set by it; as the spiritous simple, the pure spirits of the earth, the fat of the sea, the Panacea, and the remedy that dispenses immortality, and several others of that nature.

It is a root as thick as half the little finger, and as long again. It is divided into two branches, which makes a figure pretty like a man with his two legs: its colour inclines to yellow, and when it is kept any time it grows wrinkled, and dry'd like wood: the leaves it shoots forth are little, and terminate in a point, the branches are black, the flower violet, and the stalk covered with hair; they say that it produces but one of them; that this stalk produces three branches, and that each branch bears the leaves by fours and fives; it grows in the shade, in a moist soil, yet so slowly, that it comes not to perfection till after a long term of years. It is commonly found under a tree called *Kia-chu*, little differing from the sycamore. Altho' they fetch it from several places, yet the best came here from *Petch*. That which is at this day in use is taken in *Leau-tung*, a province depending upon China, and situated in the oriental Tartary.

Of all cordials, according to the Chinese opinion, there are none comparable to *Gin-sem*: it is sweet

and delightful, altho' there be in it a little smack of bitterness; its effects are marvellous; it purifies the blood, fortifies the stomach, adds motion to a languid pulse, excites the natural heat, and withal augments the radical moisture. Physicians never know how to make an end when they specify its virtues, and have whole volumes of its different uses. I have a collection of their receipts that I should report intire in this place, if I were not afraid to be tedious, and trespass upon your patience. I may print them hereafter, together with a great many treatises relating to the physick or medicine of the Chinese. I shall only add to what I have but now spoken, the usual course they take in distempers attended with faintness and swooning; whether it proceeds from some accident, or from old age.

Take a drachm of this root (you must begin with a little dose, and may increase it afterwards, according to the effect the former doses shall produce) dry it before the fire in a paper; or infuse it in wine, till it be tired by it; then cut it in little pieces with your teeth (and not with a knife, iron diminishing its virtue) and when it is calcined, take the powder in form of a bolus, in warm water or wine, according as your distemper will permit. This will be an excellent cordial, and by continuing it you will find yourself sensibly fortified.

Take also the same quantity of Gin-sen, or more if you be extremely weak, and when you have divided it into little pieces, infuse it in half a glass full of boiling water, or else you may boil it with the water itself; the water, if you drink it, will have the same effect. The root may serve a second time, but it abates of its force. They likewise make broths, electuaries, lozenges, and syrups, which are excellent remedies for all sorts of distempers.

They have also another root which the Portuguese and the ladies call Pao-China, which is an excellent

fudorifick, very proper to purge the humours and corrupted blood; but the description of all the simples would make me deviate too much; and is not proper for such a short letter as this.

The physicians of China do not employ apothecaries for the composition of their medicines, they prescribe and give them at the same time themselves. Sometimes in the patient's chamber, when it may be conveniently done; and sometimes in their own houses. They think it strange the Europeans should act otherwise, and that they commit the principal point of the cure to men that are not concerned in curing them; and are not solicitous about the goodness of the drugs, provided they get rid of them to their advantage: but there is another disorder in China a great deal more dangerous than that they lay to our charge, and that is, that there every body is admitted to practise physick, like other mechanic arts, without examination, or taking their degrees: so that a pitiful fellow, that knows not where to put his head, studies perhaps a physick book two or three months, and sets up for a doctor, *cum privilegio*, at the expence of the patient's life, whom he chooseth to kill, rather than be forced to starve himself for lack of employment. The vulgar, tho' ill served by them, take a strong fancy for these pickpockets, and they would reckon themselves covetous, when they are indisposed, if they did not die, or cause their relations to die some other way than by the way of nature.

Yet some of them you shall have confess their fault when it is too late; and I remember that an inhabitant of the city of Sucheu losing his daughter more through the ignorance of the physicians, than by the power of the disease, was so enraged, that he caused a paper to be printed, wherein the bad conduct of the pretended doctor was laid open, with several reflections tending to decry him; he affixed

series of it in all the publick places, and caused them to be distributed to the principal houses of the city. This revenge, or, as he termed it, this zeal for the publick good, had the effect he promised himself. The physician lost together with his reputation, all his practice, and was reduc'd to so great an extremity, that he quickly found himself in no condition to tell any body.

The Chinese, that are mean proficient in sciences, succeed much better in arts; and tho' they have not brought them to that degree of perfection we see them in Europe, yet know they in this respect not only what is necessary for the common use of life, but also whatever may contribute to convenience, neatness, commerce, and even to well-regulated magnificence; they would have got a great deal farther, had not the form of government, that hath prescribed bounds to the expences of private persons, put a stop to them. The workmen are extraordinary industrious, and if they be not so good at invention as we, yet do they easily comprehend our inventions, and imitate them tolerably well. There are made in several places of the empire glass, watches, pistols, bombs, and many other pieces of workmanship that they may thank us for; but they have had some out of mind gun-powder, printing, and the use of the compass, which are novel arts in Europe, but which perhaps we are obliged to them.

They divide the compass in twenty-four parts only, whereas we describe thirty-two; they evermore imagined that the needle did every where shew the true place of the pole, but by divers experiments, which we made before them, they have observed some variation and declension: The loadstone is found almost in every province; it comes also to them from Japan; but the grand use they make of it is in physick; 'tis bought by weight, and the best are not sold for above eight-pence or ten-pence an ounce.

I have brought one with me an inch and an half thick, which, tho' indifferently guarded, takes up nevertheless eleven pound weight; it will sail fourteen or fifteen when it is right fix'd. In fine, they are very dexterous in cutting them; for in France, tho' they bring them into all figures, yet it is not without great labour and cost. They cut mine in Nankim in less than two hours; the engine they make use of to that purpose is a plain one; and, if our workmen would use it, they would abridge their labour. I supposed, sir, that you would not be unwilling to hear an explanation of it.

It is compos'd of two jaumbs three or four feet high, arch-like, with two strings like a setting-iron, and parted by a board or shingle, which goes cross to it, and closed by a mortise in the lee-board. On the head of the jaumbs is set flat a little rolling-pin or cylinder, of an inch and an half diameter, which can turn circularly by means of a string rolled in the middle, whose two ends hanging are tied to a peg on which the workman sets his foot.

At one of the extremities of the cylinder a bar piece of iron is fastened with mastick by its centre, which piece of iron is very thin, very round and very sharp all about; it is eight inches diameter, and moves with a great swiftness, according as the stones are set high or low. In the mean time the workman presents the loadstone in one hand, and with the other the mud made of a very fine sand, which coats the iron, and serves to cut the stone; but because the iron, in going thro' the sand, thro' it about with violence, which might blind the workman, it is taken to place just under it a little board, turned in the manner of a half circle, which receives it and defends the workman.

Navigation is another point that shows the abilities of the Chinese; we have not always seen in Europe such able and adventurous sailors as we are to find in the East.

sea; the ancients were not so forward to venture themselves upon the seas, where one must lose the sight of land for a long time together. The danger of being mistaken in their calculation (for they had not then the use of the compass) made all pilots circumspect and wary.

There are some who pretend that the Chinese, a long time before the birth of our Saviour Christ, had sailed all the seas of India, and discovered the Cape of Good Hope: however that be, it is most certain, that from all antiquity they had always stout ships; and albeit they have not perfected the art of navigation, no more than they have done the sciences, yet did they understand much more of it than the Greeks and Romans; and at this day they sail as securely as the Portuguese.

Their vessels are like ours of all rates, but the model is not so fine; they are all flat bottom'd; the fore-castle is cut short without a stem, the stern open in the middle to the end, that the rudder, which they shut up as in a chamber, may be defended on the sides from the waves: this rudder, much longer than ours, is strongly tied to the stern-post by two cables that pass under the whole length of the vessel to the fore-part; two other such like cables hold it up, and facilitate the hoisting or lowering it, as occasion serves; the bar is as long as is necessary for the guiding it; the seamen at the helm are also assisted by ropes fastened to the larboard and starboard, and rolled upon the extremity of the bar they hold in their hand, which they fasten or slacken as they see occasion, to thrust or stop the helm.

The main-mast is quite towards the fore-part, the main-mast is not far from the place where we place our mizzen. A cord that goes from starboard to larboard, according as the wind chops about, serves them for a stay and shrouds; the boltsprit, which