

“ satisfaction of a patriot, in observing the preference due in most
“ instances to the laws of his own country above those of all other
“ states ; or, if his just prospects in life give him hopes of becoming
“ a legislator, he may collect many useful hints, for the improve-
“ ment even of that fabric, which his ancestors have erected with
“ infinite exertions of virtue and genius, but which, like all human
“ systems, will ever advance nearer to perfection, and ever fall
“ short of it.”

I quote the preceding observations from his prefatory discourse, which is written with uncommon elegance, and particularly interesting, not only from the information which it contains respecting the author whose works he illustrated, but for its critical remarks on the comparative merits of the Grecian orators, and for his dissertation on the Attic laws of succession, and the forms of pleading in the Athenian courts. It was no small credit to Mr. Jones to have successfully accomplished what Sir Mathew Hale, “ to whose
“ learning and diligence the present age is no less indebted, than
“ his contemporaries were to his wisdom and virtue,” had unsuccessfully attempted.

The works of Isæus are dedicated to Earl Bathurst ; and Mr. Jones takes occasion in the epistle dedicatory to inform the public, that, although he had received many signal marks of friendship from a number of illustrious persons, Lord Bathurst had been his greatest, his only benefactor ; that, without any solicitation, or even request on his part, his Lordship gave him a substantial and permanent token of regard, rendered still more valuable by the obliging manner of giving it, and literally the sole fruit which he had gathered from an incessant course of very painful labour. He adds his further acknowledgements for the more extended intentions of his Lordship, although he had not then derived any benefit from them.

This

This was the only publication of Mr. Jones, in 1778; which, however it might tend to increase his reputation, did not perhaps much advance his professional success. He had however every reason to be satisfied with the proportion of business that fell to his share, during the circuits which he regularly attended.

Mr. Jones had transmitted a copy of his translation to Edmund Burke; and the following letter contains his acknowledgement of the favour. The opinion of a great orator on any subject connected with that of his constant meditations, will not be read without interest.

MY DEAR SIR,

March 12, 1779.

I give you many thanks for your most obliging and valuable present, and feel myself extremely honoured by this mark of your friendship. My first leisure will be employed in an attentive perusal of an author, who had merit enough to fill up a part of yours, and whom you have made accessible to me with an ease and advantage, which one so many years disused to Greek literature as I have been, could not otherwise have. Isæus is an author of whom I know nothing but by fame; I am sure that any idea I had from thence conceived of him, will not be at all lessened by seeing him in your translation. I do not know how it has happened, that orators have hitherto fared worse in the hands of the translators, than even the poets; I never could bear to read a translation of Cicero. Demosthenes suffers I think somewhat less;—but he suffers greatly; so much, that I must say, that no English reader could well conceive from whence he had acquired the reputation of the first of orators. I am satisfied that there is now an eminent exception to this rule, and I sincerely congratulate the public on that acquisition. I am, with the greatest truth and regard, my dear Sir,

Your most faithful and obliged humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

Of the incidents in the life of Mr. Jones during the years 1778 and 1779, I have no particular information; we may suppose his time and attention to have been principally engrossed by his professional duties and studies, and the political circumstances of the times. His own letters, always interesting, and often instructive, with those of his correspondents, contain all that I know of him during this period; the latter afford additional evidence of the esteem in which his learning, abilities, and principles were held by men of high reputation in the rank of literature.

Mr. SWINNEY to Mr. JONES.

SIR;

Pera of Constantinople, January 1, 1778.

So high an opinion do I entertain of your humanity and politeness, as to persuade myself you will readily pardon the liberty I have taken, of sending you a Persian and Grecian manuscript. If, on perusal of one or the other book, you shall meet with a single passage that may contribute either to your instruction or amusement, my purpose will be fully answered.

Among the real curiosities I have seen at Constantinople, is a public museum, erected at the sole expence of a most learned Grand Visir, whose name and title was Rajib Pacha. This collection contains about two thousand Arabian, Persian, and Turkish manuscripts, which, the learned say, contain vast stores of erudition. It is not improbable but I may be able, on some favourable occasion, to procure you a copy of the catalogue; and then, should you be disposed to have any of the manuscripts copied, I intreat you will confer the honour upon me, of executing the commission. People assure me, but I dare not say whether with good authority or no, that the entire Decades of Livy, and the complete History of Curtius, are contained in that very precious repository: if so, who
knows

knows but majesty itself (so superlatively happy are we in a monarch who favours the arts and sciences!) may gracious'y condescend to command a copy of them?

Be pleased to accept of my warmest wishes for your health, prosperity, and very long life: and believe me to be (what I sincerely am) a lasting admirer of your abilities; and at the same time, dear Sir, &c.

SIDNEY SWINNEY.

Dr. STUART to Mr. JONES.

MY DEAR SIR;

3d October, 1778.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your most obliging letter. It is impossible for me to express the value in which I hold the favourable sentiments you have conveyed to me; and above all, that strain of cordiality and friendship which accompany them. The loss of that long letter, or dissertation, into which my performance was about to entice you, is a matter of infinite regret to me: but I hope that the object which then engaged more particularly your attention, and which was so worthy of it, is now within your reach; that the fates are to comply with your desires, and to place you in a scene where so much honour and so many laurels are to be won and gathered.

It affects me with a lively pleasure, that your taste has turned with a peculiar fondness to the studies of law and government on the great scale of history and manners. They have been too long in the management of enquirers, who were merely metaphysicians, or merely the retainers of courts. Their generous and liberal nature has been wounded and debased by the minuteness of an acute but useless philosophy, and by a mean and slavish appetite for practice
and

and wealth. It is now fit that we should have lawyers who are orators, philosophers, and historians.

But while I entreat you to accept my best thanks for your excellent letter, and express my approbation of those studies of which you are enamoured, permit me, at the same time, to embrace the opportunity of making known to you the bearer of these lines. Dr. Gillies, of whom you may have heard as the translator of Lysias, has been long my warm friend: and I have to recommend him to you as the possessor of qualities which are still more to his honour than extensive learning and real genius. Men who leave their compatriots behind them in the pursuits of science and true ambition, are of the same family, and ought to be known to one another.

Do me the favour, my dear Sir, to continue to afford me a place in your memory; and believe me that I shall always hear of your prosperity, your reputation, and your studies, with a peculiar and entire satisfaction.

I am now, and ever, yours, &c.

GILB. STUART.

P. S. In January or February, I am to send into the world a new work, in which I treat of the *public law*, and the *Constitutional History of SCOTLAND*. And, wherever you are, I am to transmit you one of the first copies, by Mr. Murray, of Fleet-Street.

Dean TUCKER to Mr. JONES.

DEAR SIR;

Gloucester, September 21, 1778.

When you first honoured me with your acquaintance, perhaps you was not aware what a troublesome correspondence you
was

was bringing yourself into. Be that as it may, I will now beg leave to avail myself of the permission which you kindly granted me of consulting you on some points. Several copies of my last tract have been in the University upwards of a fortnight; and it is probable that by this time some have vouchsafed to read it. What therefore I wish to know is, whether, in the judgment of those who have given it a perusal, I have confuted Mr. Locke's system in such a manner, that they are convinced his must be *wrong*, whatever else may happen to be *right*. If this is not the case, that is, if I have not totally confuted Mr. Locke, I need proceed no farther, for mine can have no chance to be true, if his is still supposed to be the only true one; and I shall very willingly give up the pursuit. But, if I have demolished his scheme, I have so far cleared the way to make room for my own; and, in that case, I have one or two points to consult you about.

I am,

J. TUCKER.

Mr. JONES to Lord ALTHORPE.

Temple, Oct. 13, 1775.

My dear Lord, captain, and friend, (of all which titles no man entertains a juster idea than yourself,) how shall I express the delight which your letter from Warley camp has given me? I cannot sufficiently regret, that I was so long deprived of that pleasure; for, intending to be in London soon after the circuit, I had neglected to leave any directions here about my letters; so that yours has lain almost a month upon my table, where I found it yesterday on my return from the country. I ought indeed to have written first to you, because I was a Rambler, you stationary: and because the pen has been my peculiar instrument, as the sword has been yours this summer: but the agitation of forensic business,

Y

and

and the sort of society in which I have been forced to live, afforded me few moments of leisure, except those in which nature calls for perfect repose, and the spirits exhausted with fatigue require immediate reparation. I rejoice to see that you are a votary, as Archilocus says of himself, both of the Muses and of Mars; nor do I believe that a letter full of more manly sentiments, or written with more unaffected elegance, than yours, has often been sent from a camp. You know I have set my mind on your being a fine speaker in next parliament, in the cause of true constitutional liberty, and your letters convince me that I shall not be disappointed. To this great object, both for your own glory and your country's good, your present military station will contribute not a little: for, a soldier's life naturally inspires a certain spirit and confidence, without which the finest elocution will not have a full effect. Not to mention Pericles, Xenophon, Cæsar, and a hundred other eloquent soldiers among the ancients, I am persuaded that Pitt (whom by the way I am far from comparing to Pericles) acquired his forcible manner in the field where he carried the colours. This I mention in addition to the advantages of your present situation, which you very justly point out: nor can I think your summer in any respect uselessly spent, since our constitution has a good defence in a well-regulated militia, officered by men who love their country: and a militia so regulated, may in due time be the means of thinning the formidable standing army, if not of extinguishing it. Captain * * * is one of the worthiest, as well as tallest men in the kingdom; but he, and his Socrates, Dr. Johnson, have such prejudices in politics, that one must be upon one's guard in their company, if one wishes to preserve their good opinion. By the way, the Dean of Gloucester has printed a work, which he thinks a full confutation of Locke's Theory of Government; and his second volume will contain a new Theory of his own: of this, when we meet. The disappointment to which you allude, and concerning which you say so many friendly things

things to me, is not yet certain. My competitor is not yet nominated : many doubt whether he will be ; I think he will not, unless the Chancellor should press it strongly. It is still the opinion and wish of the bar, that I should be the man. I believe, the minister hardly knows his own mind. I cannot legally be appointed till January, or next month at soonest, because I am not a barrister of five years standing till that time : now many believe that they keep the place open for me till I am qualified. I certainly wish to have it, because I wish to have twenty thousand pounds in my pocket before I am eight-and-thirty years old ; and then I might contribute in some little degree towards the service of my country in Parliament, as well as at the Bar, without selling my liberty to a patron, as too many of my profession are not ashamed of doing ; and I might be a Speaker in the House of Commons in the full vigour and maturity of my age ; whereas, in the slow career of Westminster-Hall, I should not perhaps, even with the best success, acquire the same independent station, till the age at which Cicero was killed. But be assured, my dear lord, that if the minister be offended at the style in which I have spoken, do speak, and will speak, of public affairs, and on that account should refuse to give me the judgeship, I shall not be at all mortified, having already a very decent competence, without a debt, or a care of any kind. I will not break in upon you at Warley unexpectedly ; but whenever you find it most convenient, let me know, and I will be with you in less than two hours.

DEAN TUCKER to Mr. JONES.

DEAR SIR,

Gloucester, December 31, 1778.

I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that your packet and letter arrived safe last night ; for both which, I am very much obliged

obliged to you. I cannot say that your remarks have wrought much conviction in me, (in some places they have,) but they have had what I esteem a better effect, that is, they will make me more cautious and circumspect in some of my expressions; and they will oblige me to bring more proofs and illustrations of some points than I thought were needful. In all these respects, your friendly remarks have done me much greater service than unmeaning compliments; and as to your differing so widely in opinion from me, your frank declaration of this difference proves you the honestest man, and the more to be esteemed. I am, &c.

ADAM PRINCE CZARTORYSKI to Mr. JONES.

SIR;

Warsaw, Nov. 26, 1778.

It is the fate of those who, like you, are an ornament to the literary world, to be known to those who are perfectly unknown to them; each is entitled to call to them for light, and this I hope will be a sufficient apology for my intruding upon you, and interrupting those studious hours which you consecrate with so much success to the instruction of your readers.

I was happy enough of late to hit upon your *Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern nations*, and your *History of the Persian language*. I found that you had made up in these two works a quarrel of a very old standing between erudition and taste: you have brought them to meet together in such a friendly manner, that one who had never read but your writings, would be apt to think they always went hand in hand.

I have been applying myself since a few years to the study of Eastern languages; though I cannot flatter myself with having
made

made as yet any considerable progress in that branch of learning. Your most excellent Grammar of the Persian language, which gave birth to Mr. Richardson's one of the Arabic, executed upon the same plan, are the agreeable guides which I follow in that difficult journey; to them I owe to be rescued out of the hands of Erpenius, Guadagnola, and the rest of those unmerciful gentlemen who never took the least trouble about clearing the road, or plucking out one single thorn from the many with which the paths of the study of Eastern languages are covered. Give me leave to be still more beholden to you; and as you learned men are the leading stars of the unlearned, I beg you'll bestow a few moments of your leisure upon answering some questions which may perhaps appear very trifling in the eyes of a man of your extensive knowledge.

I have always been at a loss to form any conjecture upon the following subject, which is, by what chance so many words from other European languages, or at least used in our European languages, are got into the Persian; as for instance, *jivân*, *pudder*, *mâder**, the English, *bad*, the German, *dochter*, *der*, *bend*, together with a deal of our Slavonian, especially in the arithmetical numbers, which, even in the manner of pronouncing them, are exactly the same, such as *pendsed*, *scheshed* †, &c. I should be greatly obliged to you likewise, if by your means I could be informed, whether the Dictionary of Meninski, proposed to be reprinted at Oxford, is already come out; whether it contains a great many additions which are not to be found in the edition of 1680; lastly, whether Mr. Richardson has published the second volume, English and Arabic, of his Dictionary. As to our poor countryman, Meninski, he has not met with the

* Youth, father, mother.

† 500 and 600.

reward which he had a right to expect*; after having wasted his health and fortune in the finishing of his work, he died unnoticed at Vienna; and his daughter ended her life in the same city a few years ago, very ill used by those who had advanced money to her father, for the publishing of his work. You live in a country where such a sin would be ranked among the mortal ones. Baron Reviczki, so justly and honourably mentioned in your works, has been residing here for several years, as minister of the Court of Vienna: we have often made the wish, that something could tempt you to take our part of the world in your way. If that should ever happen, I would consider it as a most agreeable circumstance for me, if you could be prevailed upon to accept of my house during your stay, and consider it as your own. I know what advantages we might reap from so useful and agreeable an intercourse, and would make it our business not to let time lay heavy upon your hands. I must (before I end) express to you the sense of pleasure which I felt as a Pole, in reading that passage of your preface which concerns our country: it bears the stamp of humanity and spirit. Now, after having repeated my excuses for having been so forward, and perhaps so tedious,

I am, with all possible regard, &c.

ADAM PRINCE CZARTORYSKI, General of Podolia.

* From the short account given of Meninski in the Biographical Dictionary, it appears, that he was no less distinguished for his extensive erudition and profound knowledge of languages, particularly Oriental, than by the propriety of conduct, and abilities displayed by him in various official situations to which he had risen by his merit. His first station was that of first interpreter to the Polish embassy at the Porte, and from this he was gradually advanced to the rank of a counsellor of war to the Emperor at Vienna, and first interpreter of Oriental languages. He died at Vienna at the age of 75, in 1698, eighteen years after the publication of his famous and useful work, the Oriental Thesaurus. The compilers of this account do not notice the circumstances mentioned by Prince Czartoryski.

Mr.

Mr. JONES to PRINCE ADAM CZARTORYSKI.

Lamb's Buildings, Temple, London, Feb. 17, 1779.

Nothing could be more honourable to me than your letter, nothing more flattering than the sentiments which you express in it; but I am so little used to converse or correspond with Princes, and have so long been accustomed to the plainness of the ancients, that I should address your Highness with more facility in Latin than in any modern idiom. Yet as you not only perfectly understand my native language, but even write it (I speak sincerely) with elegance, I will try to answer you in English, with Roman simplicity.

It gives me great pleasure, that my juvenile compositions have been at all useful or entertaining to you. What higher reward can a writer desire, than the approbation of such a reader? In supposing, however, that you interrupt my studious hours which I am consecrating to literature, allow me to say, that, unhappily for me, you are a little mistaken. My last four years have been spent in forensic labours, which, however arduous, are no less pleasing than reputable, and would be perfectly congenial with my temper and disposition, if they did not wholly preclude me from resuming my former studies. It is possible, however, that I may soon succeed to a high judicial office in Bengal, where the vacations will give me leisure to renew my acquaintance, which I now am obliged to intermit, with the Persian and Arabian classics. Should my appointment take place, I shall set a high value on your correspondence, and will not fail to send both your Highness, and my friend, Baron Reviczki, (to whom I will write very soon,) some wreaths of flowers from the banks of the Ganges.

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In answer to your questions, I must inform your Highness, that the project of reprinting Meninski here is entirely dropt; but Richardson is indefatigable, and advances as expeditiously as possible with the second part of his dictionary. How so many European words crept into the Persian language, I know not with certainty. Procopius, I think, mentions the great intercourse, both in war and peace, between the Persians and the nations in the north of Europe and Asia, whom the ancients knew by the general name of Scythians. Many learned investigators of antiquity are fully persuaded, that a very old and almost primæval language was in use among these northern nations, from which not only the Celtic dialects, but even the Greek and Latin, are derived; in fact we find *πατήρ* and *μητήρ* in Persian, nor is *δυγατήρ* so far removed from dockter, or even *ὄνομα* and nomen from *nâm*, as to make it ridiculous to suppose, that they sprang from the same root. We must confess that these researches are very obscure and uncertain; and you will allow, not so agreeable as an ode of Hafez, or an elegy of Amr'alkeis. How happy should I be, my dear Prince, if on my return from India, I could visit Poland, accept the kind invitation of your Highness, and enjoy the promised pleasure of your conversation and friendship. My good genius forbids me wholly to despair of that happiness; and the sperata voluptas suavis amicitiae, which enabled Lucretius to endure any toil, and to spend the starry nights, as he says, in contemplation, shall have a similar effect on, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

Dr. STUART to Mr. JONES.

MY DEAR SIR,

Feb. 12, 1779.

I beg you to accept my new work, as a mark of my best observance. The subjects are very important, very curious,

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and very now, but the materials upon which I was to operate were very imperfect. Indeed, I fear much, that a propriety of intention is all my merit, and from that, I think, I am to draw little glory; for it is common to me with writers who are the weakest and most trifling. Yet, if your eye can trace any evidence in this trifle to oppose my apprehensions, I shall be very happy. All the humility of my doubts will go away. In two respects, I expose myself very much to censure. I have attacked the *nobile officium* of the court of session; and I have vindicated the freedom of the Scottish government from the misrepresentations of Dr. Robertson, the historiographer of Scotland. With a thousand people, these things are the greatest of all crimes. It is in England, and not in this country, that I am to find those readers who will be perfectly impartial. I entreat you to accept my most sincere wishes for your prosperity, and that you will believe me, with the most entire respect, my dear Sir, &c.

GILB. STUART.

Dr. STUART to Mr. JONES.

Dr. Stuart presents his best compliments to Mr. Jones.

I beg to have the pleasure to submit to your inspection a small Treatise, which I have published a few years ago, as an introduction to an extensive work on the laws and constitution of England, which I have long meditated, and have in part executed. If you like my ideas, I shall account myself extremely fortunate. If they do not strike you as of importance and interesting, I shall think that I have employed my leisure without advantage. Your line of study has led you to enquire into the history of English manners and jurisprudence. The little work which accompanes this note, is perfectly within this line; and, as I have the most entire confidence

dence in your penetration and candour, I should be happy to know your opinion of it. I should then be in a state to form a resolution, whether I ought to give order and method to the materials I have collected in the view of prosecuting a subject, which I may perhaps have undertaken without having properly consulted my forces. You will do me the favour to excuse this trouble.

* C. REVICZKI to Mr. JONES.

Warsaw, March 17, 1779.

I lately received through Mr. ——— your two last learned publications; a most agreeable and convincing proof of your affectionate remembrance of me. The singular erudition with which your works abound, not only delighted me exceedingly, but almost excited my inclination to resume those studies which I had almost forgotten. Prince Adam Czartoryski, who has cultivated Oriental literature not unsuccessfully, had already afforded me an opportunity of perusing your life of Nadir Shah. He particularly pointed out the passages in the dissertation, in which you make such honourable mention of me, and for which I am indebted to your partiality alone. I regret the loss which the republic of letters must suffer from your desertion, and determination to devote yourself to the altar of Themis: but I trust that Melpomenè, under whose auspices you were born, will compel you to return to your allegiance. I am heartily tired with a residence of seven years on the banks of the Vistula: but the termination of the German war will, I hope, restore me to a more pleasing situation. How much more agreeable would it be to me, if fortune would allow me to gratify my inclinations, by passing my days in England, near you! But to whatever place my destiny may lead me, my affection for you will continue unabated. Farewell.

* Appendix, No. 35.

Mr.

Mr. JONES to Lord ALTHORPE.

Temple, Feb. 4, 1780.

The public piety having given me this afternoon what I rarely can obtain, a short intermission of business; can I employ my leisure more agreeably than in writing to my friend? I shall send my letter at random, not knowing whether you are at Althorpe or at Buckingham, but persuading myself that it will find you without much delay. May I congratulate you and our country on your entrance upon the great career of public life? If there ever was a time when men of spirit, sense, and virtue, ought to stand forth, it is the present. I am informed, that you have attended some country meetings, and are on some committees. Did you find it necessary or convenient to speak on the state of the nation? It is a noble subject, and with your knowledge as well as judgment, you will easily acquire habits of eloquence; but *habits* they are, no less than playing on a musical instrument, or handling a pencil; and as the best musicians and finest painters began with playing sometimes out of tune and drawing out of proportion, so the greatest orators must begin with leaving some periods unfinished, and perhaps with sitting down in the middle of a sentence. It is only by continued use that a speaker learns to express his ideas with precision and soundness, and to provide at the beginning of a period for the conclusion of it; but to this facility of speaking, the habit of writing rapidly contributes in a wonderful degree. I would particularly impress this truth upon your mind, my dear friend, because I am fully convinced that an Englishman's real importance in his country, will always be in a compound ratio of his virtue, his knowledge, and his eloquence; without all of which qualities little real utility can result from either of them apart; and I am no less persuaded, that a virtuous and knowing man, who has no natural impediment, may by habit acquire perfect eloquence, as certainly

as a healthy man who has the use of his muscles, may learn to swim or to skate. When shall we meet, and where, that we may talk over these and other matters? There are some topics which will be more properly discussed in conversation than upon paper, I mean on account of their copiousness; for believe me I should not be concerned, if all that I write were copied at the post-office, and read before the King in council. * * * * *

At the same time I solemnly declare, that I will not enlist under the banners of a party; a declaration which is I believe useless, because no party would receive a man, determined as I am, to think for himself. To you alone, my friend, and to your interests, I am firmly attached, both from early habit and from mature reason, from ancient affection unchanged for a single moment, and from a full conviction that such affection was well placed. The views and wishes of all other men, I will analyze and weigh with that suspicion and slowness of belief, which my experience, such as it is, has taught me; and to be more particular, although I will be jealous of the *regal* part of our constitution, and always lend an arm towards restraining its proud waves within due limits, yet my most vigilant and strenuous efforts shall be directed against any oligarchy that may rise; being convinced, that on the popular part of every government depends its real force, the obligation of its laws, its welfare, its security, its permanence. I have been led insensibly to write more seriously than I had intended; my letters shall not always be so dull: but with so many public causes of grief or of resentment, who can at all times be gay?

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In the memoirs of Mr. Jones, the year seventeen-hundred-and-eighty forms an interesting æra, in which his occupations were diversified, his prospects extended, and his hopes expanded, more than at any former period of his life. His professional practice had greatly increased, and suggested the fairest hopes of progressive enlargement,

enlargement, and augmented profit: but as his views were more particularly directed to the vacant seat on the bench of Fort William, in Bengal, and as, from the kindness of Lord North, he was authorized to expect the early attainment of it, he was less solicitous to procure an augmentation of business, which, in the event of success in his India pursuits, he must altogether abandon. In this state of suspense, the political events of the times, received a more than ordinary share of his attention: he did not however enrol himself with any party; but looking up to the constitution and liberty of his country, as the objects of his political adoration, he cultivated an extensive acquaintance with men of all parties, and of the first rank and talents, without any sacrifice of principle or opinion. No man had ever more right to apply to himself the character of "nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri." With respect to the American war, he early adopted sentiments upon it unfavourable to the justice of the British cause, and this opinion, once formed, would naturally acquire strength from the protraction of the contest, which he lamented with the feelings of a true patriot and friend to humanity. These reflections dictated a very animated and classical Ode to Liberty, which he composed in Latin, and printed in March; it strongly displays his genius, erudition, feelings, and political principles*.

Sir Roger Newdigate having declared his intention of vacating his seat in parliament, as representative of the University of Oxford, Mr. Jones was induced by a laudable ambition, and the encouragement of many respectable friends, to come forward as a candidate. The following letters will explain his hopes, his conduct, and disappointment on this occasion.

* Works, vol. iv. p. 581. This ode was published under the title of *Julii Melesigoni ad libertatem*. The assumed name is formed by a transposition of the letters of *Gulielmus Jonesius*.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT to Mr. JONES.

SIR;

May 6, 1780.

It is with pleasure I observe the public papers mention you as one of the candidates to represent the University of Oxford at the ensuing election. As a literary society, the rank you hold in the republic of letters ought certainly to point you out as one of the first objects of her choice. But it is not merely upon this principle that I feel myself interested in your success: exclusive of that veneration with which I look up to superior talents, I have an additional motive (which indeed ought to supersede every other) in the very high opinion I have formed of your integrity. If in this opinion I should be mistaken, your own writings have greatly contributed to mislead me. You will perceive, Sir, my reason for troubling you with this letter is to desire that when you make out a list of your friends upon this occasion, my name may be admitted into the number. I am, Sir, with truth, your very sincere well-wisher, &c.

EDMUND CARTWRIGHT.

Mr. JONES to the Rev. E. CARTWRIGHT.

DEAR SIR;

Lamb's Buildings, Temple, May 16, 1780.

Since my friends have declared me a candidate for the very honourable seat which Sir Roger Newdigate intends to vacate, I have received many flattering testimonies of regard from several respectable persons; but your letter, dated May 8th, which I did not receive till this morning, is, without a compliment, the fairest and most pleasing fruit of the competition in which I am engaged. The rule of the University, which is a very noble one, forbidding me to solicit votes for myself, I have not been at liberty even to apply to
many

many persons whom it is both a pleasure and honour to know. Your unsolicited approbation is a great reward of my past toil in my literary career, and no small incentive to future exertions. As to my integrity, of which you are pleased to express a good opinion, it has not yet been tried by any very strong temptations: I hope it will resist them if any be thrown in my way. This only I may say (and I think without a boast) that my ambition was always very much bounded, and that my views are already attained by professional success adequate to my highest expectations. Perhaps I shall not be thought very unambitious, if I add, that my great object of imitation is Mr. Selden, and that if I could obtain the same honour which was conferred on him, I should, like him, devote the rest of my life to the service of my constituents and my country, to the practice of an useful profession, and to the unremitting study of our English laws, history, and literature. To be approved by you, and such men as you (if many such could be found), would be a sufficient reward to, &c.

W. JONES.

Permit me to add an ode printed (but not published) before the present competition, and at a time when I should have been certainly made a judge in India, by the kindness of Lord North, if any appointment had taken place. It proves sufficiently that no views or connections can prevent me from declaring my honest sentiments when I think they may be useful to my country.

Mr. BURROWS to Mr. JONES.

SIR,

Hadley, near Barnet, May 23, 1760.

For the first time I am sorry I did not take all my degrees. I should have been happy to have given the testimony of an individual to a merit, which I have long considered as the reproach,

reproach, as well as ornament of this age and country: I must add, it would have given me particular pleasure to have expressed my gratitude to one who has so much contributed to my instruction and amusement.

I most heartily wish you success, as the republic seems in great danger of taking some harm from the weakness of her friends, and the vigour of her foes, and never in any time of her life stood in more need of the attracting and repelling powers of men of ability. I must own too, I have an additional reason for wishing you seated in the British parliament, as I shall take great satisfaction in seeing the dull of all denominations convinced, that men of wit and learning are as capable of excelling in public business, as they call it, as the most illiterate of them all.

I am, &c.

J. BURROWS.

Mr. JONES to Dr. MILMAN.

SIR,

May 30, 1780.

Although I have not yet the honour, to which I have long aspired, of your acquaintance and friendship, yet I am persuaded that the bond which ought in this crisis to unite all honest men is, *idem sentire de republicâ*; and my friend, Mr. Milles, having imparted to me the contents of your yesterday's note, I beg leave to assure you, that I never imagined it possible, in this metropolis, at the busiest time of the year, for professional men to attend a committee of canvassers, and never thought of soliciting the attendance or exertions of my friends, any farther than might be consistent with their engagements and avocations. Accept, Sir, my very warm and very sincere thanks (and when I have the honour of being known to you, you will find that my warmth and my sincerity are perfectly

perfectly undissembled) for the sentiments which you express to Mr. Milles in regard to me. Whatever be the event of the competition in which I am engaged, I shall certainly reap the most pleasing fruit from the kindness of many excellent persons, by whom it is an high honour to be esteemed.

* * * * *

This only I can say, that my friends having nominated me, I have nothing to do but to *steer right onward*, as Milton says, to a poll. The voyage will probably last a twelvemonth at least; and though I began to sail after the Monsoon, yet I am by no means in despair of reaching the port with flying pennons, how unfavourably soever some few breezes may blow. Without an allegory, it will necessarily take up much time for my friends to canvass nine hundred voters, a great majority of whom is dispersed in various parts of the kingdom. As to my competitors, I know them both, and respect the benevolence of Sir W. Dolben as much as I admire the extensive erudition and fine taste of Dr. Scott: but their political principles are the reverse of mine.

* H. A. SCHULTENS to Mr. JONES.

Leyden, June 2, 1760.

Although increasing, and, at this particular time, incessant occupation reluctantly compels me, in some measure, to forego the pleasure of corresponding with my friends, yet the subject of your last letter appears to me so important, that I am determined to hazard an immediate answer to it in three words, rather than, by waiting for a more favourable opportunity, run the risk of exciting a suspicion of any want of regard and affection for you, by an apparent inattention to your interest. I should be as happy to promote it as my own, although I am unfortunately deficient in the means of doing it.

* Appendix, No. 36.

The

The situation for which you are canvassing, my friend, is most honourable and important; and if it be attainable by merit, not favour, I know no person more worthy of it than yourself, none who has higher pretensions to genius, none who possesses a greater extent of useful knowledge, nor a more powerful and commanding eloquence, none who exceeds you in love for liberty and your country, none more capable of applying a remedy to the disastrous situation of affairs by wise counsels, prudence, fortitude, and integrity; none therefore to whose care our alma mater (allow me to evince my affection to the University by this expression) can more safely trust her interests and prosperity.

Have you however no apprehension that your enthusiasm for liberty, which is so generally known, may, in these unpropitious times, injure the success of your cause? Will those upon whose votes your election depends, allow the University to be represented in parliament by Julius Melesigonus? My countrymen have adopted an opinion, that, in the present situation of affairs, no man who publicly avows his attachment to liberty, can be employed in the administration.

This you will say is no concern of mine; be that as it may, no exertions on my part shall be wanting to promote your success, and I wish you would inform me how they can be directed to your advantage. Have I the power of sending a vote in your favour? I much doubt it. Shall I apply to any of my friends at Oxford who are well disposed towards me; for instance, Messrs. Kennicot, White, and Winstanley? Write to me without delay, and inform me what I shall do, that I may convince you of my zeal and sincerity to serve you.

I am at present at Leyden, having succeeded my father, who died about six months ago, in the professorship of Oriental literature.

I have

I have much to say upon this subject, and hope shortly to write fully to you about it. I long to know how you are, as well as that best of women your mother, and your sister, (to whose friendship I am so much obliged). Present my affectionate regards to them. Farewell, and remember me.

Some catalogues of my father's library, which is to be sold in September, have been forwarded, I think, to Elmsley, and I have ordered one to be sent to you.

Mr. JONES to Dr. WHEELER.

MY DEAR SIR;

September 2, 1780.

The parliament being suddenly dissolved, I must beg you, as one of my best and truest friends, to make it known in the University, that I decline giving the learned body any further trouble, and am heartily sorry for that which has already been given them. It is needless to add, what you well know, that I should never have been the first to have troubled them at all. I always thought a delegation to parliament from so respectable a society, a laudable object of true ambition; but I considered it as a distant object, as the reward of long labour and meritorious service in our country; and I conceived, that, had I filled a judge's seat in India, with the approbation of my countrymen, I might on my return be fixed on as a proper representative of the University. Had not that happened which you know, I should no more have thought of standing now, than of asking for a peerage. As to principles in politics, if my success at Oxford, at any future time, depend upon a change of them, my cause is hopeless: I cannot alter or conceal them without abandoning either my reason or my integrity; the first of which is my only guide, and the second my chief comfort in this passage through life. Were I inclined to boast

of any thing, I should certainly boast of making those principles my rule of conduct, which I learned from the best of men in ancient and modern times; and which, my reason tells me, are conducive to the happiness of mankind. As to *men*, I am certainly not hostile to the *ministers*, from whom I have received obligations; but I cannot in conscience approve their *measures*.

Mr. JONES to Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

DEAR SIR,

September 4, 1780.

Permit me again to express (what I can never express too often, or too warmly) my very sincere thanks for your kind letter, dated May 8, and to assure you, as I may with the greatest truth, that I am just as much obliged to you as if your kindness had been attended with the most brilliant success; but as my strength in the great elective body of our University, (which strength, all circumstances considered, was very respectable,) lay chiefly among the non-resident voters, it would be unpardonably ungrateful in me were I to give my friends the trouble of taking long journeys, without a higher probability of success than my late enquiries have left me room to expect. I therefore decline giving any farther trouble to the learned body, and am heartily sorry for that which has already been given them, though not originally by me or my friends. I am perfectly conscious that had I been so fortunate as to succeed at Oxford, I should not have advanced, nor wished to advance, a single step in the career of ambition, but should cheerfully have sacrificed my repose and peace of mind to such a course as I conceived likely to promote the public good; and this consciousness cannot but prevent me from being in the least depressed by my failure of success. I should never repent of this little struggle, if it had produced no other fruit than the testimony of your approbation. The hurry of the general election to a professional man, has obliged

me

me to suspend till another long vacation, two little works, which I hoped to finish in the remainder of this. The first is a treatise *On the Maritime Jurisprudence of the Athenians*, illustrated by five speeches of Demosthenes in *commercial* causes; and the second, a dissertation *On the Manners of the Arabians before the Time of Mahomet*, illustrated by the seven poems, which were written in letters of gold, and suspended in the temple at Mecca, about the beginning of the sixth century. When they are printed, I shall be proud in submitting them to your judgment, as their excellence is well known.

Mr. JONES to Lord ALTHORPE.

Sept. 4, 1780.

The intelligence which you so kindly sent me, my dear Lord, and which was perfectly unexpected, has suspended for a short time my excursion to Passy; for though I have not received any positive retainers for election business, yet there will be some contests in Wales, where I may *possibly* be employed; and, though the whole system of election-laws, and of elections themselves, (I always except the Grenville judicature) is quite repugnant to my ideas of the constitution, yet it would be thought unprofessional to be absent from England at such a time; nor ought indeed any Englishman to be absent when the question to be decided is, "Whether his country shall be free in form only, or in substance." I have therefore postponed my expedition for a fortnight at least, in which time all the borough elections will, I suppose, be over; and by that time, I shall be able to form a tolerable judgment of the counties. In the several counties through which I lately passed, I received (what I did not ask or desire) much praise from many worthy men for my plan to prevent the *necessity* of making a standing army *perpetual*; but the uniform objection which I heard was, "the plan is legal and constitutional, but this is *not the time*"
 "for

“*for it.*” Lord Mansfield himself thought otherwise, when he said in the House of Lords, that no time was to be lost in giving strength to the civil power; but let the objectors beware, lest by refusing to adopt such a plan while they are able, because they think the time improper, they should not, when the proper time shall come, be allowed to adopt it. We had some entertaining causes on the circuit, particularly a singular indictment for alarming a village on the coast of Pembrokehire, with a report that a hostile ship of war was approaching. The prosecutors were two magistrates (one of whom was an Indian ——) who were angry at having been *made fools of*, a point however which they could not easily have proved, inasmuch as they were fools already made. I defended the prosecuted man with success, and mingled in my speech many bitter reflections on the state of this country at the time of the alarm, and on the attempt, because the English laws were not relished in India, to import the Indian laws into England, by imprisoning and indicting an honest man, who had done no more than his duty, and whose only fault was fear, of which both his prosecutors were equally guilty. On my return through Oxford, I was convinced by undoubted authority, that although I had been continually gaining ground, and had collected no fewer than ten or twelve votes on the circuit, yet I had no chance of success against Sir W. D., and any attempt to shake Mr. Page would have been not only consummate rashness, but even inconsistent with my repeated declarations.

Let me request you to give my very sincere thanks to Dr. Preedy for his kind promise and assistance, assuring him (which is very true) that I am just as much obliged to him, as if his kindness had been attended with success, and desiring him to thank his friend Dr. Ruding in the same terms, and with the same sincerity. Must I add this trouble to that which you have already taken?

taken? I will make no apologies after a friendship of fifteen years, uninterrupted even for a single moment. How shall I conclude? by wishing you *prosperity* in the Greek, or *health* in the Roman form? No man, my dear Lord, wishes you both more ardently than I do, Farewell.

Mr. JONES to Dr. WETHEREL.

SIR;

Sept. 6, 1780.

It having been suggested to me by a most respectable friend, that it would be proper, and was in fact *the due form*, to apprise you and the Vice-Chancellor as soon as possible, of my being no longer a candidate for the University, I sent to the houses of those gentlemen who honoured me with forming my committee, thinking it more regular, that they should make the declaration of my having declined a poll; but as they are out of town, I am necessitated to trouble you with this letter. If Dr. Scott should stand the poll, I am ready to perform my promise of giving him my vote, as I am no more his competitor. Since I have taken up my pen (which it was by no means my intention to do) I cannot help saying that the conduct of some of my friends in respect of me gives me surprise, and (for their sakes rather than my own) uneasiness. If I have not been able to *prove* my attachment to my fellow-collegiates, it is because they never called for my service; if they had, they should have found that no man would have exerted himself with more activity to serve them; nor was I deficient in zeal, I well remember, when you in particular required my exertions. I am conscious of having deserved very well of the college; and if any of its members are so unkind as to think otherwise, I will shew my sense of their unkindness by persisting till my last hour in deserving well of them. After this, I should little have expected, that my letters, couched in the most sincere and affectionate terms, and absolutely unexceptionable, if they had been fairly represented,
would

would have been repeated by detached sentences (which might have made no small alteration in the sense) in several companies in the University. Still less should I have expected to find myself charged with *misrepresenting* (a serious word!) facts, of which I would, if necessary, make a deposition, and with writing what it must have appeared from strong internal evidence, that I could not have written; because it contained a mistake as to the number of our lay-fellows, which I (who know and esteem Mr. *Ray*) could never have made. Least of all could I have expected to be accused of wishing to *overturn* a constitution, which I prize, because I understand it, and which I would sacrifice my life to *preserve*. All these charges, God and my conscience enable me to bear with the coolest indifference, and with little abatement of that respect with which I ever have been, &c.

Mr. JONES to Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

DEAR SIR,

Sept. 8, 1780.

Your last favour I have this instant received, and am obliged to answer it in the greatest haste. I hope you have by this time received my letter, in which I informed you that I had declined a poll at Oxford, but was as much obliged to you and my other friends as if your kindness had been attended with the most brilliant success. I saw an advertisement also in the paper, that Dr. Scott had declined.

* * * * *

I have been told, that the very ode to which you are so indulgent, lost me near twenty votes; this, however, I am unwilling to believe. I am, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

The conduct of Mr. Jones, throughout the business of the election, displays his characteristical integrity and manly principles. To have

have succeeded, would have been most honourable to him; his failure was attended with no disgrace. From the letters written or received by him on this occasion, a much larger selection might have been made, and many persons of the first respectability named, as the unsolicited supporters of Mr. Jones. It was greatly to his credit, that with no other influence than that of his character and abilities, he should have been deemed worthy of being nominated a candidate to represent the University of Oxford, one of the most distinguished in the world for science and virtue. His affectionate attachment to this seat of learning, and his respectful veneration for it, were known and admitted, as well as the spirit of independence which at all times, and under all circumstances, marked his character. His opinion respecting the effect of his Ode to Liberty, on the disposition of some of the voters, countenances the suspicious of his friend Schultens; it is certain, however, that if he had succeeded in his election he would have employed all the superior talents which Schultens justly ascribes to him, with zeal and assiduity, in discharging the duties of a senator. To obtain it was his highest ambition, and he would have cheerfully sacrificed to it (to repeat his own words) "not only an Indian Judgeship of six thousand a year, but a Nabobship with as many millions."

Notwithstanding the various occupations attending the Oxford election, Mr. Jones found time to publish a small pamphlet, intitled, *An Enquiry into the legal Mode of suppressing Riots, with a constitutional Plan of future Defence*. This publication was suggested by the unfortunate necessity of calling in military assistance to suppress the riots, which, from the second to the eighth of June of that year, had desolated the capital. He had unhappily been, as he observes, a vigilant and indignant spectator of those abominable enormities: he had also seen, with a mixed sensation of anguish and joy, the vigorous and triumphant exertions of the

executive power; and though he admitted the necessity of those exertions, he deplored it.

Impressed with the fullest "conviction, that the common and "statute laws of the realm then in force, give the civil state in "every county a power, which, if it were perfectly understood and "continually prepared, would effectually quell any riot or insurrection, without assistance from the military, and even without the "modern Riot-Act," he undertook to demonstrate it; and the labour of less than a month, produced the occasional tract which he published in July.

Of the plan which he then proposed, it is sufficient to say, that during late years the *principle* of it has been advantageously adopted; and that, while the internal peace of the country has been preserved, its defence against external aggression has been no less consulted by the armed associations which, under different names, have been legally established in every county of Great Britain.

On the ninth of September of this year, Mr. Jones met the freeholders of Middlesex assembled for the purpose of nominating two representatives in the new parliament. The circumstances of the meeting afforded him no opportunity of addressing them on the general state of the nation; but he amused himself with drawing up a discourse, containing the purport of what he would have spoken, if an opportunity for this purpose had occurred.

This speech is strikingly characteristic of his principles and feelings; he condemns in unqualified terms the American war, and the conduct of the late parliament, in supporting it. He takes a summary review of the state of the nation, and delivers his opinion
upon

upon it without reserve, in that strong language which was so often heard in the parliamentary debates of 1780, and read in the petitions from the associated counties. I shall select from it two passages only, which have no reference to the political discussions of that period; one, in which Mr. Jones expresses his sentiments on the African slave trade, and the second containing an honourable declaration of that conduct which he would have pursued, if good fortune had placed him in the House of Commons.

“ I pass with haste by the coast of Africa, whence my mind
 “ turns with indignation at the abominable traffic in the human
 “ species, from which a part of our countrymen dare to derive
 “ their most inauspicious wealth. Sugar, it has been said, would
 “ be dear if it were not worked by *Blacks* in the Western
 “ islands; as if the most laborious, the most dangerous works,
 “ were not carried on in every country, but chiefly in England,
 “ by *free* men; in fact they are so carried on with infinitely
 “ more advantage, for there is an alacrity in a consciousness of
 “ freedom, and a gloomy sullen indolence in a consciousness of
 “ slavery; but let sugar be as dear as it may, it is better to
 “ eat none, to eat honey, if sweetness only be palatable; better
 “ to eat aloes or coloquintida than violate a primary law of nature,
 “ impressed on every heart not imbruted by avarice, than rob one
 “ human creature of those eternal rights, of which no law upon
 “ earth can justly deprive him.

“ Had it been my good or bad fortune, to have delivered in the
 “ great assembly of representatives the sentiments which this
 “ bosom contains, I am sensible that my *public* course of speaking
 “ and voting must have clashed in a variety of instances with my
 “ private obligations; and the conflict of interfering duties consti-
 “ tutes, in my opinion, the nicest part of morality, on which
 “ however

“ however I have completely formed my system, and trust that no views of interest will ever prevent my practice from coinciding with my theory.”

Professions of this nature are sometimes made and forgotten, when the end, which they were meant to serve, has been attained; but sincerity was ever a prominent feature in the character of Mr. Jones, and he was more disposed to overstep the bounds of prudence by adhering to it, than to violate what he always deemed a primary law of morality.

In the autumn of this year, I find Mr. Jones at Paris. He had in the preceding summer made a short excursion to that capital; but the occurrences of these journeys are not of sufficient importance to engage the reader's attention. I recollect to have heard him mention, in answer to a question which I once put to him, whether he had seen Monsieur du Perron at Paris, that this gentleman studiously avoided meeting him during his residence there.

The following letters written by Mr. Jones after his return to England are interesting, as descriptive of his occupations and sentiments, and as announcing his intention of writing an important historical work, which he never found time to execute.

Mr. JONES to Lord ALTHORPE.

I thought myself peculiarly unfortunate last Friday in my way to London; at Chatham, where I had the pleasure indeed of seeing Lady Rothes restored to perfect health, I sought in vain for Mr. Langton among the new ravelines and counterscarps; and at Dartford I had the mortification to find, that you, my dear Lord, were not in camp, where I was not without hope of passing an evening,

evening, which I am persuaded would have been equally agreeable to us both. After a very tedious and uncomfortable passage, I arrived at Margate on Wednesday night, having been out of England a month exactly, half of which time I spent at Paris. In this interval I have seen, not indeed so many men or so many cities as the hero of the *Odyssey*, but a sufficient number of both to have enlarged very considerably the sphere of my knowledge. I have heard much and thought more; but the result of all I have heard and thought is, that the war, which I have invariably and deliberately condemned as no less unjust than impolitic, will continue very long to desolate the country of our brethren, and exhaust our own. The principal object of my late excursion has been completely answered; and I had more success than I at first expected in one or two subordinate pursuits, professional and literary. I attended some causes at the *palais*, and have brought with me the works of a most learned lawyer, whose name and merit I shall have the honour of making known to our countrymen. I obtained access also to a fine manuscript in the royal library, which has given me a more perfect acquaintance with the manners of the ancient Arabians; and how little soever I may value mere *philology*, considered apart from the knowledge to which it leads, yet I shall ever set a high price on those branches of learning, which make us acquainted with the human species in all its varieties. Paris itself, and all the roads to it are so perfectly known to you, that an account of my journey would be superfluous; and as to politics, I would rather converse than write on a subject so very serious; not that I have any apprehensions, as you well know, of the least danger, or even inconvenience, to myself; but many accidents happen to letters, and in times like these, the post is hardly to be trusted. This however I will say, that as it is my fixed design, if I live to see a peace, to write an impartial history of the war, I was desirous in France to be acquainted with as many of the American leaders as I could meet

meet with; and the same desire would have carried me to Amsterdam, if the season had not been so far advanced. All the intelligence that I collected, and all the observations that I made, you should have heard on Friday evening had you been in camp, and shall hear in the course of conversation when we meet. I rejoice to hear since my return, that Lord Spencer is much better. Farewell, my dear Lord, you are more fully assured than formal words can express, how sincerely I am, &c.

Mr. JONES to Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

DEAR SIR,

Nov. 12, 1780.

You have so fully proved the favourable opinion, which you do me the honour to entertain of me, that I am persuaded you acquit me of any culpable neglect in delaying for more than two months to answer your very obliging letter. The truth is, that I had but just received it when I found myself obliged to leave England on very pressing business; and I have not long been returned from Paris. The hurry of preparing myself for so long a journey at such a season, left me no time for giving you my hearty thanks, which I now most sincerely request you to accept, both for your kind letter, and for the very elegant sonnet, with which you have rewarded me abundantly for my humble labours in the field of literature. I give you my word that your letters and verses have greatly encouraged me in proceeding as expeditiously as I am able, to send abroad my *seven Arabian poets*; and I propose to spend next month at Cambridge, in order to finish my little work, and to make use of a rare manuscript in the library of Trinity College; my own manuscript, which was copied for me at Aleppo, is very beautiful, but unfortunately not very correct. You may depend on receiving a copy as soon as it can be printed.

How

How happy I shall be if I should be able to wait upon you in Leicestershire, or to see you in London, and assure you in person that I am,

With the greatest sincerity, &c.

W. JONES.

From the public occurrences in which Mr. Jones was engaged, I now turn to a domestic calamity, the death of his mother, which involved him in the deepest affliction. If, as a parent, she had the strongest claims upon the gratitude and affection of her son, the obligations of filial duty were never more cheerfully and zealously discharged than by Mr. Jones. To her able instruction he was indebted for the first rudiments of literature; she directed his early studies, formed his habits and his taste; and, by the closest attention to economy, was enabled to promote his progress in learning by supplying the funds for this purpose. From the period of his obtaining a fellowship, he had declined receiving any assistance from her purse; and as his professional profits increased, his own was ever at her disposal. During his residence at Oxford, the time which he did not employ in study or college duties, was devoted to her; his attention was equally the result of principle and affection. She was the confidant of his plans, hopes, and occupations, and he invariably consulted her on all occasions, where his more important interests were concerned. The kindness, as well as the sincerity of his affection, was shewn in numberless instances, which never failed to attract the observation of his friends and associates, although they are too minute to be particularized, and the satisfaction which he derived from the distinction to which his abilities had raised him, was redoubled from the consideration that his mother participated in it. I regret that none of his letters to his mother have been preserved,

Have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honour (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our club*. The election was of course unanimous, and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add, that Lord Camden and the Bishop of Chester were rejected. When Bishops and Chancellors honour us with offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary that we should ever reject such an offer; but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our club I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable of giving information, and I trust that as the honour will be ours, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends as those of your lordship and lord Althorpe. I spoke yesterday in Westminster-Hall for two hours and a half, on a knotty point of law, and this morning for above an hour, on a very interesting public question; to-morrow I must argue a great cause, and am therefore obliged to conclude with assuring

Your lordship, that I am,

With the highest, &c.

W. JONES.

* Generally known by the name of the *Turk's-Head Club*, held in Gerrard Street, Soho. The establishment of this club was first proposed by Sir Joshua Reynolds to Burke and Johnson, and the original members of it were the friends of these three. The number of members was gradually increased to forty, comprehending men of the most distinguished characters, and eminent for their learning, talents, and abilities.

The Bishop of St. ASAPH to Mr. JONES.

DEAR SIR,

November 27.

You was prevented by Sir Joshua Reynolds in your kind intentions of giving me the earliest notice of the honour you have done me. I believe Mr. Fox will allow me to say, that the honour of being elected into the Turk's-Head Club is not inferior to that of being the representative of Westminster or Surry. The electors are certainly more disinterested, and I should say they were much better judges of merit, if they had not rejected Lord Camden and chosen me. I flatter myself with the hopes of great pleasure and improvement in such a society as you describe, which indeed is the only club of which I ever wished myself a member.

Though I am much flattered with hearing from you, I was delighted with the cause of your delaying to write. Your talents have found means, by their own weight, to open the way to public notice and employment, which could not long be shut against them. Your pleadings for the *nephew* against the *daughter* promise something very curious in the particulars of the case, which seems to call for great abilities to defend it.

I would not neglect the first opportunity of answering your very obliging letter, though it being early post day, I am forced to write in a greater hurry than I could wish.

I am, &c.

J. ST. A.

After an interval of six years, we find Mr. Jones retracing his favourite haunts with the Arabian muses. He devoted the leisure hours

hours of the winter of 1780-1 to complete his translation of seven ancient poems of the highest repute in Arabia*. Literature, politics, professional studies and practice, all had a share of his attention; but the principal object of his hopes and ambition was the vacant seat on the bench in India, to which he looked forward with increasing anxiety. The marriage of Lord Althorpe with Miss Bingham, daughter of Lord Lucan, was too interesting an event to pass unnoticed by Mr. Jones; and he celebrated the nuptials of his friend in a very poetical ode, under the title of the *Muse recalled*†. This composition, the dictate of friendship, and offspring of genius, was written in the course of a few hours. His poetic talents were also exerted in a cause ever nearest to his heart, that of liberty: he re-strung the lyre of Alcæus, and produced a short ode ‡ in the

* At the beginning of the seventh century, the Arabic language was brought to a high degree of perfection, by a sort of poetical academy, that used to assemble at stated times in a place called Ocadh, where every poet produced his best composition, and was sure to meet with the applause that it deserved: the most excellent of these poems were transcribed in characters of gold upon Egyptian paper, and hung up in the Temple of Mecca, whence they were named Mozahebat, or *golden*, and Moallakat, or *suspended*: the poems of this sort were called Casseidas or Eclogues, seven of which are preserved in our libraries, and are considered as the finest that were written before the time of Mohammed.

Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern nations. Works, vol. xiv. p. 595.

It may be satisfactory to the reader who does not possess the works of Sir Wm. Jones, to read his metrical imitation of a passage in the 4th Eclogue.

But ah! thou know'st not in what youthful play,
 Our nights, beguil'd with pleasure, swam away;
 Gay songs, and cheerful tales, deceiv'd the time,
 And circling goblets made a tuneful chime;
 Sweet was the draught, and sweet the blooming maid,
 Who touch'd her lyre beneath the fragrant shade;
 We sipp'd till morning purpled every plain;
 The damsels slumber'd, but we sipp'd again;
 The waking birds, that sung on every tree
 Their early notes, were not so blythe as we.

† Works, vol. iv. p. 563.

‡ Works, vol. iv. p. 571.

genuine

genuine spirit of the patriot and poet, whom he imitated. These were his amusements. The result of his professional studies was an *Essay on the Law of Bailments*. He divided and treated the subject under the distinct heads of analysis, history, and synthesis; and intimates an intention, if the method used in this tract should be approved, and on the supposition of future leisure, to discuss in the same form every branch of English law, civil and criminal, private and public; and he concludes the *Essay* with the following just and elegant reflections.

“ The great system of jurisprudence, like that of the Universe, consists of many subordinate systems, all of which are connected by nice links and beautiful dependencies; and each of them, as I have fully persuaded myself, is reducible to a few plain *elements*, either the wise *maxims* of national policy and general convenience, or the *positive* rules of our forefathers, which are seldom deficient in wisdom or utility; if LAW be a *science*, and really deserve so sublime a name, it must be founded on principle, and claim an exalted rank in the empire of *reason*; but if it be *merely* an unconnected series of decrees and ordinances, its use may remain, though its dignity be lessened; and he will become the greatest lawyer who has the strongest habitual, or artificial *memory*. In practice, law certainly employs *two* of the mental faculties; *reason* in the primary investigation of points *entirely new*, and *memory*, in transmitting the reason of sage and learned men, to which our own ought invariably to yield, if not from a becoming modesty, at least from a just attention to that object, for which all laws are framed, and all societies instituted, THE GOOD OF MANKIND.”

Nothing can more strongly evince the predilection of Mr. Jones for his professional studies, and his anxiety to acquire a knowledge of the general principles and practice of law, than a work which he undertook

undertook about this period, the translation of an Arabian poem on the Mohammedan law of succession to the property of intestates*. The subject of the original is dry, the diction obscure; it exhibits no rhetorical flowers, no poetical ornament; and even the partiality of Mr. Jones for Eastern literature could never have induced him to engage in a work of this nature, if he had not thought it connected with objects of information and utility. In the expectation of obtaining the situation of an Indian judge, this law tract probably recommended itself to his notice, as he could not but foresee that a knowledge of Mohammedan law would be essential to the performance of the duties of that station.

The reader will recollect how much the public attention was occupied in the year 1782, with the attempts to procure, by constitutional means, a reformation of parliament. It would have been surprising if Mr. Jones had remained an idle spectator on an occasion, which of all others was most interesting to his feelings. Led by his professional studies to an enthusiastic veneration for the principles of the constitution of his country, he was anxious that the form of it should in all respects correspond with them; "but, as the form in a course of years is apt to deviate widely from the spirit, it became (in his opinion) expedient almost every century to restore its genuine purity and loveliness." These sentiments he expressed in a speech to the inhabitants of the counties of Middlesex and Surry, the cities of London and Westminster, and the borough of Southwark, assembled at the London Tavern on the 28th of May, 1782, to consider on the means of procuring a reformation of parliament. The first resolution adopted by the meeting, and in which he expressed his most sincere concurrence, was, that petitions ought to be prepared for a more complete representation of the people; and the position which he endeavoured to impress upon the

* Works, vol. iii. p. 489.

minds of his audience was this, that the spirit of our constitution requires a representation of the people, nearly equal, and nearly universal. This speech has long been before the public, and I shall therefore only notice his declaration in the advertisement prefixed to it, that, "what offence the publication might give, either in part, "or in the whole, was the last and least of his cares: his first and "greatest was to speak on all occasions what he conceived to be "just and true;" and the conclusion, in which he tells his audience that "the people of England can only expect to be happy, and "most glorious, while they are the freest, and can only become the "freest, when they shall be the most virtuous and most enlightened "of nations." It was about the same period that he composed a very spirited ode, in imitation of Callistratus, which has appeared in a variety of periodical publications, and is published in his works*.

In the summer of this year, Mr. Jones again visited France, in the intention of proceeding thence to America. The object of this journey was professional, to procure the restitution of a very large estate of a client and friend, which had been attached by an order of the States, who had threatened the confiscation of the property, unless the owner appeared in person to claim it. This object is mentioned by Mr. Jones in his correspondence, and his own evidence will be conclusive against some surmises and insinuations, which were propagated respecting the motives of his intended journey. The irresolution of his friend, increased by indisposition, prevented the execution of the plan; and Mr. Jones, after having procured a passport from Franklin, the American minister at the court of France, returned to England through Normandy and Holland.

For other details relating to his life, during the years 1781 and 1782, I refer to his correspondence.

* Vol. iv. p. 573.

Mr. JONES to Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

DEAR SIR,

May 1, 1781.

I take the liberty to send you (as my *Arabian* poets are not yet ready to wait upon you) a paraphrase of a Greek fragment, which came into my head this spring in my way to Wales*. I make no doubt of your continuing to cultivate the Muses, by whom

* In his journey through life, Mr. Jones seldom overlooked the opportunities of gathering the flowers which chance presented, or of displaying, for the entertainment of his friends, the stores which he had collected. A variety of poetical compositions was produced by him during his circuits, to enliven the intervals of legal labour. Of these a few have been preserved, and amongst them the following elegant song, the offspring of genius and innocent gait. It was written by Mr. Jones, some years before the period of his life at which I am now arrived, when he was a very young man, during one of his first circuits, for the express purpose of being sung at a kind of *fête champêtre*, which the barristers held on the banks of the Wye.

Fair Tivy, how sweet are thy waves gently flowing,
 Thy wild oaken woods, and green eglantine bow'rs,
 Thy banks with the blush-rose and amaranth glowing,
 While friendship and mirth claim these labourless hours!
 Yet weak is our vaunt, while something we want,
 More sweet than the pleasure which *prospects* can give;
 Come, smile, damsels of Cardigan,
 Love can alone make it blissful to live.

How sweet is the odour of jasmine and roses,
 That Zephyr around us so lavishly flings!
 Perhaps for Bleanpant* fresh perfume he composes,
 Or tidings from Bronwith† auspiciously brings;
 Yet weak is our vaunt, while something we want,
 More sweet than the pleasure which *odours* can give:
 Come, smile, damsels of Cardigan,
 Love can alone make it blissful to live.

How sweet was the strain that enliven'd the spirit,
 And cheer'd us with numbers so folic and free!

* The seat of W. Branstocke, Esq.

† The seat of Thos. Lloyd, Esq.

whom you are so highly favoured, and hope you will from time to time transmit the fruit of their favours to, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

The poet is absent ; be just to his merit ;
 Ah ! may he in love be more happy than we ;
 For weak is our vaunt, while something we want,
 More sweet than the pleasure the *muses* can give :
 Come, smile, damsels of Cardigan,
 Love can alone make it blissful to live.

How gay is the circle of friends round a table,
 Where stately Kilgarran* o'erhangs the brown dale ;
 Where none are unwilling, and few are unable,
 To sing a wild song, or repeat a wild tale !
 Yet weak is our vaunt, while something we want,
 More sweet than the pleasure that *friendship* can give :
 Come, smile, damsels of Cardigan,
 Love can alone make it blissful to live.

No longer then pore over dark gothic pages,
 To cull a rude gibberish from Neatham or Brooke ;
 Leave year-books and parchments to grey-bearded sages ;
 Be nature and love, and fair woman, our book ;
 For weak is our vaunt, while something we want,
 More sweet than the pleasure that *learning* can give :
 Come, smile, damsels of Cardigan,
 Love can alone make it blissful to live.

Admit that our labours were crown'd with full measure,
 And gold were the fruit of rhetorical flow'rs,
 That India supplied us with long-hoarded treasure,
 That Dinevor†, Slebeck‡, and Coidsmore || were ours ;
 Yet weak is our vaunt, while something we want,
 More sweet than the pleasure that *riches* can give :
 Come, smile, damsels of Cardigan,
 Love can alone make it blissful to live.

* A ruin of a castle on the banks of the Tivey.

† Seat of Lord Dinevor's, near Landelo, in Carmarthen.

‡ Seat of — Philips, Esq. near Haverford West.

|| Seat of Thomas Lloyd, Esq. near Cardigan.

From the Bishop of St. ASAPH to Mr. JONES.

DEAR SIR,

May 28, 1781.

You have my best and earliest thanks for your ode in the true Grecian taste and spirit. I remember to have seen a fragment of Alcæus, but I cannot find it in Aristides, of whom I have only Cantern's small edition. The seed you found there you have quickened by the warmth of true genius into a noble production. I cannot help observing that Alcæus, like other good poets and patriots, was condemned for life to be in the minority.

I am, &c.

J. ST. ASAPH.

I hope you will not forget, that when you have leisure, your friends at Twyford will be very happy to see you.

Mr. BURKE to Mr. JONES.

I do not know how I can justify myself in the liberty I take with you, but confiding in your humanity and condescension, I beg, if you have leisure for it, that you would be so kind as to breakfast with me, and assist me with your opinion and advice on the conduct of the Bengal Bill. The natives of the East, to whose literature you have done so much justice, are particularly under

Or say, that, preferring fair Thames to fair Tivy,
 We gain'd the bright ermine robes, purple and red ;
 And peep'd thro' long perukes, like owlets thro' ivy,
 Or say, that bright coronets blaz'd on our head ;
 Yet weak is our vaunt, while something we want,
 More sweet than the pleasure that honours can give :
 Come, smile, damsels of Cardigan,
 Love can alone make it blissful to live.

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your protection for their rights. I have the honour to be, with the highest esteem and regard, dear Sir,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

* Mr. JONES to H. A. SCHULTENS.

June, 1781.

You are not ignorant of my sentiments on this most abominable war; the enclosed imitation of an ode of Alcæus will clearly prove my detestation of tyranny, my zeal and exertions in the cause of liberty. Literature, which is, and ought to be, ever connected with humanity, will never, I trust, be degraded by a fratricidal war between the learned, particularly those who pursue the same studies. Do you therefore, though a native of Holland, preserve that affection for me, which I, an Englishman, have, and shall ever retain for you.

I have translated into English, without the omission of a single line, the seven *suspended* poems of our Arabs, and mean to publish the whole with notes, and a dissertation on the ancient monuments of Arabia, in the next summer vacation.

I possess the Commentary of Tabrizi; and I have been obligingly furnished from Trinity College, Cambridge, with the Paraphrase of Zouzini, and his short and excellent notes. At Oxford, we have the notes and Persic version of Sadi, the Scholia of Ansari, and the fine edition of Obeidolla; but I am anxious to inspect all editions and commentaries. Your illustrious grandfather, for whose memory, as in duty bound, I preserve the greatest respect, pronounces these poems worthy of immortality, and says, if I do not mistake, that he transcribed the manuscript of Nahasi,

* Appendix, No. 37.

at

at Leyden, for his own use. I also observed in the copious catalogue of the Schultensian library, (one copy of which I delivered to my friend Hunter) these words, "6990. The seven Moallakat "Arabic, most beautifully written." Has this been purchased by any one? at what price will it be disposed of? I lament that I did not buy it, but being *tied up* at that time myself, by various important occupations, I could not bestow a thought on the *suspended* poems.

Assist me, I beseech you, in the name of the Muses, with materials for perfecting my work; collect from your stores any notes, or various readings which you may possess, and communicate them to me. I have mentioned in my preliminary discourse, your Philarabic family*, and have more to say about it both true and honourable. I wish particularly to know whether any of the seven poems, excepting those of Amr'olkais and Tarafa, will be published in Holland. You shall receive my book, which will be elegantly bound by Baumgarten.

* Albert Schultens the grandfather, and J. J. Schultens, the father of the person to whom this letter is addressed, were both distinguished by their knowledge of Oriental, particularly Arabic, literature. The former was a German, divine, born at Groningen, and taught Hebrew and the Oriental languages at Leyden, with great reputation for many years before his death, which happened in 1741. He composed many works which shew profound learning and just criticism. *Biog. Brit.* He translated and explained the fifty dissertations of Hariri, although he sent abroad but few of them, and published *Ancient Memorials of Arabia*, which Sir William Jones notices in an anniversary discourse delivered before the Asiatic Society, in Calcutta, as the most pleasing of all his works. Of J. J. Schultens his son, I have little information. In Reiske's correspondence, published by his widow, there is one letter from him, dated Herborn, 1748, which manifests no ordinary zeal in the writer for the promotion of Arabic literature. I have no account of any publications by him, excepting two academical dissertations. The learning and labours of H. A. Schultens, are sufficiently apparent from his own letters and those of Mr. Jones.

My

My mother, whom I most tenderly loved, was ever in my opinion the best of women ; I trust she is now the happiest. But my affliction for her loss is inconsolable. I shall be most happy to hear that you and your wife are well, and the early gratification of my wishes will be an additional pleasure.

The Bishop of St. ASAPH to Mr. JONES.

DEAR SIR ;

Nov. 3, 1781.

A letter from you is always welcome, come sooner or later ; yet I cannot help rejoicing at that ceaseless hurry of business, which occasioned your delay in writing, and made me lose a very valuable visit. Riches and reputation, after shewing a little coyness at first, are now making their advances at a very great rate, and will soon be as lavish of their charms as you could wish ; yet I know you think too liberally, to let either your friends or your liberty suffer by their engrossing you too much.

I thank you for the nuptial ode, which, notwithstanding its incorrectness, which you need not complain of, is the most genuine imitation of Pindar I have ever seen. I don't know whether I can assent to your criticism on the word *replete*, that it is never used in a good sense. Were it left to me, I would use it in no sense. It has but little meaning. It was never naturalized in conversation, or in prose, and I think makes no figure in verse.

I have another present of value to thank you for—your essay on the Law of Bailments. To own the truth, your name to the advertisement made me impatient, and I had sent for it and read it before. It appears to me to be clear, just, and accurate, I mean as clear as the subject will permit. My want of law language, and perhaps of a legal understanding, made me feel great difficulty in following

following you through your very ingenious distinctions and consequences, of which I thought I could perceive the solidity. I foretell that this will be your last work. For the future your business and the public will allow you to write no more.

Though I fear it will not be consistent with your employment in Westminster-Hall, I cannot help telling you, that for as many days as you can spare between this time and the meeting of parliament, you will find a warm bed, and a hearty welcome at Chilbolton. Mrs. Shipley and her daughters desire their compliments, and join in the invitation. I am, &c.

J. ST. ASAPH.

Mr. JONES to Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

DEAR SIR;

Dec. 20, 1781.

Since I received your obliging letter an interval of six months has elapsed, but in all that interval, I have either been deeply engaged in professional labours, or confined by illness: I have enjoyed no rest. At this moment I am slowly recovering from a severe inflammatory disorder; yet your letter and your fine sonnets have remained constantly on my mind, and I now take up my pen to thank you most warmly for the pleasure which they have given me. I hope my friend Watson has seen the noble wreath of laurel which your animated muse has woven for him. I entreat you to send me the two others, which I long to see. The few copies which were printed of the Latin ode are so dispersed, that I have not one for myself, and would print a few more, if a learned friend of mine had not engaged to publish it with notes, historical and critical, for want of which, it is in some parts obscure. You may depend on receiving one of the first copies that can see the light, and my seven *Arabian* poets will wait upon you as soon as the European dresses are finished. I take the liberty to enclose an ode composed without preparation, and almost without any premeditation: it is the work of a few hours. In truth, when I attended the
wedding,

wedding, I had no thought of writing, but the young ladies would not hear of an excuse: you must therefore make all due allowance for poetry by compulsion. I am, &c.

Mr. JONES to Lord ALTHORPE.

January 5, 1782.

O la bella cosa il far niente! This was my exclamation, my dear Lord, on the 12th of last month, when I found myself, as I thought, at liberty to be a rambler, or an idler, or any thing I pleased: but my *mal di gola* took ample revenge for my abuse and contempt of it, when I wrote to you, by confining me twelve days with a fever and quinsey: and I am now so cramped by the approaching session at Oxford, that I cannot make any long excursion. I enclose my tragical song of "a shepherdess going," with Mazzanti's music, of which my opinion at present is, that the modulation is very artificial, and the harmony good, but that Pergolesi (whom the modern Italians are such puppies as to undervalue) would have made it more pathetic and *heart-rending*, if I may compose such a word. I long to hear it sung by Mrs. Poyntz. Pray present the enclosed, in my name, to Lady Althorpe. I hope that I shall in a short time be able to think of you, when I read these charming lines of Catullus*:

And soon to be completely blest,
 Soon may a young Torquatus rise;
 Who, hanging on his mother's breast,
 To his known sire shall turn his eyes,
 Out-stretch his infant arms awhile,
 Half ope his little lips and smile.

(Printed Translation.)

* The original is quoted by Mr. Jones:—

Torquatus volo parvulus,
 Matris è gremio suæ
 Porrigens teneras manus,
 Dulce rideat ad patrem,
 Semi-hiante labello,

What

What a beautiful picture! can Dominichino equal it? How weak are all arts in comparison of poetry and rhetoric! Instead however of *Torquatus*, I would read *Spencerus*. Do you not think that I have discovered the true use of the fine arts, namely, in relaxing the mind after toil? Man was born for *labour*; his configuration, his passions, his restlessness, all prove it; but labour would wear him out, and the purpose of it be defeated, if he had not intervals of *pleasure*; and unless that pleasure be *innocent*, both he and society must suffer. Now what pleasures are more harmless, if they be nothing else, than those afforded by polite arts and polite literature? Love was given us by the Author of our being as the reward of virtue, and the solace of care; but the base and sordid forms of *artificial*, (which I oppose to *natural*,) society in which we live, have encircled that heavenly rose with so many thorns, that the wealthy alone can gather it with prudence. On the other hand, mere pleasure, to which the idle are not justly entitled, soon satiates, and leaves a vacuity in the mind more unpleasant than actual pain. A just mixture, or interchange of labour and pleasures, appears alone conducive to such happiness as this life affords. Farewell. I have no room to add my useless name, and still more useless professions of friendship.

* * * * *

The sentiments expressed in this letter do credit to the heart and understanding of Mr. Jones; they exhibit the pure feelings of an uncorrupted mind; but in giving them to the public, I deem it a duty to observe, that though a just mixture of labours and pleasures, (such innocent pleasures as Mr. Jones describes, and such only as he ever enjoyed,) is greatly conducive to the happiness of this life, the true foundation of real happiness must be sought in a higher source. In the unpremeditated effusions of friendly correspondence, expressions are not to be scrupulously weighed, nor rigorously criticised; but I feel a confidence, which the reader, if he peruses
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the whole of these memoirs, will participate with me, that Mr. Jones would have himself approved the observation which I have made upon his letter.

In March of this year, a proposal was made to Mr. Jones, to become a member of the society for constitutional information, and it appears from a letter which he wrote to the secretary of the society, in reply, that he readily accepted it. To prove that he was not regardless of the objects of the society's institution, a short time afterwards he addressed a second letter to the secretary, for the express purpose of confuting some doctrines in the writings of the celebrated Fielding, which he thought dangerous to the constitution of England; I insert both from a periodical publication of 1787, in which they have been preserved.

Mr. JONES to Mr. THOMAS YEATES.

SIR;

Lamb's Buildings, April 25, 1782.

It was not till within these very few days that I received, on my return from the circuit, your obliging letter, dated the 18th of March, which, had I been so fortunate as to receive earlier, I should have made a point of answering immediately. The society for constitutional information, by electing me one of their members, will confer upon me an honour, which I am wholly unconscious of deserving, but which is so flattering to me, that I accept of their offer with pleasure and gratitude. I should indeed long ago have testified my regard for so useful an institution by an offer of my humble service in promoting it, if I had not really despaired in my present situation of being able to attend your meetings as often as I should ardently wish.

My future life shall certainly be devoted to the support of that excellent constitution, which it is the object of your society to unfold
and

and elucidate ; and from this resolution long and deliberately made, no prospects, no connections, no station here or abroad, no fear of danger, or hope of advantage to myself, shall ever deter or allure me.

A form of government so apparently conducive to the true happiness of the Community, must be admired as soon as it is understood, and if reason and virtue have any influence in human breasts, ought to be preserved by any exertions, and at any hazard. Care must now be taken, lest by reducing the regal power to its just level, we raise the aristocratical to a dangerous height ; since it is from the people that we can deduce the obligation of our laws, and the authority of magistrates.

On the people depend the welfare, the security, and the permanence of every legal government ; in the people must reside all substantial power ; and to the people must all those, in whose ability and knowledge we sometimes wisely, often imprudently confide, be always accountable for the due exercise of that power with which they are for a time entrusted.

If the properties of all good government be considered as duly distributed in the different parts of our limited republic, goodness ought to be the distinguished attribute of the crown, wisdom of the aristocracy, but power and fortitude of the people.

May justice and humanity prevail in them all !

I am, Sir,

Your very faithful and obedient servant,

W. JONES.

Mr. JONES to Mr. THOMAS YEATES.

SIR,

Lamb's Buildings, Temple, June 7, 1782.

I lately met with some dangerous doctrine concerning the constitution of England, in the works of an admired English writer; the doctrine so dangerous, that an immediate confutation of it seems highly necessary, and the writer so admired, that his opinions, good or bad, must naturally have a very general influence. It was the opinion, in short, of the late ingenious Henry Fielding, that "the constitution of this island was nothing fixed, but just as "variable as its weather," and he treats the contrary notion as a ridiculous error: now if this doctrine be well founded, our society will soon, I imagine, think it wise to dissolve themselves, since it is hardly consistent with the gravity of sensible men to collect and impart information like the makers of almanacks, upon any thing so uncertain as the weather; if on the other hand, the error be palpably on the side of Mr. Fielding, you will not only proceed with assiduity in your laudable design of rendering our constitution universally known, but will be at least equal in usefulness and true dignity to any society that ever was formed. His words are these, in the preface to his tract, "On the Increase of Robberies," dedicated to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke. "There is nothing so much "talked of and so little understood in this country, as the constitution. "It is a word in the mouth of every man; and yet when we come "to discourse of the matter, there is no subject on which our ideas "are more confused and perplexed. Some, when they speak of the "constitution, confine their notions to the law; others to the legisla- "ture; others, again, to the governing or executive part; and many "there are who jumble all these together in one idea. One error "however is common to them all; for all seem to have the conception "of something uniform and permanent, as if the constitution of "England partook rather of the nature of the soil than of the climate,

“ and was as fixed and constant as the former, not as changing and
 “ variable as the latter. Now in this word, the constitution, are
 “ included the original and fundamental law of the kingdom, from
 “ whence all powers are derived, and by which they are circum-
 “ scribed ; all legislative and executive authority, all those municipal
 “ provisions, which are commonly called laws ; and lastly, the
 “ customs, manners, and habits of the people. These joined to-
 “ ther do, I apprehend, form the political, as the several members
 “ of the body, the animal economy, with the humours and habit,
 “ compose that which is called the natural constitution.”

He adds a paragraph or two of elegant, but idle allusions to the Platonic philosophy, as if we lived under the polity of Plato, not in the days of William the Norman. Now of all words easy to be comprehended, the easiest, in my humble opinion, is the word constitution ; it is the great system of public in contra-distinction to private and criminal law, and comprises all those articles which Blackstone arranges in his first volume, under the rights of persons, and of which he gives a perspicuous analysis. Whatever then relates to the rights of persons, either absolute rights, as the enjoyment of liberty, security, and property, or relative, that is in the public relations of magistrates and people, makes a part of that majestic whole, which we properly call the constitution. Of those magistrates some are subordinate, and some supreme ; as the legislative or parliament, which ought to consist of delegates from every independent voice in the nation ; and the executive or the king, whose legal rights for the general good are called prerogative. The people are the aggregate body or community, and are in an ecclesiastical, civil, military, or maritime state.

This constitutional or public law is partly unwritten, and grounded upon immemorial usage, and partly written or enacted by
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the legislative power, but the unwritten or common law contains the true spirit of our constitution: the written has often most unjustifiably altered the form of it: the common law is the collected wisdom of many centuries, having been used and approved by successive generations, but the statutes frequently contain the whims of a few leading men; and sometimes of the mere individuals employed to draw them; lastly, the unwritten law is eminently favourable, and the written generally hostile to the absolute rights of persons.

But though this inestimable law be called unwritten, yet the only evidence of it is in writing preserved in the public records, judicial, official, and parliamentary, and explained in works of acknowledged authority. Positive acts of the legislature may indeed change the form of the constitution; but as in the system of private law, the narrowness or rigour of our forensic rules may be enlarged or softened by the interposition of parliament, (for our courts of equity are wholly of a different nature,) so all legislative provisions, which oppose the spirit of the constitution, may be corrected agreeable to that very spirit, by the people or nation at large, who form as it were, the high court of appeal in cases of constitutional equity; and their sense must be collected from the petitions which they present, expressed with moderation and respect, yet with all the firmness which their cause justifies, and all the dignity which truly becomes them.

I am, Sir,

Your very faithful humble servant,

W. JONES.

Mr. JONES to the Bishop of St. ASAPH.

MY LORD,

Wimbledon Park, Sept. 19, 1782.

If your Lordship received my letter from Calais, you will not be much surpris'd to see the date of this, and the place where

where I now am writing, while Lady Spencer is making morning visits. Mr. and Mrs. Poyntz have this instant left us. Lord Althorpe being in Northamptonshire, I must give myself some consolation for my disappointment in missing him, by scribbling a few lines to him, as soon as I have finished these with which I now trouble your lordship. My excursion to the United *Provinces* (which has been the substitute for my intended expedition to the United *States*) was extremely pleasing and improving to me. I returned last Monday, and finding all my friends dispersed in various parts of England, am going for a few days into Buckinghamshire, whence I shall go to Oxford, and must continue there till the Sessions. Should your lordship be in Hampshire any time in October, and should it be in all respects convenient to you, I will accept this year, with great pleasure, the obliging invitation to Chilbolton, which I was unfortunately prevented from accepting last year. I lament the unhappy dissensions among our great men, and clearly see the vanity of my anxious wish, that they would have played in tune some time longer in the political concert.

The delays about the India judgeship have, it is true, greatly injured me; but with my patience and assiduity, I could easily recover my lost ground. I must however take the liberty here to allude to a most obliging letter of your lordship from Chilbolton, which I received so long ago as last November, but was prevented from answering till you came to town. It was inexpressibly flattering to me, but my intimate knowledge of the nature of my profession, obliges me to assure you, that it requires the *whole man*, and admits of no concurrent pursuits; that, consequently, I must either give it up, or it will engross me so much, that I shall not for some years be *able to enjoy the society of my friends, or the sweets of liberty*. Whether it be a wise part to live uncomfortably, in order to die wealthy, is another

another question ; but this I know by experience, and have heard old practitioners make the same observation, that a lawyer who is in earnest, must be chained to his chambers and the bar for ten or twelve years together. In regard to your lordship's indulgent and flattering prediction, that my Essay on Bailment would be my last work, and that for the future, business and the public would allow me to write no more, I doubt whether it will be accomplished, whatever may be my practice or situation ; for I have already prepared many tracts on jurisprudence ; and when I see the volumes written by Lord Coke, whose annual gains were twelve or fourteen thousand pounds, by Lord Bacon, Sir Matthew Hale, and a number of judges and chancellors, I cannot think that I should be hurt in my professional career, by publishing now and then a law tract upon some interesting branch of the science ; and the science itself is indeed so complex, that, without *writing*, which is *the chain of memory*, it is impossible to remember a thousandth part of what we read or hear. Since it is my wish therefore to become in time as great a lawyer as Sulpicius, I shall probably leave as many volumes of my works, as he is said to have written. As to politics, I begin to think, that the natural propensity of men to dissent from one another, will prevent them, in a corrupt age, from uniting in any laudable design ; and at present I have nothing to do but to *rest on my oars*, which the Greek philosophers, I believe, called *ἐπέχαιν*, a word which Cicero applies in one of his letters to the same subject.

My best respects to the ladies, for whom I would certainly have brought some Virginia nightingales, if my western expedition had taken place, since I was informed by the captain, with whom I should have sailed, that they might have been kept in the cabin without any danger.

Mr.

Mr. JONES to Mr. Baron EYRE.

DEAR SIR,

Oct. 2, 1782.

I have been in England about a fortnight, and was made happy by learning in John Street, that you had long been restored to health from the illness which confined you, to my inexpressible concern, at the time when I set out for the Continent. The cause of my return is, in few words, this; I ought to have foreseen, what I nevertheless did not expect, that the same timidity or imbecility, which made my unhappy friend declare, that he neither could nor would go to Virginia without me, would make him declare, when he saw the sails and the waves, that he neither would nor could go at all. A dread of some imaginary danger so enervated him, that he kept his bed, and wrote me word, that if he staid a week longer at Nantes, he should lose his reason or his life. My expostulations had some little effect, but there was no dependence, I found, on a man who had none, he confessed, upon himself; and when I discovered, that no ship, with even tolerable accommodation, would sail till September, so that I could not keep my word with my friends in England, by returning from America before the new year, I came back through Normandy about the middle of August, and having a few weeks to spare, made a very pleasant and improving excursion into Holland, which I traversed from South to North. The detail of my expedition may not perhaps be unentertaining to you, when I have the pleasure of conversing with you at your leisure; and I am not without hope of enjoying that pleasure, if you continue at Ruscombe, before the term begins. I stay here till the Sessions are over, and would immediately after take my chance of finding you in Berkshire, but am called upon to keep an old promise of visiting the Bishop of St. Asaph near Andover, and must spend a day or two with my friend

friend Poyntz. I can easily conceive how little time you can have to write letters, yet if you could find a moment to let me know how long you propose to remain in the country, I would not be in your neighbourhood without paying my respects to you, and I would indeed have taken Ruscombe in my way to Oxford, if I had not been engaged to make a visit in Buckinghamshire. As to myself, I find such distraction among my political friends, that I should be glad (if I had no other motive) to be fixed in India, at the distance of 16,000 miles from all their animosities, but I am unhappily more unsettled than ever; for * * * * writes me word, that he has nothing more at heart than *to open some situation for me in India*. What this means I know not, but it looks like some new plan, which may probably hang undecided from session to session. On the whole I greatly fear, that it would have been happy for me, and perhaps for millions, if India had never existed, or if we had known as little of it as of Japan.

Mr. JONES to Lord ALTHORPE.

MY DEAR LORD,

Oct. 5, 1782.

Your friendly letter caught me in Buckinghamshire, before I came to college, where I have been for some days sole governor, and almost sole inhabitant of Alfred's peaceful mansion, till Mr. Windham surprised me agreeably, by coming with a design of passing some time in this academical retreat. You, in the mean while, are taking healthful and pleasing exercise in Norfolk, where Mr. Fox, I understand, is also shooting partridges; and you are both ready, no doubt, to turn your firelocks against the Dutch, should they make their appearance in your fields: when I was in Zealand they expected us, and if they stand upon the ceremony of the first visit, we shall not, I imagine, meet very soon.

In

In regard to my expectation of seeing a little good attained for our miserable country, I am not apt to be sanguine, but rather inclined to fear the worst than to expect the best. I rejoice, however, at the *distrust* conceived by many honest men of those now in power; my opinion is, that *power* should always be *distrusted*, in whatever hands it is placed. As to America, I know not what ***** thinks: but this I know, that the sturdy transatlantic yeomanry will neither be dragooned nor bamboozled out of their liberty. His principles in regard to our internal government are, unless I am deluded by his professions, such as my reason approves, and which is better, such as I know to be approved in clear terms by our *recorded* constitution. The friends of ***** were too monarchical, and those of ***** far too aristocratical for me; and if it were possible to see an administration too democratical, I should equally dislike it. There must be a mixture of all the powers, in due proportions weighed and measured by the laws, or the nation cannot exist without misery or shame. I may write all this consistently with good manners and with friendship, because I know the excellence of your understanding and soundness of your principles; and independently of my presumption that all your actions must be wise and just, I see and applaud the motive which must have induced you to resign an office, which you were not at first much inclined to accept. I am confident also, that you would as little endure a Swedish *monarchy*, as a Venetian *aristocracy*. I enclose a little *jeu d'esprit** which I wrote at Paris. It

* The *jeu d'esprit* mentioned here, is the Dialogue between a Farmer and Country Gentleman on the Principles of Government. In Dr. Towers' Tract on the Rights of Juries, the following passage relating to it occurs:

"After a Bill of Indictment had been found against the Dean of St. Asaph, for the publication of the edition which was printed in Wales, Sir William Jones sent a letter to Lord Kenyon, then Chief Justice of Chester, in which he avowed himself to be the author of the dialogue, and maintained that every position in it was strictly conformable to the laws and constitution of England." p. 117.

was printed here by a society, who, if they will steer clear of party, will do more good to Britain, than all the philosophers and antiquaries of Somerset House. But to speak the truth, I greatly doubt, whether they, or any other men in this country, can do it substantial good. The nation, as Demosthenes said, will be fed like a consumptive patient, with chicken-broth and panada, which will neither suffer him to expire, nor keep him wholly alive. As to myself, if my friends are resolved to assail one another, instead of concurring in any great and laudable effort for the general safety, I have no course left, but to act and speak rightly to the best of my understanding; but I have an additional motive for wishing to obtain an office in India, where I might have some prospect of contributing to the happiness of millions, or at least of alleviating their misery, and serving my country essentially, whilst I benefited my fellow-creatures.

When the sessions are over, I shall hasten to Chilbolton, and perform an old promise of passing a few days with the best of Bishops; after which I shall take Midgham, and Baron Eyre's at Ruscombe, in my way to London, where I must be at the beginning of the term. A Persian book is just printed here, said to have been composed by Tamerlane, who confesses, that he governed men by four great arts, bribing, dividing, *amusing*, and *keeping in suspence*. How far it may be an object with modern Tamerlanes, or sultans of India, to govern me, I cannot tell; but as I cannot be *bribed*, without losing my senses, nor divided, without losing my life, I will neither be *amused*, nor *kept long in suspence*; and, indeed, I have so high an opinion of Lord Ashburton, who never professes more than he means, that I do not suspect any artifice in that business.

Mr. JONES to Lady SPENCER.

MADAM,

Chilbolton, Oct. 21, 1782.

Though I wrote so lately to your Ladyship, and cannot hope by any thing I can now say to make amends for the dulness of my last letter; yet, as some of the ladies here are this moment writing to St. James's Place, I cannot prevail on myself to decline joining so agreeable a party, especially as the very favourable accounts which were last night received of Lord Spencer's health have given me spirits, and made me eager to offer my sincere congratulations. Yes; I rejoice with the truest sincerity, that his Lordship's health is so likely to be re-established, for I cannot name a man of rank in the nation, in whose health the public and all mankind, as well as his family and friends, are more truly interested. I have passed my time at Chilbolton so agreeably, that ten days have appeared like one; and it gives me concern that the near approach of the term will oblige me to leave so charming and improving a society at the end of this week: after which I shall hope to find my friends at Midgham in perfect health; and then farewell, a long farewell to all my rational and interesting pleasures, which must be succeeded by the drudgery of drawing bills in equity, the toil of answering cases, the squabbles of the bar, and the more vexatious dissensions and conflicts of the political world, which I vainly deprecated, and now as vainly deplore. How happy would it be, if statesmen had more *music in their souls*, and could bring themselves to consider, that what harmony is in a concert, such is union in a state; but in the great orchestra of politics, I find so many musicians out of humour, and instruments out of tune, that I am more tormented by such dissonance than the man in Hogarth's print, and am more desirous than ever of being transported to the distance of five thousand leagues from all this fatal discord. Without a metaphor, I lament

with

with anguish the bitterness and animosity with which some of my friends have been assailing others; as if empty altercation could be the means of procuring any good to this afflicted country. I find myself in more instances than one, like poor Petrarch, wishing to pass my days

*Fra' magnanimi pochi; a chi 'l ben piace,
Di lor chi in' assecura?
Io vo gridando pace, pace, pace.*

—but I shall not be heard, and must console myself with the pleasing hope, that your Ladyship, and the few friends of virtue and humanity will agree in this sentiment with, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

From the Duchess of DEVONSHIRE to Mr. JONES.

MY DEAR MR. JONES,

Plimton, Oct. 28, 1782.

I am very happy that the fear of losing a privilege, which you are so good as to say is precious to you, has induced you to write to me, for I assure you, that your letters give me very great pleasure, and that they, as well as the few times in which we meet, make me regret very much, that the turn of your public engagements take you so much from societies where you are wished for.

I agree with you, that the political world is strangely torn. If you had been in parliament at this crisis, you would have felt yourself in an uncomfortable situation, I confess; but I cannot think, that with the good Whig principles you are blessed with, private friendships or connections would have prevailed on you to remain silent or inactive.

*Chi vuol Catone amico,
Facilmente l'avrà: Sia fido a Roma.*

This

This I think would have been the test of your political friendship.

I am rejoiced that there is a chance of your returning to poetry. I had a very valuable present made me by Dr. Blagden, physician to the camp, of your ode in imitation of Callistratus. I wish I understood Greek, that I might read something Mr. Paradise has written at the top of it. I will attempt to copy it; and after the various characters I have, *in days of yore*, seen you decipher, I will not despair of your making out Greek, though written by me.

Αἱ Χαρίτες, τέμενος τι λαβείν ὅπερ ἔπι παίστη
Ζηῆσαι, ψυχὴν εὖρον Ἰωνιον*.

I shall expect to see the poem something sooner than the rest of your friends; and I assure you, the having so seldom the pleasure of meeting you, does not diminish the sincerity, with which I shall ever retain that title.—If you are still at Chilbolton, pray give my love to the family there, and tell Miss Shipley to write to me.

My seal is a talisman, which if you can send me the explanation of, I shall be much obliged to you.

* * * * *

In the beginning of 1783, Mr. Jones published his translation of the seven Arabian poems, which he had finished in 1781. It was his intention to have prefixed to this work, a discourse on the antiquity of the Arabian language and characters, on the manners of the Arabs in the age immediately preceding that of Mohammed, and other interesting information respecting the poems, and the lives of the authors, with a critical history of their works; but he could not command sufficient leisure for the execution of it. Some of the subjects intended for this dissertation, appeared in a discourse

* The Graces, seeking a shrine that would never decay, found the soul of Jones.

on the Arabs, which he composed some years afterwards, and from the manner in which it was written, it is impossible not to regret the irrecoverable loss of the larger discussion which he originally proposed. The poems present us with a curious specimen of the manners of the natives of Arabia, and on this account, must be particularly interesting to those, who consider the study of human nature in all its varieties, as an instructive subject of contemplation. "They exhibit (to use the words of Mr. Jones) an exact picture of the virtues and vices of the Arabs in the age of the seven poets, their wisdom and their folly, and shew what may be constantly expected from men of open hearts, and boiling passions, with no law to control, and little religion to restrain them."

The period was now arrived, when Mr. Jones had the happiness to gain the accomplishment of his most anxious wishes. In March 1783, during the administration of Lord Shelburne, he was appointed a judge of the supreme court of judicature at Fortwilliam at Bengal, on which occasion the honour of knighthood was conferred upon him; and, in the April following, he married Anna Maria Shipley, the eldest daughter of the Bishop of St. Asaph. I have remarked the early impression made upon the affections of Sir William Jones by this lady, and the honourable determination which he formed upon that occasion, and if I should have succeeded in imparting to my readers any portion of that interest, which I feel in his personal concerns, they will see him with pleasure receiving the rewards of principle and affection.

The Bishop of St. Asaph, of whose respectable character and high literary reputation it is unnecessary to remind the public, possessed too enlightened an understanding not to appreciate the early distinguished talents and virtues of Sir William Jones, and their

their friendship was cemented by an union of political principles, and the zealous admiration each felt for the constitution of their country. The Bishop, in the choice of a son-in-law, had every reason to indulge the pleasing hope that he had consulted, as far as human foresight can extend, the happiness of his beloved daughter; nor were his expectations disappointed.

For his appointment to India, Mr. Jones was indebted to the friendship of Lord Ashburton: in October 1782 I find a letter from his Lordship to Mr. Jones, with the following words: "You will give me credit for not being indifferent about the important stake still left in India, or your particular interest in it, in which I consider that of the public so materially involved." The intelligence of his success was communicated to Mr. Jones, in the following letter of congratulation, to which I subjoin one from the celebrated Franklin on the same occasion.

MY DEAR SIR,

March 3, 1783.

It is with little less satisfaction to myself than it can give you, that I send you the inclosed, and I do assure you there are few events, in which I could have felt so sensible a mortification, as in that of your finally missing this favourite object. The weather suggests to me as no slight topic of congratulation, your being relieved from such a journey and under such circumstances, as your last favour intimates you had in contemplation for Wednesday; but when I consider this appointment as securing to you at once, two of the first objects of human pursuit, those of ambition and love, I feel it a subject of very serious and cordial congratulation, which I desire you to accept, and to convey accordingly.

I am, with every good wish, dear Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

ASHBURTON.

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itlli*

DEAR FRIEND,

Passy, March 17, 1783.

I duly received your obliging letter of Nov. 15. You will have since learnt how much I was then and have been continually engaged in public affairs, and your goodness will excuse my not having answered it sooner. You announced your intended marriage with my much respected friend Miss Anna Maria, which I assure you gave me great pleasure, as I cannot conceive a match more likely to be happy, from the amiable qualities each of you possess so plentifully. You mention its taking place as soon as a prudent attention to worldly interests would permit. I just now learn from Mr. Hodgson, that you are appointed to an honourable and profitable place in the Indies; so I expect now soon to hear of the wedding, and to receive the profile. With the good Bishop's permission, I will join my blessing with his; adding my wishes that you may return from that corrupting country, with a great deal of money honestly acquired, and with full as much virtue as you carry out with you.

The engraving of my medal, which you know was projected before the peace, is but just finished. None are yet struck in hard metal, but will in a few days. In the mean time, having this good opportunity by Mr. Penn, I find you one of the Epreuves. You will see that I have profited by some of your ideas, and adopted the mottos you were so kind as to furnish.

I am at present quite recovered from my late illness, and flatter myself that I may in the ensuing summer be able to undertake a trip to England, for the pleasure of seeing once more my dear friends there, among whom the Bishop and his family stand foremost in my estimation and affection.

I thank you for your good wishes respecting me. Mine for your welfare and prosperity are not less earnest and sincere ; being with great truth, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,
and most obedient servant,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

* * * * *

I have mentioned the literary productions of Sir William Jones in the order in which they were published. I observe however two compositions which had escaped my attention ; an abridged History of the Life of Nadir Shah, in English, and a History of the Persian Language, intended to be prefixed to the first edition of his Persian Grammar.*

* The reader will peruse with pleasure the following lines from the Arabic, written by Sir William Jones, in 1783, and addressed to Lady Jones.

While sad suspense and chill delay
Bereave my wounded soul of rest,
New hopes, new fears, from day to day,
By turns assail my lab'ring breast.

My heart, which ardent love consumes,
Throbs with each agonizing thought ;
So flutters with entangled plumes,
The lark in wily meshes caught.

There she, with unavailing strain,
Pours thro' the night her warbled grief :
The gloom retires, but not her pain ;
The dawn appears, but not relief.

Two younglings wait the parent bird,
Their thrilling sorrows to appease :
She comes—ah ! no : the sound they heard
Was but a whisper of the breeze.

A long list might be formed of works which he meditated at different periods. He had projected a Treatise on Maritime Contracts; and with a view to the completion of this work, he commissioned a friend to purchase for him the Collections of Heineccius, containing the Dissertations of Stypman and Kerrick, with any other works that could be procured on the same subject. It was also his intention to re-publish Lyttleton's Treatise on Tenures, from the first edition of 1482, with a new translation, explanatory notes, and a commentary; and to prefix an Introductory Discourse on the Laws of England. He had made a considerable progress towards the completion of this work, which still exists, but not in a sufficient degree of advancement for publication.

I have remarked the extraordinary avidity with which he availed himself of every opportunity to acquire knowledge: but I have omitted to mention his attendance during a course of anatomical lectures, by the celebrated Hunter: and amongst other sciences which he diligently and successfully cultivated, I have still to mention the Mathematics, in which he had advanced so far, as to read and understand Newton's Principia.

The review of the various acquisitions of Sir William Jones in science and literature, will be introduced in another place; and having brought to a close that portion of his life, which was passed in England, I must now prepare the reader to transport himself with him to Hindustan.

SIR WILLIAM JONES embarked for India in the Crocodile frigate; and in April 1783, left his native country, to which he was never to return, with the unavailing regret and affectionate wishes of his numerous friends and admirers.

As to himself, the melancholy impressions which he could not but feel on such an occasion, were alleviated by various considerations. The expectations of five years were now accomplished in the attainment of his wishes; he anticipated the utility of his official labours to the public, and the occupation so peculiarly delightful to him, of investigating unexplored mines of literature. Sir William Jones was now in his thirty-seventh year, in the full vigour of his faculties, and he looked forward with ardour to the pleasures and advantages arising from his situation in India, without any apprehension that the climate of that country would prove hostile to his constitution. A difference of opinion on great political questions, without diminishing his regard for his friends, had narrowed his habits of intercourse with some whom he sincerely esteemed, and he felt therefore the less regret in quitting those whose principles he wished to approve, but from whom, an adherence to his own frequently compelled him to dissent. He reflected with pleasure on the independency of his station, that the line of duty, which it prescribed, was strait and defined, and in leaving his native country, for which he retained the warmest affection, he was not sorry to abandon all political cares and discussions. But his greatest consolation and enjoyment were derived from the society of Lady Jones.

To those who are destitute of internal resources, whose habits have led them to seek for amusement in the miscellaneous occurrences and topics of the day only, a sea voyage is a period of fatigue, languor, and anxiety. To Sir William Jones every new scene was interesting, and his mind, exercised by incessant study and reflection, possessed an inexhaustible fund of subjects ; which he could at pleasure select and apply to the purposes of recreation and improvement, but his application during his voyage was more particularly directed to those studies, by which he was to enlarge the requisite qualifications for discharging the duties of his public station, with satisfaction to himself, and benefit to the community.*

The

* The following memorandum was written by Sir William Jones during his voyage.

Objects of Enquiry during my residence in Asia.

1. The Laws of the Hindus and Mohammedans.
2. The History of the *Ancient* World.
3. Proofs and Illustrations of Scripture.
4. Traditions concerning the Deluge, &c.
5. Modern Politics and Geography of Hindustan.
6. Best Mode of governing Bengal.
7. Arithmetic and Geometry, and mixed Sciences of the Asiatics.
8. Medicine, Chemistry, Surgery, and Anatomy of the Indians.
9. Natural Productions of India.
10. Poetry, Rhetoric, and Morality of Asia.
11. Music of the Eastern Nations.
12. The Shi-King, or 300 Chinese Odes.
13. The best accounts of Tibet and Cashmir.
14. Trade, Manufactures, Agriculture, and Commerce of India.
15. Mogul Constitution, contained in the *Dcfteri Alemghiri*, and *Ayein Acbari*.
16. Mahratta Constitution.

To print and publish the *Gospel* of St. Luke in Arabic.

To publish Law Tracts in Persian or Arabic.

To

The following short letter to Lord Ashburton, written a few weeks after his embarkation, may not be unacceptable to the reader :

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Lord ASHBURTON.

April 27, 1783.

Your kind letter found me on board the *Crocodile*: I should have been very unhappy had it missed me, since I have long habituated myself to set the highest value on every word you speak, and every line you write. Of the two inclosed letters to our friends, Impey and Chambers, I will take the greatest care, and will punctually follow your directions as to the first of them. My departure was sudden indeed; but the Admiralty were so anxious for the sailing of this frigate, and their orders were so peremptory, that it was impossible to wait for any thing but a breeze. Our voyage has hitherto been tolerably pleasant, and, since we left the Channel, very quick. We begin to see albacores about the ship, and to perceive an agreeable change of climate. Our days, though short, give me ample time for study, recreation, and exercise; but

To print and publish the *Psalms of David* in Persian Verse.
To Compose, if God grant me Life,

1. Elements of the Laws of England.

Model—The Essay on Bailment—Aristotle.

2. The History of the *American* War.

Model—Thucydides and Polybius.

3. Britain discovered, an Heroic Poem on the Constitution of England. Machinery.
Hindu Gods.

Model—Homer.

4. Speeches, Political and Forensic.

Model—Demosthenes.

5. Dialogues, Philosophical and Historical.

Model—Plato.

6. Letters. *Model*—Demosthenes and Plato.

12th July, 1783. *Crocodile* Frigate.

my joy and delight proceed from the surprising health and spirits of Anna Maria, who joins me in affectionate remembrance to Lady Ashburton. As to you, my dear Lord, we consider you as the spring and fountain of our happiness, as the author and parent, (a Roman would have added, what the coldness of our northern language will hardly admit) the *god* of our fortunes. It is possible indeed, that by incessant labour and irksome attendance at the bar, I might in due time have attained all that my very limited ambition could aspire to; but in no other station than that which I owe to your friendship, could I have gratified at once my boundless curiosity concerning the people of the East, continued the exercise of my profession, in which I sincerely delight, and enjoyed at the same time the comforts of domestic life. The grand jury of Denbighshire, have found, I understand, the bill against the Dean of St. Asaph, for publishing my dialogue; but as an indictment for a theoretical essay on government was I believe never before known, I have no apprehension for the consequences. As to the doctrines in the tract, though I shall certainly not preach them to the Indians, who must and will be governed by absolute power, yet I shall go through life with a persuasion, that they are just and rational, that substantial freedom is both the daughter and parent of virtue, and that virtue is the only source of public and private felicity. Farewell.

* * * * *

In the course of the voyage he stopped at Madeira, and, in ten additional weeks of prosperous sailing from the rugged islands of Cape Verd, arrived at Hinzuan or Joanna. Of this island, where he remained a few days only, he has published an interesting and amusing description. He expatiates with rapture on his approach to it, delineates with the skill of an artist the beauties of the scenery, and sketches with the discriminating pen of a philosopher, the characters and manners of the unpolished but hospitable natives.

tives. The novelty of the scene was attractive, and its impression upon his mind is strongly marked by the following just and elegant reflection, which in substance is more than once repeated in his writings :—“ If life were not too short for the complete discharge of
 “ all our respective duties, public and private, and for the acqui-
 “ sition even of necessary knowledge in any degree of perfection,
 “ with how much pleasure and improvement might a great part of
 “ it be spent in admiring the beauties of this wonderful orb, and
 “ contemplating the nature of man in all its varieties !”•

But it would be injustice to his memory, to pass over without particular notice, the sensible and dignified rebuke, with which he repelled the rude attack of Mussulman bigotry on the divinity of our Saviour. During a visit which he made to a native of the island, a Coran was produced for his inspection, and his attention was pointedly directed to a passage in a commentary accusing the Christians of blasphemy, in calling our Saviour the Son of God. “ The commentator (he replied) was much to blame for passing so
 “ indiscriminate and hasty a censure ; the title which gave your
 “ legislator, and which gives you such offence, was often applied
 “ in *Judea* by a bold figure, agreeably to the *Hebrew* idiom,
 “ though unusual in *Arabic*, to *angels*, to *holy men*, and even to *all*
 “ *mankind*, who are commanded to call God their father ; and in
 “ this large sense, the Apostle to the Romans calls the elect the
 “ *children* of God, and the Messiah *the first born among many*
 “ *brethren* ; but the words *only begotten* are applied transcendentally
 “ and incomparably to him alone ; and as for me, who believe the
 “ Scriptures which you also profess to believe, though you assert
 “ without proof that we have altered them, I cannot refuse him
 “ an appellation, though far surpassing our reason, by which he is
 “ distinguished in the Gospel ; and the believers in Mohammed,

• Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iv. p. 488.

“ who

“ who expressly names him the Messiah, and pronounces him to have been born of a virgin (which alone might fully justify the phrase condemned by this author) are themselves condemnable, for cavilling at words, when they cannot object to the substance of our faith, consistently with their own*.”

This quotation affords a decisive proof of the belief of Sir William Jones, in the sublime doctrines of the Christian religion. Had he been an infidel, he would have smiled at the scoffs of Mussulman bigotry ; and had he been indifferent to his faith, he would have been silent on an occasion, where he could expect neither candour nor concessions from his antagonists. Indeed he was well aware, that a religious dispute with those zealots, would have been fruitless and unseasonable, and might have been dangerous ; but, as it was inconsistent with his principles, to disavow or conceal what he firmly believed and professed, he could not suffer the attack to pass without reprehension, and he grounded it on premises, which his opponents could not dispute, nor did they venture to answer.

From Hinzuán to the Ganges, nothing material occurred, and he landed at Calcutta, in September 1783. His reputation had preceded his arrival, which was anxiously expected, and he had the happiness to find, that his appointment had diffused a general satisfaction, which his presence now rendered complete. The students of the Oriental languages were eager to welcome a scholar, whose erudition in that branch of literature was unrivalled, and whose labours and genius had assisted their progress ; while the public rejoiced in the possession of a magistrate, whose probity and independence were no less acknowledged than his abilities.

* Sir William Jones's Works, vol. i. p. 465.

With what rapture he himself contemplated his new situation, may be more easily conceived than described. As a magistrate of the supreme court of judicature, he had now that opportunity, which he ever ardently desired, of devoting his talents to the service of his native country, and of promoting the happiness of the community in which he resided; while the history, antiquities, natural productions, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, opened an extensive and almost boundless field to his enquiries. He was now placed amidst a people, whose pretensions to antiquity had hitherto eluded research, and whose manners, religion, and customs, still retained the same characteristic peculiarities, by which they were originally distinguished. Time, who spreads the veil of oblivion over the opinions and works of mankind, who annihilates empires and the records of their existence, had spared the doctrines and language of the followers of Brama, and amidst the ravages of conquest and oppressions of tyranny, seemed to protect with parental care some of the earliest monuments of his reign. The Hindoos in fact presented to the observation of Sir William Jones, a living picture of antiquity: and although the colouring might be somewhat faded and obscured, the lineaments of the original character were still discernible by the most superficial observer, whilst he remarked them with discrimination and rapture.

In December 1783, he entered upon his judicial functions, and at the opening of the sessions, delivered his first charge to the grand jury. The public had formed a high estimate of his oratorical powers, nor were they disappointed. His address was elegant, concise, and appropriate; the exposition of his sentiments and principles was equally manly and conciliatory, and calculated to inspire general satisfaction, as the known sincerity of his character was a test of his adherence to his professions. In glancing at dissensions, which, at no remote period, had unfortu-

nately prevailed between the supreme executive and judicial powers in Bengal, he shewed that they might and ought to be avoided, that the functions of both were distinct, and could be exercised without danger of collision, in promoting what should be the object of both, the public good.

In the intervals of leisure from his professional duties, he directed his attention to scientific objects; he soon saw that the field of research in India, was of an extent to baffle the industry of any individual; and that whatever success might attend his own indefatigable labours, it could only be explored by the united efforts of many. With these ideas, he devised the institution of a society in Calcutta, on the plan of those established in the principal cities of Europe, as best calculated to excite and facilitate the enquiries of the ingenious, as affording the means of preserving the numerous little tracts and essays, which otherwise would be lost to the public, and of concentrating all the valuable knowledge, which might be obtained in Asia. The suggestion was received with the greatest satisfaction by several gentlemen to whom he communicated it, and the members of the new association, assembled for the first time, in January 1784.

The repetition of a narrative, which has already appeared in several publications*, may be deemed superfluous; but a detail of the circumstances attending the formation of an Institution, of which Sir William Jones was not only the founder, but the brightest ornament, cannot with propriety be omitted in the memoirs of his life.

It had been resolved to follow, as nearly as possible, the plan of the Royal Society in London, of which the King is the patron,

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. Introduction. The account is omitted in the works of Sir William Jones.

and at the first meeting, it was therefore agreed, to address the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, explaining the objects of the society, and soliciting the honour of their patronage, which was granted in the most flattering terms of approbation. The members next proceeded to the nomination of a president: and as Warren Hastings, Esquire, then Governor-General of India, had distinguished himself as the first liberal promoter of useful knowledge in Bengal, and especially as the great encourager of Persian and Sanscrit literature, they deemed him entitled to every mark of distinction, which it was in their power to offer: and although they were aware, that the numerous and important duties of his public station, might prove an insurmountable objection to his acquiescence, they nevertheless determined to solicit his acceptance of the honorary title of president of the society, as a just tribute of respect, which the occasion seemed to demand, and which could not have been omitted, without an appearance of inattention to his distinguished merit.

The application was received with the acknowledgment due to the motives which dictated it: but Mr. Hastings, for the reasons which had been anticipated, declined his acceptance of the proffered title, and “begged leave to resign his pretensions to the gentleman, whose genius had planned the institution, and was most capable of conducting it, to the attainment of the great and splendid purposes of its formation.” Sir William Jones, upon the receipt of this answer, was immediately and unanimously requested to accept the presidency of the society. On this occasion, he addressed the following letter to Mr. Hastings:

MY DEAR SIR;

Independently of my general presumption, that whatever you determine is right, I cannot but admit the solidity of the

reasons,

reasons, which induce you to decline that precedence, to which, if our society were in its full vigour instead of being in its cradle, you would have a title paramount to all, who have been, are, or will be, in this country. Every part of your letter (except that which your kind indulgence makes so honourable to me) carries with it the clearest conviction. Your first reason (namely, an unwillingness to accept an honorary trust, and want of leisure for one, that may require an active part) must appear satisfactory to all. I trust, you will consider our act as proceeding solely from our anxiety to give you that distinction, which justice obliged us to give. As to myself, I could never have been satisfied, if, in traversing the sea of knowledge, I had fallen in with a ship of your rate and station, without striking my flag. One thing more, my dear Sir, I must assure you of, that in whatever manner your objections had been stated, I should have thought them just and wise; and if it were not for the pleasure, which your friendly communication of them has given me, I should repent of the trouble which our intended homage has occasioned.

I return Mr. Turner's letters, with many thanks for the entertainment which Lady J. and myself have received from them. I promise myself much delight and instruction from his conversation, and hope that when he shall think proper to communicate a relation of his travels*, he will prefer our society to that of London. I will pay my respects to you in the evening, and am concerned, from a selfish motive, that the place where I now write, will so

* This relation was published in 1800, under the title of "An Account of an Embassy to the Court of Teshoo Lama in Tibet;" &c., by Captain Samuel Turner. It is exceedingly curious and interesting. The author, whose amiable manners and good qualities had endeared him to his friends, was seized with an apoplexy as he was walking the streets of London, and died within two days.

soon lose one of its greatest advantages. Believe me to be, with unfeigned regard, dear Sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

* * * * *

To this public and private record of the merit of Mr. Hastings, in promoting and encouraging the pursuits of literature in Asia, the addition of any further testimony must be superfluous; yet I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of stating briefly the grounds of his claims to that distinction, which excited the acknowledgments, and prompted the solicitation of the society.

Mr. Hastings entered into the service of the East-India company, with all the advantages of a regular classical education, and with a mind strongly impressed with the pleasures of literature. The common dialects of Bengal, after his arrival in that country, soon became familiar to him; and at a period when the use and importance of the Persian language were scarcely suspected, and when the want of that grammatical and philological assistance, which has facilitated the labours of succeeding students, rendered the attainment of it a task of peculiar difficulty, he acquired a proficiency in it. His success not only contributed to make known the advantages of the acquisition, but proved an inducement to others to follow his example, and the general knowledge of the Persian language, which has been since attained by the servants of the East-India company, has conspired to produce political effects of the greatest national importance, by promoting and accelerating the improvements, which have taken place in the system of internal administration in Bengal.

If Mr. Hastings cannot claim the merit of having himself explored the mine of Sanscrit literature, he is eminently entitled to the

praise

praise of having invited and liberally encouraged the researches of others. But he has a claim to commendations of a higher nature ; for a conduct no less favourable to the cause of literature, than to the advancement of the British influence in India, by removing that reserve and distrust in the professors of the Braminical Faith, which had taught them to view with suspicion all attempts to investigate their code, and to apprehend the infringement of its ordinances, in our political rule. The importance of his success will be readily acknowledged by those, whose observation qualifies them to form a due estimate of it ; and to those who have not had the advantages of local experience, the communication of my own may not be unsatisfactory.

The spirit of the Mohammedan religion is adverse to every appearance of idolatry, and the conquest of Hindustan by the Mussulmans, was prosecuted with the zeal of a religious crusade. The rage of proselytism was united with the ambition of dominion, and the subversion of the Hindu superstition was always considered a religious obligation, the discharge of which might indeed be suspended by political considerations, but could never be renounced : and, notwithstanding occasional marks of toleration in some of the emperors of Hindustan, or their viceroys, their Hindu subjects were ever beheld by them, in the contemptuous light of infidels and idolaters. They were of course naturally disposed to apprehend the effects of a similar bigotry and intolerance in their European governors, so widely discriminated from themselves in manners, language, and religion. The Bramins, too, (who had the feelings common to the bulk of the people,) deemed themselves precluded by laws, in their opinion of sacred and eternal obligation, from any development of their secret doctrines to a race of people, who could only be ranked in the lowest of the four classes of mankind, and to whom, with little exception, their secrecy and

reserve

reserve had hitherto proved impenetrable. To surmount these obstacles, to subdue the jealousy and prejudices of the Bramins, and to diminish the apprehensions of the people at large, required a conduct regulated by the most liberal and equitable principles, and the influence of personal intercourse and conciliation. The compilation of a code of laws by Pundits, convened by the invitation of Mr. Hastings, the Persian version of it, made under their immediate inspection, and the translation of the Bagvhat Geeta, a work containing all the grand mysteries of the Braminical Faith, are incontrovertible proofs of the success of his efforts, to inspire confidence in minds where distrust was habitual, while a variety of useful publications, undertaken at his suggestion, demonstrate the beneficial effects of his patronage and encouragement of Oriental literature.

Amongst the original members of the society, who subscribed the address to the Governor-General and Council, proposing the institution, will be found the names of several who have distinguished themselves by their proficiency in Oriental learning; of Mr. William Chambers, whose knowledge of the dialects on the coast of Coromandel, as well as of Persian and Arabic literature, was critical and extensive, and his least praise; of Mr. Francis Gladwyn, the author of many works calculated to assist the students of the Persian language, the translator of various Oriental manuscripts, and particularly of the institutes of Akbar, the wisest, greatest, and most tolerant monarch, that ever swayed the sceptre of India*; of Captain Charles Hamilton, who published a translation

* The toleration of Akbar, and his curiosity to investigate the religious tenets of other nations, have exposed him to the charge of heresy amongst the Mohammedans in general. In a collection of his letters, published by his learned minister Ab-ul-fuzl, there is one addressed to the king of Portugal, in which he censures in the strongest terms, the slavish

lation of the Hedaiya, a code of Mohammedan laws, which has been found of great use in the administration of justice in Bengal; and of Charles Wilkins, Esquire, the first Englishman who acquired a critical knowledge of the language of the Bramins, and who, by the application of rare talents and industry, by his own personal exertions, invented and cast types of the Debnagree, Persic, and Bengalese characters, in such perfection, that no succeeding attempts have exhibited any improvement upon his labours. Of these names, two only survive.

The loss of Mr. Chambers must be particularly lamented, by all who feel an interest in communicating a knowledge of the doctrines of salvation, to the natives of India. In an early period of life he saw and felt the truth and importance of the Christian Religion, and while his own conduct exhibited the strength of his conviction, he thought it a duty to employ his talents and acquirements in dis-

propensity of mankind, to adopt the religious principles of their fathers and those amongst whom they have been brought up, without evidence or investigation; he avows his own pleasure and profit, in conversing with the learned professors of different persuasions, and desires that some person of that character, conversant in the Oriental and European languages, may be sent to him. He also requests translations of the *heavenly books*, the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospels, or of any others of general utility.

In a code of instructions, specifically addressed to the officers of his empire, I find the two following passages:

“ Do not molest mankind on account of their religious principles. If in the affairs of this world, which are transitory and perishable, a prudent man is guided by a regard to his interest; still less, in spiritual concerns, which are eternal, whilst he retains his senses, will he adopt what is pernicious. If truth be on his side, do not oppose it and molest him; but if it be with you, and he from want of understanding should have imbibed erroneous notions, ignorance is his malady, and he is to be considered an object of your compassion and assistance, not of molestation and severity. Keep on good terms with the upright and virtuous of *all persuasions*.”

“ The best adoration, which man in this world can pay to his Maker, is duly to administer the affairs of his creatures, discarding passion and affection, and without distinction of friend or foe, relation or stranger.”

seminating

seminating amongst the untaught natives a knowledge of that faith, which he regarded of supreme and universal importance. In this view, he determined to undertake a translation of the New Testament into Persian, and devoted all his leisure to the performance of this task, with the most zealous solicitude to make it accurate; but he had not completed half the Gospel of St. Matthew, when it pleased Providence to call him out of this life.

Such, amongst others, were the original members of the society formed at Calcutta, for enquiring into the history, antiquities, the natural productions, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, under the patronage of Sir William Jones, who at the first meeting after the institution was completed, in his capacity of president, unfolded, in an elegant and appropriate address, the objects proposed for their researches, and concluded with a promise, which he amply discharged, of communicating the result of his own studies and enquiries.

That he might be qualified to perform this promise, in a manner worthy his high reputation, as well as from more commanding motives, he determined to commence without loss of time the study of the Sanscrit. His reflection had before suggested, that a knowledge of this ancient tongue would be of the greatest utility, in enabling him to discharge with confidence and satisfaction to himself, the duties of a judge; and he soon discovered, what subsequent experience fully confirmed, that no reliance could be placed on the opinions or interpretations of the professors of the Hindu law, unless he were qualified to examine their authorities and quotations, and detect their errors and misrepresentations. On the other hand, he knew that all attempts to explore the religion or literature of India, through any other medium than a knowledge of the Sanscrit, must be imperfect and unsatisfactory; it was evi-

dent, that the most erroneous and discordant opinions on these subjects, had been circulated by the ignorance of those who had collected their information from oral communications only, and that the pictures exhibited in Europe, of the religion and literature of India, could only be compared to the maps constructed by the natives, in which every position is distorted, and all proportion violated. As a lawyer, he knew the value and importance of original documents and records, and as a scholar and man of science, he disdained the idea of amusing the learned world, with secondary information on subjects which had greatly interested their curiosity, when he had the means of access to the original sources. He was also aware, that much was expected by the literati in Europe, from his superior abilities and learning, and he felt the strongest inclination to gratify their expectations in the fullest possible extent.

Of his time he had early learned to be a rigid economist *, and he frequently regretted the sacrifices of it, which custom or ceremony extorted. An adherence to this principle, while it restrained in some degree his habits of social intercourse, necessarily limited

* As a proof of the strict regularity of Sir William Jones in the application of his time, the reader is presented with a transcript of a card in his own writing. It contains, indeed, the occupations which he had prescribed to himself in a period of the following year; but may serve as a sample of the manner in which he devoted his leisure hours at all times.

DAILY STUDIES

for the

Long Vacation of 1785 :

Morning.....One letter.
Ten chapters of the Bible.
 Sanscrit Grammar.
 Hindu Law, &c.

Afternoon.....Indian Geography.

Evening.....Roman History.
 Chess. Ariosto.

his correspondence with his friends. From the few letters which he wrote, I shall now select such, as describe his feelings, thoughts, and occupations, a few months only after his arrival in Bengal.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Mr. Justice HYDE.

DEAR SIR;

Friday Evening, at the Chambers, Jan. 1784.

Ramlochind has raised my curiosity by telling me, that when you had occasion to receive the evidence of some *Mugs*, they produced a book in strange square characters, which they called *Zuboor*. Now *Zuboor* is the name by which the *Psalms of David* are known in Asia. May not this book be the Psalms in old Hebrew or Samaritan, and the people a sect of Jews? Can you give me any information on this head?

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Mr. Justice HYDE.

Garden, May 14, 1784.

Many thanks, my dear Sir, for your kind concern and attention. I was on the bridge by Col. Tolly's house in the midst of the storm, my horses mad with the fear of the lightning, and my carriage every moment in danger of being upset by the wind; I was wet to the skin, and saved from worse inconvenience by the diligence of my servants, who took off the horses and drew the carriage to a place of safety. I am nevertheless in good health; but Lady Jones is not quite recovered from a severe cold and rheumatism, attended with a fever.

Remember that I am always ready to relieve you at the chambers in the Loll Bazar*, and will cheerfully take the labouring oar

* A house in Calcutta, where the puisné judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature attended by rotation in the evening, as justices of the peace.

nexth month if you please; especially, as I propose to spend the long vacation in a floating house, and to leave Calcutta as soon as the session is over; but I shall return dead or alive before the 22d of *October*. I am inexpressibly amused by a Persian translation of an old Sanscrit book, called *Siry Bha'gwat*, which comprizes almost the whole of the *Hindu* religion, and contains the life and achievements of *Crishen*; it is by far the most entertaining book, on account of its novelty and wildness, that I ever read.

Farewell, and believe me, dear Sir,

Ever affectionately yours,

WILLIAM JONES.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Dr. PATRICK RUSSELL.

Calcutta, March 10, 1784.

You would readily excuse my delay in answering your obliging letter, if you could form an idea of the incessant hurry and confusion, in which I have been kept ever since my arrival in Bengal, by necessary business, or necessary formalities, and by the difficulty of settling myself to my mind, in a country so different from that which I have left. I am indeed at best, but a bad correspondent; for I never write by candle-light, and find so much Arabic or Persian to read, that all my leisure in a morning, is hardly sufficient for a thousandth part of the reading that would be highly agreeable and useful to me; and as I purpose to spend the long vacation up the country, I wish to be a match in conversation with the learned natives, whom I may happen to meet.

I rejoice that you are so near, but lament that you are not nearer, and am not without hope, that you may one day be tempted to visit Bengal, where I flatter myself you will give me as much of your company as possible.

Many

Many thanks for your kind hints in regard to my health. As to me, I do not expect, as long as I stay in India, to be free from a bad digestion, the morbus literatorum, for which there is hardly any remedy, but abstinence from too much food, literary and culinary. I rise before the sun, and bathe after a gentle ride; my diet is light and sparing, and I go early to rest; yet the activity of my mind is too strong for my constitution, though naturally not infirm, and I must be satisfied with a valetudinarian state of health. If you should meet with any curiosities on the coast, either in your botanical rambles or in reading, and will communicate them to our society, lately instituted for enquiring into the history, civil and natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, we shall give you our hearty thanks. There is an Abyssinian here, who knew Mr. Bruce at Gwender. I have examined him, and he confirms Bruce's account. Every day supplies me with something new in Oriental learning, and if I were to stay here half a century, I should be continually amused.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to _____

April 13, 1784.

* * * * *

I am discouraged from writing to you as copiously as I wish, by the fear that my letter may never reach you. I inclose however a hymn to the Indian cupid, which is here said to be the only correct specimen of Hindu mythology that has appeared; it is certainly new and quite original, except the form of the stanza, which is Milton's. I add the character of Lord Ashburton, which my zeal for his fame prompted me to publish*.

Had

* Lord Ashburton died on the 18th of August 1783. His character, written by Sir William Jones, is published in vol. iv. of his works, page 577. I transcribe from it the last paragraph, as a proof of the gratitude and sensibility of the writer.

"F"

* * * * * Had I dreamt that the dialogue would have made such a stir, I should certainly have taken more pains with it. I will never cease to avow and justify the doctrine comprised in it. I meant it merely as an imitation of one of Plato's, where a boy wholly ignorant of geometry, is made by a few simple questions to demonstrate a proposition, and I intended to inculcate, that the principles of government were so obvious and intelligible, that a clown might be brought to understand them. As to raising sedition, I as much thought of raising a church.

My dialogue contains my system, which I have ever avowed, and ever will avow ; but I perfectly agree (and no man of sound intellect can disagree) that such a system is wholly inapplicable to this country, where millions of men are so wedded to inveterate prejudices and habits, that if liberty could be forced upon them by Britain, it would make them as miserable as the cruelest despotism.

Pray remember me affectionately to all my friends at the bar, whom I have not time to enumerate, and assure my academical

“ For some months before his death, the nursery had been his chief delight, and gave him more pleasure than the cabinet could have afforded : but this parental affection, which had been a source of so much felicity, was probably a cause of his fatal illness. He had lost one son, and expected to lose another, when the author of this painful tribute to his memory, parted from him, with tears in his eyes, little hoping to see him again in a perishable state. As he perceives, without affectation, that his tears now steal from him, and begin to moisten the paper on which he writes, he reluctantly leaves a subject, which he could not soon have exhausted ; and when he also shall resign his life to the great Giver of it, he desires no other decoration of his humble grave-stone, than this honourable truth :

“ With none to flatter, none to recommend,
“ DUNNING approv'd, and mark'd him as a friend.”

and

and professional friends, that I will write to them all when I have leisure. Farewell, &c.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to CHARLES CHAPMAN, Esq.

Gardens, near Allipore, April 25, 1784.

Allow me, dear Sir, to give you the warmest thanks in my own name, and in that of our infant society, for the pleasure which we have received from your interesting account of Cochin-china, with considerable extracts from which we have been favoured by our patrons. Our meetings are well attended, and the society may really be said, considering the recent time of its establishment, to flourish.

We have been rather indisposed, the weather being such as we had no idea of in England, excessive heat at noon, and an incessant high wind from morning to night; at this moment it blows a hurricane, and my study reminds me of my cabin at sea. Our way of life however is quite pastoral in this retired spot; as my prime favourites, among all our pets, are two large English sheep, which came with us from Spithead, and, having narrowly escaped the knife, are to live as long and as happily with us as they can; they follow us for bread, and are perfectly domestic. We are literally lulled to sleep by Persian nightingales, and cease to wonder, that the Bulbul, with a *thousand tales*, makes such a figure in Oriental poetry. Since I am resolved to sit regularly in court as long as I am well, not knowing how soon I may be forced to remit my attention to business, I shall not be at liberty to enter my budgerow till near the end of July, and must be again in Calcutta on the 22d of October, so that my time will be very limited; and I shall wish if possible to see Benares.

The principal object of his meditated excursion was to open sources of information, on topics entirely new in the republic of letters. The indisposition which he mentions, not without apprehensions of its continuance, had not altogether left him when he commenced his journey, and during the progress of it returned with a severity, which long held the public in anxious suspense, before any hopes could be entertained of its favourable termination.

The author of these memoirs saw him in August 1784, at the house of a friend in the vicinity of Moorshedabad, languid, exhausted, and emaciated, in a state of very doubtful convalescence; but his mind had suffered no depression, and exhibited all its habitual fervour. In his conversation he spoke with rapture of the country, of the novel and interesting sources opened to his researches, and seemed to lament his sufferings, only as impediments to the prosecution of them. From Moorshedabad he proceeded to Jungipore, at the distance of a day's journey only, and from this place continued his correspondence, which describes his condition.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to CHARLES CHAPMAN, Esq.

August 30, 1784.

Nothing but a series of severe attacks of illness could have prevented my replying long ago to your friendly letter. After resisting them by temperance and exercise for some time, I was quite overpowered by a fever, which has confined me ten weeks to my couch, but is now almost entirely abated, though it has left me in a state of extreme weakness. I had a relapse at Raugamutty, which obliged me to stay three weeks at Afzalbang, where the judgment and attention of Dr. Glas, prevented perhaps serious consequences. I have spent two days at this place, and I find myself

self so much better, that I propose to continue my voyage this evening: whether I shall be able to go farther than Patna, (I long to see Benares) is very uncertain. This is only the second attempt I have made to write since my illness; and as I hold my pen with some difficulty, I will say no more than that I am, with great esteem, &c.

P. S. I cannot help adding, that your proposal of extracting such parts of your very interesting narrative concerning Cochin-china, as you may think proper to deposit among the archives of our society, is the very thing I wished, and I really think it will be one of our most valuable tracts*.

* * * * *

But his thoughts and attention were not confined to the perishable concerns of this world only; and what was the subject of his meditations in health, was more forcibly impressed upon his mind during illness. He knew the duty of resignation to the will of his Maker, and of dependence on the merits of a Redeemer; and I find these sentiments expressed in a short prayer, which he composed during his indisposition in September 1784, and which I here insert:

“ O thou Bestower of all Good! if it please thee to continue my
“ easy tasks in this life, grant me strength to perform them as a

* The extracts alluded to, have not yet appeared in the *Asiatic Researches*. The voyage which led to that narrative, was undertaken on the following occasion: Two Mandarins of Cochin-china, had been accidentally brought to Calcutta, in 1778; the Governor-General of India, W. Hastings, Esq., from motives of humanity and policy, furnished the means of their return to their native country, and Charles Chapman, Esq., at his own request, was appointed to accompany them with a public commission, with instructions to establish, if practicable, a commercial intercourse between the Company's settlements in India and Cochin-china, and to procure such privileges and advantages for English vessels resorting thither, as the government of that country might be disposed to grant.

“ faithful servant ; but if thy wisdom hath willed to end them by
 “ this thy visitation, admit me, not weighing my unworthiness,
 “ but through thy mercy declared in Christ, into thy heavenly
 “ mansions, that I may continually advance in happiness, by ad-
 “ vancing in true knowledge and awful love of thee. Thy will
 “ be done !”

I quote with particular satisfaction, this short but decisive testimony of the religious principles of Sir William Jones. Among many additional proofs, which might be given of them, is the following short prayer, composed on waking, July 27, 1783, at sea, also copied from his own writing :

“ Graciously accept our thanks, thou Giver of all Good, for ha-
 “ ving preserved us another night, and bestowed on us another day.
 “ O, grant that on this day, we may meditate on thy law with joy-
 “ ful veneration, and keep it in all our actions, with firm obe-
 “ dience.”

Minute circumstances frequently tend to mark and develop character. As a farther instance of this observation, however trifling it may appear, the application by Sir William Jones to himself, of two lines of Milton in his own writing under a card with his printed name, in addition to more substantial proofs, may be quoted in evidence of his habitual frame of mind :

Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who call'd him to a land unknown.

On another scrap of paper, the following lines appear ; they were written by him in India, but at what period is not known, nor indeed of any consequence :

Sir EDWARD COKE,

Six hours in sleep, in law's grave study six,
Four spend in prayer,—the rest on nature fix:

BATHER,

Seven hours to law, to soothing slumber seven,
Ten to the world allot, and *all* to Heaven.

If we sometimes suffer the humiliation, of seeing great talents and extensive erudition prostituted to infidelity, and employed in propagating misery by endeavouring to subvert the basis of our temporal and eternal welfare, we cannot but feel a more than common gratification, at the salutary union of true genius and piety. Learning, that wantons in irreligion, may, like the Sirius of Homer, flash its strong light upon us; but though brilliant, it is baneful, and while it dazzles, makes us tremble for our safety. Science therefore, without piety, whatever admiration it may excite, will never be entitled to an equal degree of respect and esteem, with the humble knowledge, which makes us wise unto Salvation. The belief of Sir William Jones in Revelation, is openly and distinctly declared in his works; but the unostentatious effusions of sequestered adoration, whilst they prove the sincerity of his conviction, give an additional weight to his avowed opinions. More might be added on this subject, but it will be communicated in another place.

His next stage was Bhagilpoor, the residence of the friend, to whom the preceding letters were addressed, and here he was long detained by illness and debility. The vigour of his mind however still continued unimpaired, and except during the severe paroxysms of disorder, his researches for information were never suspended, nor would he suffer himself to be debarred from any intercourse by which they could be promoted. It was at this place, during the hours of convalescence when he was confined to his couch, that he

appeared

applied himself to the study of botany ; a science for which he had early entertained a great partiality, and which he pronounces the most lovely and fascinating branch of natural knowledge. With the works of Linnæus before him, he procured the plants of the country to be brought to him, and comparing the productions of nature, with the descriptions and arrangements of the Swedish philosopher, he beguiled the hours of languor and disease, and laid the solid foundation of that botanical knowledge, which he ever afterwards cultivated with increasing ardour and delight.

From Bhagilpoor he pursued his journey to Patna, where he was again attacked with a severe indisposition. It did not however prevent him from proceeding by land to Guyah, famous as the birth-place of Boudh, the author of a system of philosophy which labours under the imputation of atheism ; but more famous for the annual resort of Hindu pilgrims from all parts of India, who repair to the holy city for the purpose of making prescribed oblations to their deceased ancestors, and of obtaining absolution from all their sins.

The city of Benares was his next stage, and the limits of his excursion. He had here an opportunity of seeing the professors of the Hindu religion, at the most celebrated and ancient university of India, and had only to regret, that his knowledge of their language was insufficient to enable him to converse with them without the assistance of an interpreter. After a short residence, which his sense of duty would not allow him to protract unnecessarily, he returned by the Ganges to Bhagilpoor*, where, as he observes, he had

* From a note written by Sir William Jones, on Major Rennel's account of Butan and Tibet, I extract the following passage. It is endorsed, as having been intended for the Researches of the Asiatic Society, but is not published in them.

had already found so much health, pleasure, and instruction for two months.

In his journey from this place to Calcutta, he visited Gour, once the residence of the sovereigns of Bengal. This place still exhibits architectural remains of royal magnificence, which the traveller is obliged to explore at some personal risk amidst forests, the exclusive haunts of wild beasts ; for nature has here resumed her dominion, and triumphs over the short-lived pride of man. In a letter to a

“ Just after sun-set, on the 5th of October 1784, I had a distinct view from Bhagilpoor of CHUMALURY peak, and the adjoining mountains of TIBET, which are very clearly seen from *Perncia*, and were perfectly recollected by a learned member of our society, one of the latest travellers to that interesting country, who had obligingly communicated to me a correct note of the bearings and courses observed in his journey from *Rengpur* to *Tassisudden*, and thence through *Paradgong* to *Chumalury*. The peak bore very nearly due north to the room, from which it was seen, in the house of Mr. Chapman ; and from the most accurate calculations that I could make, the horizontal distance at which it was distinctly visible, must be at least 244 *British miles* ; there was a strong glare from the setting sun on the snows of its more western side, and it might assuredly have been discerned at a much greater distance. By an observation of Mr. Davis, at *Rengpur*, and another at *Tassisudden*, the difference of latitude between the place last mentioned and *Bhagilpoor*, is 163 *geographical*, or 188 and a fraction, *British miles* : now although the road from *Buxadewar* in *Butan*, the latitude of which was found to be 26° 53', consisted of rough mountains and deep valleys, yet the way between *Paradgong* and *Chumalury*, especially from *Chesacamba*, the frontier of *Tibet*, was very level ; and the accuracy of our travellers gives us reason to believe, that their computed miles from *Tassisudden* were but little above the standard ; so that having measured the northern sides of the two triangles, formed by their courses WNW. and NNW. we could not be far from the truth.”

“ The mountains of *Chumalury*, are the second or third ridge described in the *Memoir*. The Major justly considers the mountains of *Himola*, for so they are named by the natives from a word signifying *snow*, as equal in elevation to any in the old hemisphere ; and an observation of Mr. *Saunders* at *Perncia*, added to a remark of Mr. *Smith* on the appearance of *Chumalury* from *Morcng*, gives abundant reason to think, that we saw from *Bhagilpoor*, the highest mountains in the world, without excepting the *ANDES*.”

friend

friend*, written after his arrival in Calcutta, he has briefly described some parts of his journey. “ The Mahanada was beautiful, “ and the banks of some rivers in the Sunderbunds were magnificent ; we passed within two yards of a fine tiger, who gazed “ on us with indifference ; but we took care for several reasons to “ avoid the narrow passes at night. As we approached Calcutta, “ we perceived the difference of climate, and thought of Bhagil- “ poor with pleasure and regret.

“ I find Calcutta greatly changed ; the loss of Mr. Hastings and “ Shore†, I feel very sensibly, and cannot but fear that the pleasure, “ which I derive from other friendships formed in India, will be “ followed by the pain of losing my friends next season. This was “ a great evil at the university, and abates not a little the happi- “ ness I expected in this country.

“ Will you have the goodness to ask Mahesa pundit, whether “ the university of Tyrhoot is still supported, and confers degrees “ in Hindu law ? One of our pundits is dead, and we have thoughts “ of requesting recommendations from the universities of Hin- “ dustan, particularly from Benares, and Tyrhoot, if it exists ; so “ that the new pundit may be universally approved, and the “ Hindus may be convinced, that we decide on their law from the “ best information we can procure‡.”

“ I am just returned,” (thus he writes to another correspondent, Dr. P. Russel, March 2, 1785,) “ as it were from the brink of “ another world, having been absent near seven months, and re- “ duced to a skeleton by fevers of every denomination, with an

* Charles Chapman, Esq.

† Warren Hastings, Esq. and Mr. Shore embarked in February 1785, for England.

‡ The pundits are the expounders of the Hindu law ; in which capacity, two constantly attended the supreme court of judicature, at Fortwilliam.

“obstinate bilious flux at their heels. My health is tolerably restored by a long ramble through South Behar, and the district of Benares, of which if I were to write an account, I must fill a volume.”

They who have perused the description of Joanna, by Sir William Jones, will regret that this volume was never written. The objects presented to his inspection during his journey, afforded ample scope for his observation, which was equally qualified to explore the beauties of nature, the works of art, the discriminations of character, and the productions of learning and science. Many of the remarks and reflections which he made in this tour, are transfused through his various compositions, two of which were actually written, during the course of his journey.

The elegant little tale in verse, under the title of *The Enchanted Fruit, or Hindu Wife*, was composed during his residence in Beyhar, and affords a proof of the success of his enquiries, as well as of his skill in the happy application of the intelligence obtained by them.

The other production was a Treatise on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India, which he afterwards revised, and presented to the society. The design of this essay was to point out a resemblance, too strong to have been accidental, between the popular worship of the old Greeks and Italians, and that of the Hindus, and between their strange religion and that of Egypt, China, Persia, Phrygia, Phœnicia, and Syria, and even remoter nations. The proof of such resemblance, if satisfactorily established, would, as he remarks, authorize an inference of a general union and affinity between the most distinguished inhabitants of the primitive world, at the time when they deviated, as they did too early deviate, from the rational adoration of the only true God.

To this journey, under Providence, he was in all probability indebted for the preservation of his life, which without it might have fallen a sacrifice to the accumulation of disease: after his arrival in Calcutta, his health was almost completely restored.

He now resumed his functions in the supreme court of judicature, and renewed the meetings of the society, which had been interrupted by his absence. In his second anniversary discourse, which was delivered in February 1785, he notices with pleasure and surprize the successful progress of the institution, and the variety of subjects which had been discussed by the members of it: and as in his first address, he had confined himself to the exhibition of a distant prospect only of the vast career on which the society was entering; in the second, he delineates a slight but masterly sketch of the various discoveries in history, science, and art, which might justly be expected to result from its researches into the literature of Asia. He mentions his satisfaction at having had an opportunity of visiting two ancient seats of Hindu religion and literature, and notices the impediments opposed by illness to the prosecution of his proposed enquiries, and the necessity of leaving them, as Æneas is feigned to have left the shades, when his guide made him recollect *the swift flight of irrevocable time*, with a curiosity raised to the height, and a regret not easy to be described.

I now return to the correspondence of Sir William Jones, which in this year, consists of few letters, and those chiefly addressed to *John Macpherson, Esq. who, in February 1785, succeeded to the station of Governor-General of India, on the departure of Mr. Hastings. If, in these letters, Sir William adverts to topics not familiar to his readers, they are such as naturally arise out of his situation and connections. Removed at a distance of a quarter of

* The present Sir John Macpherson, Bart.

the circumference of the globe from the scene of politics, in which he had taken a deep interest, his attention is transferred to new objects and new duties. The sentiments which flow from his pen, in the confidential intercourse of friendship, display his mind more clearly than any narrative; and they are often such as could not be omitted without injury to his character. Some passages in the letters, which, as less generally interesting, could be suppressed without this effect, have not been transcribed.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. MACPHERSON, Esq.

March 12, 1785.

I always thought before I left England, that a regard for the public good required the most cordial union between the executive and judicial powers in this country; and I lamented the mischief occasioned by former divisions. Since I have no view of happiness on this side of the grave, but in a faithful discharge of my duty, I shall spare no pains to preserve that cordiality which subsists, I trust, and will subsist, between the government and the judges.

Lord Bacon, if I remember right, advises every statesman to relieve his mind from the fatigues of business by a poem, or a prospect, or any thing that raises agreeable images; now as your own gardens afford you the finest prospects, and I should only offer you a view of paddy fields*, I send you for your amusement, what has amused me in the composition, a poem† on the old philosophy and religion of this country, and you may depend on its orthodoxy. The time approaches when I must leave these recreations, and return to my desk in court, where however a knowledge of the Hindu manners and prejudices may not be useless.

* Rice fields.

† The Enchanted Fruit; or, Hindu Wife. Works, vol. vi. p. 177.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. MACPHERSON, Esq.

May 17, 1785.

I have so many things, my dear Sir, to thank you for, that I scarce know where to begin. To follow the order of time, I must in the first place give you my hearty thanks for your kind and pleasing letter of last week, which shews that your mind can grasp the whole field of literature and criticism, as well as that of politics, and that in the manner of ancient rulers in Asia, particularly Cicero, the governor of Cilicia, you unite the character of the statesman and the scholar. Next for the news, which has on the whole given me pleasure, and in particular, what both pleases and surprises me, that Lord Camden has accepted the post of president of the council. You know the opinion which I early formed of Pitt; and that opinion will be raised still higher, if he has shewn himself (not merely indifferent, but) anxious that the reins of this government may long continue in the hands which now hold them, and which, though mortals, as Addison says, cannot command success, will certainly deserve it. I anxiously wish, for the sake of the public, that not only the operations of the law, but the cordial assent of those on whom it depends, have already secured your seat, as long as it may be consistent with your happiness to fill it.—

* * * * *

I will not fail to talk with Mr. Chambers on the college, and beg you to assure yourself, that I shall ever be happy in my sphere to give my humble assistance whenever you may require it.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. MACPHERSON, Esq.

May 22, 1785.

It was my intention to present to you in the author's name, the books which I now send. The poet Zainudeen was recommended.

commended to me soon after I came to India, as a worthy ingenious old man. I inclose his verses to you, with a hasty translation* on the back of the paper, of the best couplets. The smaller volume contains part of the epic poem, which is written with enthusiasm; and the other volume is filled with odes and elegies, all in the old man's writing. He is *married to immortal verse*, and his highest ambition is to be *an atom in one of your sun-beams*.

* This translation, as a specimen of the *taste* and adulatory style of modern Persian poets, is inserted for the reader's entertainment.

Macpherson exalted as the sky, prosperous in thy undertakings, who like the sun receivest even atoms in thy beams! Thou art the just one of this age; and in thy name, that of Nushirovan revives. With the aid of Jesus (blessed be his name!) the government acquires its stability from thy mind. I have composed a poem in words of truth, beginning with a panegyric on the company. It contains a recital of the wars of the *English*, described with an animated pen. By the command of *Hastings*, entitled to reverence, I began a book on the victory of *Benares*; but before the completion of my task, that honourable man returned to his country. In thy government has my work been completed, and with thy name have I adorned its opening, in hope, that thou wilt send me fresh materials, to decorate with golden verses the checks of my book. If I compose a *Shahnameh*, on the glorious name of the King of England, the book will fly over Iran and Turan, and the deeds of thy nation will blaze like the sun; if I sing the achievements of the *English*, the name of *Parveiz* will be no more mentioned. If I open a chapter of their conquests, *Afrasiab* will tremble under the earth; the rapid motion of my dark reed will make *Rustem* halt and droop. Hear my strains with discernment, and my pen shall soar with the wings of a falcon. Favour me, as *Sultan Mahmoud* shewed kindness to *Ferdosi*, that we may be a pair of tuneful nightingales.

The actions of all nations are commemorated, let those of the *English* be celebrated under thy auspices. May thy orders be resistless as the sea; the head of the contumacious be in thy power, and the seal of government bear thy name!

On the names mentioned in this translation, it may be sufficient to observe that *Ferdosi* is the *Homer* of *Persia*, who composed an heroic poem under the title of *Shahnameh*; that the name of *Nushirovan*, is proverbial for justice; that *Iran* and *Turan* are *Persia* and *Tartary*; and that the other persons introduced were kings or heroes of those countries.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. MACPHERSON, Esq.

May 1785.

The ornament of the faith (for that is the bard's name) *Zainudeen* will wait upon you on Wednesday; his style of compliments is moderate in comparison of most Oriental compositions; other poets of this country would have entreated you not to ride on horseback, lest you should cause an earthquake in India when you mounted. This was actually said to a prince at Delhi, who pleasantly bade the poet comfort himself, and assured him, that he would ever after go in a palanquin.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. MACPHERSON, Esq.

May 26, 1785.

The regulation which you made concerning the *Madrisa** is so salutary, that few things would grieve me more than to see it frustrated. Your predecessor has often mentioned to me, the high opinion which he had formed of the rector, but (I know not for what reason) he is very unpopular. Perhaps it is only faction, too common in most colleges at our universities, of the students against the head.

* The passages in these letters relating to the *Madrisa* or college, as an establishment of national importance, merits a more particular explanation. Mr. Hastings, whilst he held the office of governor-general, with a view to promote the knowledge of Mohammedan law, as essential to the due administration of justice to the natives of India, had established a college at Calcutta, in which native students were admitted and taught at the public expence. This institution was dictated by a wise policy; it was calculated to conciliate the affections of the Mussulmans, and to ensure a succession of men properly qualified by education to expound the law of the Koran, and to fill the important offices of magistrates in the courts of justice. The president of this college had been selected with every attention to his character and ability; but some representations having been made to his disadvantage, the succeeding governor-general, J. Macpherson, Esq. consulted Sir William Jones, on the regulations proper to be established for promoting the laudable objects of the institution, and controlling its conduct.

It

It is a remark of Johnson's*, that as spiders would make silk, if they could agree together, so men of letters would be useful to the public, if they were not perpetually at variance. Besides my approbation as a good citizen of your regulations, I have a particular interest in the conduct of Mujduddeen, who is Maulavy† of the court, and as such ought to be *omni exceptione major*. I believe from my conversation with him, that he is not a man of deep learning; but his manners are not displeasing. The proposal which you make, cannot but produce good effects; but I hardly know any member of our society, who answers your description for a visitor under your directions, except Mr. Chambers, and his report might be depended on. I will, if you please, propose it on Thursday. The students brought a complaint before me last term, which I dismissed as not being within my cognizance, that their allowances were taken by the head, who left them without subsistence; but whether this be true or false, it will not be amiss for the Maulavy to know, that he is subject to visitation from time to time.

If the best intentions can ensure safety, you have nothing to apprehend; but, alas! my friend, if you can be *safe only* in fixed unanimous opinions of *statute law*, you can seldom, I fear, act with perfect confidence. Such is the imperfection of human language, that few written laws are free from ambiguity; and it rarely happens that many minds are united in the same interpretation of them.

A statesman told Lord Coke, that he meant to consult him on a point of law. "If it be common law," said Coke, "I should be ashamed if I could not give you an answer; but if it be

* Originally Reaumur's.

† Expounder of the Mohammedan law.

“statute-law, I should be equally ashamed if I answered you “immediately.””

I will here only set down a few rules of interpretation which the wisdom of ages has established, where the sense of the words is at all ambiguous.

1. The intention of the writer must be sought, and prevail over the literal sense of terms; but penal laws must be strictly expounded against offenders, and liberally against the offence.

2. All clauses, preceding or subsequent, must be taken together to explain any one doubtful clause.

3. When a case is expressed to remove any doubt, whether it was included or not, the extent of the clause, with regard to cases not so expressed, is by no means restrained.

4. The conclusion of a phrase is not confined to the words *immediately* preceding, but usually extended to the whole antecedent phrase.

These are copious maxims, and, with half a dozen more, are the stars by which we steer in the construction of all public and private writings.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. MACPHERSON, Esq.

Court House, July.

We have just convicted a low Hindu of a foul conspiracy, which would have ended in perjury, and (as his own law-giver says) in every cause of damnation. If richer men were of the plot, I hope our court will escape the reproach of the satirist, that “laws resemble cobwebs, which catch flies and let the wasps break through.”

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. MACPHERSON, Esq.

August 14, 1785.

I give you my hearty thanks, my dear Sir, for the history of the Roman Republic, which I read with particular pleasure.

Looking over my shelves the other day, I laid my hand on the annexed little book ascribed to Sir Walter Raleigh; it is, like most posthumous works, incorrect, but contains, with some rubbish, a number of wise aphorisms and pertinent examples; it is rather the common-place book of some statesman, than a well digested treatise, but it has amused me on a second reading, and I hope it will amuse a few of your leisure moments.

* * * * *

The society of Sir William Jones was too attractive, to allow him to employ his leisure hours in those studies, which he so eagerly desired to cultivate, and although no man was more happy in the conversation of his friends, he soon found that the unrestrained enjoyment of this gratification was incompatible with his attention to literary pursuits. He determined therefore to seek some retirement, at no great distance from Calcutta, where he might have the benefit of air and exercise, and prosecute his studies without interruption, during the vacations of the supreme court. For this purpose, he made choice of a residence at Crishnagur, which had a particular attraction for him, from its vicinity to a Hindu college, and from this spot he writes to his friends.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Dr. PATRICK RUSSEL.

Sept. 8, 1785.

Your two kind letters found me overwhelmed with the business of a severe sessions and term, which lasted two months,

and fatigued me so much, that I was forced to hasten from Calcutta as fast as winds and oars could carry me. I am now at the ancient university of Nadeya, where I hope to learn the rudiments of that venerable and interesting language which was once vernacular in all India, and in both the peninsulas with their islands. Your pursuits must be delightful, and I shall be impatient to see the fruit of your learned labours. Our society goes on slowly; and hot-bed fruits are not so good to my taste as those which ripen naturally.

Dr. Kœnig's loss will be severely felt; he was a valuable man, with as much simplicity as nature herself, whose works he studied. Do you know when his books are to be disposed of? I should wish to purchase his Linnæus.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to CHARLES CHAPMAN, Esq.

Sept. 28, 1785.

I am proceeding slowly, but surely, in this retired place, in the study of Sanscrit; for I can no longer bear to be at the mercy of our pundits, who deal out Hindu law as they please, and make it at reasonable rates, when they cannot find it ready made. I annex the form adopted by us for the oaths of Mussulmans; you will in your discretion adopt or reject it, and if you can collect from Mahesa pundit, who seemed a worthy honest man, how Hindu witnesses ought to be examined, and whether the Bramins can give absolution (I think they call it pryarchitt) for perjury, and in what case, you will greatly oblige me, and contribute to the advancement of justice.

The

The conclusion of this letter expresses a sentiment, which, as a judge in Bengal, and friend of human nature, he always considered an object of the first importance.

The period of his residence at his country cottage, was necessarily limited by the duty of attending the supreme court: on his return to Calcutta, in October, he writes to John Macpherson, Esq. "Lady Jones, and myself, received much benefit from the dry soil and pure air of Crishnagur; how long my health will continue in this town, with constant attendance in court every morning, and the irksome business of justice of peace in the afternoon, I cannot foresee. If temperance and composure of mind will avail, I shall be well; but I would rather be a valetudinarian, all my life, than leave unexplored the Sanscrit mine which I have just opened.

"I have brought with me the father of the university of Nadya, who, though not a Brahmin, has taught grammar and ethics to the most learned Brahmins, and has no priestly pride, with which his pupils in general abound."

In the year 1785, a periodical work was undertaken at Calcutta, under the title of the Asiatick Miscellany, which has been ignorantly ascribed to the Asiatick Society, with whose researches it had no connection. The title of the work indicates the nature of its contents, which consisted chiefly of extracts from books published in Europe, relating to India, of translations from Oriental Authors, and of poems and essays. The editor was occasionally assisted by the literary talents of gentlemen in India, and we find in the two first volumes, which were published in the years 1785 and 86, the following compositions of Sir William Jones, who never neglected any opportunity of contributing to the advancement of Oriental

literature: the tale of the Enchanted Fruit, which has already been mentioned, six hymns* addressed to as many Hindu deities, a literal translation of twenty tales and fables of Nizami, expressly intended to assist the students of the Persian language, besides other smaller pieces, from which I quote with pleasure, the following beautiful tetrastick, which is a literal translation from the Persian:

On parent knees, a naked, new-born child,
Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smil'd :
So live, that, sinking in thy last long sleep,
Calm thou may'st smile, when all around thee weep.

The hymns, which are original compositions, are descriptive of the Hindu deities, to whom they were addressed, and a short introductory explanation accompanies each. The mythological allusions and Sanscrit names, with which they abound, are not sufficiently familiar to the English reader, to enable him to derive that pleasure from them, which those who are acquainted with the manners and mythology of the Hindus feel in the perusal of these hymns; but whilst they mark the taste and genius of the author, they supply a fund of information, equally novel and curious. We contemplate with delight and surprise the admirer of the Grecian bards, and the pupil of the Grecian sages, led by his enthusiasm from the banks of the Ilyssus to the streams of the Ganges, celebrating, in

* In his hymn to Surya, or the Sun, Sir William Jones alludes to himself in the following beautiful lines:

And, if they ask what mortal pours the strain?
Say (for thou seest earth, air, and main),
Say, "From the bosom of yon silver isle,
Where skies more softly smile,
He came; and lisp'ng our celestial tongue,
Though not from Brahma sprung,
Draws orient knowledge, from its fountains pure,
'Through caves obstructed long, and paths too long obscure."

strains not unworthy of Pindar, the fabulous divinities of India, and exploring the sources of the Egyptian and Persian theology, and of the tenets of the Ionic and Italic schools of philosophy. These compositions were the elegant amusements of hours of leisure and relaxation, which he never suffered to interfere with his public duties. They prove the versatility of those intellectual powers, which could immediately turn from the investigation of legal causes or the solution of abstruse mathematical problems, to explain and adorn the mythological fictions of the Hindus, in odes which the Bramins would have approved and admired. The variety of measures adopted in the composition of these hymns is remarkable; each of the nine* has a different form of versification, and if they are not all equally harmonious, they are all regular. The opening and conclusion of the Hymn to Narayon are very sublime.

On the second of February 1786, Sir William Jones delivered to the society his third annual discourse, in which he proposed to fill up the outlines delineated in his two former addresses, and promised, if the state of his health should permit him to continue long enough in India, to prepare for the annual meetings of the society, a series of short dissertations unconnected in their titles, but all leading to one common point of no small importance, in the pursuit of interesting truths. He exhibits, in this discourse, a proof of the successful application of his time to the study of Sanscrit, and speaks with increased confidence of the result of his new attainments. The conclusion expresses his regret, at the departure for Europe of the very ingenious member who first opened the mine of Sanscrit literature, an honourable tribute to the merit of Mr. Charles Wilkins.

Sir William had long proposed making an excursion to Chatigan, the eastern limits of the British dominions in Bengal. Exclusively

* He wrote three more hymns afterwards.



of his anxiety to acquire, from local observation, a knowledge of the state of the country, and of the manners and characters of the natives, a prudent attention to the re-establishment of his health, which had suffered from an unremitting application to his public duties as judge and magistrate, as well as a regard for that of Lady Jones, now rendered the journey expedient. In the beginning of 1786, after the recess of the court, he had an opportunity of executing his plan, and repaired to Chatigan by sea, in February.

A short time before his departure, a discussion had taken place between the judges of the supreme court of judicature, and the executive government of Bengal, respecting a resolution adopted by the latter, altering the mode in which the salaries of the judges had been paid. They remonstrated against the resolution, and the letter written by Sir William Jones to Sir J. Macpherson on the occasion, is so strongly characteristic of that independent spirit which he always possessed, that on this account it merits insertion. The remainder of his correspondence of this year, as far as it is proper to lay it before the public, follows in the order of its dates.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Sir J. MACPHERSON, Bart.

MY DEAR SIR,

Phoenix Sloop, Feb. 5, 1786.

Had I known where Captain Light* lived in Calcutta, I would not have troubled you with the annexed letter, but I must request you to forward it to him. It is an answer to an excellent letter from him, which I received near a twelvemonth ago. I anxiously hope he has completed (what no other European could begin) a version of the Siamese code.

* Captain Light was appointed superintendant of a new settlement at Penang, or Prince of Wales's Island. He was thoroughly conversant in the Malay dialect.

My

My voyage to the eastern coast will, I trust, be very pleasant, and I hope we shall make our part good against the scoundrel Peguers; though if we descry a fleet of boats, I believe it will be wiser to retreat on the wings of the Phoenix; for I am not poet enough to believe, that another will rise from her ashes.

I lament that our respective engagements have prevented our meeting often, since the end of the rains; but six or seven hours in the morning, and two or three in the evening, spent in unremitted labour for the last three months, fatigued me so much that I had no leisure for society, scarcely any for natural repose. My last act was to sign our letter to your board on the subject of our salaries, and I would have called upon you to expostulate amicably on the measure you had pursued, if I had not wished to spare you the pain of defending indefensible steps, and the difficulty of finding reasons to support the most unreasonable conduct. Many passages in the letter were softened by my brethren, for I, who have long been habituated to ancient simplicity, am ever inclined both to write and speak as I think and feel; and I should certainly have asked, if we had conversed on this matter, whether distressing and pinching the judges, and making them contemptible in the eyes of the natives, and of their own servants, was, as you expressed yourself last summer, assisting them with heart and hand; or whether forming resolutions, as the sub-treasurer wrote me word three weeks ago concerning them, of which they were the last men in the settlement to hear, was intended as a return for that perfect cordiality, as far as honesty permitted, which I had assured you and Mr. Stables, to be one of the golden rules which I had early resolved to pursue in my judicial character.

In a word, the measure is so totally indefensible, that it would have given me as much pain as yourself, to have discussed it. I

have

have marked the progress of this business from the morning, when I received Mr. M.'s note; and I am well persuaded, that the invasion of our property, was not an idea conceived or approved by you, but forced on you by some financier, who was himself deluded by a conceit of impartiality, not considering that the cases were by no means parallel; under this persuasion, I beg you to believe, that the measure has not yet made any change in the sincere esteem, with which I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to THOMAS CALDICOTT, Esq.

Chatigan, Feb. 21, 1786.

I have been so loaded with business, that I deferred writing to you, till it was too late to write much, and when the term ended, was obliged, for the sake of my wife's health and my own, to spend a few weeks in this Indian Montpelier, where the hills are covered with pepper vines, and sparkle with blossoms of the coffee tree; but the description of the place would fill a volume, and I can only write a short letter to say, si vales, bene est; valeo.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to GEORGE HARDYNGE, Esq.

Feb. 22, 1786.

A word to you, no! though you have more of wisdom (et verbum sapienti, &c.) than I have, or wish to have of popularity, yet I would not send you one word, but millions and trillions of words, if I were not obliged to reserve them for conversation. The immeasurable field, that lies before me in the study of Sanscrit and of Hindu jurisprudence (the Arabic laws are familiar
to

to me) compels me for the present, to suspend my intention of corresponding regularly with those I love *.—

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Sir J. MACPHERSON, Bart.

Jafferabad, Feb. 27, 1780.

I cannot express, my dear Sir, the pleasure which I have just received from that part of the Board's letter to us, in which they set us right in our misconception of their preceding letter.

I rejoice that we were mistaken, and have just signed our reply; it will, I persuade myself, restore the harmony of our concert, which if worldly affairs have any analogy to music, will rather be improved than spoiled by a short dissonant interval. You, who are a musician, will feel the tone of this metaphor; as to my

* The following sonnet, written some years before the date of Sir William Jones's letter, was addressed by him to his friend :

To G. HARDYNCE, Esq.

HARDYNCE, whom Camden's voice, and Camden's fame,
 To noble thoughts, and high attempts excite,
 Whom thy learn'd sire's well polish'd lays invite,
 To kindle in thy breast, Phœbean flame,
 Oh rise! oh! emulate their lives, and claim
 The glorious meed of many a studious night,
 And many a day spent in asserting right,
 Repressing wrong, and bringing fraud to shame.
 Nor let the glare of wealth, or pleasure's bow'rs
 Allure thy fancy. Think how Tully shone,
 Think how Demosthenes with heav'nly fire
 Shook Philip's throne, and lighten'd o'er his tow'rs.
 What gave them strength? Not eloquence alone,
 But minds elate above each low desire.

W. J.

harsher

harsher notes, quicquid asperius dictum est, indictum esto. In fact (you could not know it, but) I never had been so pinched in my life, for the last three months; having bought company's bonds, (which nothing but extreme necessity could have made me sell at 30 per cent. discount), I was unable to pay my physician, or my munshis, and was forced to borrow (for the first time in my life) for my daily rice; what was worse, I was forced to borrow of a black man, and it was like touching a snake or the South American eel; in short, if our apprehensions had been well grounded, two of us had resolved to go home next season. But your letter dispersed all clouds and made my mind as clear as the air of this fine climate, where I expect to escape the heats, and all the ills they produce in a constitution like mine. I confess I wish you had accepted our offer, for half my salary is enough for me, and I would have received the remainder cheerfully on any terms, as I have hitherto done; but as it is, we are all satisfied, and your offers were so equal, that either would have been satisfactory to me.

You must know better than I can, though I am so much nearer the place on the frontiers where Major Ellerker is now encamped. I can hardly persuade myself that Myun Gachim Fera*, with all his bravery in words, will venture to pass the Naf; the whole story is curious, and as I am on the spot, I wish to write it with all the gravity of an historian, especially as I can pick out some part of the Pegu general's original letter, the characters of which are little more than the *nagari* letters inverted and rounded.

I now sit opposite to the seas, which wafted us gently hither in the Phoenix; and our voyage was well timed, for had we staid two days longer, we should have been in a north-wester. A beautiful

* A general in the service of the king of Ava, who appeared on the frontiers of Chatigan, with an army. The Naf, is the boundary river between Chatigan and Aracan.

vale lies between the hillock on which the house is built and the beach, on all the other sides are hills finely diversified with groves, the walks are scented with blossoms of the *champac** and *nagasart*†; and the plantations of pepper and coffee are equally new and pleasing. My wife, who desires her best remembrance, amuses herself with drawing, and I with botany. If (which I trust will not be the case) you should be indisposed, this is the Montpellier which will restore you to health.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Mr. Justice HYDE.

Jaferabad, April 30, 1786.

I delayed, my dear Sir, to answer your kind letter of the 10th, until I could give you an accurate account of my motions towards Calcutta. We shall not stay here a whole week longer, but proceed, as soon as we can make preparations for our journey, to the burning well‡, and thence through Tipera to Dacca: an old engagement will oblige us to deviate a little out of our way to Comarcaly; and if the Jellingy be navigable, we shall soon be in Calcutta,

* Lin. *Michelia*.

† Lin. *Mesua*.

‡ The burning well is situated about twenty-two miles from Chatigan, at the termination of a valley surrounded by hills. I visited it in 1778, and from *recollection* am enabled to give the following account of it. The shape of the well, or rather reservoir, is oblong, about six feet by four, and the depth does not exceed twelve feet. The water which is always cold is supplied by a spring, and there is a conduit for carrying off the superfluity; a part of the surface of the well, about a fourth, is covered with brick-work, which is nearly ignited by the flames, which flash without intermission from the surface of the water. It would appear that an inflammable vapour escapes through the water, which takes fire on contact with the external air; the perpetuity of the flame is occasioned by the ignited brick-work, as without this, much of the vapour would escape without conflagration. This was proved by taking away the covering of brick-work after the extinction of the heat, by throwing upon it the water of the well. The flames still continued to burst forth from the surface, but with momentary intermissions, and the vapour was always immediately kindled by holding a caudle at a small distance from the

Calcutta, if not, we must pass a second time through the Sundarbans; in all events, nothing I think can hinder my being in court on the 15th of June. Suffer me now to thank you, as I do most heartily, for the very useful information which you give me concerning money matters. The ancients said, (not very properly of their imaginary gods) 'carior est divis homo, quam sibi:' but I may truly say, 'carior est amicis, quam sibi,' speaking of myself and of your friendly attentions to me.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Sir J. MACPHERSON, Bart.

May 6, 1786.

I delayed from day to day, and from week to week, the pleasure of answering your acceptable letter, which I received, I am afraid, so long ago as the middle of March. I wished to send you something interesting; but my days flowed on in the same equable and uniform tenor, and were only to be distinguished by the advances I made in my Persian, Indian, and botanical pursuits. In short, as it sometimes happens, by intending to write much, I had written nothing; and was preparing to give you some account of my motions towards the presidency, when I had the very great satisfaction of receiving your packet full of matter, full of pleasing accounts, and full of just observations. * * * *

* * * * I read with pleasure, while I was at breakfast, Mr. Forster's lively little tract, and having finished my daily task of Persian reading with a learned Parsi of Yezd, who accompanied me hither, I allot the rest of the morning to you.

surface of the water. A piece of silver placed in the conduit for carrying off the superfluous water, was discoloured in a few minutes, and an infusion of tea gave a dark tinge to the water.

On the side of a hill distant about three miles from the burning well, there is a spot of ground of a few feet only in dimensions, from which flashes of fire burst on stamping strongly with the foot. The appearance of this spot resembled that of earth, on which a fire had been kindled. I do not recollect whether it was hot to the touch.

The

The approbation given at home to your seasonable exertions here, was but natural ; it could not have been otherwise, and therefore it gives me great pleasure, but no surprise. Be assured that general applause ever has resulted, and ever will result from good actions and salutary measures, as certainly as an echo, in rocky places, follows the voice. You will readily believe me, when I assure you, that I have few things more at heart than that you may enjoy as much as you can desire of that echo, and receive no pain or injury from the rocks ; for rocks abound, my friend, in the sea of life.

The Scripture speaks of nations overturning their *judges in stony places* ; and ambitious judges ought to be overturned, but as I do not aspire, I can never fall from an eminence.

The state of parties in England, still makes me rejoice, that I am not in London. My friendships would lead me naturally to wish the rise of the ————— while my conscience, and my humble judgment oblige me to prefer system as far as I know it. God grant he may adopt the best measures for this country, and give them effect by the best means, without disarranging your measures, since the wheel of continual changes cannot but have a bad effect in the minds of the governed—but I sat down to write a letter, not a treatise.

By the way, I have read a second time here your friend's *Treatise on the History of Civil Society*, and am extremely pleased with it, especially his chapter on the relaxation of national spirit *

• • • • •

Your communications about the Lama will be truly interesting. I have read since I left Calcutta 800 pages in quarto concerning the

Mythology and History, both civil and natural, of Tibet. The work was printed with every advantage of new types and curious engravings, at Rome, about ten years ago, and was compiled from the papers of an Italian father, named Orazio, who had lived thirty years in that country and Napal, where he died. On my return, I purpose, with the permission of the society, to send a treatise* to the press, which ought to stand first in our collections, as it will be a key to many other papers. I have caused six or seven plates to be engraved for it.

Always excepting my own imperfect essays, I may venture to foretell, that the learned in Europe will not be disappointed by our first volume. But my great object, at which I have long been labouring, is to give our country a complete digest of Hindu and Mussulman law. I have enabled myself by excessive care to read the oldest Sanscrit law books with the help of a loose Persian paraphrase; and I have begun a translation of Menu into English; the best Arabian law-tract, I translated last year. What I can possibly perform alone, I will by God's blessing perform; and I would write on the subject to the Minister, Chancellor, the Board of Control, and the Directors, if I were not apprehensive that they who know the world, but do not fully know me, would think that I expected some advantage either of fame or patronage, by purposing to be made the Justinian of India; whereas I am conscious of desiring no advantage, but the pleasure of doing general good. I shall consequently proceed in the work by my own strength, and will print my digest by degrees at my own expense, giving copies of it where I know they will be useful. One point I have already attained; I made the pundit of our court read and correct a copy

* A Dissertation on the Orthography of Asiatic Words in Roman Letters. Works, vol. i. page 175.

of Halhed's* book in the original Sanscrit, and I then obliged him to attest it as good law, so that he never now can give corrupt opinions, without certain detection.

May your commercial blossom arrive at maturity, with all the vigour of Indian vegetation !

My soul expands, like your blossom, at the idea of improved commerce ; no subject is to me more animating.

I have a commercial idea for you, not a blossom, but as yet a germ only. What if Persia should now flourish ! and what if the present king, Jaffier Khan, be really as great a man as represented ! Persia wants many manufactures of India, and her king would be a valuable ally. * * * * *

* * * * * I have already thanked you for your kind attentions to Emin, and I beg to repeat them. Many in England will be equally thankful. He is a fine fellow ; and if active service should be required, he would seek nothing so much, as to be placed in the most perilous edge of the battle.

In this letter we see the unabated activity of a vigorous mind, uniting recreation with improvement, and collecting in its progress through the gardens of literature, the flowers of every soil. A detailed account of the daily studies of Sir William Jones would surprise the most indefatigable, and it may not be impertinent to mention in proof of this observation, that he found time during his short residence at Chatigan, in addition to the occupations which he has described, to peruse twice the heroic poem of Ferdosi, the Homer of Persia, supposed to contain sixty thousand couplets. Of the

* A translation by N. B. Halhed, Esq. of the code compiled by pundits, by the direction of Mr. Hastings.

sentiments expressed in his correspondence, it is sufficient to remark in general, that they do no less honour to his heart than to his judgment. I cannot but wish that he had found time to write the ample description which he mentions.

Few persons have passed through a greater variety of hardships, and perilous adventures, than the person mentioned by Sir William Jones, under the name of Emin. Born at Hamadan, in Persia, of Armenian parents, and exposed during his infancy to uncommon disasters, while a mere youth he followed his father and ruined family to Calcutta. He had there an opportunity of observing the superiority of Europeans, in arms, arts, and sciences, over the Asiatics, and the impression which he received from it, inspired an invincible desire in Emin to acquire the knowledge which they possessed. For this purpose, he determined, at all hazards, to visit England, and after a long opposition from his father, having obtained his reluctant assent, he adopted the only means left for the accomplishment of his purpose, by working his passage as a common sailor in one of the ships belonging to the East-India Company. After his arrival in England, he lost no time in beginning to acquire the instruction which he so anxiously desired, but his progress was retarded by the narrowness of his circumstances, and he was compelled to submit to menial occupations, and laborious employments, to procure a subsistence. Fortune favoured his perseverance, and in a moment of despair, he was accidentally introduced to the notice of the Duke of Northumberland, and afterwards to that of many gentlemen of rank and fortune, by whose assistance his views were promoted*.

The

* Previous to his introduction to the Duke of Northumberland, Emin had become acquainted with Edmund Burke, whom he accidentally met in the Park. After some conversation, Mr. Burke invited Emin to his apartments, up two pair of stairs at the sign
of

The great object of Emin, was to obtain a knowledge of military tactics, in the hopes of employing it successfully, in rescuing the liberty and religion of the country of his ancestors from the despotism of the Turks and Persians. After serving with the Prussian and English armies in Germany, he procured the means of transporting himself into the mountains of Armenia, in the view of offering his services to Heraclius, the reigning prince of Georgia, and of rousing the religious zeal and martial spirit of his countrymen. He had there the mortification to find his resources inadequate to the magnitude of the enterprise, and he was compelled to return disappointed to England. After some time spent in solicitation, he was enabled by the assistance of his patrons to proceed with recommendations to Russia, and thence, after various fatigues and impediments, which his fortitude and perseverance surmounted, he reached Teflis, the capital of Georgia. After eight years of wandering, perils, and distress, through the mountains of that country and Armenia, he was obliged to abandon his visionary project, and returned to his father in Calcutta. Still anxious for

of Pope's head, at a bookseller's near the Temple. Emin, ignorant of the name of the gentleman who had treated him with so much courtesy, begged to be favoured with it, and Mr. Burke politely answered, "Sir, my name is Edmund Burke at your service; I am a run-away son from a father, as you are." He then presented half-a-guinea to Emin, saying, "upon my honour this is what I have at present, please to accept it."

Mr. Burke the next day visited Emin, and assisted him with his advice as to the books which he should read. He introduced him to his relation, Mr. William Burke; and for thirty years, Emin acknowledges that he was treated with unceasing kindness by both.

At the period of the commencement of his acquaintance with Mr. Burke, Emin had little left for his maintenance, and the prospect of accomplishing the purpose of his voyage to England became daily more gloomy. "Had not Mr. Burke consoled him now and then (to use the words of Emin) he might have been lost for ever through despair; but his friend always advised him to put his trust in God, and he never missed a day without seeing Emin. He was writing books at the time, and desired the author (i. e. Emin) to copy them; the first was an Imitation of the late Lord Bolingbroke's Letter; the second, *The Treatise of Sublime and Beautiful.*" *Life of Emin, London edition, p. 93.*

the accomplishment of his plans, and no ways intimidated by the experience of past dangers and difficulties, he made a third attempt for the execution of them, and proceeded to Persia. This proved equally unsuccessful, and he again returned to Calcutta. In Emin, we see the same man, who was a sailor, a porter, a menial servant, and subsisting by charity, the companion of nobles, and patronized by princes and monarchs, ever preserving in his deepest distresses, a sense of honour, a spirit of integrity, a reliance upon Providence, and a firm adherence to the principles of Christianity, in which he had been educated. During his residence in Calcutta, he published an account of his eventful life, which Sir William Jones condescended to revise, so far only as to correct orthographical errors, but without any amendment of the style.

From Chatigan, Sir William Jones returned to Calcutta, and after the recess of the court, again visited his retirement at Chrishnagur, where he occupied himself as usual in his favourite studies, an account of which, as well as of his journey to the presidency, I shall supply by extracts from his familiar letters.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Mr. Justice HYDE.

Comarcaly, June 15, 1786.

I find that in this country, travellers are perfect slaves to the seasons and elements. It was my resolution when I left Dacca, to push on as expeditiously as possible to Calcutta; but in our passage of eight days last year through the Tulsî creek and the Artai river, our boat was hotter day and night, than I ever felt a vapour-bath; till then, as much as I had reason to dread an Indian sun, I had not a complete idea of it. This affected both Lady Jones and me so much, that it would have been madness to have passed the Sundarbans in such weather; and Mr. Redfearn (having promised to send me word, when the Jelînga becomes navigable

vigable (which is usually about the middle of this month) I expect every day to receive that intelligence, after which I shall be in Calcutta in eight days. I am principally vexed at this delay, because from your having taken the charge when it was Sir R. Chambers' turn, I fear he must be ill, and consequently that, you must have a great deal of trouble: give my affectionate remembrance to him.

I am, &c.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Miss E. SHIPLEY.

On the Ganges, Sept. 7, 1786.

You do too much honour, my dear Madam, to my compositions; they amuse me in the few hours of leisure that my business allows, and if they amuse my friends, I am amply rewarded.

Mà si 'l Latino e'l Greco
Parlan di me dopo la morte, è un vento;
Ond' io, perche pavento
Adunar sempre quel ch'un' ora sgombre,
Vorrei 'l vero abbracciar lassando l'ombre.

We talk of the year 1790, as the happy limit of our residence in this unpropitious climate; but this must be a family secret, lest applications should be made for my place, and I should be shoved out before my resignation. God grant that the bad state of my Anna's health, may not compel her to leave India before me; I should remain like a man with a dead palsy on one of his sides; but it were better to lose one side for a time than both for ever. I do not mean that she has been, or is likely to be, in danger from her complaints. I have proposed a visit to her friend, Lady Campbell, and she seemed to receive the proposal with pleasure; the sea air, and change of scene at a proper season, may do more than all the faculty with all their prescriptions. As to politics and ministers, let me whisper another secret in your ear:

Io non credo piu àl nero ch' all' azzurro,

o o

and

and, as to coalitions, if the *nero* be mixed with the *azzurro*, they will only make a dirtier colour. India is yet secure, and improvable beyond imagination; it is not however in such a state of security, but that wise politicians may, with strong well-timed exertions and well applied address, contrive to lose it. The discharge of my duty, and the study of Indian laws in their original languages (which is no inconsiderable part of my duty) are an excuse for my neglect of writing letters; and indeed I find by experience, that I can take up my pen for that purpose but once a year, and I have a hundred unanswered letters now lying before me, but my Anna, who is my secretary of state, and first or rather *sole* lady of the treasury, has written volumes. Loves and regards to all who love and regard us; as to compliments, they are unmeaning things, and neither become me to send, nor you to convey.

I am with great regard, dear Madam,

Your faithful and affectionate servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Dr. PATRICK RUSSEL.

Crishna-nagur, Sept. 28, 1786.

Various causes contribute to render me a bad correspondent, particularly the discharge of my public duty, and the studies which are connected with that duty, such as the Indian and Arabic laws in their several difficult languages, one of which has occupied most of my leisure for the last twelvemonth, excepting when I travelled to Islamabad, for the benefit of the sea air and verdant hillocks, during the hot season. It is only in such a retirement as the cottage, where I am passing a short vacation, that I can write to literary friends, or even think much on literary subjects; and it was long after I left this solitude last autumn, that I had the pleasure of receiving your most agreeable letter.

I am

I am tolerably strong in *Sanscrit*, and hope to prove my strength soon by translating a law tract of great intrinsic merit, and extremely curious, which the Hindus believe to be almost as old as the creation. It is ascribed to Menu, the Minos of India, and like him, the son of Jove. My present study is the original of Bidpa's fables, called *Hitopadesa**, which is a charming book, and wonderfully useful to a learner of the language. I congratulate you on the completion of your two works, but exhort you to publish them. Think how much fame Kœnig lost by delaying his publications. God knows whether any use honourable to his memory will be made of his manuscripts. Think of Mr. D'Herbelot, whose posthumous work, like most others, had the fate of being incorrectly published. Printing is dear at Calcutta; but if government would print your works (as they ought) I could cheerfully superintend commas and colons. I am delighted with your botanical pursuits. They talk of a public garden on the banks of the river near Calcutta. How I wish for our sakes, you could be allured from the Sircars! I long to visit them, however, and to view your collections; though I must be so honest as to own, that *accurate* botanical descriptions give me more pleasure than an herbal, I mean where the fresh plants can be examined. For this reason I have not begun to collect specimens, but describe as well as I can; and for brevity in coarse Latin. Lady Jones assists me by her accuracy in drawing and colouring.

The province of Chatigan (vulgarly Chitigong) is a noble field for a naturalist. It is so called, I believe, from the *chatag*, which is the most beautiful little bird I ever saw. The hills and woods abound with uncommon plants and animals; indeed, the whole Eastern peninsula would be a new world to a philosopher. I wish

* Translated by Sir William Jones, and published in his Works, vol. vi.

poor Kœnig had left his papers to you ; Banks has too much of his own to employ him, and Macpherson, who loved the sage, would I dare say have persuaded Lord Cornwallis to raise the best monument to his memory, a good edition of his works. I have carefully examined a plant, which Kœnig mentioned to me, and called *pentapethes protea*, from the singular variety of leaves on the same tree. The natives call it *Mascamchand* ; and one of its fragrant fleshy blossoms, infused for a night in a glass of water, forms a mucilage of a very cooling quality. The *pentapethes phœnicia*, which now beautifies this plain, produces a similar mucilage, which might answer the same purposes as that of the Arabian gum, if not other and more important purposes. But I mention this plant, because Kœnig told me, that Linnæus had inverted nature in his description of it, by assigning to it *five* castrated filaments, to each of which were annexed three prolific ones ; whereas, said he, (I am sure I did not mistake him) the flower has *fifteen* castrated, and *five* prolific ; so that in truth it would have been *pentandrian*. Now I have examined all the flowers of this species that I could get, and I find the description of Linnæus to be correct ; but there is no accounting for the variety of a protean plant.

Many thanks for your offer of Mr. D'Hancarville, but I have the book, though like you I have not read it. I wish to be firm in Sanscrit, before I read systems of mythology. We have sent the first papers of our transactions to the press, and shall go on as fast as Mr. G.'s compositor will let us. Farewell, my dear Sir ; vivere, valere, et philosophari cum paucis, is what I wish for you, as much as for your, &c.

Sir

Sir WILLIAM JONES to WILLIAM SHIPLEY*, Esq.

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 5, 1786.

I blush, my dear Sir, in reading a second or third time with increasing delight, your excellent letters from Maidstone, when I compare the dates of them with that of my answer. Various, however, are the causes which oblige me to be an indifferent and slow correspondent; first, illness, which had confined me three months to my couch, where your first letter found me on the great river; next, the discharge of an important duty, which falls peculiarly heavy on the Indian judges, who are forced to act as justices of the peace in a populous country where the police is deplorably bad; then the difficult study of Hindu and Moham-
medan laws, in two copious languages, Sanscrit and Arabic, which studies are inseparably connected with my public duty, and may tend to establish by degrees, among ten millions of our black subjects, that security of descendable property, a want of which, as you justly observe, has prevented the people of Asia from improving their agriculture and mechanical arts; lastly, I may add (though rather an amusement than a duty) my pursuit of general literature, which I have here an opportunity of doing from the fountain head, an opportunity, which if lost, may never be recovered. When I accept therefore with gratitude the honour offered me by your young Hercules, the Maidstone Society, of being

* William Shipley, Esq. brother to the late Bishop of St. Asaph, and now in his 89th year. He suggested the idea of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Commerce, &c. which was established in 1783, and in the following year, a gold medal was voted to him by the society, with an inscription:

To WILLIAM SHIPLEY,
whose public spirit
gave Rise to this
Society.

one of their corresponding members, I cannot indulge a hope of being a diligent or useful correspondent, unless any discovery should be made by our Indian Society, which I may think likely to be of use in our common country. Your various papers I have distributed among those, who seemed the likeliest to avail themselves of the rules and hints which they contain. The rapidity of the Ganges, makes it extremely difficult to rescue the unhappy persons who are overset in boats, especially at the time of the *bore**, when such accidents most usually happen; but I am confident that the methods prescribed in the little work which you sent me, will often be salutary even here. Dr. Johnson's tract I have now lent to a medical friend of great ability; and I am particularly interested in the security of our prisons from infection, to which indeed they are less liable in this climate, from our practice of sleeping in a draught of air whenever it can be had. Without this habit, to which I am now enured, we should never be free from putrid disorders. * * * * *

* * * * * Should your society be so extended us to admit all Kent, you will, I trust, have an excellent member in one of my oldest college friends, Doctor Breton, of Broughton, near Ashford, who has left no path of science or literature unexplored. We shall print our transactions with all speed consistent with accuracy; but as all our members, including even our printer, are men of business, in commerce, revenue, or judicature, we cannot proceed very rapidly, either in giving the public the tracts we have already collected, or in adding to our collection.

* The *bore*, is an expression applied to a peculiar swell in the Hughli river, occasioned by the rapid influx of the tide; it breaks in shallow water along the shore, and no boat can resist its violence. The noise of its approach is heard at a distance of some miles, and the boats to avoid it are rowed into deep water, where the agitation is considerable, but not dangerous. The *bores* are highest about the equinoxes, and at the middle periods between them cease altogether.

Sir

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Sir J. MACPHERSON, Bart.

Calcutta, Nov. 1786.

The society heard with pleasure, the curious account of the Lama's inauguration; and the first sheet of their transactions is printed. * * * * *

* * * * * Be assured, that I will ever remember the contents of your own letter; and accept my thanks for the pleasure which I have received from that of Mr. Adam Ferguson to you. One sentence of it is so wise, and so well expressed, that I read it till I had it by heart. "Justice to the stranger," &c.

I am correcting proofs of our Transactions, which will, I hope, satisfy Mr. Ferguson as to the theology of the Hindus. By rising before the sun, I allot an hour every day to Sanscrit, and am charmed with knowing so beautiful a sister of Latin and Greek. *

Magnum vectigal est parsimonia, is an aphorism which I learned early from Cicero. The public, if they are grateful, must wish that you had attended as vigilantly to your own vectigal, as you have wisely and successfully to theirs.

In September, Lord Cornwallis arrived at Fortwilliam, with the appointment of Governor-General; and the writer of these sheets, who accompanied him to India, had the happiness of renewing his personal intimacy with Sir William Jones.

The uniformity which marked the remaining period of his allotted existence, admits of little variety of delineation. The largest portion of each year was devoted to his professional duties and studies; and all the time that could be saved from these important avoca-

tions

tions, was dedicated to the cultivation of science and literature. Some periods were chequered by illness, the consequence of intense application; and others were embittered by the frequent and severe indisposition of the partner of his cares and object of his affections. "The climate of India" (as he had already found occasion to remark in a letter to a friend) "had been unpropitious to the delicate constitution of his beloved wife;" and so apprehensive was he of the consequences, that he intended, "unless some favourable alteration should take place, to urge her return to her native country, preferring the pang of separation for five or six years to the anguish, which he should hardly survive, of losing her."

While business required the daily attendance of Sir William Jones, in Calcutta, his usual residence was on the banks of the Ganges, at the distance of five miles from the court; to this spot he returned every evening after sun-set, and in the morning rose so early as to reach his apartments in town by walking, at the first appearance of the dawn. Having severely suffered from the heat of the sun, he ever afterwards dreaded and avoided an exposure to it; and in his hymn to Surya, he alludes to its effect upon him, and to his moon-light rambles in the following lines:

Then roves thy poet free,
 Who with no borrow'd art,
 Dares hymn thy pow'r, and durst provoke thy blaze,
 But felt the thrilling dart,
 And now on lowly knee
 From him, who gave the wound, the balsam prays.

The intervening period of each morning until the opening of the court, was regularly allotted and applied to distinct studies. He passed the months of vacation at his retirement at Crishna-nagur, in his usual pursuits. Some of the literary productions of his retirement

ment will be noticed ; and I shall now continue my extracts from his familiar correspondence.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. SHORE, Esq.

Gardens, near Calcutta, March 25, 1787.

I am charmed, my dear Sir, with the short but comprehensive work of Rhadacaunt, your pundit, the title of which I see is Purán-arthupracusam, or the meaning of the Purans displayed. It contains pedigrees, or lists of kings, from the earliest times to the decline of the Indian empire ; but the proper names are so murdered, or so strangely disguised in Persian letters, that I am only tantalized with a thirst for more accurate information. If the pundit at your request, will lend me the original, my *marhatta* writer shall copy it elegantly, with spaces between the lines for a literal English translation, which may perhaps be agreeable, with your consent, to our society.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. SHORE, Esq.

May 11, 1787.

I return with many thanks, my dear Sir, the letter of his High Mightiness Tatbu Arnu (king of Ava*). When I began it, I feared

* If the reader has a curiosity to see this singular letter, he may gratify it. The personal, may perhaps recall to his recollection, the following lines :

Here's a large mouth indeed,

That spits forth death and mountains, rocks and seas !

Official translation of a letter from the Rajah or Principal of the Burmas to the Collector of Chittagong :

I am lord of a whole people, and of 101 countries, and my titles are Rajah Chatterdary (*i. e.* sitting under a canopy) and Rajah Surey Bunkshee, (*i. e.* descendant of the Sun).

I feared it was hostile, but am glad to find it so amicable. Dulce mihi nomen pacis! If he is at peace with the Siamese, he may be a good

Sun). Sitting on the throne with a splendid canopy of gold, I hold in subjection to my authority many Rajahs; gold, silver, and jewels, are the produce of my country, and in my hand is the instrument of war, that, as the lightning of Heaven, humbles and subdues my enemies; my troops require neither injunctions nor commands, and my elephants and horses are without number. In my service are ten pundits learned in the Shaaster, and 104 priests, whose wisdom is not to be equalled; agreeably to whose learning and intelligence, I execute and distribute justice among my people, so that my mandates, like the lightning, suffer no resistance nor control. My subjects are endowed with virtue and the principles of justice, and refrain from all immoral practices, and I am as the Sun, blessed with the light of wisdom to discover the secret designs of men; whoever is worthy of being called a Rajah, is merciful and just towards his people; thieves, robbers, and disturbers of the peace, have at length received the punishment due to their crimes; and now the word of my mouth is dreaded as the lightning from Heaven. I am as a great sea, among 2000 rivers, and many rivulets, and as the mountain Shumeroo, surrounded by 40,000 hills, and like unto these is my authority, extending itself over 101 Rajahs; further, 10,000 Rajahs pay daily attendance at my Durbar, and my country excels every country of the world; my palace as the heavens, studded with gold and precious stones, is revered more than any other palace in the universe. My occupations resemble the business of the chief of the angels, and I have written unto all the provinces of Arracan, with orders to forward this letter in safety to Chittagong, formerly subject to the Rajah Sery Tamah Chucka, by whom the country was cultivated and populated; and he erected 2400 places of public worship, and made 24 tanks.

Previous to his accession, the country was subject to other Rajahs, whose title was Chatterdary, who erected places of worship, and appointed priests to administer the rites of religion to people of every denomination; but at that period the country was ill governed, previous to the accession of Rajah Sery Tamah Chucka to the government of the countries of Rutunpoor, Dootinady, Arracan, Dooraputty, Ramputty, Chagdoye, Mahadaye, Mawong, in whose time the country was governed with justice and ability, and his wisdom was as the lightning; and the people were happy under his administration. He was also favoured with the friendship of the religious men of the age, one of whom, by name Budder, resorting to his place of residence, was solicited by the Rajah to appoint some one for the purpose of instructing him in religious rites, and Shawhmany was accordingly appointed agreeably to the Rajah's requisition; at this time it rained from Heaven, gold, silver, and precious stones, which were buried under ground in charge of the above priest, whose house was of gold and silver workmanship, to which the people resort,

a good neighbour, and we may be gainers by his gold and ivory; but I have no inclination to taste his sweet and delicious petroleum, which he praises so highly; I am satisfied with the smell of it, and with its singular property of restoring the scent of Russia

resort, and worship the deities; and the Rajah kept a large establishment of servants, and of slaves at the temple, for the service of travellers and passengers; and his time was engaged in the studying of the five books, and he always refrained from immoral practices and deeds interdicted by his religion, and the priests, &c. abstained from the flesh of geese, pigeons, goats, hogs, and of fowls; and wickedness, theft, adultery, lying, drunkenness, were unknown in that age. I likewise pursue a line of conduct and religion similar to the above; but previous to my conquest of Arracan, the people were as snakes wounding men, a prey to enmity and disorder; and in several provinces there were eaters of the flesh of men, and wickedness prevailed amongst them, so that no man could trust his neighbour. At this time one Bowdah Outhar, otherwise Sery Boot Taukwor, came down in the country of Arracan, and instructed the people and the beasts of the field in the principles of religion and rectitude, and agreeably to his word the country was governed for a period of 5000 years, so that peace and good-will subsisted amongst men; agreeably hereto is the tenor of my conduct and government of my people: as there is an oil, the produce of a certain spot of the earth, of exquisite flavour, so is my dignity and power above that of other Rajahs; and Taffoo Rajah, the high priest, having consulted with the others of that class, represented to me on 15th Aughur 1148, saying, do you enforce the laws and customs of Sery Boot Taukwor, which I accordingly did, and moreover erected six places of divine worship, and have conformed myself strictly to the laws and customs of Sery Tamah Chucka, governing my people with lenity and justice.

As the country of Arracan lies contiguous to Chittagong, if a Treaty of Commerce were established between me and the English, perfect amity and alliance would ensue from such engagements; therefore I have submitted it to you, that the merchants of your country should resort hither for the purpose of purchasing pearls, ivory, wax, and that in return my people should be permitted to resort to Chittagong for the purpose of trafficking in such commodities as the country may afford; but as the Mugs residing at Chittagong have deviated from the principles of religion and morality, they ought to be corrected for their errors and irregularities agreeably to the written laws, inasmuch as those invested with power will suffer eternal punishment in case of any deviation from their religion and laws, but whoever conforms his conduct to the strict rules of piety and religion will hereafter be translated to Heaven. I have accordingly sent four elephant's teeth under charge of 30 persons, who will return with your answer to the above proposals and offers of alliance.

leather



leather. I am told he is an able man ; but from all I can learn, I suspect him to be an ambitious dog, who would act the lion if he could, and end, as he is said to have begun, the Aurenzeb of the Indian peninsula.

We are pretty well, and hope that you are now in good health. You will not (though you dislike medicine) object to my prescription :

Take a concerto of Corelli,
An air of Leo, or Pergolesi,
—— a trio of Haydn, &c. Mixture fiat.

Would I could be as good a physician to you, as I am, &c.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. SHORE, Esq.

May 12, 1787.

You have sent me a treasure, which will enable me to satisfy my mind at least on the chronology of India ; need I say, that I shall ever be happy in the conversation of so learned a man as Rhadacaunt ? Before I return to Calcutta, I shall have read his interesting book, and shall be better able to converse with him in Sanscrit, which I speak continually with my pundit.

I can easily conceive all your feelings, but consider, my dear friend, that you are now collecting for yourself (while you serve your country) those flowers which will give a brighter bloom even to the valleys of Devonshire, that you are young and have as fair a prospect of long happiness as any mortal can have. I predict, that when I meet you a few years hence at Teignmouth, where I hope to spend many a season with all that my soul cherishes in this world, I shall hear you confess, that your painful toil in India, conduced in the end to your happiness. That you may enjoy as much of it as human life affords, is the sincere wish of, &c.

Sir

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. SHORE, Esq.

June 24.

I am well, rising constantly between three and four, and usually walking two or three miles before sun-rise; my wife is tolerably well; and we only lament, that the damp weather will soon oblige us to leave our herds and flocks, and all our rural delights on the banks of the Baghiratti. The business of the court will continue at least two months longer, after which I purpose to take a house at Bandell or Hugli, and pass my autumnal vacation as usual with the Hindu bards. I have read your pundit's curious book twice in Sanscrit, and will have it elegantly copied; the *Dabistan* also I have read through twice with great attention; and both copies are ready to be returned, as you shall direct. Mr. R. Johnston thinks he has a young friend who will translate the *Dabistan*, and the greatest part of it would be very interesting to a curious reader, but some of it cannot be translated. It contains more recondite learning, more entertaining history, more beautiful specimens of poetry, more ingenuity and wit, more indecency and blasphemy, than I ever saw collected in a single volume; the two last are not the author's, but are introduced in the chapters on the heretics and infidels of India. On the whole, it is the most amusing and instructive book I ever read in Persian*.

I hear nothing from Europe, but what all the papers contain; and that is enough to make me rejoice exceedingly, that I am in

* The *Dabistan*, is a treatise on twelve different religions, composed by a Mohamadan traveller, a native of Cashmir, named *Mohian*, but distinguished by the assumed name of Fani, or perishable. Sir William Jones, in his sixth discourse to the society, on the Persians, refers to it as a rare and interesting tract, which had cast a gleam of light on the primeval history of *Iran* and the human race, of which he had long despaired, and which could hardly have dawned from any other quarter.

Asia. Those with whom I have spent some of my happiest hours, and hope to spend many more on my return to England, are tearing one another to pieces, with the enmity that is proverbial here, of the snake and the ichneumon. I have nothing left therefore, but to wish what is right and just may prevail, to discharge my public duties with unremitting attention, and to recreate myself at leisure with the literature of this interesting country.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. SHORE, Esq.

Chrishna-nagur, Aug. 16, 1787.

I thank you heartily, my dear Sir, for the tender strains of the unfortunate Charlotte*, which have given us pleasure and pain; the sonnets which relate to herself are incomparably the best. Petrarca is little known; his sonnets, especially the first book, are the least valuable of his works, and contain less natural sentiments than those of the swan of Avon; but his odes which are political, are equal to the lyric poems of the Greeks; and his triumphs are in a triumphant strain of sublimity and magnificence. Anna Maria gives you many thanks for the pleasure you have procured her. We are in love with this pastoral cottage; but though these three months are called a vacation, yet I have no vacant hours. It rarely happens that favourite studies are closely connected with the strict discharge of our duty, as mine happily are; even in this cottage I am assisting the court by studying Arabic and Sanscrit, and have now rendered it an impossibility for the Mohammedan or Hindu lawyers to impose upon us with erroneous opinions.

This brings to my mind your honest pundit, Rhadacaunt, who refused, I hear, the office of pundit to the court, and told Mr. Hastings that he would not accept of it, if the salary were doubled;

* Sonnets by Charlotte Smith.

his scruples were probably religious; but they would put it out of my power to serve him, should the office again be vacant. His unvarnished tale I would have repeated to you, if we had not missed one another on the river; but since I despair of seeing you until my return to Calcutta, at the end of October, I will set it down here, as nearly as I can recollect, in his own words:

“ My father (said he) died at the age of an hundred years, and
 “ my mother, who was eighty years old, became a *sati*, and burned
 “ herself to expiate sins. They left me little besides good prin-
 “ ciples. Mr. Hastings purchased for me a piece of land, which
 “ at first yielded twelve hundred rupees a year; but lately, either
 “ through my inattention or through accident, it has produced
 “ only one thousand. This would be sufficient for me and my
 “ family; but the duty of Brahmins is not only to teach the
 “ youths of their sect, but to relieve those who are poor. I made
 “ many presents to poor scholars and others in distress, and for
 “ this purpose I anticipated my income: I was then obliged to bor-
 “ row for my family expenses, and I now owe about three thousand
 “ rupees. This debt is my only cause of uneasiness in this world.
 “ I would have mentioned it to Mr. Shore, but I was ashamed.”

Now the question is, how he can be set upon his legs again, when I hope he will be more prudent. If Bahman* should return to Persia, I can afford to give him one hundred rupees a month, till his debt shall be discharged out of his rents; but at present, I pay more in salaries to my native scholars than I can well afford; nevertheless I will cheerfully join you in any mode of clearing the honest man, that can be suggested; and I would assist him merely for his own sake, as I have more Brahmanical teachers than I can find time to hear.

* A parsi and a native of Yeaz, employed by Sir William Jones as a reader.

I send you not an elegant pathetic sonnet, but the wildest and strangest poem that was ever written, Khakani's complaint in prison. The whole is a menace, that he would change his religion, and seek protection among the Christians, or the Gabres. It contains one or two proper names, of which I find no full explanation even in a commentary professedly written to illustrate the poem. The fire of Khakani's genius blazes through the smoke of his erudition; the measure of the poem, which will enable you to correct the errors of the copies, is

o — — — | o — — — | o — — —
 o — — — | o — — — | o — — —

with a strong accent on the last syllable of each foot. Adieu, my dear Sir, &c.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to JOS. COWPER, Esq.

Of St. Valoire, near Bray, Ireland.

Crishna-nagur, Sept. 11, 1787.

I give you my hearty thanks, dear Sir, for your kind attention to me, and for the pleasure which I have received from your letter, as well as for that which I certainly shall receive from your historical memoirs of the Irish Bards. The term being over before your book could be found, and the state of my health obliging me to seek this pastoral retreat, where I always pass my vacation among the Brahmans of this ancient university, I left Calcutta before I could read your work, but shall peruse it with eagerness on my return to the capital. You touched an important string, when you mentioned the subject of Indian music, of which I am particularly fond. I have just read a very old book on that art in Sanscrit. I hope to present the world with the substance of it, as soon as the transactions of our society can be printed; but we go on slowly, since the press is often engaged by government; and we think it better to let our fruit ripen naturally,

than

than to bring forth such watery and imperfect fruits as are usually raised in hot beds. The *Asiatic Miscellany*, to which you allude, is not the publication of our society, who mean to print no scraps, nor any *mere* translations. It was the undertaking of a private gentleman, and will certainly be of use in diffusing Oriental literature, though it has not been so correctly printed as I could wish. When you see Colonel Vallancy, whose learned work I have read through twice with great pleasure, I request you to present him with my best remembrance. We shall soon I hope see faithful translations of Irish histories and poems. I shall be happy in comparing them with the Sanscrit, with which the ancient language of Ireland had certainly an affinity. Proceed, Sir, in your laudable career; you deserve the applause of your country, and will most assuredly have that of, Sir, &c.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Dr. PATRICK RUSSEL.

Chrishna-nagur, Sept. 22, 1787.

Your interesting papers did not find their way to me till I had left this cottage, and was wholly immersed in business. Indeed, I am so harassed for eight months in twelve, that I can seldom think of literature till the autumn vacation, which I pass in this charming plain, the driest in Bengal, and close to a college of Brahmans. I am charmed with your plan; and if the directors have not yet resolved to print the work at their expense, I can perhaps suggest a mode of procuring very powerful influence with them. The king has much at heart his new botanical garden at St. Vincent's; his object is two-fold, to improve the commerce of the West-India islands, and to provide the British troops on service there with medicinal plants. Now, if you could send a box or two of seeds, likely to be useful in commerce or medicine, directed to Sir George Young, the secretary at war, (to whom I have inclosed your letter to the Board at Madras) I dare say the Board

of Controul would be desired to use their influence with the Directors. * * * * * You could not have chosen a better specimen than the *pedalium murex*, of which little is said by Linnæus, and that from doubtful authority. The *opuntia* I have not seen here, and I cannot ramble into the woods. Our groves at this place are skirted with an angulated *cactus*, called *sija* (pronounced *seeja*) in the Sanscrit dictionaries, where I find the names of about 300 medicinal plants, the virtues of which are mentioned in medicinal books. I agree with you, that those books do not carry full conviction; but they lead to useful experiments, and are therefore valuable. I made fine red ink, by dropping a solution of tin in *aqua regia* into an infusion of the *coccus*, which Dr. Anderson was so polite as to send to me. His discovery will, I trust, be useful; his ardour and ingenuity deserve success.

I have just read with attention the *Philosophia Botanica*, which I consider as the grammar, and the *Genera et Species* as the dictionary, of botany. It is a masterly work, and contains excellent matter in a short volume; but it is harshly, not to say barbarously, written. I grieve to see botany imperfect in its two most important articles, the *natural orders* and the *virtues* of plants, between which I suspect a strong affinity. I envy those who have leisure to pursue this bewitching study.

Pray, my dear Sir, have you the Oriental manuscripts of my friend Dr. Alexander Russel? He lent me three, which I returned; the *Sucardan*, the *Banquet of Physicians*, and a beautiful *Hafez*. If you have them, I shall beg leave to read them again, when we meet in Europe.

Postscript. What is spikenard? I mean botanically, what is the natural order, class, genus, &c. of the plant? What was the
spikenard

spikenard in the alabaster-box of the Gospel? What was nardi parvus onyx? What did Ptolemy mean by the excellent nard of Rhanganutty in Bengal? I have been in vain endeavouring for above two years to procure an answer to these questions; your answer will greatly oblige me.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to THOMAS CALDICOTT, Esq.

Christna-nagur, Sept. 27, 1787.

Your brother sent me your letter at a convenient time, and to a convenient place, for I can only write in the long vacation, which I generally spend in a delightful cottage, about as far from Calcutta as Oxford is from London, and close to an ancient university of Brahmans, with whom I now converse familiarly in Sanscrit. You would be astonished at the resemblance between that language and both Greek and Latin. Sanscrit and Arabic will enable me to do this country more essential service, than the introduction of arts (even if I should be able to introduce them) by procuring an accurate digest of Hindu and Mohammedan laws, which the natives hold sacred, and by which both justice and policy require that they should be governed.

I have published nothing; but Armenian clerks make such blunders, that I print ten or twenty copies of every thing I compose, which are to be considered as manuscripts. I beg you will send me your remarks on my plan of an epic poem. Sanscrit has engaged my vacations lately; but I will finish it, if I live. I promise you to attend to all that is said, especially if alterations are suggested, always reserving to myself the final judgment. One thing I am inflexible in; I have maturely considered the point, and am resolved to write in blank verse. I have not time to add my reasons; but they are good.

I thank



I thank you for Sheridan's speech, which I could not however read through. For the last sixteen years of my life, I have been in a habit of requiring evidence of all assertions, and I have no leisure to examine proofs in a business so foreign to my pursuits. *

If Hastings and Impey are guilty, in God's name let them be punished; but let them not be condemned without legal evidence. I will say more of myself, than you do of yourself, but in few words. I never was unhappy in England; it was not in my nature to be so; but I never was happy till I was settled in India. My constitution has overcome the climate; and if I could say the same of my beloved wife, I should be the happiest of men; but she has perpetual complaints, and of course I am in perpetual anxiety on her account.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. WILMOT, Esq.

Chrisna-nagur, Bengal, Oct. 9, 1787.

I cannot, however, let the season slip, without scribbling a few lines to tell you, that my constitution seems to have overcome the climate, and that I should be as happy as a mortal man can be, or perhaps ought to be, if my wife had been as well as I have for the last three years.

I have nothing to say of India politics, except that Lord Cornwallis and * * * are justly popular, and perhaps the most virtuous governors in the world. Of English politics I say nothing; because I doubt whether you and I should ever agree in them. I do not mean the narrow politics of contending parties, but the great principles of government and legislation, the majesty of the whole nation collectively, and the consistency of popular rights (with regal prerogative, which ought to be supported, to suppress the

the oligarchical power. But in India I think little of these matters.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to J. SHORE, Esq.

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 10, 1787.

I hope in less than a fortnight to see you in perfect health, as I shall leave this charming retreat on the 20th. I want but a few leaves of having read your copy of Hafez twice through ; and I am obliged to you for the most agreeable task (next the Shah-namh) I ever performed. The annexed elegy* was sent to

* The elegy alluded to, which has been since printed in a collection of poems, is the following :

PHILEMON. An Elegy.

Where shade you yews the church-yard's lonely bourn,
With faltering step, absorb'd in thought profound,
Philemon wends in solitude to mourn,
While evening pours her deep'ning glooms around.

Loud shrieks the blast, the sleety torrent drives,
Wide spreads the tempest's desolating power ;
To grief alone Philemon reckless lives,
No rolling peal he heeds, cold blast, nor shower.

For this the date that stump'd his partner's doom ;
His trembling lips receiv'd her latest breath.
" Ah ! wilt thou drop one tear on Emma's tomb ?"
She cried : and clos'd each wistful eye in death.

No sighs he breath'd, for anguish riv'd his breast ;
Her clay-cold hand he grasp'd, no tears he shed,
Till fainting nature sunk by grief oppress'd,
And ere distraction came all sense was fled.

Now time has calm'd, not cur'd Philemon's woe,
For grief like his, life-woven, never dies ;
And still each year's collected sorrows flow,
As drooping o'er his Emma's tomb he sighs.

me by the post; and I send it to you, because I think you will like it. There is a great pathos in the fourth tetrastick; and I know unhappily that excessive grief is neither full of tears, nor full of words; yet if a dramatic poet were to represent such grief naturally, I doubt whether his conduct would be approved, though with fine acting and fine sounds in the orchestra, it ought to have a wonderful effect. Lady J. is pretty well; a tiger about a month old, who is suckled by a goat, and has all the gentleness of his foster-mother, is now playing at her feet. I call him Jupiter. Adieu.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Dr. FORD.

Gardens, on the Ganges, Jan. 5, 1788.

Give me leave to recommend to your kind attentions Colonel Polier, who will deliver this to you at Oxford. He presents to the university an extremely rare work in Sanscrit, a copy of the four *vedas*, or Indian scriptures, which confirm, instead of opposing the Mosaic account of the creation, and of the deluge. He is himself one of the best-disposed and best informed men, who ever left India. If he embark to-morrow, I shall not be able to send you, by him, an Arabic manuscript, which I have read with a native of Mecca, the poems of the great Ali. * * * *

* * * * * Our return to Europe is very distant; but I hope, before the end of the eighteenth century, to have the pleasure of conversing with you, and to give you a good account of Persia, through which I purpose to return.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Sir JOSEPH BANKS.

Gardens, near Calcutta, Feb. 25, 1788.

I was highly gratified by your kind letter, and have diffused great pleasure among our astronomers here, by shewing them an account of the lunar volcano. The Brahmans, to whom I have

I have related the discovery in Sanscrit, are highly delighted with it. Public business presses on me so heavily at this season, that I must postpone the pleasure of writing fully to you, till I can retire in the long vacation to my cottage, where I hear nothing of plaintiffs or defendants. Your second commission I will faithfully execute, and have already made enquiries concerning the *dacca cotton*; but I shall be hardly able to procure the seeds, &c. before the Rodney sails.

These letters describe the elegant occupations of a mind disciplined in the school of science, ardent to embrace it in all its extent, and to make even its amusements subservient to the advancement of useful knowledge, and the public good. From the discharge of his appointed duties, we see Sir William Jones returning with avidity to his literary pursuits, improving his acquaintance with botany, and, relaxing from the severity of study by the perusal of the most admired Oriental authors, communicating his pleasures and acquirements to his friends. There are few of his letters in which he does not introduce the name of Lady Jones, with that affection which never abated: she was his constant companion, and the associate of the literary entertainment which occupied and amused his evenings.

Amongst the letters which I have transcribed, I cannot pass, without particular notice, that which he wrote to me in the beginning of 1787. The prediction which it contains, is a melancholy proof of the disappointment of human expectations; and I am now discharging the duty of affection for his memory, at a short distance only from the spot which he mentions, as the anticipated scene of future delight, and where I once fondly hoped to enjoy the happiness of his society. That happiness would indeed have imparted a higher bloom to the valleys of Devonshire, which I

now trace with the melancholy recollection, that the friend whom I loved, and whose virtues I admired, is no more.

The introduction of the unvarnished tale of his respectable Hindu friend, is a proof of that kindness and sensibility, which he ever felt for distressed merit. It is superfluous to add, what the reader will have anticipated, that the disposition to relieve his wants was not suffered to evaporate in mere profession.

In the midst of his public duties and literary employments, political speculations had but little share of his attention; yet the sentiments which he occasionally expresses on this subject, do honour to his heart, and prove that the welfare of his country was always nearest to it.

The hope with which he flatters himself, that his constitution had overcome the climate, was unfortunately ill-founded; few months elapsed without his suffering from the effects of it, and every attack had a tendency to weaken the vigour of his frame.

Among other literary designs which he meditated, he mentions the plan of an epic poem. It was founded on the same story which he had originally selected for a composition of the same nature in his twenty-second year, the discovery of England by Brutus; but his acquaintance with Hindu mythology had suggested to him the addition of a machinery perfectly new, by the introduction of the agency of the Hindu deities; and however wild or extravagant the fiction may appear, the discordancy may be easily reconciled by the actual subjection of Hindustan to the British dominion, poetically visible to the guardian angels of that country. The first hint of this poem, was not suggested by the example of Pope, but by a passage in a letter of Spenser to Sir Walter Raleigh*;

* Appendix A.

it is evident however, that Sir William Jones was not disposed to abandon the execution of his purpose by the strictures of Dr. Johnson, on Pope's intended poem, and that, in more open defiance of the critic's opinion, he determined to write it in blank verse, although he originally proposed to adopt the heroic measure in rhyme. I should have been happy to gratify the curiosity of my readers with his reasons for this determination, but they do not appear.

Notwithstanding all that might have been expected from the genius, taste, and erudition of Sir William Jones on a subject like this, I cannot, for my own part, lament the application of his time and labour to other studies, calculated to instruct as well as to delight the public; we have far more reason to lament, that he did not live to return to his native country through Persia, and that we have lost for ever that information which would have been supplied by his researches and observations during the journey. The strength of a constitution, never vigorous, was unequal to the incessant exertion of his mental faculties: and whilst we admire the boundless activity of his mind, we anticipate with sorrow its fatal effects upon his health.

I have frequently remarked, that it was the prevailing wish of Sir William Jones to render his talents and attainments useful to his country. The tenour of his correspondence shews, that his principal studies were directed to this object; and nearly two years preceding the period at which I am arrived, he describes the mode in which he proposes to give effect to his wishes, and expresses his determination to accomplish it, with an energy which marks his sense of the importance of the work he then meditated.

Having now qualified himself, by his knowledge of the Sanscrit and Hindu laws, for the execution of his plan, he determined to delay it no longer; and as he could not prudently defray the expense of the undertaking from his own finances, he deemed it proper to apply to the government of Bengal for their assistance. The following letter which he addressed to the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, on this subject, contains all the explanations necessary.

MY LORD,

It has long been my wish to address the government of the British dominions in India on the administration of justice among the natives of Bengal and Bahar, a subject of equal importance to the appellate jurisdiction of the supreme court at Calcutta, where the judges are required by the legislature to decide controversies between Hindu and Mohammedan parties, according to their respective laws of contracts, and of succession to property; they had, I believe, so decided them, in most cases before the statute to which I allude, had passed; and the parliament only confirmed that mode of decision, which the obvious principles of justice had led them before to adopt. Nothing indeed could be more obviously just, than to determine private contests according to those laws, which the parties themselves had ever considered as the rules of their conduct and engagements in civil life; nor could any thing be wiser, than, by a legislative act, to assure the Hindu and Mussulman subjects of Great Britian, that the private laws which they severally held sacred, and a violation of which they would have thought the most grievous oppression, should not be superseded by a new system of which they could have no knowledge, and which they must have considered as imposed on them by a spirit of rigour and intolerance.

So

So far the principle of decision between the native parties in a cause appears perfectly clear; but the difficulty lies (as in most other cases) in the application of the principle to practice; for, the Hindu and Mussulman laws are locked up for the most part in two very difficult languages, Sanscrit and Arabic, which few Europeans will ever learn, because neither of them leads to any advantage in worldly pursuits: and if we give judgment only from the opinions of the native lawyers and scholars, we can never be sure, that we have not been deceived by them.

It would be absurd and unjust to pass an indiscriminate censure on so considerable a body of men; but my experience justifies me in declaring, that I could not with an easy conscience concur in a decision, merely on the written opinion of native lawyers, in any cause in which they could have the remotest interest in misleading the court; nor, how vigilant soever we might be, would it be very difficult for them to mislead us; for a single obscure text, explained by themselves, might be quoted as express authority, though perhaps in the very book from which it was selected, it might be differently explained or introduced only for the purpose of being exploded. The obvious remedy for this evil had occurred to me before I left England, where I had communicated my sentiments to some friends in parliament, and on the bench in Westminster-Hall, of whose discernment I had the highest opinion: and those sentiments I propose to unfold in this letter, with as much brevity as the magnitude of the subject will admit.

If we had a complete digest of Hindu and Mohammedan laws, after the model of Justinian's inestimable pandects, compiled by the most learned of the native lawyers, with an accurate verbal translation of it into English; and if copies of the work were depo-

sited



sited in the proper offices of the Sedr Divani Adaulat*, and of the supreme court, that they might occasionally be consulted as a standard of justice, we should rarely be at a loss for principles at least, and rules of law applicable to the cases before us, and should never perhaps be led astray by the pundits or maulavis, who would hardly venture to impose on us, when their imposition might so easily be detected. The great work, of which Justinian has the credit, consists of texts collected from law books of approved authority, which in his time were extant at Rome, and those texts are digested according to a scientific analysis; the names of the original authors, and the titles of their several books, being constantly cited with references even to the parts of their works, from which the different passages were selected: but although it comprehends the whole system of jurisprudence, public, private, and criminal, yet that vast compilation was finished, we are told, in three years; it bears marks unquestionably of great precipitation, and of a desire to gratify the Emperor by quickness of dispatch; but with all its imperfections, it is a most valuable mine of judicial knowledge, it gives law at this hour to the greatest part of Europe, and, though few English lawyers dare make such an acknowledgement, it is the true source of nearly all our English laws, that are not of a feudal origin. It would not be unworthy of a British government, to give the natives of these Indian provinces a permanent security for the due administration of justice among them, similar to that which Justinian gave to his Greek and Roman subjects: but our compilation would require far less labour, and might be completed with far greater exactness in as short a time, since it would be confined to the laws of contracts and inheritances, which are of the most extensive use in private life, and to which the legislature has limited the decisions of the supreme

* The court of appeals in civil suits.

court in causes between native parties; the labour of the work would also be greatly diminished by two compilations already made in Sanscrit and Arabic, which approach nearly in merit and in method, to the digest of Justinian: the first was composed a few centuries ago by a Brahman of this province, named *Raghunanden*, and is comprised in twenty-seven books at least, on every branch of Hindu law: the second, which the Arabs called the *Indian decisions*, is known here by the title of *Fetaweh Aalemgiri*, and was compiled by the order of *Aurangzeb*, in five large volumes, of which I possess a perfect and well-collated copy. To translate these immense works, would be surperfluous labour; but they will greatly facilitate the compilation of a digest on the laws of inheritance and contracts; and the code, as it is called, of Hindu law, which was compiled at the request of Mr. Hastings, will be useful for the same purpose, though it by no means obviates the difficulties before stated, nor supersedes the necessity or the expedience at least of a more ample repertory of Hindu laws, especially on the twelve different contracts, to which *Ulpian* has given specific names, and on all the others, which, though not specifically named, are reducible to four general heads. The last-mentioned work is entitled *Vivadamasvetu*, and consists, like the Roman digests, of authentic texts, with the names of their several authors regularly prefixed to them, and explained, where an explanation is requisite, in short notes taken from commentaries of high authority: it is, as far as it goes, a very excellent work; but though it appear extremely diffuse on subjects rather curious than useful, and though the chapter on inheritances be copious and exact, yet the other important branch of jurisprudence, the law of contracts, is very succinctly and superficially discussed, and bears an inconsiderable proportion to the rest of the work. But whatever be the merit of the original, the translation of it has no authority, and is of no other use than to suggest enquiries on the many dark passages which we find in it; properly speaking,
indeed,

indeed, we cannot call it a translation; for though Mr. Halhed performed his part with fidelity, yet the Persian interpreter had supplied him only with a loose injudicious epitome of the original Sanscrit, in which abstract many essential passages are omitted; though several notes of little consequence are interpolated, from a vain idea of elucidating or improving the text. All this I say with confidence, having already perused no small part of the original with a learned pundit, comparing it as I proceeded, with the English version. Having shewn therefore the expedience of a new compilation for each system of Indian law, I beg leave to state the difficulties which must attend the work, and to suggest the means of removing them.

The difficulty which first presents itself, is the *expense* of paying the pundits and maulavis who must compile the digest, and the native writers who must be employed to transcribe it. Since two provinces are immediately under this government, in each of which there are many *customary* laws, it would be proper to employ one pundit of Bengal and another from Behar; and since there are two Mohammedan sects, who differ in regard to many traditions from their Prophet, and to some decisions of their respective doctors, it might be thought equally proper to engage one maulavi of each sect; and this mode would have another advantage, since two lawyers conferring freely together on fundamental principles common to both, would assist, direct, and check each other*.

Although I can have no personal interest, immediate or consequential, in the work proposed, yet I would cheerfully have borne the whole expense of it, if common prudence had not restrained me, and if my private establishment of native readers and writers, which I cannot with convenience discontinue at present, did not require

* A passage relating to the remuneration of the natives to be employed, is here omitted.