or to make uſe of their prince's government, as an occaſion to diminiſh his authority. Although there are ſome examples of this hiſtory, yet they ſeldom occur, and whenever they do, it is under ſuch circumſtances as ſeem to go a great way toward their juſtification.

BUT ſuch is the temper of the Chineſe, that when their emperor is full of violence and paſſion, or very negligent of his charge, the ſame ſpirit of perverſeneſs poſſeſſes alſo his ſubjects. Every Mandarine thinks himſelf the ſovereign of his province or city, when he does not perceive it taken care of by a ſuperior power. The chief miniſters ſell places to thoſe who are unfit to fill them. The vice-roys become ſo many little tyrants. The governors obſerve no more the rules of juſtice. The people by theſe means oppreſſed and trampled under foot, and by conſequence miſerable, are eaſily ſtirred up to ſedition. Rogues multiply and commit inſolencies in companies; and in a country where the people are almoſt innumerable, numerous armies do in an inſtant get together, who wait nothing but an opportunity, under ſpecious pretences, to diſturb the public peace and quiet.

SUCH beginnings as theſe have occaſioned fatal conſequences, and have oftentimes put China under the command of new maſters. So that the beſt and ſureſt way for an emperor to eſtabliſh himſelf in his throne, is to give an exact regard and an entire obedience to thoſe laws, whoſe goodneſs have been confirmed by the experience of more than four thouſand years.

THIS is the ordinary form of government which the laws preſcribe. The emperor hath two ſovereign councils; the one is called the extraordinary council, and is compoſed of princes of the blood only; the other, called the council in ordinary, has beſides the

princes ſeveral miniſters of ſtate named Colaos admitted into it. Theſe are they who examine all the affairs of ſtate, and make their report to the emperor, from whom they have their final determination. Beſides theſe there are at Peking ſix ſovereign courts, whoſe authority extends over all the provinces of China, each of theſe courts have their different matters aſſigned to them, of which they are to take cognizance.

BUT becauſe it is the emperor's intereſt to keep ſuch conſiderable bodies as theſe ſo far under, as that it may not lie in their power to weaken the emperor's authority, or to enterpriſe any thing againſt the ſtate; care is taken that though each of theſe ſix courts have their particular charges of which they are conſtituted ſole judges, yet no conſiderable thing can be brought to perfection and maturity, without the joint help and mutual concurrence of all theſe courts; I explain myſelf by the inſtance of war: the number of the troops, the quality of their officers, the march of the armies, are provided for by the fourth court, but the money to pay them muſt be had from the ſecond. So that ſcarce any one thing of conſequence to the ſtate can be promoted without the inſpection of many, and oft times of all the Mandarines.

THE ſecond means uſed by the emperor, for this purpoſe, is to place an officer in each of theſe courts, who has an eye to all their proceedings. He is not, it is true, of the council, yet he is preſent at all their aſſemblies, and informed of all their proceedings: we may call this officer an inſpector. He either privately advertiſes the court, or elſe openly accuſes the mandarines of the faults which they commit in their private capacities, as well as thoſe which they commit in the execution of their office. He obſerves their actions, their behaviour, and even their words, ſo that

nothing eſcapes his notice. I am told that he who once undertakes this employ can never quit it for any other, that ſo the hopes of a better preferment may never tempt him to be partial to any one, nor the fear of loſing his place frighten him from accuſing thoſe who miſbehave themſelves. Of theſe officers whom they call Colaos even the princes of the blood ſtand in awe; and I remember that one of the greateſt of the nobility having built a houſe ſomewhat higher than the cuſtom of China ſuffers, did of himſelf pull it down in a few days, when he had heard that one of theſe inſpectors talked of accuſing him.

As for the provinces, they are under the immediate inſpection of two ſorts of vice-roys. One ſort has the government of one province only. Thus there is one vice-roy at Peking, at Canton, or at Nanking, or in any other town but a little diſtant from the chief city of the province. Beſides this, theſe provinces are under the government of other vice-roys, who are called Tſounto, and have under their juriſdiction two, or three, nay ſometimes four provinces. There is no prince in Europe whoſe dominions are of ſo large extent as is the juriſdiction of theſe general officers; yet how great ſoever their authority may ſeem to be, they do in no wiſe diminiſh that of the particular vice-roys; and each of theſe two vice-roys have their particular rights ſo well ſettled and adjuſted, that they never clath or contend with each other in their adminiſtrations.

THESE have all of them in their ſeveral lordſhips many courts, of the ſame nature with thoſe at Peking already deſcribed, but are ſubordinate to them, ſo that from theſe they appeal to them: there are beſide theſe ſeveral other inferior offices for the preparing buſineſs, or for finiſhing it according to the extent of their com-

miſſions. There are three ſorts of towns, each of which have their particular governor, and a great number of Mandarines who adminiſter juſtice; among which cities there is this difference, that thoſe of the third ſort or rank are ſubordinate to thoſe of the ſecond, as thoſe of the ſecond are to them of the firſt; theſe of the firſt rank are ſubject to the juriſdiction of the general officers of the capital cities, according as the nature of things require, and all the judges, be their quality what it will in the civil government, have their dependence on the vice-roy, in whom reſides the imperial authority. He from time to time convenes the principal Mandarines of his province, to take cognizance of the good or bad qualities of the governors, lieutenants, and even inferior officers: he ſends private diſpatches to court to inform the emperor who miſbehave themſelves, who are either therefore deprived of their offices, or elſe cited to appear and offer what they have to ſay in their juſtification.

ON the other hand the vice-roy's power is counterpoiſed by that of the great Mandarines who are about him, and who may accuſe him when they are ſatisfied that it is neceſſary for the public good. But that which principally keeps him upon his guard is, that the people, when evil intreated or oppreſſed by him, may petition the emperor in perſon for his removal, and that another may be ordered them. The leaſt inſurrection or diſturbance is laid at his door, which if it continues three days he muſt anſwer for it at his peril. It is his fault, ſay the laws, if diſturbance ſpring up in his family, that is, in the province over which he has the charge. He ought to regulate the conduct of the Mandarines under him, that ſo the people may not ſuffer by their ill management. When people like

their maſters they do not deſire to change them; and when the yoke is eaſy it is a pleaſure to bear it.

BUT becauſe private perſons cannot eaſily come at the court, and becauſe the juſt complaints of his people cannot always reach the ears of their prince, (eſpecially in China where the governors eaſily corrupt with bribes the general officers, and they the ſupreme courts;) the emperor diſperſes up and down ſecret ſpies, perſons of known wiſdom and reputation; theſe in every province by their cunning management, inform themſelves from the countrymen, tradeſmen or others, after what manner the Mandarines behave themſelves in the execution of their offices. When from their private but certain informations, or rather when by the public voice, which ſeldom impoſes on us, they are acquainted with any diſorder, then they publicly own their commiſſion from the emperor; they take up thoſe criminal Mandarines, and manage the cauſe againſt them. This heretofore kept all the judges to their duty; but ſince the Tartars have been maſters of China, theſe officers have been laid aſide; in as much as ſome of them abuſed their commiſſion, enriched themſelves by taking money of the guilty to conceal their faults, and of the innocent, whom they threatened to accuſe as criminal. Nevertheleſs, that ſo uſeful a means of keeping the magiſtrates to their duty may not be wholly loſt, the emperor himſelf, who has a tender love for his ſubjects, hath thought it his duty to viſit in perſon each province, and to hear himſelf the complaints of his people; which he performs with ſuch a diligence as makes him the terror of his Mandarines, and the delight of his people. Amongſt the great variety of accidents which have happened to him during thoſe his progreſſes, they report, that being once ſeparated from his at-

tendants, he ſaw an old man weeping bitterly, of whom he enquired what was the occaſion of his tears. Sir, ſaid the old man, who did not know to whom he ſpoke, I have but one ſon, who was the comfort of my life, and on whom lay the whole care of my family, a Mandarine of Tartary has deprived me of him; which hath made me helpleſs at preſent, and will make me ſo as long as I live; for how can I, who am ſo poor and friendleſs, oblige ſo great a man as he to make me reſtitution? That is not ſo difficult as you imagine, ſaid the emperor; get up behind me and direct me to his houſe who has done you this wrong. The good man complied without any ceremony, and in two hours' time they both got to the Mandarine's houſe, who little expected ſo extraordinary a viſit. In the interim the guards, and a great company of lords, after a great deal of ſearch made came thither, ſome of which attended without, others entered with the emperor, not knowing what the buſineſs was which brought him there. Where the emperor having convicted the Mandarine of the violence of which he was accuſed, condemned him on the ſpot to death; afterward turning round to the afflicted father who had loſt his ſon: To make you a good recompence for your loſs, ſays he, after a grave and ſerious manner, I give you the office of the criminal who is juſt now dead; but take care to execute it with equity, and let his puniſhment, as well as his crime, prove for your advantage, for fear leſt you in your turn are made an example to others.

THEY have ſtill a farther means to oblige the viceroys and other governors to a ſtrict care of their charge, which expedient I do not believe any government or kingdom, though never ſo ſevere, did ever make uſe of. It is this, every governor is obliged from time to

time with all humility and ſincerity to own and acknowledge the ſecret or public faults committed by himſelf in his adminiſtration, and to ſend the account in writing up to court. This is a more troubleſome buſineſs to comply with than one readily imagines, for on one ſide it is an uneaſy thing to accuſe ourſelves of thoſe things which we know will be puniſhed by the emperor, though mildly. On the other ſide it is more dangerous to diſſemble them; for if by chance they are accuſed of them in the inſpector's advertiſement, the leaſt fault which the Mandarine ſhall have concealed will be big enough to turn him out of his miniſtry. So that the beſt way is to make a ſincere confeſſion of one's faults, and to purchaſe a pardon for them by money, which in China has the virtue of blotting out all crimes, which remedy notwithſtanding is no ſmall puniſhment for a Chineſe; the fear of ſuch a puniſhment makes him oft-times exceeding circumſpect and careful, and ſometimes even virtuous againſt his own inclinations.

AFTER theſe proviſions which the laws make, as I have ſaid, they give the following directions how to proceed in the buſineſs of puniſhing criminals. There is no need of having a warrant to carry them before the magiſtrate, nor that the magiſtrate ſhould ſit in a court of juſtice to hear the accuſation and plea of the criminal. Such formalities as theſe are not inſiſted on there. Wherever the magiſtrate ſees a fault, there he has power to puniſh it on the ſpot, be it in the ſtreet, in the highway or in a private houſe, it is all one; he may take up a gameſter, a rook, or a debauchee, and without any more formalities he orders one of his attendants to give him twenty or thirty ſtripes: after which, as though nothing extraordinary had happened, he goes on his journey without any concernment. Notwith-

ſtanding this puniſhment the perſon damaged may accuſe the ſame criminal again in a ſuperior court, where he is tried, the reſult of which is uſually a further puniſhment.

FARTHER, the plaintiff may in common caſes bring his action in any higher magiſtrate's court, even before it has been pleaded in an inferior court. I mean, an inhabitant of a town of the third rank may forthwith apply himſelf to the governor of the capital city of the province, or even to the vice-roy, without having it examined before the governor of his own town; and when it once comes before a ſuperior judge, the inferior ones may not take cognizance of it, unleſs it be deputed to them by thoſe ſuperior judges, as it often is. When the cauſe is of great conſequence, there lies an appeal from the vice-roy to one of the ſupreme courts at Peking, according to the nature of the affair, where the cauſe is examined in one of the under offices, who make their report to the preſident of the ſupreme office, who gives ſentence after he has adviſed with his aſſiſtants, and communicated his opinion to the Caloas who carry it to the emperor. Sometimes the emperor deſires better information, ſometimes gives ſentence on the ſpot, and in his name the ſupreme court makes a brief of the ſentence, and ſends it to the vice-roys for them to put it in execution. A ſentence pronounced in this manner is irrevocable, they call it the holy commandment; that is to ſay, the commandment which is without defect or partiality.

YOU will think it doubtleſs an inconceivable thing, that a prince ſhould have time to examine himſelf the affairs of ſo vaſt an empire as is that of China. But beſides that wars and foreign negotiations never ſpend his time, which in Europe is almoſt the ſole buſineſs

of the councils, beſides this, I ſay, their affairs are ſo well digeſted and ordered, that he can with half an eye ſee to which party he ought to incline in his ſentence, and this becauſe their laws are ſo plain that they leave no room for intricacy or diſpute. So that two hours a day is time enough for that prince to govern himſelf an empire of that extent, that were there other laws might find employment for thirty kings. So true is it that the laws of China, are wiſe, plain, well underſtood, and exactly adequate to the particular genius and temper of that nation.

To give a general notion of this, I ſhall think it ſufficient to remark to you three things, which are exceeding conducive to the public peace, and are as it were the very ſoul of the government. The firſt is the moral principles which are inſtilled into the people. The ſecond is the political rules which are ſet up in every thing. The third is the maxims of good policy which are, or ought to be every where obſerved.

THE firſt moral principle reſpects private families, and injoins children ſuch a love, obedience, and reſpect for their parents, that neither the ſeverity of their treatment, the impertinency of their old age, or the meanneſs of their rank, when the children have met with preferment, can ever efface. One cannot imagine to what a degree of perfection this firſt principle of nature is improved. There is no ſubmiſſion, no point of obedience which the parents cannot command, or which the children can refuſe. Theſe children are obliged to comfort them when alive, and continually to bewail them when dead. They proſtrate themſelves a thouſand times before their dead bodies, offer them proviſions, as though they were yet alive, to ſignify that all their goods belong to them, and that from the

bottom of their heart they wiſh them in a capacity to enjoy them. They bury them with a pomp and expence which to us would ſeem extravagant, they pay conſtantly at their tombs a tribute of tears, which ceremonies they often perform even to their pictures, which they keep in their houſes with all imaginable care, which they honour with offerings, and with as due reſpect as they would their parents were they yet alive. Their kings themſelves are not excuſed this piece of duty, and the preſent emperor has been obſervant of it, not only to his predeceſſors of his own family, but even to thoſe who were not. For one day when in hunting he perceived afar off the magnificent monument which his father had erected for Tcoumtchin, the laſt Chineſe emperor, who loſt his life and crown in a rebellion, he ran to the place, and fell on his knees before the tomb, and even wept, and in a great concern for his misfortune: "O prince! (ſays "he) O emperor, worthy of a better fate! you know "that your deſtruction is no ways owing to us; your "death lies not at our door, your ſubjects brought it "upon you. It was them that betrayed you. It is "upon them, and not on my anceſters, that heaven "muſt ſend down vengeance for this act." Afterward he ordered flambeaus to be lighted, and incenſe to be offered. During all which time he fixed his countenance on the ground, and aroſe not till all theſe ceremonies were over.

THE ordinary term of mourning is three years, during which time the mourner can exerciſe no public office. So that a Mandarine is obliged to forſake his employ, and a miniſter of ſtate his office, to ſpend all that time in grief. If a father be honoured after his death as a god, to be ſure he is obeyed in his family like a prince, over whom he exerciſes a deſpotic pow-

er; as abſolute maſter not only of his eſtate which he diſtributes to whom he pleaſes, but alſo of his concubines and children, of whom he diſpoſes with that liberty and power that he may ſell them to ſtrangers when their behaviour diſpleaſes him. If a father accuſes his ſon of any crime before a Mandarine, there needs no proof of it; it is ſuppoſed to be true that the ſon is in the fault if the father be diſpleaſed. This paternal power is of that extent, that there is no father but may take his ſon's life away, if he will ſtick to his accuſation. When we ſeemed amazed at this procedure, we were anſwered: Who underſtands the merit of the ſon better than the father, who has brought him up, educated him, and ſuch a long time obſerved all his actions? And again, can any perſon have a greater love, or a more ſincere affection for him? If therefore he who knows his caſe exactly, and loves him tenderly, condemns him, how can we pronounce him guiltleſs and innocent? And when we objected that ſome perſons have an inbred diſlike of others, and that fathers who were men, as well as fathers, were capable of ſuch antipathies againſt ſome of their children; they anſwered, that men were not more unnatural than ſavage beaſts, the cruelleſt of which never deſtroyed their young ones for a frolic; but ſuppoſing there be ſuch monſters among men, their children by their modeſty and ſweetneſs of temper muſt tame and ſoften them. But after all, ſay they, the love of their children is ſo deeply imprinted in the hearts of parents, that antipathy, or diſlike, unleſs provoked and inflamed by the undutiful ſtubbornneſs and diſorderly behaviour of their children, can never eraſe.

If it ſhould happen that a ſon ſhould be ſo inſolent as to mock his parents, or arrive to that height of fury and madneſs as to lay violent hands on them; it is the

whole empire's concern, and the province where this horrible violence is committed is alarmed. The emperor himſelf judges the criminal. All the Mandarines near the place are turned out, eſpecially thoſe of that town, who have been ſo negligent in their inſtructions. The neighbours are all reprimanded for neglecting, by former puniſhments, to ſtop the iniquity of this criminal before it came to this height, for they ſuppoſe that ſuch a diabolical temper as this muſt needs have ſhewed itſelf on other occaſions, ſince it is hardly poſſible to attain to ſuch a pitch of iniquity at once. As for the criminal there is no puniſhment which they think too ſevere. They cut him in a thouſand pieces, burn him, deſtroy his houſe to the ground, and even thoſe houſes which ſtand near it, and ſet up monuments and memorials of this ſo horrible an inſolence.

EVEN the emperors themſelves cannot reject the authority of their parents without running the riſk of ſuffering for it; and hiſtory tells us a ſtory which will always make the affection which the Chineſe have to this duty appear amiable. One of the emperors had a mother who managed a private intrigue with one of the lords of the court; the notice which was publicly taken of it, obliged the emperor to ſhew his reſentment of it, both for his own honour and that of the empire: ſo that he baniſhed her into a far diſtant province; and becauſe he knew that his actions would not be very acceptable to his princes and Mandarines, he forbad them all, under pain of death, giving him advice therein. They were all ſilent for ſome time, hoping that of himſelf he would condemn his own conduct in that affair; but ſeeing that he did not, they reſolved to appear in it, rather than ſuffer ſo pernicious a precedent.

THE firſt who had the courage to put up a requeſt

to the emperor in this matter was put to death on the ſpot. His death put not a ſtop to the Mandarines' proceedings; for a day or two after another made his appearance, and to ſhew all the world that he was willing to ſacrifice his life for the public, he ordered his hearſe to ſtand at the palace gate. The emperor minded not this generous action, but was the rather more provoked at it. He not only ſentenced him to death, but to terrify all others from following his example, he ordered him to be put to the torture. One would not think it prudence to hold out longer. The Chineſe were of another mind, for they reſolved to fall one after another rather than baſely to paſs over in ſilence ſo baſe an action.

THERE was therefore a third who devoted himſelf. He, like the ſecond, ordered his coffin to be ſet at the palace gate, and proteſted to the emperor that he was not able any longer to ſee him ſtill guilty of his crime. "What ſhall we loſe by our death (ſays he) nothing "but the ſight of a prince, upon whom we cannot "look without amazement and horror. Since you will "not hear us, we will go and ſeek out yours and the "empreſs your mother's anceſtors. They will hear our "complaints, and perhaps in the dark and ſilence of "the night you will hear ours and their ghoſts reproach "you with your injuſtice."

THE emperor being more enraged than ever at this inſolence, as he called it, of his ſubjects, inflicted on this laſt the ſevereſt torments he could deviſe. Many others, encouraged by theſe examples, expoſed themſelves to torment, and did in effect die the martyrs of filial duty, which they ſtood up for with the laſt drop of their blood. At laſt this heroic conſtancy wearied out the emperor's cruelty; and whether he was afraid of more dangerous conſequences, or was himſelf con-

vinced of his own fault, he repented, as he was the father of his people, that he had ſo unworthily put to death his children; and as a ſon of the empreſs he was troubled that he had ſo long miſuſed his mother. He recalled her therefore, reſtored her to her former dignity, and after that the more he honoured her, the more was he himſelf honoured by his ſubjects.

THE ſecond moral principle which obtains among them, is to honour their Mandarines as they would the emperor himſelf, whoſe perſon the Mandarines repreſent. To maintain this credit the Mandarines never appear in public without a retinue, and face of grandeur that commands reſpect. They are always carried in a magnificent chair open, before them go all the officers of their courts, and round them are carried all the marks and badges of their dignity. The people, wherever they come, open to the right and left to let them paſs through. When they adminiſter juſtice in their palaces, no body ſpeaks to them but on their knees, be they of what quality they will, and ſince they can at any time command any perſons to be whipped, no one comes near them without trembling.

HERETOFORE when any Mandarine took a journey, all the inhabitants of the towns through which he paſſed ran in a crowd to meet him, and proffer their ſervices, conducting him with all ſolemnity through their territory: now when he leaves his office which he has adminiſtered to the ſatisfaction of all men, they give him ſuch marks of honour, as would engage the moſt ſtupid to love virtue and juſtice. When he is taking his leave in order to lay down his office, almoſt all the inhabitants go in the highways, and place themſelves ſome here, ſome there for almoſt fourteen or fifteen miles together. So that every where in the road one ſees tables handſomely painted, with ſatin table-

cloths, covered with ſweet-meats, tea and other liquors.

EVERY one almoſt conſtrains him to ſtay, to ſit down and eat or drink ſomething. When he leaves one another ſtops him, and thus he ſpends the whole day among the applauſes and acclamations of his people. And, which is an odd thing, every one deſires to have ſomething which comes from off him. Some take his boots, others his cap, ſome his great coat; but they who take any thing, give him another of the ſame ſort, and before he is quit of this multitude, it ſometimes happens that he has had thirty different pairs of boots on.

THEN he hears himſelf called publick benefactor, the preſerver and father of his people. They bewail the loſs of him with wet eyes; and a Mandarine muſt be very inſenſible indeed, if he does not in his turn ſhed a tear or two, when he ſees ſuch tender marks of affection. For the inhabitants are not obliged to ſhew him this reſpect, and when they do not like the adminiſtration of a governour, they ſhew themſelves as indifferent at his departure, as they do affectionate and ſorry at the loſs of a good one.

THE extraordinary reſpect which children pay to their parents, and people to their governours, is the greateſt means of preſerving quietneſs in their families, and peace in their towns; I am perſuaded that all the good order, in which we ſee ſo mighty a people, flows from theſe two ſprings.

THE third principle of morality eſtabliſhed among them is this, that it is very neceſſary that all people ſhould obſerve towards each other the ſtricteſt rules of modeſty and civility, that they ſhould behave themſelves ſo obligingly and complaiſantly, that all their actions may have a mixture of ſweetneſs and courteſy

in them. This, ſay they, is that which makes the diſtinction between man and beaſt, or between the Chineſe and other men: they pretend alſo that the diſturbance of ſeveral kingdoms is owing to the rough and unpoliſhed temper of their ſubjects. For thoſe tempers which fly out into rudeneſs and paſſion, perpetually embroiled in quarrels, which uſe neither reſpect nor complaiſance toward any, are fitted to be incendiaries and diſturbers of the publick peace. On the contrary, people who honour and reſpect each other, who can ſuffer an injury, and diſſemble or ſtifle it; who religiouſly obſerve that difference which either age, quality, or merit have made; a people of this ſtamp are naturally lovers of order, and when they do amiſs it is not without violence to their own inclinations.

THE Chineſe are ſo far from neglecting the practice of this maxim, that in ſeveral inſtances they carry it on too far. No ſort of men are excuſed from it; tradeſmen, ſervants, nay even countrymen have their ways of expreſſing kindneſs and civility to one another; I have often been amazed to ſee footmen take their leave of each other on their knees, and farmers in their entertainments uſe more compliments and ceremonies than we do at our publick treats. Even the ſeamen, who from their manner of living, and from the air they breathe, draw in naturally roughneſs, do yet bear to each other a love like that of brothers, and pay that deference to one another, that one would think them united by the ſtraiteſt bands of friendſhip.

THE ſtate, which has always, in policy, accounted this as moſt conducive to the quiet of the empire, has appointed forms of ſalutation, of viſiting, of making entertainments, and of writing letters. The uſual way of ſalutation is to lay your hands croſs your breaſt, and bow your head a little. Where you would ſtill ſhow a

greater reſpect, you muſt join your hands together, and carry them almoſt to the ground, bowing your whole body; if you paſs by a perſon of eminent quality, or receive ſuch a one into your houſe, you muſt bend one knee, and remain in that poſture till he whom you thus ſalute takes you up, which he always does immediately. But when a Mandarine appears in publick, it would be a criminal ſaucineſs to ſalute him in any ſort of faſhion, unleſs you have occaſion to ſpeak to him: you muſt ſtep aſide a little, and holding your eyes on the ground, and your arms croſs your ſides, ſtay till he be gone paſt you.

ALTHOUGH very familiar acquaintance make viſits without any ceremony, yet for thoſe friends who are not ſo, cuſtom has preſcribed a ſet form of viſiting. The viſitor ſends his ſervant before with a piece of red paper, on which is wrote his own name, and a great many marks of reſpect to the perſon he viſits, according as his dignity or quality is. When this meſſage is received, the viſitor comes in, and meets with a reception anſwerable to his merit. The perſon viſited ſometimes ſtays for the viſitor in the hall, without going out to meet him, or if he be of a much ſuperior quality, without riſing from his ſeat: ſometimes he meets the viſitor at his door; ſometimes he goes out into the court-yard, and ſometimes even into the ſtreet to bring him in. When they come into view, they both run and make a low bow. They ſay but little, their compliments are in form, one knows what he muſt ſay, and the other how he muſt anſwer; they never beat their brains, like us, to find out new compliments, and find phraſes. At every gate they make a halt, where the ceremonies begin afreſh, and the bows are renewed to make each go firſt; they uſe but two ways of ſpeaking on this occaſion, which are, Tſin; that is "pray

"be pleaſed to enter," and Poukan, "it muſt not be." Each of them repeats his word four or five times, and then the ſtranger ſuffers himſelf to be perſuaded, and goes on to the next door, where the ſame thing begins anew.

WHEN they come to the room where they are to ſtay, they ſtand near the door in a row, and every one bows almoſt to the ground; then follow the ceremonies of kneeling, and going on this or that ſide to give the right hand, then the chairs are ſaluted (for they have their compliments paid them as well as the men; they rub them to take all duſt away, and bow in a reſpective manner to them) then follow the contentions about the firſt place; yet all this makes no confuſion. Uſe has made it natural to the Chineſe, they know before what themſelves, and what others are to do, every one ſtays till the others have done in their order what is expected, ſo that there happens no confuſion or diſturbance.

IT muſt be owned that this is a great piece of fatigue, and after ſo many motions and different poſtures, in which they ſpend a quarter of an hour before they are to ſit down, it muſt be owned they have need enough of reſt. The chairs are ſet ſo that every body ſits oppoſite to one another; when you are ſate, you muſt ſit ſtraight, not lean back, your eyes muſt look downward, your hands muſt be ſtretched on your knees, your feet even, not acroſs, with a grave and compoſed behaviour, not to be over forward to ſpeak. The Chineſe think that a viſit conſiſts not in mutual converſe ſo much as in outward compliment and ceremony, and in China the viſitor may truly and properly ſay he comes to pay his reſpects, for oft-times there are more honours paid than words ſpoken.

A miſſionary did aver to me that a Mandarine made

him a viſit, in which he ſpoke never a word to him. This is always certain that they never overheat themſelves with diſcourſing, for one may generally ſay of them that they are ſtatues or figures placed in a theatre for ornament. They have ſo little of diſcourſe and ſo much of gravity.

THEIR ſpeech is mighty ſubmiſſive and humble, you will never hear them ſay, for example, "I am obliged "to you for the favour you have done me," but thus, "The favour which my lord, which my inſtructer has "granted to me, who am little in his eyes; or who am "his diſciple, has extremely obliged me." Again, they do not ſay, "I make bold to preſent you with a few "curioſities of my country; but, the ſervant takes the "liberty to offer to his lord a few curioſities which "came from the mean and vile country. Again, not "whatſoever comes from your kingdom or province is "well worked; but whatſoever comes from the pre-"cious kingdom, the noble province of the lord is "extraordinary fine, and exceeding well wrought." In like manner in all other caſes, they never ſay I or you in the firſt or ſecond perſon; but "me your ſer-"vant, me your diſciple, me your ſubject." And inſtead of ſaying you, they ſay "the doctor ſaid, the lord "did, the emperor appointed." It would be a great piece of clowniſhneſs to ſay otherwiſe, unleſs to your ſervants.

DURING the viſit the tea goes round two or three times, where you muſt uſe a ceremony when you take the diſh, when you carry it to your mouth, or when you return it to the ſervant. When you depart it is with the ſame ceremonies with which you came in, and you conclude the comedy with the ſame expence you began it. Strangers are very uncouth at playing their parts herein, and make great blunders. The

reaſonable part of the Chineſe ſmile at them and excuſe them; others take exceptions at it, and deſire them to learn and practice before they venture in publick. For this reaſon they allow ambaſſadors forty days to prepare for their audience of the emperor; and for fear they ſhould miſs any ceremony, they ſend them, during the time allowed, maſters of the ceremonies, who teach them, and make them practice.

THEIR feaſts are ceremonious even beyond what you can imagine, you would think they are not invited to eat, but to make grimaces. Not a mouthful of meat is eat, or a drop of wine drank but it coſts an hundred faces. They have, like our concerts of muſick, an officer who beats time, that the gueſts may all together in concord take their meat on their plates, and put it into their mouths, and lift up their little inſtruments of wood, which ſerve inſtead of a fork, or put them again in their places in order. Every gueſt has a peculiar table, without table-cloth, napkin, knife or ſpoon; for every thing is ready cut to their hands, and they never touch any thing but with two little wooden inſtruments tipped with ſilver, which the Chineſe handle very dexterouſly, and which ſerve them for an univerſal inſtrument.

THEY begin their feaſts with drinking wine, which is given to every gueſt at one and the ſame time in a ſmall cup of China or ſilver, which cup all the gueſts take hold of with both hands: every one lifts his veſſel as high as his head, preſenting their ſervice thereby to one another without ſpeaking, and inviting each other to drink firſt. It is enough if you hold the cup to your mouth only without drinking during the time while the reſt drink; for if the outward ceremonies are obſerved and kept, it is all one to them whether you drink or not.

AFTER the firſt cup, they ſet upon every table a great veſſel of haſhed meat, or ragoo. Then every one obſerves the motions of the maſter of the feaſt, who directs the actions of his gueſts. According as he gives the ſign, they take their two little inſtruments, brandiſh them in the air, and as it were preſent them, and after exerciſing them after twenty faſhions which I cannot expreſs, they ſtrike them into the diſh, from whence they cleverly bring up a piece of meat, which muſt be eat neither too haſtily nor too ſlowly, ſince it would be a rudeneſs either to eat before others or to make them ſtay for you. Then again they exerciſe their little inſtruments, which at length they place on the table in that poſture wherein they were at the firſt. In all this you muſt obſerve time, that all may begin and end at once.

A little after comes the wine again, which is drank with all the ceremonies aforeſaid. Then comes a ſecond meſs, which they dip into as into the firſt, and thus the feaſt is continued until the end, drinking between every mouthful, till there have been twenty or four and twenty different plates of meat at every table, which makes them drink off as many cups of wine; but we muſt obſerve that, beſides that I have ſaid that they drink as much or as little as they will at a time, their wine cups are very little, and their wine is ſmall.

WHEN all the diſhes are ſerved, which are done with all imaginable order, no more wine is brought, and the gueſts may be a little more free with their meat, taking indifferently out of any of theſe diſhes before them, which yet muſt be done when the reſt of the gueſts take out of ſome of their diſhes, for uniformity and order is always ſacred. At this time they bring rice and bread, for as yet nothing but meat has been brought; they bring likewiſe fine broths made of fleſh or fiſh, in

which the gueſts, if they think fit, may mingle their rice.

THEY ſit at table ſerious, grave, and ſilent, for three or four hours together. When the maſter of the houſe ſees they have all done eating, he gives the ſign to riſe, and they go aſide for a quarter of an hour into the hall or garden to entertain and divert themſelves. Then they come again to table, which they find ſet out with all ſorts of ſweetmeats, and dried fruits, which they keep to eat with their tea.

THESE cuſtoms ſo ſtrictly enjoined, and ſo extremely troubleſome, which muſt be performed from one end to the other of the feaſt, keeps all the gueſts from eating, who do not find themſelves hungry till they ariſe from the table. Then they have a great mind to go and dine at home; but a company of ſtrollers come and play over a comedy, which is ſo tedious that it wearies one as much as that before at the table did. Nor is tediouſneſs the only fault, for they are commonly very dull and very noiſy, no rules are obſerved, ſometimes they ſing, ſometimes bawl, and ſometimes howl, for the Chineſe have little ſkill in making declamations. Yet you muſt not laugh at this folly, but all the while admire at the politeneſs of China, at its ceremonies, inſtituted, as they ſay, by the diſcretion of the antients, and ſtill kept up by the wiſdom of the moderns.

THE letters which are wrote from one to another, are as remarkable for their civilities and ceremonies, which are as many and as myſterious as the others. They do not write in the ſame manner as they ſpeak; the bigneſs of the characters, the diſtance between the lines, the innumerable titles of honour given to the ſeveral qualities of perſons, the ſhape of the paper, the number of red, white or blue covers for the letter, according to the perſon's condition, and an hundred other

formalities puzzle ſometimes the brain of the moſt underſtanding men amongſt them, for there is ſcarce any one who is ſecretary enough to write and ſend one of their letters as it ought to be.

THERE are a thouſand other rules practiſed by the better ſort in ordinary converſation, which you muſt obſerve, unleſs you would be accounted a clown; and though in a thouſand inſtances theſe things favour more of a ridiculous affectation than of real politeneſs, no one can deny nevertheleſs but that theſe cuſtoms, which people obſerve ſo exactly, do inſpire into them a ſweetneſs of temper, and a love of order. Theſe three moral principles, that is, the reſpect which children pay their parents, the veneration which all pay the emperor and his officers, and the mutual humility and courteſy of all people, work their effect the better, becauſe ſupported by a wiſe and well underſtood policy. The principal maxims of which are as follow.

THE firſt is, never to give any one an office in his own province, and that for two reaſons; becauſe, firſt, a Mandarine of ordinary parentage is uſually deſpiſed by thoſe who know his family. Secondly, becauſe being brought into favour and repute, by the great number of his kindred and friends, he might be enabled either to make, or at leaſt to ſupport a rebellion, or at leaſt it would be very difficult for him to execute juſtice with an univerſal impartiality.

THE ſecond maxim, is to retain at court the children of the Mandarines employed in the moſt conſiderable offices in the province, under pretence indeed of educating them well, but in reality keeping them as hoſtages, leſt their fathers ſhould fall from that duty which they owe the emperor.

THE third maxim, is that when one goes to law, ſuch a commiſſary is made uſe of as the emperor pleaſ-

es to name, unleſs the office or quality of the criminal gives him the liberty to refuſe him. If the emperor diſlikes the firſt ſentence, he may commiſſion new judges to re-examine it until the ſentence be agreeable to his mind. For otherwiſe it would be in the power of money, or of artifice to ſave a man whoſe life would be noxious to the good of the ſtate. On the other ſide, ſay they, we need not fear the prince's paſſion, who if he have a mind to take off a good man may find ways enough to do it without going ſo openly about it. But it is but fitting that there ſhould be a means efficacious enough to rid the empire of an ill man.

THE fourth maxim of policy is never to ſell any place, but to beſtow it always upon merit; that is to thoſe of good life, and who by a diligent ſtudy have acquainted themſelves with the laws and cuſtoms of their country. To this end informations are exhibited of the life and manners of the candidate, eſpecially when a Mandarine is removed from an inferior to a ſuperior office; as for their underſtanding the laws, they undergo ſo many examinations and trials of it, that it is impoſſible for an ignoramus to be thought underſtanding, ſo ſevere are the meaſures which they take.

WHEN they reſolve to ſet a child apart to learning, they put him to a maſter, for the towns of China are full of ſchools, where reading and writing are taught, which to learn well will take up ſome years. When the youth has made a pretty good progreſs in this, he is preſented to a Mandarine of the lower order to be examined. If he writes a good hand, and makes their characters handſomely, he is admitted among thoſe who apply themſelves to the knowledge of books, and endeavour to obtain a degree, of which there are three ſorts, which anſwer to our bachelor, maſter of arts, and doctor. As the fortunes of the Chineſe do whol-

ly depend upon their capacity and underſtanding, ſo they ſpend their whole life in ſtudy. They ſay by heart all their ſtaple books with a wonderful alacrity, they make comments on their laws: compoſition, eloquence, imitation and knowledge of their antient doctors, and the delicacy and politeneſs of the modern ones, from ſix to ſixty are their conſtant employ. In ſome the quickneſs and readineſs of wit ſaves them a great deal of labour, for ſome have been doctors at an age when others can write but indifferently; but theſe are heroes amongſt the Chineſe, of which one in an age is enough.

THE examinations are ſtrict, maſters of arts are created by the principal Mandarines of the province; bachelors by thoſe Mandarines aſſiſted by a commiſſary from court; as for doctors they commence only at Peking: but becauſe ſome who deſerve this degree, have not wherewith to defray ſo expenſive a journey, what is neceſſary for it, is beſtowed on them gratis, that ſo poverty may not deprive the ſtate of the ſervice of thoſe men who may prove uſeful and beneficial to it.

EVERY one's character is taken from his ability to invent or compoſe. For this purpoſe the candidates are ſhut up in a cloſe room, without books, without any other paper than what is neceſſary for them to write on. All the while they are forbidden all manner of correſpondents, at the doors are placed by the Mandarines guards, whoſe fidelity no bribes can corrupt; the ſecond examination is yet more ſtrict, for leſt the commiſſary ſent by the court ſhould himſelf be byaſſed through favour or the hopes of gain, he is not ſuffered to ſee or ſpeak with any perſon till the examination is over.

IN creating the doctors, the emperor often engages himſelf; the preſent emperor is more feared by the

candidates than any of the other poſers, not only for his nice exactneſs and rigorous juſtice, but for his extraordinary abilities in judging of any thing of this nature. When the doctors are named, they are preſented to him; to the three principal of which he gives garlands of flowers, or any other marks of honour, to diſtinguiſh them from the reſt; ſome of them likewiſe he chuſes for members of his royal academy, from whence they never remove, unleſs unto poſts of the greateſt conſideration and credit in the kingdom.

THE great number of preſents which they receive from their kindred and friends keeps the doctors from being poor. Every one hopes to make ſome advantage from his friendſhip; but leſt high promotion ſhould make them negligent, and ſit looſe to their ſtudies; they ſtill undergo ſeveral examinations, where if they appear to have been negligent, they certainly meet with ſeverity and reproof; whereas if they have ſtill continued to forward and improve their ſtudies, they meet with a ſuitable encouragement and reward.

No ſmall ſhare of the public good is owing to this principle of policy. The youths, whom idleneſs and ſloth never fail to corrupt, are by this conſtant employment diverted from ill courſes, they have ſcarce time enough to follow their looſe inclinations. Secondly, ſtudy forms and poliſhes their wits. People who never engage in arts and ſciences, are always blockiſh and ſtupid. Thirdly, all offices are filled by able men, and if they cannot prevent that injuſtice which proceeds from the covetouſneſs and corrupt affections of officers, at leaſt they will take care to hinder that which ariſes from ignorance and immorality. Fourthly, ſince the places are given, the emperor may with greater juſtice turn out thoſe officers whom he ſhall find undeſerving. We ought indeed to puniſh every of-

ſender; yet it would be natural to bear with a Mandarine who is negligent of his office for want of underſtanding or application, who is too mild or over ſevere, if taking away his place would ruin his family, whoſe whole fortune it may be is laid out in the purchaſe of it, when as if a place be diſpoſed only by donation, the prince who gave it may eaſily without any diſturbance take it from one, and gratify another with it.

LASTLY, no fees are paid for the adminiſtration of juſtice. The judge, whoſe office coſt him nothing, and who has his ſalary ſtated, can require nothing of the parties at law: which impowers every poor man to proſecute his own rights, and frees him from being oppreſſed by the opulence of his adverſary, who cannot be brought to do juſtly and reaſonably becauſe the other has not money.

THE Chineſe have eſtabliſhed this as a fifth maxim of policy, never to ſuffer ſtrangers to have any ſhare in their adminiſtration. The ſmall eſteem they bear them, makes the Chineſe uſe them ſo coarſely. They fancy that a mixture of natives and foreigners would bring them to contempt, and occaſion nought but corruption and diſorder. From thence alſo would ſpring particular grudges, making parties, and at laſt rebellions. For difference of people neceſſarily ſuppoſes difference of cuſtoms, languages, humours and religion. This makes them no longer children of the ſame family, bred up to the ſame opinions, and tempered with the ſame notions; and be there all imaginable care uſed in inſtructing and forming ſtrangers, they are at moſt but adopted ſons, who never have that implicit obedience and tender affection, which children by nature bear to their own parents. So that ſhould foreigners be better qualified than natives, which you can never make the Chineſe believe, they would fancy it for the good

of their country to prefer natives to them: and it is little leſs than a miracle in favour of chriſtianity, that a few miſſionaries have been ſuffered to ſettle there.

THIS laſt piece of policy is extremely good when thoſe of a falſe religion are kept out, which teaches rebellion and diſturbance; itſelf being the product of caballing and riot; but the caſe is otherwiſe in chriſtianity, whoſe humility, ſweetneſs and obedience to authority, produces nought but peace, unity, and charity among all people. This is what the Chineſe begin to be convinced of, having had trial of it for a whole age together. Happy were it if they would embrace it as a conſtitution equally neceſſary for the ſalvation of their ſouls, as conducive to the peace and good of their ſtate.

THEIR ſixth maxim is that nobility is never hereditary, neither is there any diſtinction between the qualities of people; ſaving what the offices which they execute makes: ſo that excepting the family of Confucius the whole kingdom is divided into magiſtracy and commonalty. There are no lands but what are held by ſocage-tenure, not even thoſe lands which are deſtined for the Bonzes, or which belong to the temples of the idols. So that their gods, as well as men, are ſubject to the ſtate, and are obliged by taxes and contributions to acknowledge the emperor's ſupremacy. When a vice-roy or governour of a province is dead, his children, as well as others, have their fortunes to make; and if they inherit not their father's virtue and ingenuity, his name which they bear, be it never ſo famous, gives them no quality at all.

THE advantages which the ſtate makes of this maxim are firſt, trading is in a more flouriſhing condition, which the lazineſs of the nobility is the likelieſt means to ruin. Secondly, the emperor's revenues are en-

creaſed by it; becauſe no eſtates are tax-free. I towns which pay poll-money no perſon is exemp Thirdly, by this means families are hindered from in gratiating themſelves with the populace, and ſo kep from eſtabliſhing themſelves ſo far in the people's fa vour, that it would be a difficulty to the prince him ſelf to keep them within bounds. Laſtly, it is a receiv ed opinion among the Chineſe, that if an emperc would be obeyed he muſt lay his commands upon ſub jects, and not upon ſo many little kings.

THEIR ſeventh principle of policy is to keep up i peace, as well as war, great armies; as well to main tain a credit and reſpect from the neighbours, as t ſtifle or rather prevent any diſturbance or inſurrectio which may happen at home. Heretofore a million c ſoldiers were ſet to guard their great wall. A le number alſo than that to garriſon their frontiers an great towns would have been too little. Now the think it enough to keep garriſons in their moſt impor tant towns.

BESIDES theſe ſtanding forces, there are fifteen o twenty thouſand men in each province, under the com mand of private officers; they have alſo ſoldiers t keep their iſlands, eſpecially Haynan and Formoſa The horſe-guards of Peking are above an hundred an ſixty thouſand. So that, I believe, in the greateſt an ſecureſt peace the emperor has in pay and at muſter n leſs than fifty hundred thouſand effective men, all ar med according to the cuſtom of the country with ſci meters and darts. They have but a very ſmall infan try, and of thoſe which they have there are no pike men, and very few muſketeers.

THEIR ſoldiers are very graceful, and pretty we diſciplined, for the Tartars have almoſt degenerated in to Chineſe, and the Chineſe continue as they alway

were, ſoft, effeminate, enemies of labour, better at making an handſome figure at muſter or in a march, than at behaving themſelves gallantly in an action. The Tartars begin with heat and briſkneſs, and if they can make their enemies give ground in the beginning, then they can make their advantage of it; otherwiſe they are unable to continue an attack a good while, or to bear up long againſt one, eſpecially if made in order and with rigour. The emperor, whom I have had the honour to ſpeak with, who ſays nothing but what is proper, as he does nothing but what is great, gave this ſhort character of them: They are good ſoldiers when oppoſed to bad ones, but bad when oppoſed to good ones.

THE eighth maxim is concerning their rewards and puniſhments. Great men who have faithfully ſerved their country never loſe their reward; and becauſe be a prince never ſo opulent, he can never have enough to reward all his ſubjects, this defect is made up by marks and titles of honour, which are very acceptable to the ſubjects, and no charge to the prince.

THOSE titles of honour are what they call the ſeveral orders of Mandarines. They ſay ſuch an one is a Mandarine of the firſt rank, or the emperor has placed ſuch an one in the firſt claſs of the Mandarines of the ſecond rank, and in like manner of others. This dignity, which is merely honorary, makes them take place in aſſemblies, viſits, and councils, but is no profit to them. To make theſe rewards of greater extent, which the people chuſe much ſooner than penſions, they are ſometimes beſtowed even upon the dead, who are oft times made Mandarines after their funerals, who therefore fill ſometimes the greateſt places of honour amongſt the nobility when the emperor cannot beſtow upon them the meaneſt place among the living. They have of-

tentimes at the publick or prince's charge lofty monuments raiſed for them, and that court which looks after the publick expences judges what recompence ſhall be paid to their deſert. Theſe rewards are oft-times accompanied with elogies in their praiſe made by the emperor himſelf, which makes them and their family famous to all poſterity. But the higheſt honour is to make them ſaints, to build them temples, and offer them ſacrifices as to the gods of the country. By this means paganiſm has been mightily ſupported by the emperors, adoring themſelves the work of their own hands, and paying worſhip and honour to them, who when alive would have been glad to be proſtrate at their own worſhippers feet.

THEY reward alſo in private men thoſe virtuous actions which bring no publick advantage to the ſtate. We read in hiſtory that temples have been raiſed to the memory of ſome maids who all their lives kept their chaſtity inviolable. And I myſelf have ſeen in ſeveral of their towns trophies with honourable inſcriptions raiſed up for inhabitants of mean rank and degree, to publiſh to all the world their virtue and merit.

IF the Chineſe are very liberal in their rewards, they are as ſevere in their puniſhments even of the ſlighteſt faults; their puniſhments are adequate to their demerits. The uſual puniſhment is the baſtinado on the back. When they receive but forty or fifty blows, they call this a fatherly correction. To which as well Mandarines as others are ſubject; this puniſhment is not accounted very ſcandalous, and after it is executed, the criminal muſt fall on his knees before the judge, and if able bow three times down to the ground, and give him humble thanks for taking this care of his education.

YET this puniſhment is of that violence, that one ſtroke is enough to fell one that is of a tender conſtitution; and oft-times perſons die of it; it is true there are ways of ſoftening this puniſhment when the execution of it is in court. The eaſieſt is to bribe the executioners, for there are many of them; becauſe leſt the executioner's wearineſs ſhould leſſen the puniſhment, after five or ſix ſtrokes another ſucceeds, and ſo till the whole be performed. But when the criminal has by money made them his friend, they underſtand their buſineſs ſo well, that notwithſtanding all the care which the Mandarines preſent can uſe, the puniſhment becomes light and almoſt nothing.

BESIDES this in the courts there are perſons to be hired, who keep a good underſtanding with the officers. Who, upon a ſignal given, take the place of the criminal, who eſcapes among the croud, and receives his puniſhment. For money there are every where theſe ſort of vicarious perſons to be met with. For it is a trade at China, where ſeveral perſons are maintained by the blows of the cudgel.

BY ſuch a trick as this Yam quam ſien, a famous perſecutor of chriſtianity, eſcaped the juſt ſentence of the judges. He engaged a paltry fellow for a large ſum of money to take upon him his name, and go to the court of juſtice in his ſtead. He told him that let it come to the worſt it was but a good cudgelling, and if after that he was impriſoned, there ſhould be found out a way to redeem him thence. The poor fellow went according to agreement, and when the cryer called out aloud Yam quam ſien, the fellow anſwered as loud, Here; his ſentence was paſſed, and the Mandarine condemned him to death. The officers, who had been bribed, ſeized on him immediately, and according to cuſtom gagged him; for after ſentence the

criminal is not ſuffered to ſpeak. Afterward he w brought to the place of execution, where the poor wret ſuffered a miſerable death.

THE ſecond ſort of puniſhment is the Carcan, whi differs from the former only in the place where t baſtinadoes are given: in this they are given the cr minal at one of the city gates or in the highway; t puniſhment here is not ſo ſharp, but the infamy is grea er, and he who has once undergone this puniſhme can never more recover his reputation.

THEY have ſeveral different ways of inflicting death Mean and ignoble perſons have their heads cut off, ſo in China the ſeparation of the head from the body diſgraceful. On the contrary, perſons of quality a ſtrangled, which among them is a death of more cre dit; if the crime be very notorious they are puniſhe like mean perſons, and ſometimes their heads are cu off and hanged on a tree in the highways.

REBELS and traitors are puniſhed with the utmo ſeverity; that is to ſpeak as they do, they cut them in to ten thouſand pieces. For, after that the executione hath tied them to a poſt, he cuts off the ſkin all roun their forehead, which he tears by force till it hangs o ver their eyes, that they may not ſee the torments the are to endure. Afterwards he cuts their bodies i what places he thinks fit, and when he is tired with thi barbarous employment, he leaves them to the tyranny of their enemies, and the inſults of the mob.

OFTEN criminals are cruelly whipped till they ex pire. Laſtly, the torture, which is the cruelleſt of all deaths, is here uſed; and generally the hands and fingers ſuffer moſt in it.

NINTHLY, they think it good policy to forbid women from all trade and commerce, which they can only benefit by letting it alone; all their buſineſs lies within

doors, where they find continual employment in the education of their children. They neither buy nor ſell; and one ſees women ſo ſeldom in the ſtreets, that one would imagine them to be all religiouſes confined to a cloiſter. Princeſſes never ſucceed to the crown, nor ever have the regency during the young prince's minority; and though the emperor may in privite conſult them, it is reckoned mean and ignoble to do it. In which thing the Chineſe ſeem in my opinion leſs reaſonable than in others. For wit and foreſight is equally the portion of the one as of the other ſex; and a prince is never ſo underſtanding as when he knows how to find out all his treaſures whereſoever nature has placed them, nor ever ſo prudent as when he makes uſe of them.

LASTLY, their tenth maxim is to encourage trade as much as poſſible through the whole empire. All the other policy is conducive to the plenty or convenience of their country; but this is concerned for the very lives of the people, who would be ſoon reduced to the laſt extremity if trade ſhould once fail. It is not the people's care only, but the Mandarines alſo, who put out their money to truſty traders to make the beſt advantage of it. By this private way Ouſanguey, the little king of Chenſi, who brought the Tartars into China, made himſelf ſo rich and powerful, that he was able himſelf to ſupport for a long time the war againſt the emperor.

GOOD order in the inferior governments is as uſeful a part of policy to the ſtate as any whatever; by theſe inferior governments I mean thoſe of the cities, and of the ſeveral camps. All theſe are ſettled in China; for from the foundation of that empire the ſtate has thought it worth while to look after even the moſt inconſiderable things.

AMONG perſons of quality there never happens an diſpute about taking place, becauſe every one know exactly what is due to his own, and to others quality and it was a great ſurpriſe to every body to ſee abo ſix or ſeven years ago a prince of the blood, and a C lao engaged in ſuch a ſort of diſpute. The occaſion it was this; the laws ordain that when a Colao is abo to ſpeak to a prince of the blood he muſt bend th knee, but cuſtom has laid as ſtrong an obligation o the prince to take him up immediately.

THE prince thought that an obliging cuſtom thoug conſtantly practiſed by the royal family on ſeveral oc caſions ought not to prejudice his right by law. H did therefore give audience to a Colao on his knees and never made any motion for him to riſe. The mi niſter of ſtate in a great confuſion to ſee himſelf kep ſo long in ſo humble a poſture complained of it to th emperor, who aſſembled the council forthwith. The looked into the ceremonial to obſerve what they coul find that would contribute to the deciding this nove caſe, but when they could find nothing therein ſervice able to that end they were more perplexed than ever.

FINALLY, the council who were againſt innovations, judged that the practice ought not to be continued as before; and not freeing the Colaos from their obliga tion of ſpeaking to the princes of the blood on their knees, they thought it requiſite alſo that the princes ſhould uſe that civility towards them as not to keep them in that poſture long. "You cannot," ſaid they to the Colao, "honour the princes too much, and you "do not do well to omit any occaſion where you can "ſhew the reſpect you bear them." "Princes," added the emperor to him who had occaſioned this diſpute, "are by their own rank ſet high enough above the reſt "of mankind, not to need proudly to ſeek to de-

" baſe them lower. They can want nothing to make " them honourable, but temper and modeſty. When " you are denied the reſpect due to you, all the world " knows you have not what you ought to have; but " when you inſiſt upon every little mark of reſpect, it " will make the world begin to enquire whether you " deſerve it." Thus both of them were reprimanded, and that no new laws might be made they let cuſtom be their rule.

EVERY thing that belongs to the princes or Mandarines, is punctually ſtated; their penſions, their houſes, the number of their ſervants, the ſhape and bigneſs of their ſedans, and the badges of honour by which they are diſtinguiſhed. So that when they come into publick their quality is preſently known, and the reſpect which is due to them with as little trouble paid. When the Chineſe governed the empire, even private men wore their marks of diſtinction; and there was no learned man but his degree and rank might be known by the faſhion or colour of his garb.

THE towns have their determinate figure; they ought all to be ſquare as far as the ground they are built upon will ſuffer it; in ſuch ſort that the gates may be ſo built as to anſwer the four principal quarters of the world, that is the north, ſouth, eaſt, and weſt. The houſes have thorough lights, and are eſteemed ill built if their doors do not lie exactly parallel to one of the ſides of the town.

TOWNS of the ſeveral orders have different bigneſs, the chief towns are nine or twelve miles round, thoſe of the firſt rank are but ſix, thoſe of the ſecond or third orders are leſs in proportion. This rule nevertheleſs is not ſo univerſal as to admit of no exception. The ſtreets are ſtrait, generally laid out by the line, large, well paved, yet very inconvenient; becauſe every per-

ſon of any account goes up and down them either on horſeback or in a chair. The houſes are low, of an equal height. The jealouſy of the huſbands would not ſuffer that their neighbours houſes ſhould be higher than their own, leſt thereby their windows ſhould overlook their court-yards and gardens.

THE whole town is divided into four parts, and thoſe again into ſeveral ſmaller diviſions, each of which contain ten houſes, over every one of which ſubdiviſions an officer preſides, who takes notice of every thing which paſſes in his little ward, tells the Mandarine what contentions happen, what extraordinary things, what ſtrangers come thither or go thence. The neighbourhood is obliged to give mutual aſſiſtance, and in caſe of an alarm to lend one another an helping hand, for if any theft or robbery be committed in the night, the neighbourhood muſt contribute towards repairing the loſs. Laſtly, in every family the father is reſponſible for the diſorders and irregularities committed either by his children or ſervants.

THE gates of the cities are well looked after, and even in time of peace are ſhut up at the approach of night. In the day time there are guards to examine all who come in; if he be a ſtranger, if he comes from another province, or from a neighbouring town, they know by his tone, by his mein, or his habit, which in every place are ſomewhat different. When they obſerve any thing extraordinary or ſuſpicious, they take the perſon up, or inform the Mandarine of it. So that European miſſionaries, whoſe aſpect is infinitely different from that of the Chineſe, are known as ſoon as ſeen, and thoſe who have not the emperor's approbation find it very difficult to make a long journey.

IN certain places, as at Peking, as ſoon as night comes on they tie chains acroſs the ſtreets; the guards go the patrole up and down the chief ſtreets, and guards

and ſentinels are placed here and there. The horſe go the rounds upon the fortifications; and wo be to him who is found then from home. Meetings, maſquerades and balls, and ſuch like night works are good, ſay the Chineſe, for none but thieves and the mob. Orderly people ought at that time either to ſit up providing for their family, or elſe take their reſt, that they may be refreſhed, and better able the next day to manage the buſineſs of the family.

GAMING is forbidden both to the commonalty and gentry. Which nevertheleſs hinders not the Chineſe from playing, ſometimes even ſo long as till they have loſt all their eſtates, their houſes, their children and their wives, which they ſometimes hazard upon a card; for there is no degree of extravagance to which the deſire of lucre and riches will not carry a Chineſe. But beſides that it is a diſorder which the Tartars, ſince they became maſters of China, have introduced amongſt them, they take great heed to conceal their gaming; and by conſequence the law which forbids it always flouriſhes, and is able to ſuppreſs great diſorders.

WHAT I have ſaid concerning wives, that their huſbands may ſell them, or loſe them at play; puts me in mind to give ſome account of the rules which their civil conſtitution rather than their religion has ordained concerning marriages; thoſe who have a mind to marry do not, as among us, follow their own fancies in their choice of a wife. They never ſee the woman they are about to have, but take her parents word in the caſe, or elſe they have their information from ſeveral old women who are as it were inſpectors, but who are nevertheleſs in fee with the woman's friends to ſet her out more than ſhe deſerves, ſo that it is very ſeldom that they make a true deſcription, or give a juſt character of her whom they go to view.

THE woman's parents give money generally to theſe emiſſaries, to oblige them to give a favourable character. For it is for the parents advantage that their daughter ſhould be reputed handſome, witty, and genteel; becauſe the Chineſe buy their wives, and, as in other merchandiſe, they give more or leſs according to the good or bad properties of them.

WHEN the parties are agreed about the price, the contract is made, and the money paid down. Then preparation is made on both ſides for the nuptial ſolemnities: when the day of marriage is come, they carry the bride in a ſumptuous chair, before which go hautboys, drums and fifes, and after it follow her parents, and other particular friends of her family. All the portion which ſhe brings, is her marriage garments, ſome cloaths and houſhold goods, which her father preſents her with. The bridegroom ſtands at his door richly attired waiting for her: he himſelf opens the ſedan, which was cloſely ſhut, and having conducted her into a chamber, delivers her to ſeveral women invited thither for that purpoſe, who ſpend there the day together in feaſting and ſporting, while the huſband in another room entertains his friends and acquaintance.

THIS being the firſt time that the bride and bridegroom ſee each other, and both or one very often not liking their bargain, it is frequently a day of rejoicing for their gueſts, but of ſorrow for themſelves. The women muſt ſubmit though they do not like, becauſe their parents have ſold them, but the huſbands ſometimes are not ſo complaiſant, for there have been ſome who when they firſt opened the ſedan to receive the bride, repulſed by her ſhape and aſpect have ſhut the chair again, and ſent her and her parents and friends back again, willing rather to loſe their money than enter upon ſo bad a purchaſe.

WHEN the Tartars in the late war took Nanking, there happened a paſſage which made the Chineſe merry notwithſtanding all their misfortunes. Among all the diſorders which the victors committed in that province, they endeavoured to ſeize upon all the women they could to make money of them. When they took the chief city of that province, they carried all the women thither, and ſhut them up higgly piggly together in the magazines with other goods. But becauſe there were ſome of all ages and degrees of beauty, they reſolved to put them into ſacks and carry them to market, and ſo ſell them to any one at a venture ugly or handſome. There was the ſame price ſet upon every one, and for ſixteen or eighteen ſhillings take which ſack you will without opening it. After this manner the ſoldiers, who were ever inſolent in proſperity, abuſed their victory, and approved themſelves more barbarous in the moſt polite and civil city in the world, than they had been in the deſerts of Tartary.

AT the day of ſale there came buyers enough. Some came to recover if haply they could their wives or children who were among theſe women, others were led thither through hopes that good fortune and a lucky chance would put a fortune into his hands. In ſhort the novelty of the thing brought a great concourſe from the adjacent places. An ordinary fellow, who had but twelve ſhillings in the world, gave it and choſe a ſack as did the reſt, and carried it off; when he was got out of the crowd, whether through curioſity, or a deſire to relieve the perſon in the ſack who complained, he could not forbear opening it. In it he found an old woman, whom age, grief, and ill treatment had made deformed to the higheſt degree; he was ſo confoundedly mad at it, that to gratify his paſſion and rage he was going to throw the old woman and ſack

both together into the river, that the gratification of his paſſion might be ſome comfort to him for the loſs of his money.

THEN the good old gentlewoman ſaid to him: Son, your lot is not ſo bad as you imagine; be of good chear, you have made your fortune: take care only of my life, I will make yours happier than ever it has been yet. Theſe words ſomewhat pacified him. Wherefore he carried her into a houſe hard by, where ſhe told him her quality and her eſtate. She belonged to a Mandarine of note in the neighbourhood, to whom ſhe wrote immediately. He ſent her an equipage agreeable to her quality, and ſhe carried her deliverer along with her, and afterwards was ſo good a friend to him, that he never had reaſon to complain that he had loſt the two crowns which he laid out in the purchaſing her.

BUT to return to the Chineſe marriages, I muſt farther tell you, that a huſband may not divorſe his wife, excepting for adultery, and a few other occaſions which ſeldom or never fall out; in thoſe caſes they ſell them to whoſoever will buy them, and buy another. Perſons of quality never do thus, but common people do frequently. If a man has the boldneſs to ſell his wife without juſt reaſon, both the buyer and ſeller are ſeverely puniſhed, yet the husband is not obliged to take her again.

ALTHOUGH a man be allowed but one wife, he may have as many concubines as he will; all the children have an equal claim to the eſtate, becauſe they are reckoned as the wives' children, though they may be ſome of the concubines'; they all call the wife mother, who is indeed ſole miſtreſs of the houſe; the concubines ſerve and honour her, and have no manner of authority or power but what they derive from her.

THE Chineſe think it a ſtrange thing that the Europeans are not thus allowed the uſe of women, yet they confeſs it is a commendable ſign of moderation in them. But when we obſerved to them the troubles, quarrels, contentions, and jealouſies which many women muſt needs raiſe in a family, they ſay nothing is without ſome inconvenience and diſorder; but that perhaps there are more croſſes in having but one, than in having many women. The beſt way they own is to have none at all.

ALTHOUGH the Chineſe are extremely jealous to that degree that they ſuffer not their wives to ſpeak in private even to their own brethren, much leſs give them liberty to enjoy all that freedom and public diverſion which in Europe is eſteemed only gallantry and curioſity: nevertheleſs there are huſbands ſo very complaiſant to their wives as to let them freely commit adultery, which permiſſion ſome women make the condition of their marriage: Thoſe who according to ſuch agreement follow theſe courſes (as there is a certain ſort of people who do) have no manner of power to hinder debauchees from frequenting their houſes, and from making ill uſe of the eaſineſs or unruly paſſions of ſuch women. But ſuch families as theſe are abhorred by the Chineſe, who think ſo ill of them, that their children though never ſo deſerving or intelligent can never obtain any degree, or be employed in any honourable office.

OF *all their civil inſtitutions there is no one* which coſts the Chineſe ſo much trouble as does the ordering of their time, and their holidays. There are in the emperor's ſervice above an hundred perſons, on purpoſe to regulate the kalendar, which they make a-new every year, and with a great deal of ceremony ſend it up and down to the vice-roys of each province. They

regulate the number of months, which is ſometimes twelve, ſometimes thirteen, which are lunar months, and ought to agree with the ſun's courſe. In theſe almanacs and equinoxes, ſolſtices, and the ſun's entry into each ſign is ſet down: The eclipſes of the ſun or moon are there, and the time when viſible at Peking or any of the principal cities. The planets' courſes, their places in the ecliptic, their oppoſitions, conjunctions, and propinquity to any ſtars are deſcribed and indeed every thing elſe is well calculated, which aſtronomy has that is curious or excellent. They mix with this divers points of judicial aſtrology, which ignorance or ſuperſtition have invented, concerning happy or unhappy days, times proper for marriage, building, or undertaking journies. Theſe prejudices generally guide the people; but the emperor, and all other men of ſenſe are wiſer than to mind any ſuch trifles.

ALTHOUGH there be no public clocks as in Europe, the day is nevertheleſs divided into four and twenty parts, which have all their particular names, and begin from midnight. They tell me that antiently they divided their day into twelve parts, each of which were ſubdivided into eight; which made the natural day conſiſt of fourſcore and ſixteen, which were exactly diſtinguiſhed in their calculations. But their ſun-dials (and they have very antient ones) were divided into four general diviſions, each of which contained four and twenty little ſubdiviſions, which added to the four great diviſions, divided the whole circle into an hundred parts.

THIS ſort of dialling ſeems verry irregular, nor can I ſee for what uſe it was intended. Since they have received the new kalendar from the miſſionaries, they have regulated their dials by hours, and reckon their

time almoſt as we do; only we muſt take notice that inſtead of two hours they reckon but one, ſo that their natural day conſiſts of but twelve hours, the names of which diverſly combined with ten other terms which they have invented, make a revolution of ſixty, which ſerves them inſtead of a cycle to mark their different years. I dare not trouble you with particular enumerations, which would be tedious, and are in foregoing relations ſufficiently explained.

As for the people, they are not very nice herein; they content themſelves with knowing the time of the ſun's riſing and ſetting, and noon. In the night they make uſe of bells and drums, which are very often ſounded, and ſerve to diſtinguiſh the night into five watches.

THE civil government of the Chineſe does not only preſide over the towns, but extends alſo over the highways, which they make handſome and eaſily paſſable. The paſſages for their water are in ſeveral places fenced in with ſtone walls for the convenience of travelling, over which there are a great number of bridges, which unite the towns and the fields together. Canals are alſo cut for the water to paſs through all the towns of the ſouthern provinces, to make their ditches more ſecure, and the towns more pleaſant. In low and marſhy grounds, they throw up prodigious long banks, which keep their roads in thoſe parts good; to perform which they ſtick at no coſt, cutting a paſſage even through mountains when they ſtand in their way.

THE road from Signanfou to Hamptchoum is one of the ſtrangeſt pieces of work in the world. They ſay, for I myſelf have never yet ſeen it, that upon the ſide of ſome mountains which are perpendicular, and have no ſhelving, they have fixed large beams into them,

upon the which beams they have made a ſort of balcony without rails, which reaches through ſeveral mountains in that faſhion; thoſe who are not uſed to theſe ſort of galleries, travel over them in a great deal of pain, afraid of ſome ill accident or other. But the people of the place are very hazardous: they have mules uſed to theſe ſort of roads, which travel with as little fear or concern over theſe ſteep and hideous precipices as they could do in the beſt and plaineſt heath. I have in other places expoſed myſelf very much by following too rafhly my guides.

ONE cannot imagine what care they take to make the common roads convenient for paſſage. They are fourſcore feet broad, or very near it; the ſoil of them is light and ſoon dry when it has left off raining. In ſome provinces there are on the right and left hand cauſeways for the foot paſſengers, which are on both ſides ſupported by long rows of trees, and oft-times terraſſed with a wall of eight or ten feet high on each ſide, to keep paſſengers out of the fields. Nevertheleſs theſe walls have breaks, where roads croſs one another, and they all terminate at ſome great town.

THERE are ſeveral wooden machines made like triumphal arches ſet up in the roads about a mile and a half diſtant from each other, about thirty feet high, which have three doors, over which is wrote upon a large frize in characters ſo large as may be read at almoſt half a quarter of a mile diſtance, how far it is from the town you left, and how far to the town you are going to. So that you have no need of guides here, for you may by theſe directions ſee what place the road leads to, and from whence you came, how far you have already gone, and how far you have yet to go.

THE great care which they have taken to lay out all theſe diſtances by the line, makes the account which

theſe inſcriptions give to be pretty ſure; yet they are not equal, becauſe the miles in ſome provinces are longer than in others. It has happened likewiſe that ſome of theſe arches being ruined and conſumed by decay and time, have not been ſet up exactly in the ſame place; but generally ſpeaking they ſerve for a good meaſure of the highways, beſides that in ſeveral places they are no ſmall ornament.

ON one ſide of theſe ways about the ſame diſtance are fixed little towers made of earth caſt up, on which they ſet up the emperor's ſtandard; near it is a lodge for ſoldiers or country militia. Theſe are made uſe of in time of rebellion, or indeed at any other time, to carry an expreſs if occaſion be, or to hand letters from one to another; but eſpecially to take care to ſtop highwaymen and robbers.

EVERY man who goes by armed is obliged to give an account whence he came, whither he is going, and upon what buſineſs, and muſt ſhew his paſs. Beſides, theſe guards in caſe of an alarm give a helping hand to travellers, and ſtop all thoſe who are ſuſpected or accuſed of robbery. Among the mighty number of inhabitants which are in China, a great part of which ſcarce know how to get a ſubſiſtence, a body would imagine that abundance muſt need turn thieves; yet one may travel there with as great ſafety as here. I have travelled there ſix thouſand miles up and down through almoſt all the provinces, and was never but once in danger of being robbed. Four ſtrange horſemen followed me a whole day together, but the roads were ſo full of travellers up and down that they could never get the coaſt clear for a quarter of an hour together, and ſo fell ſhort of their aim.

THEIR poſts are as well regulated as ours in Europe are, at the emperor's ſole charge, who for that end

maintains a great number of horſe. The couriers go from Peking for the capital cities; the vice-roys of which as ſoon as they have received the diſpatches from court, ſend them forthwith by other couriers to the towns of the firſt rank: from whence they are by theſe governors conveyed to thoſe of the ſecond rank under their juriſdiction; and from thence they are tranſmitted to the towns of the third rank. It is true theſe poſts were not eſtabliſhed for the conveyance of private letters, yet the poſtmaſters for a little money undertake to carry letters for private men, as they always do for the miſſionaries, who find it as ſure a way as that uſed in Europe, and much leſs chargeable.

As it is a matter of importance that the emperor's orders be quickly tranſmitted, ſo it is a great part of the Mandarine's care to ſee that the roads be good; and the emperor to keep them the more ſtrictly to this, ſpreads a report that he intends ſhortly to viſit this or that province. The governors of theſe provinces ſpare no charge or pains to repair thoſe roads, becauſe it not only concerns their fortunes, but ſometimes their life, if this care be not omitted.

As I once paſſed juſt by a village of the third rank, in the province of Chenſi, they told me that the governor had juſt hanged himſelf through deſpair leſt he ſhould not have time enough to repair a road through which the emperor was to paſs to the capital town. The emperor nevertheleſs never went the journey, ſo that the Mandarine might have ſaved his life by a little patience. But yet all the care which the Chineſe can uſe, will never prevent a mighty inconvenience which happens to thoſe who travel in their roads.

THE ſoil of China is mighty light, and very much beaten by the vaſt multitudes who travel, ſome on foot, ſome on camels, others in litters, and again others in

chariots, ſo that the roads are perfectly ground into very fine powder; when this is raiſed by travellers, and carried about by the winds, it is enough to blind all paſſengers if they have not maſks or veils on them. Through theſe clouds you muſt continually make your way, and ſuck them in inſtead of air, during whole journeys together. When the weather is hot, and the wind in one's face, ſcarce any one except a native can withſtand it: I have ſometimes been forced to deſiſt from my journey and come back again.

BUT of all their wholeſome inſtitutions there is nothing which contributes ſo much to the keeping up peace and order, as does their method of levying the emperor's revenue. They are not troubled in China with ſuch ſwarms of officers and commiſſioners as we are. All the eſtates there are meaſured, and all the families regiſtered; and whatſoever the emperor is to have by exciſe on goods, or tax upon perſons, is publicly known, every body brings in what is due from him, to the Mandarines or governors of the towns of the third rank, for there is no particular receiver appointed. Thoſe who neglect to bring in their dues, do not loſe their eſtates by confiſcation, which would be to puniſh the innocent of that family with the guilty: but the perſons ſo offending ſuffer impriſonment, and undergo the baſtinadoe till they have made ſatisfaction.

THESE Mandarines of a lower rank, give in an account of what they receive to a general officer of the province, who accounts with the court of Peking, which looks after the public exchequer. A great part of the revenue is diſburſed up and down the provinces in penſions, ſalaries, ſoldiers' pay, and public buildings: what is over is carried to Peking, to maintain the em-

peror's court, and other expences in that town, where the emperor keeps in pay above an hundred and ſixty thouſand regular troops, to whom, as well as to the Mandarines, is given out every day meat, fiſh, rice, peaſe, and ſtraw, according to every one's rank, beſides their conſtant pay, which they regularly receive.

THAT which comes from the ſouthern provinces is alone ſufficient to anſwer this expence; this they bring by water in the emperor's veſſels: yet they are ſo jealous leſt the revenue ſhould fall ſhort at any time of the diſburſements, that in Pekin there are magazines of rice before hand ſufficient for three years. Which will keep a great while if it be well fanned and mixed, and although it looks not ſo well, nor taſtes ſo pleaſantly as new rice, yet it is much more wholeſome and nouriſhing.

THIS numerous army about the emperor, well looked after, duly paid, and exactly diſciplined, one would think ſhould awe all Aſia, yet their idleneſs, and the ſmall uſe they ever have occaſion to make of their weapons, does contribute to weaken them as much as their natural effeminacy. The weſtern Tartars do not value their numbers a ſtraw, and frequently ſay in deriſion of them, that the neighing of a Tartary horſe is enough to rout all the Chineſe cavalry.

YET they take all poſſible care to have good ſoldiers, for they take no officers into the guards, till they have made trial of their ſtoutneſs, ſkill, and dexterity in military affairs. They are regularly examined, ſo that as learned men have their doctors to examine them, ſo theſe have alſo their profeſſors.

THESE officers do regularly exerciſe their companies, they form them into ſquadrons, march them, teach them to divide their files, to march through narrow paſſages, ſhew them to give the onſet, to rally at the

found of the cornet or trumpet; beſides they are very dexterous in managing their bow, or handling their ſcimitar: yet ſoon broke, and by the leaſt thing in the world put into diſorder. The occaſion of this I apprehend to be, becauſe in the education of their youth they never inſtil into them principles of honour and bravery, as we do as ſoon as ever they are big enough to know what weapons are. The Chineſe are always talking to their children of gravity, policy, law, and government; they always ſet books and letters in their view, but never a ſword into their hands. So that having ſpent their youthful days behind the counter, or at the bar, they know no other courage but that of defending obſtinately an ill cauſe, and are liſted into the ſoldiery on no other conſideration but that they hope there will be no occaſion for fighting. The Chineſe policy hinders hereby a great many domeſtic feuds and diſturbances: but at the ſame time it does expoſe its ſubjects hereby to the inſults of foreigners, which is ten times worſe.

Of the RELIGION *and* WORSHIP *of the* CHINESE.

IN the empire of China there are three principal ſects; the ſect of the learned, who follow the doctrine of the ancient books, and look upon Confucius as their maſter; that of the diſciples of Lao kien, which is nothing but a web of extravagance and impiety; and that of idolaters, who worſhip a divinity called Fo, whoſe opinions were tranſlated from the Indies into China about thirty two years after our Saviour's crucifixion.

THE firſt of theſe ſects only make profeſſion of being regular ſtudents, in order to advance themſelves to the degrees and dignities of the empire on account of merit, wit and learning, proper for the conduct of life, and government of the empire.

THE ſecond has degenerated into a profeſſion of magic and enchantment; for the diſciples of this ſect boaſt of the ſecrets of making gold, and of the rendering perſons immortal.

THE third is nothing but a heap of fables and ſuperſtitions brought from the Indies into China, and maintained by the Bronzes, who deceive the people under the appearance of falſe piety; they have introduced the belief of the tranſmigration of ſouls, and promiſe more or leſs happineſs in proportion to the liberality that is ſhewn to themſelves.

TO give ſome notion of theſe different ſects I ſhall follow the order of time in which they took their riſe, and obſerve ſucceſſively their condition among the people.

IT is univerſally believed by every perſon who has

ſearched after the original of an empire ſo ancient as China, that Noah's ſons were ſcattered abroad in the eaſtern part of Aſia; that ſome of the deſcendants of this patriarch penetrated into China about two hundred years after the deluge, and laid the foundation of this extenſive empire; that inſtructed by tradition, concerning the grandeur and power of the ſupreme Being, they taught their children, and through them their numerous poſterity, to fear and honour the Almighty Creator of the world, and to live agreeable to the law of nature written in their hearts.

OF this we find traces in their ancient and valuable book, which the Chineſe call, by way of eminence, The Five Volumes, the canonical or claſſical books of the higheſt rank, which they look upon as the ſource of all their learning and morality.

HOWEVER, theſe books are not treatiſes of religion purpoſely made with a deſign to inſtruct the people, for they contain only part of their hiſtory: The authors do not attempt to prove what they advance, but only draw natural conſequences from principles already allowed, and lay down theſe opinions as fundamental truths on which all the reſt are built.

To ſpeak in general it appears that the drift of theſe claſſical books was to maintain peace and tranquillity in the ſtate by a regulation of manners, and an exact obſervation of the laws; for the attainment of which the ancient Chineſe judged two things neceſſary to be obſerved, viz. the duties of religion, and the rules of good government.

THE chief object of their worſhip is the ſupreme Being, Lord and chief Sovereign of all things, which they worſhipped under the name of Chang ti, that is Supreme Emperor, or Tien, which, according to the Chineſe, ſignifies the ſame thing; "Tien (ſay the in-

" terpreters) is the ſpirit that preſides in heaven, be-
" cauſe heaven is the moſt excellent work produced by
" the firſt cauſe;" it is taken alſo for the material hea-
vens, but this depends upon the ſubject to which it is
applied: The Chineſe ſay that the father is the Tien of
the family, the viceroy the Tien of the province, and
the emperor the Tien of the kingdom, &c. They like-
wiſe pay an adoration, but in a ſubordinate manner, to
inferior ſpirits depending on the ſupreme Being, which,
according to them, preſide over cities, rivers, moun-
tains, &c.

IF from the beginning of the monarchy they appli-
ed themſelves to aſtronomy, their deſign in the obſer-
vation of the ſtars was to be acquainted with their mo-
tions, and to ſolve the appearances of the viſible Tien,
or heaven.

AS for their politics, which conſiſted in the obſer-
vation of regularity and purity of manners, they redu-
ced them to this ſimple maxim, viz. That thoſe who
command ſhould imitate the conduct of Tien in treat-
ing their inferiors as their children, and thoſe who obey
ought to look upon their ſuperiors as fathers.

BUT did they regard this Tien, who is the object of
their worſhip, as an intelligent being, lord and creator
of heaven and earth, and all things? Is it not likely
that their vows and homage were addreſſed to the vi-
ſible and material heaven, or at leaſt to a celeſtial e-
nergy void of underſtanding, inſeparable from the i-
dentical matter of heaven? But this I ſhall leave to
the judgment of the reader, and content myſelf with
relating what is learnt from the claſſical books.

IT appears from one of theſe canonical books, called
Chu king, that this Tien, or firſt being, the object of
public worſhip, is the principle of all things, the father
of the people, abſolutely independent, almighty, om-

niſcient, knowing even the ſecrets of the heart, who watches over the conduct of the univerſe, and permits nothing to be acted contrary to his will; who is holy without partiality, a rewarder of virtue in mankind, ſupremely juſt, puniſhing wickedneſs in the moſt public manner, raiſing up and caſting down the kings of the earth according to his own pleaſure; that the public calamities are the notices which he gives for the reformation of manners, and that the end of theſe evils is followed with mercy and goodneſs; as for inſtance when a dreadful ſtorm has made havock with the harveſt and the trees, immediately after an illuſtrious innocent is recalled from baniſhment, juſtified from ſlander, and re-eſtabliſhed in his former dignity.

ONE ſees there the ſolemn vows that they make to the ſupreme Being for obtaining rain in a long drought, or for the recovery of a worthy emperor when his life is deſpaired of; theſe vows, as hiſtory relates, are generally heard, and they acknowledge that it is not the effect of chance that an impious emperor has been ſtruck with lightning, but that it is the viſible puniſhment of heaven deſigned as an example to mankind.

THE variety of events are attributed only to Tien, for they ſpeak of him chiefly when vice is puniſhed, and when it is not, they ſuppoſe it one day will, and always threaten wicked perſons in proſperity. One may ſee by theſe books that the chief of the nation are fully perſuaded that the Tien, by prodigies or extraordinary appearances, gives notice of approaching miſeries wherewith the ſtate is threatened, that men may reform their lives as the ſureſt means of appeaſing the anger of heaven.

IT is ſaid of the emperor Tcheou that he rejected all the good thoughts inſpired by Tien, that he made no

account of the prodigies by which Tien gave notice
his ruin if he did not reform his life: and when the
is mention made of the emperor Kie they ſay, if
had changed his conduct after the calamities ſent fro
on high, heaven would not have depopulated the em
pire: They report that two great emperors, founde
of two powerful dynaſties, admired by poſterity fo
their rare virtues, had a great conflict in their ow
minds when there was a debate upon their aſcendin
the throne; on the one ſide they were ſolicited by th
grandees of the empire, and by the people, and per
haps even by private motives of ambition hard to b
diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of a more ſpecious ſort; o
the other ſide they were with held by the duty and fi
delity that a ſubject owes to his prince, though muc
and deſervedly hated.

THIS inward conflict and uncertainty that troubled their repoſe proceeded from the fear of diſpleaſing Chang ti, either by taking up arms as they were urged, or by refuſing to take them up to free the people from the oppreſſion under which they groaned, and to put a ſtop to an infinite number of crimes; by this proceeding they acknowledged their dependence to be on a maſter who forbids unfaithfulneſs, hates tyranny, loves the people as a father, and protects thoſe that are oppreſſed.

ALMOST all the pages of the canonical books, and eſpecially of the Chu king, ceaſe not to inſpire this juſt dread as the moſt proper curb for the paſſions, and the moſt certain remedy againſt vice.

THERE likewiſe appears what idea theſe princes ought to form of the juſtice, holineſs, and goodneſs of the ſupreme Lord; in the times of public calamities they were not ſatisfied with only addreſſing their vows to Tien, and offering ſacrifices, but they applied them-

ſelves carefully to the examination of their ſecret faults, which had drawn down this puniſhment from Tien; they examined if they were not too expenſive in their habits, too delicate at their tables, too magnificent in their equipage and in their palaces, all which they reſolved to reform.

ONE of theſe princes acknowledges ſincerely, That he had not followed the ſolitary thoughts inſpired by Tien: Another reproaches himſelf for neglect of application to buſineſs, and too much regard for innocent amuſements, and he looks upon theſe faults as likely to provoke the anger of Tien, and meekly acknowledges theſe to be the ſource of public calamities.

IN the canonical book, called Tchun tſiou, mention is made of the misfortunes of a prince as ſo many puniſhments of Tien, who to make the chaſtiſement ſtill greater rendered him inſenſible to his diſgrace.

THE Chu king ſpeaks often of a maſter who preſides over the government of his dominions, who has an abſolute empire over the deſigns of mankind, and conducts them to wiſe and juſt ends, who rewards and puniſhes mankind by other men, without any abridgement of their liberty.

THIS perſuaſion was ſo common, that princes, naturally jealous of their own honour, never attributed the ſucceſs of their government to themſelves, but referred it to the ſupreme Lord that governs the univerſe.

ALMOST from the beginning of the monarchy it was appointed that the emperor ſoon after his exaltation, ſhould humble himſelf ſo far as to till the earth, and that the crop ariſing from his cultivation ſhould be offered in ſacrifice to Tien: It is found in Chu king that the ſame emperor, of whom I have been ſpeaking, hav-

ing neglected this ceremony attributes the public calamities to his negligence.

THERE is repreſented in the ſame book the wiſeſt of their emperors in a ſuppliant poſture before Chang ti to divert the miſeries wherewith their deſcendants are threatened: An emperor of the ſame race declares That his illuſtrious anceſtors, notwithſtanding their extraordinary talents, could not have governed the empire, as they have done, without the aſſiſtance of the ſage miniſters that Tien had given them.

IT is ſtill farther obſervable that they attribute nothing to Chang ti, which does not become the ſupreme Lord of the world; they attribute to him power, providence, knowledge, juſtice, goodneſs, clemency; they call him their father and lord, they honour him with worſhip and ſacrifices worthy of the ſupreme Being, and by the practice of every virtue; they likewiſe affirm that all outward adoration muſt fail in pleaſing Tien, if it does not proceed from the heart, and the inward ſentiments of the ſoul.

IT is ſaid in Chu king that Chang ti clearly beholds all things, that he ſees from the higheſt heavens what is done here below, that he makes uſe of our parents to beſtow upon us the material part, but that he himſelf gives an underſtanding mind, capable of reflection, which raiſes us above the rank of brutes; that to offer an acceptable ſacrifice, which is not ſufficient for the emperor to whom this function belongs, joins the prieſthood to the royal dignity, for it is likewiſe neceſſary that he be either upright or penitent, and that before the ſacrifice he ſhould expiate his faults with faſting and tears; that we cannot fathom the depths of his deſigns and counſels, and yet we ought not to believe that he is too exalted to attend to what is done below; that he himſelf examines all our actions, and that he

has ſet up a tribunal in our own conſciences whereby we are judged.

THE emperors have always thought themſelves chiefly obliged to obſerve the primitive rites, the ſolemn functions of which belong to them alone, as heads of the nation: Thus they are emperors to govern, maſters to teach, prieſts to ſacrifice, and all this to the end that the imperial majeſty being humbled in the preſence of his court, in the ſacrifices that he offers in the name of the empire to the Lord of the univerſe, the majeſty of the ſupreme Being ſhould ſtill ſhine more reſplendent, and that by this means no earthly ſplendor might be thought to equal his.

Fo hi, who is ſuppoſed to be contemporary with Phaleg, was one of the heads of the colony which came to ſettle in this part of the Eaſt, and who is acknowledged to be the founder of the Chineſe monarchy; he had nothing more at heart than to give public marks of a religious veneration for the ſupreme Being; he kept in a domeſtic park ſix ſorts of animals to ſerve as victims in his ſacrifices, which he ſolemnly offered twice a year at the two ſolſtices, at which time the tribunals left off buſineſs, and the ſhops were ſhut up, nor was it permitted on theſe days to undertake any long journey; they were to think of nothing elſe but joining with the prince to honour Chang ti: The book intitled Li ki, calls theſe ſolemnities the feſtivals of gratitude to Tien.

CHIN nong, who ſucceeded Fo hi, was not content with theſe two ſacrifices alone, he appointed two others at the equinoxes, that in the ſpring to implore a bleſſing on the fruit of the earth, that in the autumn after the harveſt was over, to offer the firſt fruits to Chang ti; and as Fo hi had fed ſix ſorts of animals for ſacrifice, Chin nong, through a prudent emulation, culti-

vated the fields with his own hands, and offered th corn and the fruit at the ſame ſacrifices.

HOANG ti, who aſcended the throne after the dea of Chin nong, had greater zeal than his predeceſſor for fearing leſt bad weather ſhould hinder him fro making the uſual ſacrifices in the open air, he bui a large temple, that ſacrifices might be offered i all ſeaſons, and the people inſtructed in the princip duties.

THE empreſs Loui tſou, wife of Hoang ti, took u on her the care of nouriſhing ſilkworms, and makin ſilks fit for ornaments on theſe ſolemn occaſions: Wit out the ſouth gate was incloſed a large quantity of a rable land, *from whence were gathered corn, rice an* other fruits deſigned for ſacrifice; and without th north gate was another great incloſure full of mulbe ry-trees, wherein were nouriſhed abundance of ſil worms; the ſame day that the emperor went to t the ground with the principal courtiers, the prince went to her mulberry-grove with the ladies of her cour animating them by her example to make ſilks and em broidery, which ſhe ſet apart for religious uſes.

THE empire becoming elective, none were raiſed t the throne but the ſons of kings diſtinguiſhed for thei wiſdom, or wiſe men who were aſſociates in the go vernment; the choice never fell but upon ſuch as per formed the duties of religion with veneration: It is a honour to the throne, as it is written in Chu king that he whom Chang ti chooſes to govern mankin ſhould repreſent his virtues upon earth, and be his mo perfect image.

THIS motive alone cauſed Hoang ti to conſent tha his ſon ſhould be ſucceſſor with the title of Chao hao that is of young Fo hi, becauſe from his youth he had beer

the faithful imitator of the virtues of the firſt founder of the empire, Tai hao fo hi.

THE ſequel made it appear that they were not deceived in their choice; he increaſed the pomp and ſolemnity of the ſacrifice offered to Chang ti by harmonious concerts of muſic; his reign was peaceable and quiet except the laſt part, which was diſturbed by the conſpiracy of nine tributary princes, who endeavoured to unhinge the religious worſhip and the government of the ſtate, by deſtroying that regular ſubordination eſtabliſhed by the firſt kings.

To the fear of Chang ti they were deſirous of ſubſtituting the fear of ſpirits, and ſo had recourſe to magic and enchantments; they pretended to diſturb houſes with malignant ſpirits, and terrified the people with their deluſions: The people aſſembling in the temple on the ſolemn days that the emperor ſacrificed, made it reſound with their clamours, tumultuouſly requiring that ſacrifice ſhould likewiſe be offered to theſe ſpirits.

THE next emperor began by extirpating the race of the nine enchanters, who were the principal authors of the tumult; he appeaſed the minds of the people, and re-eſtabliſhed order in the ſacrifices.

HAVING reflected on the inconvenience of aſſembling an active murmuring people in the ſame place where the emperor ſacrificed, he ſeparated the place of inſtruction from that of ſacrifices, and eſtabliſhed two great Mandarines as preſidents, chooſing them from among the ſons of the deceaſed emperor, one of whom was to look after the ceremonial, and the other took care of the inſtructions of the people.

HE likewiſe regulated the choice of the victims, and took care that they ſhould not be lame or defective, that they ſhould be of the ſame ſort of animals

appointed by Fo hi, as likewiſe well fed, and of colour agreeable to the four ſeaſons wherein the ſacrifices were made; in a word he regulated their age and ſize.

Ti ko, nephew of Tchuen hio, was raiſed to the throne by the ſuffrages of all degrees in the kingdom, and he did not apply leſs than his uncle to the worſhip of Chang ti, and to the religious obſervation of the ceremonies: It is ſaid in the annals of this prince that the empreſs Yuen kiang, who was barren, accompanying the emperor to a ſolemn ſacrifice, prayed to Chang ti for children with ſo much fervency that ſhe conceived almoſt at the ſame time, and ten months after brought into the world a ſon called Heou tſie, who was the progenitor of a glorious poſterity, and famous for a great number of emperors, which his family yielded to China.

THERE is room for wonder that ſo prudent a prince as Ti ko did not chooſe for ſucceſſor neither this miraculous infant, nor Yao, which he had by his ſecond queen, nor Ki lie ſon of the third queen, and that he ſhould prefer to theſe young princes, already ſo worthy on account of their virtues, his other ſon named Tchi, whom he had by his fourth queen, in whom there was no quality worthy of the throne; but he did not reign very long.

IT is ſaid in the book, intitled Chang kien, that the providence of Chang ti watched over the welfare of the ſtate, and that by his appointment the unanimous ſuffrages of the people depoſed this wicked prince, to place the virtuous Yao in his room, who joined the quality of legiſlator to that of emperor, and became a pattern for all ſucceeding princes.

IN the ſixtieth year of his reign the people being greatly multiplied, and the beautiful plains quite co-

vered with water, ſuppoſed by ſome to be the remainder of the univerſal deluge, the great Yu applied himſelf to drain off the waters into the ſea, to level the inequality of the fields, and divide them among the people.

NINE years after this great emperor thought of taking an aſſociate in the empire, and appoint him to be his ſucceſſor. "I perceive no merit in my nine ſons, "ſaid he to his miniſters, and therefore find out a man, "no matter of what family, provided he is truly wiſe "and ſteadily virtuous."

THEY mentioned to him a young man who lived in the country, called Chun, who had been ill uſed by his parents and relations, and bore their injurious treatment with mildneſs and patience, and this man the emperor approved of.

WHEN he was in poſſeſſion of the throne he applied himſelf firſt of all to pay his ſolemn homage to Chang ti, after which he enacted wiſe laws, on which the government of the empire is founded; he created Mandarines, and gave excellent precepts upon the five principal duties of the king and the ſubject, father and children, husband and wife, elder and younger, and of friends among themſelves; inſomuch that, from the greateſt to the ſmalleſt, every one immediately knew whether he ought to command or obey.

HIS example gave great weight to his precepts, for when all perſons ſaw his reſpectful ſubmiſſion to Yao, whom he looked upon as his father and maſter, they were all inclined to put in execution ſuch wiſe inſtitutions.

YAO died twenty-eight years after the adoption of Chun, and the ſorrow for the loſs of ſo great a prince was univerſal: Chun now reigning alone, divided the offices among ſeveral wiſe men of known capacity, af-

ter the example of Yao: he choſe no ſucceſſor in his own family, but appointed the ſage Yu, who had the general approbation.

YU the Great did not forget a duty which he believed to be of the higheſt nature, for the worſhip of Chang ti was never more obſerved than in his reign; he even attempted to prevent the negligence which might cool the zeal of poſterity, for which reaſon he eſtabliſhed Mandarines at court, and in the provinces, as ſo many ſages, whoſe buſineſs was to repreſent to the emperors their obligation to worſhip Chang ti, and to give them, when it was neceſſary, uſeful inſtructions concerning the practice of the nine royal virtues.

IN the reign of Tching tang ſeven years' famine having reduced the people to the greateſt miſery, the emperor had offered ſeveral ſacrifices to appeaſe the wrath of heaven without ſucceſs, he therefore reſolved to offer himſelf as a victim to appeaſe the anger of Tien; he diveſted himſelf of his imperial enſigns, and went with the grandees of the court to a mountain ſome diſtance from the city, where with a bare head and naked feet, in the poſture of a criminal, he proſtrated himſelf nine times before the ſupreme Lord of the univerſe.

"LORD (ſaid he) all the ſacrifices that I have offered to implore thy clemency have been in vain, and therefore it is doubtleſs I myſelf that have drawn down ſo many miſeries on my people: Dare I aſk what my fault is? Is it the magnificence of my palace, the delicacies of my table, or is it the number of my concubines, which however the laws allow me? I am deſirous of repairing all theſe faults by modeſty, frugality and temperance; and if this is not ſufficient I offer myſelf a victim to juſtice, let

" me be puniſhed, but my people ſpared; I ſhall be " contented that the thunderbolt be aimed at my " head, if at the ſame time the rain falls upon the " plains, that there may be a remedy for the miſeries " of the empire." His prayers were heard, the air was darkened with clouds, refreſhing ſhowers watered the earth, and afterwards produced a plentiful harveſt.

FROM theſe inſtances it appears that, from the foundation of the empire by Fo hi, the ſupreme Being was commonly known by the name of Chang ti and Tien, who was the object of public worſhip, and as it were the ſoul and *primum mobile* of the government of the nation; that the ſupreme Being was feared, honoured, reverenced, and this not only by the people, but by the grandees of the empire, and the emperors themſelves; and it will be ſufficient to ſay that, according to the aſſertions of the canonical books, the Chineſe nation for the ſpace of two thouſand years acknowledged, reverenced, and honoured with ſacrifices a ſupreme Being, and ſovereign Lord of the univerſe.

IF the ancient teachers of the Chineſe doctrine are compared with the heathen ſages, there will appear a great difference between them, for the latter only taught virtue to give themſelves a ſuperiority over the reſt of mankind; beſides they dogmatized in ſo haughty and oſtentatious a manner, that it was plain they ſought leſs the diſcovery of truth than to diſplay their own talents; while on the other hand the teachers of the doctrine, inculcated in the canonical books, were emperors and prime miniſters, whoſe virtue gave great weight to their inſtructions, who obſerved themſelves the ſame laws which they impoſed upon others, and conveyed their moral doctrine without the ſubtilties and ſophiſms ſo commonly uſed by others.

IT would be doubtleſs an injury to the ancient Chineſe, who followed the law of nature, which they received from their fathers, to tax them with irreligion, becauſe they had not a knowledge of the Divinity ſo clear and diſtinct as the Chriſtian world; this would be to require too much of theſe people, who could not be inſtructed, as we are, with the precepts of the goſpel.

IT is true that though the canonical books often exhort men to fear Tien, and though they place the ſouls of virtuous men near Chang ti, yet it does not appear that they have ſpoken clearly of the puniſhments in the life to come; in like manner though they affirm that the ſupreme Being created all things, yet they have not treated it ſo diſtinctly as to judge whether they mean a true creation, a production of all things out of nothing; but though they are ſilent with relation to this, they have not affirmed it to be a thing impoſſible, nor, like certain Greek philoſophers, aſſert that the matter of the univerſe is eternal.

THOUGH we likewiſe do not find that they have treated explicitly concerning the ſtate of the ſoul, but have only confuſed notions relating to this matter, yet it cannot be doubted but they believe that ſouls exiſt when the body ceaſes to act; and they alſo believe the certainty of apparitions, of which that related by Confucius is an inſtance.

THIS philoſopher declared to his moſt familiar diſciples, that for ſeveral years he had ſeen in a dream the celebrated Tcheo kong, ſon of Ven vang, to whom the empire was indebted for ſo many excellent inſtructions; and it is obſervable that the learned Tchu ki, ſo famous under the dynaſty of Song, being aſked if Confucius ſpoke of a dream or a true apparition, anſwered without heſitation, That he meant a true apparition;

however, Tcheou kong had been dead ſix hundred years when he appeared to Confucius.

THAT which has contributed greatly to the preſervation of the religion of the early ages in China is, that there has been a ſupreme tribunal eſtabliſhed with full authority to condemn or ſuppreſs any ſuperſtition that may ariſe, which is called The tribunal of rites.

THIS precaution of the Chineſe would have been effectual, if the mind of man was not ſo narrow and liable to be ſeduced; the ſtrongeſt dykes, being only the work of men, cannot reſiſt very violent inundations; but the reaſon why the body of philoſophers in China have been idolaters contrary to their own conſciences, is through fear of a people who were in love with idols, and had too much the aſcendant in public affairs, inſomuch that the antient doctrine of the Chineſe has found the tribunal that I juſt mentioned its only ſupport, and through the aſſiſtance of its decrees has ſtill continued the prevailing ſect.

WHATEVER veneration the Chineſe nation has had for its greateſt emperors, it has never paid adoration to any but the ſupreme Being; and though it has diſcovered eſteem and veneration for the memory of great men, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their virtues and ſervices, it has rather choſen to preſerve their memory by tablets than by ſtatues.

HOWEVER, the troubles which happened in the empire, the civil wars which divided it, and the corruption of manners, which became almoſt general, were very like to have ſuppreſſed the antient doctrine, had not Confucius revived it by giving freſh reputation to the antient books, eſpecially to the Chu king, which he propoſed as an exact rule of manners.

I have already ſpoken of the reputation acquired by this philoſopher, who is ſtill looked upon as the chief

doctor of the empire, and yet in his time aroſe the ſect of Tao ſſeë.

THE author of this ſect came into the world about two years before Confucius, and the doctrine that he taught was agreeable on account of its novelty, and however extravagant it might appear to reaſonable men, yet it was countenanced by ſome of the emperors, and a great number of other perſons, which gave it reputation.

Of the Sect of the TAO SSEË.

LAO KIUN is the name of the philoſopher who gave riſe to this new ſect, and if you credit his diſciples, his birth was very extraordinary, he not coming into the world till forty years after his conception: His books are ſtill extant, but, as it is ſuppoſed, much diſguiſed by his followers, though there ſtill remain maxims and ſentiments worthy of a philoſopher, upon moral virtue, the avoiding honours, the contempt of riches, and the happy ſolicitude of a ſoul who raiſing itſelf above terreſtrial things, believes that it has a ſufficiency in itſelf.

AMONG the ſentences there is one that is often repeated, eſpecially when he ſpeaks of the production of the world: "Tao (ſays he) or Reaſon, hath produced one, one hath produced two, two have produced three, and three have produced all things."

THE morality of this philoſopher and his diſciples is not unlike that of the Epicureans; it conſiſts in avoiding vehement deſires and paſſions capable of diſturbing the peace and tranquillity of the ſoul; and, according to them, the attention of every wiſe man ought to be, to paſs his life free from ſolicitude and

uneaſineſs, and to this end never to reflect on what is paſt, nor to be anxious of ſearching into futurity.

THEY affirm that to give one's ſelf up to ruffling care, to be buſied about great projects, to follow the dictates of ambition, avarice, and other paſſions, is to labour more for poſterity than ourſelves, and that it is madneſs to purchaſe the happineſs of others at the expence of our own repoſe and pleaſure; that with reſpect to our own happineſs our purſuits after it ſhould be moderate, and our deſires not too violent, becauſe whatever we look upon as our happineſs ceaſes to be ſo if it is accompanied with trouble, diſtaſte, or inquietude, and if the peace of the ſoul is never ſo little diſturbed.

FOR this reaſon thoſe who belong to this ſect affect a calm which ſuſpends, as they ſay, all the functions of the ſoul; and as this tranquillity muſt needs be diſturbed by the thoughts of death, they boaſt of inventing a liquor that has the power of rendering them immortal: They are addicted to chymiſtry and ſearch after the philoſopher's ſtone; they are likewiſe fond of magic, and are perſuaded that by the aſſiſtance of the demons they invoke they can ſucceed in their deſires.

THE hope of avoiding death prevailed upon a great number of the Mandarines to ſtudy this diabolical art; the women eſpecially being naturally curious, and exceeding fond of life, purſued theſe extravagancies with eagerneſs; at length certain credulous and ſuperſtitious emperors brought this impious doctrine in vogue, and greatly multiplied the number of its followers.

THE emperor Tſin chi hoang ti, an inveterate enemy to learning and learned men, was perſuaded by

theſe impoſtors that they had actually found the liquor of immortality, which was called Tchang ſeng yo.

VOU TI, the ſixth emperor of the dynaſty of Han, was wholly addicted to the ſtudy of magical books under a leader of this ſect; a great number of theſe pretended doctors flocked to court at this time, who were famous for the magic arts, and this prince loſing one of his queens that he doated on to diſtraction, and being inconſolable for her loſs, one of theſe impoſtors, by his inchantments, cauſed the deceaſed queen to appear before the emperor, at which he was ſurpriſed and terrified, and by this means more ſtrongly attached to the impieties of this ſect: He ſeveral times drank the liquor of immortality, but at laſt perceived that he was as mortal as ever, and being ready to expire, lamented too late his fond credulity.

THE new ſect ſuffered no prejudice on account of the emperor's death, for it found protectors among the princes of the ſame dynaſty; two of their moſt famous doctors were authoriſed to propagate the worſhip paid to a demon in a great number of temples already erected through the empire; theſe falſe doctors diſtributed in all places the ſmall images that repreſented the croud of ſpirits and men that they had ranked among their gods, and ſold them at a high price.

THIS ſuperſtition increaſed in ſuch a manner, under the emperors of the dynaſty of Tang, that they gave the miniſters of this ſect the honourable title of Tien ſſeë, that is, Heavenly Doctors; the founder of this line erected a ſuperb temple to Lao kiun, and Hiuen tſong, the ſixth emperor of the ſame dynaſty, cauſed his ſtatue to be carried in a pompous manner into the palace.

THE ſucceſſors of the head of this ſect are always honoured with the dignity of chief Mandarines, and they

reſide in a town of the province of Kjang ſi, where they have a magnificent palace: A great concourſe of people flock thither from the neighbouring provinces to get proper remedies for their diſeaſes, or to learn their deſtiny, and what is to happen in the remainder of their lives, when they receive of the Tien ſſeë a billet filled with magical characters, and go away well ſatisfied, without complaining of the ſum they pay for this ſingular favour.

BUT it was chiefly under the government of the Song that the doctors of this ſect were greatly ſtrengthened; Tchin tſong the third emperor of this dynaſty was ridiculouſly led away with their tricks and forgeries; theſe impoſtors, during a dark night, had hung up a book on the principal gate of the imperial city, filled with characters and magical forms of invoking demons, and gave out that this book was fallen from heaven; the credulous prince, with great veneration, went on foot to fetch it, and after receiving it with deep humility, carried it triumphantly into the palace, and encloſed it in a gold box, where it was carefully preſerved.

THESE Tao ſſeë were the perſons who introduced into the empire the multitude of ſpirits till then unknown, whom they revered as deities independent of the ſupreme Being, and to whom they gave the name of Chang ti; they even deified ſome of the antient kings, and paid them divine homage.

THIS abominable ſect in time became ſtill more formidable by the protection of the princes, and by the paſſions of the grandees, whom it flattered, and by the impreſſions of wonder or terror that it made upon the minds of the people.

THE compacts of their miniſters with demons, the lots which they caſt, the ſurpriſing effects of their ma-

gical arts infatuated the minds of the multitude, and they are ſtill extremely prejudiced in their favour; theſe impoſtors are generally called to heal diſeaſes, and drive away demons.

THEY ſacrifice to this ſpirit of darkneſs three ſorts of victims, a hog, a fiſh, and a bird; they drive a ſtake in the earth as a ſort of charm, and trace upon paper odd ſort of figures, accompanying the ſtroke of their pencil with horrible grimaces and frightful cries.

SOMETIMES a great number of profligate fellows are ſold to theſe miniſters of iniquity, who follow the trade of divination; though they never have ſeen the perſon before who conſults them, they tell his name and all the circumſtances of his family, where his houſe ſtands, how many children he has, their names and age, and a hundred other particulars which are ſtrangely ſurpriſing to weak and credulous minds, ſuch as the vulgar are among the Chineſe.

SOME of theſe conjurers, after they have made their invocations, cauſe the figures of the chief of their ſect, and their idols to appear in the air; formerly they could make a pencil write of itſelf without any body touching it, and that which was written upon paper or ſand was the anſwer which they deſired, or elſe they would cauſe all the people of the houſe paſs in review in a large veſſel of water, and there they ſhew the changes that ſhall happen in the empire, and the imaginary dignities to which they ſhall be raiſed who embrace their ſect; in ſhort they pronounce myſterious words without meaning, and place charms in houſes and on men's perſons: Nothing being more common than to hear theſe ſort of ſtories, it is very likely that the greateſt part are only illuſions, but it is not credible that all ſhould be ſo, for there are in reality ma-

ny effects that ought to be attributed to the power of demons.

THE thinking people among the Chineſe laugh at theſe ſtories as ſo many fictions.

Of the Sect of Fo, *or* Foë.

FOR the ſpace of two hundred and ſeventy years the emperors of the dynaſty of Han poſſeſſed the imperial throne, and about ſixty-five years from the birth of Chriſt the emperor Ming ti introduced a new ſect into China ſtill more dangerous than the former, and has made a much more rapid progreſs.

THIS prince happened to dream one night, and among other things there occurred to his mind a ſentence which Confucius often repeated, viz. "That "the Moſt Holy was to be found in the Weſt;" upon this he ſent ambaſſadors into the Indies to diſcover who this ſaint was, and to ſeek for the true law which he there taught; the ambaſſadors ſuppoſed they had found him among the worſhippers of the Idol Fo or Foë, and they tranſported this idol into China, and with it the fables wherewith the Indian books were filled.

THIS contagion, which began in the court, ſoon got ground in the provinces, and has ſpread through all the empire, wherein magic and impiety had already made too great havoc.

IT is hard to ſay in what part of the Indies this idol was, and if the extraordinary things that its diſciples relate of it are not ſo many fables purpoſely invented, one would be apt to believe, with St. Francis Xavier, that he was rather a demon than an ordinary man.

THEY relate that he was born in that part of the Indies which the Chineſe call Chung tien cho, that his

father was the king of this country, and that his mother was called Mo ye, and died ſoon after he was born; when ſhe conceived ſhe almoſt conſtantly dreamed that ſhe had ſwallowed an elephant, and hence ariſe the honours that the kings of the Indies pay to white elephants, and often make war to gain poſſeſſion of this animal.

HARDLY (ſay they) was this monſter ſeparated from his mother, but he ſtood upright and walked ſeven paces, pointing with one hand to the heaven, and the other to the earth; nay he likewiſe ſpoke and pronounced diſtinctly theſe following words, "There is none "but myſelf in the heaven or on the earth that ought "to be adored."

AT the age of ſeventeen he married three wives, and had a ſon called by the Chineſe Mo heou lo; at the age of nineteen he forſook his wives, and all earthly cares, to retire into a ſolitary place, and put himſelf under the guidance of four philoſophers called by the Indians, Joghi; at thirty he was wholly inſpired by the divinity, and became Fo or pagod, as the Indians call him, looking upon himſelf as a god; he then applied himſelf wholly to propagate his doctrines, the devil always helping him out at a dead lift, for by his aſſiſtance he did the moſt wonderful things, and by the novelty of his miracles filled the people with dread, and procured himſelf great veneration; the Chineſe have deſcribed theſe prodigies in ſeveral large volumes, and repreſented them in ſeveral cuts.

IT is ſcarcely credible how many diſciples this chimerical god gained, for they reckon eighty thouſand who were buſy in infecting all the Eaſt with impious tenets; the Chineſe call them Ho chang; the Tartars, Lamas; the Siameſe, Talapoins; the Japaneſe, or rather the Europeans, Bonzes: Among this great num-

ber of diſciples there were ten of greater diſtinction as to rank and dignity, who publiſhed five thouſand volumes in honour of their maſter.

HOWEVER this new god found himſelf mortal as well as the reſt of mankind, for at the age of ſeventy-nine the weakneſs of his body gave him notice of his approaching end, and then to crown all his impieties he broached the venom of atheiſm.

HE declared to his diſciples that till that moment he had made uſe of nothing but parables, that his diſcourſes were ſo many enigmas, and that for more than forty years he had concealed the truth under figurative and metaphorical expreſſions, but being about to leave them he would communicate his true ſentiments, and reveal the myſtery of his doctrine: "Learn then (ſaid "he to them) that the principle of all things is emp-"tineſs and nothing; from nothing all things proceed-"ed, and into nothing all will return, and that is the "end of all our hopes;" but his diſciples adhered only to his firſt words, and their doctrine is directly oppoſite to atheiſm.

HOWEVER, the laſt words of this impoſtor laid the foundation of that celebrated diſtinction, which is made in his doctrine into exterior and interior, of which I ſhall ſpeak hereafter: His diſciples did not fail to diſperſe a great number of fables after his death, and eaſily perſuaded a ſimple and credulous people that their maſter had been born eight thouſand times, that his ſoul had ſucceſſively paſſed through different animals, and that he had appeared in the figure of an ape, a dragon, an elephant, &c.

THIS was plainly done with a deſign to eſtabliſh the worſhip of this pretended god under the ſhape of various animals, and in reality theſe different creatures, through which the ſoul of Fo was ſaid to have paſſed,

were worſhipped in ſeveral places; the Chineſe themſelves built ſeveral temples to all ſorts of idols, and they multiplied exceedingly throughout the empire.

AMONG the great number of diſciples that this chimerical deity made, there was one more dear to him than all the reſt, to whom he truſted his greateſt ſecrets, and charged him more particularly to propagate his doctrine; he was called Moo kia ye; he commanded him not to amuſe himſelf with bringing proofs and tedious arguments to ſupport his doctrine, but to put, in a plain manner, at the head of his works which he ſhould publiſh, theſe words, "It is thus that I have "learned."

THIS Fo ſpeaks, in one of his books, of a maſter more ancient than himſelf, called by the Chineſe, Omi to, whom the Japaneſe, by corruption of the language, have termed Amida; it was in the kingdom of Bengal that this other monſter appeared, and the bonzes pretend that he attained to ſuch great ſanctity, and had ſuch great merit, that it is ſufficient at preſent to invoke him to obtain pardon for the greateſt of crimes; on this account the Chineſe of this ſect are heard continually to pronounce theſe two names, O mi to, Fo; they think that the invocation of theſe pretended deities purifies them in ſuch a manner that they may afterwards give a looſe to all their paſſions, being perſuaded that it will coſt them nothing but an invocation to expiate their moſt enormous crimes.

THE laſt words of Fo, when he was dying, gave riſe to a ſect of atheiſts, but the greateſt part of the bonzes could not lay aſide the prejudices of their education, and ſo perſevered in the firſt errors their maſters had taught.

THERE were others who endeavoured at a reconciliation between them, by calling one the exterior doc

trine, and the other the interior; the firſt was more ſuitable to the capacity of the people, and prepared their minds to receive the ſecond, which was ſuitable to none but elevated minds, and the better to convey their thoughts they made uſe of the following example:

THE exterior doctrine, ſay they, is with relation to the interior what the frame is with reſpect to the arch that is built upon it; for the frame is only neceſſary to ſupport the ſtones while the arch is building, but as ſoon as it is finiſhed it becomes uſeleſs, and they take it to pieces; in the ſame manner the exterior doctrine is laid aſide as ſoon as the interior is embraced.

WHAT then is the exterior doctrine which contains the principles of the morality of the bonzes, which they are very careful to inforce? They ſay there is great difference between good and evil; that after death there will be rewards for thoſe that have done well, and puniſhments for thoſe that have done evil; that there are places appointed for the ſouls of both, wherein they are fixed according to their deſert; that the god Fo was born to ſave mankind, and to direct thoſe to the way of ſalvation who had ſtrayed from it; that it was he who expiated their ſins, and procured them a happy birth in the other world; and there are five precepts to be obſerved, the firſt is, not to kill any living creature: the ſecond is, not to take what belongs to others; the third prohibits impurity, the fourth lying and the fifth drinking of wine.

BUT eſpecially they muſt not be wanting to certain charitable works which they preſcribe: Uſe the bonzes well, ſay they, and furniſh them with the neceſſaries of life; build their monaſteries and temples, that by their prayers and the penances that they impoſe for the expiation of your ſins, you may be freed from the

puniſhments that are due. At the funeral obſequies of your relations burn gilt and ſilver paper, and garments made of ſilk, and this in the other world ſhall be changed into gold, ſilver, and real habits: By this means your departed relations will want nothing that is neceſſary, and will have wherewith to reconcile the eighteen guardians of the infernal regions, who would be inexorable without theſe bribes, and if you neglect theſe commands you muſt expect nothing after death but to become a prey to the moſt cruel torments, and your ſoul, by a long ſucceſſion of tranſmigrations, ſhall paſs into the vileſt animals, and you ſhall appear again in the form of a mule, a horſe, a dog, a rat, or ſome other creature ſtill more contemptible.

IT is hard to conceive what an influence the dread of theſe chimeras has over the minds of the credulous and ſuperſtitious Chineſe; this will appear in a better light from a ſtory that was related by F. *le* Compte, and which happened to himſelf when he lived in the province of Chen ſi.

"THEY called me one day to baptize a ſick perſon, "who was an old man of ſeventy, and lived upon a "ſmall penſion given him by the emperor: When I "entered his room, he ſaid, I am obliged to you, my "father, that you are going to deliver me from a hea-"vy puniſhment: That is not all, replied I, baptiſm "not only delivers perſons from hell, but conducts "them to a life of bleſſedneſs. I do not comprehend, "replied the ſick perſon, what it is you ſay, and per-"haps I have not ſufficiently explained myſelf; you "know that for ſome time I have lived on the empe-"ror's benevolence, and the bonzes, who are well in-"ſtructed in what paſſes in the next world, have aſ-"ſured me that out of gratitude I ſhould be obliged "to ſerve him after death, and that my ſoul will in-

fallibly paſs into a poſt-horſe to carry diſpatches out of the provinces to court: For this reaſon they exhort me to perform my duty well, when I ſhall have aſſumed my new being, and to take care not to ſtumble, nor wince, nor bite, nor hurt any body; beſides, they direct me to travel well, to eat little, to be patient, and by that means move the compaſſion of the deities, who often convert a good beaſt into a man of quality, and make him a conſiderable Mandarine: I own, father, that this thought makes me ſhudder, and I cannot think on it without trembling. I dream of it every night, and ſometimes when I am aſleep I think myſelf harneſſed, and ready to ſet out at the firſt ſtroke of the rider; I then wake in a ſweat, and under great concern, not being able to determine whether I am a man or a horſe; but alas! what will become of me when I ſhall be a horſe in reality? This then, my father, is the reſolution that I am come to: They ſay that thoſe of your religion are not ſubject to theſe miſeries, that men continue to be men, and ſhall be the ſame in the next world as they are in this: I beſeech you to receive me among you; I know that your religion is hard to be obſerved, but if it was ſtill more difficule I am ready to embrace it, and whatever it coſt me I had rather be a Chriſtian than become a beaſt. This diſcourſe and the preſent condition of the ſick perſon excited my compaſſion, but reflecting afterwards that God makes uſe of ſimplicity and ignorance to lead men to the truth, I took occaſion to undeceive him in his errors, and to direct him in the way of ſalvation; I gave him inſtructions a long time, and at length he believed, and I had the conſolation to ſee him die not only with the moſt ſati-

" onal ſentiments, but with all the marks of a good " Chriſtian."

IT is eaſy to ſee that if the Chineſe are the dupes of a doctrine ſo abſurd and ridiculous as the tranſmigration of ſouls, the bonzes, who propagate it with ſo much zeal, draw no ſmall advantage from it: It is exceeding uſeful to ſupport all their deceitful tricks by which they gain ſo many charitable contributions, and enlarge their revenues; having their extraction from the dregs of the people, and being maintained from their infancy in an idle profeſſion, they find this doctrine proper to authoriſe the artifices that they make uſe of to excite the liberality of the people.

ONE may judge of this the better from the following relation of F. le Compte.

" TWO of theſe bonzes, ſaid he, one day perceiv- " ing in the court of a rich peaſant two or three large " ducks proſtrating themſelves before the door, began " to ſigh and weep bitterly; the good woman who " perceived them from her chamber, came out to learn " the reaſon of their grief: We know, ſaid they, that " the ſouls of our fathers have paſſed into the bodies of " theſe creatures, and the fear we are under that you " ſhould kill them will certainly make us die with " grief. I own, ſaid the woman, that we were de- " termined to ſell them, but ſince they are your pa- " rents I promiſe to keep them."

THIS was not what the bonzes wanted, and therefore they added, " Perhaps your huſband will not be " ſo charitable as yourſelf, and you may reſt aſſured " that it will be fatal to us if any accident hapens to " them.

" IN ſhort, after a great deal of diſcourſe, the good " woman was ſo moved with their ſeeming grief that " ſhe gave them the ducks to take care of, which they

"took very reſpectfully after twenty ſeveral proteſtati-
"ons, and the ſelf ſame evening made a feaſt of them
"for their little ſociety."

THESE ſort of people are diſperſed throughout the empire, and are brought up to this trade from their infancy: Theſe wretches, to preſerve their ſect, purchaſe children of ſeven or eight years old, of which they make young bonzes, inſtructing them in their myſteries fifteen or twenty years; but they are generally very ignorant, and there are very few that underſtand the doctrines of their own ſect.

ALL the bonzes are not equally honourable, for they are of different degrees, ſome are employed in collecting alms, others, but their number is ſmall, have gained the knowledge of books, and ſpeak politely, and their buſineſs is to viſit the learned, and to inſinuate themſelves into the good graces of the Mandarines; there are likewiſe among them venerable old men, who preſide over the aſſemblies of women, but theſe aſſemblies are uncommon, and not uſed in many places.

THOUGH the bonzes have not a regular hierarchy, yet they have their ſuperiors, whom they call Ta ho chang, that is great bonzes, and this rank to which they are raiſed greatly adds to the reputation which they have acquired by their age, gravity, meekneſs and hypocriſy. There are in all places monaſteries of theſe bonzes, but they are not all equally frequented by a concourſe of people.

THERE are in every province certain mountains wherein there are idol-temples, which have greater credit than the reſt; they go very far in pilgrimage to theſe temples, and the pilgrims when they are at the foot of the mountain, kneel down and proſtrate themſelves at every ſtep they take in aſcending up: Thoſe who cannot go on pilgrimage deſire ſome of their

friends to purchaſe a large printed ſheet, marked with a certain coin by the bonzes: In the middle of the ſheet is the figure of the god Fo, and upon his garment and round about a great number of ſmall circles; the devotees have hung on his neck and round his arm a ſort of bracelet, compoſed of a hundred middle-ſized beads and eight large ones; on the top is a large bead in the ſhape of a ſnuff-box; when they roll theſe beads upon their fingers they pronounce theſe myſterious words, O mi to, Fo, the ſignification of which they themſelves do not underſtand. They make above an hundred genuflexions, after which they draw one of theſe red circles upon a ſheet of paper.

THEY invite the bonzes, from time to time, to come to the temple to pray, and to ſeal and make authentic the number of circles which they have drawn; they carry them in a pompous manner to funerals in a little box ſealed up by the bonzes; this they call Lou in, that is, a paſſport for travelling from this life to the next: This paſſport is not granted for nothing, for it generally coſts ſeveral taels; but, ſay they, there ought to be no complaint of this expence, becauſe they are ſure of a happy voyage.

AMONG the temples of theſe falſe gods there are ſeveral famous for the beauty and magnificence of their ſtructure, and for the ſtrange ſhapes of their idols; there are ſome ſo monſtrous that the poor Chineſe, as ſoon as they ſee them, fall proſtrate on the earth, and beat their forehead ſeveral times againſt it out of fear and dread: as the bonzes have no other view than to get money, and as whatever their reputation may be, they are in reality nothing but a collection of the dregs of the empire; they are well acquainted with the art of cringing before every body; they affect a mildneſs, complaiſance, humility, and a modeſty which deceive

t firſt ſight: The Chineſe, who penetrate no farther han the outſide, take them for ſo many ſaints, eſpe-ially when to this outſide ſhew they join rigorous fa-ing, and riſing ſeveral times in a night to worſhip Fo, nd ſeem to ſacrifice themſelves in ſome ſort for the ublic good.

WITH a deſign to appear very deſerving among the ulgar: and to gain a compaſſion which excites their li-erality, they expoſe themſelves publicly in the ſtreets hen they undergo their ſevere penances; ſome will aſten their neck and feet to thick chains above thirty eet long, which they drag along the ſtreet with a reat deal of pain; they ſtop at the door of every ouſe, and ſay, You ſee how much it coſts us to ex-iate your crimes, cannot you afford us ſome trifling lms?

YOU ſee others in the croſs-ſtreets, and moſt fre-uented places, who make themſelves all over blood by eating their heads with all their might againſt a great tone; but among theſe ſort of penances there is none nore ſurpriſing than that of a young bonze, which is elated by F. le Compte in the following manner:

" I met one day in the middle of a village a young ' briſk bonze, who was mild, modeſt, and very likely ' to ſucceed in aſking charity; he ſtood upright in a ' cloſe chair ſtuck all over on the inſide with the ſharp ' points of nails, in ſuch a manner that he could ' not ſtir without being wounded; two men that were ' hired carried him very ſlowly into the houſes, where ' he beſought the people to have compaſſion on him.

" I am, ſaid he, ſhut up in this chair for the " good of your ſouls, and am reſolved never to go out " till all the nails are bought, [and they were above " two thouſand] every nail is worth ſixpence, and yet " there is not one of them but what will become a

" ſource of happineſs in your houſes; if you buy a-
" ny you will perform an act of heroic virtue, and
" you will give an alms not to the bonzes but to
" the god Fo, to whoſe honour we deſign to build a
" temple.

" I then paſſed near the place where he was, and as
" ſoon as the bonze ſaw me he made me the ſame
" compliment as the reſt. I told him he was very un-
" happy to give himſelf ſuch uſeleſs torment in this
" world, and I counſelled him to leave his priſon, and
" go to the temple of the true God to be inſtructed in
" heavenly truths, and to ſubmit to a penance leſs ſe-
" vere and more ſalutary.

" HE replied very mildly, and without the leaſt e-
" motion, that he was obliged to me for my advice,
" but his obligation would be greater if I would buy
" a dozen of his nails, which would certainly make me
" fortunate in my journey.

" HERE, ſaid he turning himſelf on one ſide, take
" theſe, which upon the faith of a bonze are the beſt
" in my chair, becauſe they give me the leaſt pain;
" however, they are all the ſame price: He pronoun-
" ced theſe words with an air and action, which on a-
" ny other occaſion would have made me laugh, but
" then it excited my compaſſion."

THE ſame motive of getting alms cauſes theſe bon-
zes ſo conſtantly to make viſits to all perſons, as well
poor as rich; they go in what number are deſired, and
ſtay as long as they will, and when there are aſſem-
blies of women, which is uncommon unleſs in ſome
places, they bring with them a grand bonze, who is di-
ſtinguiſhed from the reſt by the place that he takes, by
the reſpect the other bonzes pay him, and by his ha-
bit, which is different from thoſe of the other bonzes.

THESE aſſemblies of the ladies are a good revenue

for the bonzes, for there are in every city ſeveral ſocieties of ten, fifteen, twenty women more or leſs: They are commonly of a good family, and advanced in years, or elſe widows, and conſequently have money to diſpoſe of: They are ſuperiors of the ſociety in their turns for one year, and it is generally at the ſuperior's houſe that the aſſemblies are held, and that every thing may be done in order they all contribute a certain ſum of money for common expences.

THE day on which the aſſembly is held comes a bonze, pretty well advanced in years, who is preſident, and ſings anthems to Fo: The devotees enter into the concert, and after they have ſeveral times cried O mi to, Fo, and beaten very heartily ſome ſmall kettles, they ſit at the table and regale themſelves; but this is the ordinary ceremony.

ON the more ſolemn days they adorn the houſe with ſeveral idols placed in order by the bonzes, and with ſeveral groteſque paintings, which repreſent in divers manners the torments of hell; the prayers and feaſts laſt for ſeven days; the grand bonze is aſſiſted by ſeveral other bonzes, who join in the concert.

DURING theſe ſeven days their principal care is to prepare and conſecrate treaſures for the other world: To this purpoſe they build an apartment with paper, painted and gilt, containing every part of a perfect houſe; they fill this little houſe with a great number of paſteboard-boxes painted and varniſhed; in theſe boxes are ingots of gold and ſilver, or to ſpeak more properly, of gilt paper, of which there are ſeveral hundreds, deſigned to redeem them from the dreadful puniſhments that the king of the infernal regions inflicts on thoſe who have nothing to give him; they put a ſcore by themſelves to bribe the officers of the tribunal of this king of ſhadows; the reſt, as well as the

houſe, is for lodging, boarding and buying ſome office in the other world; they ſhut up all theſe little boxes with padlocks of paper, then they ſhut the doors of the paper houſe, and guard it carefully with locks.

WHEN the perſon, who has been at this expence, happens to die, they burn the houſe firſt in a very ſerious manner, then they burn the keys of the houſe, and of the little cheſts, that ſhe may be able to open them and take out the gold and ſilver, for they believe the gilt paper will be turned into fine ſilver and gold, and ſuppoſe the king of the infernal regions [Yen vang] to be eaſily corrupted with this tempting metal.

THIS hope, joined to the oſtentatious ſhew, makes ſuch an impreſſion upon the minds of theſe poor Chineſe, that nothing but an extraordinary miracle of grace can undeceive them; in a word, the exerciſe of religion is perfectly free, and they celebrate this kind of feaſts whenever they pleaſe, and you have nothing but good words from all theſe impoſtors, who promiſe long life, great honours for your children, abundance of riches in this world, and above all things exquiſite happineſs in the next: ſuch are the extravagancies wherewith theſe impoſtors amuſe the credulity of the people; they have acquired ſo great authority over their minds that there are idols to be ſeen every where, which the blind Chineſe invoke inceſſantly, eſpecially in times of ſickneſs, when they are to go any journey, or when they are in danger.

IN the voyage which F. Fontaney made from Siam to China in a Chineſe veſſel, he was an eye witneſs of all their ceremonies, as ridiculous as ſuperſtitious They had, ſays he, on the poop of their veſſel a ſmall idol quite black with the ſmoke of a lamp, which burnt continually to his honour; before they ſat down to dinner they offered him ſome of the victuals deſigned

for their own repaſt; twice in a day they threw into the ſea little Gondolaes made of paper, to the end that being employed in over-ſetting thoſe ſmall boats he might ſpare their own.

BUT if, notwithſtanding theſe preſents and offerings, the waves were violently agitated by the ſpirit, which, as they believe, governs them, they then burn a great many feathers, whoſe ſmoke and ſmell infect the air, and they pretend by this means to lay the tempeſt, and drive away the evil demon at a great diſtance; but it was at the ſight of a mountain, which they diſcovered as they paſſed the channel of Cochin-china, and where they have built an idol temple, that they out-did themſelves in their ſuperſtition.

AFTER they had offered victuals, lighted wax candles, burnt perfumes, thrown ſeveral figures of gilt paper into the ſea, and had proſtrated themſelves a great number of times, the ſailors prepared a ſmall veſſel made of boards, about four foot long, with maſts, cords, ſails, ſtreamers, compaſs, rudder, boat, cannon, proviſions, merchandiſes, and even a book of accompts; they had diſpoſed upon the quarter-deck, the forecaſtle, and the cords, as many ſmall figures of painted paper as there were men in the veſſel; they put this machine upon a raft, and lifted it up with ſeveral ceremonies, carried it about the veſſel with the ſound of a drum and copper-baſons; a ſailor habited like a Bonze was at the head of the proceſſion, ſeucing with a long ſtaff, and ſhouting as loud as poſſible; then they let it deſcend ſlowly into the ſea, and followed it with their eyes as far as they could ſee; after which this pretended Bonze went to the very higheſt part of the ſtern, where he continued his ſhouts, and wiſhed it a happy voyage.

As there are aſſemblies of women where the Bonzes preſide, there are likewiſe aſſemblies of men, which

they call faſters; every aſſembly has its ſuperior, who has under him a great number of diſciples called Tou ti, to whom they give the name of Sſeë fou, which is as much as to ſay, doctor father.

WHEN they are induſtrious, and have gained any reputation, they eaſily attain this office; they preſerve in a family ſome old manuſcript, which has paſſed from father to ſon for ſeveral generations; this book is full of impious prayers which nobody underſtands, and there is none but the head of the family can repeat them; ſometimes theſe prayers are followed with ſurpriſing effects, and there needs nothing elſe to raiſe a man to the quality of Sſeë fou, and to gain a great number of diſciples: the days on which the aſſemblies are held, all the diſciples have notice to appear, and no perſon dares ſtay away; the ſuperior is placed in the bottom of the hall, about the middle; every one proſtrates himſelf before him, and then place themſelves to the right and the left in two lines; when the time is come they recite theſe ſecret and impious prayers, and make an end by placing themſelves at the table, and plunging themſelves into all manner of exceſs, for nothing can be more pleaſing than theſe Chineſe faſters; to ſay the truth they deny themſelves all their life the uſe of fleſh, fiſh, wine, onions, garlick, and every thing that heats, but they know how to make themſelves amends with other proviſions, and eſpecially with the liberty of eating as often as they pleaſe.

WE are not to ſuppoſe that this ſort of abſtinence is any great trouble to a Chineſe, for there are great numbers who do not profeſs the art of faſting, and yet are contented with rice and herbs for their food, being not able to purchaſe fleſh.

WHEN once they have attained the degree of Sſeë fou, and have gained a great number of diſciples, the

ſhare that every diſciple is obliged to pay on the days of meeting amounts to a conſiderable ſum in the ſpace of a year.

IN ſhort there are no ſtratagems, nor ridiculous inventions, which theſe miniſters of Satan have not recourſe to, to keep their followers entirely devoted to the God Fo, and to alienate them from the preachers of the goſpel; but be it as it will, what has been mentioned hitherto is nothing but the exterior doctrine of Fo taught by the Bonzes, and adjuſted to the artifices which they make uſe of to impoſe on the credulity of the people: as to the interior doctrine, very few are allowed to be acquainted with its myſteries, the body of the Bonzes in general are thought to be too ſtupid to partake thereof; for thoſe who are initiated muſt have a ſublime genius, that they may be capable of attaining the higheſt perfection.

THIS interior doctrine is the ſame that was taught by Fo in the laſt moments of his life, and which his diſciples, whom he truſted moſt, have taken care to explain and propagate: we need do nothing more than mention this ridiculous ſyſtem, to ſhew how far the folly of mankind will lead thoſe who give way to ſuch like extravagancies.

THEY teach that a vacuum or nothing is the principle of all things, that from this our firſt parents had their original, and to this they returned after their death; that the vacuum is that which conſtitutes our being and ſubſtance; that it is from nothing, and the mixture of the elements, that all things are produced, and to which they all return; that all beings differ from one another only by their ſhape and qualities, in the ſame manner as ſnow, ice, and hail differ from each other; and in the ſame manner as they make a man, a lion, or ſome other creature of the ſame metal,

which loſing their ſhapes and qualities become again the ſame uniform maſs.

THUS they ſay all beings, as well animate as inanimate, though differing in their qualities and figures, are only the ſame thing proceeding from the ſame principle; this principle is a moſt admirable thing, exceeding pure, free from all alteration, very fine, ſimple, and by its ſimplicity is the perfection of all beings; in ſhort it is very perfect, and conſtantly at reſt, without energy, power or underſtanding, nay more, its eſſence conſiſts in being without underſtanding, without action, without deſires; to live happy we muſt continually ſtrive by meditation, and frequent victories over ourſelves, to become like this *Principium*, and to this end accuſtom ourſelves to do nothing, to deſire nothing, to perceive nothing, to think on nothing; there is no diſpute about vice or virtues, rewards or puniſhments, providence and the immortality of the ſoul; all holineſs conſiſts in ceaſing to be ſwallowed up by nothing; the nearer we approach to the nature of a ſtone, or the trunk of a tree, the more perfect we are; in ſhort it is in indolence and inactivity, in a ceſſation of all paſſions, in a privation of every motion of the body, in an annihilation of all the faculties of the ſoul, and in the general ſuſpenſion of all thought, that virtue and happineſs conſiſt; when a man has once attained this happy ſtate he will then meet with no further viciſſitudes and tranſmigrations, he has nothing to fear for the future, becauſe properly ſpeaking he is nothing; or if he is any thing he is happy, and to ſay every thing in one word, he is perfectly like the god Fo.

THIS doctrine is not without its followers even at court, where it was embraced by ſome grandees: the emperor Kao tſong was ſo bewitched with it, that he

reſigned the government of the empire to his adopted ſon, that he might entirely addict himſelf to theſe ſtupid and ſenſeleſs meditations.

HOWEVER, the greateſt part of the learned have oppoſed this ſect, and among others a famous Colao called Poei guei, a zealous diſciple of Confucius; they attacked it with all their might, proving that this apathy, or rather this monſtrous ſtupidity, overturned all morality and civil government; that man is raiſed only above other beings by his thinking and reaſoning faculties, and by his application to the knowledge and practice of virtue; that to aſpire after this fooliſh inactivity is renouncing the moſt eſſential duties, abolishing the neceſſary relation of father and ſon, huſband and wife, prince and ſubject, and that if this doctrine was followed it would reduce all the members of a ſtate to a condition much inferior to that of beaſts.

THUS China is become a prey to all ſorts of ridiculous and extravagant opinions; and though ſome of the learned oppoſe theſe ſects, and treat them as hereſies, and have ſometimes inclined the court to extirpate them throughout the empire, yet ſuch inclinations have been attended with no effect, for hitherto they have been tolerable, either through fear of exciting commotions among the people, or becauſe they have had ſecret favourers and protectors among the learned themſelves; ſo that all that they ever do is to condemn hereſy in general, which is put in practice every year at Peking.

IT is this monſtrous heap of ſuperſtitions, magick, idolatry and atheiſm, that, having very early infected the minds of ſome of the learned, has ſpawned a ſect which is embraced in the room of religion or philoſophy, for it is difficult to give it a true title, nor perhaps do they know what to call it themſelves.