

the printing trade, and in very good circumstances. He was, moreover, a very generous and good-natured gentleman, and I became, in a little time, so great a favourite, that he could scarce pass a day without seeing and consulting me about some of his affairs; and by his means I came at last to translate books, and to get a comfortable living by it. It was then I began to perceive, with no small joy, how God blessed my endeavours in proportion to my diligence and honesty, which made so lively an impression on my mind, that I resolved never to be concerned in any works, that were either prophane, heretical, or of a trifling nature or ill tendency, and have accordingly refused them whenever they have been offered to me. From translating of other people's works, I came at length to print some of my own, and with the same laudable view, and have found still more credit and comfort in it, and more cause to bless the Divine mercy, for the wonderful and undeserved success I have since met with. But of these I shall speak in a more proper place; in the mean time I shall only observe

serve here, that my charitable friends, dying one after another, as my business increased, I never applied to the survivors for a continuance of their benevolence, but declined it where it was offered, as being then able to live without it : and I can only add, that though I once looked upon these subscriptions as no less unworthily bestowed upon, than basely received by me, yet I have had the comfort to observe since, that they proved the happy means of freeing me from a more laborious and unprofitable life, and of enabling me to follow those studies with more ease and chearfulness, which fitted me, in time, for those more arduous and beneficial tasks, which I have been since engaged in ; seeing it was during the greater part of that time, that I applied myself to the Hebrew tongue, and to the more close study of the sacred books ; by which means I had an opportunity of making a large collection of critical and other remarks, which, though designed then only for my own information, came at length to have a place in one of those works I shall speak of in the sequel, where they have since met with the approbation of the public, both in  
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England and abroad; though even under those encouragements, and with those opportunities I had, I must own, to my shame, that I was still far enough from such a laudable application, as might have turned them to better advantage; and that I still mis-spent a great deal of my time in a loose, careless manner, and that it was not till after a year or two that I disengaged myself from company, especially of the fair sex, though, one person excepted, rather trifling than culpable, to follow my books more closely. I shall therefore skip all the former part of my time, from the twentieth to the thirty-second year of my age, as a sad blank to every thing that was good or laudable, and fraught with a dismal variety of folly, indiscretion and other miscarriages, which would rather disgust than inform, or even divert a sober reader, to come to a more hopeful and instructive period; and only observe, before-hand, that it was no small happiness to me, (which, to whatsoever owing, I ought at least to attribute to my own discretion) that the many learned and pious persons I was formerly, and continued still, acquainted with, (for it was  
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with such that I mostly chose to converse) were never acquainted with, nor, as I could perceive, ever suspected me of being guilty of such a shameful, idle and scandalous way of living, but believed that I spent most of my time to better purpose; else it is not to be doubted but I had been discarded and shunned by them. In which case I should have entirely lost the most effectual means of coming into a better way of thinking, which their conversation, example, and the many good books which they lent me, did at length happily bring me to, and been left, like a weather-cock, exposed to all winds: for though I could talk, and, at some serious intervals, think as seriously as they of religion and its most important duties, and even comply with them in such a manner, as seemed very delightful and edifying to them; yet was my roving heart so far from joining sincerely, or being affected with them, that I could easily forego them, to indulge any new rising satisfaction, though ever so opposite. And indeed, such a frequent variety did offer itself naturally in my way, as I was in no way able to resist.

Thus,



Thus, for instance, it was natural for those intimates to introduce or renew some old subject or topic relating to my pretended country, travels, conversion, or other romantic part of my life, which, however irksome it was then become to me to repeat, and as it were to confirm anew; yet there was no way for me to avoid it, unless I had at once acknowledged the whole relation to have been a notorious and shameful imposture; and what a deadly wound must have such an unexpected confession given to my natural vanity? and what a mortification would it have been, to such sincere honest people, to hear it from my own mouth? so that, could I even have had courage enough to forego the former, as I have more than once thought and even resolved to do, yet how could I find it in my heart to give so sensible a displeasure to persons that had shewn so much friendship and zeal for me? to say nothing of the dreadful apprehensions of the consequence of their charitable opinion being thereby turned into a just abhorrence and detestation. This was the sad dilemma I found myself in when I came to reflect seriously on my case,

case, and which made me conclude it, all things considered, altogether impossible for me to extricate myself out of, without some miraculous power to assist me to overcome a passion, which had hitherto eluded all the opposition which my reason and experience had been able to raise against it. But what glimpse of hope of any such Divine help could such a wretch have, who, with his eyes open to the guilt and danger, had brought himself into such a dangerous state? But God's mercy, which is over all his works, is not to be judged of by us according to our narrow apprehensions, but according to the gracious manifestation he has given us of it in his gospel ; and as that assurance gave me good grounds to hope, so that hope inspired me with a design to use all proper means to obtain it, and leave the issue of it to his Divine Providence. To him, therefore, I thankfully give all the praise for his undeserved and singular blessing on those means which himself directed me to, and what the chiefest of them were I have already mentioned, and shall take notice of some others in the sequel, in hopes they may

may prove of service to such as may stand in the same need of them as I did then.

However, I must own, that the resolution had something awful and deterring, when I considered it in its full extent, to exchange the delights of variety and multiplicity of company (which had been so delightful and insnaring to me till then, that no motive or obstacle could keep me from it) for solitude and retirement; their bewitching flatteries and commendations, whether for a false merit I had assumed, or for some valuable things they fancied in me, for a closer recollection and abhorrence of my own vileness; to spending of so much precious time in the gaities and guilty vanities of life, for a more close application and search after the properest and most effectual means of redeeming that invaluable jewel, and the parcelling and bestowing it to the most beneficial purposes; to retrench not only all unnecessary and unlawful expences, but even some of the common and necessary ones, in order to make some amends for past extravagancies, by supplying the wants of those many objects, that used to pass by unobserved and unpitied by me.

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These, and other such like indispensable preparatives, to the desired thorough change, seemed to carry such unsurmountable difficulties with them, that neither my small share of reason nor philosophy could have supported me to any tolerable degree in the resolutions I was daily striving to make after it. And indeed, nothing so effectually did it, as the consideration that that Divine Providence, which had inspired me with that desire, would not fail of completing it, if I was not wanting to myself; for that at once set me upon trying sometimes one, sometimes another, of those duties, with success enough at least to encourage me to proceed.

And here I was again providentially helped by a worthy clergyman at Braintree in Essex; who, good man, had a much better opinion of me than I deserved, and presented me with that excellent book called Reformed devotions, and recommended by the late reverend Dr. Hicks. This excellent book, though then unknown to me, and disrelished by some weak Christians, is so well known to all the true devout ones, that I need say no more in commendation of  
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of it, than that it proved of such vast benefit to me, that I can never sufficiently admire it, or the piety of the compiler and reformer ; for the many opportunities and invitations it gives one of frequent and closer intercourse with God, and of meditating, in the most exalted manner, on his various works, infinite mercies, and on all the sublime truths and duties of Christianity, did so effectually reconcile me to that solitude and retirement I had formerly been so averse to, and afforded me a most noble refreshment several times a day, from my close application to other studies I was then pursuing, some of which being of the dry, others of the complex kind, might have gone but sluggishly on without it. The late pious Mr. Nelson's Method of Devotion falling likewise, soon after, into my hands, in order to be conveyed, by my means, to a young gentlewoman lately recovered from a state of despondency, I had the curiosity to run through it, and found in it such excellent, yet easy rules for the conquering of our natural vices, and recovering the contrary virtues to them, that I made it one

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of my daily monitors, and with no small success.

But that which gave me the greatest help, was the learned and pious Mr. Law's Serious Call to Devotion. This truly valuable treatise I accidentally found on a clergyman's table, who, nevertheless, soon took it out of my hand, and gave such a character of it, as might have discouraged me from looking farther into it, had not the place I had opened given me a quite different notion of it. However, as I could not prevail upon him to lend it me, I went and bought me one, and read it over and over, from beginning to end, with greater eagerness and satisfaction than any I had ever met with on that subject. I was particularly much taken with the author's motives, as well as his method for the right use of our time, money, talents, &c. not to mention that his variety of characters and reasonings upon them, which are a continued appeal to the most unbiassed and soundest judgement, which admit of neither cavil or objection, soon opened to me a much better way of applying them to advantage, than any I had hitherto, or could indeed

indeed have fallen into, without such an excellent guide. The directions he gives for the obtaining of those Christian virtues, which he there recommends as the proper subject for the several hours of prayer in the day, may indeed appear to have something too technical (since it is no other than a daily renewing of those very desires, till themselves become the virtues we want) from which too much of the success may, by the light and thoughtless, be ascribed to the method, and too little to the grace of God accompanying it. For may not, some will be apt to say, an honest heathen or deist, by the same method, raise himself up into a habit of sobriety, chastity, &c. without any such application to, or particular assistance from, the Supreme Being? yet let any serious person try the efficacy of it against any of his favourite, especially his constitutional vices, and he will find, at length, that he hath been only trying to wash a Blackmoor white, and must do so to the end of the chapter, without the intervention of Divine grace. As for me I shall always, I hope, look upon the desire itself, as well as the success of the

means used for the obtaining any virtue, to be alike the work of God in the soul, let these be such as Mr. Law directs, or any other, which Providence puts into our hands.

I had long before this, however, began to consecrate part of my time to the study of the sacred books, tho' not in that regular and uniform manner as I happily fell into after reading the excellent directory above mentioned, and had made a pretty collection of criticisms, and other observations upon them, such as occurred on my reading of the various commentators on them; and now it was that I became sensible, indeed, of my own want of knowledge of the original Hebrew, and to bewail the loss of several opportunities I had missed of gaining a more perfect knowledge in that sacred and useful tongue. For I had been so discouraged from the pursuit of it, by the difficulties I met with at the very threshold, that is, in the grammars, that I never had the patience to go thro' one of them, but contented myself with the interliniary versions of Pagninus, Arias Montanus, and other Interpreters; chusing



chusing rather to rely on their honesty and skill, than to be at the trouble of becoming a proper judge of either. It was not indeed possible for me to go on long in this groping way, before their various interpretations of the text, (especially those of some bold critics, which seemed calculated to unhinge, rather than confirm our belief, by exploding several, till then, acknowledged facts and doctrines, or interpreting them in their own artful way) set me again upon making some fresh efforts, for attaining a more perfect knowledge of the original, which were however soon damped by every fresh difficulty I met with in the common way of learning it, till I providentially stumbled, as it were, on the following easy method.

I was then hammering at an exercitation on the 34th Psalm, printed at the end of the grammar that goes under the name of Bellarmine; in which I found at almost every word some exceptions to the grammar rules, and such reasons assigned for them as still carried one farther from the point in view; when a poor man came and offered me a pocket Hebrew psalter, with

Leusden's Latin version, over against each page. I greedily bought it, and finding the version much more easy and natural than those literal ones of Pagninus and Montanus, quickly went through every verse in the book, without troubling myself about grammar, or any thing but the true meaning of every word as they occurred. So that by the time I had given it a second reading, my memory being the best faculty I could boast of, I had by that very rote, as I may call it, not only gained a considerable copia verborum, but by observation on the flexion of nouns, verbs, &c. got a tolerable insight into the declensions, conjugations, and other parts of the grammar and syntax; and, whenever any difficulty or doubt occurred, could easily turn to my Bellarmine or even Buxtorf, the most discouraging of all; because, having then but one point in view, I could, without perplexing my mind with any more than that, either satisfy myself about it, or at the worst postpone it, till a further reading and observation brought me to it: I became so fond of this method, that having gone through a third reading of it, with little or

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no obstacle, and in a very little time, I resolved thenceforth to confine myself to the psalms of each day, as they are read at church, and to begin with the historical books.

Here, instead of perplexing myself with such Bibles as had the servile letters printed in a different kind of character, to distinguish them from the radicals, I pitched upon the first edition of that of Munster, which is far inferior to the second, and, by the help of his version on the opposite column, though often at several lines distance from the original, had hardly gone through six or eight chapters of the first book of Samuel, before the ease I found in it invited me to go back to Genesis, and take every chapter in its course. I resolved at first to run them over once, without taking notice of his notes, because the greatest part of them were either of the Massoretic or of the Cabbalistical kind, and would rather clog than assist; and even in these of the grammatical sort he lays all along so great a stress on the punctuation for the true meaning and import of each word, as made his version the less to be depended upon. For

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though I always did and do still look upon the points to be of singular help to learners, and consequently on the method proposed by some moderns of teaching the Hebrew without them, as wild, intricate, and in some cases dangerous, yet from all I had been able to gather from the learned authors who have wrote on the controversy, I was so far from thinking them of the same authority with the text, they plainly appeared of too modern a date to be used in any other shape than as an expeditious help; and as such I still made use of them, without confining myself to them any farther than they were supported by the dialect, by the ancient paraphrases and versions, and other such critical helps, but made no scruple to depart from them whenever a small change of them could afford one a clearer or better sense. And for that I shall refer the reader to what I have since wrote on that so much controverted subject in the Jewish history, which makes the seventh chapter of the Universal History, and especially in the folio edition, where I had more room to expatiate upon it than in the octavo one, in which our being confined to



to reduce the whole within the compass of twenty volumes, obliged us to be a little more concise. I must therefore here own with pleasure, that all that I there advanced hath been so well received, and looked upon as so well grounded, that it hath not, that I know of, been since censured or contradicted; and that though the controversy in favour of the antiquity and authority of the points hath been of late revived with no small warmth, I have met with nothing in it, nor heard from either those I converse or correspond with, any thing that could give me cause to alter my mind. I shall only beg leave to add, that my looking on the Hebrew points, both vowel and grammatical only in that view, enabled me to make many useful discoveries in the sacred books, which have been highly approved by those who have since read them in the history abovementioned.

But to return to my first reading of the original books, I ran with ease through the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, &c. except the few poetical parts which occur in it, such as Exod. xv. pass. Deut. xxxii. Judges v. .1 Samuel

muel ii. 1—10. where the stile is not only  
 swoln and figurative, but where the construc-  
 tion is harsh, irregular, and to appearance  
 truncated, and several terms which occur no  
 where else; so that finding them too hard  
 for me to surmount, with all the application  
 I had, I postponed them to a future read-  
 ing. I found likewise pretty near the same  
 difficulty in the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and  
 the Song of Solomon, and much more still  
 in Job; and therefore contented myself with  
 catching as much as I could at one  
 cursory reading, and leaving the rest for  
 hereafter; yet did not this discourage me  
 from going through all the Prophets in  
 course, though it proved an arduous task,  
 and I went but slowly on, because in these I  
 endeavoured to make myself as much mas-  
 ter of their meaning and stile, as well as of  
 the new words and phrases peculiar to  
 them: and as I spent generally some hours  
 a day on that study, I had quickly gone  
 through all the sacred books of the Old  
 Testament, excepting those chapters in Da-  
 niel, Ezra, &c. which are in the Chaldee,  
 and where I contented myself at this first  
 reading, with examining as well as I was  
 able,

able, the difference between that and the Hebrew. And here I own I found such a disparity between them, such a noble simplicity, and yet masculine energy in the latter, and such an apparent softness and effeminacy in the former, not unlike what is justly observed between Latin and Italian, that I believe nothing could have tempted me to become more acquainted with it, had it not been for the vast helps which the Chaldee paraphrase affords us, not only in fixing the meaning of many obscure words and expressions, but, what is still more valuable, in discovering the sentiments of the ancient Jews concerning many pregnant prophecies of the Messiah, from which the Talmudic writers have since departed out of dislike to him.

When I came to the second reading of Genesis, by which time I had likewise ran through the Psalms five or six times, and was got again into the historical stile, I found myself so unclogged, so acquainted with the grammar and syntax, and master of such a vast number of words, that I began to think I might begin to read the Latin into Hebrew; that is, by hiding the Hebrew  
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column with my hand, try how I could make my own agree to it. This I found however too hard and tedious, except in some easy places or chapters, and I found myself not only at a loss for the words, but mostly in the conjugating and syntax, and though it might in all likelihood have quitted cost, had I proceeded regularly in that method, yet I found it too tedious, as it took me above twice the time, so that I contented myself with only trying it now and then, when the humour took, or the subject invited me to it. At other leisure times, I used likewise to exercise myself in conjugating of verbs by dint of memory and observation, and then to compare it with those in the grammar, by which I soon found out wherein I was deficient, and this I thought more expeditious, diverting, and effectual, than the dull method of beginners, who, by dint of hammering, learn them by heart, scarcely knowing what they are about. One thing however I found would be a great help, viz. in all dubious words, as the Hebrew is so figurative and scanty, to have recourse to the Lexicon, in order to find out the primitive sense of them

from



from the more remote, which it was easy to do by the parallel texts there pointed at, where they occurred. This method duely attended to, opens a spacious insight into the true meaning of the sacred books. Thus I found for instance in the words כְּרוּחַפַּת רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים Genesis i. 2. the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, compared with the motion of the eagle in stirring her young ones to flight, Deut. xxxii. 11. that the verb רוּחַ in the former in its primitive sense, is not such a motion as our version expresses, nor a brooding like that of the hen over her eggs, as some other translations intimate, but a lively agitation, such as much better explains the action of the spirit of God upon the face of the waters. This method, which I preferred to the consulting that variety of versions we have, which rather confound than fix the sense, enabled me in my very second going through the sacred books, to make a pretty large collection of such kind of criticisms and observations, as have been since of singular use to me in the progress of my study, and in some of those works in which I have been since engaged, though I little thought then that

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either they, or those which I made out of other authors that came in my way, would ever come into public view.

I had by this time made so great a proficiency in the Hebrew, tongue that I could have talked it pretty fluently, had I been as well acquainted with the pronunciation of it. But as that could not be attained from grammars, which differed almost as much in the rules they gave for it, as the native languages of their authors differed from each other, I thought it might be more easily attained by conversing with the Jews themselves, going to their synagogues, and hearing the Scriptures read by their chazans or ministers, who, I supposed, were perfect masters of it. But here, to my great surprise, I found that they not only greatly differed among themselves, that is, the northern from the southern, or German, Polish, Hungarian, &c. from the Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, &c. but that every one of them pronounced it after the same manner as they did the languages of the countries where they had been brought up, and, as it plainly appeared to me, none of them right. And this was farther confirmed to me by conversing

versing with some Morocco Jews, whose native language being the Arabic, made me think they bid fairest for having retained the antient pronunciation in a greater degree at least of purity; for some of them whom I met with by chance in the Portuguese synagogue, made a mere ridicule of their way of reading and pronouncing it. And it was by conversing with some of these, who were besides well acquainted with the Hebrew, that I took my rules for a more genuine way of speaking it: and it was no small pleasure to me to find, that I could be very readily understood by all the southern Jews, though I could not so easily understand them, on account of their not sufficiently distinguishing between the sounding of sundry consonants, aspirations, gutturals, &c. which seemed to me to have originally differed very greatly; such as the ו and ו and ו the כּ and כ the ף and ף the ץ and ץ the ן and ן &c. but between which they do not make any distinction, nor indeed can, for want of having been taught it in their youth. In the same manner do they murder it, when they go about to write it in European characters, witness that Spanish dialogue of the famed R. Netto,

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intituled אש דת *esh dath*, the legal fire, but which he spells, after his Spanish manner of pronouncing, *es dat*. However, after I had once been fully apprised of all the defects of their reading, which several of them I have conversed with have had the ingenuity to own as such, I could easily enough understand both their lectures of the Old Testament and their prayers. But as to the northern Jews, I own I never could converse with them in that tongue, without an interpreter, or some go-between, who, by the help of travelling into other parts, had learned the way to accomodate their speech to both ways of pronouncing, so much wider and uncooth is theirs to that of the fouthern; and this was no small grief to me, because I always found the northern more learned and communicative, as well as more fluent and ready at speaking that sacred tongue; though that consideration was never sufficient to induce me to be at the pains to accustom myself to their way. Thus much I thought might be necessary to say with respect to the pronunciation of the Hebrew, to which I shall only add, that my method for learning and preserving it

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was by reading it aloud to myself, and with the same exactness, as if I had been reading it to an assembly.

But what contributed most to this extraordinary readiness of speaking it, was a method I fell into at proper times, when I found myself inclined to close thinking, to cloath my ideas in that, instead of any other language, or, as one may more properly word it, to think in Hebrew rather than in English, or any other language I was used to. The Psalter, which at my first setting up for this study, I had read over for some time, at least three or four times a month, and afterwards constantly went through once a month ever since, was become so familiar to me, that I had got it by heart; and as that contains most of the radical words, as well as idioms, which are most in use, I seldom was at a loss for either in these my soliloquies, or, if I was, I immediately endeavoured to call to mind where I had read any thing like it, either in that or any other of the sacred books, and by turning to it, if I could not readily recover it by dint of memory, seldom failed of fixing it there

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indelibly. By this means I soon acquired not only a surprising fluency in it, but could speak it in the pure and elegant stile of the sacred writers, and now and then, upon occasion, raise it to the lofty strain of the poetical books. This I was the more admired for, because it was what few, if any, of the learned among the Jews could do, who commonly marred their own by an heterogeneous mixture of the corrupt Talmudic and Rabbinic words and idioms, to which I was then in a great measure a stranger, nor could ever be reconciled to after I became more acquainted with them. One may, indeed, observe almost the same difference between the former and the latter, some few of these excepted, as there is between the Latin of the Augustin age, and that which was in vogue after the inundation of the northern barbarians into the Roman empire, as the reader may see by what I have said of it in my History of the Jews from their Dispersion after the destruction of Jerusalem to this time.

By what I have said hitherto of my method of learning Hebrew, any one may  
see

see how easily men at years of maturity may come to as perfect knowledge of it, as the thing will admit of, and without the discouraging slavery of beginning at the grammar; and may even make that a pleasing relaxation from other studies; and it is with a view of lessening, if not altogether removing those fancied difficulties and discouragements which have been the cause of that sacred tongue being so much, and, I may add, so shamefully neglected, by the clergy especially, that I have ventured to write so far on that subject from my own experience; for, let them think of or palliate it as they will, such a neglect must of necessity be condemned, by all who seriously consider how impossible it is to come at a true knowledge, not only of the Old, but I will be bold to say of the New Testament, without a sufficient knowledge of the Hebrew: the first seems to me self-evident, and with respect to the second, or New Testament, I need only observe, that the writers of it, though inspired, and endowed with the gift of tongues, did visibly adhere still to the Hebrew idiom in which they had been

brought up, St. Paul himself not excepted. Hence, the vast quantity of Hebraisms that occur more or less in the Gospels, Acts, and in the Epistles, and which never can be rightly understood or explained; but by having recourse to the Hebrew idiom; but this hath been so fully displayed by much better pens, that I shall say no more on the subject.

I have often wished, indeed, that we had some more inviting helps to that study than we have, and such as might more effectually contribute to overcome the aversion, or indifference, which our young clergy seem to have for it. And in order to contribute something more than a bare wish towards it, I had once gone a good way in composing a tragi-comic piece, intituled, David and Michol, in Hebrew verse, wherein I introduced this young princess, acknowledging with a suitable reluctance and shame to her confident, her new born affection for the young shepherd, after she had seen him unperceived from behind a curtain in her father's pavilion, and heard some of these inimitable strains with which he was wont to enliven



enliven that desponding monarch in his most melancholy hours. The distress arising from the apprehended rivalship of her eldest sister, who was soon after promised as a reward to that brave youth, for killing the vapouring champion of the Philistines and Morabs, being represented here as having already settled her affections on Adriel the Meholathite, to whom Saul actually gave her soon after, contrary to his promise (1 Sam. xviii. 19.) the different fears and emotions of the two sisters, the means by which they came to understand each other's case and inclinations, the singular affection of Jonathan towards David, and the kind offices he did him with Saul, in order to procure him his beloved Michol, instead of her sister; all these, I say, are represented in divers affecting scenes, to which the energy of the Hebrew gives no small beauty and pathos. The Episodes, the most considerable of which consist of several interviews and conferences between the prophet Samuel and young David, as when he acquainted him with Saul's utter rejection, and his being chosen by God to succeed him in the Israelitish

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kingdom, David's surprise, scruples and fears, his dread of entertaining even the most distant hope of a crown, which he could not obtain but by the most unnatural and blackest treason against his father-in-law, and his most generous friend Jonathan, and the arguments by which the prophet endeavours to satisfy his scrupulous mind, that he shall enjoy the promised crown, without the least stain to his loyalty, and at length prevails on him to suffer himself to be anointed king; these, and some others of less importance, are not improper interludes to bring the piece to its happy catastrophe, his marrying the kind and beloved Michol, and being justly raised to the command of the Israelitish army. To this I had added a literal version, which I designed to have illustrated with critical notes; but some avocations obliged me to set it aside for a considerable number of years, and when I came to give it a fresh reading, I found it to fall so short of the elegance and loftiness of the sacred poets, with whom I was become by that time much better acquainted, and a much greater admirer of, that I was quite discouraged from improving

improving or even finishing, especially when I considered the little likelihood there was of its meeting with encouragement answerable to the pains and cost, at a time when one might observe the study of that tongue to dwindle more and more visibly into contempt, among those whose duty and business it ought to have been to cultivate and promote it.

The same mortifying consideration made me likewise set aside a design I had formed, of compiling some scriptural Hebrew Dialogues, in imitation of the Latin ones of Castalio, and a set of others on more common subjects, like those of Corderius, tho' not so puerile, for the encouragement and diversion of young beginners; and a third between a Jew, and a Christian, on the most material points of controversy between us, together with a collection and exposition of a great number of texts, both in the Old, and New Testament, plainly foretelling the future restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel, to their own Land, and their embracing Christian religion at the second coming of Christ, towards

the close of the sixth, or in the beginning of the seventh millenary of the world; for though that doctrine is, as the Jews at Rome said of Christianity, every where spoken against, (Acts, cap. ult. v. 22.) I never found it to be so but by men who, like these Jews had never rightly considered it; whilst those who really have, (among whom I have known several eminent divines of the church of England, and some among the Dissenters who were thoroughly satisfied with it) contented themselves with owning their belief of it to their intimate friends, without daring to preach or promote it, for fear of being reflected or ridiculed for it. But I have had frequent occasion to observe since (vide *Jual un Hestor*, fol. edit. vol. i. p. 613, &c. 8vo. edit. vol. iii. p. 39. and above all, see the conclusion of their history, from the dispersion to this present time) that the Christians denying that doctrine, is one of the most effectual means not only of hardening the Jews in their unbelief, but of unhinging one of the greatest evidences of the Christian faith, since it cannot be proved *or they can?* in any sense, that any of those glorious prophecies



phesies concerning the happy state of the Jews under the Messiah, which are scattered through the Old and New Testament, have been fulfilled; but that, on the contrary, they have for the most part been hated, persecuted and miserable, in most countries in the world, ever since the death of Christ. However, as I had little encouragement to hope that such a subject, written in Hebrew, how beneficial soever it might have proved, at least to young beginners, especially by the help of the Latin version, would relish with the present age, I likewise postponed it for some happier time, which is not yet come, if ever I should live to see it.

I therefore contented myself with preparing for the press a new edition of the Psalms, with Leusden's Latin version over against it, and some critical and other notes for the use of the learners, interspersed here and there, with others of a more curious nature, on several deficient places of that book, and most of them new. To this I designed a preface, that should give an account of the method by which I had, chiefly by the means of the psalms, attained to my knowledge

ledge of the Hebrew tongue, in the manner I have lately related. I designed to add some further directions than those I have mentioned, with respect to the more easy attaining a readiness of understanding and speaking it, one of which was, in the frequent reading to change the third into the second person at proper places, and so turning the psalm into a kind of prayer, which, by raising the attention, imprints the words more in the mind, as well as familiarizes the conjugating of the verbs, &c. and this I found a great help to my progress, and was approved by some judges, upon which I acquainted Mr. Palmer, of Bartholomew's Close, one of the best printers then in England, with my design, and was surpris'd one day on my coming to talk further about it, to hear that the reverend Dr. W—— had been there just before, to treat with him about printing a new edition of it, said to have been compiled by Dr. Hare, since bishop of Chichester, who pretended to have found out the true metre of the Psalms, and by means of that to have made a great number of considerable discoveries and emendations in the original. I knew  
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but too well how many excellent critics had already split upon that fatal rock, and who, instead of correcting, had quite marred the Hebrew, by distorting, transposing and altering it at pleasure, in order to bring it to their model, to expect any thing solid or satisfactory from that quarter, considering especially the character of the author. Nor was I mistaken, though this performance did not appear in print till seven or eight years after, and then to my great surprise. For Mr. Palmer had amused me with the belief that the design was set aside, either on account of its being found impracticable, or at least too difficult and dangerous; for that, upon his applying to Dr. W—— to enquire further about it, he had received such evasive answers, as plainly convinced him, that the author did not design to go on with it, which still confirmed me more in my old opinion, that all attempts to recover the antient metre of the sacred poetical books, were fruitless and lost labour. It appeared however, as I shall show hereafter, that Mr. Palmer imposed upon me, and that he knew that the design was carried on in another printing-house, though  
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with such privacy, that I never heard or dreamed of it, though I had been long acquainted with Mr. Bowyer, who was employed in the printing of it. So far from it was I, that I began to think Mr. Palmer had only invented that story to divert me from printing my proposed edition, in order to set me upon another work, in which he was more immediately concerned, and expected greater credit, as well as present profit from. This was his history of printing, which he had long promised to the world, but for which he was not at all qualified. However, he designed to have added a second part, relating to the practical art, which was more suited to his genius, and in which he designed to have given a full account of all that relates to that branch, from the letter-founding to the most elegant way of printing, imposing, binding, &c. in which he had made considerable improvements of his own, besides those he had taken from foreign authors; but this second part, though but then as it were in embryo, met with such early and strenuous opposition from the respective bodies of letterfounders, printers, and bookbinders,



binders, under an ill-grounded apprehension, that the discovery of the mystery of those arts, especially the two first, would render them cheap and contemptible (whereas the very reverse would have been the case, they appearing indeed the more curious and worthy our admiration, the better they are known) that he was forced to set it aside. But as to the first part, viz. the history of printing, he met with the greatest encouragement, not only from them, but from a very great number of the learned, who all engaged to subscribe largely to it, particularly the late earls of Pembroke and Oxford, and the famous doctor Mead, whose libraries were to furnish him with the noblest materials for the compiling of it, and did so accordingly.

The misfortune was, that Mr. Palmer, knowing himself unequal to the task, had turned it over to one Papiat, a broken Irish bookseller then in London, of whom he had a great opinion, though still more unqualified for it than he, and only aimed at getting money from him, without ever doing any thing towards it, except amusing him with fair promises for near three quarters

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ters of a year. He had so long dallied with him that they were come within three months of the time in which Mr. Palmer had engaged to produce a compleat plan, and a number or two of the first part, by way of specimen of the work, viz. the invention and improvement of it by John Faust at Mentz; and these were to be shewn at a grand meeting of learned men, of which Dr. Mead was president that year, and being his singular friend and patron, was to have promoted a large subscription and payment, which Mr. Palmer stood in great need of at that time. Whereas Papiath had got nothing ready but a few loose and imperfect extracts out of Chevalier la Caille, and some other French authors on the subject, but which could be of little or no use, because he frequently mistook them, and left blanks for the words he did not understand.

These however, such as they were, Mr. Palmer brought to me, and earnestly pressed me that I would set aside all other things I might be then about, and try to produce the expected plan and specimen by the time promised, since he must be ruined both in credit and pocket, if he disappointed his friends

friends of it. It was well for him and me, that the subject lay within so small a compass as the consulting of about twelve or fourteen principal authors, and the controversy between Mentz and Harlem universally decided in favour of the former, so that I easily fell upon a proper plan of the work, which I divided into three parts, the first which was, to give an account of the invention of the art, and its first essays by Faust at Mentz, and of its improvement by fusile or metal types, varnish, ink, &c. by his son-in-law Peter Schoeffer. The second was to contain its propagation and further improvement, through most part of Europe, under the most celebrated printers; and the third an account of its introduction and progress into England. This, together with above one half of the first part, were happily finished, and produced by the time appointed, and met with more approbation and encouragement from his friends than I feared it would, being conscious how much better it might have turned out, would time have permitted it. And this I chiefly mention, not so much to excuse the defects of such a horrid performance,

mance, as because it hath given me since frequent occasion to observe how many much more considerable works have been spoiled, both at home and abroad, through the impatience of the subscribers; though this is far enough from being the only, or even the greatest inconvenience that attends most of those kinds of subscriptions.

As to Mr. Palmer, his circumstances were by this time so unaccountably low and unfortunate, considering the largeness and success of his business, and that he was himself a sober industrious man, and free from all extravagance, that he could not extricate himself by any other way, but by a statute of bankrupt, which caused his history to go sluggishly on; so that notwithstanding all the care and kind assistance of his good friend Dr. Mead, a stubborn distemper, which his misfortunes brought upon him, carried him off before the third part of it was finished. This defect, however, was happily supplied by the late noble earl of Pembroke, who being informed by Mr. Pain the engraver, Mr. Palmer's brother-in-law, what condition the remainder was left in, and that I was the person who had

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wrote the former parts, sent for me, and, with his usual generosity, enjoined me to compleat the work, according to the plan; and not only defrayed all the charges of it, even of the paper and printing, but furnished me with all necessary materials out of his own library; and, when the work was finished, his lordship reserved only some few copies to himself, and gave the remainder of the impression to Mr. Palmer's widow, not without some farther tokens of his liberality.

Before I leave this subject, I must, in justice to that noble peer, give an instance or two of his generosity and singular integrity. At my first coming into England, I had had the honour to be introduced to him, and to dine with him and other great persons in his company, and had received no small tokens of his regard, till he conceived a just disgust at one absurd fact I had affirmed in my fabulous history of Formosa, viz. the Greek tongue being taught there as a learned language, which monstrous absurdity sufficiently shewed my ignorance and indiscretion at the time of my writing it, and from that time his lordship gave me up

for what I was, an impostor, and I saw him no more, till above twenty-eight years after, when Mr. Pine brought me to him, in order to finish the book abovementioned. At my first coming into his presence, his lordship presently knew me again, and reminded me of my having been often with him, and of the reason of his taking a dislike to me; upon which I readily owned the justness of the charge, and of his resentment, which I begged his lordship to look upon as the effect of a rash inconsiderate piece of youthful vanity, which I had long since disclaimed, and condemned myself for, and assured him, that I had since then, I thanked God, fallen into so laudable a way of living, as I doubted not his lordship, if he knew of it, would not but approve of. Mr. Pine confirmed what I had said; and his lordship with his usual affability and condescension, highly congratulated and commended me for it, and was pleased to express a more than ordinary pleasure at it, exhorting me to continue in the same good mind and way, and assuring me of his friendship and encouragement; and from that time I cannot sufficiently acknowledge his  
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extreme benevolence and condescension, in not only furnishing me with all the books and other helps I wanted, but in his generously rewarding me for what I did; and when I was forced afterwards to acquaint him that I was a person concerned in the writing of the Universal History, became a subscriber and encourager of it, as I shall presently have occasion to shew. It was a little before Mr. Palmer's death, that this work, the project of which had been formed by Mr. Crockat, and the excellent plan by the late famed Mr. Sale, met with an unexpected stop, by an unhappy quarrel between the proprietors and the authors, at the head of whom was Mr. Sale abovementioned, when I was recommended to the former as a proper person to supply the place of some of the latter, who had absolutely declined being farther concerned in it. This rupture happened soon after the publication of the third number, anno 1730, when Mr. Palmer brought me the three printed numbers from the proprietors, and desired, if after having read them and the plan, I had a mind to engage myself in the work,

I should give them and the rest of the authors a meeting at a place and day appointed, which I accordingly did, and after having informed myself with their terms, method, and other previous particulars, readily undertook to write the Jewish history, in which I was the most versed, and for which I knew myself already provided with a considerable quantity and variety of materials, which I had been collecting for my private use for several years; and as I have been one of the chief persons concerned as an author, not only in the first, but also in the second edition, and so was perfectly acquainted with every step taken in the progress of the work, the encouragements and difficulties it hath met with, as well as with the merit and demerit of every part of it, I shall make no difficulty to insert here a faithful and impartial account of the whole, at least so far as it may be of service to the public, and prove a means of making any future editions more compleat, by pointing out the many false steps which I found were impossible for us to avoid in the two former.

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And here I must observe, in the first place, that though the design was publicly pretended to be carried on by a society of learned gentlemen, yet in fact Mr. Sale was to be the sole conductor of it, by the assistance of such amanuenses as he should think fit to employ in the work. And though, in point of learning, no man might be better qualified than he, for such an arduous and extensive undertaking, yet his known strait circumstances obliged him to have so many other irons in the fire (to say nothing of his natural indolence, the sad effects of which, not only the proprietors of this work, but many others of that profession have sufficiently felt) that it was impossible for him to give it that attention which a work of that nature deserved, much less the dispatch he had engaged with them for, viz. the publishing twenty sheets per month. Accordingly upon enquiry I could not find that he ever wrote more than the first number; which, though puffed up with the specious pretence of a second edition, every reader versed on the subjects treated in it, might easily know where he had got all his materials ready

gathered to his hand ; yet so long was he in publishing it, that his delay occasioned the first misunderstanding between him and the proprietors, which was however followed by a greater.

The second and third numbers, which appeared afterwards to have been written by his two amanuenses, till then unknown to the partners, came out indeed more regularly ; but the proprietors, who had already paid Mr. Sale for them, were not a little surprised when the two young authors (whom I forbear naming, because they are both alive and make a good figure, the one in a high post, and the other in the commonwealth of learning) came and demanded the money for their copy. The proprietors did indeed produce his receipts for much greater sums than the three numbers could amount to, but though they knew that he was not in a capacity to pay them, they refused to make a second disbursement for what they had more than payed for, whilst the sufferers, on the other hand, refused to go on further with the work, till they were satisfied for what they had done. The partners stiffly refusing to comply, the result was, that one of them  
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not only quite declined all further meddling in the work, but vented his resentment by crying it down, and all the persons concerned in it, authors as well as proprietors. Mr. Sale was still more outrageous against them, of whom the latter had taken a note of 72 pounds, payable on demand, for money overpaid, and the embezzlement of a considerable number of books, which they had furnished him to carry on the design. This note was probably taken with a view of keeping him in awe, but neither that nor their threats could contain him within bounds, so that he became a most inveterate enemy to the design, and did all he could to discredit and obstruct it.

This was the hopeless situation of the work at my first being invited to it, and against which I cannot forbear mentioning another discouragement, viz. the freedom which the authors of the foregoing part had taken in reflecting, as often as they had opportunity, against the Mosaic account, especially in the history of the antient Canaanites, where God is recorded to have treated them with such severity in favour of the Israelites, and where they made no diffi-

culty to reflect upon that partiality, as inconsistent with the divine justice and goodness towards a favourite nation, who are there represented as by far the worse of the two : for, as I took the liberty to observe to them, besides that all the objections against the divine conduct in this particular have been so often and so effectually answered by learned divines, that there can be no justifiable reason given for reviving them here, this manner of treating Moses's writings is far below the regard that such an antient and celebrated author may challenge, abstractedly even from his being acknowledged an inspired penman, by Jews, Turks and Christians. And therefore added, I will never engage in the work, unless you will allow me to follow the opposite tract, and, instead of reflecting, to vindicate both his character and writings, as often as occasion offers, either from the works of our best divines, or from sundry new observations I have had opportunity to make on the books of that divine lawgiver. I much question, if they had not been at such a nonplus for a hand to go immediately upon the Jewish history, whether they would have ever yielded



yielded to these terms, such was their opinion of Mr. Sale, whom they knew had no great regard for the Old Testament, and who had long ago inspired one, if not both of his amanuenses with a most outrageous zeal against it. However, I got them with some trouble to acquiesce, and let me take my own way, only Mr. Provost, then one of the partners, begged it as a favour of me, that *I would not be righteous over much.*

I gave them soon after good cause to be satisfied with my advice and conduct, and the unexpected encouragement which the work met with, after the regular publication of two or three numbers of the Jewish history (to say nothing of the commendations given to it in print, by two such learned persons as Dr. Chapman, chaplain to his grace of Canterbury, and Dr. Pearce, rector of St. Martin's in the fields) raised it into such reputation and vogue, that they no longer doubted of its success; inso-much that they began now to enlarge the edition from 750 to 1000. And this I mention with pleasure, because the great call there was for it from that time, to what they had found before, when the numbers  
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were returned to them by dozens from other booksellers, plainly shewed how few encouragers it would have met with among the freethinkers and unbelievers, to what it did among those of a different, and I may add, of a better way of thinking. There was indeed one main objection made, viz. my clashing with those who had gone before me; and I remember more particularly, that the late earl of Pembroke (who, as I lately hinted, was an encourager of the work, and to whom I was obliged to excuse my not waiting so often on him as he desired, in order to finish the third part of Mr. Palmer's history above mentioned, by acquainting his lordship that much of my time was taken up with the Universal History, in which I was engaged) expressed no small dislike at this contrast, or, as he was pleased to call it, chequer-work between the Jewish history, and some of the numbers that preceded it; the one expressing all along an unaccountable disregard for the Mosaic writings, whilst the other took all proper occasion to vindicate them, in a manner which he was pleased to call so very laudable and just; upon which I was  
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forced to acquaint his lordship, that the former part had been printed some time before I was concerned in the work, and written by persons in a very different way of thinking from me, and which I had publicly disallowed; but as they had since declined the work, the proprietors had left me wholly at my liberty to take my own way, which I was fully determined to pursue to the end, so that there would be no more such contradictions to be found in the sequel, because all that related to the Jewish nation down to their dispersion at the destruction of Jerusalem, or even from that to the present time, if we were encouraged to continue it, would fall to my share; and that those who were to write the histories of the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, and other nations which had any connection with the Jewish, should be obliged to follow the same tract, and acknowledge the divine authority of the Old Testament. This his lordship highly approved, and as to the remaining difficulty, viz. the reconciling what was already printed, and he thought past remedying, I told his lordship, that the greatest part of these early numbers having  
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been mislaid, and so bandied about and wasted that there would be speedily a necessity of reprinting them, I would engage to revise and correct them, so as to make the whole uniform, which was soon after done accordingly. But when, for the credit of the work, I proposed to the proprietors the calling in of the old numbers, and giving the purchasers the new ones in lieu of them, the greater part of them lent a deaf ear to it, alledging, that they were so much out of pocket already, that they could not afford to destroy so great a number of copies for the sake of uniformity, and that the work must take its chance without it.

This was not the only instance in which they stood in their own light; I shall beg leave to add one or two more. Before the ninth number of the first volume had been published, they had received several letters from the learned both at home and abroad, directed to the authors, particularly two from Holland, the one from a person who translated our history into French, and the other into Dutch, and published them there regularly every month, as we did here. These, among other commendations



mendations and encouragements, desired us  
 to send them the sheets as fast as printed  
 here, for the better dispatch of their ver-  
 sion, and keeping time with us; offering  
 to make any reasonable satisfaction for it,  
 and to promote the credit and sale of the  
 English original on the other side the water.  
 The Dutch translator in particular, who  
 was a man of learning and character, ac-  
 quainted us, not without a handsome and  
 modest apology, with some alterations and  
 deviations he had taken the liberty to make  
 from our printed copy, in the three or four  
 first numbers, and desired us above all  
 things to settle a correspondence with him,  
 that we might freely communicate our  
 thoughts to one another, promising to send  
 us, at the conclusion of each volume a copy,  
 of his version, with the alterations marked  
 in the margin, and the sentiments of the  
 learned beyond sea; about the work which  
 he accordingly did at the close of his first  
 volume, though we had not been able to  
 prevail upon the proprietors to send them  
 the sheets in the manner above desired, and  
 were not willing to do it without their con-  
 sent, they being all apprehensive that these  
 versions

versions would hinder the sale of the English original there. We tried in vain to convince them of the contrary, by shewing them that it would rather forward it, by making it more known and famed abroad; for that not only the English there, but likewise those who understood that language, would still chuse to read it in the original rather than in a version. I likewise tried to make them sensible how necessary and useful such a correspondence would be to us, and how much it would in all likelihood contribute to the credit and reputation of the work, and what need we stood in to use all proper helps, in a work of so arduous and extensive a nature. The only thing they would agree to, was that we might, if we thought fit, still correspond with them, (and that they knew we could do without their leave) but as to the sending the sheets as soon as printed, they absolutely refused; so that we were forced to put an end to the one for want of being able to comply with the other.

The next instance I shall give is still of a more fordid nature. They were obliged to furnish us with all necessary books  
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for the work, and on my first going upon the Jewish history, I sent them a list of such as were really wanted, though some of them very considerable both in bulk and value, such as the Thalmuds, Polyglott, Opera Criticorum, &c. and was surprised at the difficulties they made, and objections they raised against both the number and charge of them, alledging on the one hand the vast number of them that had been formerly embezzled and lost, which they pretended to amount to near 200/. and on the other, the vast expence they had already been at, and the little returns made for it in the four first numbers; so that if I would not dispense with a good number of the dearest sort, they were afraid they must desist from proceeding farther. It was well for them, as well as me, that I had then a free access to Sion College library, by an order from the president and some of the heads of that society, and which I had made use of for some years, whenever I stood in need of it; so that I readily engaged to strike out all those that I should find there, provided they would promise to find me all the rest. By which means, as well as by the  
kind

kind assistance of my good friend the reverend Mr. Reading, the late worthy library-keeper, who having the goodness to bring me all the books I called for, without the trouble of my looking out for them in their respective shelves, to my writing desk at the farther end of the library, I could with ease consult all my authors, make what extracts I wanted out of them, after which he took the pains of returning them to their proper places.

Now as this saved the booksellers the buying of near, if not more than 100*l.* worth of books, and me a great deal of trouble, (for Mr. Reading did most frequently enquire of me what part of a book I designed to consult, and being well acquainted with most of them, brought them to me opened at the very place I wanted, which enabled me to make more dispatch, and to keep up to the time of publication) I insisted at one of our meetings, and I thought justly too, that they should, by way of acknowledgement, present either the library, or the worthy keeper of it, with a set of volumes, as soon as they come out, which, I told them, might likewise be a means of recommending



recommending the work to those divines and others that frequented that place. They all seemed readily to agree to the proposal, and I acquainted Mr. Reading, who was not a little pleased with it, and told me, that, for his part, he was very ready to do all he could to promote our design, without any such view, though he said that he should be glad to see it presented to the library, as it was a work which he much approved as far as we had gone, the chronology excepted, to which he thought that of the learned Usher vastly preferable. I told him I was wholly of his opinion, and was sorry Mr. Sale had ever fixed upon this, but that it was done before I was concerned in the work, and could not now be retrieved, at least in this first edition, but by the readers making up the difference either in their mind or with the pen. I added, that I had reason to believe, that if the work came ever to be reprinted, we should exchange it for that of Archbishop Usher, as we have actually done. However, as soon as the first part of the Jewish history was printed off, I took a little recess among some of my

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friends

friends in Hampshire, where I compleated my next task, viz. the history of the Celtes and the Scythians, and as I had the free use of several libraries there, I saved the proprietors the charge of buying those books. I was sure to find in any of them, and as soon as I found by the public papers, that the first volume was published, wrote a letter to put them in mind of their promise of presenting one of them to Sion College library; but I was much surpris'd at my coming to town, to find that they had absolutely resolv'd against it, on pretence that it might hinder many clergymen from buying it, if they could have the reading of it there. I tried in vain to forewarn them that I should want most of the same scarce and chargeable books, besides a number of others, for the writing the second part of the Jewish history, in a subsequent volume, in which case they could not expect that I should again have recourse to my good friend Mr. Reading, but must of necessity be at the expence of buying them; they chose to run the hazard of it, and I took care not to spare them in one of them, when it came to the point.

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From these few instances, the reader may easily guess that the then partners were not quite so solicitous for the credit of the work, as might have been wished, considering how well it took by this time. But I must in justice to them acquaint him, that (besides the great difficulties they laboured under to procure proper hands to go on with it, and for which I refer him to what I have said in the dedication and preface to the last volume of the folio edition) they had met with many unexpected and considerable losses; some of the newly engaged authors, for instance took up pretty round sums before-hand, and never wrote a line of the part they had undertaken; others, even among the old ones, wrote theirs in such a careless manner as not to be fit to appear in print, when they came to be examined by the rest, and yet were paid the same to the full as if their copy had passed muster, though the whole was to be done again *de novo*, and the retarding of the work was an additional loss to the proprietors. I will add, that I have since known near twenty sheets of the beginning of the Byzantine history, done by

*Bonze*

a judicious hand, and printed off, yet condemned to waste paper chiefly because it was spun to too great a length, which was still a much greater loss. The truth is, that the author of the Roman history, having wire-drawn it to above three times the length it was to have been, there was an absolute necessity of curtailing that of the Constantinopolitan emperors, to prevent the work swelling into an enormous bulk; and he himself hath abridged it in such a manner as hath quite marred it, since the reader will find most reigns contained in as many short paragraphs as they would have required sheets, which is so much the greater loss to the public, inasmuch as the Roman history being so well known, and written by so many hands, was the fittest to have been thus epitomised; whereas the Byzantine, though equally curious and instructive, is so little known, that it ought to have been written in a more copious manner, especially as it abounds with the most interesting incidents to the church as well as the state. So that the author hath done in both respects  
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the very reverse of what he ought to have done.

The reader may, from the instances above mentioned, suppose perhaps, that we the authors kept constantly to our meetings and examining each part in a body, as we used to do at first setting out, a method of the greatest consequence towards the carrying on such a work, and which the proprietors were not wanting in generosity to promote; but we soon found the new comers so averse to continue it, or submit the review of their copy to the old ones, that they either absented themselves from our meetings, or else condescended only to answer such questions as were asked them by the old ones concerning their fixing any point of history, which had a connection with that of another nation; as the Macedonians and Greeks, for instance, done by two or three hands, to prevent our clashing with each other about uncertain or controverted facts; in every respect, they insisted on going on each in his own way, as they were, they told us, sufficiently acquainted with the subject they had in hand. By this means it was that they indulged themselves in the

liberty of going beyond their bounds, and swelling each part to double the bulk agreed on, by often repeating the same common facts in each separate history, which we had agreed should be related at length but in its proper place, whilst every other occasion that offered for fresh mention of them, was to be only referred to that, either as *promiscua* to follow in the sequel, or as a reference to what hath already been said. For we had from the beginning agreed upon this method, that nothing should be related at length concerning the history of any nation or country, but what was transacted within the boundaries of it; and that the wars, conquests, &c. which were carried on abroad, should be mentioned chiefly in the history of those countries where they were made; to do otherwise, would be, as was hinted at the beginning of the first volume, treating those conquered nations with the same arbitrary contempt and neglect as their conquerors had formerly done. Thus, for instance, it was resolved that Alexander's history should be confined to Macedonia, and his other conquests re-  
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ferred to that of those nations he subdued; that that of the Romans, should be confined within the limits of Italy, and their new lawless acquisitions referred to the history of the Gauls, Germans, Spaniards, Carthaginians, &c. that were to follow. This would at once have effectually cut off all needless repetitions, with which the work hath been swelled beyond its designed length, without docking the history of any nation, as we have been since forced to do, to avoid falling into the same fault in which the writers of the several Greek histories have fallen, where the reader may see the same facts related over and over in the histories of the Macedonians, Athenians, Spartans, &c. not without some visible and unjustifiable variations, all which might easily have been avoided, had the authors kept within the rules abovementioned. But no one hath shewn a greater disregard to them, than the author of the Roman history, who hath swallowed up all the unhappy nations that fell into those conquerors clutches without distinction, and expatiated with the same diffuseness on their history without, as he hath in that within

their territories, which though some of our readers have approved of, as it gives a more connected history of that nation, a thing so much the less needful in a work of this extensive nature, as we have it written in a body by so many different hands, yet hath been highly disliked by the far greater, and I may add the more judicious part of them, as contrary to our plan and engagements to the public, and to the nature of an Universal History, wherein that of every nation, should be found fully displayed, and every fact confined to its proper scene of action. It was to the neglect of attending to, or rather keeping up to this original design, that we must ascribe two considerable defects in the work, against which our readers have justly complained. The one, that some histories, as for instance, that of the Carthaginians, had been fraught with an unnecessary repetition of all their wars with the Romans, or which had been already fully related in the Roman history, to the swelling of the work beyond its due limits; the other, that to avoid that inconveniency and charge to the purchasers, those of the Gauls, Germans and Spaniards

are



are truncated, and their wars with, and reduction by the Romans are barely referred to what hath been said in the Roman history, where they are scattered and so interspersed with that of other nations, that it cannot be called a regular and compleat history of them. And what is this but absorbing all these brave nations by the lump, into that of their tyrannic conquerors; and how could I, to whose lot the history of those three ancient nations fell, avoid it by any other way, but that of recapitulating all afresh, in the most compendious manner I could, to avoid swelling the work and referring the reader to the volume and page of the Roman history, where the facts are mentioned at length. And there was by that time the more cause to abridge all these needless repetitions, because the purchasers, and after them the booksellers, had justly complained, how vastly the work was already swelled beyond the bounds to which we had promised to confine it. But this was not so readily complied with by the rest, who having finished each their respective histories, according to the plan and method agreed upon, and mentioned above,

and

and either did not dream that the writer of the Roman history would go contrary, or when they found he had, did resent it too much to suffer their own to be truncated on his account, insisted upon their being printed at full length, and with all their repetitions. And this the booksellers were forced to submit to, for fear not only of disobliging the authors, but likewise of retarding the regular publication of the volumes.

But what will easily convince the reader, as it hath me long since, how much more earnest the writer of the Roman history was to promote his own ignoble interest, at the expence of the proprietors as well as the credit of the work, is, that when he came afterwards to write the second part of the history of the Persians, he hath repeated at length all their wars with the eastern emperors, together with all the other facts and incidents that passed between them, at full length, instead of referring to what he had formerly said in the Byzantine history; for this plainly shews that the *dulcis odor lucri*, more effectually influenced him than all the complaints of the proprietors and purchasers, which last were become

come so rife that we thought it necessary to publish something by way of excuse for this excess of bulk, and at the same time to make the best apology we could for that and other deviations from our original plan, without discovering the causes they were owing to, which would have rather helped to discredit the work in the eye of the world, which did not dream how little unanimity there was in our proceedings, and how impossible it was for the best inclined of us to keep such selfish spirits as were then employed, within the bounds prescribed. I shall now give a farther instance of it, and such a pregnant one, as will convince the reader that such a work as this could never be carried on fairly, and according to our promise, notwithstanding all our care and precaution, even in the second impression of the work; how much less possible must it have been, to have done so in the first.

But there was still a greater inconvenience resulting from these repetitions, and the monstrous bulk of the Roman history, and by that time the seventh volume was  
finished,

finished, the public began to think we designed to spin the work to nine or ten, for there were still a great number of ancient kingdoms and countries to be described, according to our original design, such as the Mohammedan history, and other nations interwoven with it, consisting of above twenty articles in Mr. Sale's plan, most of them of such hard names as few readers were acquainted with, besides the kingdoms of the great Mogul and other parts of India, those of Siam, China, Japan, Tartary, Russia both in Europe and Asia, the Turkish empire in both, and the whole country of America; all which could hardly be contained in less than two volumes at the least. However, by that time the seventh volume was published, the proprietors met with so little encouragement to go on from the purchasers, and were already such considerable losers, that they thought fit to stop there, and leave the work thus maimed and imperfect; but what not only determined, but in some measure forced them to it, was their having the mortification soon after, to see their property invaded by three different piratical bookfellers



bookfellers of Dublin, who, as they were not at any other charge than printing and paper, both which are much cheaper in Ireland than here, could well enough afford it to the public for half the price that ours sold for at London, and unknown to each other reprinted the work there word for word, two of them in folio and the third in octavo, and when each of them came to understand that the like piracy had been committed by the other two, fell foul against each other in their advertisements, in such language and opprobrious names as all three justly deserved. As therefore such a piece of flagrant injustice could not but greatly affect the original proprietors, who were already so considerably losers, it could not be expected that they should run the manifest hazard of throwing away more money in pursuit of their plan. We were therefore obliged to frame another kind of excuse for their dropping it, viz. that those countries and kingdoms not spoken of in the foregoing volumes, being of later discovery, such as India, China, &c. in Asia, a great part of Africa, and the new American world, they would  
be.

be more properly described, and their histories begun and continued in the modern part, which they were however no farther resolved to go on with, than as they found a probability of its meeting more encouragement than the old had hitherto done. So that they had now time to think on some proper means of suppressing the three pyrated impressions as far as possible, by exposing them to the public as they justly deserved, and proposing to give the world a new and more correct edition of the whole in octavo, together with additions of such material points as had been omitted in the former.

When this second impression came to be resolved on, both the authors and proprietors, sensible of the many miscarriages of the former, for want of our following our first plan, did unanimously agree among other things, that every one of us in the revising, correcting, and improving each ~~our~~ respective parts, should oblige ourselves, so far to stick close to it for the future, that all the unnecessary repetitions should be rescinded, and every historical fact be confined to the history of that country in  
which

which it was transacted, and no where mentioned at length but there; as the conquest of Sicily in the history of that Island, of Carthage in that of the Republic, of the Spaniards, Gauls, &c. in that of those nations, which was the only way of making every one of them compleat, and at the same time shorten the work, by the avoiding all needless repetitions. And this we not only promised, but bound ourselves in writing to perform; however to make the point still more sure, as I had reason to doubt an unanimous compliance to the agreement from one quarter, I further proposed that no part should go to the press, till it had been examined and approved by the rest. This was accordingly opposed by the party I suspected under several specious pretences, such as taking up too much time, as we lived at some distance from each other, the danger of mislaying or losing some of the copy, and having now and then some alteration in controverted points, all which might retard if not hinder the work; upon which the proprietors thought fit to give it up, and to depend upon our honour for the exact performance of our agreement.

agreement. However, as he hath hardly in one single instance kept up to it, but hath reprinted, not only his own Roman history, but several other parts done formerly by other hands, and now committed to his care by the booksellers, almost verbatim from the first edition, to the no small trouble of, and damage to the other authors who had filled up these unnecessary chasms in their respective parts, which he should have struck out of his own, and have been since obliged to erase all those additions; he hath sufficiently convinced every one of us what his views were in so strenuously opposing my proposal, and consequently how impossible it is for such a design as this to be rightly executed, unless the whole care and revival be left to one single person of ability equal to it. The thing is now past all remedy with respect to this second edition, though it may be easily rectified in every respect in a future one, if any such may ever find encouragement. But the wrong done to the public in this second, is the more considerable, through the unfairness of the author above mentioned, in as much as, though



though he is the only one concerned, that hath not complied with our articles, he has by his subdulous artifice had the far greater share in the work committed to him. And I think I have the greater right to complain of his breach of promise, and the discredit he hath brought on us and the work, as I can make it appear that neither in the first nor second edition, I have ever departed from our original plan, in any of those parts I have been engaged in, nor inserted any thing in them except by way of promissum or reference, that properly belonged to another. And for the truth of this I shall only appeal to these parts, a list of which I shall, in justice to my own character, now give to the reader.

1. The Jewish history, from Abraham, to the Babylonish captivity.
2. The history of the Celtes and Scythians.
3. The ancient history of Greece, or the fabulous and heroic times.
4. The sequel of the Jewish history, from the return from Babylon, to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.
5. The history of the ancient Empires of Nice and Trebizon.

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6. The

6. The history of the ancient Spaniards.

7. Of the Gauls.

8. Of the ancient Germans.

In the second edition, wherein we endeavoured to supply all the material omissions in the first, the following parts came to my share, viz.

1. The sequel of the Theban, and Corinthian history.

2. The Retreat of Xenophon.

3. The continuation of the Jewish history, from the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, to this present time.

I must here observe with respect to the last of these, that it had been promised in our plan from the very beginning, but had been deferred, as more properly belonging to the modern history; upon which several of our subscribers and correspondents complained of the omission, as it is a subject not only curious and instructive, but likewise little known, and therefore much wanted; upon which we had agreed to satisfy their demand, and to have inserted it at the end of the second part of the Jewish or the Roman history, and I had accordingly prepared it for the press against that time, and bestowed

*Author of the  
- Greek, Persian,  
- Roman, Carthaginian,  
- Sicilian,  
- Jewish History,  
- the Jewish  
- History - the Jewish  
- History -*

bestowed full six months in the writing of it, besides what I had spent before in collecting such curious materials as fell in my way; so that the copy, which will make about fifteen or sixteen sheets of the octavo edition, hath been a good while in the hands of the proprietors, and as I had reason to expect, would have been printed before now in the fifteenth or sixteenth volume, of which I had apprised several of my correspondents, as well as those of my acquaintance who enquired after it. But to my surprise, the proprietors have since determined to postpone it till the Modern History comes out, as it brings the history of the Jewish nation down to the present time, which no other in the work doth, and can have no place in the Antient. But the real cause was the want of room, the work being like to swell beyond the number of volumes promised in their proposals.

The truth is they being in some measure obliged to include it within the compass of twenty, or at most twenty-one volumes, in order to suppress the piratical Irish edition (which was promised to be contained

within that number, though without any probability (or perhaps design) of their so doing, if one may guess by the bulk of each of those volumes that have been published) there was a necessity of reducing matters within a narrower compass. And this upon a strict computation might have been easily done, notwithstanding the several additions that were to be made to the work, had all the needless repetitions been rescinded, the style made more concise, and a great number of superfluous facts, circumstances, disquisitions, and controversies, most of them useless and incompatible with the nature of so extensive a work, been struck out of both the text and notes, as we had agreed should be done by every one in his respective parts, and hath been actually done by all but one, and him the person who had the largest share in the revising and contracting of the work; so that through his neglect and noncompliance, the work hath swelled not only much beyond our computation, but would have done much more so, had not the proprietors from a laudable desire of keeping up as much as could possibly be



be done to the first proposals, not only generously thrown in five or six sheets extraordinary into every volume, but likewise enlarged every page both in the length and number of the lines, by which each volume from the fourth downwards, may be justly said to contain between six or seven sheets more of matter than was originally proposed, or than the third or fourth contained. And this I am bound to mention in justice to them, because though they were considerable losers by the first edition, they yet chose to put themselves to this extraordinary expence, rather than incur the charge of imposing upon the public, by the unexpected addition of three or four volumes more than they had engaged to comprise the whole work in. However, I cannot but be sorry that these considerations should be looked upon as a sufficient pretext for their suppressing that sequel of the Jewish history I have been speaking of, contrary to the original plan of the work, and the expectation of so many of its encouragers. And I do purposely take notice of it, that in case I can not prevail upon them to print it at the end of the work,

and leave it at the option of subscribers, either to buy or leave it, the public may know where the fault lies, and that my friends may not lay it at my door.

Thus much may suffice for the history of this work, and to account for the great imperfections of the first edition, and for the second not turning out better than it hath; and I doubt not, when the reader considers all these things he will be apt rather to wonder, as I have often done, that it is come out so well as it is. I have no intention, much less any cause to reflect on the proprietors of the work, especially those who are become so since the deaths or failure of most of the old ones. They have spared neither pains nor cost towards its improvement, nor been wanting in generosity to the authors. They never once disputed with me about the price I set upon my labour, nor refused to supply me with such sums as I drew upon them for. This is indeed more than I can or ought to say of the old set of them, some of whom often put us to great difficulties by their sordidness and mutual jealousies and misunderstandings, all which I with pleasure observed to vanish upon

upon the coming in of this new set. It is true that as far as related to me, they always found me diligent and punctual; I performed the parts I undertook to the best of my ability, and being content with a moderate gain, could bestow the more time and labour upon them, and always took care to have them finished at the time required; and so wholly, and I may add cordially, was I intent upon the work in general, that I would never engage in any other whilst that lasted. And this they were so far satisfied of, and so entirely relied on me, that whether in town or country, I have been allowed to draw upon Mr. Millar, for some scores of pounds before hand, which were punctually answered by him, though neither he nor any of the partners, ever saw any of my copy till it went to the press; and when printed off paid the surplus with uncommon generosity, for I always took care to keep within compass. This may look like vanity for me to say of myself, but as it will not be made public till after my death, when I shall be out of the way of reaping any satisfaction from it, but the consciousness of having acted an honest part; and

as this hath been my constant method with all the booksellers with whom I have been concerned, and for this I dare appeal to all who have employed me, I am the less scrupulous about any sinister construction a censorious reader may put upon it; those who have known me and my conversation for much above these twenty years, will I hope pass a more candid judgment upon it.

However, with respect to the management of the partners about this second edition, I cannot but observe that they were guilty of two fatal errors. The first in committing so great a share of the work, as well as the revival of the whole to a man, who they had all reason to believe aimed chiefly at gain and dispatch, and to agree with him by the lump as they did, which would only prove a temptation to him to hurry it off as fast as he could, and as he accordingly did, to their no small mortification, as well as hurt to themselves and the work. I might add, that as he was and owned himself quite unacquainted with the eastern languages, he was the most unqualified for several parts that fell to his



his lot of any and if care had not been taken would have committed such mistakes in the very spelling of proper names, as would quite have discredited it.

The other was their engaging to publish a volume monthly, and beginning to publish before they had a sufficient number ready printed before hand, to have enabled them to keep up to their time; the want of which precaution hath since obliged them to have several volumes on the anvil at different presses at once, and to be dispatched with such precipitation that the compositors have overlooked many literal errors which had been corrected by the authors, and which is still worse, this hath likewise made it impossible for us to make the proper and necessary references from one volume to the other as they were printed at the same time, and not regularly one after another, as they should have done, so that in some cases we could hardly refer to the volume much less to the page; but the reader will find many instances of this last.

I shall

I shall now give some few useful hints how this work may be made compleat in a future edition by one single hand, if equal to the task; first, let whoever undertakes it read it all over again attentively and regularly, one volume after another, and as he reads, common-place every thing, person, fact, &c. as if he designed it for a compleat and copious index. Let him not depend upon that general one which is ready made to his hand, at the end of the work, and where all these needless repetitions, inconsistencies, and contradictions may be artfully omitted or concealed, but either make a full and exact one *de novo*, or at least consult the printed one upon every point he reads over, and mark down every such omission or concealment; though were it my case I should rather prefer the former, because there will be the less labour lost, as it will stand ready for such when the work comes to be reprinted, and he will have afterwards nothing to do but add the printed pages to every article as they come in course, only if it should be deemed too full, he may strike out afterwards such as appear of less moment. But he will find  
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this singular benefit by such an exact common-placing of every thing, that it will discover to him at once every needless repetition, every inconsistency and contradiction as he reads on, which he may at the same time mark down in the margin of the book, in order to correct them on the second reading. He may then set down likewise in the margin, the volume and page where the same thing is told before, where it is differently related or set in a different light, and in cases that admit a dispute, by consulting the original authors, be able to judge which is right or most probable. Thus for instance, when he finds the very same facts related in the histories of Sicily, Rome and Carthage, he will easily know where they ought to have been set down at length, namely, where the scene of action happened, and where only to be referred to it, viz. in the other two. So that whatever either the Romans or Carthaginians transacted in Sicily, should be only promised or referred to in their history, and only related at full length in that of the Sicilians; and so of the rest. He will likewise by such an index find out

out where any facts or transactions have been differently related or represented by each of their writers, who must of course be supposed, and will upon trial be found to clash often, for want of frequently conferring with each other, or duly consulting and examining, or perhaps some times of rightly understanding the original authors they pretend to follow.

By this means he will likewise be able to discover many facts related in one place, which more properly belong to, or might be more conveniently transferred to another, and place them so accordingly in his marginal notes. By that time he hath common-placed the whole set of volumes, he will be likewise able to discover every material omission under every article, either from his own memory and reading, or by turning to the index of such books as treat of the same subject, and be able to supply every such defect from them. Thus in the articles of nations, as Jews, Egyptians, Romans, &c. or of cities, as Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome, &c. if he finds any thing material, which not being in his common-place book, makes him conclude  
it



it was omitted in the work, he will likewise easily supply from those authors and their indexes, and the same may be done by the articles of names of kingdoms, provinces, monarchs, &c. by furnishing himself with the best modern authors who have wrote of them, and supplying each with every thing he finds wanting in his own common-place book, as well as exchange some less material trifles that are in this, for more momentous ones he will find in them, all which may be done with little trouble, and he will still reserve to himself the liberty of the difference in controverted points he will meet with among those moderns, by having recourse to the original ones; for he must make it a standing rule to himself, not to rely on the former which are more copious than exact, without consulting the latter, and where those differ among themselves as they often do, to use all proper helps either to reconcile them, or to chuse the more probable side.

This would have been the method I should have taken, had I had any share in the revising any other but my own particular

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lar-parts in the work; tho' I must still have thought it too much for any one to have revised the whole, and should have thought it necessary to have imparted the above mentioned rules to the rest, in order to have enabled them to have rectified every mistake, contrast, and jarring, between their parts. For as I knew that all the hopes of the proprietors, was in a second, and more correct edition, to reimburse the losses they had sustained by the first; I had their consent to compose the index to each of the volumes, (the first excepted, which was done by the same hand that wrote the Roman history, and justly condemned for its unnecessary length and verbosity) by which I could observe as I read along, and marked in the margin of the leaves, every needless repetition, superfluity, contrariety, omission, transposition, &c. that would be necessary to make the next impression more compleat, especially when I came to make the general one to the whole; and was the better inabled by it, to rescind and alter what I found amiss or superfluous in those parts that came more immediately under my care, though I have had since  
reason

reason to think I have gone too far in it, and out of complaisance to the proprietors, who complained that my Jewish history was too diffuse for a work of this nature, have been prevailed on to strike out in this second edition many curious things, which I have since found had been very well liked and approved of in the first. But without such rescissions it was impossible to bring the whole within the compass proposed, especially as they were so much neglected in several other parts of the work, which would at least as conveniently admit of them, such as the Dynasties of the Egyptians, the history of Persia from the oriental writers, and many other such fabulous absurdities. However, I cannot accuse myself of having suppressed any thing that was of moment in that history; though several perhaps, and to my no small regret, which would have been acceptable to the curious in that kind of learning. As for all the other parts within my province, I have rather enlarged and improved them with new proofs, observations and curious additions, as may be easily found by comparing the two editions together.

With

With relation to the desiderata in both editions, I cannot forbear taking notice that the ancient history of the northern nations, such as Moscovy, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, &c. hath been altogether omitted except some few hints that have been given in that of the Scythians and Celtes, intimating only that the former were originally descended from the latter. It is indeed commonly believed that these remote nations have no records of their ancient times, but I had a singular opportunity of being convinced of the contrary, by a learned gentleman who was a professor of history, &c. in the university of Abbo in Norway, but came to London mostly every summer as an agent from the king of Sweden, and among other new books, used to buy several sets of the Universal History for that Prince, for count Coningslegg, and other great persons in that kingdom. This gentleman having expressed a desire to Mr. Symons his bookseller, and one of the proprietors, of conversing with one of the authors, particularly with that of the Jewish history, we soon came acquainted together, and upon  
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my enquiring of him after such records or monuments of those northern nations on which one might compile their ancient history, gave me such a satisfactory account, as made me persuade Mr. Symon, and the other partners, to engage him to undertake it, which he, with some difficulty, agreed to do, notwithstanding his other avocations. I had the pleasure of seeing him every time he came to London, and to hear how well he proceeded in the work; and accordingly in about three years he brought a large and elaborate account of all the northern nations and countries, their origin, ancient settlements, history, &c. with many curious observations on their geography, natural history, and the whole backed with such good authorities and proofs, as one would hardly have expected from such barren climes, and was recommended by several of the most learned men in Sweden and Norway, who had the perusal, or even contributed to some part or other of it.

This chapter, which, according to our original plan, was to have preceded the irruption of the Huns, Goths, Vandals, Suevi

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and into the southern parts of Europe, would have given a much better and clearer account of these barbarous nations, than that which hath been given in the history of their new settlements in Hungary, Italy, France, Spain, &c. The misfortune was, that it proved too bulky (though nothing could be said to be superfluous or impertinent in it) it being computed to amount to above seventy folio sheets, for which they could not find room, our work being already swollen vastly beyond its bulk; so that Dr. Sidenius, that was the learned author's name, had the mortification of having that curious part refused by the proprietors, and returned upon his hands, the old ones, as Messrs. Symon and Batley, being dead, and the rest, except Mr. Osborne in Grays-Inn, being gone off, and the new ones not looking upon themselves concerned in the agreement. And this I mention with no small regret, because it was a considerable loss to the learned world, as well as to the author, and such as I much fear will hardly be ever recovered.

In the interval between the conclusion of the first, and the resolution of printing the second,

second, I was invited into a share of the new System of Geography, in which though the Public found just fault with the extravagant length of that which related to Great Britain and Ireland, I yet found the authors concerned in it, so well qualified for the work, so communicative and punctual in their regular meetings once a fortnight, that I readily came into it, and found with pleasure the work carried on with more unanimity, exactness, and to the satisfaction of the proprietors, as well as of the public. The parts I did in that work were those that follow. 1. Spain, Portugal and the islands belonging to them. 2. Italy, Savoy, Piedmont, and the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, &c. 3. Muscovy both in Europe and Asia. 4. Turkey in Asia. 5. In Asia, China, Japan, Jetzo, and the islands along those coasts, particularly that of Formosa, which part I chose, that I might take occasion publickly to acknowledge, as it were by a third hand, the falshood and imposture of my former account of that island. 6. In Africa, the kingdoms of Egypt, Abyssinia, Lybia, Barbary, Tripoli, Tunis, Morocco, Fez, with an

account of the Mediterranean Sea, and the famed river of Sanaga. 7. The Azores islands. 8. In America, the countries of Brasil, Magellan, Terra del Fuego, Canada, Louisiana, and the Bahamas and Bermudas islands. And by the time I had concluded these last, I was called upon to prepare my respective parts of the Universal History, for the second impression mentioned above. I have however found sufficient reason to complain of the wrong management of this work in several respects, though otherwise carried on with greater exactness and unanimity than that of the Universal History, and I shall now take the liberty of mentioning some of the most considerable ones, because they have been the cause of some unavoidable errors and blunders, not only in the two above mentioned works, but in most others that have been published in the same or near the same way. The first is the authors being tied to produce such a number of sheets in so short a time as is almost incompatible with their desire, if any such they have, of performing their respective parts with any exactness; for, though the publishers seldom fail of ac-

quainting



quainting the public that the work is either already, or pretty near finished and ready for the press, so that there is no danger of its meeting with any delay or impediment, yet that is seldom if ever the case, and with respect to the works I am speaking of, I found it quite the reverse, and that they have frequently been sent to the press, under the promise of being regularly published, by such a number of sheets every week or month, when scarcely a fourth part of it was written. So that, to prevent the retarding of the work, they have been obliged to call in for new helps, whom they have obliged to engage to perform their part in less than half the time, that it would have reasonably required; considering that they not only had it all to begin and go through in that short space, as was the case in this new System of Geography, but that some of them were likewise engaged in some other work, between which and this, they were forced to divide their time and diligence, though either of them did more than require it all; and how could it be possible for either to be performed as it ought?

Another mismanagement from the beginning was, the interlarding every fourth or fifth number with a set of maps which indeed gave some breathing time to the authors, but then it confined them to receive all their directions concerning the limits, situation, longitude, latitude, distances, &c. from those maps, which being such as the engraver rather than the authors had made choice of, as the most authentic in his opinion, were not always so judiciously chosen as could have been wished. This made many errors remediless and irretrievable, because the greatest part of those maps had been published in such numbers, several months before the authors were called upon to begin the geography of those countries. This I often complained of to the proprietors from the beginning, both as a great oversight and a hardship upon the authors, who, instead of being allowed to direct the engraver in the choice or compiling of them, were obliged to follow him implicitly, and often contrary to their own opinion and liking, in those which he had thought fit to pitch upon for our guide. Thus in the  
map

map of Japan, for instance, the land of Jetzo is affirmed to be the same with Cum-schatta, though contrary to fact, it not being so much as part of it. I might add likewise, that those maps confined us to the orthography of places, though very often erroneous, or being of foreign extract, conveyed a wrong sound of the name to an English ear.

But the most considerable mismanagement was in the choice of such printers as bore indeed the greatest sway and interest, and who consequently had such a glut of business, that every thing was dispatched with the utmost hurry and precipitation, in order to keep up to their time. This never failed causing a great deal of confusion and incorrectness in the printing, particularly in the orthography of proper names, and giving the authors a great deal of trouble in correcting the proofs, which, however, was but too often of no service, through the hurry the compositors were in, which made them overlook and often neglect those corrections. It frequently happened likewise, that they required such a quick dispatch of the author, in correcting the sheets, that

they had not time enough to read them over with that carefulness they would otherwise have done ; so that they themselves could not avoid overlooking even some material errors in the spelling, but most chiefly in the numbers and figures. As for me, it being my constant rule not to be engaged in two works at once, I never would let a proof go out of my hands, without a second, and, in some cases, a third reading, but I have often found that I might as well have saved myself that labour, since the correctors or compositors had not time enough left to make the proper emendations, and sometimes have sent the sheet to the press before the proof hath been returned.

To prevent this unfair dealing, as I may justly call it, or at least to lay the blame at the right door, I had taken a method of insisting upon having two proofs, of each sheet, sent me from the press; under pretence of keeping one of them by me, to refer to when it was requisite, but in fact by correcting both proofs alike in the margin, to be able to produce that which I kept by me, against both the compositor,  
and



and corrector, when ever they were guilty of any such neglect. But as soon as my design was found out by them, some plausible excuses were made, for not continuing to send duplicates, and I was forced to give up that point, unless I had a mind to disoblige the very master printers, who were some of the richest, and bore the greatest sway with the proprietors, and had already deprived us, under the pretence of dispatch, of the privilege of revising our copy, after our first correction. This last indeed was denied us, on account of the unreasonable trouble, which one of the authors too frequently gave them, in those revises at the first setting out; who did often require three or four of them, and every one loaded with new, and mostly needless alterations, which took up so much of the compositors time that they were obliged to complain of it. This was, though true with respect to one author, but a poor pretence for depriving the rest of the liberty of one single revise, which they chiefly insisted on, not so much to make any necessary alterations, as only to be satisfied that none of their corrections were over-

overlooked. However, the point was overruled by the printers; and that material check being taken off from the compositors, the literal errors multiplied so fast upon us, especially in the words and quotations out of the eastern languages, that we were obliged to take notice only of such as were of the greatest moment in the table of errata of the first edition, and to curtail as many of those foreign words as we could in the second, especially those of the Arabic, Hebrew, and Syriac kind.

These are some of the principal causes of that incorrectness which commonly, I had almost said unavoidably, happen in these kinds of works, let an author be ever so desirous and careful to avoid them, unless he hath so great a sway over the printers, that they dare not refuse him the liberty of revising his own work as often as he sees it needful. And the least that he can insist on, for his own credit and satisfaction, is a revival of every proof after it hath been corrected by him.

I did take occasion to mention a little higher the wrong information which Mr. Palmer gave me concerning Bishop Hare's Metrical Psalter,

Psalter, which was, unknown to me, put into Mr. Bowyer's hands to print, whilst I was writing the first part of the Jewish history, and as there had elapsed several years between the time, in which Mr. Palmer was applied to by Dr. Washburn, and that of my becoming in course to write on the subject of the Hebrew poetry, which had confirmed me in the opinion that the bishop's design was quite set aside; I made no difficulty to affirm after the generality of the learned writers on that subject, that the metre of the Hebrew Psalms and other poetical pieces in the Old Testament, was looked upon as irretrievably lost, notwithstanding the efforts of some, and the pretences of others, who vainly imagined they had or were in the way of recovering it. I backed my opinion with some new arguments which had occurred to me during my fruitless search after it, and which appeared to me to carry no small force. This part, which was contained in the ninth number of the first volume, was scarcely published, before the bishop's Psalter came out. It may be easily imagined that my curiosity would not permit me to be long without examining

examining that performance, which seemed to overthrow all that I had said on that subject, and sadly was I vexed that my part was published before I had seen this unexpected piece. Had I dreamed of any such being so near coming out, I would doubtless have suppressed mine till I had thereby examined it. What surprised me most, and made me entertain some higher notion of that enterprize, was the long interval which had passed between the time of its being finished and offered to Mr. Palmer, and that of its being published, which I reckon to have been about six or seven years, and which I therefore supposed the bishop and his learned friend Dr. W——, had spent in the revising and polishing it; but, upon stricter enquiry, I found the cause of that delay to have been of a different nature, and was as follows.

His lordship had excepted against Mr. Palmer's Hebrew types, which were of Athias's font, and a little battered, and insisted upon his having a new sett from Mr. Caslon, which greatly exceeded it in beauty. But Mr. Palmer was so deep in debt to him, that he knew not well how to procure



procure it from him without ready money, which he was not able to spare. The bishop likewise insisted upon having some Roman and Italic types cast with some distinguishing mark, to direct his readers to the Hebrew letters they were designed to answer, and these required a new sett of punches and matrices before they could be cast, and that would have delayed the work, which Mr. Palmer was in haste to go about, that he might the sooner finger some of his lordship's money. This put him upon such an unfair stratagem, which when discovered, quite disgusted his lordship against him, viz. representing Mr. Caſſon as an idle, dilatory workman, who would in all probability make them wait several years for those few types, if ever he finished them. That he was indeed the only artist that could supply him with those types, but that he hated work, and was not to be depended upon, and therefore advised his lordship to make shift with some sort which he could substitute, and would answer the same purpose, rather than run the risk of staying so long, and being perhaps disappointed. The  
bishop

bishop, however, being resolved, if possible, to have the desired types, sent for Mr. Bowyer, and asked him whether he knew a letter founder that could cast him such a sett out of hand, who immediately recommended Mr. Caslon; and, being told what a sad and disadvantageous character he had heard of him, Mr. Bowyer not only assured his lordship that it was a very false and unjust one, and engaged to get the above-mentioned types cast by him, and a new font of his Hebrew ones, in as short a time as the thing could possibly be done. Mr. Caslon was accordingly sent for by his lordship, and having made him sensible of the time the new ones would require to be made ready for use, did produce them according to his promise, and the book was soon after put to the press; and this it was that had so long retarded its publication.

I was not long without it, and must own that his preface, in which his lordship confuted, with uncommon learning and keenness, all the systems that hitherto appeared in public, raised my expectation to a high degree. For if the metre of the sacred book  
could

could but be supposed to come up to the loftiness and dignity of the thoughts and expressions, (and who could ever have doubted of it, that considers how much greater genius the latter requires than the former?) it must I thought have greatly excelled that of Homer and Virgil. But how great was my surprise, when upon reading on I found that his lordship had reduced it to a poor low, crawling humdrum, bitony of trochaics and iambics, or *vice versa* as the reader pleased, and into which he might with ease, and with much less than half the variations, maiming and distortion of the text, have reduced any common prose out of any language! How much more still to find in almost every line, words, and sometimes whole verses mutilated, stretched out or lopped off, transposed or exchanged *ad libitum*, in order to bring them to his ill contrived standard! To hear a learned prelate, with all the seeming gravity imaginable, affirm that the Hebrew poetry, (which by the way was arrived to such prodigious heights, with respect to the grandeur and loftiness of its figures and imagery, even so early as Moses's

Moses's

Moses's time) was even so low as in David's time, so crude, imperfect and vague, as not to have so much as a determinate difference between long and short syllables, especially considering to what a height of perfection that monarch had improved the art of music; and, what is still more surprising than all the rest, to see his lordship, in consequence of this his low conceit of the Hebrew poetry, take such pains to mar, deface, and destroy some of the most surprising, lofty and complicated figures and allusions in that sacred book, and such as far excel all that is to be met with in the Greek and Latin poets. But for these I must refer the reader to what I have observed of the Hebrew poetry, and on that absurd performance, in the *Universal History* (see vol. iv. of folio edition p. 710 & *seq.* and notes, and in the octavo one, vol. x. p. 202 & *seq.* and note (E)). The occasion of my being obliged to make those animadversions on it, was as follows.

I was so shocked at the freedom which that prelate took to depreciate, mutilate and vilify so sublime a set of the noblest and most divine poems, that I  
 thought



thought myself obliged to write against him, and to expose, as they deserved, all his unfair criticisms on it, all his forced emendations, and, above all, the absurdity of his new-discovered metre; but withal, in such a respectful manner, as was due to a person of his character. And in order to that, retired for three months into Surry and Hampshire, where I had an opportunity to consult, upon proper occasions, some of my friends, who were no strangers to that kind of learning. I found the task the less difficult, as I presently fell in among some of them, who not only condemned his performance, but had raised already some very material objections against it, which they readily communicated to me as soon as they were apprised of my design. One of them among the rest had (by way of exposing his lordship's contemptible metre) reduced the English Lord's Prayer, Creed, Ten Commandments, and the *Te Deum*, into the same crawling measure; whilst I, who wholly confined myself to the Hebrew, had already done the same by the first chapter of Genesis, and the last chapter of

Malachi, both which I had likewise turned into the same dull verse, without half the deviations from the text, which his lordship had been forced to make in almost every Psalm. Some of his very pretended emendations proved such, that the frequency of them directed me to the discovery of a more elegant metre than he had ever dreamed of, and which convinced me, as they have since many more Hebraists, that there was in the metre of the Psalms, not only a real and settled distinction between the long and the short syllables, but that two of the latter were equivalent, in the constituting of a foot or verse, to one of the former; so that they had at least three different kinds of feet, viz. long monosyllables, bisyllables, consisting of two long, and trisyllables, consisting of two short and one long, or *vice versa*; but which in the metre answered to a spondee, or two long syllables. Of this I gave so many instances, as made me think, contrary to what I had done till then, that the Hebrew metre was not so irrecoverably lost as I had imagined, and that a little more application than I  
had

had time then, or have had since to bestow upon it, might go near to recover most, if not all, the various kinds of it.

However, as soon as I had finished what I, and some of my friends as well as I, thought a sufficient confutation of the bishop's performance, and in the same, tho' not so florid and elegant a Latin, I sent to desire one of my booksellers to enquire of Mr. Bowyer, whether the new types, cast for his lordship, were still in his possession? and whether I might be permitted the use of them, in the answer I had prepared for the press? I was answered in the affirmative; but one bookseller took it into his head to ask at the same time, what number of copies his lordship had caused to be printed of his Psalter? and was answered only five hundred; one half of which had been presented by his Lordship to his learned friends, both in and out of England, and most of the rest were still unfold, there being but few among the learned, that were curious in such matters; the performance having been disapproved by all that had seen it. This news so cooled the booksellers eagerness after my answer,

that, upon my coming to town, and their acquainting me with the state of the case, I was quite discouraged from printing it. For they concluded from what Mr. Bowyer had said, that it would be dangerous to print above three hundred of mine, the charge of which being deducted, the profit, upon a supposition that they were all sold, would be so small, that they could not afford me above two or three guineas for my copy (which would have made about seven or eight sheets of a middling octavo) without being losers. This was their way of computing the matter, against which having nothing to object, I locked up the papers in my cabinet, where they have lain ever since. They did indeed offer me better terms, and to print a greater number of copies, if I would be at the trouble of printing it in English, which they thought would be more universally read, out of dislike to the bishop ; but, besides that I cared not to be at the pains of Englishing it, I thought it below the subject to print it in any other language, but that in which his was wrote, and so wholly declined it.

I lodged then with the curate of the parish,



parish\*, who, upon my coming from Hampshire, told me the following story, which I give on his authority, for I never enquired farther into it—That his rector, the reverend Dr. Nichols, acquainted the bishop, that he had a gentleman in his parish, who designed shortly to publish a confutation of his Hebrew metre. The bishop asked whether he was equal to the task? and was answered, that he was thought so by all that knew him, and that he was the person who had wrote the Jewish history, wherein he had given a greater character of the Hebrew poetry than his lordship seemed to do in his book, and that he was one of the persons concerned in the writing of the Universal History. The bishop then asked his name, and being told that he called himself Psalmanazar, expressed himself with some warmth to the company, that there was never a Jew of them all that understood any thing of Hebrew, much less of the sacred poetry; and being told that I was no Jew, but in all appearance an honest and strict churchman, who would doubtless use his lordship with the respect due to

\* St. Luke's, Old-street.

his

his character; he appeared a little better satisfied, and willing to suspend his judgment, till he saw what I had to say against him. And here I cannot forbear making an observation, or two, on his lordship's speech, taking the story for true, which I am the more inclined to believe to be so, because he was always known to have a singular contempt of the Jews, so far as related to their knowledge of the Hebrew tongue. The one is, that his mean opinion of them must be owing to his small acquaintance with them; otherwise he might have found in London several of them very learned in that tongue, (besides a much greater number abroad, especially among the northern ones) and who, bating their different interpretations of those main prophecies which relate to the Messiah, could have displayed to him a much greater and deeper skill in that sacred tongue, than he appears to have had, by any thing one can find in his book. The other is, how his lordship came to take Salmanazar for a Jewish, instead of an Assyrian name; for as the monarch so called, was one of those monarchs who carried away part of Israel's  
captives

captives into Affyria; a Jew would as soon call a son of his Beelzebub, as Salmanazar, or Nabuchadnezzar,

However, the abovementioned story, as well as the expectation which my friends in Hampshire, Surry, and London, were in, to see my answer to him, gave me no small regret, lest my not publishing it should be interpreted in favour of his performance, or as my yielding the point to him, as not being able to confute him. And could I have afforded it, I would have run the hazard of printing it at my own charge; for I was above doing it by subscription, it being so small a thing as a pamphlet of at most eight octavo sheets; and much more loth was I, all the above things considered, to let a work seemingly calculated to depreciate the excellence of the sacred poetry of the Old Testament, to go uncensured; especially as I had so many strong objections ready levelled against it. At length a thought came into my mind, as I was then preparing new materials for the second part of the Jewish history, to resume that subject there. And this I thought, I was so much better intitled to do,

do, if it were but in defence of what I had said in the first part in praise of the Hebrew poetry, and which was, in most cases, quite opposite to the character, which his lordship gave of it in his book. The collecting, and compleating of the canon of the sacred books by Ezra, and other inspired writers, and their appointing of the proper lessons, psalms, &c. for the divine worship, gave me a fair opportunity for it, which I was the more ready to take, as I knew that it would be read by many more people in such a work as that, than in a Latin pamphlet, and would of course more effectually expose the absurdity of his pretended new-found metre, as well as the unseemly freedom he hath given himself in altering and mutilating the sacred text for the sake of it. I therefore resolved to take notice, in justice to his lordship, of all just, laudable, and useful discoveries he had made on that subject in the text, and to throw the main part of my objections against the rest of his book in a long note, in the most succinct and impartial manner I could, in hopes that the setting both forth, as it were, in one view, might probably  
excite



excite some who had more learning and leisure than I, to follow the hints there given, as the most likely means for compleating the desired discovery, to which his lordship had in a great measure opened the way, though he had so unhappily miscarried in the end. The difficulty was how to contract my materials so as not to over-swell that part of the work, as it must have done if I had brought every thing into it, which I had wrote on that subject, and this obliged me to strike off near two thirds of them, and to confine myself to the most material points, such as would most effectually answer the two main ends I had in view, viz. the exploding the bishop's new metre, and giving the curious reader, that would go about it, a clue to find out the original one of the sacred books; for as to what I designed to have said in praise of the Hebrew poetry, had the subject been printed separately, it was the less necessary here, as I had already expatiated so much upon it in the first volume. Some of the proprietors and authors were indeed against my design, not only as it would swell the chapter beyond its length, but likewise as

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the subject in question appeared to them, foreign to the rest of its contents; but I had the pleasure not only to carry my point against them, but likewise to have the performance commended by several learned men as well as by all my friends; insomuch that upon my consulting several of them, whether I might not in the second or octavo edition (in which we were obliged to contract our materials, in order to reduce the whole within the proposed limits) either wholly omit or content myself with a short mention of what I had done more at large in the folio; they advised me by no means to curtail the main subject, though I might, they thought, erase here and there an explanatory or critical note, which I readily complied with.

Soon after I had concluded my last part of the Ancient History, the proprietors and authors had some meetings together to consult upon the going on with the Modern, and several plans were proposed by different persons of learning and capacity. The misfortune was, that this part likewise was to be confined within the compass of  
twenty :

twenty volumes, of the same bulk with the Ancient, and these gentlemen differed so much in the proportion they allowed to each respective country or kingdom, that we could see but little likelihood of making any tolerable computation, either of what the whole might reasonably amount to, or of what number of sheets might be properly allowed to each history. As for me, the more I considered the great extent of the work, and the number of empires and kingdoms which had not so much as been touched upon in the Ancient part, such as Turkey, India, the great Mogul, Tartary, China, Japan, &c. the greatest part of Africa, and the whole tract of America, to say nothing of Russia and several other northern countries in Europe; the more I was persuaded of the impossibility of reducing the whole within so small a number of volumes, unless it was done rather by way of epitome, than of compleat, though ever so succinct, a history. But though this appeared still more visible by the small number of sheets which these plans, however different, allotted to most parts of the work, and must have  
received

received by almost every reader, at the first view, yet the proprietors who had their particular reasons for fixing upon that number of volumes, would by no means consent to have it exceeded. This however occasioned some demur, during which some of the best judges in this kingdom, and out of it, were consulted, as well as about the properest method of beginning and pursuing this modern part.

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F I N I S.