hand; that Barillon was entrusted by his Sovereign with very large sums of money; the distribution of which he was of course to give some account of, but for which no vouchers could be required of him: and if it shall be thought allowable to entertain a doubt of the accuracy of the accounts of the ambassador, we may then venture to suggest that he had a two-fold inducement to place those sums to the name of Mr. Sydney, as furnishing a discharge for the amount stated to be given; and affording means of obtaining credit with his employer, for having been able to prevail with such a man to receive foreign money for any purpose.

'This appears not to be an unfair way of viewing the subject. Mr. Fox, however, could hardly be aware how Barillon's testimony bore on the character of these two men, on whom he bestows great and just eulogiums, when thinking it useful in support of a position he wished to maintain, he appreciated the value of Barillon's letters so highly, as we have observed, and added, that his studies at Paris "had been useful beyond what he could describe."'

We cannot bid adieu to the works of these two eminent writers, without expressing a hope, that they will effectually convince the public, that whoever undertakes the history of the revolution must begin with the reign of Charles the Second. Mr. Hume's account of it is much too general, had it no other defect, to afford sufficient information on so important and so recent a period of British story. Besides, a great deal of most valuable matter, relative to it, has been brought to light since that work was composed. The Clarendon Papers, Dalrymple's Collections, &c., have appeared; and Mr. Rose shows that much more might still be recovered. In short, a history of the revolution establishment is yet wanted, a history that shall be so full and detailed, as to afford satisfaction to the lawyer, the statesman, the philosopher, and the general reader; where at the outset, the constitution, as it stood at the Restoration, shall be correctly delineated, the progressive movement of laws, government, factions, and opinions traced, and a kindly and paramount regard for all the branches of the constitution, and for the interests of religion, liberty, and order, without bias for individuals, parties, or opinions, be invariably maintained.

ART. II. *Voyages à Peking, Manille, et l'Isle de France, faits dans l'intervalle des années* 1784 *à* 1801. Par M. de Guignes. Résident de France à la Chine, attaché au Ministère des Relations extérieures, Correspondant de la première et de la troisième Classe de l'Institut. 3 tom. 8vo. pp. 1404. avec un Atlas en folio, à Paris, 1808.

AFTER an embargo of some years' continuance, on the literary productions of France, a considerable importation has recently been permitted, or, more properly speaking, perhaps, smuggled, through

through the ports of Holland, into this interdicted country; and if we may be allowed to form our judgment from the article now before us, as well as from some splendid publications of voyages to, and discoveries of, countries long since discovered and described, we shall run little risk in pronouncing the art of book-making to be quite as well understood in Paris as in London. We hail with pleasure, however, any article, in the shape of literature, which is brought to us from the East; whether of the pure and genuine production of that quarter of the globe, or whether, in its passage through the continent of Europe, it may have suffered some little adulteration in the workshops of the West. Much as we should of course prefer the former, we are not yet become so fastidious as entirely to overlook the latter; among which description we fear we must be under the necessity of classing the work of M. de Guignes.

The great empire of China, notwithstanding its numerous and powerful claims to the attention of mankind, in consequence perhaps of its peculiarity of situation, and internal polity, remained for ages in almost total obscurity and exclusion from the rest of the civilized world; its existence being scarcely hinted at by ancient writers; and the real character and condition of its multitudinous subjects represented, by the moderns, in terms so incongruous and opposite, as sometimes to excite a doubt in our minds whether they speak of the same people. Long after its first discovery, the predominant opinion ran in favour of all its institutions; and this may easily be accounted for by taking into consideration the unfavourable circumstances under which the western hemisphere was labouring about that period. The strong impressions which must necessarily have been made on the mind of that man who, after traversing a dreary succession of wastes, over whose wide-extended surface were thinly scattered a few tawny-coloured, half-naked and half-famished inhabitants, was thrown at once upon a fertile and cultivated region, peopled by a race of men not materially differing from Europeans, many of them comfortably, and some superbly, clothed in vests of costly materials and curious workmanship, and where the multitudes on every side were so vast that, in speaking of them, he could not bring himself to employ a term expressive of less than millions—the impressions, we say, that such an adventure was likely to stamp on the mind of the traveller, would naturally dispose him to relate to his countrymen 'a tale of wonder;' and we cannot therefore be surprised if, under such circumstances, we occasionally meet with exaggerations in that account of China which is usually attributed to *Marco Polo*. Those religious men also, who, impelled by a laudable zeal for disseminating the truths of Christianity among the nations of the East, after traversing many a wild waste and sandy desert, entered this flourishing

flourishing empire at a time when neither the comforts nor the conveniences, much less the elegancies, of life were generally diffused over Europe, and who, at their departure, had seen but little of the world beyond the boundary of their respective convents,—such men also might well be excused for any little aberration from the strict line of truth, in their reports respecting a country and people so very different from all to which they had been accustomed. The flattering reception they met with at the court of this extraordinary nation, and the pleasing prospect which presented itself of a plentiful harvest in the field of the gospel, could not fail in some measure to influence their minds, and to give their narratives a bias in favour of such a people.

The relations published of the several missions were sought after with great avidity by the learned of Europe; those, in particular, which concerned China, were peculiarly interesting to the philosophers of the age, as describing a people endowed with every moral and social virtue, and enjoying the advantage of civil institutions, whose sole end was that of promoting the general happiness of mankind. The learned Isaac Vossius became such an enthusiast in favour of the Chinese, that he asserted there was nothing valuable on earth that was not to be met with in China, and he lamented exceedingly that he himself had not been born a Chinese! The French academicians extolled to the skies the profound knowledge of this wonderful people in civil polity, in morality, in literature, and all the useful arts and sciences; and the laborious Encyclopedists considered them as not only superior to the rest of Asiatic nations, but at least equal to the most enlightened of Europeans: nay, the incredulous philosopher of Ferney condescended, in this instance, to swim with the stream, and to prostitute his talents in the propagation of what, in his heart, he could not possibly believe to be true. During this frenzy of the French to establish the superior excellence of the Chinese, there was some little danger that the *Chee-King* would have driven the Iliad out of the field, and the *Lee-kee* have supplanted the sublime morality of the New Testament, whose doctrines it was declared to have anticipated! In short, *Lao-tsé* was the prince of poets, and *Cong-foo-tsé* the first of philosophers.

With few exceptions, this extravagant character maintained its ground for some time in the literary world. The Abbé Renaudot, however, in a dissertation on the state of learning among the Chinese, annexed to his 'Relation of Two Mahomedan Travellers who visited China in the 9th Century,' took a very different, and, as has since appeared, a more correct view of the national character. Most of the navigators also, who subsequently called for refreshments, and those who, for purposes of commerce, visited the port of

of Canton, whether English, French, Dutch, Danes or Swedes, concurred very generally in representing the Chinese as a people deficient in real science, and totally devoid of every moral principle. But the evidence of such visitors, however, could not in fairness be considered as conclusive; and many doubts yet remained, when the question was taken up by M. Pauw, who, in a work of extraordinary merit, published under the title of *Recherches Philosophiques sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois*, discussed, in a very ingenious and satisfactory manner, the pretensions of the Chinese to the supereminent qualities which had so generally been ascribed to them. This inquiry seems to have arisen from some learned strictures published in the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, most of them by M. de Guignes (the father of the gentleman whose work is now under consideration,) the object of which was to prove that the Chinese were originally a colony from Egypt. M. Pauw not only exposed the fallacy of such a conclusion, but incontrovertibly shewed that not one single point of resemblance ever existed between the two nations. A performance of so much ability, in which not merely the judgment but the veracity of the missionaries was impeached, could not be silently passed over by the advocates of the Chinese. The Abbé Grozier, in his preface to the *Histoire Générale de la Chine*, accuses the author of wilful misrepresentation, falsehood, and calumny, and is highly indignant at the effrontery of a German philosopher, who, from his easy chair at Berlin, presumed to pronounce judgment on a distant people whom he never saw. This argument however would equally apply to the Abbé Grozier's *Description générale de la Chine*, which is a mere compilation from the accounts furnished by the missionaries, the Abbé having no more local information than M. Pauw. The former, who was furnished with abundance of materials, seems deficient in the faculty of discrimination; whilst the latter, with great ingenuity, has sifted the grain from the chaff.

The works regarding China, having been mostly published on the Continent, excited but little interest in England. Our connection with that country was confined to one spot, and our concern limited to one object. We cared little about China so long as it supplied us with Bohea and Souchong. At length however an event occurred which drew the attention of the English towards that country: this was the embassy of the Earl of Macartney to the Court of Pekin. The national curiosity now became so impatient to be gratified with some account of China and its inhabitants, that a publication, patched up in London from the meagre journal kept by a menial servant of the Ambassador, and plentifully interlarded with extracts from Du Halde and Grozier, went through several editions, before the 'Authentic Account' from the Secretary of the

Embassy

Embassy could make its appearance. Since that event, our knowledge of China, though still very imperfect, has considerably increased.

The supposed failure of the English, said to be owing to their obstinacy in not submitting to the Chinese ceremony of salutation, was a spur to Mr. Van Braam, the chief of the Dutch factory, to try what might be done by an unconditional submission to all that Chinese etiquette should require. He therefore solicited permission from the Council of Batavia to proceed to Pekin; the Council, though they approved the proposal, did not consider him as a proper person for the situation of ambassador, but sent Mr. Titsingh, one of their own members, appointing Mr. Van Braam as his deputy. M. de Guignes, having little employ, as *Resident de France à la Chine*, offered his services to Mr. Titsingh, who took him under his protection, in the capacity of Secretary and Assistant Interpreter. Of this embassy we have two narratives; the one by Mr. Van Braam, in two very bulky and very stupid quarto volumes, and the work which is now before us, from the pen of M. de Guignes. The account given by Van Braam, though as clumsy a production as ever issued from the literary workshop of a Dutchman, contains some valuable facts; and we are not sorry on the whole that his ideas and observations have been laid before the public, as it is only by a comparison of the descriptions and sentiments of different writers, that we can hope to obtain any thing like a correct view of nations that are otherwise inaccessible to us. From M. de Guignes, however, we were naturally led to expect a great deal more than from Mr. Van Braam; he had resided among the Chinese for many years; he had studied their language; he was educated, we may say, in the very focus of literature; he travelled under the protection of an ambassador, to whom he acted occasionally as interpreter; he traversed the whole extent of the empire from north to south, proceeding by land to the capital, and returning by water to Canton; and to sum up all, he has taken twelve years to compose his book. Let us see then how far, under all these advantages, he has realized our expectations.

His book is arranged under three general divisions.

1. *Tableau de l'Histoire ancienne de la Chine.*
2. *Voyage à Peking*—and, *Retour de Peking.*
3. *Observations sur les Chinois.*

The matter contained under the first of these, is little more, in fact, than a *precis* or abstract from the ponderous work of that indefatigable missionary le père Mayrac de Mailla, published in twelve quarto volumes by the Abbé Grozier, under the title of *Histoire generale de la Chine,* with occasional extracts from the translation of the *Choo-king;* yet this transcript occupies no less than

than two hundred and fifty pages of the first volume. We could have wished that M. de Guignes had been candid enough at least to acknowledge the sources from which he derived the information contained in this superfluous part of his work. In a book of travels announced to the world under this title, we are not prepared to look for a history of the change of dynasties, the succession of the imperial family, and the miraculous circumstances which foretold or accompanied those important events. We do not mean to depreciate the history of China; we consider it, on the contrary, as a curious and valuable record of the transactions of times antecedent to the period from which the earliest European history is dated. We object not to the many miraculous events, and the several instances of the interposition of a supernatural power, which occur in all ancient history: we object only to a mutilated abstract being placed at the head of a work avowedly announced as a book of travels. The *Table des Empereurs*, exhibiting their names in the characters of the Chinese language, and the *Itineraire*, which precede this historical abstract, might quite as well have been omitted, being of little use, except to increase the size of the volume.

The second division of the work occupies the remaining part of the first, and one hundred and forty-six pages of the second volume. It is a journal of the progress of the Embassy to and from the capital, with a detailed account of its proceedings there, and of the feasts and entertainments given on the occasion, at the Court of Pekin, and in the gardens of Yuen-min-yuen. Although we cannot compliment M. de Guignes on the clearness and accuracy of his descriptions, or on the depth of his observations and reflections, we are yet inclined to believe that his statement of facts is strictly correct. We believe also that the objects which he has endeavoured to describe are such only as came under his own observation; this part of the work therefore we consider as original, interesting, and valuable. It presents to us almost daily notices of the general nature of the surface, the soil, and the productions of the country; it gives us the appearance of the habitations, and the dress of the people; it describes the various modes of travelling; it abounds with complaints of the roguish tricks of the mandarins; of the insolence of the common people; of the wretchedness of the Kong-quan, or houses of accommodation; the scarcity and bad quality of their provisions, the miserable condition of the horses provided for them, and the mean and contemptible carriages and palanquins in which they were conveyed. With an attention rather more minute than was absolutely necessary, M. de Guignes has noted down every bridge, pagoda, triumphal arch, and building of a public nature which occurred in the course of each day's journey: and here, by the

the way, we must be allowed to enter our protest against the general misapplication of the words *pagoda* and *triumphal arch.* Use too frequently gives a sanction to abuse, which however is but a poor apology for the continuance of error. The Chinese word *ta,* or the English *tower,* might with more propriety be adopted than the Persic *pagod,* (*Boot-kooda*) which conveys the erroneous idea of a temple; and as for the objects which M. de Guignes, and all the missionaries before him, have dignified with the name of triumphal arches, they bear so little analogy to buildings of this description, either in form or intention, that there is not even the semblance of a curve in any part of their construction, being invariably a triple rectangular gateway of wood or stone thrown across a road or street; and bearing an inscription over the central passage to designate their use, which is generally to record the integrity of some great mandarin, or the chastity of some antiquated virgin; two characters which, from the honours thus bestowed upon them, it may be concluded, are not very common among this virtuous people.

We have already observed that the natural productions of the country are not unnoticed by M. de Guignes; they are noticed however in so vague and general a manner, as to convey but a small degree of information. Neither he nor any of the party possessed the least knowledge, as it would seem, of natural history, philosophy, or, indeed, the least taste for them; which, in this age, when every boarding-school miss is a botanist, and every school-boy knows something of the sciences, is a defect in a modern traveller that will not easily be pardoned by those readers who look for information. Of the manner in which M. de Guignes has noted down his daily remarks, and of their mode of travelling, the following will convey a tolerable idea.

'About four in the morning, seated, *deux à deux,* in our carts, which we had taken the precaution to line with great coats, we proceeded on our journey. The country is parched and dry, and thickly covered with dust; the roads however are bordered with trees, and this is the best circumstance attending them. The houses have a most wretched appearance, and look as if they were built of ashes, or rather cinders: the pagodas are abandoned, the idols thrown down, and exposed to the weather!—Such was the coup-d'œil which presented itself to us before we reached the town of Hokien-fou. Here our drivers lost their way, and we had to wander up and down several streets. We observed a few gateways of brick, and a house here and there of a tolerable appearance: that which was selected for us belonged to the government. It was very spacious, and contained a number of rooms on the ground-floor, most of which had *estrades,* or raised platforms of brick.

'After eating some fruit, we remounted our miserable and inconvenient carriages: here we were very ill at ease, and jolted at every step beyond endurance: the shocks frequently dashed us one against

 another,

another, and we had the utmost difficulty to escape mutual bruises, notwithstanding all our great coats. The cart was so short, that our feet hung out before; and to this unpleasant circumstance, we had to add that of being completely covered with an impalpable dust, which filtered through the mats that formed the back of the carriage, and mixed with that which rolled upon us in front; for having no light on the sides, we were compelled to keep the fore-part open, that we might see the country. Such are the coaches, and such the diligences of the Chinese.'—Tom. i. p. 350.

The summer amusements of the Emperor of China, and his court, have been described in a lively and entertaining manner by the Earl of Macartney. M. de Guignes has furnished us with specimens of their winter recreations in the frozen gardens of Yuen-min-yuen, and we should have laid them before the reader if they had possessed either interest or novelty: they consist in fact of such tricks of agility as may be seen at our country fairs, and of displays of fireworks, in which the Chinese must be allowed to excel. Even M. de Guignes is not a little scandalized at 'seeing the emperor and his ministry amuse themselves with contemplating such paltry performances, and above all, at their choosing to exhibit their fire-works by day, or when the moon was at the full.'—p. 416.

Upon another occasion, after being entertained with a vast display of fiery dragons, snakes breathing flame, and men clothed in fire, and capering about with lanterns fixed on poles, they were presented with the following curious exhibition, intended perhaps as a sublime allegorical representation of an eclipse of the moon:—

'A number of Chinese, placed at the distance of six feet from one another, now entered, bearing two long dragons of silk or paper painted blue, with white scales, and stuffed with lighted lamps. These two dragons, after saluting the emperor with due respect, moved up and down with great composure; when the moon suddenly made her appearance, upon which they began to run after her. The moon, however, fearlessly placed herself between them, and the two dragons, after surveying her for some time, and concluding, apparently, that she was too large a morsel for them to swallow, judged it prudent to retire; which they did with the same ceremony as they entered. The moon, elated with her triumph, then withdrew with prodigious gravity; a little flushed, however, with the chace which she had sustained.'

It is curious to observe how well-informed the Chinese appear to have been of the determination of the Dutch to submit to every demand, however humiliating; and how industriously they sought for opportunities of bringing poor Van Braam's head to the ground: three genuflexions and nine prostrations, to 'a man of his kidney,' for, like Falstaff, he was 'out of all compass, out of all reasonable compass,' were attended with no little inconvenience, and the Chinese

Chinese seemed to enjoy it; for on every trumpery present of a plate of meagre venison or insipid sweetmeats, the two ambassadors were duly called upon to bow the knee to the absent Baal! In these and other petty circumstances concerning the conduct of the court towards the embassy, M. de Guignes is as tediously minute as if he imagined that the detail would be interesting to his readers or honourable to his friends.

The last, and probably not the least valuable part of M. de Guignes' work, though, like the first part, injudiciously placed in a book of travels, is that division which bears the title of '*Observations sur les Chinois.*' These observations occupy 330 pages of the second, and 362 pages of the third volume; they embrace a great variety of subjects, distributed under more than one hundred different heads, but placed promiscuously without regard to any systematic arrangement. Though presented as original observations, they have but little claim in point of fact to that title, being for the most part a compilation from the writings of preceding authors, with here and there an attempt to find fault with the more recent accounts of China, especially with those of Sir George Staunton and Mr. Barrow.

Having thus drawn a very general outline of the contents of M. de Guignes' book, we shall now proceed to make a few observations on particular parts of it, extracting, in the first place, such passages as more immediately relate to the general character of the nation, and the manners and condition of the people, as viewed by this impartial observer; for such he professes himself to be, and such we are inclined to believe he really is.

'I describe the Chinese,' he says, 'such as I found them: I have no wish to depreciate them, but I certainly am far from thinking that they are a nation of sages, a steady and rational people, who scarcely require the restraint of law to be just.'

Yet, though he does not consider them with, the Abbé Raynal, a nation of philosophers, he thinks they are deserving of a better character than they have received at the hands of M. Pauw and Mr. Barrow.

'In reading the latter,' he says, 'it is easy to perceive that he has frequently adopted the opinion of a man, whose prejudices against the Chinese are notorious, and whose account of that people is singularly erroneous.'—p. 214.

It appears to us, however, that M. de Guignes, if we may trust his own account, saw them, in most respects, in as bad a light as either of the above-mentioned authors. We perceive nothing, either in his journal of occurrences, or in his observations, of that decent

decent and orderly demeanor among the middling and lower classes of this country, which has so frequently been extolled, and held up for the example and admiration of the rest of mankind; on the contrary, we are told that, while the suite of the ambassador were left by their bearers freezing with cold in their miserable palanquins, which he describes as—

'Open, and only furnished in front with a wretched screen of cloth; the populace, to get a better view of them, quickly tore the whole away, and left them exposed to a keen north wind.'—p. 279.

At another time his bearers ran away, leaving him perched in his crazy chair, in the midst of the rain, while the peasantry annoyed him by pushing about the machine, opening the little windows, tearing away the curtains, and then laughing at the ridiculous situation in which he was placed.

'The people,' he observes, 'of these countries, seem very prone to mockery, and often laughed without cause.' And again, the 'Chinese appeared very insolent; they followed us sneering and sniggering, and one of them had the impudence to thrust his hand into my pocket.'—Tom. i. 339.

A little further on, he complains of their impertinence.

'The people of this canton are arrogant and inquisitive to a very troublesome degree; they opened our palanquins, tore the curtain, and insulted us in the grossest manner.'—p. 346.

Not far from the same place they were pursued by the populace, who abused them and pelted them with mud (tom. i. p. 348); and at no great distance from the capital M. de Guignes tells us, that, being mounted on a lame horse, and left behind his companions, the people not only hooted, but threw stones at him, (tom. ii. p. 9.) So much for the urbanity and decency of manners among the million of China! Had these intrusions been merely the effect of extreme curiosity, they might admit of some excuse; but curiosity has never been held to form a part of the Chinese character; and their conduct can only be ascribed to that intolerable self-conceit, and that gross ignorance of the rest of mankind, which induce those semi-barbarians to consider all foreigners as belonging to a class of animals much inferior to themselves, whom they are pleased to designate by the opprobrious name of *Fan-quei*, which, without deviating widely from the idea meant to be conveyed, may be rendered 'subjects of the devil.'

M. de Guignes seems very unwilling to believe that the Chinese can possibly be guilty of infanticide; but unfortunately for his scepticism, there is on record such a host of incontrovertible evidence

dence of the existence of this unnatural crime, that all argument to throw discredit on the fact must fall to the ground. We observe also, that, in treating of this subject, he is either guilty of a wilful misrepresentation, or that he is very imperfectly acquainted with the English language, from which he pretends to quote. Thus, after making Mr. Barrow assert, that 30,000 infants are annually exposed *in the capital*, he adds,

'This gentleman, however, soon corrects himself, and reduces this exorbitant number one-half, and even much more than one-half.'—Tom. ii. p. 286.

We have taken the trouble of turning to the passage alluded to in 'Barrow's Travels,' where we find it run thus:—'The number of children thus unnaturally and inhumanly slaughtered, or interred alive, in the course of a year, is differently stated by different authors, some making it about ten, and others thirty, thousand *in the whole empire*. The truth, as generally happens, may probably be about the middle. The missionaries, who alone possess the means of ascertaining nearly the number that is thus sacrificed *in the capital*, differ very materially in their statements: taking the mean, as given by those with whom we conversed on the subject, I should conclude that about twenty-four infants were, on an average, *in Pekin*, daily carried to the pit of death.' (*Travels in China*, p. 169.) The number, therefore, stated by this author, instead of *thirty*, is considerably less than *nine*, thousand sacrificed in the capital. M. de Guignes, however, is as little cautious in contradicting his own statements, as in misrepresenting those of others. In speaking of the dreadful famines, which he says depopulate sometimes half the provinces, but which we are inclined to believe never yet took place to anything like this extent, he observes,

'Fathers then expose, sell, and even kill their children; thousands of people perish, and *eat one another;* circumstances which actually took place in Chan-tong, in 1786,' (tom. iii. p. 65.) And again, he says, 'this feeding on human flesh is not a story forged at pleasure, but an undoubted fact; nor is this the only instance of it. About the same time too, in the northern part of Hou-Kouang, thirty persons were buried alive, by a party of famished wretches to whom they had refused some rice.'—Tom. ii. p. 163.

We are rather surprised that M. de Guignes, after taking upon himself to vouch for these people being in the habit of eating human flesh, and of burying their fellow-creatures alive, to neither of which, with submission to his superior means of information, we feel disposed to give the least degree of credit, should boggle at the practice of infanticide, especially after gravely assuring us, that there

there are cases where fathers expose, sell, and even *put to death*, their own children. We are persuaded that how much soever the Chinese may pretend in their maxims to value the life of man, they are in reality indifferent to the feelings of human misery and human suffering. M. de Guignes tells us as a fact, which must have come within his own knowledge, that, on such a day, six of their coolies died from famine and fatigue, (tom. i. p. 320,) and this horrible event he simply enters in his journal as if it were a common occurrence, and required no comment.

It may perhaps be objected, that the general character of a nation is not to be estimated fairly from the manners and conduct of the lower orders of the people, but rather from the state of society as it exists among the middle class. In China, however, there is no middle class; there only the great and the little, are to be found; the governors and the governed, or, more strictly speaking, the drivers and the driven. Wealth, in China, loses that influence which it acquires in most other countries; for, without office, a Chinese has no consideration distinct from the mass of the people. Wealth, it is true, may and does purchase the insignia of office, but none of its power; such a purchase is a mere voluntary tax upon vanity, and operates only as a gratification to him who has the folly to pay it. Let us see then what M. de Guignes has to say on the manners, character, and conduct of the mandarins, or nobility of China.

In the first place, those great men who were delegated to conduct the Ambassador and his suite to the presence of their sovereign, not only defrauded the wretched, half-starved palanquin bearers of the greater part of the pitiful allowance to which they were justly entitled, but occasionally degraded their high situation so far as to pummel them with their fists if they attempted to remonstrate. They pocketed the money that the government allotted for the pay of the ambassador's Chinese servants. They sold half of the regulated allowance of provisions for the ambassador and his train (tom. ii. p. 439). The first minister (or rather the favourite of the six *Colaos* which compose the cabinet, for in fact there is no such person as prime minister in China) condescended to appropriate to his own use two pieces of clock-work, which were amongst the presents for the emperor, substituting two mean baubles of no value in their stead, to prevent a disagreement in the number of articles contained in the catalogue. The many little tricks which the Dutch experienced, on their long journey to and from the capital, from these ministers of state or their deputies, can only be classed with the finesse of a post-boy, or a tavern-waiter, in Europe. So much for the honour and integrity of the great men of China.

Their good breeding is about equal to their integrity. Of this M. de

M. de Guignes furnishes abundant proof; we shall not, however, weary our readers with the disgusting detail, but proceed to the passage in which the author sums up the national character.

'The Chinese are active aud laborious; they have no great genius for the sciences, but they have an aptitude for commerce and the arts. They are supple and pliant, though haughty; and look with contempt on other nations, to which they believe themselves very superior: maintaining, in this, the character of their ancestors, who are described by Pliny and Amm. Marcellinus as a sober and peaceable people, but resembling wild beasts in the carefulness with which they shunned the company of other men.

'The Chinese are selfish and prone to deceive: I have seen the peasants cram their poultry with sand to increase their weight. During our journey, the Chinese stuffed the rolls of silk which were presented to us, with paper, to make them appear more bulky; and at Peking, the mandarins gave M. Van Braam spurious gin-seng for true. Fraud is so habitual to this people, that they do not esteem it an evil; it is, according to them, simple dexterity! They love gaming, and debauchery; and, under a grave and decent exterior, succeed better than others in hiding their vices, and irregular propensities and passions. Humble in their discourse, frivolously minute in their writings, and polite without sincerity, they conceal, under an appearance of coldness and indifference, a most vindictive character. They have no mutual attachments, but endeavour to injure one another. Cruel when they are the strongest, and cowardly in danger, they are attached to life; though instances are to be found of their destroying themselves: suicide, however, is less common among the men than the women, with whom it is the effect of jealousy, of rage, or of a wish to involve their husbands in trouble.'—*Tom.* i. p. 161.

We have heard of Roman matrons dying for their husbands, and even teaching them how easy it was to die; but it was reserved for a Chinese wife to commit suicide in order to draw her surviving husband into a scrape.

On the so-much vaunted politeness of the Chinese, M. de Guignes makes this general, and we believe just remark, 'politeness with them is merely a habit, and ceremony occupies the place of sentiment.' And elsewhere he observes, with equal correctness,

'When the missionaries inform us, that the grandees are even afraid to jostle a seller of matches, they somewhat exaggerate the politeness of the mandarins. In China, it is not sentiment which generates respect, but compulsion and terror. The road of duty is clearly defined, and whoever deviates from it, is quickly brought back by the bamboo.' —Tom. ii. p. 458.

And he sums up the character of the government in these words:—

'I have

'I have lived long in China; I have traversed this vast empire from north to south; everywhere I have seen the strong oppress the weak, and every man, who possessed the slightest portion of authority, make use of it to vex, to harass, and to crush the people.'—Tom. ii. p. 438.

His ideas of the government are equally unfavourable. The emperor is a complete despot, his ministers are all knaves and hypocrites, and the whole fabric is founded on tyranny and fraud. Each provincial mandarin strives to deceive his superior, that superior the great officers at court, and these the emperor!

By what causes and contrivances, so unwieldy, so badly planned, and worse constructed a machine, has continued to rub on and produce its effect for so many thousand years, while more perfect systems have successively mouldered into decay, and many of them totally disappeared, M. de Guignes does not enable us to determine: nor, indeed, does he furnish any new lights to assist us in the inquiry. For the attainment of this knowledge, more information is necessary than the mere enumeration of the departments of government, and the number and rank of the mandarins, or officers of state: this we have already heard, and to say the truth, the tale is not one of that kind which, *decies repetita, placebit.*

Under the head of *Classes de Citoyens*, M. de Guignes is very ill informed in saying there is no permanent or hereditary nobility; and that the family of Confucius alone enjoys an honorary distinction, which passes in a direct descent; on the contrary, titles, pensions, and privileges are conferred on many families for services rendered to the state, transmissible to their descendants. He is also mistaken in dividing the people into seven classes; the law acknowledges no such division: mention, indeed, is made in Chinese books of their distribution into four classes, called *Se*, *Nung*, *Kung*, and *Shang*, that is, the literary, agricultural, manufacturing, and mercantile classes; but this, if it ever existed, has been obsolete for ages, and the law now distinguishes only the privileged orders, officers and others in the civil and military employment of government, and the people.

The state of the arts and manufactures our author has described under a variety of heads; in some he is abundantly tedious, in others not sufficiently clear and explicit: thus we have minute descriptions of the dwellings of mandarins, of city gates, of bridges, barges, &c. of the splendid painting and decoration of the imperial palace, and of the humble furniture of the peasant's cottage, whilst he affords little information on the subject of those arts in which the Chinese excel, as in the composition and application of colours, and varnish, and the manufacture of porcelain: he tells us, however, that old Chinese ink is good for the stomach, and sovereign in cases of hemorrhage, which, he gravely adds, is not surprising,

prising, since it is composed of glue *de peau d'âne*, an infallible remedy, it appears, for a spitting of blood. (Tom. ii. p. 236.) Under the heads of *Hatching of Ducks, Salutations, Dress, Feasts, Food, Marriage Ceremonies, Funerals*, &c. we do not perceive that M. de Guignes has added anything deserving of particular notice, to what is to be found on those subjects in the works of Du Halde and the Abbé Grozier.

On the state of slavery in China the missionaries have not been very explicit. Originally, such only were considered as slaves who were made prisoners of war, or who, for their crimes, were by law condemned to that situation. At present, however, a father has the power, in certain cases, to sell his children as slaves. But the state of slavery in China is very different from that which exists in the European colonies: they can at any time be enfranchised on certain conditions; they are considered as members of the family in which they live; they partake of its pursuits, follow its fortunes, and are in many respects superior in their condition to our apprentices.

'During our journey to Peking,' says M. de Guignes, 'one of our Chinese domestics purchased a little boy: he then drew up a writing, by which he engaged to maintain and clothe him. The instant it was finished, he called the child his brother, and treated him as if he had really been so.'

Under the head of *Comedie*, M. de Guignes complains of the total want of decency on the Chinese stage, where, he observes, 'L'acteur met tant de verité, que la scène en devient extrêmement indécente;' a remark which he strongly illustrates by an example, of which he was an eyewitness, where the heroine of the piece 'devint grosse et accoucha sur le théâtre d'un enfant.' (Tom. ii. p. 324.) The excoriated lady, strutting about the stage without her skin, as described by Barrow, is decency itself when compared with this.

We pass over the compilations which he has arranged under the titles of *Sectes de Lao-Kiun et de Fo; Secte de Confucius; Juifs; Christianisme; Mahometans; Cultes; Sortes; Pagodes; Bonzes;* and *Fêtes;* because we do not perceive that they add to our previous information on these subjects. Neither has M. de Guignes thrown any new light on the nature of the extraordinary language of this country; on the contrary, his attempt to construct a grammar, on the plan of a Latin or Greek grammar, for what has neither inflexion, change of termination, nor the least variation in the expression of the original monosyllable, is not only absurd, but conveys a very erroneous idea of a language the most meagre and imperfect in use among civilized society. The written character, however, is exceedingly curious, but the account of it by M. de Guignes conveys not half the information that may be acquired

acquired by consulting the *Meditationes Sinicæ* of Fourmont, or the *Museum Sinicum* of Bayer: the nature and construction of the system on which the Chinese character is founded, are satisfactorily explained by Sir George Staunton and Mr. Barrow.

Our brethren of the north attribute the ignorance of Englishmen with respect to everything that concerns China to a want of 'that encouragement which a wise and liberal government ought long ago to have afforded.' We should be surprised indeed if government, in their estimation, could, by any possible accident, stumble upon what was right: in the present instance, however, it so happens that government neither has, nor can have the least concern. Our intercourse with China is exclusively commercial, and confined to the East India Company; and this being the fairest field in their extensive patronage, the harvest is reserved for the near connections of the Court of Directors; it is a sort of family patrimony from which strangers are carefully excluded: in a few years it produces a certain fortune to their sons or nephews or cousins, without the employment of capital, or risk, or talent, or exertion. The whole establishment consists only of twelve supercargoes and eight writers; the latter have a small annual allowance and a free table: and they succeed in rotation to the situation of the former, who have also a free table, and annually divide among themselves, in shares proportioned to their seniority, a sum seldom falling short of 70,000*l.* arising from a per centage on the value of the import and export cargoes, and producing to each individual from 1,500*l.* to 8,000*l.* and to the chief of the factory from 10,000*l.* to 12,000*l.* a year. The services to be performed for this liberal remuneration, consist in a residence of three or four months every year at Canton, for the purpose of delivering the imported goods to the Hong merchants, and of shipping the teas for England; they then retire to Macao for the rest of the year, where they have little or nothing to do, except to make out and register the daily bills of fare for the information of their honourable employers, who perhaps may be desirous of seeing that their servants abroad do not keep a better table than themselves at home. Here they are cooped up within a space not exceeding two or three miles, with scarcely any society but what is formed among themselves. Thus circumstanced, it might be supposed that they would fly with avidity to the study of the Chinese language and Chinese books, as a relief from *ennui*. But no:—yet it cannot be said, that there is any want of liberal encouragement, though there certainly is of a proper stimulus. The Directors are sufficiently aware of the importance of their servants possessing a knowledge of the Chinese language, and are by no means backward in holding out encouragement for the pursuit of it; as appears by their recent appointment of Sir George Staunton as Chinese

Secretary

Secretary and interpreter, with a salary of 500*l.* a year, in consequence of the essential services derived from his knowledge of that language. But an additional salary of 500*l.* a year, cannot be expected to operate very powerfully in stimulating others to acquire a difficult language, where the field is equally open to them for the attainment of 12,000*l.* a year, without this knowledge. In fact the whole system is faulty, but the remedy is obvious and of easy application. It requires only that before a writer be appointed to China, he shall be able from recollection to write down the 214 keys, or radical characters of the Chinese language, which a boy of fifteen, of an ordinary capacity, would accomplish in three months. With this introductory knowledge, and the help of a Chinese Dictionary, he would be enabled to make considerable progress in the course of his voyage to China; but, alas! where is such a dictionary to be found? There are, indeed, plenty of them in this country, but they are all in manuscript. It is easy, however, to have one of them printed: true; but how is the expense to be defrayed? To publish a Chinese dictionary, with an explanation in some European language, of ten, twelve, or fifteen thousand characters, would perhaps require one third part of the sum which is annually expended in—but sacred be the festive board of the Directors! We will suppose, however, the dictionary printed: the writer, thus prepared, should not be allowed to succeed to the situation of supercargo, until he could read the first class of school-books usually put into the hands of Chinese youth; nor should a supercargo ever attain the valuable pre-eminence of a chief, until he was able to address, by letter, or memorial, in appropriate language, the members of government at Canton. By these or similar regulations, so that the knowledge of the language should be a *sine qua non*, either to an appointment or preferment, we should soon learn something more of the Chinese than the stale stories of the roguery of the common people, and the rapacity of the mandarins. We should augur much better from such a proceeding, than from any progress in Chinese literature, which can be hoped for from the recent establishment at Hertford.

In treating of the *Population* of China, M. de Guignes has ventured to launch into a wider field of speculation and argument than he is accustomed to do on other subjects; but his reasoning is inconclusive; and, after all, he leaves us as much in the dark with regard to the real state of the question, as when we first set out. He tells us that, from what *he saw* in the course of his journey to and from Pekin, he is convinced that the population of China cannot exceed that of *other countries*. From so vague a statement, nothing can be collected; and the ocular proof, which he accounts so decisive, is worth no more than the opinion that a stranger might form

form of the population of London by walking from Portman to Russel square, in the month of October. M. de Guignes doubts the accuracy of the enormous population of China, as furnished by the mandarins to Lord Macartney; but his endeavour to discredit the statement, on account of a greater population being assigned to the province of Pe-che-lee than to Kiang-nan, while the latter is of greater extent than the former, is not a very happy specimen of critical acumen: as well might he assert that the United Provinces are less populous than the mountainous tracts of Siberia, because the latter is much greater in extent than the former. For our own part, we see no reason to call in question the authenticity of the statement furnished by Père Amiot from the *Tai-tsing-ye-tung-tché*, a sort of Encyclopedie or Circle of Sciences, published by the authority of the late Emperor Kien-long. According to this census, the population at the present time may amount to about two hundred millions of souls. It is an official document; and in a country where all are liable to personal service, and where the omission of enrolment on the public registers is a penal offence, government must necessarily possess a pretty accurate knowledge of the number of inhabitants which compose this extensive and populous empire.

If M. de Guignes has given little information respecting the population, his statements concerning the public revenue and expenditure are still less satisfactory; his premises are conjectural, his data gratuitous, and consequently all his calculations and conclusions of no value. We could wish he had given us more facts, and fewer extracts from other authors without acknowledgement from whence he drew them. Had he applied the small degree of knowledge which he appears to possess of the Chinese language, to the study of Chinese books, he might have been able, with the assistance of a native Chinese at his elbow, to collect a mass of very valuable information: we have heard enough of what Europeans say of the Chinese; we could now wish to hear what the Chinese have to say of themselves.

China is perhaps the only nation that has succeeded in adapting a scale of punishments to every species of crime. Here every offence, be it what it may, has its prescribed expiation; and the whole code is drawn up in such concise and intelligible characters, and so widely circulated throughout the empire, that no one can plead ignorance of the consequences that must result from the commission of any penal offence. The necessity is thus precluded of advocates and attornies; neither of whom are in fact known in China. The administration of justice is here wholly an affair of government, and free from all cost to the parties, unless that of a few strokes with the bamboo for occasioning trouble in frivolous cases.

There

There are four kinds of punishment for criminal offences:

1. A given number of blows with the bamboo, according to the nature and magnitude of the crime, from ten to one hundred, which the privileged orders (being officers of state) are allowed to commute for a proportionate fine.

2. Temporary banishment to certain distances, according to the nature and magnitude of the offence.

3. Perpetual banishment.

4. Death, the sentence of which admits of three degrees: first, by strangling; second, by decollation; and third, by a slow and painful process, in cases of treason, rebellion, sacrilege, and other crimes of extraordinary atrocity. M. de Guignes, by some strange mistake, has converted the third degree of punishment or 'perpetual banishment' into that of 'Tirage des Barques,' tracking the public barges: no such punishment is mentioned in the *Leu-lee*, or *Code of Penal Laws*, where, if it existed at all, it would most certainly have appeared. The mistake is partly copied from Grozier; and arose in the first instance, perhaps, from a misconception of the character (*lieu*), the general meaning of which is, *to flow as a stream*, but which, in the above-mentioned code, is used for *perpetual banishment*, probably in a metaphorical sense, implying that as the waters of a river are removed from their source to the sea, never to return, so is the exile removed from his home and his friends. The very context mentioning the distances, as quoted by M. de Guignes, points out his mistake; the 'punishment of tracking the Imperial barges is imposed for two hundred, two hundred and fifty, and three hundred leagues, according to the enormity of the crime;' which, in fact, are the distances to which the offender is to be perpetually banished. Tracking of barges is one species of personal service to which the land-holders are liable; it is possible, also, that the magistrates may possess the power of inflicting it as a punishment for petty crimes and misdemeanours. It gives us no small degree of pleasure to observe the notice of a translation in the press of the *Leu-lee*, or *Code of Penal Laws* above-mentioned, by Sir George Staunton; from this work we are persuaded, that more real knowledge may be collected, than from all the volumes which have hitherto appeared in Europe on the subject of China. We have long known that the whip and the bamboo are powerful instruments in the hands of government, but they are not sufficient to explain and unfold the system, by which such a mass of population has been kept so long in due order and obedience to the laws. We sincerely hope that Sir George will not stop here; having commenced his literary career with an arduous and important undertaking, we trust that he will not be deterred by any obstacles in the path which he has thus marked

marked out for himself. If, without being deemed guilty of presumption, we might venture to recommend to his attention any particular class of books, we should say that the world would be most highly gratified by translations from those numerous collections of moral tales with which we know the press in China to abound; or of those dramatic productions in which are represented the manners and customs of real life, and the state and condition of domestic society. Faithful versions of this kind would, in a great degree supersede the tiresome papers scattered over the numerous volumes of the *Lettres edifiantes et curieuses;* and the mass of matter that is now shut up in the fifteen ponderous quartos of *Memoires sur les Chinois.* Du Halde and Grozier would then serve only as compilations of notes, to be referred to occasionally for the illustration of particular passages. But, we have extended our observations on this article as far as our limits will allow. We shall therefore only remark that, under the head of *commerce* and other subjects immediately connected with it, M. de Guignes has employed no less than one hundred and thirty pages, a great portion of which consists of matter that is altogether absurd and fallacious: he describes, for instance, companies and factories as flourishing in 1808, which actually ceased to exist near half a century ago; and he leads us to suppose that the French are still carrying on a flourishing and lucrative trade with China; whereas it is well known that not a single French ship of any description has, for the last seventeen years, made its appearance in the river Canton, with the exception of one or two small vessels during Mr. Addington's truce. It would seem that the national vanity would not permit him to announce to the world the total annihilation of the trade and intercourse of France with that country.

We find nothing deserving of particular notice in the few remaining pages of the last volume, which are occupied with a brief account of the author's voyage to the Phillippine Islands, the Isle of France, and from thence to Europe. The 'Table Alphabetique des matieres,' which concludes the volume, would be useful, if the passages referred to were to be found under the respective pages indicated in the table. Upon the whole, we are not altogether satisfied with M. de Guignes' performance. It is not what the title page professes it to be, a book of travels; and, with the exception of the short diary of a journey to and from the capital, it might have been composed in the purlieus of the ci-devant Palais Royal by a person whose travels never extended beyond the suburbs of Paris. Considering the many advantages which the author possessed, we were certainly led to expect something better; the name too had long been familiar to the literary world: but great talents are not hereditary, any more than great virtues; and the Commercial Agent of China can never be recognised, by the present work, as a descendant

dant of the learned and ingenious author of the 'Histoire des Huns,' the translator of the 'Choo-king,' and the writer of many valuable articles in the 'Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres.'

We shall add but one word on the folio Atlas of plates which accompanies these volumes. It is, in fact, a most wretched specimen of the state of the fine arts in the capital of *la Grande Nation:* indeed, the whole performance is so miserable, as even to disgrace a Chinese artist; to whose drawings, in fact, if we are not greatly deceived, the engraver has been indebted. Yet many of these tame and trumpery prints bear the names of no less than three persons: thus we have 'De Guignes fecit;' 'Duval sculpsit;' 'Deseve direxit.' In this respect the national character has suffered no change —a Frenchman must still call to his assistance the whole ocean, when a pail of water would be more than sufficient for his purpose.

ART. III. *The Alexandrian School; or a Narrative of the First Christian Professors in Alexandria; with Observations on the Influence they still maintain over the Established Church.* By Edw. Jerningham. 8vo. pp. 58. London. Hatchard. 1809.

SOME tenderness, perhaps, is due to the author of this pamphlet, on account of the peculiar circumstances under which he writes. While he wishes to reform our established religion, he represents himself as having hazarded the displeasure of certain near connections by the preference which he has given to it. p. 57. Yet, though we are desirous of treating him with all the delicacy which his situation fairly requires, there is a higher duty to be performed. Amicus Plato, &c.—that is, we wish very well to Mr. Jerningham, and applaud the disposition which appeals from human systems to the Divine will, and makes the scriptures the foundation of faith. But our chief concern must be for the character of that establishment, which, as yet, he misunderstands, and which, with singular oddity, he at once supports, and labours to discredit.

It was indeed with no small surprise that we first perused the title-page of this essay. It was not very probable, that a subject of so much importance as the reformation of the Establishment should be satisfactorily discussed in so meagre a work; nor did it clearly appear, that, if the Church were sick, she was likely to find in Mr. J. a person particularly qualified to be her clinical attendant. p. 30. But whatever might be his fitness for such a work, we

 knew