MEMOIRS,

ILLUSTRATING THE

HISTORY OF JACOBINISM.

A TRANSLATION FROM THE FRENCH OF

THE ABBE BARRUEL.

PART I.—VOL. I.

THE ANTICHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY.

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PREFACE

OF THE

TRANSLATOR.

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READER,

IN the work laid before you, you are not to expect the beauties of imagination; truth alone is the object of this research. History has always been considered as the school in which the statesman is to learn the art of government; the citizen to read with awe of those disastrous days of bloodshed and rapine, expressed by the term *Revolution*. This work will lay open the most terrible, and perhaps the most astonishing concatenation of intrigue, that has ever entered the mind of man, to bring about the dreadful revolution, with which all Europe has been convulsed.

The First Part will contain, THE ANTI-CHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY, or that of the *Sophisters of Impiety* against the God of Christianity, and against every religion and every altar, whether Protestant or Catholic, Lutheran or Calvinist, provided it be but Christian.

The Second Part will show, THE ANTI-MONARCHICAL CONSPIRACY, or that of the *Sophisters of Impiety*, coalescing with those *of Rebellion* against all kings.

The Third Part will demonstrate THE ANTI-SOCIAL CONSPIRACY, or that of the *Sophisters of Impiety* coalescing with those of *Anarchy* against every religion, against every government, without even excepting the republican, against all civil society and all property whatever.

The first of these conspiracies was that of those men called Philosophers. The second that of the Philosophers united with the Occult Lodges of the Freemasons *. The third was that of the Philosophers and the Occult-Masons coalesced with the Illuminés, who generated the Jacobins.

* We say OCCULT LODGES, as the Freemasons in general were far from being acquainted with the conspiracies of the Occult Lodges; and indeed many were not people to be tampered with. It might be objected, that all lodges were occult: with regard to the public they were so; but besides the common lodges, there existed others which were hidden from the generality of the Freemasons. It is those which the author styles ARRIERES LOGES, and that we have translated by OCCULT LODGES.

It

It is with confidence that we preſent the firſt volume to the public, after the approbation which one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed authors of the age, both for his political knowledge, and the noble ardor he has ſhown in his writings to ſubdue the growing evil, was pleaſed to expreſs, when he read the firſt volume of the French original. He was flattering enough to ſay, in writing to the author, "The whole of the wonderful narrative "is ſupported by documents and proofs, "with the moſt juridical regularity and "exactneſs. The reflexions and reaſon-"ings are interſperſed with infinite "judgment, and in their moſt proper "places, for leading the ſentiments of "the reader and preventing the force of "plauſible objections. The tendency "of the whole is admirable in every "point of view, political, religious and "philoſophical."

After ſuch a decided opinion on the French original, the tranſlator cannot but think it *a duty he has fulfilled* in laying ſuch a work open to thoſe of his countrymen, who may not be ſufficiently verſed

verſed in the French language; and if in ſo critical a moment, he can, by this means, ſerve his country, he is willing to take upon himſelf all thoſe inaccuracies of ſtyle, which are too frequent in tranſlations, eſpecially when done in haſte. That the reader may be inſtructed in theſe dreadful plots, and be acquainted with the whole and nothing but the truth, is the ſincere wiſh of the

TRANSLATOR.

It would be uſeleſs to add, that in all quotations the moſt literal exactneſs has been obſerved.

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PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

AT an early period of the French Revolution, there appeared a ſect calling itſelf Jacobin, and teaching *that all men were equal and free!* In the name of their equality and diſorganizing liberty, they trampled under foot the altar and the throne; they ſtimulated all nations to rebellion, and aimed at plunging them ultimately into the horrors of anarchy.

At its firſt appearance, this ſect counted 300,000 adepts; and it was ſupported by two millions of men, ſcattered through France, armed with torches and pikes, and all the fire-brands of revolution.

It was under the auſpices of this ſect, by their intrigues, their influence, and their impulſe, that France beheld itſelf a prey to every crime; that its ſoil was ſtained with the blood of its pontiffs and prieſts, of its rich men and nobles; with the blood of every claſs of its citizens, without regard to rank, age or ſex! Theſe were the men who,

after having made the unfortunate Lewis XVI. his Queen and Sister, drink to the very dregs the cup of outrage and ignominy during a long confinement, solemnly murdered them on a scaffold, proudly menacing the sovereigns of the earth with a similar fate! These are the men who have made the French Revolution a scourge to all Europe, a terror to its Powers, who vainly combine to stop the progress of their revolutionary armies, more numerous and destructive than the inundations of the Vandals.

Whence originated these men, who seem to arise from the bowels of the earth, who start into existence with their plans and their projects, their tenets and their thunders, their means and ferocious resolves; whence, I say, this devouring sect? Whence this swarm of adepts, these systems, this frantic rage against the altar and the throne, against every institution, whether civil or religious, so much respected by our ancestors? Can their primogeniture in the order of the revolution give them this tremendous power, or were they not anterior? is it not their own work? where then was their hiding place? Their schools, their masters, where shall we find them, and who will dive into their future projects? This French Revolution ended, will they cease to desolate the earth, to murder its kings, to fanaticise its people?

These

Importance of their History

Theſe certainly are queſtions that cannot be indifferent to nations or their rulers, or to thoſe who watch for the happineſs and preſervation of ſociety; and theſe are the queſtions which I will attempt to anſwer. I will ſeek their ſolution in the very annals of the ſect, whence I will ſhew their plans and ſyſtems, their plots and means. Such, Reader, will be the object of the following Memoirs.

Had I ſeen the plots and oaths of the Jacobins end with the diſaſters they produced; had I ſeen the cloud of our misfortunes diſſipated with the French Revolution, ſtill ſhould I ſtand convinced of the importance and neceſſity of diſcloſing to the world the dark receſſes from whence it burſt into being.

to poſterity;

When with awe and reverence we read of plagues and other ſcourges that have deſolated the earth, though the danger may be paſſed, they are not to be conſidered as objects of mere curioſity. In the hiſtory of poiſons we find the antidotes; in the hiſtory of monſters we learn the weapons that deſtroyed them. When former ſcourges re-appear, or are to be apprehended, is it not our duty to explore the cauſes which firſt promoted their deſtructive influence, the means by which they might have been oppoſed, and the errors by which they may again be produced? The preſent generation is inſtructed by the misfortunes of the

paſt; be then the future inſtructed by the hiſtory of ours.

to the preſent generation.

But we have evils yet more preſſing to combat: the preſent generation has been deluded; and ſuch deluſions muſt be done away as may double our misfortunes in the inſtant when we think ourſelves moſt ſecure. We have ſeen men obſtinately blind to the cauſes of the French Revolution: we have ſeen men who wiſhed to perſuade themſelves that this conſpiring and revolutionary ſect had no exiſtence anterior to the revolution. In their minds this long chain of miſeries which has befallen France, to the terror of all Europe, was the mere offspring of that concourſe of unforeſeen events inſeparable from the times; it is in vain, in their conceptions, to ſeek conſpirators or conſpiracies, vain to ſearch for the hand that directs the horrid courſe. The man who rules to-day knows not the plans of his predeceſſor, and he that ſhall follow will, in their opinions, be equally ignorant of thoſe of the preſent ruler.

Firſt error on the cauſe of the revolution.

Prepoſſeſſed with ſuch falſe ideas, and acting under ſo dangerous a prejudice, theſe ſuperficial obſervers would willingly make all nations believe, that the French Revolution could to them be no cauſe of alarm; that it was a volcano rapidly venting itſelf on the unfortunate country that gave it exiſtence, whilſt its focus and its origin remain unfathomable. Cauſes unknown (they will ſay) but

peculiar

peculiar to your climate; elements leſs ſubject to ferment; laws more analogous to your character; the public fortune better balanced; theſe and ſuch as theſe are reaſons ſufficient to make you regardleſs of the fate of France. But ſhould ſuch, alas! be your impending fate, vain will be your efforts to avert the threatening blow. The concourſe and fatality of circumſtances will drag you towards it; the very ramparts you ſhall build againſt it will fall back upon you, and perhaps level the ſpace that now divides you from the horrid ſcene of anarchy and deſolation.

Who could conceive, that ſuch was the language I have heard fall from the mouths even of thoſe whom the unfortunate Lewis XVI. had called near his perſon to ward off the blows perpetually aimed at him by the revolution! a language better calculated to lull all nations into that fatal ſecurity which portends deſtruction.—I have now before me the Memorial of an Ex-miniſter, conſulted on the cauſes of this infernal revolution, and in particular as to the chief conſpirators, which he ſhould have better known, and on the plan of the conſpiracy.—I hear this man anſwering, that it would be uſeleſs to ſeek either men, or any ſet of men, conſpiring againſt the altar and the throne, or to ſuppoſe that any plan had been framed. Unfortunate monarch! Are thoſe who are to watch for the ſafety of your perſon, for the ſafety of your people, ignorant of the

names, of the very exiſtence of your enemies! If then we behold both you and your people falling victims to their plots, can we be aſtoniſhed?

Truths combating the firſt error.

Strong in the facts, and armed with the proofs ſhown in the following Memoirs, we ſhall hold a very different language. We ſhall ſhew that with which it is incumbent on all nations and their chiefs to be acquainted: we ſhall demonſtrate that, even to the moſt horrid deeds perpetrated during the French Revolution, every thing was foreſeen and reſolved on, was combined and premeditated: that they were the offſpring of deep-thought villainy, ſince they had been prepared and were produced by men, who alone held the clue of thoſe plots and conſpiracies, lurking in the ſecret meetings where they had been conceived, and only watching the favorable moment of burſting forth. Though the events of each day may not appear to have been combined, there nevertheleſs exiſted a ſecret agent and a ſecret cauſe, giving riſe to each event, and turning each circumſtance to the long-ſought-for end. Though circumſtances may often have afforded the pretence or the occaſion, yet the grand cauſe of the revolution, its leading features, its atrocious crimes, will ſtill remain one continued chain of deep-laid and premeditated villany.

Second error on the nature

In revealing the object, and ſhowing the extent of theſe plots, I meet a ſecond error, more dangerous

gerous than the firſt. There are men who make no difficulty in owning that the French Revolution was premeditated, but that the intention of the firſt authors was pure, and that they only ſought the happineſs and regeneration of empires; that if great misfortunes have ſince happened, they aroſe from the obſtacles thrown in their way; that a great people cannot be regenerated without commotion, but that the tempeſt will ſubſide, and a calm ſucceed the ſwelling billow. Then nations, aſtoniſhed at the fear they had conceived of the French Revolution, and true only to its principles, will be happy in imitation. of the revolution.

This error is the favorite theme of the Jacobin miſſionaries; it was this that gained them their firſt inſtruments of rebellion; that cohort of conſtitutionaliſts, who ſtill look on their decrees of the Rights of Man as the ſummit of legiſlative perfection, and ſtill impatiently wait the fatal day when the world ſhall impetuouſly move in the ſphere of their political rhapſody. It was this that gained them that prodigious number of votaries more blind than wicked, and who might have been miſtaken for honeſt, if virtue could have combined with ferocity in ſearch of happier days. It was this that gained them thoſe men whoſe well-meant, though ſtupid credulity, miſled them to believe in the neceſſity of the carnage of the 10th

of Auguſt, and of the horrid butcheries of the 2d of September; in a word, all thoſe men who, in the murders of 3 or 400,000 fellow-creatures, in the extermination of millions of victims by famine, the ſword, or the guillotine, ſeek conſolation, in ſpite of this depopulating ſcourge, in the empty hope that this dreadful chain of horrors may be productive of happier days.

Truths combating the ſecond error.

In anſwer to theſe fallacious hopes, to theſe pretended good intentions, I will oppoſe the real views of this revolutionary ſect, their true projects, their conſpiracies, and their means of execution. I will ſhow them, for they muſt be divulged, the proofs being acquired. The French Revolution has been a true child to its parent ſect; its crimes have been its filial duty; and thoſe black deeds and atrocious acts, the natural ſequel of the principles and ſyſtems that gave it birth. I will ſhow more; ſo far from ſeeking future proſperity, the French Revolution is but a ſportive eſſay of its ſtrength, while the whole univerſe is its aim. If elſewhere the ſame crimes are neceſſary, they will be committed; if equal ferocity is neceſſary they will be equally ferocious; and it will extend whereſoever its errors are received.

True conſequences of theſe truths.

The reflecting reader muſt then conclude, that either this Jacobin ſect muſt be cruſhed or ſociety overthrown: that all governments muſt give place to thoſe maſſacres, thoſe convulſive diſorders, and

that

that infernal anarchy which rages in France: 'tis true there is no other alternative, univerſal deſtruction or extinction of the ſect. But let it be remembered, that to cruſh a ſect is not to imitate the fury of its apoſtles, intoxicated with its ſanguinary rage and propenſe to enthuſiaſtic murder. It is not to maſſacre and immolate its adepts, or retort on them the thunders they had hurled. To cruſh a ſect, is to attack it in its ſchools, to reveal its impoſture, and ſhow to the world the abſurdity of its principles, the atrocity of its means, and above all the profound wickedneſs of its teachers. Yes; ſtrike the Jacobin, but ſpare the man; the ſect is a ſect of opinion, and its deſtruction will be doubly complete on the day when it is deſerted by its diſciples, to return to the true principles of reaſon and ſociety.

The ſect is monſtrous, but all its diſciples are not monſters. Its care in hiding its latter projects, the extreme precaution with which it initiated the choſen of the elect, ſhews how much it feared the deſertion of the multitude of its diſciples, and its conſequent deſtruction, had the horror of its myſteries been ſurmiſed. For my part, I never doubted, how depraved ſoever the Jacobins may have been, that the greateſt part would have deſerted the ſect could they have foreſeen whither and by what means they were led. Could the French people have followed ſuch chiefs, had it been

been poſſible to make them conceive to what lengths the plans and plots of the conſpirators would carry them!

That theſe plots ſhould be known,

Were France, like hell, a bottomleſs pit, impenetrable to every voice but that of the fiends of the revolution, ſtill it is not too late to acquaint other nations of their danger. They have heard of the crimes and misfortunes of that revolution, let them learn the lot that awaits them ſhould Jacobiniſm prevail; let them learn that they are not leſs within the grand revolutionary circle than France itſelf; that all thoſe crimes, the anarchy and bloody ſcenes which have followed the diſſolution of the French empire, equally await all other nations; let them learn that their altars and their thrones, their pontiffs and their kings, are doomed to the ſame fate with thoſe of France: all are comprehended within the grand conſpiracy.

the intereſt of all nations;

intereſt of all governments.

When a phantom of peace ſhall ſeem to terminate the preſent war between the Jacobins and the combined powers, it certainly will be the intereſt of all governments to aſcertain how far ſuch a peace can be relied on. At that period, more than at any other, will it be neceſſary to ſtudy the ſecret hiſtory of that ſect, which ſends its legions rather to ſhiver the ſceptre than to fight the power, which has not promiſed to its adepts the crowns of princes, kings and emperors, but has required of and bound thoſe adepts by the oath of deſtroying them all:

at

at that period we must remember, that it is not in the field of Mars that the war against sects is the most dangerous; when rebellion and anarchy are in the very tenets of the sectary, the hand may be disarmed, but war glows warmly in the heart. The sect, weakened, may slumber for a while, but such a sleep is the calm preceding the irruption of the volcano. It no longer sends forth its curling flames; but the subterraneous fire winds its course, penetrates, and, preparing many vents, suddenly bursts forth and carries misery and devastation wherever its fiery torrent rolls.

The object of these Memoirs is not to treat precisely of that state of war or of peace carried on from Power to Power. Then it often happens that, all resources being exhausted, the sword must be sheathed, though the original grievances still subsist. Let the rulers of the people discuss the means of force. But we know there exists another sort of war, which a confidence in treaties only renders more fatal; *that* war is a war of plots and conspiracies, and against them public treaties can never avail. Woe to that Power which shall have made peace without knowing why its enemy had declared war against it. What the sect had done before it burst forth the first time, it will do again to prepare a second eruption. In darkness it will conspire anew, and calamities still more disastrous will teach all nations that the French revolution was only

only the first step towards the universal dissolution which the sect has so long been meditating and contriving.

Object of these memoirs.

Such were the reasons which stimulated me to investigate the plots and wishes, the tortuous means and nature of this sect. We have witnessed the frantic rage and the ferocity of its legions; we have known them as the agents of the French Revolution, as the perpetrators of all its atrocious crimes and devastations; but few are acquainted with the schools that have formed them. Posterity, alas! will feel, during many generations, their dire effects. To trace their ravages, it will only have to cast its eyes around. The ruins of the palaces and the temples, the fallen cities, the mansions destroyed throughout the provinces, will paint in glowing colours the devastations of the modern Vandals. The lists of proscription, fatal to the prince and so many of his subjects, the deserted villages, all, in a word, will long be the vouchers of those fatal lanterns, of that insatiable guillotine, of those legislative executioners supported by bands of assassins.

Circumstances so painful and so humiliating to human nature will not be recorded in these memoirs. It is not to expose what a Marat or a Robespierre has done, but to bare to the light the schools, the systems, the conspiracies, in a word, the masters who have formed a Philippe D'Orleans, a Syeyes, a Condorcet, or a Petion,

and

and who at this preſent time are forming in all nations men who would rival Marat and Robeſpierre in their cruelties. Our object is, that, the ſect of the Jacobins and their conſpiracies once known, their crimes ſhall be no longer a cauſe of ſurpriſe; that their propenſity to the effuſion of blood, their blaſphemies againſt Chriſt and his altars, their frantic rage againſt the throne, and their cruelties againſt their fellow-citizens, ſhall be as naturally underſtood as the ravages of the plague. And may nations in future as cautiouſly guard againſt the one, as they preſerve themſelves againſt the other!

It was to attain this important object that all our reſearches on the ſect have been directed at its chiefs, its origin, its plots, its plans, and its progreſs; more particularly inveſtigating the means it employed to bring about the revolution, than deſcribing its conduct during that revolution.

The reſult of our reſearch, corroborated by proofs drawn from the records of the Jacobins, and of their firſt maſters, has been, that this ſect with its conſpiracies is in itſelf no other than the coalition of a triple ſect, of a triple conſpiracy, in which, long before the revolution, the overthrow of the altar, the ruin of the throne, and the diſſolution of all civil ſociety had been debated and reſolved on.

1ſt,

1ſt. Many years before the French Revolution, men who ſtyled themſelves Philoſophers conſpired againſt the God of the Goſpel, againſt Chriſtianity, without diſtinction of worſhip, whether Proteſtant or Catholic, Anglican or Preſbyterian. The grand object of this conſpiracy was to overturn every altar where Chriſt was adored. It was the conſpiracy of the *Sophiſters of Impiety*, or the ANTICHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY.

2dly. This ſchool of impiety ſoon formed the *Sophiſters of Rebellion*: theſe latter, combining their conſpiracy againſt kings with that of the Sophiſters of Impiety, coaleſce with that ancient ſect whoſe tenets conſtituted the whole ſecret of the *Occult Lodges* of Free-maſonry, which long ſince, impoſing on the credulity of its moſt diſtinguiſhed adepts, only initiated the choſen of the elect into the ſecret of their unrelenting hatred for Chriſt and kings.

3dly. From the Sophiſters of Impiety and Rebellion, aroſe the *Sophiſters of Impiety and Anarchy*. Theſe latter conſpire not only againſt Chriſt and his altars, but againſt every religion natural or revealed: not only againſt kings, but againſt every government, againſt all civil ſociety, even againſt all property whatſoever.

This third ſect, known by the name of *Illuminés*, coaleſced with the Sophiſters conſpiring againſt Chriſt, coaleſced with the Sophiſters who,

with

with the Occult Masons, conspired against both Christ and kings. It was the coalition of the adepts of *impiety* of the adepts of *rebellion*, and the adepts of *anarchy*, which *formed the* CLUB *of the* JACOBINS. Under this name, common to the triple sect (originating from the name of the order, whose convent they had seized upon to hold their sittings), we shall see the adepts following up their triple conspiracy against God, the King, and Society. Such was the origin, such the progress of that sect, since become so dreadfully famous under the name of JACOBIN.

In the present Memoirs each of these three conspiracies shall be treated separately; their authors unmasked, the object, means, coalition and progress of the adepts shall be laid open.

Proofs of the most pointed nature are necessary, when such horrid plots are denounced to all nations; and it is to give these proofs the greater authenticity, that the title of MEMOIRS has been prefixed to this work. To have written the simple history of the Jacobins might have sufficed for many; but these Memoirs are intended for the historian, who will find a collection of proofs, both numerous and convincing, all extracted from the records and avowals of the conspirators themselves. Strong in these proofs, we shall not fear to proclaim to all nations, "that whatever their reli-
"gion or their government may be, to whatever
"rank

" rank they may belong in civil ſociety, if Jaco-
" biniſm triumphs, all will be overthrown; that
" ſhould the plans and wiſhes of the Jacobins be
" accompliſhed, their religion with its pontiffs,
" their government with its laws, their magiſtrates
" and their property, all would be ſwept away in
" the common maſs of ruin! Their riches and their
" fields, their houſes and their cottages, their very
" wives and children would be torn from them.
" You have looked upon the Jacobinical faction
" as exhauſting itſelf in France, when it was only
" making a ſportive eſſay of its ſtrength. Their
" wiſhes and their oaths extend throughout Europe;
" nor are England or Germany, Italy or Spain,
" ſtrangers to their intrigues."

Let not the Reader take this for the language of enthuſiaſm or fanaticiſm; far be ſuch paſſions either from myſelf or my readers. Let them decide on the proofs adduced, with the ſame coolneſs and impartiality which has been neceſſary to collect and digeſt them. The order followed in the inveſtigation of theſe conſpiracies ſhall be exactly that in which they were generated. We ſhall therefore begin with the conſpiracy againſt the whole religion of the Goſpel, and which we have ſtyled the ANTICHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY.

THE

THE

ANTICHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY.

CHAP. I.

Of the Principal Actors of the Conspiracy.

ABOUT the middle of this century, there appeared three men leagued in the most inveterate hatred against Christianity. These were Voltaire, D'Alembert, and Frederick II. King of Prussia. Voltaire hated religion because he was jealous of its Author, and of all those whom it had rendered illustrious; D'Alembert because his cold heart was incapable of affection; Frederick because he had never seen it but through the medium of its enemies. Chiefs of the conspiracy.

To these three a fourth must be added, named Diderot; hating religion because he doated on nature; enthusiastically wedded to the chaos of his own ideas, he chose rather to build his system on chimeras and form mysteries of his own, than submit to the light of the Gospel.

Numerous were the adepts afterwards drawn into this conſpiracy, generally ſtupid admirers or ſecondary agents. Voltaire the chief, D'Alembert the moſt ſubtle agent, Frederick the protector and often the adviſer, Diderot the forlorn hope.

Voltaire. The firſt of theſe conſpirators, Mary Francis Arouet, was born at Paris, February 20th, 1694, ſon of an ancient notary of the Chatelet; through vanity he changed his name to that of Voltaire, which he deemed more noble, more ſonorous, and better ſuited to the reputation he aimed at: and never had there yet appeared a man with ſuch talents, and ſuch a thirſt of dominion over the literary world. Gravity of manners, the ſpirit of meditation, or a genius leading to diſcuſſion and deep reſearch, were unfortunately not among the gifts which Nature had laviſhed on him; and more unfortunately ſtill, in his own heart were to be found all thoſe paſſions which render abilities dangerous: from his early youth he ſeemed to direct them all at the overthrow of religion.

While only a ſtudent in rhetoric, in the college of Louis le Grand, he drew on himſelf the following rebuke from his profeſſor, the Jeſuit Le Jay, *Unfortunate young man, you will one day come to be the ſtandard-bearer of Infidelity* *. Never was oracle more literally fulfilled.

* Life of Voltaire, edit. of Kell, and Feller's Hiſt. Dict.

On

On leaving the college, he neither ſought nor loved any other ſociety, but that of men whoſe profligate morals could ſtimulate his incredulity. He was particularly intimate with Chaulieu the Anacreon of his day, the poet of voluptuouſneſs; and with a few Epicureans who held their ſittings at the Hotel de Vendôme. His firſt eſſays were in ſatire, which gave offence to government, and in tragedy, where we ſhould have ſeen the rival of Corneille, Racine and Crebillon, had he not at the ſame time wiſhed to rival Celſus and Porphyrius, with all the other enemies of religion. At a time when licentiouſneſs in opinion ſtill met with obſtacles in France, he ſought an aſylum in England. He there found men whom the writings of Shafteſbury, commented on by Bolingbroke, had trained up to Deiſm. He miſtook them for philoſophers, and was perſuaded that they alone were eſteemed by the Engliſh. If he was not then miſtaken, times ſince are greatly changed. All thoſe ſophiſters whom Voltaire extols as the glory of Great Britain, if not forgotten, are more deſpiſed than read. Collins and Hobbes when remembered are claſſed with Tom Paine; an Engliſhman's good ſenſe does not allow him to hate religion, or make an oſtentatious diſplay of impiety. With him nothing is leſs philoſophical, notwithſtanding his toleration and variety of creeds, than that affected hatred to Chriſtianity which

marks our Sophiſters, and more particularly their conſpiracies to overthrow it.

Philoſophiſm is ſaid to have firſt ariſen in England. I deny the fact. Philoſophiſm is the error of every man who, judging of every thing by the ſtandard of his own reaſon, rejects in religious matters every authority that is not derived from the light of nature. It is the error of every man who denies the poſſibility of any myſtery beyond the limits of his reaſon, of every man who, diſcarding revelation, in defence of the pretended rights of reaſon, their liberty and equality, ſeeks to ſubvert the whole fabric of the Chriſtian religion.

Such an error may conſtitute a ſect; the hiſtory of ancient Jacobiniſm demonſtrates that the ſect exiſted long ſince; but it had ſhrunk back to its dark abodes, when Voltaire appeared.

Such an error may be that of a few individuals. Many of the ſame ſort had been broached during the two laſt centuries. Numerous were the ſects which had ſprung from Luther and Calvin, each making its partial attack on the ancient tenets of Chriſtianity; when at length there aroſe a ſet of men attacking them all, and they would believe nothing. At firſt they were ſtyled Libertines, the only name they deſerved.

Voltaire might every where have met with ſome of thoſe men, and more particularly at Paris under

under the regency of the Duke of Orleans, who was himſelf a monſter of libertiniſm; but, feeling the neceſſity of religion for the ſtate, would not ſuffer it to be attacked in their publications.

It was in England, it is true, where, under their Collins and their Hobbes, the libertines firſt ſtyled themſelves Philoſophers, and aſſumed the airs of deep thought, probably from ſome impious productions, which in any other part of Chriſtendom would have enjoyed neither equal publicity nor impunity. But it may be certainly concluded, that Voltaire would every where have been, what he became in England; he would have been ſo, at leaſt, wherever, from the lenity of the laws, he could give vent to his inſatiable thirſt of dominion over the empire of ſcience or letters.

It was in vain for him to aſpire at the reputation of a Boſſuet, a Paſcal, or of that blaze of genius which had ſhone forth in the defence of religion; but, hating their cauſe, and dazzled by their glory, he dared be jealous of their God; at his empire he levelled his blows, and would be foremoſt in the ranks of the Philoſophiſts.—He ſucceeded; but, to keep his pre-eminence, bluſhed not to blend philoſophy with impiety, and to compaſs the overthrow of religion. England however was the place where he firſt conceived a poſſibility of ſucceſs. Condorcet, his adept, his confidant, his hiſtorian, and his panegyriſt, aſſerts it in poſitive

terms: *There it was* (in England) *that Voltaire ſwore to dedicate his life to the accompliſhment of that project; and he has kept his word* *.

On his return to Paris, about the year 1730, he made ſo little ſecret of his deſign, he had publiſhed ſo many writings againſt Chriſtianity, and was ſo ſanguine in his hopes, that Mr. Herault, the Lieutenant of Police, upbraiding him one day with his impiety, and adding, *You may do or write what you pleaſe, you will never be able to deſtroy the Chriſtian religion.* Voltaire without heſitation anſwered, *That is what we ſhall ſee* †.

Stimulated by the obſtacles he met with, and ſeeing ſo much glory in his enterprize, he would not willingly have ſhared it with any body. "I am "weary," he would ſay, "of hearing people repeat, "that twelve men have been ſufficient to eſtabliſh "Chriſtianity, and I will prove that one may ſuf- "fice to overthrow it ‡." When he uttered theſe words, his ſpite ſeemed to blind him to ſuch a degree, as to hide from him the immenſe diſtance between the genius that creates, and the petty cunning of the miſchievous monkey that deſtroys. The Sophiſter may conjure the clouds, or veil the world in darkneſs, but does not by that approach the God of truth. The virtues, the miracles, all the divine knowledge of the apoſtles, were neceſſary to teach man the path of life.

* Life of Voltaire, edit. of Kell. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

Although

Although Voltaire in his outset flattered himself to enjoy alone the whole glory of the destruction of the Christian religion, which was his sole object, he nevertheless soon found that associates would be necessary. He even feared the noise of his undertaking, and hence resolved to move in the surer though humbler sphere of a conspirator. Already his numerous writings, either impious or obscene, had gained him many admirers and disciples, who, under the name of Philosophers, prided themselves in the hatred they bore to Christianity. Among these he chose D'Alembert as the most proper person to second him in his new plan of attack; and he chose well.

In the nobler theme, among the Sophisters we should compare Voltaire to Agamemnon, and D'Alembert to Ulysses. If the comparison be too noble, see the latter cunning and cringing, even barking like the fox. Born of Fontenelle according to some, of Astruc the doctor according to others, his birth was always a secret to him. His mother was at the head of one of those societies of men of letters common in Paris, and she used to style them her beasts. Whether designed to hide his birth or not, is unknown; but certain it is, that in the night from the 16th to the 17th of November 1717, he was found, wrapped in swaddling cloaths, in the portico of the parish church of St. John; and hence took D'Alembert.

took the name of *Jean le Rond* at the Foundling Hoſpital whither he was carried and in which he was bred.

While yet a youth he inliſted under the banners of incredulity, repaying with ingratitude the church that had charitably reared him; with the ſmall ſums given him for his education, he ſought, like many other young men, all thoſe profligate works written againſt a religion whoſe proofs they almoſt flee from. Thus do wicked boys calumniate the kind maſter who thwarts their evil diſpoſition.

Both his heart and mind naturally led him to be a diſciple of Voltaire; even their diverſity of character and the immenſe difference of talent, were ſoon confounded in their mutual bias to incredulity, and confirmed hatred to Chriſtianity.

Voltaire was fiery, paſſionate and impetuous; D'Alembert cold, reſerved, prudent and crafty; Voltaire fond of ſhow, D'Alembert almoſt feared to be ſeen. The one, like the chief who is obliged to maſk his battery, reluctantly uſed diſſimulation, wiſhed to wage open war with Chriſtianity, *and die on a heap of Chriſtians*, which he terms Bigots, *immolated at his feet**. The other, by inſtinct a diſſembler, waged war like the partizan who, from behind his buſhes, ſmiles to ſee his enemy fall into the ſnares he has laid †. Voltaire, ſo tran-

* Letter from Voltaire to D'Alembert, 20th April 1761.

† Particularly Let. 100, from D'Alembert, 4th May 1762.

ſcendent in polite literature, was but ſuperficial in mathematicks. In the latter D'Alembert was profound, and owed his reputation to them: in every thing elſe he was a dry, finical, and perplexed writer, and is ſometimes as low and vulgar as Voltaire is noble, eaſy and elegant; he would plod to turn a bad epigram, while the latter would have wittily filled whole volumes.

Voltaire impudently daring, whether for or againſt, would quote the ſcriptures, hiſtory, or the holy fathers, affirming, inventing, or traducing the paſſage he wants; for to wound was his only aim. D'Alembert carefully guards againſt the reply that may expoſe him; his ſteps, myſterious and indirect, hide his deſign; ſhrinking from refutation, if attacked he flies, concealing the fight leſt he proclaim his defeat. Voltaire on the contrary ſeeks his enemies, calls to them; though a hundred times defeated, he returns to the charge; though his error be refuted, he will inceſſantly repeat it. It is not in defeat, but in flight alone that he ſees diſgrace; and thus after a war of ſixty years we ſtill ſee him ranging on the field of battle.

D'Alembert ſeeks the ſmile of every little aſſembly; and the applauſe of forty men in an academical circle conſtitutes his triumphal day; while all the world, from London to St. Peterſburg, from Sweden to America, to pleaſe Voltaire muſt ſound his fame.

D'Alem-

D'Alembert enlists from around him those secondary adepts; he trains them, initiates them, directs their missions, and holds petty correspondences. Voltaire will conjure kings, emperors, ministers and princes against his God; all must do homage to the sultan of incredulity. Among these latter, history must distinguish that Frederick, which it has yet only known by titles glorious to monarchs, whether conquerors or rulers.

Frederick II.

In this Frederick II. the Solomon of the North according to the Sophisters, there are two distinct men. First, that King of Prussia, that hero less worthy of our admiration in the field of victory, displaying his vast military talents, than as the father of his people, giving life to agriculture and commerce, protecting the arts, counterpoising in some sort, by the justice and wisdom of his administration, those exploits perhaps more brilliant than just. In the second (so beneath a monarch) we see the Sophister, the philosophic pedant, the conspirator of incredulity; less cruel and enthusiastic than Julian the apostate, but more artful and perfidious.

It is painful to disclose the dark mysteries of this impious prince; but history must be true, and here especially. To trace the conspiracy against their thrones, kings must know what share their colleagues have had in the conspiracy against the altar.

Frederick,

Frederick, born with a mind worthy of a Celſus or his ſchool, had not the help of a Juſtin or a Tertullian to guide his ſteps in religion, and was ſurrounded by its calumniators. While only Prince-royal he was in correſpondence with Voltaire, and chiefly on religion or metaphyſics; and even at that early age deemed himſelf a Philoſopher; for he ſays—"To ſpeak with my uſual freedom, I muſt "naturally own, that whatever regards the *God made* "*man*, diſpleaſes me in the mouth of a Philoſopher, "who ſhould be above popular error. Leave to *the* "*great Corneille*, when *doating and fallen back to child-* "*hood*, the inſipid taſk of verſifying the *Imitation* "*of Chriſt*; and whatever you may give us, let "it be your own. We may ſpeak of fables, "but merely as fables; and a profound ſilence in "my opinion ſhould be kept, concerning thoſe "fables of the Chriſtians, ſanctified by time and "the credulity of the abſurd and ſtupid *."

Even in his firſt letters there appears, with the ridiculous pride of a pedantic king, all the verſatility and hypocriſy of a Sophiſter. Frederick denies, when Voltaire ſupports liberty †. With Voltaire, man is a pure machine; Frederick then maintains that man is free ‡. In one place we are free, preciſely becauſe we can form a clear idea of freedom §.

* Let. 53, anno 1738.
† Their letters in 1737.
‡ Let. of 16 Sept. 1771.
§ Ibid.

In

In another, man is all matter; though one can hardly form a more confuſed idea, than that of matter thinking, free or arguing, though it were with Frederick's own verſatility*. He upbraids Voltaire with the praiſes he had beſtowed on Chriſt, and three years after he is not aſhamed to write—"For my "part, I own that (however people may enliſt under "the banners of Fanaticiſm) I never ſhall. I may "indeed compoſe a few Pſalms to give a good opi- "nion of my orthodoxy. Socrates incenſed the "houſehold Gods, ſo did Cicero, and he was not "credulous. We muſt give way to the fancies of "a frivolous people, to avoid perſecution and blame. "For after all what is moſt deſirable in this world "is to live in peace; let us then live fooliſhly with "fools, that we may live quietly †."

The ſame Frederick had written, that the Chriſtian religion *yielded none but poiſonous weeds* ‡; and Voltaire had congratulated him, *as having above all Princes fortitude of ſoul, ſufficient inſight and knowledge, to ſee that for the ſeventeen hundred years paſt the* CHRISTIAN SECT *had never done any thing but harm* §, when we afterward find him the opponent of that work of Philoſophic inſight, or rather ſo infamouſly profligate, *the Syſtem of Nature*. "One could "be tempted," ſays he, "to accuſe its author of

* Let. of 4th Dec. 1775. † Let. of 7th Jan. 1740.
‡ Let. to Voltaire 143, anno 1766.
§ Let. of 5th April 1764.

"want

" want of ſenſe and ſkill when, calumniating the " Chriſtian religion, he imputes to it failings that " it has not. How can he with truth aſſert that " religion can be the cauſe of the misfortunes of " mankind! He would have been more correct, " had he ſimply ſaid, that the ambition and ſelf- " intereſt of men, cloaked under the veil of reli- " gion, had ſought to diſturb the world and gratify " their paſſions. What then is reprehenſible in the " morals of the commandments? Were there in " the whole Goſpel but this ſingle precept, *Do as* " *thou wouldſt be done by*, we ſhould be obliged to " confeſs that thoſe few words contained the whole " quinteſſence of morality:—The forgiveneſs of " injuries, charity, humanity, were not theſe preach- " ed by Jeſus in his excellent ſermon on the " mount*?"

In writing this, how much Frederick had loſt of that inſight, that knowledge which had ſo lately diſtinguiſhed him from other princes! But ſtrange to ſay, after having ſeen religion in ſo clear a light, he compliments Voltaire on being its ſcourge †, he ſtill communicates his plans for its deſtruction ‡, and foreſees, that ſhould it be preſerved and pro- tected in France, *the fine arts and higher ſciences muſt*

* Examination of the Syſtem of Nature, by Frederick, King of Pruſſia.

† Letter of 12th Aug. 1773. ‡ Let. 20th July 1775.

fall,

fall, and that *the ruſt of ſuperſtition will completely deſtroy a people, otherwiſe amiable and born for ſociety* *.

Had our ſophiſtical monarch really foreſeen events, he would have ſeen *that* people, *otherwiſe amiable* and *born for ſociety*, when it had loſt its religion, terrifying all Europe with its horrid deeds. But, like Voltaire, he was to be the ſport of his pretended wiſdom, as he was of his philoſophy; and though we ſhall often ſee him judging ſhrewdly of the adepts, we ſhall always find him conſpiring with them againſt the religion of Chriſt.

The correſpondence that ſo well developes the characters of the royal adept, and of his idol Voltaire, begins in 1736; it was uninterrupted during their lives, ſome few years of the idol's diſgrace excepted. It is in this correſpondence that we muſt ſtudy him, incredulous and impious; diveſting himſelf of his royal inſignia, he is more emulous of the Philoſophiſt, than he was jealous of the Cæſars; and to rival Voltaire becomes his ſervile copyiſt. A poet beneath mediocrity, a metaphyſician on the lower ranks, he excels in but two things, his admiration for Voltaire, and his impiety, often worſe than that of his maſter.

In conſideration of this homage, this zeal, Voltaire overlooked his caprice, the rough uſage he ſometimes met with, even to the correction of the

* Letter to Voltaire, 30th July 1777.

cane

cane inflicted on him at Frankfort by a major by order of the deſpotic Sophiſter. It was too eſſential for the ſect to continue the ſupport of a royal adept, and we ſhall ſee how very much he ſerved them. But firſt, in order to fathom their mutual hatred to Chriſtianity, let us attend to the vaſt obſtacles they overcame; let us hear Voltaire pathetically deſcribing his ſufferings at Berlin, a few years after his arrival, in a letter to Mad. Denis, his niece and confidant. He ſays, "La "Metrie in his Prefaces may extol his extreme "felicity in being with a great king, who ſome- "times reads his poetry to him; yet in private "he weeps with me; he would willingly return "though it were on foot. But why am *I* here? "I will aſtoniſh you. This La Metrie, a man of "no conſequence, chats familiarly with the king "when their readings are over—He ſpeaks to "me with confidence. He declared to me that "talking to the king a few days ago of my ſup- "poſed favor, and of the jealouſy it excites, the "king had anſwered, *I ſhall certainly not want "him above a twelve-month longer; we ſqueeze "the orange and throw away the rind*..... I "made him repeat theſe conſolatory words, I "queſtioned him again and again, but he only re- "iterated his declaration.—I have done my utmoſt "not to believe La Metrie; and yet, in reading

"over

" over the king's verſes I found an epiſtle to one " of his painters called Père, it begins thus:

" *Quel ſpectacle etonnant vient de frapper mes yeux?*
" *Cher Père, ton pinceau, t'égale au rang des dieux.*

" Tell me what ſight has ſtruck my wond'ring eyes?
" Thy ſkill, dear Père, with gods immortal vies.

" Now this Père is a fellow whom he takes no " notice of, and yet he is the *dear Père, he is a* " *God*; he may perhaps ſee me in the ſame light, " and that is not ſaving much.—You may eaſily " gueſs what reflexions, what a recoil upon my- " ſelf and what perplexity, in a word what trouble " this declaration of La Metrie's has created " within me *."

This firſt letter was ſoon ſucceeded by a ſecond, as follows: " My ſole views at preſent are, to " deſert in a genteel manner, to take care of my " health, to ſee you again, and forget this three " years dream. I plainly perceive the orange has " been ſqueezed; I muſt think of ſaving the rind. " For my own inſtruction I will compile a diction- " ary for the uſe of kings. *My friend*, ſignifies " *my ſlave*; *my dear friend*, is to ſay, *you are to* " *me more than indifferent:* you are to underſtand " by *I will make you happy, I will bear with you as* " *long as I ſhall have need for you*; *ſup with me* " *to-night*, means *I will make game of you to-night.*

* Let. to Mad. Denis, Berlin 2d Sept. 1752.

" This

" This dictionary might be of some length, and " not unworthy a place in the Encyclopædia.

" Seriously this distresses me. Can there be truth " in what I have seen? To delight in making " mischief among those that live with him! To " say every thing that is gracious to a person, " and write pamphlets against him! To force a " man from his country by the most endearing " and solemn promises, and treat him with the " blackest malice! What contrasts! And this is the " man who wrote in such a philosophic strain, and " whom I mistook for a Philosopher! and I styled " him *the Solomon of the North!* Do you remem- " ber that fine letter, which never pleased you? " You are a Philosopher, said he, and so am I. " Upon my word, Sire, as to Philosophers, we " are neither of us so *."

Voltaire never was more correct; neither Frederic nor he could pretend to Philosophy in its true acceptation; but they might eminently so in the sense of the conspirators, with whom impiety and hatred to Christianity was its only essence.

It was soon after writing this last letter, that Voltaire stole away from the court of his disciple, and received at Frankfort the *correction* which made him the laughing-stock of all Europe. Established however at Ferney, he soon forgot his bastinado, and Frederic was once more the *Solomon*

* Letter to Mad. Denis, 18th Dec. 1752.

of the North, who returns the compliment by saluting him as the Father of Philosophy. Though not in friendship, they were soon united in their mutual hatred to Christianity; and though they never met again, their plans were more easily formed and intelligently conducted in their future correspondence.

Diderot.

As to Diderot, he spontaneously threw himself into the arms of the conspirators. A heated brain, an enthusiastic rage for that Philosophism of which Voltaire had set the fashion, a disorderly confusion of ideas (the more evident, as both his speech and pen followed all the explosions of his brain), pointed him out to D'Alembert as a man essential to the conspiracy, and who would say, or could be made to say, such things as he dared not speak himself. They were both, until death, as firmly united to Voltaire, as the latter was to Frederic.

Uncertainty of the chiefs in their philosophical opinions.

If there had been any thing but chaos to have succeeded to Christianity, had there been any doctrine whatsoever to have been substituted, never were four men less fitted for such an undertaking.

Voltaire leaned to Deism, and seemed for some time to have adopted it; but, insensibly falling into Spinosa's systems, he knew not what to believe. Consulting at one time D'Alembert, at another Frederic, he was torn with remorse during the remainder of his life; if doubts and anguish of mind, void of repentance, can be called remorse. At nearly fourscore

fourſcore he expreſſes himſelf in the following uncertain manner: " Doubts encompaſs us around, " *and doubting is a diſagreeable ſtate.* Is there a " God ſuch as he is ſaid to be? A ſoul ſuch as is " imagined? Analogies ſuch as laid down? Is " there any thing to be hoped for after this life? " Was Gilimer in the right to laugh, though " ſtript of his dominions, when brought before " Juſtinian, or Cato preferring ſuicide to the " ſight of Cæſar. Is glory then but an illuſion? " Shall Muſtapha in the effeminacy of his harem, " beaten, ignorant, proud and committing every " folly, be happier provided he digeſts well, than " the philoſopher who digeſts ill? Are all beings " equal before the great Being that animates " nature? In that caſe could the ſoul of Ravaillac " be equal to that of Henry IV. or had they " neither of them a ſoul? May the heroic philo- " ſophers unravel all this; for my part I can " make nothing of it *."

D'Alembert and Frederick alternately preſſed by theſe queſtions, each anſwered after his own way. Unable to fix his own uncertainty the former frankly confeſſes he has not the gift of ſolving them: " I own to you," ſays he, " that concern- " ing the exiſtence of God, the Author of the " *Syſtem of Nature* ſeems too reſolute and dogmatic,

* Letter 179, 12th Oct. 1770.

" and on this ſubject ſcepticiſm ſeems the moſt " rational. *What do we know about it*, is with " me, an anſwer to moſt metaphyſical queſtions, " and the conſequent reflection muſt be, that ſince " we know nothing of the matter, it is doubtleſs " unneceſſary that we ſhould know more *."

This reflection on the little importance of theſe queſtions, was added, leſt Voltaire, harraſſed out with the anguiſh of his mind, ſhould forſake a philoſophy unable to ſolve his doubts on queſtions, by no means, in his opinion, indifferent to the happineſs of man. He inſiſted, but D'Alembert perſiſting in the ſame ſtyle, ſays that " *No*, " in metaphyſics, appeared to him not much wiſer " than *yes*; and that *non liquet* (it is not clear) was " generally the only rational anſwer †."

Frederick was as averſe to doubts as Voltaire, but perpetually wiſhing to ſtifle them, he was at length perſuaded he had ſucceeded. " A phi- " loſopher of my acquaintance," ſays he, " a man " pretty reſolute in his opinions, thinks that we " have a ſufficient degree of probability, to con- " ſtitute a certainty that *poſt mortem nihil eſt* (or " that death is an eternal ſleep), he maintains that " man is not twofold, that he is only matter " animated by motion; and this ſtrange man ſays,

* Letter 36, anno 1770. † Letter 38, ibid.

" that

" that there exists no relation between *animals* and " the supreme *intelligence* *."

This resolute philosopher, this strange man, was Frederick himself, and a few years after, he makes no secret of it, when he more decidely writes, " I am well assured that I am not twofold; " hence, I consider myself as a single being. " I know that I am an animal organised and that " thinks; hence, I conclude that matter can " think, as well as it has the property of being " electric †."

Verging towards his grave, but wishing to inspire Voltaire with confidence, he writes anew. " The gout has successively ran over all my body. " Our frail machine must needs be destroyed by " time, which consumes every thing; my founda- " tions are undermined, but all that, gives me " very little concern ‡."

As to the fourth hero of the conspiracy, the famous Diderot, he is exactly the person, whose decisions against God, D'Alembert had found too resolute and dogmatic, though oftentimes, in the same work, we find him after deciding against the Deist, deciding in the same peremptory manner for or against the Sceptic and the Atheist. But whether he writes for or against a God, he always appears impervious to doubts or anguish of mind.

* Letter of 30th Oct. 1770. † Letter of 4th Dec. 1775.
‡ Letter 8th Apr. 1776.

He fairly wrote what he thought at the moment he held his pen, whether *he cruſhed the atheiſt with the weight of the univerſe*, and that *the eye of a mite, the wing of a butterfly* was ſufficient to defeat them *, or when *that glorious diſplay did not give him even the moſt diſtant idea of any thing divine* †, and that this univerſe was but the *fortuitous reſult of motion and matter* ‡; whether, when the exiſtence of God was to be left in doubt, *ſcepticiſm at all times and in all places, could alone preſerve us from the two oppoſite exceſſes* §, or when *he prays God for the ſceptics*, becauſe he ſees *they all want light* ‖; whether in fine to form a ſceptic, *it was neceſſary to have a head as well organiſed as that of Montagne the philoſopher* **.

Never was there a man ſo peremptory when affirming or denying any point, ſo perfectly void of conſtraint or trouble, ſo impervious to remorſe; he was a perfect ſtranger to them even when he poſitively ſays that, *between him and his dog he knows of no other difference but their dreſs* ††.

With theſe extravagancies in their religious opinions we find, Voltaire impious and tormented by his doubts and ignorance; D'Alembert impious

* Philoſophical Thoughts, No. 20.
† The Code of Nature.
‡ Philoſophical Thoughts, No. 21.
§ Idem, No. 33. ‖ Idem, No. 22. ** Idem, No. 28.
†† Life of Seneca, page 377.

but

but calm in his; while Frederick impious and triumphant, or thinking he had triumphed over his ignorance, left God in heaven provided there were no ſouls on earth; and Diderot, by turns, Atheiſt, Materialiſt, Deiſt or Sceptic, but ever impious, ever frantic, the better fitted for the various parts he was doomed to act.

Such were the men whoſe characters and religious errors, were neceſſary to be known, to aſcertain the conſpiracy of which they were the chiefs, and of whoſe exiſtence we ſhall give undeniable proof, indicate its preciſe object, and unfold its means and future progreſs.

CHAP. II.

Of the Object, Extent, and Exiſtence of the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy.

The true characteriſtics of a conſpiracy.

TO ſay that there exiſted a conſpiracy againſt the Chriſtian religion, of which Voltaire, D'Alembert, Frederick II. King of Pruſſia, and Diderot, were the chief authors and inſtigators, is not ſimply to ſay, that each one of them was an enemy and that their writings tended to the deſtruction of the religion of Chriſt; for both before and after them, we have ſeen enemies to this ſame religion, ſeeking to ſpread, by their writings, the venom of incredulity. France has had her Bayle, and her Monteſquieu; the firſt a true ſophiſter, undecided in his principles and ſupporting the *pro* and *con* with equal verſatility; but deſtitute of that hatred, which conſtitutes the conſpirator, and ſeeks accomplices: the latter is but a youth when he writes his *Perſian Letters*, and has no fixed principle againſt that faith, to which he will one day do homage, by declaring that *he always reſpected religion*, and that he beheld the Goſpel, *as the faireſt gift that God had beſtowed on man* *.

* Vid. Monteſquieu, Feller's Hiſt. Dict.

England

England has ſeen her Hobbes, her Woolſtons or her Collins, with many other diſciples of incredulity; but each of theſe ſophiſters was impious in his own way, and they ſought not to league together, however much Voltaire and Condorcet may aſſert the contrary. Each makes his partial attack on Chriſtianity from his own brain, and that is not ſufficient to conſtitute a conſpiracy.

In order to ſhow a real conſpiracy againſt Chriſtianity, we muſt not only point out the wiſh to deſtroy, but alſo the union and ſecret correſpondence in the means employed to attack, debaſe or annihilate it. When therefore I name Voltaire and Frederick, Diderot and D'Alembert, as the chiefs of this Antichriſtian Conſpiracy, I not only mean to ſhew, that each had impiouſly written againſt Chriſtianity, but that they had formed the wiſh, and had ſecretly communicated that wiſh of deſtroying the religion of Chriſt; that they had acted in concert, ſparing no political nor impious art to effectuate this deſtruction; that they were the inſtigators and conductors of thoſe ſecondary agents whom they had miſled, and following up their plans and projects, with all that ardor and conſtancy, which denotes the moſt finiſhed conſpirator. My very proofs ſhall be drawn from what we may very properly term the records of the conſpiracy, I mean from their moſt intimate

corre-

correſpondence, a long time ſecret, or from their own aſſertions contained in their divers writings.

The true archives of the conſpirators.

When Beaumarchais gave us a compleat edition of Voltaire's works, with all the magnificence of the Baſkerville type; either the adepts, blinded by their ſucceſs, were perſuaded that the publicity of this monſtrous conſpiracy, could only add new luſtre to its chief, or that the Editors themſelves were ignorant of the fact, or in fine, that being ſcattered and diſperſed through forty large volumes of letters, to all ſorts of perſons, and on all ſorts of ſubjects, no man could at once ſeize the thread of a conſpiracy, the work of many long years. But whatever may have been their intentions, whatever their art in ſuppreſſing parts of the correſpondence, they have not effectually done away all means of diſcovery. Never ſhould I have undertaken a work of ſuch labour, ſo painful and diſguſting, had I not ſeen the neceſſity of proving from the very records of the conſpirators, the reality of their plots; the neceſſity of denouncing to all nations, with proof in hand, the men, who wiſh to miſlead them, and who ſought to overturn every altar provided it was but Chriſtian. With them the altars of London or Geneva, of Stockholm or Peterſburg were to ſhare the ſame fate with thoſe of Paris or Madrid, of Vienna or Rome, thus adding, by their fall, a new, though tardy proof of the univerſality of this conſpiracy. Such then

then are their black and hidden crimes. Behold them conſpiring againſt your God, in order to conſpire againſt your ſovereign and your laws, behold them ſeeking to overthrow all civil ſociety and univerſally extend the ſcourges of the French revolution.

I know that the gravity of the charge requires ſtrong evidence and clear proofs, to juſtify it; if then my proofs are too numerous, let my reader reflect on the weightineſs of the charge.

The word of the conſpirators.

In all conſpiracies there is generally a ſecret language or a watchword, unintelligible to the vulgar, though it perpetually recals the object to the mind of the conſpirator. The word choſen by Voltaire muſt have been dictated by ſome fiend of hatred or frantic rage. But what words! *Cruſh the wretch!* (ecraſez l'infame!) and what a ſignification is attached to theſe three words in the mouths of D'Alembert, of Frederick or their diſciples; conſtantly they mean *cruſh Chriſt, cruſh the religion of Chriſt, cruſh every religion that adores Chriſt.* Oh readers retain your indignation until you have ſeen the proof!

Proofs as to the true ſenſe of the word with Voltaire.

When Voltaire complains that the adepts are not ſufficiently united in the war they wage againſt the *wretch*; when he wiſhes to revive their zeal, he recals to their minds, the hopes and projects he had already conceived in 1730, when the lieutenant of the police at Paris, warned him that he would

would not succeed in overturning the Christian religion, he had daringly, answered *that is what we shall see* *.

When exulting in the success of the war, and progress of the conspiracy against the *wretch*, he triumphs in the idea, " that in Geneva, Calvin's " own town, there are but a few beggarly fellows " who believe in the consubstantial †."

When he wishes, during this war against the *wretch*, to give his reasons for tolerating the Socinians, it is, says he, *because Julian would have favoured them, and that he hates what Julian hated, and despises what he* (Julian) *despised* ‡.

What then is this hatred, common to the Socinians and to Julian the apostate, if it be not their hatred to the divinity of Christ. What is meant by the consubstantial, fallen into disrepute, if it be not Christ; or how can the word *wretch*, be otherwise interpreted, in the mouth of him that had uttered, " I am weary of hearing people re- " peat that twelve men have been sufficient to es- " tablish Christianity, and I will prove that one " may suffice to overthrow it §." In the mouth I say of a man who, in his intrigues against the *wretch* exclaims, " could not five or six men of " parts, and who rightly understood each other,

* Let. to D'Alembert, 20th of June 1760.
† Let. 119, anno 1763, 28th Sept.
‡ Let. to Frederick, 5th Nov. 1773.
§ Life of Voltaire by Condorcet.

" succeed,

" ſucceed, after the example of twelve ſcoundrels " who have already ſucceeded *."

In the mouth of this frantic infidel can we conceal the ſenſe of theſe words: The twelve apoſtles called *twelve ſcoundrels!* and their divine maſter a *wretch!* I may dwell too much on the proofs, but the charges are too heinous, to paſs them over lightly.

All thoſe men, ſo much extolled by Voltaire for their ardor in *cruſhing the wretch*, are preciſely thoſe who attacked Chriſtianity without the leaſt decorum or decency, ſuch as Diderot, Condorcet, Helvetius, Freret, Boulanger, Dumarſais and ſuch like infidels; and thoſe which he particularly wiſhes D'Alembert to rally, the more effectually *to cruſh the wretch*, are namely the Atheiſts, the Deiſts and Spinoſiſts †.

Againſt whom then will the Atheiſt, the Deiſt and the Spinoſiſt coaleſce, unleſs it be againſt the God of the Goſpel?

Voltaire proceeds to direct the zeal of the conſpirators againſt the holy fathers, and thoſe modern writers, who have written in defence of Chriſtianity and the divinity of Chriſt, both of whom he wiſhes to ſee treated with the utmoſt contempt; he writes to his adepts, " Victory is declaring for us " on all ſides, and I can aſſure you, that ſoon, none

* Let. to D'Alembert 24th July 1760.
† Let. 37th to D'Alembert, 1770.

" but

" but the rabble will follow the ſtandard of our " enemies, and we equally contemn that rabble " whether for or againſt us. We are a corps " of brave knights, defenders of the truth and " who admit none amongſt us, but men of " education. Courage brave Diderot, intrepid " D'Alembert, form with my dear Damilaville " and ruſh forward on thoſe fanatics and knaves; " pity poor Paſchal, but deſpiſe Houtville and " Abadie as much as if they were fathers of the " church *."

Here then is the explanation of what Voltaire means *by cruſhing the wretch.* It is to undo what the apoſtles have done, to hate what Julian the apoſtate hated, to attack thoſe, whom the deiſts, atheiſts and ſpinoſiſts always attacked, it is in fine to ruſh on the holy fathers or on any other man who dares defend the religion of Chriſt.

With Frederick

The ſenſe of this atrocious watchward is equally clear in the mouth of Frederick. With this royal ſophiſter as with Voltaire, *Chriſtianity, the Chriſtian ſect, the Chriſticole ſuperſtition* (La ſuperſtition Chriſticole) and *the wretch*, are all ſynonimous terms. With him as with Voltaire *the wretch yielded none but poiſonous weeds*; the beſt writings againſt the *wretch* are preciſely the moſt impious, and if any in particular deſerve his peculiar eſteem, it is, *that ſince Celſus, nothing ſo ſtriking had been pub-*

* Let. to Damilaville, anno 1765.

liſhed

liſhed againſt Chriſtianty. The fact really is, that Boulanger, unfortunately more known by his impiety than by his converſion, *is ſtill ſuperior to Celſus himſelf* *.

With D'Alembert.

As to D'Alembert we may ſee, though he ſeldom uſes this ſhocking word, that he was well acquainted with its meaning; by his anſwers to Voltaire, by the means he ſuggeſts, by the writings he approves of and ſeeks to circulate, as fitteſt *to cruſh the wretch*; and which writings are preciſely thoſe that more directly tend to eradicate religion from the minds of the people. We may ſee it, when wiſhing to ſhew his zeal for the progreſs of the conſpiracy againſt *the wretch*, he profeſſes his eagerneſs to ſupport Voltaire, or his ſorrow that from localities, he cannot ſpeak with the ſame freedom againſt Chriſtianity. His expreſſions and numberleſs letters hereafter quoted, will leave no more doubt of him, than of Voltaire or Frederick†.

Extent of the conſpiracy.

Such was the general acceptation of the word among all the conſpirators; Condorcet, even laying aſide the word *wretch*, poſitively aſſerts, that Voltaire had ſworn, *to cruſh Chriſtianity* ‡, and Mercier ſays *to cruſh Chriſt* §.

* See let. of the King of Pruſſia, No. 143, 145, 153, anno 1767, &c. &c. &c.

† See D'Alembert's letters, 100, 102, 151.

‡ Life of Voltaire.

§ Mercier's letters. No. 60 of M. Pelletier.

In

In the views of the conſpirators, *to cruſh Chriſt* was not too ſtrong an expreſſion. In the extent of their projects, no ſhadow of his worſhip was to remain: it is true that among the Chriſtians, they honored the church of Rome with their chief hatred. But Luther and Calvin, the Church of England or of Geneva, though ſeparated from Rome, had retained their belief of Chriſt, and were therefore to ſhare the fate of the former.

The whole Goſpel of Calvin, is ridiculed by Voltaire, *as the fooleries of Jean Chauvin* *, and it was of theſe fooleries he ſpeaks when writing to D'Alembert he ſays, *that in Calvin's own town* (Geneva) *there were but a few beggarly fellows who believed in the conſubſtantial*, that is to ſay, *who believed in Chriſt*. He particularly exults in the approaching fall of the Church of England, when he extols *the Engliſh truths* †, that is the impieties of Hume, or when he thought himſelf authorized to write, that *in London Chriſt was ſpurned* ‡.

Thoſe diſciples who paid him the homage of their philoſophic ſcience, adopting his ſtyle, write, " I don't like Calvin, he was intolerant, and poor " Servet fell a victim to him, and it is true he is " no more ſpoken of at Geneva than if he had " never exiſted. As to Luther, though he had not

* Let. to Damilaville, Aug. 18th, 1766.
† Let. to the Marquis D'Argence, April 28, 1760.
‡ Let. to D'Alembert, Sept. 28th, 1763.

" much

"much wit, as is eaſily perceived by his writings, "he did not perſecute, and only loved wine and "women*?"

It is even obſervable, that for a conſiderable time the conſpiring ſophiſters placed particular ſatisfaction in their ſucceſſes againſt the Proteſtant churches. With what exceſſive joy Voltaire would write, that England and Switzerland were over-run with men *who hated and deſpiſed* Chriſtianity, as *Julian* the apoſtate *hated and deſpiſed it* †, and that *from Geneva to Berne not a Chriſtian was to be found* ‡. Frederick on his ſide, writes with equal joy, *In our proteſtant countries we go on much briſker* §.

Such then was the extent of this conſpiracy; they were to overturn every altar where Chriſt was adored. An hiſtorian might have been miſled in ſeeing the adepts ſolicit, more than once, the recal of the Proteſtants into France; but at the very time that Voltaire writes, how much he laments to ſee the petition made by the miniſter Choiſeul rejected, fearing leſt his diſciples ſhould imagine he wiſhed to ſpare the Huguenot more than the Catholic, he haſtens to add, that the Huguenots and the Calviniſts *are not leſs mad than the Sorboniſts or the Catholics*, that they were even *raving mad* ||;

* Let. of the Langrave of Heſſe to Voltaire, Sept. 9th 1766.
† Let. to the King of Pruſſia, 15th Nov. 1773.
‡ Let. to D'Alembert, Feb. 8th 1776.
§ Let. 143. || Let. to Marmontel, 21ſt Aug. 1767.

nay, sometimes he saw *nothing more atrabilarious and ferocious than the Huguenots* *.

All this pretended zeal of the conspirators to calvinize France, was but as a preparatory step to de-Christianize it with greater expedition. We may trace the gradation of their intended progress, in the following words of D'Alembert to Voltaire: "For my part I see every thing in the brightest "colours, I already behold toleration established, "*the Protestants recalled*, the priests married, con- "fession abolished, and fanaticism crushed, *without* "*so much as its being perceived* †." *Fanaticism and wretch* in D'Alembert's mouth are synonimous, the latter is even made use of in the same letter, both meaning *Christ* or *his whole religion crushed*.

There is however an exception often made by Voltaire, which might have left Christ some few worshippers among the rabble. He seems little jealous of that conquest, when he writes to D'Alembert, "Both you and Damilaville must be well pleased, "to see the contempt into which *the wretch* is fallen "among the better sort of people throughout Eu- "rope. *They are all we wished for*, or that were "necessary. We never pretended to enlighten *the* "*house maids and shoemakers*; we leave them to "the apostles ‡." Or when he writes to Diderot, "Whatever you do, have your eye on *the wretch*.

* Let. to the Marquis D'Argence de Dirac, Mar. 2d 1763.
† May 4th 1762. ‡ Sept. 2d 1768.

"It

" *It* muſt be deſtroyed among the better ſort *and* " *leave it to the rabble* for whom *it* was made * ;" or when, in fine, he writes to Damilaville, " I can " aſſure you, that ſoon none but the rabble will fol- " low the ſtandard of our enemies, and we equally " contemn that rabble whether for or againſt us †."

Voltaire, deſpairing of wider ſucceſs, would ſometimes except *the clergy and the great chamber of the Parliament.* But in the ſequel of theſe memoirs, we ſhall ſee the conſpirators actively extending their principles, and inſtilling their hatred againſt Chriſtianity into every claſs of men, from the cottage to the throne, not even excepting their ſo much deſpiſed rabble.

* Dec. 25th 1762. † Anno 1765.

CHAP. III.

The Secret, the Union and the Epoch of the Conſpiracy.

IN conſpiracies it is not enough for the agents to have a particular watchword, or formula, in order to hide their general object, but they have alſo peculiar names, by which they mutually point out each other, and which are unintelligible to the public. They carefully conceal their correſpondence; but if they fear diſcovery, it is then they uſe theſe precautions leſt their names, or the object of the plot, be expoſed.

The ſuppoſed names of the conſpirators.

Theſe means were not to be neglected by Voltaire or D'Alembert. In their correſpondence Frederick is often called *Duluc* *, D'Alembert *Protagoras* †, though he often ſtyles himſelf *Bertrand* ‡. Both were well applied to him, the former to denote the infidel, the latter to betoken the means of his impiety, by the ſhifts of Bertrand, in Fontaine's fable of the Monkey and the Cat: when D'Alembert is Bertrand (the monkey), Voltaire is Raton §

* Let. of D'Alembert, No. 77.
† Voltaire to Thiriot, 26th Jan. 1762.
‡ Let. 90. § Let. 22d, March, 1774.

(the

(the cat). Diderot perſonates Plato or Tomplat *, and the general term for the conſpirators, is *Cacouac* †. They ſay he is a good Cacouac, when he can be perfectly depended upon. Oftentimes, and particularly by Voltaire, they are called brothers as in maſonry. They alſo give peculiar imports to whole phraſes of their enigmatical language, for example, *the vine of Truth is well cultivated*, is to ſay we make amazing progreſs againſt religion ‡. Their ſecret language.

This ſecret language was particularly made uſe of, when they feared their letters were opened or ſtopped, which often gave Voltaire and D'Alembert great uneaſineſs. It was for that reaſon, that many of their letters, were directed to fictitious perſons, to merchants or ſome clerk in office, who was in the ſecret. It does not appear that they ever made uſe of cyphers, they would have been much too tedious, conſidering Voltaire's immenſe correſpondence. Thoſe were reſerved for conſpirators, not leſs ardent, but of a deeper policy. Falſe directions and not ſigning their names, ſeem to have given them ſufficient confidence in their ſtyle, and if perchance, any of their letters are more enigmatical than common, they are eaſily explained by the preceding or following ones. It

* Voltaire to Damilaville, 25th Auguſt, 1766.

† Let. of D'Alembert, No. 76.

‡ Let. to D'Alembert, No. 35.

was by these shifts they wished to leave an opening for excusing or explaining what they had already written; but they are not sufficiently obscure to prevent discovery, and that with very little trouble, when surprised.

Some few, nevertheless, are more difficult to be understood than others; for example, the letter written by Voltaire to D'Alembert, the 30th of January 1764: "My illustrious philosopher has "sent me the letter of Hippias, B. This letter "of B, proves that there are T.'s and that poor "literature is falling back into the shackles which "*Malesherbes* had broken. That demi-scholar as "well as demi-citizen, D'Agueſſeau, was a T.... "He would have hindered the nation from think-"ing! I wish you had but seen that brute of a "*Maboul*, he was a very silly T... to be at the head "of the customs upon ideas under the T... "D'Agueſſeau. Then followed the under T.'s "about half a dozen miserable rascals, who for "the pitiful salary of 17l. per annum, would "erase from a book, every thing that was worth "leaving in it."

Here it is evident that T stands for *tyrant*, one of which tyrants is the chancellor D'Agueſſeau, the other Maboul, the comptroller of the press. The under T's, or tyrants, are the public censors, whose salaries were about 17l. per annum. As to *Hippias B*, his person is not so clear; he was most probably some tyrant who wished to stop the circulation

culation of those works, which directly tended to the overthrow of the altar and the throne. But who can see, without indignation, the chancellor D'Aguesseau, the ornament of the magistracy, called a tyrant, a demi-scholar, a demi-citizen. It is, however, forbearance in Voltaire, not to abuse him more grosly; we must expect to see him and D'Alembert lavishing the lowest terms of blackguardism, throughout this correspondence, on every man who differs from them in opinion, whatsoever be his merits otherwise, but especially on those who laboured for, or wrote in defence of religion.

However openly the conspirators expressed themselves to each other, secrecy was strictly recommended to them, with respect to the public; and Voltaire perpetually apprizes the adepts of its importance. "The mysteries of Mytra, (he would "make D'Alembert write to the adepts) are not "to be divulged, the monster (religion) must fall, "pierced by a hundred invisible hands; yes, let "it fall beneath a thousand repeated blows*." Their secrecy.

This secrecy, nevertheless, was not to be so much with respect to the object of the conspiracy, as to the names of the conspirators, and the means they employed; for it was impossible for the rancorous hatred of Voltaire, to disguise the wish of annihilating Christianity; but he had to fear on one

* Let. to D'Alembert, April 27th 1768.

ſide the ſeverity of the laws, and on the other the contempt and infamy which would certainly attach to himſelf and diſciples, from the impudence of their falſehoods and the effrontery of their calumnies, had it ever been poſſible to trace their authors and abettors.

Hiſtory is not in fault, if it is obliged to repreſent the chief of the conſpiracy, at once the moſt daring, the moſt unrelenting in his hatred to Chriſt, and the moſt deſirous of hiding his attacks. Voltaire ſecretly conſpiring and concealing his means, is the ſame man, though bold and blaſpheming. Openly attacking the altars of his God, he is ſtill the Sophiſter, though veiling the hand that ſtrikes, or ſeeking in the dark to undermine the temple. It is hatred that fires his rage, or leads him through the torturous ways of the conſpirator. To unmaſk this diſſimulating man, ſhall be a leading point in the following memoirs.

In his character of chief, the myſteries of Mytra as well as the intrigues of the conſpirators, could be of no ſmall concern to him, and the following were his ſecret inſtructions. " Confound *the wretch* to " the utmoſt of your power, ſpeak your mind " boldly, ſtrike *and conceal your hand.* You may be " known; I am willing to believe there are people " ſufficiently keen-ſcented, but they will not be " able to convict you*."

Their leſſons on the art of ſecrecy.

* Let. to D'Alembert, May 1761.

" The

" The Nile, it was ſaid, ſpread around its ferti-
" lizing waters, though it concealed its head; *do*
" *you the ſame*, you will ſecretly enjoy your triumph.
" I recommend *the wretch to you* *." " We em-
" brace the worthy knight and exhort him to con-
" ceal his hand from the enemy †."

No precept is oftener repeated by Voltaire than *ſtrike but conceal the hand*, and if by indiſcretion any adept occaſioned his diſcovery, he would complain moſt bitterly, he would even deny works that were the moſt decidedly his. " I know not why
" (ſays he) people are ſo obſtinately bent on be-
" lieving me the author of the *Philoſophical Dic-*
" *tionary*. The greateſt ſervice you can do me,
" is to aſſert, though you pledge your ſhare in Pa-
" radiſe, that I have no hand in that helliſh work.
" There are three or four people, who perpetu-
" ally repeat, that I have ſupported the good
" cauſe, and that I fight mortally againſt the wild
" beaſts. *It is betraying one's brethren, to praiſe*
" *them on ſuch an occaſion, thoſe good ſouls bleſs me,*
" *but ruin me.* It is certainly him, they ſay, it is
" his ſtyle, his manner. Ah, my brethren, what
" fatal accents; on the contrary you ſhould cry out
" on the public ways, it is not he, *for the monſter*

* Let. to Helvetius, May 11th 1761.

† Let. to Mr. de Vielleville, 26th April 1767.

" *muſt*

" *muſt fall pierced by a hundred inviſible hands; yes,*
" *let it fall beneath a thouſand repeated blows* *."

It was in this art of ſecrecy and of concealing his ſteps, that D'Alembert ſo much excelled. Him it was, that Voltaire recommended to the brethren for imitation, and *as the hope of the flock.* " He is " daring (would he ſay to them), but not raſh; he " will make hypocrites tremble (that is religious " men) without giving any hold againſt himſelf †."

Frederick not only approved of this ſecrecy ‡, but we ſhall ſee him playing off all the artifices of his dark policy to enſure the ſucceſs of the conſpiracy.

Union of the conſpirators.

In every plot, union is as eſſential to the conſpirator, as ſecrecy to the cauſe, and ſo it is often and particularly recommended. Among others we find the following inſtructions: " Oh, my philoſo- " phers, we ſhould march cloſed, as the Macedonian " phalanx, it was only vanquiſhed when it opened. " Let the real philoſophers unite in a brotherhood " like the Free-maſons; let them aſſemble and " ſupport each other, let them be faithful to the " aſſociation. Such an academy will be far ſupe- " rior to that of Athens, and to all thoſe of " Paris §."

* Let. to D'Alembert, 152 and 219.

† Let. from Voltaire to Thuriot, 19th Nov. 1760.

‡ Let. to Voltaire, 16th May 1771.

§ Let. to D'Alembert, No. 85 anno 1761, and No. 2, anno 1769.

If

If any diſſention, perchance, happened among the conſpirators, the chief immediately wrote to appeaſe them: he would ſay, "Ah poor brethren, "the primitive Chriſtians behaved themſelves "much better than we do. Patience, do not let "us loſe courage, God will help us provided we "remain united," and when he wiſhed to inſiſt more particularly on the object of that union, he would repeat his anſwer to Herault, *We'll ſee whether it be true, that the Chriſtian religion cannot be deſtroyed**.

Moſt of theſe diſſentions aroſe from the difference of opinion in the conſpirators, and the diſcordancy of their ſophiſms againſt Chriſtianity, which often made them thwart each other. Voltaire, aware of the advantage it gave to religious writers, immediately enjoined D'Alembert to ſeek, if poſſible, a reconciliation with the Atheiſts, Deiſts and Spinoſiſts. "The two parties (ſays he) muſt "neceſſarily coaleſce. I wiſh you would undertake "that reconciliation; ſay to them, if you will omit "the emetic, I will overlook the bleeding†."

This premier chief, always fearful leſt their ardor ſhould ſubſide, and wiſhing to animate their zeal, would write to the other chiefs, "I fear you are "not ſufficiently zealous, you bury your talents, "you ſeem only to contemn whilſt you ſhould ab- Ardor and conſtancy in the plot.

* Let. to D'Alembert, No. 66.

† Let. to D'Alembert, No. 37, 1770.

"hor

" hor and deſtroy the monſter. Could not you " cruſh him in a few pages, while you modeſtly " hide from him, that he falls by your pen. It " was given Meleager to kill the boar; *hurl the* " *javelin, but hide your hand.* Comfort me in my " old age *." He would write to a young adept, who might be dejected through ill ſucceſs, *Courage! do not let yourſelf be dejected* †. In fine, to bind them by the ſtrongeſt ties of intereſt, he would tell them by means of D'Alembert, " Such is our " ſituation that we ſhall be the execration of man- " kind, if we have not the better ſort of people " on our ſide. We muſt then gain them, coſt " what it will; labour therefore in the vineyard, " *and cruſh the wretch, then cruſh the wretch* ‡."

It is thus that every diſtinctive mark which conſtitutes the conſpirator, ſuch as enigmatical language, a common and ſecret wiſh, union, ardor and perſeverance, is to be ſeen in theſe firſt authors of the war againſt Chriſtianity. It is thus that the hiſtorian is authoriſed to repreſent this coalition of Sophiſters, as a true conſpiracy againſt the altar. At length Voltaire not only allows it, but wiſhes every adept to underſtand, that the war of which he was the chief, was a true plot, and that

Open avowal of Voltaire.

* Let. to D'Alembert, 28th Sept. 1763.

† Let. to Damilaville.

‡ 13th Feb. 1764.

each

each one was to act the part of a conspirator. When he feared their excessive zeal, he would write himself, or through D'Alembert, that in the war they waged, *they were to act as conspirators and not as zealots* *.

When the chief of these infidels makes so formal a declaration, when he so clearly orders them to *act as conspirators*, it would be absurd to seek further proofs, as to the existence of the conspiracy. I fear they have already been too numerous for my reader; but in a matter of such importance, I was to presume him equally rigid as myself, with respect to its demonstration. Now as nobody will deny this, unless blind to conviction, to have been a real conspiracy of the Sophisters against Christ and his church, I will not end this chapter, without trying to ascertain its origin and true epoch.

Epoch of the conspiracy.

Was this conspiracy to be dated from the day on which Voltaire consecrated his life to the annihilation of Christianity, we should look back to the year 1728, that being the epoch of his return from London to France; and his most faithful disciples inform us, that he made his determination when in England †. But Voltaire lived many years, alone ruminating his hatred against Christ; it is

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, let. 142.

† Life of Voltaire, edit. of Kell.

true

true he was already the officious defender of every impious work that had the ſame tendency, but theſe were only the iſolated works of Sophiſters, ſingly writing, without any of the appurtenances of the conſpirator. To form adepts and inſtil his hatred into them, could be but the work of time, and his efforts, unfortunately crowned with ſucceſs, had greatly augmented their number, when, in 1750, he by the expreſs deſire of the king of Pruſſia, took his departure for Berlin. Of all the diſciples he left in Paris, the moſt zealous were D'Alembert and Diderot, and it is to theſe two men, that the coalition againſt Chriſt can be firſt traced. Though it may not have acquired all its ſtrength, it certainly exiſted when the plan of the Encyclopedia was decided on; that is to ſay, the year that Voltaire left Paris for Berlin. Voltaire had formed his diſciples, but it was D'Alembert and Diderot who united them in one body to make that famous compilation, which may in truth be ſtyled the grand arſenal of impiety, whence all their ſophiſticated arms, were to be directed againſt Chriſtianity.

Voltaire, who alone was worth a hoſt of infidels, laboring apart in the war againſt Chriſtianity, left the Encyclopediſts, for ſome time, to their own ſchemes; but if his diſciples had been able to form the coalition, they were incapable of carrying it on. Their difficulties augmenting, they ſought a

man

man able to remove them, and without hesitation fixed on Voltaire, or rather, to use the words of his historian, *Voltaire, by his age, his reputation and his genius, naturally became their chief.*

At his return from Prussia, about the year 1752, he found the conspiracy complete. Its precise object was the destruction of Christianity; the chief had first sworn it, the secondary chiefs, such as D'Alembert, Diderot and even Frederick, notwithstanding his quarrels with the premier, were ever after leagued with him in the same bonds. At this period, the adepts were all that Voltaire could number, as his disciples: but from the day of the coalition between the premier, the secondary chiefs, and the adepts' agents or protectors; from the day that the object of this coalition to crush Christ and his religion, under the appellation of *wretch*, had been decreed, until the grand object of the coalition was to be consummated by the proscriptions and horrid massacres of the Jacobins, near half a century was to elapse; for so much time was necessary for the harbinger of blood and corruption, to prepare the way for the Philosophist of destruction and murder. Naturally during this long period of time, we shall see this sophistical sect, who had sworn to crush, coalescing with the sect, who under the name of *Jacobin*, really does crush and massacre.

Where

Relation between the Sophisters and the Jacobins.

Where then the difference between the sophistical sect under Voltaire and D'Alembert, anticipating the murders of the French revolution, by their wishes and their conspiracies, and those sophisters, who under the name of Jacobin, overthrow the altar and embrue its steps with the blood of its priests and pontifs? Do not they proscribe the religion of the same Christ, of the same God, whom Voltaire, D'Alembert, Frederick and all that impious sequel of adepts had sworn to crush and abhor? Will any one tell us, that there is any difference between the sophisms of the former, and the pretexts of the latter, between the school of Voltaire and the maxims of the Jacobinical den.

The Jacobins will one day declare that all men are free, that all men are equal, and as a consequence of this liberty and equality they will conclude that every man must be left to the lights of reason. That every religion subjecting man's reason to mysteries, or to the authorities of any revelation speaking in God's name, is a religion of slavery and constraint; that as such it should be annihilated, in order to re-establish the indefeasible rights of liberty and equality, as to the belief or disbelief of all that the reason of man approves or disapproves: and they will call this liberty and equality, the reign of reason and the empire of philo-

philoſophy. Can the candid reader believe, that this liberty and equality is not appoſite to the war carried on by Voltaire againſt Chriſtianity? Had the chiefs or adepts ever any other view, than that of eſtabliſhing their pretended empire of philoſophy or their reign of reaſon, on that ſelf-ſame liberty and equality applied to revelation and the myſteries, in perpetual oppoſition to Chriſt and his church?

Did not Voltaire hate the church and its paſtors, becauſe they oppoſed that liberty and equality applied to our belief; becauſe nothing was *ſo contemptible* and *ſo miſerable* in his eyes, as to ſee one man have recourſe to another in matters of faith, *or to aſk what he ought to believe* *. *Reaſon*, *liberty* and *philoſophy* were as conſtantly in the mouths of Voltaire and D'Alembert, as a means of overthrowing Revelation and the Goſpel; as they are at this day in the mouths of the Jacobins †. When the adepts wiſh to extol the glory of their chiefs, they will repreſent them *perpetually reclaiming the independence of Reaſon*, and devoutly expecting thoſe days when *the ſun ſhall no longer ſhine, but upon free men, acknowledging no other maſter but their own reaſon* ‡.

When therefore, on the ruins of the temple, the Jacobins ſhall have erected the idol of their

* Letter to the Duke D'Uſez, 19th Nov. 1760.

† See the whole of their correſpondence.

‡ Condorcet's Progreſs of Reaſon, 9th Epoch.

reaſon, their liberty or their philoſophy; will they have fulfilled any other wiſh, any other oath, than that ſworn by Voltaire and his adepts.

When the Jacobins ſhall apply the axe to the foundations of the temples whether Proteſtant or Catholic, or in fine of any ſect acknowledging the God of the Chriſtians; will they have more widely extended their ſyſtems of deſtruction, than Voltaire conſpiring againſt the altars of London or Geneva, equally as againſt thoſe of Rome?

When their grand club ſhall be filled with every infidel the French revolution can produce, whether Atheiſt, Deiſt or Sceptic, will their revolutionary cohorts be differently formed, than thoſe which D'Alembert was to quicken and ſtir up againſt the God of Chriſtianity?

In fine, when one day theſe legions ſallying from this den of impiety, from the grand club of the Jacobins, ſhall triumphantly carry to the Pantheon, the aſhes of Voltaire; will not that be the conſummating of the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy, will not that be the revolution ſo long planned by Voltaire? The means may differ, but the object, the ſpirit, and the extent of the conſpiracy will remain. We ſhall ſee the very means employed, the revolution that deſtroys the altar, that plunders and maſſacres its prieſts by the hand of the Jacobin, were not foreign to the wiſhes or intentions of the firſt adepts. The moſt dreadful and diſguſting parts

of

of this irreligious revolution, only differs from their plans, by a difference in terms; *one* WISHED *to crush*, *the other* DID *crush*. The means were such as the times suggested, both were not equally powerful.—We will now proceed to tear the veil from those dark intrigues, successively employed by the Sophisters during the half century, which prepared such scenes of blood and confusion.

CHAP. IV.

First Means of the Conspirators.

IN order *to crush the wretch*, in the sense of Voltaire, or to attain the destruction of the altars of that God whose worship had been taught by the Apostles, nothing less could suffice than the total subjection of the public opinion, and the annihilation of the faith of all Christian nations. To annihilate it by force was above the strength of the rising coalition. Force was only to be resorted to, when by a revolution in all religious ideas, things had been brought to that state, in which our Jacobin legislators found them; or when, by incredulity, the courts the senates the armies, in fine, men of all descriptions, had been gained over to a submission, or blind confidence in their sophistry. And indeed the necessary growth of impiety and corruption, supposed too long a period, for Frederick or Voltaire ever to flatter themselves with the hopes of seeing it *. It was then too early for them to grasp the falchion of the butchering Jacobin; nor must we expect, in the following pages, to read of guillo-

* Letter of Frederick to Voltaire, 5th May 1767.

tines,

tines, or forced requiſitions in battle arrray, againſt the altars of Chriſtianity.

In the beginning we ſee their intrigues hidden, and without tumult; ſlow and tortuous, but more inſidious from their ſecrecy, more certain from their ſlowneſs; the public opinion was to periſh, as it were, by inanition, before they dared lay the axe to the altar. And this mode of proceeding we find, is perfectly underſtood by Frederick, when he writes to Voltaire, that *to undermine the edifice in ſilence, is to oblige it to fall of itſelf**; and ſtill better underſtood by D'Alembert, when upbraiding Voltaire with being too haſty, he ſays, *If mankind grows enlightened, it is becauſe we have the care to enlighten them by degrees* †. Convinced of the neceſſity of this gradation, D'Alembert bethought himſelf of the Encyclopedia, as the grand means of philoſophizing mankind, and *cruſhing the wretch*. His project is no ſooner conceived, than enthuſiaſtically embraced by Diderot; and Voltaire animated their drooping courage more than once, by his conſtant attention to the undertaking.

The Encyclopedia projected.

To judge of what amazing importance the ſucceſs of this famous dictionary was to the conſpiring chiefs, we muſt be acquainted with the plan, the method of its execution, and how it was

Its ſuppoſed object.

* 29th July 1775. † 31ſt July 1762.

to become the infallible agent of incredulity, and its moſt powerful weapon in perverting the public opinion, or overturning all the principles of Chriſtianity.

The Encyclopedia is at firſt uſhered into the world as the aggregate, as the complete treaſure of all human arts and ſciences, of Religion, Divinity, Phyſics, Hiſtory, Geography, Aſtronomy or Commerce; in a word, of whatever may conſtitute a Science: of Poetry, Oratory, Grammar, Painting, Architecture, Manufactures, or of whatever can be the object of uſeful or pleaſing arts. This great work was to comprehend the very minutiæ of different trades, from the manufacturer to the labourer; it was of itſelf to be an immenſe library, and ſupply the place of one. It was to be the work of men the moſt ſcientific and the moſt profound in every branch, that France could produce. The diſcourſe in which it was announced by D'Alembert to all Europe, was written with ſo much art, had been ſo profoundly meditated and nicely weighed, the concatenation of the ſciences and the progreſs of the human mind, appeared ſo properly delineated; whatever he had borrowed from Bacon or Chambers on the filiation of ideas, ſo perfectly diſguiſed; in fine, the plagiary ſophiſter had ſo perfectly decked himſelf in the riches of others, that the proſpectus of the Encyclopedia was looked upon

as

as a masterpiece, and its author as the most proper person to preside over so stupendous a work.

Such were their mighty promises, but promises never intended to be fulfilled; while, on the other side, they had their secret object, and that they were determined to accomplish. This was to convert the Encyclopedia into a vast emporium of all the sophisms, errors or calumnies, which ever had been invented against religion, from the first schools of impiety, until the day of their enterprize; and these were to be so artfully concealed, that the reader should insensibly imbibe the poison without the least suspicion. To prevent discovery the error was never to be found where it might be supposed, religion was not only to be respected, but even supported in all direct discussions, though sometimes the discussion is so handled, that the objection they seem to refute, is more forcibly impressed on the mind of the reader. The more to impose on the unthinking, D'Alembert and Diderot artfully engaged several men of unblemished character to partake in this vast undertaking. Such was Mr. de Jeaucourt, a man of great learning and probity, who has furnished a number of articles to the Encyclopedia: his name alone could have been thought a sufficient guarantee against all the art and perfidy of its principles; in short, it was declared that all points of religion were to be

Its secret object.

discussed by divines, well known for their learning and orthodoxy.

All this might have been true, and the work only prove the more perfidious, D'Alembert and Diderot reserving to themselves a three-fold resource to forward their Antichristian Conspiracy.

Its means and art.

Their first resource, was that of insinuating error and infidelity into those articles deemed the least susceptible of them; such, for example, as History, or Natural Philosophy, even into Chemistry and Geography, where such danger could not even have been surmised. The second was that of references, an art so precious, by which after having placed some religious truths under the reader's eye, he is tempted to seek further information in articles of a quite different cast. Sometimes the mere reference was an epigram or a sarcasm. They would, after having treated a religious subject with all possible respect, simply add, *See the art.* PREJUDICE, or SUPERSTITION, or FANATICISM; lastly, when our referring Sophisters feared this shift could not avail them, they would not hesitate at falsifying and altering the discussion of a virtuous co-operator, or at adding an article of their own, whose apparent object was to defend, while the real was to refute what had already been written on the subject. In fine, impiety was to be sufficiently veiled

to

to make it attractive, while it left place for excuse and subterfuge. This was the peculiar art of our barking sophister D'Alembert. Diderot, more daring, was at first countenanced in the mad flights of his impiety, but in cooler moments, his articles were to be revised; he was then to add some apparent restriction in favour of religion, some of those high-sounding and reverential words, but which left the whole of the impiety to subsist. If he was above that care, D'Alembert as supervisor-general, took it upon himself.

Peculiar care was to be taken in the redaction of the first volumes, lest the clergy or those men of prejudice, as they were called, should take the alarm. As they proceeded in the work they were to grow more bold, and if circumstances did not favor them, nor allow them to say all they wished to say, they were to resort to supplements, and to foreign editions, which would at the same time render this dangerous work more common, and less costly to the generality of readers.

The Encyclopedia, perpetually recommended and cried up by the adepts, was to be a standing book in all libraries, and insensibly the learned was to be converted into the Antichristian world. If the project was well conceived, it was impossible to see one more faithfully executed.

It is now our duty to lay before the reader, proofs first as to the fact, secondly as to the intention. Proofs.

As to the fact.

tion. For the first, it will be sufficient to cast the eye on divers articles of this immense collection, especially where the principal tenets of Christianity, or even of natural religion are treated, and to follow them through the divers references the Sophisters have prepared for the reader. We shall find the existence of God, free agency, the spirituality of the soul, treated in the style of a Christian philosopher, but a *vide* DEMONSTRATION, or a *vide* CORRUPTION will be added, to pervert all that had been said; and those articles to which D'Alembert and Diderot more particularly refer the reader, are exactly those, where the doctrine of the sceptic or the Spinosist, of the Fatalist or the Materialist, is chiefly inculcated. [*See note at the end of the Chapter.*]

This cunning could not escape those authors who wrote in the defence of religion *. But Voltaire resorting to calumny, in order to defend their Encyclopedia, will represent these authors as enemies of the state, as bad citizens †. Such, indeed, were his usual weapons, and had he perfectly succeeded in deceiving people, it would have been sufficient to have examined his confidential correspondence with the very authors of the work, to be convinced of the wickedness of their intentions.

* See *Religion Vindicated*, the writings of Gauchat, of Bergier, in our Helvian Letters.

† 18th Letter to D'Alembert.

At

At a hundred leagues from Paris, and not thwarted by the obſtacles D'Alembert had to combat, he often complains, that the attacks are not ſufficiently direct. He is often ruffled by certain reſtrictions familiar to D'Alembert, and at length he breaks out on thoſe put to the article BAYLE. D'Alembert anſwers, "This is an idle quarrel in- "deed, on Bayle's Dictionary. In the firſt place, I "did not ſay, *happy would it have been had he ſhown* "*more reverence to religion and morality.* My "phraſe is much more modeſt: and beſides, in "a curſed country like this, where we are wri- "ting, who does not know that ſuch ſentences "are of mere form and only a cloak to the truths "additionally conveyed. Every one is aware of "that *." As to the intention.

During the time that Voltaire was ſo much buſied with the articles he ſo frequently ſent to D'Alembert for the Encyclopedia, he often complains of his ſhackles, and is unable to diſſemble how much he deſires to attack religion openly, and writes, "All that I am told about the articles "of Divinity and Metaphyſics, grieves me to the "heart; *oh how cruel it is to print the very reverſe* "*of what one thinks* †." But D'Alembert, more adroit, ſenſible of the neceſſity of theſe palliatives, "*leſt he ſhould be looked upon as a madman by thoſe* "*he wiſhed to convert*," foreſaw the day when he

* 10th Oct. 1764. † Let. of the 9th of Oct. 1755.

could

could triumphantly anſwer, " If mankind is ſo " much enlightened to-day, it is only becauſe we " have had the precaution, or good fortune, *to* " *enlighten them by degrees* *."

When Voltaire had ſent certain violent articles, under the name of the prieſt of Lauſanne, D'Alembert would immediately write, " We ſhall always " receive with gratitude whatever comes from the " ſame hand. We only pray our heretic to draw " in his claw a little, as in certain places he has " ſhown his fangs a little too much. *This is the* " *time for ſtepping back to make the better leap* †." And to ſhow that he never loſt ſight of this maxim, he anſwers Voltaire's animadverſions on the article HELL: "Without doubt we have ſeveral wretched " articles in our divinity and metaphyſics, *but with* " *divines for cenſors and a privilege, I defy you to* " *make them better.* There are articles *leſs expoſed* " where *all is ſet to rights again* ‡."

Can there be a doubt left of the preciſe and determined intention of the Encyclopediſts, when Voltaire exhorts D'Alembert to ſnatch the moment, whilſt the attention of government is drawn off by other concerns. " During this war *with* " *the parliament* and the *biſhops*, the philoſophers " will have fine play. *You have a fair opportunity* " *of filling the Encyclopedia with thoſe truths, that*

* 16th July 1762. † 21ſt July 1757. ‡ Ibid.

" *we*

" *we ſhould not have dared utter twenty years ago* *."
Or when he writes to Damilaville, " I can be con-
" cerned for a good dramatic performance, but
" could be far more pleaſed with a good philoſo-
" phical work that ſhould for ever cruſh the
" wretch. *I place all my hopes in the Encyclopedia* †."
After ſuch an avowal it would be uſeleſs to ſeek further proof, of this immenſe compilation being no other than the grand arſenal for all their ſophiſticated arms againſt religion.

Diderot more open, even in his ambuſhes reluctantly employed cunning. He does not hide how much he wiſhed, boldly to inſert his principles, and his principles are explained when he writes, " The age
" of Louis XIV. only produced two men worthy
" of co-operating to the Encyclopedia," and theſe two men were Perault and Boindin. The merits of the latter are more conſpicuous than thoſe of the former. Boindin, born in 1676, had lately died a reputed Atheiſt, and had been refuſed Chriſtian burial. The notoriety of his principles had ſhut the French academy againſt him, and with ſuch titles he could not have failed being a worthy co-operator.

Such then the object, ſuch the intention of the conſpiring authors. We ſee by their own confeſſion, that they did not wiſh to compile for

* Let. to D'Alembert, 13th Nov. 1756.
† 23d May 1764.

ſcience,

ſcience, but to compile for incredulity; that it was not the advancement of arts they ſought, but to ſeize the moment, when the attention of the ruling authorities were drawn off, to propagate their impious calumnies againſt religion. They hypocritically utter ſome few religious truths; they *print the contrary of what they believed* on Chriſtianity, but only the better to cover the ſophiſms they printed againſt it.

Obſtacles and ſucceſs of the Encyclopedia.

In ſpite of all thoſe arts, men zealous for religion, forcibly oppoſed the work. The Dauphin in particular, obtained a temporary ſuſpenſion of it; and various were the rebuffs the authors met with. D'Alembert wearied, had nearly forſaken it, when Voltaire, ſenſible of the importance of this firſt tool of the conſpiracy, rouſed his drooping courage. He, far from abating, rather redoubled his efforts, aſking for, and inceſſantly ſending freſh articles. He would extol perſeverance, he would ſhow D'Alembert and Diderot the ignominy and ſhame redounding to their opponents *. He would urge them, conjure them by their friendſhip or in the name of philoſophy to overcome their diſguſt, and not to be foiled in ſo glorious an undertaking †.

At length the Encyclopedia was brought to a concluſion, and it made its appearance under the

* See his letters of the years 1755-6.

† Letters of 5th Sept. 1752, 13th Nov. 1756, and particularly of 8th Jan. 1757.

ſanction

ſanction of a public privilege. Triumphant in their firſt ſtep, the conſpirators ſaw in it but the forerunner of their future ſucceſſes againſt religion.

Leſt any one ſhould doubt of the particular driſt of this compilation; the reader muſt be informed of the co-operators choſen by D'Alembert and Diderot, and that eſpecially for the religious part. Their firſt divine was Raynal, a man juſt expelled from the order of the Jeſuits on account of his impiety, his chief and ſtrongeſt recommendation to D'Alembert. Every one unfortunately knows how much he verified the judgement of his former brethren, by his atrocious declamations againſt Chriſtianity; but few are acquainted with the anecdote of his expulſion from among the co-operators, and that connects his ſtory with that of another divine, who, without being impious himſelf, had been unfortunately drawn into the company of the Sophiſters.

This was the Abbé Yvon, an odd metaphyſician, but an inoffenſive and upright man; often in extreme indigence, and living by his pen, when he thought he could do it with decency. In the ſimplicity of his heart he had written *The Defence of the Abbé de Prades*. I have heard him aſſert that not a ſingle error could be found in that work, and on the firſt argument give up the point. With the ſame ſimplicity I have heard him relate, by what

what means he had co-operated to the Encyclopedia. "I was in want of money, (said he); Raynal "met me and persuaded me to write a few articles, "promising me a good reward, I acceded, and "my work delivered at Raynal's study, I received "twenty-five Louis-d'ors. Thinking myself very "well paid, I imparted my good fortune to one "of the booksellers employed for the Encyclope- "dia, who seemed much surprised that the arti- "cles furnished by Raynal, should not be his own. "He was furious at the trick he surmised. A few "days after I was sent for to the office; and Ray- "nal, who had received a thousand crowns for his "pretended work, was obliged to refund me the "hundred Louis-d'ors he had kept for himself."

This anecdote will not surprise those who are acquainted with Raynal's plagiary talents. His impiety was not sufficient to prevent his dismis- sion, but it preserved him within the pale of the fraternal embrace.

I must add, that the articles on GOD and on the SOUL, furnished by the Abbé Yvon, are exactly those which grieved Voltaire to the heart, and for which, D'Alembert and Diderot were obliged to have recourse to their art of references.

The third divine, or as D'Alembert styles him the second, for he never dared mention Yvon to Voltaire, was the Abbé de Prades, obliged to fly to Prussia, on his attempt to impose on the Sorbonne

Sorbonne in advancing his own impious propoſitions for thoſe of religion. It was the cunning of this theſis which had miſled the Abbé Yvon, but ſoon diſcovered, the parliament took it up. The author, nevertheleſs, was put under the protection of the King of Pruſſia, by Voltaire and D'Alembert *.

We alſo owe to the memory of De Prades to repeat, what his protectors would willingly conceal; that three years after, he publicly retracted all his errors in a declaration ſigned the 6th of April 1754, bewailing his intimacy with the Sophiſters, adding, *that one life could not ſuffice to weep his paſt conduct* † : he died in 1782.

Another of their divines was the Abbé Morelet, a man precious to Voltaire and D'Alembert, who playing on his name called him the Abbé *Mord-les* (bite them), becauſe under pretence of attacking the Inquiſition, he had fallen on (bitten) the church with all his might ‡.

Should we enumerate the lay writers who co-operated in this work, we ſhould find far worſe. But we will only mention the famous Dumarſais, at the ſame time ſo infamous, that the public autho-

* Correſpondence of Voltaire and D'Alembert, let. 2 and 3.

† Feller's Hiſt. Dict.

‡ Correſpondence of D'Alembert, No. 65 and 96 : Let. to Thiriot, 26th Jan. 1762.

rities were obliged to interfere and deſtroy a ſchool he had formed, ſolely to imbibe his pupils with the venom of his impiety. This unfortunate man alſo retracted his errors, but only on his death-bed. The choice of this man's pen, ſhows what co-operators D'Alembert ſought.

Far be it from me, to confound, in this claſs, ſuch men as M. de Formey or Jaucourt, particularly the latter, to whom, as we have already ſaid, they were indebted for many articles. The only reproach we can make him, is that he ſhould have continued his labours, after he either did or ſhould have ſeen the drift of that vaſt compilation, where intermixed with his toils, lay all the ſophiſms and calumnies impiety could invent.

Excepting theſe two men, we may nearly comprehend the reſt of the Encyclopedian writers, in the following picture, drawn by Diderot himſelf. "All that deteſtable crew, who, though perfectly "ignorant, valued themſelves on knowing every "thing, who ſeeking to diſtinguiſh themſelves by "that vexatious univerſality they pretended to, "fell upon every thing, jumbled and ſpoiled all, "and converted this pretended digeſt of ſcience "*into a gulph, or rather a ſort of rag-baſket, where* "*they promiſcuouſly threw every thing half examined,* "*ill digeſted, good, bad, and indifferent, but al-*"*ways incoherent.*" What a precious avowal as to the intrinſic merit of their work; eſpecially after

after what he says as to their views, in describing the pains they had taken, the torments it had put them to, the art it had required to insinuate what they dared not openly write against prejudices (religion), in order to overthrow them without being perceived *.

In fine, all these follies of the *rag-dealers*, contributed to the bulk and accelerated the appearance of the volumes; the chiefs carefully inserting, in each volume, what could promote the grand object. At length terminated, all the trumpets sounded, and the journals of the party teemed with the praises of this literary atchievement. The learned themselves were duped. Every one would have an Encyclopedia. Numerous were the editions, of all sizes and prices, but under the pretence of correcting, greater boldness was assumed. About the time, when the antichristian revolution was nearly accomplished, appeared *The Encyclopedia by order of Matter*. When it was first undertaken, some deference was still paid to religion. A man of eminent merit, Mr. Bergier, a canon of Paris, thought it incumbent on him to yield to the pressing solicitations of his friends, left the part treating of religion, should fall into the hands of its greatest enemies. What was easy to foresee came to pass.

A new Encyclopedia.

* The text in the original is far more extensive, where Diderot treats of the deficiencies of the Encyclopedia, but not having it at hand, we quote from Feller's Hist. Dict. art. Diderot.

The name of a man, who had combated the impious works of a Voltaire or a Rouſſeau, naturally ſerved as a cloak to this new digeſt, ſtyled *The Encyclopedia methodiſed.* This was on the eve of the French revolution, ſo that the petty infidels charged with the work, kept no further bounds with regard to religion. This new work is more completely impious than the former, notwithſtanding ſome excellent tracts of Mr. Bergier and of ſome others; and thus the Sophiſters of the day perfected the firſt tool of the Antichriſtian conſpirators.

Note referred to in Page 58.

Devices of the Encyclopedia on the article GOD.

Look for the article GOD (Geneva edition) and you will find very ſound notions, together with the direct, phyſical and metaphyſical demonſtration of his exiſtence; and indeed under ſuch an article it would have been too manifeſt to have broached any thing even bordering on Atheiſm, Spinoſiſm, or Epicuriſm; but the reader is *referred* to the article DEMONSTRATION, and there all the phyſical and metaphyſical cogent arguments for the exiſtence of a God diſappear. We are there taught, that all direct demonſtrations *ſuppoſe the idea of infinitude, and that ſuch an idea cannot be of the cleareſt, either for the Naturaliſt or the Metaphyſician.* This in a word deſtroys all confidence the reader had in the proofs adduced of the exiſtence of God. There again, they are pleaſed to tell you, that a ſingle inſect, in the eyes of the philoſopher, more forcibly proves *the exiſtence of a God, than all the metaphyſical arguments whatever* (ibid.); but you are then *referred* to CORRUPTION, where you learn how much you are to beware of aſſerting in a poſitive manner, that corruption can never

never beget animated bodies, and that such a production of animated bodies by corruption, seems to be countenanced by *daily experiments*; and it is from these experiments precisely, that the Atheists conclude, that the existence of God is unnecessary, either for the creation of man or animals. Prepossessed by these *references*, against the existence of God, let the reader turn to the articles of ENCYCLOPEDIA and EPICURISM. In the former he will be told, *that there is no being in nature that can be called the first or last, and that a machine infinite in every way must necessarily be the Deity.* In the latter the *atom* is to be the Deity. It will be the primary cause of all things, by whom and of whom, every thing is, active, essentially of itself, *alone unalterable, alone eternal, alone immutable*; and thus the reader will be insensibly led from the God of the Gospel to the heathenish fictions of an Epicurus or of a Spinosa.

On the article of the SOUL.

The same cunning is to be found in the article of the SOUL. When the Sophisters treat directly of its essence they give the ordinary proofs of its *spirituality and of its immortality*. They will even add in the article BRUTE, that the soul cannot be supposed *material*, nor can *the brute be reduced to the quality of a mere machine, without running the hazard of making of man an Automaton.* And under NATURAL LAW we read, that if the determinations of man, or even his oscillations, arise from any thing *material, extraneous to his soul, there will be neither good nor evil, neither just nor unjust, neither obligation nor right.* Then *referred* to the article LOCKE, in order to do away all this consequence, we are told that it is of no importance *whether matter thinks or not, for what is that to justice or injustice, to the immortality of the soul and to all the truths of the system, whether political or religious*; the reader, enjoying the liberty and equality of his reason, is left in doubt with regard to the spirituality, and no longer knows whether he should not think himself all matter. But he will decide when, under the article ANIMAL, he finds

that life and animation are only physical properties of matter, and leſt he ſhould think himſelf debaſed by his reſembling a plant or an animal, to conſole him in his fall, they will tell him, article ENCYCLOPÆDIA and ANIMAL, *that the only difference between certain vegetables, and animals ſuch as us, is, that they ſleep and that we wake, that we are animals that feel, and that they are animals that feel not*; and ſtill further in the article ANIMAL, that the ſole difference *between a ſtock and a man, is, that the one ever falls, while the latter never falls after the ſame manner.* After peruſing theſe articles *bona fide*, the reader muſt be inſenſibly drawn into the vortex of materialiſm.

On the article LIBERTY.

In treating of Liberty or free agency, we find the ſame artifice. When they treat of it directly, they will ſay, "Take away liberty, all human nature is overthrown, and "there will be no trace of order in ſociety—Recompenſe "will be ridiculous, and chaſtiſement unjuſt.—The ruin of "liberty carries with it, that of all order, of police, and "legitimates the moſt monſtrous crimes—So monſtrous a "doctrine is not to be debated in the ſchools, but puniſhed "by the magiſtrates, &c. *Oh, Liberty!* they exclaim, *Oh, "Liberty, gift of heaven! Oh, Liberty of action! Oh, Liberty "of thought!* thou alone art capable of great things." [*See articles* AUTHORITY *and the* PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.] But at the article CHANCE *(fortuit)* all this liberty of action and of thought is only *a power that cannot be exerciſed, that cannot be known by actual exerciſe*; and Diderot at the article EVIDENCE pretending to ſupport liberty will very properly ſay, "This concatenation of cauſes and effects ſuppoſed by "the philoſophers, in order to form ideas repreſenting the "mechaniſm of the Univerſe, is as fabulous as the Tritons "and the Naïads." But both him and D'Alembert will deſcant again on that concatenation, and returning to CHANCE *(fortuit)*, will tell us "That though it is *imper-"ceptible*, it is not the leſs *real*; that it *connects* all things "in

" in nature, that *all events depend on it*; juſt as the wheels of " the watch, as to their motion, depend on each other: that " from the firſt moment of our exiſtence, we are by *no means* " *maſters of our motions*; that were there a thouſand worlds " ſimilar to this, and ſimultaneouſly exiſting, governed by " the ſame laws, every thing in them would be done in the " ſame way; and that *man in virtue of theſe ſame laws, would* " *perform at the ſame inſtants of time, the ſame actions*, in each " one of theſe worlds." This will naturally convince, the uninformed reader, of the chimera of ſuch a liberty or free agency, which cannot be exerciſed. Not content with this, Diderot at the article FATALITY, after a long diſſertation on this *concatenation of cauſes*, ends by ſaying, that it *cannot be conteſted* either *in the phyſical world*, nor *in the moral* and *intellectual world*. Hence what becomes of that liberty without which there no longer exiſts *juſt* or *unjuſt*, *obligation* or *right*.

Theſe examples will ſuffice to convince the reader of the truth of what we have aſſerted, as to the artful policy with which the Encyclopedia had been digeſted; they will ſhow with what cunning its authors ſought to ſpread the principles of Atheiſm, Materialiſm and Fataliſm, in fine, every error incompatible with that religion, for which they profeſſed ſo great a reverence at their outſet.

CHAP. V.

Second means of the Conſpirators.—The Extinction of the Jeſuits.

THE hypocriſy of Voltaire and D'Alembert, had triumphed over every obſtacle. They had ſo perfectly ſucceeded in their abuſe on every perſon who dared oppoſe the Encyclopedia, repreſenting them as barbarians and enemies to literature; they had found ſuch powerful ſupport during the ſucceſſive miniſtries of D'Argenſon, Choiſeul and Maleſherbes, that all the oppoſition of the great Dauphin, of the clergy and of the religious writers, could not avail, and this impious digeſt was in future to be looked upon as a neceſſary work. It was to be found in every library, whether at home or abroad, it was always to be referred to. From thence the ſimple mind in queſt of ſcience, was to imbibe the poiſon of incredulity, and the Sophiſter was to be furniſhed with arms againſt Chriſtianity. The conſpirators, though proud of their firſt invention, could not diſſemble, that there exiſted a ſet of men whoſe zeal, whoſe learning, whoſe weight and authority, might one day counteract their undertaking. The church

General wiſh of the conſpirators as to religious orders.

was

was defended by her bishops and all the lower clergy. They had, moreover, numerous orders of religious, always ready to join the seculars for her defence in the cause of Christianity. But before we treat of the means employed for the destruction of these defenders of the faith, we must show the plan formed by Frederick, whence they resolved on the destruction of the Jesuits, as the first step towards dismantling the church, the destruction of her bishops and of her different orders of priesthood.

Frederick's first plan to overthrow the church.

In the year 1743, Voltaire had been sent on secret service to the court of Prussia and among his dispatches from Berlin, we find the following writen to the minister Amelot. "In the last "interview I had with his Prussian majesty, I spoke "to him of a pamphlet that appeared in Hol- "land about six weeks back, in which the secula- "rization of ecclesiastical principalities in favour "of the Emperor and Queen of Hungary, was "proposed as the means of pacification for the Em- "pire. I told him that I could wish, with all my "heart, to see it take place; that what was Cæsar's "was to be given to Cæsar; that the whole busi- "ness of the church was to supplicate God and "the princes; that by his institution, the Bene- "dictine would have no claim to sovereignty, and "that this decided opinion of mine, had gained me "many enemies among the clergy. He owned

"that

" that the *pamphlet had been printed by his orders.*
" He hinted that he ſhould not diſlike to be one
" of thoſe kings, to whom the clergy would con-
" ſcientiouſly make reſtitution, and that he ſhould
" not be ſorry to embelliſh Berlin with the goods
" of the church. This is moſt certainly his grand
" object, and he means only to make peace, when
" he ſees the poſſibility of accompliſhing it. It
" is in your breaſt, to prudently profit of this his
" ſecret plans, which he confided to me alone *."

Effect of this plan at the court of Verſailles

It was at this period that the court of Lewis XV. began to be overrun with miniſters, who thought on religious matters, like a Voltaire or a Frederick. They had no eccleſiaſtical ſtates, no eccleſiaſtical electors to pillage, but the poſſeſſions of the numerous religious orders diſperſed through France, could ſatiate their rapacity, and they conceived that the plan of Frederick, could be equally lucrative to France. The Marquis D'Argenſon, counſellor of ſtate and miniſter of foreign affairs, was the great patron of Voltaire.

D'Argenſon's plan.

It was he who adopted all his ideas, and formed the plan for the deſtruction of all religious orders in France. The progreſs of the plan was to be ſlow and ſucceſſive, leſt it ſhould ſpread the alarm. They were to begin with thoſe orders that were leaſt numerous, they were to render the entrance into religion more difficult, and the time of their

* General correſpondence, 8th Oct. 1743.

pro-

profeſſions was to be delayed until that age, when people are already engaged in ſome other ſtate of life. The poſſeſſions of the ſuppreſſed was artfully to be adapted to ſome pious uſe, or united to the epiſcopal revenues. Time was to do away all difficulties, and the day was not far off, when, as lord paramount, the ſovereign was to put in his claim to all that belonged to the ſuppreſſed orders, even to what had been united, for the moment, to the ſees of the biſhops; the whole was to be added to his domains.

That the French miniſtry often changed, but that the plans of the cabinet never did; and that it always watched the favorable opportunity, was the remark of a ſhrewd and obſerving legate. The plan, for the deſtruction of religious orders, had been made by D'Argenſon, in the year 1745, though forty years after it lay on the chimney-piece of Maurepas, then prime miniſter. I owe this anecdote to a perſon of the name of Bevis*, a learned Benedictine, and in ſuch high repute with Maurepas, that he often preſſed him to leave his hood, promiſing him preferment as a ſecular. The Benedictine refuſed ſuch offers, and it was not without ſurpriſe, that he heard Maurepas tell him, in preſſing him to accept his offer, *that ſecularization would one day be his lot*; he then gave him *D'Argenſon's* plan, which had long been followed and would ſoon be accompliſhed.

* He is at preſent in London.

Avarice alone could not have ſuggeſted this plan, as the mendicant orders, as well as the more wealthy, were equally to be deſtroyed.

It would have been nugatory to attempt the execution before the Encyclopedian ſophiſters had prepared the way; it was therefore dormant many years in the ſtate offices at Verſailles. In the mean time the Voltarian miniſtry, foſtering up infidelity, pretended to ſtrike, while they ſecretly ſupported the ſophiſtical tribe. They forbid Voltaire the entrance of Paris, while *in amazement he receives a ſcroll of the king*, confirming his penſion, *which had been ſuppreſſed twelve years before* !* He carries on his correſpondence with the adepts, under the covers and the very ſeal of the firſt ſecretaries and of the miniſters themſelves, who were perfectly converſant with all his impious plans †. It was this very part of the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy that Condorcet was wont to deſcribe when he ſays: "Often a government would reward the philoſopher with one hand, whilſt "with the other it would pay his ſlanderer; "would proſcribe him, while they were proud of "the ſoil that had given him birth; puniſhed "him for his opinions, but would have bluſhed "not to have partaken of them ‡."

* Let. to Damilaville, 9th Jan. 1762.

† Let. to Marmontel, 13th Aug. 1760.

‡ Condorcet's Sketch on Hiſtory, 9th Epoch.

This

This perfidious underſtanding between the miniſters of his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, and the Antichriſtian Conſpirators, haſtened their progreſs, when the moſt impious and moſt deſpotic of miniſters, judged that the time was come when the deciſive blow could be ſtruck. This miniſter was the Duke of Choiſeul; during the whole time of his power he was the faithful adept and admirer of Voltaire, who ſays: "Don't fear oppoſition from "the Duke of Choiſeul; I repeat it, I don't miſ- "lead you, he will be proud of ſerving you*:" or to Marmontel, "We have been a little alarmed "by certain panics, but never was fright ſo un- "founded. The Duke de Choiſeul and Mad. de "Pompadour know the opinions of the *uncle* and "of the *niece*. You may ſend any thing without "danger." In fine, he was ſo ſecure in the duke's protection againſt the Sorbonne and the church, that he would exclaim, "*The miniſtry of France* "*for ever; long live the Duke de Choiſeul* †."

Choiſeul's underſtanding with the Sophiſters.

This confidence of the premier chief was well placed in Choiſeul, who had adopted and taken up all the plans of D'Argenſon. The miniſtry progneſticated a great ſource of riches to the ſtate, in the deſtruction of the religious, though many of them did not ſeek in that, the deſtruction of religion; they even thought ſome of them neceſſary

Reſolves the deſtruction of the Jeſuits: why he begins withthem.

* Let. to D'Alembert, No. 68, anno 1760.

† Let. to Marmontel, 13th Aug. 1760, and 2d Sept. 1767.

and

and the Jeſuits were excepted. Unfortunately theſe were exactly the men by whom Choiſeul wiſhed to begin, and his intention was already known by the following anecdote :—Choiſeul, one day, converſing with three ambaſſadors, one of them ſaid, If I ever chance to be in power, I will certainly deſtroy all religious orders excepting the Jeſuits, for they are at leaſt uſeful to education. "As for "my part (anſwered Choiſeul), I will deſtroy "none but the Jeſuits; for, their education once "deſtroyed, all the other religious orders will fall "of themſelves," and his policy was deep! There can be no doubt but what deſtroying the order, in whoſe hands the majority of the colleges were at that time, would be ſtriking at the very root of that Chriſtian education, which prepared ſo many for the religious ſtate; therefore, in ſpite of the exception, Choiſeul ſtill ſought to ſway the council by his opinion.

The Jeſuits were tampered with, but in vain; ſo far from acceding to the deſtruction of the other orders, they were foremoſt in their defence; they pleaded the rights of the church; they ſupported them with all their weight, whether in their writings or their diſcourſe. This gave occaſion to Choiſeul to remonſtrate with the council, and to perſuade them, if they wiſhed to procure to the ſtate, the immenſe reſources of the religious poſſeſſions,

poſſeſſions, that it was neceſſary to begin with the *deſtruction of the Jeſuits.*

This anecdote I only cite, as having heard it among the Jeſuits, but their ſubſequent expulſion ſtrongly corroborates its veracity. Whether theſe religious deſerved their fate or not, is alien to my ſubject; I only wiſh to point out the hand that ſtrikes, and the men who D'Alembert ſays *gave the orders* for their deſtruction. Treating of this Antichriſtian Conſpiracy, I have only to aſcertain whether their deſtruction was not conceived, urged and premeditated, by the ſophiſtical conſpirators, as a means powerfully tending to the deſtruction of Chriſtianity. Let us then examine what that body of men really was, and how neceſſarily odious they muſt have been to the conſpirators, from their general reputation. Let us, above all, hear the Sophiſters themſelves; let us ſee how much they intereſted themſelves in their deſtruction.

What the Jeſuits were

The Jeſuits were a body of twenty thouſand men, ſpread through all Catholic countries, and particularly charged with the education of youth. They did not for that neglect the other duties of the eccleſiaſtic, and were bound by a particular vow, to go as miſſionaries to any part of the globe, if ſent to preach the goſpel. From their youth, brought up to the ſtudy of literature, they had produced numberleſs authors, but more particularly

larly divines, who immediately combated any error, that might ſpring up in the church. Latterly they were chiefly engaged in France againſt the Janſeniſts and Sophiſters, and it was their zeal in the defence of the church, that made the King of Pruſſia ſtyle them the *The Life-guards of the Pope**.

Opinion of the biſhops on the Jeſuits.

When fifty French prelates, cardinals, archbiſhops or biſhops, aſſembled, were conſulted by Louis XV. on the propriety of deſtroying the order, they expreſsly anſwered: "The Jeſuits "are of infinite ſervice to us in our dioceſes, "whether for preaching or the direction of the "faithful, to revive, preſerve and propagate faith "and piety, by their miſſions, congregations and "ſpiritual retreats, which they make with our approbation, and under our authority. For theſe "reaſons we think, Sire, that to prohibit them "from inſtructing, would eſſentially injure our "dioceſes, and that it would be difficult to replace them with equal advantage in the inſtruction of youth, and more particularly ſo, in thoſe "provincial towns where there are no univerſities †."

Such in general was the idea entertained of them in all Catholic countries; it is eſſential to the reader to be acquainted with it, that he might under-

* Let. of the King of Pruſſia to Voltaire, No. 154, anno 1767. † Opinion of the Biſhops, 1761.

ſtand

ſtand of what importance their deſtruction was to the Sophiſters. At the time, the Janſeniſts had the honor of it, and indeed they were very ardent in the ſucceſs. But the Duke de Choiſeul, and the famous courtezan La Marquiſe de Pompadour, who then held the deſtiny of France, under the ſhadow and in the name of Louis XV, were not more partial to the Janſeniſts than to the Jeſuits. Both confidants of Voltaire, they were conſequently initiated in all the myſteries of the Sophiſters *, and Voltaire, as he ſays himſelf, *would willingly have ſeen all the Jeſuits at the bottom of the ſea, each with a Janſeniſt hung to his neck* †.

The Janſeniſts were nothing more than the hounds employed in the general hunt by Choiſeul, the Marquiſe de Pompadour and the Sophiſters. The Miniſter, ſpurred on by his impiety, the marquiſe, wiſhing to revenge the inſult, as ſhe called it, received from Pere Sacy a Jeſuit. This father had refuſed her the ſacraments, unleſs by quitting the court, ſhe would in ſome ſort atone for the public ſcandal ſhe had given, by her cohabitation with Louis XV. But if we judge by Voltaire's letters, they neither of them needed much ſtimulation, as they both had always been great protectors of the Sophiſters, and the mini-

* Let. of Voltaire to Marmontel, 13th Aug. 1760.

† Let. to Chabanon.

ſter had always favored their intrigues as far as he could, conſiſtently with circumſtances and politics*. The following pages will ſhow theſe intrigues, and we ſhall begin by D'Alembert, who writes in the moſt ſanguine manner on their future victory over the Jeſuits, and on the immenſe advantages to be derived to the conſpiracy by their downfall. "You are perpetually repeating, "*Cruſh the wretch*; for God's ſake let it fall headlong of itſelf! Do you know what Aſtruc ſays? "It is not the Janſeniſts that are killing the Jeſuits, but the Encyclopedia. Yes, zounds! it "is the Encyclopedia, and that is not unlikely. "This ſcoundrel of an Aſtruc is a ſecond Paſquin, "he ſometimes ſays good things. For my part I "ſee every thing in the brighteſt colours: I foreſee the Janſeniſts naturally dying off the next "year, after having ſtrangled the Jeſuits this; "toleration eſtabliſhed, the Proteſtants recalled, "the prieſts married, confeſſion aboliſhed, and "*fanaticiſm* (religion) *cruſhed*, and all this without "its even being perceived †."

D'Alembert's avowal on their deſtruction.

The very words of the conſpirators ſhow what part they had in the deſtruction of the Jeſuits. They were the true cauſe; we ſee what advantage they hoped to reap from it; they had kindled the hatred, they had procured the death warrant. The

* Let. from Voltaire to Marmontel, 21 Aug. 1767.

† Let. 100.

Janſeniſts

Janſeniſts were to ſerve the conſpirators, but fall themſelves, when no more wanted. The Calviniſts were to be recalled, but only to periſh in their turn. To ſtrike at the whole Chriſtian religion was their aim, and impiety with its ſophiſters, was ſolely to range throughout the unbelieving world.

D'Alembert ſmiles at the blinded parliaments, ſeconding with all their power the plans of the conſpirators. It is in this idea he writes to Voltaire: "The laugh is no longer on the ſide of the "Jeſuits, ſince they have fallen out with the "philoſophers; at preſent they are at open war "with the parliament, who find that the ſociety "of Jeſus is contrary to *human* ſociety. This "ſame ſociety of Jeſus finds on its ſide, that the "*order* of the parliament is not within the *order* "of thoſe who have common ſenſe, and *philoſo-* "*phy would decide that both the ſociety of Jeſus* "*and the parliament are in the right* *." Or again, when he writes to Voltaire: "The evacuation of "the college of Louis le Grand (the Jeſuits Col- "lege at Paris) is of more importance to us "than that of Martinico. Upon my word this is "becoming ſerious, and the people of the parlia- "ment don't mince the matter. They think they "are ſerving religion, while *they are forwarding*

* Letter 98, 1761.

" *reaſon without the leaſt ſuſpicion.* They are " the public executioners, *who take their orders* " *from philoſophy without knowing it* *." Wrapped up in his idea, when he ſees the Encyclopedian commands nearly executed, he openly avows the cauſe of his revenge; he even implores Heaven, leſt his prey ſhould eſcape him. " Philoſophy " (ſays he) is on the eve of being revenged of " the Jeſuits, but who will avenge it of the other " fanatics. Pray God, dear brother, that reaſon " may triumph even in our days †."

And this day of triumph comes, he proclaims the long-concerted exploit: " At length, he cries, " on the ſixth of next month, we ſhall be deli- " vered from all that Jeſuitical rabble, but will rea- " ſon for that, have gained, or *the wretch* have loſt " ground ‡."

Thus we ſee, under this ſhocking formula, the deſtruction of Chriſtianity is linked with that of the Jeſuits. D'Alembert was ſo much convinced of the importance of their triumph over that order, that hearing one day of Voltaire's pretended gratitude to his former maſters, he immediately wrote to him, " Do you know what I was told yeſter- " day, that you began to pity the Jeſuits, that " you was almoſt tempted to write in their favor, " as if it were poſſible to intereſt any one in fa-

* Let. 100. † Let. 90, anno 1761. ‡ Let. 102.

" vor

" vor of people, on whom you have caſt ſo much " ridicule. *Believe me, let us have no human weak-* " *neſs.* Let the Janſenitical rabble rid us of the " Jeſuitical, and do not prevent one ſpider from " devouring another*."

Nothing was leſs founded than this alarm, Voltaire was not the writer of the concluſions drawn by the Attorney-Generals of the Parliament, as D'Alembert had been informed, who himſelf had been the author of Mr. de la Chalotais, the moſt artful and virulent piece that appeared againſt the Jeſuits. Voltaire however was not leſs active in compoſing and circulating memorials againſt them†. Avowal of Voltaire.

If he ſuſpected any great perſonage of protecting the Jeſuits, he would write and uſe his utmoſt endeavours to diſſuade them. It was for that he wrote to the Mareſchal de Richelieu, " I have " been told, my Lord, that you had favored the " Jeſuits at Bourdeaux. Try to deſtroy whatever " influence they may have ‡." Thus again he did not bluſh to upbraid Frederick himſelf, with having offered an aſylum to theſe unfortunate victims of their plots ‖. Full as rancorous as D'Alembert, he would expreſs his joy at their misfortunes in the ſame groſs abuſe, and his letters ſhow with what

* Let. 15th of Sept. 1762.

† Let. to the Marquis D'Argence de Dirac, 26th Feb. 1762. ‡ Let. of the 27th Nov. 1761. ‖ 5th Nov. 1773.

adepts he ſhared it. " I rejoice with my brave " *chevalier* (he would write to the Marq. de Vielle- " ville) on the expulſion of the Jeſuits; Japan " led the way in driving out thoſe knaves of Loy- " ola; China followed the example of Japan, and " France and Spain have imitated the Chineſe. " Would to God that all the monks were ſwept " from the face of the earth, they are no better " than thoſe knaves of Loyola. If the Sorbonne " was ſuffered to act, it would be worſe than the " Jeſuits. One is ſurrounded with monſters: we " embrace our worthy chevalier, and exhort him " to conceal his march from the enemy *."

What examples does the philoſophiſt of Ferney adduce! The cruelties of a Taikoſama, who, in expelling and crucifying the miſſionary Jeſuits, alſo murders thouſands and thouſands of his ſubjects, in order to irradicate Chriſtianity. The Chineſe, leſs violent indeed, but with whom every perſecution againſt the miſſionaries, has always been followed or preceded by a prohibition to preach the goſpel. Can the man build upon ſuch authorities, without forming the ſame wiſh?

It is to be remarked that Voltaire dares not cite the example of Portugal or of its tyrant Carvalho †. The truth is, that with the reſt of Europe,

* 27th April, 1767.

† I have ſeen well-informed perſons, who thought that the perſecution in Portugal was not entirely unconnected with the

Europe, he is obliged to confeſs, that the conduct of this miniſter in Portugal, with regard to the Father Malagrida and the pretended conſpiracy of the Jeſuits, *was the ſummit of ridicule and the exceſs of horror* *.

It is alſo worthy of remark, that the conſpiring Sophiſters ſpared no pains to throw the odium of the aſſaſſination of Louis XV. on the Jeſuits, and more particularly Damilaville, whom Voltaire anſwers in the following manner: "My brethren, "you may eaſily perceive that I have not ſpared "the Jeſuits. But poſterity would revolt againſt "me in their favor, were I to accuſe them of a "crime of which all Europe and Damien has "cleared them. I ſhould debaſe myſelf into the

the conſpiracy of the Sophiſters. That it was only a firſt eſſay of what might be afterwards attempted againſt the whole body. This might be. The politics and power of Choiſeul and the character of Carvalho, could add weight to this opinion. I candidly confeſs I have no proof of their ſecret co-operations; and beſides, the ferocious wickedneſs of Carvalho, has been ſet in ſo ſtrong a light, he was the murderer and jailor of ſo many victims declared innocent by the decree of the 8th of April 1771, that it would be uſeleſs to ſeek any other ſtimulator than his own heart, in that ſhocking ſeries of cruelties which diſtinguiſhed his miniſtry. *See the Memoirs and Anecdotes of the Marq. of Pombal. The Diſcourſe on Hiſtory by the Comte D'Albon.*

* Voltaire's Age of Louis XV. chap. 33.

" vile *echo of the Janseniſts*, were I to ſpeak " otherwiſe *."

Notwithſtanding the incoherency in their accuſations againſt the Jeſuits, D'Alembert, certain of Voltaire's zeal in this warfare, ſends him his *pretended hiſtory* of theſe Religious; a work, of whoſe hypocriſy, his own pen is the beſt guarantee, when he ſpeaks of it as a means for the grand object. " I recommend this work to your pro- " tection (he writes to Voltaire), I really believe " it will be of ſervice to the common cauſe, and " that *ſuperſtition* notwithſtanding the many bows " I pretend to make before it, will not fare the " better for it. Was I, like you, far from Paris, " *to give it a ſound threſhing*, I would certainly do " it, with all my heart, with all my ſoul, with all " my ſtrength, infine, as they tell us, we are to love " God. But, *placed as I am, I muſt content myſelf* " *with giving a few fillips*, apologizing for the " great liberty taken, and I do not think but what " I have hit it off pretty well †."

Could the reader for a moment forget his indignation at the profligacy of the ſtyle, would not the hypocriſy, the profound diſſimulation, of which theſe Sophiſters ſpeak ſo lightly, rouſe it anew; if the annals of hiſtory ſhould ever be compulſed, it would be in vain to ſeek a conſpi-

* Let. to Damilaville, 2d March, 1763.

† 3d January, 1765.

racy

racy whose intrigues, whose cunning was of a deeper hue, and that from its own confession.

Avowal and strange conduct of Frederick.

As to Frederick, during the whole of this warfare, his conduct is so singular, that his words alone can give a proper idea of it. He would call the Jesuits, *The life-guards of the court of Rome, the grenadiers of Religion*; and as such hated them, and triumphed with the rest of the conspirators in their defeat. But he also beheld in them a body of men useful and even necessary to his state; as such he supported them several years after their destruction; was deaf to the repeated solicitations of Voltaire and his motley crew. One could be almost tempted to think he liked them; he openly writes to Voltaire, "I have no reason to complain of "Ganganelli, he has left me my dear Jesuits, "who are the objects of universal persecution. "I will preserve a seed of so precious and un- "common a plant, to furnish those who may wish "to cultivate it hereafter*." He would even enter in a sort of justification, with Voltaire, on his conduct, so opposite to the views of the party. "However much a heretic, and still more an infi- "del, says he, I have preserved that order after "a fashion, and for the following reasons:

"Not one Catholic man of letters is to be "found in these regions, except among the

* 7th July, 1770.

"Jesuits.

" Jeſuits. We had nobody capable of keeping " ſchools. We had no Oratorian Fathers, no " Puriſts (Piariſtes or Fathers of charity-ſchools); " there was no alternative, the deſtruction of " our ſchools, or the preſervation of the Jeſuits. " It was neceſſary that the order ſhould ſubſiſt to " furniſh profeſſors, where they dropped off; and " the foundation could ſuffice for ſuch an expence; " but it would have been inadequate to the ſalary " of laymen profeſſors. Moreover, it was at " the univerſity of the Jeſuits, that the divines " were taught; who where afterwards to fill the " rectories. Had the order been ſuppreſſed, " there was an end of the univerſity, and our " Sileſian divines would have been obliged to go " and finiſh their ſtudies in Bohemia, which " would have been contrary to the fundamental " principles of our government*."

Such was the language of Frederick, ſpeaking in his royal character, ſuch were the political reaſons he ſo ably adduced, in ſupport of his oppoſition to the Sophiſters. Alas! I have already ſaid it; in Frederick there were two diſtinct men, one the great king, and as ſuch, he believes the preſervation of the Jeſuits neceſſary; the other the impious Sophiſter, conſpiring with Voltaire, and triumphant in the loſs religion had ſuſtained in

* 8th November, 1777.

that

that of the Jeſuits. In the latter character we find him freely exulting with the conſpirators and felicitating D'Alembert, on this happy omen of the total deſtruction of Chriſtianity, and in his ſarcaſtic ſtyle, writes, " What an unfortunate age " for the court of Rome; ſhe is openly attacked in " Poland, her life-guards are driven out of France " and Portugal, and it appears that they will ſhare " the ſame fate in Spain. The philoſophers openly " ſap the foundations of the apoſtolic throne; " the hieroglyphics of the conjuror are laughed at, " and the author of the ſect is pelted, toleration " is preached, ſo all is loſt. A miracle alone " could ſave the church. She is ſtrucken with a " dreadful apoplexy, and you (Voltaire) will have " the happineſs of burying her, and of writing " her epitaph, as you formerly did that of the " Sorbonne *."

When what Frederick had foreſeen really came to paſs in Spain, he wrote again to Voltaire. " Here is a new victory you have gained in Spain. " The Jeſuits are driven out of the kingdom. " Moreover the courts of Verſailles, of Vienna and " Madrid have applied to the Pope for the ſup- " preſſion of divers convents. It is ſaid the holy " father, though in a rage, will be obliged to " conſent. Oh! cruel revolution, what are we

* Letter 154, anno 1767.

" not

" not to expect in the next century, the axe is at
" the root of the tree. On one side the philoso-
" phers openly attack the abuses of a sainted
" superstition; on the other, *princes by the abuses*
" *of dissipation* are forced to lay violent hands on
" the goods of these recluse, who are the props
" and trumpeters of fanaticism. This edifice
" sapped in its foundations, is on the eve of fall-
" ing, and nations shall inscribe on their annals,
" that Voltaire was the promoter of the revolu-
" tion, operated, during the nineteenth century,
" in the human mind *."

A long while fluctuating between the king and the Sophister, Frederick had not yet yielded to the solicitations of the conspirators. D'Alembert was particularly pressing in his; we see how much he was bent on the success by his following letter to Voltaire. " My venerable Patriarch,
" do not accuse me of want of zeal in the good
" cause, no one perhaps serves it more than my-
" self. Do you know with what I am occupied
" at present? With nothing less than the expul-
" sion of the Jesuitical rabble, from Silesia; and
" your former disciple is but too willing, on ac-
" count of the numerous and perfidious treacheries
" he experienced through their means, as he says
" himself, during the last war; I do not send a

Further avowals of D'Alembert and Voltaire.

* 5th May, 1767.

" single

" ſingle letter to Berlin without repeating, *That*
" *the philoſophers of France are amazed, that the*
" *king of philoſophers, that the declared protector of*
" *philoſophy* ſhould be ſo *dilatory*, in following the
" example of the kings of France or Portugal.
" Theſe letters are read to the king, who is very
" ſenſible, as you know, to what the true believers
" may think of him; and this ſenſe will, without
" doubt, produce a good effect, by the help of
" God's grace, which, as the ſcripture very pro-
" perly remarks, turns the heart of kings like a
" water-cock *."

It is a loathſome taſk to copy all this low buffoonery with which D'Alembert would ſeaſon his dark plots, and the unconcern of his clandeſtine perſecution, againſt a ſociety of men, whoſe only crime was their reſpect and reverence for Chriſtianity. I paſs over many more expreſſions of this ſtamp, or more indecent; it will ſuffice for my object, to ſhow how little, how empty, how deſpicable, theſe proud and mighty men were, when ſeen in their true light.

In ſpite of all theſe ſolicitations, Frederick was invincible, and fifteen years after, he ſtill protected and preſerved *his Dear Jeſuits*. This expreſſion in his mouth, when he at length ſacrificed them to the conſpiracy, may be looked upon as an anſwer

* D'Alembert to Voltaire, 15th Dec. 1763.

to

to what D'Alembert had written of their treachery to the king; it might prove with what unconcern, calumny or ſuppoſed evidence of others, were adduced as proofs by him; as in another place he ſays, Frederick is not a man, *to confine within his royal breaſt*, the ſubjects of complaint he may have had againſt them *, as had been the caſe with the king of Spain, whoſe conduct in that reſpect had been ſo much blamed by the Sophiſters †.

Their fears of the recall of the Jeſuits.

Theſe ſophiſtical conſpirators were not to be ſatisfied by the general expulſion of the Jeſuits, from the different ſtates of the kings of the earth. But by their reiterated cries, Rome was at length to be forced *to declare the total extinction of the order*. We may obſerve this in a work, in which Voltaire particularly intereſts himſelf, and whoſe ſole object, was to obtain that extinction. At length it was obtained. France too late perceiving the blow it had given to public education, without appearing to recoil, many of her leading men, ſeeking to remedy the miſtake, formed the plan of a new ſociety ſolely deſtined to the education of youth. In this the former Jeſuits, as the moſt habituated to education, were to be admitted. On the firſt news of this plan, D'Alembert ſpread the alarm;

* 24th July 1767.

† D'Alembert to Voltaire, 4th May 1767.

he

he ſees the Jeſuits returning to life; he writes again and again to Voltaire; he ſends the counter-plan. He lays great ſtreſs on the danger that *would reſult from thence, for the ſtate, for the king, and for the Duke D'Aiguillon*, during whoſe adminiſtration, the deſtruction had taken place; *alſo on the impropriety of placing youth under the tuition of any community of prieſts whatever:* they were to be repreſented *as ultramontains by principle and as anti-citizens.* Our barking philoſophiſt then concluding in his cant to Voltaire, ſays, *Raton* (cat), *this cheſnut requires to be covered in the embers, and to be handled by a paw as dextrous as that of Raton, and ſo ſaying I tenderly kiſs thoſe dear paws.* Seized with the ſame panic, Voltaire ſets to work, and aſks for freſh inſtructions. He conſiders what turn can be given to this affair, much too ſerious to be treated with ridicule alone. D'Alembert inſiſts *, Voltaire at Ferney, writes againſt the recall, and the conſpirators fill Paris and Verſailles with their intrigues. The miniſters are prevailed upon, the plan laid aſide, youth left without inſtruction, and it is on ſuch an occaſion that Voltaire writes, " My dear friend, " I know not what is to become of me; in the " mean time let us enjoy the pleaſure of having " ſeen the Jeſuits expelled †."

* See Letters of 26th Feb., 5th and 22d March 1774.

† Let. to D'Alembert, 27th April 1771.

This

This pleaſure was but ſhort, as D'Alembert, ſeized with a new panic, writes again to Voltaire, "I am told, for certain, that the Jeſuitical rabble "is about to be reinſtated in Portugal, in all but "the dreſs. This new Queen appears to be a "very *ſuperſtitious Majeſty*. Should the King of "Spain chance to die, I would not anſwer for "that kingdom's not imitating Portugal. *Rea-* "*ſon is undone ſhould the enemy's army gain this* "*battle* *."

When I firſt undertook to ſhow that the deſtruction of the Jeſuits was a favourite object of the conſpirators, and that it was eſſentially inherent to their plan of overthrowing the Chriſtian religion, I promiſed to confine myſelf to the records and confeſſions of the Sophiſters themſelves. I have omitted, for brevity ſake, ſeveral of great weight, even that written by Voltaire, fifteen years after their expulſion, wherein he flatters himſelf, *that by means of the court of Peterſburg*, he could ſucceed in getting them expelled from China, becauſe *thoſe Jeſuits, whom the Emperor of China had choſen to preſerve at Pekin, were rather* CONVERTERS *than Mathematicians* †.

Had the Sophiſters been leſs ſanguine, or leſs active, in the extinction of this order I ſhould not have inſiſted ſo much on that object. But the very warfare they waged was a libel on Chriſtianity;

* 23d June 1777. † 8th Dec. 1776.

what

what! they had perſuaded themſelves that the religion of the Chriſtians was the work of man, that the deſtruction of a few poor mortals, was to ſhake it to its very foundations? Had they forgotten that Chriſtianity had flouriſhed during fourteen centuries, before a Jeſuit was heard of? Hell might open its gates wider after their deſtruction, but it was written that they ſhould not prevail. The power and intrigues of the miniſters of France, of a Choiſeul or a Pompadour, plotting with a Voltaire; of a D'Aranda in Spain, the public friend of D'Alembert and the protector of infidelity; of a Carvalho in Portugal, the ferocious perſecutor of the good; in fine, the intrigues of many other miniſters, dupes or agents of the ſophiſtical conſpiracy, rather than politicians, may have extorted the bull of extinction from Ganganelli, by threats of ſchiſm: but did that pontiff, or any other Chriſtian, believe that the power of the Goſpel reſted on the Jeſuits? No: the God of the Goſpel reigns above, he will one day judge the pontiff and the miniſter, the Jeſuit and the Sophiſter.—It is certain that a body of twenty thouſand religious diſperſed throughout Chriſtendom, and forming a ſucceſſion of men, attending to the education of youth, applying to the ſtudy of ſcience, both religious and prophane, muſt have been of the greateſt utility both to church and ſtate. The conſpirators were not long before they

Miſtake of the Sophiſters on this abolition.

perceived their error, and though they had done the Jesuits the honor to look upon them as the base on which the church rested, they found that Christianity had other succours left, that new plots were necessary, and with equal ardor, we shall see them attacking all other religious orders, as the third means of the Antichristian Conspiracy.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Third Means of the Conſpirators.—Extinction of all the Religious Orders.

THE favorite theme of thoſe who were inimical to religious orders, has been to ſhew their inutility both to church and ſtate. But by what right ſhall Europe complain of a ſet of men, by whoſe care ſhe has emerged from that ſavage ſtate of the ancient Gauls or Germanni, by whoſe labours two-thirds of her lands have been cultivated, her villages built, her towns beautified and augmented. Shall the ſtate complain of thoſe men, who perpetually attending to the cultivation of lands which their predeceſſors had firſt tilled, furniſh ſuſtenance to the inhabitants; ſhall the inhabitant complain, when the village, the town, the country, from whence he comes, would not have exiſted, or remained uncultivated, but from their care. Shall men of letters complain, when, ſhould they have been happy enough to have eſcaped the general ignorance and barbarity of Europe, they would perhaps, be vainly ſearching ruins in hopes of finding ſome fragment of ancient literature. Yes complain, all Europe complain! It is from them,

Charges againſt religious orders.

them you learned your letters, and they have been abuſed but too much; alas! your forefathers learned to read, but we to read perverſely; they opened the temple of ſcience, we half ſhut it again; and the dangerous man is not he who is ignorant, but the half wiſe, who would pretend to wiſdom.

Had any one been at the trouble of comparing the knowledge of the leaſt learned part of the religious orders, with that of the generality of the laiety, I have no doubt but the former would greatly have excelled the latter, though they had received their ordinary education. It is true, the religious were not verſed in the ſophiſticated ſcience of the age; but often have I ſeen thoſe very men, who upbraided with their ignorance, were happy in the ſciences their occupations required. It was not only among the Benedictines, who have been more generally excepted from this badge of ignorance, but among all other orders that I have met with men, as diſtinguiſhed by their knowledge, as by the purity of their morals. Could I, alas, extend this remark to the laiety! This, indeed, is a language very different from that, which the reader may have ſeen in the ſatiric declamations of the age; but will ſatire ſatisfy his judgement. In the annals of the conſpiring Sophiſters, ſhall he find teſtimony borne of their ſervices, and every

ſcurrilous

ſcurrilous expreſſion, ſhall be a new laurel in their crown.

The Jeſuits were deſtroyed, the conſpirators ſaw Chriſtianity ſtill ſubſiſted, and they then ſaid to each other, we muſt deſtroy the other religious orders, or we ſhall not triumph. Their whole plan is to be ſeen in a letter from Frederick, to which Voltaire gave occaſion by the following: " Hercules went to fight the robbers and Bellero- " phon chimeras; I ſhould not be ſorry to behold " Herculeſes and Bellerophons delivering the " earth, both from Catholic robbers and Catholic " chimeras *." Frederick anſwers on the 24th of the ſame month: " It is not the lot of arms *to* " *deſtroy the wretch*, it ſhall periſh by the arm of " truth, and intereſted ſelfiſhneſs. If you wiſh me " to explain this idea, my meaning is as follows. " —I have remarked as well as many others, that " in thoſe places where convents are the moſt " numerous, are thoſe where the people are moſt " blindly attached to ſuperſtition. No doubt but " if theſe aſylums of fanaticiſm were deſtroyed, " the people would grow tepid and ſee with in- " difference, the preſent objects of their venera- " tion. The point would *be to deſtroy the cloiſters*, " at leaſt to begin by leſſening their number. " The time is come, the French and Auſtrian

Frederick's plan.

Frederick's plan for the deſtruction of the religious orders.

* 3d March, 1767.

" governments are involved in debt; they have " exhausted the resources of industry to discharge " them, and they have not succeeded; the lure " of rich abbeys and well-endowed convents, is " tempting. By representing to them the preju- " dice cloistered persons occasion to the popula- " tion of their states, as well as the great abuse of " the numbers of *Cucullati*, who are spread " throughout the provinces; also the facility of " paying off part of their debts, with the trea- " sures of those communities, who are without " heirs; they might, I think, be made to adopt " this plan of reform; and it may be presumed, " that after having enjoyed the secularization of " some good livings, their rapacity could crave " the rest.

" Every government who shall adopt this plan, " *will be friendly to the philosophers*, and the pro- " moter of all those books, which attack popular " superstition, or the false zeal that would sup- " port it.

" Here is a pretty little plan, which I submit to " the examination of the patriarch of Ferney; " it is his province, as father of the faithful, to " rectify and put it in execution.

" The patriarch may perhaps ask *what is to become* " *of the bishops?* I answer, it is not yet time to " touch them. To destroy those, who stir up " the fire of fanaticism in the hearts of the people,

" is

" is the firſt ſtep, and when the people are cool-
" ed, *the biſhops will be but little perſonages, whom*
" *ſovereigns in proceſs of time, will diſpoſe of as*
" *they pleaſe.*"

Voltaire reliſhed ſuch plans too much not to ſet a great value on them, and of courſe anſwered the King of Pruſſia: " Your plan of attack againſt " the *Chriſticole Superſtition*, in that of the friar-" hood, is worthy a great captain. The religious " orders once aboliſhed, *error* is expoſed to univer-" ſal contempt. Much is written in France on " this ſubject; every one talks of it, but it is not " ripe enough as yet. People are not ſuffi-" ciently daring in France, bigots are yet in " power *."

Having read theſe letters, it would be ridiculous to aſk of what ſervice religious orders could be to the church. Certain it is, that many had fallen off from the auſterity of their firſt inſtitute; but even in this degenerate ſtate we ſee Frederick making uſe of all his policy to overturn them, becauſe his antichriſtian plots are thwarted by the zeal and example of theſe religious: becauſe he thinks the church cannot be ſtormed, until the convents are carried as the outworks; and Voltaire traces the hand of the great captain, who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf ſo emi-

* 5th April 1767.

nently by his military ſcience in Germany, in the plan of attack againſt the *Chriſticole Superſtition*. Theſe religious corps were uſeful then, though branded with ſloth and ignorance; they were a true barrier to impiety. Frederick was ſo much convinced of it, that when the Sophiſters had already occupied all the avenues of the throne, he dared not direct his attacks againſt the Biſhops, nor the body of the place, until the outworks were carried.

Voltaire writes to him on the 29th of July 1775, "We hope that philoſophy which in France "*is near the throne*, will ſoon *be on it*. But that "is but hope, which too often proves fallacious. "There are ſo many people intereſted in the ſup- "port of error and nonſenſe, ſo many dignities, "and ſuch riches are annexed to the trade, that "the hypocrites, it is to be feared, will get the "better of the ſages. Has not your Germany "transformed your principal eccleſiaſtics into ſo- "vereigns? Where is there an elector or a biſhop, "who will ſide with reaſon againſt a ſect, that "allows him two or three hundred thouſand "pounds a-year?"

Frederick continued to vote for the war being carried on againſt the religious. It was too early to attack the biſhops. He anſwers Voltaire, "All what you ſay of our German biſhops is but "too true; they are the hogs fattened on the "tythes

" tythes of Sion (such is their scurrilous language " in their private correspondence). But you know " likewise, that in the Holy Roman Empire, ancient " custom, the golden bull, *and such like antiquated* " *fooleries*, have given weight to established abuses. " One sees them, shrugs one's shoulders, and things " jog on in the old way. If we wish to diminish " fanaticism, *we must not begin by the bishops.* " But if we succeed in lessening the friarhood, " especially the mendicant orders, the people will " cool, and they being less superstitious, will al- " low the powers *to bring down the bishops* as " best suits their states. *This is the only possible* " *mode of proceeding.* To silently undermine the " edifice hostile to reason, is to force it to fall of " itself *."

I began by saying, that the means of the conspirators would give new proofs of the reality of the conspiracy, and of its object. Can any other interpretation, than that of an Antichristian Conspiracy, be put on the whole sentences made use of in their correspondence ? How can we otherwise understand, *such is the only possible mode of proceeding, to undermine* the edifice of that religion, which they are pleased to design by *Christicole Superstition*, as fanatic or unreasonable; or in order to overthrow its pontifs, to seduce the people from its worship ?

* 13th August 1775.

What

What then is conſpiracy, if thoſe ſecret machinations carried on between Ferney, Berlin and Paris, in ſpite of diſtances, be not ſo? What reader can be ſufficiently blind not to ſee, that by the eſtabliſhment of reaſon, it is only the overthrow of Chriſtianity that is ſought? It is indeed a matter of ſurpriſe, that the Sophiſters ſhould have ſo openly expoſed their plans at ſo early a period.

Plan adopted in France on the religious.

In the mean time Voltaire was correct when he anſwers Frederick, that the plan of deſtruction was ardently purſued in France, ever ſince the expulſion of the Jeſuits, and that by people who were in office. The firſt ſtep taken was to put off the period of religious profeſſions until the age of twenty-one, though the adepts in miniſtry would fain have deferred it till the age of twenty-five. That is to ſay, that of a hundred young people, who would have embraced that ſtate, not two would have been able to follow their vocations; for what parent would let his child attain that age, without being certain of the ſtate of life he would embrace. The remonſtrances made by many friends to religion, cauſed the age fixed on by the edict, to be that of eighteen for women, and twenty-one for men. Nevertheleſs, this was looked upon as an act of authority exerciſed on thoſe, who choſe to conſecrate themſelves more particularly to the ſervice of their God, and reſcue

cue themſelves from the danger of the paſſions, at that age when they are the moſt powerful. This ſubject had been very fully treated in the laſt Œcumenical Council, where the age for the profeſſion of religious perſons had been fixed at ſixteen, with a term of five years to reclaim againſt their laſt vows, in caſe they did not chooſe to continue the religious life they had undertaken. And it had always been looked upon as a right inherent to the church, to decide on theſe matters, as may be ſeen in Chappelain's diſcourſe on that ſubject. It would be ridiculous to repeat the favourite argument of their inutility to France, after what has been ſaid in this chapter. What! pious works, edification and the inſtruction of the people uſeleſs to a nation! Beſides, France was a lively example that the number of convents had not hurt its population, as few ſtates were peopled in an equal proportion. If celibacy was to be attacked, ſhe might have turned her eyes to her armies and to that numerous claſs of men, who lived in celibacy, and who perhaps ought to have been noticed by the laws. In fine, all further reclamations were uſeleſs. What had been foreſeen came to paſs, according to the wiſhes of the miniſterial Sophiſters. In many colleges the Jeſuits being very ill replaced, youth neglected in their education, left a prey to their paſſions, or looking on the number of years they had to wait for their reception

tion into the religious ſtate, as ſo much time loſt, laid aſide all thoughts of that ſtate, and took to other employments. Some few, from want, engaged, but rather ſeeking bread than the ſervice of their God, or elſe prone to vice and to their paſſions, which they had never been taught to ſubdue, reluctantly ſubmitted to the rules of the cloiſter. Already there exiſted many abuſes, but they daily increaſed; and while the number of religious was diminiſhing, their fervour languiſhed, and public ſcandals became more frequent. This was preciſely what the miniſters wanted, to have a plea for the ſuppreſſion of the whole; while their maſters, more ſanguine if poſſible, made the preſs teem with writings, in which neither ſatire nor calumny were ſpared.

Briennes proſecutes the plan.

The perſon who ſeemed to ſecond them with the greateſt warmth, was that man who, after having perſuaded his companions even, that he had ſome talent for governing, at length finiſhed by only adding his name to thoſe miniſters, whom ambition may be ſaid to have blinded even to ſtupidity. This man was Briennes, Archbiſhop of Toulouſe, ſince Archbiſhop of Sens, afterwards prime miniſter, then a public apoſtate, and who died as univerſally hated and deſpiſed, as Necker himſelf appears to be at this day. Briennes will be more deſpiſed, when it ſhall be known that he was the friend and confidant of D'Alembert, and that in a com-

a commiſſion for the reform of the religious orders, he wore the mitre, and exerciſed its powers as a D'Alembert would have done.

The clergy had thought it neceſſary to examine the means of reforming the religious, and of re-eſtabliſhing their primitive fervor. The court ſeemed to enter into their views, and named counſellors of ſtate to join the biſhops in their deliberations on this ſubject, and called it the *Commiſſion of Regulars*. A mixture of prelates, who are only to be actuated by the ſpirit of the church, and of ſtateſmen ſolely acting from worldly views, could never agree; ſome few articles were ſuppoſed to have been ſettled; but all was in vain, and many, through diſguſt, abandoned the commiſſion. Among the biſhops were Mr. Dillon, Archbiſhop of Narbonne; Mr. de Boiſgelin, Archbiſhop of Aix; Mr. de Cicè, Archbiſhop of Bourdeaux, and the famous Briennes, Archbiſhop of Toulouſe.

The firſt, majeſtic in his perſon and noble in his eloquence, ſeems to have had but little to do in this affair, and ſoon withdrew. The talents and zeal ſhewn by the ſecond in the national aſſembly, in defence of the religious ſtate, will convince the reader that he might have given an opinion which the court did not wiſh to adopt; he alſo abandoned the commiſſion. In the third we ſee, that if by accepting of the ſeals of the revolution, and by af-

fixing

fixing them to the conſtitutional decrees, he could err; by his repentance and retractation he never would have found it in his heart, had he known the plans of the conſpirators.

Briennes' underſtanding with D'Alembert.

Briennes was the only man of this commiſſion who enjoyed the confidence of the court, or had the ſecret of D'Alembert, and the latter knew but too well how to prize the future ſervices Briennes was about to render to the conſpiracy. On his reception into the French academy, D'Alembert informs the patriarch, "We have in him a "good brother, who will certainly prove uſeful to "letters *and to philoſophy*, provided *philoſophy does* "*not tie up his hands by licentiouſneſs*, or that the "general outcry does not force him to act againſt "his will *." In fewer words, he might have ſaid, he will attack his God and his religion with all the hypocriſy worthy a conſpiring Sophiſter.

Voltaire, thinking he had reaſon to complain of the monſtrous prelate, is anſwered by D'Alembert, who was a connoiſſeur in brethren, "For "God's ſake don't judge raſhly——I would lay a "hundred to one, that things have been miſrepre-"ſented, and that his miſconduct has been greatly "exaggerated. I know his way of thinking too "well, not to be aſſured that he only did on that

* 20th June and 21ſt December 1770.

"occaſion,

" occaſion, what he was indiſpenſibly obliged to " do *."

Voltaire complained on that occaſion, of an order publiſhed by Briennes againſt the adept Audra, who at Toulouſe openly read lectures on impiety, under pretence of reading on hiſtory. On the enquiries made in favor of the adept by D'Alembert, he writes that Briennes " had with- " ſtood, during a whole year, the joint clamours of " the parliament, the biſhops, and the aſſembly of " the clergy;" and that it was abſolutely neceſ- ſary *to compel him to act*, to prevent the youth of his dioceſe from receiving the like lectures. His apologiſt continues, " Don't let yourſelf be pre- " judiced againſt Briennes, and be aſſured, once " for all, that reaſon (that is our reaſon) will never " have to complain of him †."

Such was the hypocrite or mitred Sophiſter, which intrigue had placed in the commiſſion to deliberate on the reform of the religious orders. Seeking diſorder and deſtruction, ſupported by the miniſtry, without attending to the other biſhops of the commiſſion, he ſolely dictated in this reform.

To the edict on the age for profeſſions he added another, ſuppreſſing all convents in towns that conſiſted of leſs than twenty religious; and elſe- Means and ſucceſs of Briennes.

* 4th Dec. 1770. † 21ſt Dec. 1770.

where,

where, when their number was under ten, on the ſpecious pretence, that the conventual rules were better obſerved where the number was greater. The biſhops and the cardinal de Luynes in particular, objected the great ſervices rendered in country places by theſe ſmall convents, and how much they helped the curates, but all to no purpoſe; and Briennes had already contrived to ſuppreſs fifteen hundred convents before the revolution. Soon he would have advanced more rapidly, for by promoting and encouraging the complaints of the young religious againſt the elder, of the inferior againſt the ſuperior, by cramping and thwarting their elections, he ſpread diſſentions throughout the cloiſters. On the other ſide, the ridicule and calumnies contrived by the Sophiſters were ſo powerful, that few young men dared take the habit, while ſome of the ancients were *aſhamed of wearing a gown covered with infamy* *. Others at length, wearied out by theſe ſhuffling tricks, themſelves petitioned to be ſuppreſſed.

Philoſophiſm, with its principles of liberty and equality, was even gaining ground in their houſes, with all its concomitant evils; the good religious ſhed tears of blood over thoſe perſecutions of Briennes, who alone would have effectuated thoſe dreadful ſchemes planned by Voltaire

* Voltaire to the King of Pruſſia, No. 15.

and

and Frederick. Their decline was daily more evident, and it was a prodigy that any fervor yet remained, though a greater prodigy ſtill, when we ſee the fervor of many of thoſe who had petitioned for their ſecularization, revive in the firſt days of the revolution. I know for certain that not one-third of thoſe who had petitioned, dared take the oath, for apoſtacy ſtared him in the face. The tortuous intrigues of a Briennes had ſhaken them; but the direct attacks of the National Aſſembly opened their eyes, and they beheld aſtoniſhed, in their ſuppreſſion, the grand attack which had been levelled againſt Chriſtianity.

Voltaire and Frederick did not live to ſee their plans accompliſhed, Briennes did; but claiming the honour, he only reaped the ignominy of them. Shame and remorſe devoured him. With what pleaſure we may ſpeak of the piety of thoſe chaſte virgins, conſecrated to the ſervice of their God! With them his intrigues had been uſeleſs. They, more immediately under the direction of their biſhops, had not been expoſed to the anarchy and diſſentions of a Briennes; their ſecluſion from the world, their profeſſions at an earlier age (eighteen), their education within the walls of the convent, theſe were barriers againſt his intrigues; but with what admiration ſhould we not behold thoſe who from the pure motives of religion ſpent their lives in the ſervice of the ſick, whoſe cha-

His attempt fruitleſs againſt the nuns.

rity, whose chaste modesty, though in the midst of the world, could make man believe them to be angels in human forms. These were far above the reach of calumny or of a Briennes, a pretence could not even be devised.

With a view to diminish the number of real nuns, he thought, that if he augmented those asylums for canonesses, who have a much greater communication with the world, therefore more easily perverted, that novices would not be so numerous. But by an inconceivable oversight, unless he had some very deep and hidden scheme, these canonesses were in future, to prove a certain number of degrees of nobility to enter these asylums, when before they had been open to all ranks in the state. One would have thought he meant to render the real nuns odious to the nobility, and the latter to all other classes, by applying foundations to particular ranks, which had ever been common to all.

These were reflections that Briennes little attended to; he was laying his snares, while D'Alembert smiled at the idea, that soon both nuns and canonesses would add to the common mass of ruin; but these sacred virgins baffled all their cunning.

These plans consummated by the National Assembly.

Nothing less than all the despotic powers of the Constituent Assembly could prevail against them; they were to be classed with the martyrs of that bloody September; their fervor was impassible.

Edicts

Edicts worthy of Nero, exulting in the flames of burning Rome, are neceſſary to drive them from the altar, cannons and the ſatellites of that Conſtituant Aſſembly, march againſt them to enforce thoſe edicts, and *thirty thouſand women* are driven from their convents, in contradiction to a decree of that ſame aſſembly, promiſing to let them die peaceably in their aſylums. Thus was the deſtruction of religious orders completed in France. It was then forty years ſince this plan had been dictated by the Sophiſters to the miniſters of his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty. But when accompliſhed, miniſters are no more! . . . The ſacred perſon of the king, a priſoner in the towers of the Temple! . . . The object of the abolition of religious orders was fulfilled; religion was ſavagely perſecuted in the perſon of its miniſters! But during the long period that preceded the triumph of the Sophiſters, they had reſorted to many other means with which I have to acquaint my reader.

CHAP. VII.

Fourth Means of the Conſpirators—Voltaire's Colony.

WHILST the conſpirators were ſo much taken up with the deſtruction of the Jeſuits, and of all other religious orders, Voltaire was forming a plan which was to give to impiety itſelf, both apoſtles and propogandiſts. This idea ſeems to have firſt ſtruck him about the year 1760-61. Always ruminating the deſtruction of Chriſtianity, he writes to D'Alembert, "Could "not five or ſix men of parts, who rightly un- "derſtood each other, ſucceed after the example "of twelve ſcoundrels, who have already ſucceed- "ed*." The object of this underſtanding has already been explained in a letter before quoted. "Let the real philoſophers unite in a brotherhood, "like the Free-maſons; let them aſſemble and "ſupport each other; let them be faithful to the "aſſociation. This ſecret academy will be far "ſuperior to that of Athens and to all thoſe of "Paris. But every one thinks but of himſelf,

Object of this colony.

* Let. 69, anno 1760.

"and

" and forgets that his moſt ſacred duty *is to cruſh* " *the wretch* *."

The conſpirators never loſt ſight of this moſt ſacred duty, they met with various obſtacles; religion was ſtill zealouſly defended in France, and Paris was not yet a proper aſylum for ſuch an aſſociation. It appears alſo that Voltaire was obliged for ſome time to lay this plan aſide; but taking it up again, a few years afterwards, he applied to Frederick, as we are told by the editor of their correſpondence, for leave " to eſtabliſh at " Cleves a little colony of French philoſophers, " who might there, freely and boldly, ſpeak the " truth, *without fearing miniſters, prieſts, or par-* " *liaments.*" Frederick anſwered with all the deſired zeal, " I ſee you wiſh to eſtabliſh the " little colony you had mentioned to me. — I " think the ſhorteſt way would be, that thoſe " men, or your aſſociates, ſhould ſend to Cleves " to ſee what would be moſt convenient for " them, and what I can diſpoſe of in their " favor †."

Frederick ſeconds this plan.

It is to be lamented that many letters reſpecting this colony have been ſuppreſſed in their correſpondence; but Frederick's anſwers are ſufficient to convince us of the obſtinacy of Voltaire in the undertaking, who returning to the charge again,

* Let. 85, to D'Alembert, 1761. † 24th October 1765.

is answered, "You speak of a colony of philoso-
"phers, who wish to establish themselves at
"Cleves. I have no objection to it. I can give
"them every thing but wood, the forests having
"been almost destroyed by your countrymen.
"But only on this condition, that *they will respect*
"*those who are to be respected*, and that they will
"keep within the *proper bounds of decency in their*
"*writings* *."

The explanation of this letter, will be better understood, when we treat of the Antimonarchial Conspiracy. Decency in their writings, one should think, would be of the first necessity even for their own views, otherwise this new colony must have spread a general alarm, and governments would have been obliged to repress their barefaced impudence.

While on one side Voltaire was imploring the succour and protection of the King of Prussia, for these apostles of impiety, on the other he was seeking Sophisters worthy of the apostleship. He writes to Damilaville, that he is ready to make a sacrifice of all the sweets of Ferney, and go and place himself at their head. "Your friend, says
"he, persists in his idea; it is true, as you have
"remarked, that he must tear himself from
"many objects that are at present his delight,
"and then will be of his regret. But is it not

* Letter 146, anno 1766.

"better

" better to quit them through philoſophy than by " death. What ſurpriſes him moſt, is that many " people have not taken this reſolution together. " Why ſhould not a certain philoſophic baron " labor at the eſtabliſhment of this colony? why " ſhould not ſo many others improve ſo fair an " opportunity?" In the continuation of this letter we find that Frederick was not the only prince who countenanced the plan: " Two ſovereign princes, " *who think entirely as you do*, have lately viſited " your friend. One of them offered a town, " provided that which relates to the grand work, " ſhould not ſuit *."

It was preciſely at the time this letter was written, that the Langrave of Heſſe Caſſel went to pay homage to the idol of Ferney. The date of his journey, the ſimilarity of his ſentiments, can leave little doubt, but what he was the prince who offered a town to the colony, ſhould Cleves prove inconvenient †.

Meanwhile, the apoſtles of this mock Meſſiah, however zealous for the grand work, were not equally ready to ſacrifice their eaſe. D'Alembert idolized by the Sophiſters at Paris, ſaw that he could be but a ſecondary divinity in the preſence of Voltaire. That Damilaville, celebrated by the impious patriarch as perſonally hating God, was

Coolneſs of the conſpirators for this colony.

* Letter of the 6th of Auguſt 1766.

† Letter of the Langrave, 9th Sept. 1766.

neceſſary for carrying on the ſecret correſpondence in Paris. Diderot, the certain philoſophic Baron, and the remaining multitude of adepts, reluctantly caſt their eyes on a German town, where they could not with equal eaſe, ſacrifice in luxury and debauchery to their Pagan divinities. Such remiſſneſs diſconcerted Voltaire. He endeavoured to ſtimulate their ardor by aſking, "If ſix or "ſeven hundred thouſand Huguenots left their "country for the *fooleries of Jane Chauvin*, ſhall "not twelve ſages be found, who will make ſome "little ſacrifice to reaſon which is trampled on *."

When he wiſhes to perſuade them, that their conſent is all that is neceſſary to accompliſh the grand object, he writes again, "All that I can "tell you now, by a ſure hand, is, that every "thing is ready for the eſtabliſhment of the "manufacture; more than one Prince envies the "honor of it, and from the borders of the Rhine "unto the Oby, Tomplat (that is Plato Diderot) "will be honored, encouraged, and live in ſecu-"rity." He would then repeat the grand object of the conſpiracy, in hopes of perſuading the conſpirators. He would ſeek to inflame their hearts with that hatred for Chriſt, which was conſuming his own. He would repeatedly cry out, *Cruſh, cruſh the wretch, then cruſh the wretch* †.

* Letter to Damilaville, 18th of Auguſt 1766.

† Letter to Damilaville, 25th of Auguſt 1766.

His

His prayers, his repeated ſolicitations could not avail againſt the ſweets of Paris. That ſame reaſon which made Voltaire willing to ſacrifice all the pleaſing ſcenes of Ferney, to bury himſelf in the heart of Germany, there to conſecrate his days and writings to the extinction of Chriſtianity, that reaſon, I ſay, taught the younger adepts that the ſweets of Paris were not to be neglected. They were not the Apoſtles of the Goſpel preaching temperance and mortification both by word and example; ſo indeed, was Voltaire obliged to give up all hopes of expatriating his ſophiſtical apoſtles. He indignantly expreſſes his vexation to Frederick a few years afterwards: "I own to "you, that I was ſo much vexed and ſo much "aſhamed of the little ſucceſs I had in the tranſ- "migration to Cleves, that I have never ſince "dared propoſe any of my ideas to your Majeſty. "When I reflect that a fool and an ideot, like "St. Ignatius, ſhould have found twelve follow- "ers, and that I could not find three Philoſophers "who would follow me, I was almoſt tempted to "think, that reaſon was uſeleſs *. I ſhall never "recover the non-execution of this plan, it was "there I ſhould have ended my old age †."

Voltaire's regret on its failure.

However violent Voltaire was in his reproaches againſt the other conſpirators, the ſequel of theſe

* Nov. 1769. † 12th of Oct. 1770.

memoirs

memoirs will ſhow that it was unjuſtly. D'Alembert in particular had far other plans to proſecute; he graſped at the empire of the academic honors, and without expoſing his dictatorſhip, or expatriating the adepts, by diſtributing theſe honors ſolely to the Sophiſters, he abundantly replaced Voltaire's ſo much regretted plan. This means and the method by which it was forwarded, ſhall be the ſubject of the enſuing chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Fifth Means of the Conſpirators.—The Academic Honors.

First object of the academies.

THE protection which the kings had given to men of letters, had brought them into that repute which they ſo well deſerved, until abuſing their talents, they turned them againſt religion and governments. It was in the French academy where glory ſeemed to be enthroned, and a ſeat within its walls, was the grand purſuit of the orator and the poet, in fine of all writers, whether eminent in the hiſtoric or any other branch of literature. Corneille, Boſſuet, Racine, Maſſillon, La Bruyère, Lafontaine, in fine, all thoſe authors who had adorned the reign of Louis XIV were proud of their admiſſion within this ſanctuary of letters. Morals and the laws ſeemed to guard its entrance, leſt it might be prophaned by the impious. Any public ſign of incredulity, was a bar againſt admiſſion, even during the reign of Louis XV. Nor was the famous Monteſquieu himſelf admitted until he had given proper ſatisfaction, on account of certain articles contained in his Perſian Letters.—Voltaire pretends that he deceived the Cardinal de Fleury, by ſending him a new edition

edition of his work, in which all the objectionable parts had been omitted. Such a low trick was beneath Monteſquieu, repentence was his only plea, and later, little doubt can be left of his repenting ſincerely. In fine, on admiſſion, impiety was openly renounced, and religion publicly avowed.

Boindin, whoſe incredulity was notorious, had been rejected, though a member of ſeveral other academies. Voltaire was for a long time unable to gain admiſſion, and at length only ſucceeded by means of high protection and that low hypocriſy which we ſhall ſee him recommending to his diſciples. D'Alembert, ever provident, hid his propenſity to incredulity until he had gained his ſeat; and though the road to theſe literary honors had been much widened by the adepts who ſurrounded the court, nevertheleſs, he thought that it would not be impoſſible, by dint of intrigues, to turn the ſcale; that if formerly impiety had been a means of excluſion, in future it might be a title of admiſſion, and that none ſhould be ſeated near him, but thoſe whoſe writings had rendered them worthy abettors of the conſpiracy, and ſupporters of their ſophiſtical arts. His true field was that of petty intrigue, and ſo ſucceſsfully did he handle it, that in the latter times, the titles of Academician and Sophiſter were nearly ſynonimous. It is true that ſometimes he met with obſtacles; and the

D'Alembert's plan on the academies.

the plot framed between him and Voltaire, for the admiſſion of Diderot, will be ſufficient to evince what great advantages they expected would acrue to their conſpiracy, by this new means of promoting irreligion.

Intrigues for Diderot.

D'Alembert firſt propoſed it, Voltaire received the propoſal with all the attention due to its importance, and anſwers, "You wiſh Diderot to be "of the academy, it muſt then be brought "about." The king was to approve of the nomination, and D'Alembert feared miniſterial oppoſition. It is to this fear that we owe the account Voltaire has given of Choiſeul, it is then, he mentions his partiality to the Sophiſters, and that ſo far from obſtructing the like plots, he would forward them with all his power; "In a word, "he continues, Diderot muſt be of the academy, "it will be the moſt noble revenge that can be "taken for the play againſt the philoſophers. "The academy is incenſed at le Franc-de-Pom-"pignan; it would willingly give him a moſt "ſwinging ſlap.—I will make a bonfire on Dide-"rot's admiſſion. Ah! what a happineſs it would "be, if Helvetius and Diderot could be received "together *."

D'Alembert would have been equally happy in ſuch a triumph, but he was on the ſpot and ſaw

* 9th of July 1760.

the

the oppoſition made by the Dauphin, the Queen and the Clergy; he anſwers, " I ſhould be more " deſirous than yourſelf to ſee Diderot of the " academy. *I am perfectly ſenſible how much the " common cauſe would be benefited by it*, but the " impoſſibility of doing it, is beyond what you " can conceive *."

Voltaire knowing that Choiſeul and La Pompadour had often prevailed againſt the Dauphin, ordered D'Alembert not to deſpond. He takes the direction of the intrigue on himſelf, and places his chief hopes on the Courteſan. " Still further, " (ſays he), ſhe may look upon it as an honor, " and make a merit of ſupporting Diderot. Let " her undeceive the king on his ſcore, and delight " in quaſhing a cabal which ſhe diſpiſes †." What D'Alembert could not perſonally undertake, Voltaire recommends to the courtiers, and particularly to the Count D'Argental: " My divine " Angel, would he write, do but get Diderot to " be of the academy, it will be the boldeſt ſtroke " that can be in the game reaſon is playing againſt " fanaticiſm and folly *(that is religion and piety)*; " impoſe for penance on the Duke de Choiſeul " to introduce Diderot into the academy ‡."

The ſecretary of the academy, Duclos, is alſo called in, as an auxiliary by Voltaire, who gives

* 18th July 1760. † 28th July 1760.
‡ Letter 153, anno 1760.

him

him inſtructions to inſure the ſucceſs of the recipiendary adept. " Could not you repreſent, or " cauſe to be repreſented, how very eſſential ſuch " a man is to you for the completion of ſome " neceſſary work? Could not you *after having* " *ſlyly played off that battery* aſſemble *ſeven or eight* " *of the elect*, and form a deputation to the king, " to aſk for Diderot as the moſt capable of for- " warding your enterprize? Would not the Duke " of Nivernois help you in that project, would " not he be the ſpeaker on the occaſion? The " bigots will ſay, that Diderot has written a " metaphyſical work which they do not under- " ſtand: *Deny the fact, ſay that he did not write it,* " *and that he is a good Catholic—it is ſo eaſy to be a* " *Catholic* *." "

It would be an object of ſurpriſe to the reader and to the hiſtorian to ſee Voltaire ſtraining every nerve, calling on Dukes and courtiers, not bluſhing at the vileſt hypocriſy, adviſing baſe diſſimulation, and that merely to gain the admiſſion of one of his fellow conſpirators, into the academy; but this ſurpriſe will ceaſe when they ſee D'Alembert's own words: *I am perfectly ſenſible how much the common cauſe would be benefited by it*; or in other words, the war we are waging againſt Chriſtianity. Theſe words will explain all his agitation. And

* Letter 11th of Auguſt 1760.

to

to have admitted within the ſanctuary of letters, the man the moſt notorious for his incredulity, would it not have been corroborating the fault government had committed, in letting itſelf be led away by the hypocritical demonſtrations of a Voltaire or a D'Alembert? Would it not have been crowning the moſt ſcandalous impiety with the laurels of literature, and declaring that Atheiſm ſo far from being a ſtain, would be a new title to its honors? The moſt prejudiced muſt own it would have been an open contempt for religion, and Choiſeul and La Pompadour were conſcious, that it was not yet time to allow the conſpirators ſuch a triumph. D'Alembert even ſhrunk back when he beheld the clamours it would excite, and deſiſted for the preſent. But the critical moment was now come, when the miniſters ſecretly abetted, what they publicly ſeemed to wiſh to cruſh. D'Alembert perſiſted in his hopes, that with ſome contrivance he would ſoon be able to exclude all writers from literary honors, who had not offered ſome ſacrifice at leaſt, to the Antichriſtian Sophiſtry, and he at length ſucceeded.

Succeſs of the conſpirators, and liſt of the principal academicians.

From the time when D'Alembert had conceived of what importance the French academy, converted into a club of irreligious Sophiſters, might be to the conſpiracy, let us examine the merits of ſome of thoſe who were admitted among its members. Firſt, we find Marmontel perfectly coinciding

coinciding in opinion with Voltaire, D'Alembert and Diderot; then in succession, La Harpe the favorite adept of Voltaire; Champfort, the adept and hebdomadary co-adjutor of Marmontel and La Harpe; a Lemierre distinguished by Voltaire as *a staunch enemy to the wretch*, or Christ *; an Abbé Millot whose sole merit with D'Alembert was his total oblivion of his priesthood, and with the public to have transformed the history of France into an antipapal one †; a Briennes, long since known to D'Alembert as an enemy to the church, though living in its bosom; a Suar, a Gaillar, and lastly a Condorcet, whose reception was to enthrone the fiend of atheism within the walls of the academy.

It does not appear why Mr. de Turgot did not succeed in his admission, though seconded by all the intrigues of D'Alembert and Voltaire ‡. In casting an eye on their correspondence, the reader would be surprised to see of what concern it was to them to fill this philosophical Sanhedrim with their favorite adepts. There are above thirty letters on the admission of their adepts, or on the exclusion of those who were friendly to religion. Their intrigues, whether through protection or any other way, were at length so successful, that

* Letter from Voltaire to Damilaville, 1767.

† Letter of D'Alembert, 27th Dec. 1777.

‡ Letter of Voltaire, 8th of Feb. 1776.

in a few years, the name of Academician and Atheiſt or Deiſt were ſynonimous. If there were yet to be found among them ſome few men, eſpecially biſhops, of a different ſtamp from Briennes, it was a remains of deference ſhown them, which ſome might have miſtaken for an honor, whilſt they ſhould have looked upon it as an inſult, to be ſeated next to a D'Alembert, a Marmontel or a Condorcet.

There was however among the forty, a layman much to be reſpected for his piety. This was Mr. Beauzet. I one day aſked him, how it had been poſſible, that a man of his morality could ever have been aſſociated with men ſo notoriouſly unbelievers? "The very ſame queſtion (he anſwered), have I put to D'Alembert. At one "of the ſittings, ſeeing that I was nearly the only "perſon who believed in God, I aſked him, how "he poſſibly could ever have thought of me for "a member, when he knew that my ſentiments "and opinions differed ſo widely from thoſe of "his brethren? D'Alembert without heſitation "(added Mr. Beauzet) anſwered, I am ſenſible "of your amazement, but we were in want of a "ſkilful gramarian, and among our party, not one "had made himſelf a reputation in that line. We "knew that you believed in God, but being a "good ſort of man, we caſt our eyes on you,

"for

" for want of a philoſopher to ſupply your " place."

Thus was the ſceptre wreſted from the hands of ſcience and talents, by the hand of impiety. Voltaire had wiſhed to place his conſpirators under the protection of the Royal Sophiſter; D'Alembert ſtopped their flight, and made them triumph in the very ſtates of that monarch, who gloried in the title of Moſt Chriſtian. His plot, better laid, conferred the laurels of literature ſolely on the impious writer, whilſt he who dared defend religion, was to be covered with reproach and infamy. The French academy thus converted into a club of infidels, was a far better ſupport to the Sophiſters conſpiring againſt Chriſtianity, than any colony which Voltaire could have conceived. The academy infected the men of letters, and theſe perverted the public opinion by that torrent of impious productions, which deluged all Europe. Theſe were to be inſtrumental in bringing over the people to univerſal apoſtacy, and will be conſidered by us, as the ſixth means for the Antichriſtian revolution.

CHAP. IX.

Sixth Means of the Conſpirators.—Inundation of Antichriſtian Writings.

Concert of the chiefs in their writings.

THAT for theſe forty years paſt, and particularly for the laſt twenty of Voltaire's life, all Europe has been overrun with moſt impious writings, whether under the forms of pamphlets, ſyſtems, romances or pretended hiſtories, is one of thoſe ſelf-evident truths which needs no proof. Though I ſhall in this place confine myſelf only to a part of what I have to ſay on this ſubject, I will here ſhow how the chiefs of the conſpiracy acted in concert, whether in the production, the multiplication or diſtribution of them, in order to diſſeminate their poiſons thoughout Europe.

The method to be obſerved in their own works, was particularly concerted between Voltaire, D'Alembert and Frederick. We ſee them, in their letters, confiding to each other the different works they are writing againſt Chriſtianity, their hopes of ſucceſs and their arts to enſure it. We ſee them ſmile at the ſnares they have laid againſt religion, and that particularly, in thoſe works and ſyſtems which they affected moſt to look upon as indif-

indifferent to, or as rather promoting than attacking religion. In that ſtyle D'Alembert was admirable. The following example will convince the hiſtorian, or the reader, of the great art of this crafty Sophiſter.

Cunning of D'Alembert with regard to ſyſtems.

It is well known, with what immenſe pains our philoſophers of the day, have been forming their pretended phyſical ſyſtems on the formation of the globe, their numerous theories and genealogies of the earth. We have ſeen them diving into mines, ſplitting mountains or digging up their ſurface in ſearch of ſhells, to trace old ocean's travels, and build their epochs. Theſe numerous reſearches, to hear them talk, had no other end but the advancement of ſcience and natural philoſophy. Their new epochs were not to affect religion, and we have reaſon to believe that many of our naturaliſts had no other object in view, as many of them, real men of learning and of candour in their reſearches, and capable of obſervation, have rather furniſhed arms againſt, than forwarded thoſe vain ſyſtems by their ſtudies, labours or peregrinations: not ſuch the caſe with D'Alembert and his adepts. They ſoon perceived that theſe new epochs and ſyſtems drew the attention of divines, who had to maintain the truth of the facts and the authenticity of the books of Moſes, the foundation and title-pages of Revelation. To baffle the Sorbonne and all the defenders of ſacred

writ, D'Alembert writes a work under the title of *The Abuſe of Criticiſm*, a real apology of all thoſe ſyſtems. The main drift of the work, was with ſhowing a great reſpect for religion, to prove that neither revelation, nor the credibility of Moſes, could be the leaſt affected by theſe theories or epochs, and that the alarms of the divines were ungrounded. Many pages were dedicated to prove that theſe ſyſtems could only ſerve to raiſe our ideas to the grand and ſublime. That ſo far from *counteracting the power of God, or his divine wiſdom*, they only *diſplayed it more*; that conſidering the object of their reſearches, *it little became the divine, but the natural philoſopher to judge of them.* Divines are repreſented as *narrow-minded, puſillanimous, or enemies to reaſon*, terrified at an object which did not ſo much as regard them. He is very pointed in his writings againſt thoſe pretended panics, and among other things ſays, "They have ſought to "connect Chriſtianity with ſyſtems purely philoſo- "phical. In vain did religion, ſo ſimple and pre- "ciſe in its tenets, conſtantly throw off the alloy "that disfigured it, and it is from that alloy the "notion has prevailed, of its being attacked in "works where it was the leaſt ſo *."

Theſe are preciſely the works where, for the formation of the univerſe, *a much longer ſpace of time is required*, than the hiſtory of the creation,

* The Abuſe of Criticiſm, Nos. 4, 15, 16, 17.

delineated

delineated by Moſes, leaves us at liberty to ſuppoſe.

Who but would have thought D'Alembert convinced that all thoſe phyſical ſyſtems, thoſe theories, *and longer ſpace of time*, ſo far from overturning Chriſtianity, would only ſerve to raiſe the grandeur and ſublimity of our ideas of the God of Moſes and of the Chriſtians. But that ſame D'Alembert, while ſeeking this *longer ſpace of time*, anticipated his applauſe to the lie, which his travelling adepts were about to give to Moſes and to revelation. Thoſe adepts rambling in the mountains of the Alps or the Appenines, are the men he points out to Voltaire *as precious to philoſophy*. It is he who, after having been ſo tender for the honor of Moſes and revelation, writes to Voltaire, "This letter, my dear companion, will be delivered to you by Deſmarets, a man of merit and "of ſound philoſophy, who wiſhes to pay his reſpects to you on his journey to Italy, where he "purpoſes *making ſuch obſervations on natural hiſtory, as may very well give the lie to Moſes*. He will "not ſay a word of this to the maſter of the ſacred palace, but if perchance, *he ſhould diſcover that the world is more ancient than even the ſeptuagint pretend, he will not keep it a ſecret from you* *."

* Let. 137, 1763.

D'Alembert directs Voltaire in his writings.

It would have been difficult to use more art, though it were to direct the hand of an assassin; D'Alembert would sometimes direct Voltaire, when shafts were to be sent from Ferney, which could not yet be shot from Paris. On these occasions the theme was already made, and only needed the last gloss of Voltaire's pen.

When, in 1763, the Sorbonne published that famous Thesis, which foretold what the French revolution has since taught the sovereigns of Europe, on the evil tendency of this modern philosophism to their very thrones; D'Alembert, in haste, informs Voltaire of the exigency of counteracting an impression so detrimental to the conspiracy. He shews Voltaire how to impose on the kings themselves, and how to involve the church in all their doubts and suspicions. In tracing this master-piece of art and cunning, he reminds him of the contests long since extinct, between the priesthood and the empire, and lets him into the whole art of throwing odium and suspicion on the clergy *. Many other plans are proposed to the patriarch according to circumstances †. Those were in his style *the chesnuts* that *Bertrand* (D'Alembert) *pointed out under the ashes*, and which *Raton* (Voltaire) was to help him to draw out of the fire with *his delicate paw*.

* Let. of D'Alembert, 18th Jan. and 9th Feb. 1773.

† Particularly let. of 26th Feb. and 22d March 1774.

Voltaire

Voltaire did not fail, on his part, to inform D'Alembert and the other adepts, of what he himself compoſed, or of the ſteps he took with miniſtry. It is thus that as a prelude to the plundering decrees of the revolution, he gave Count D'Argental notice of the memorial he had ſent to the Duke de Praſlin, to prevail on that miniſter to deprive the clergy of part its maintenance by aboliſhing tythes *. Their concert.

Theſe ſecret memorials, the anecdotes, whether true or ſlanderous againſt the religious writers, were all concerted among the conſpirators and their chiefs †. Even to the ſmiles, the witticiſms or inſipid epigrams of the adepts, were under the direction of Voltaire, and uſed by him as forwarding the conſpiracy. He, better than any man, knew the powers of ridicule, and he would often recommend it to the adepts in their writings or in their converſation. "Do your beſt, he writes "to D'Alembert, to preſerve your chearfulneſs, "always endeavour *to cruſh the wretch.* I only "aſk five or ſix witticiſms a day; that would "ſuffice. *It* would not get the better of them. "Laugh Democritus, make me laugh, and the "ſages ſhall carry the day ‡."

* Let. to the Count D'Argental, 1764.

† Letters of Voltaire and D'Alembert, 18 and 20.

‡ Let. 128.

Voltaire

Voltaire was not always of the same opinion, with regard to this attack on Christianity. This method was not sufficiently elevated for a philosopher, and he soon after adds, in his quality of chief, *To the flood of jests and sarcasms*, there should succeed, *some serious work, which however should be worth reading*, for the justification of the philosophers, and the confusion *of the wretch* *. This work, notwithstanding the exhortations of the chief, and his union with the adepts, never was executed. But on the other side, the press teemed with deistical and atheistical works, fraught with calumny and impiety. Monthly or weekly some new production of the most daring impiety was printed in Holland. Such were the *Philosophic Soldier*, *The Doubts*, *Priestcraft*, *Blackguardism unveiled* †, which are nearly the most profligate the sect has produced. One would have thought Voltaire alone presided over this traffic of impiety, such was his zeal in promoting the sale of them. He received notice of the publications, which he communicated to his brethren at Paris. He recommended their getting them, circulating them; upbraided them with their little ardor in spreading them abroad, while he himself dispersed them

Circulation of these works urged.

* Let. to D'Alembert, 67.

† Le Militaire Philosophe, Les Doubts, l'Imposture Sacerdotale, Le Polissonisme devoilé.

all

all around him *. To ſtimulate them, he would write, that it was out of theſe works *that all the German youth learned to read; in ſhort, that they were the univerſal catechiſms from Baden to Moſcow* †.

When he thought Holland could not ſufficiently infect France with theſe profligate writings, he would ſelect thoſe which D'Alembert was to get privately printed at Paris, and then diſtribute them by thouſands. Such, for example, was the pretended *Survey of Religion*, by Dumarſais. "They "have ſent me," theſe are Voltaire's own words, "*a work of Dumarſais* ASCRIBED *to St. Evremond.* "It is an excellent work (preciſely one of the "moſt impious). I exhort you, my dear brother, "to prevail on ſome one of our faithful and be-"loved, to reprint this little work, which may "do a great deal of good ‡." Like exhortations, but rather more preſſing, he made with regard to the *Laſt Will of Jean Meſlier*, of that famous Curate of Etrepigni, whoſe apoſtacy and blaſphemies could make ſtill ſtronger an impreſſion on the minds of the populace. Voltaire would complain that there were not ſo many copies of that impious work in all Paris, as he himſelf had diſperſed throughout the mountains of Switzerland §.

* See his letters to Count D'Argental, to Mad. du Deffant and particularly to D'Alembert, No. 2, 1769.

† Let. to the Count D'Argental, 26th Sept. 1766.

‡ Let. 122.

§ Let. of D'Alembert, 3d of July, and of Voltaire, 15th Sept. 1762.

D'Alem-

D'Alembert was himself obliged to apologize as if indifferent and deficient in point of zeal, but particularly for not having dared, at the entreaties of Voltaire, to *print* in Paris *and distribute four or five thousand copies of John Meslier's Last Will.* His excuse shows the consummate conspirator, who knows how to wait the moment, and take precautions to ensure that success, which too great precipitancy might have ruined *. We see by what he writes to Voltaire on a master-piece of impiety, entitled *Good Sense*, that he was perfectly aware of the effect these impious works had on the minds of the people; that he knew when they were to be multiplied or cast into the hands of the vulgar; he says, "This production *(Good Sense)* is a work "much more to be dreaded than the *System of* "*Nature.*" It really was so, because, with greater art and unconcern, it leads to the most unqualified Atheism; and for that reason we see D'Alembert setting forth the advantages to be derived from it to the conspiracy if it were abridged, though already but small, *so as to cost no more than five-pence, and thus to be fitted for the pocket and the reading of every cook-maid* †.

D'Alembert's excuse.

These low intrigues were not the only means the Sophisters resorted to, to evade the law, and overrun all Europe with these Antichristian pro-

* Let. 102. † Let. 146.

ductions.

ductions. They were supported at court by powerful men, or ministerial adepts, who knew how to silence the law itself, or if it ever was to speak, it was only the better to favour this impious traffic, at another time, in spite of the magistracy. The duke de Choiseul and Malesherbes were again the promoters of this grand means of robbing the people of their religion, and insinuating the errors of philosophism. The former, with all the assurance of ministerial despotism, threatened the Sorbonne with all the weight of his indignation, when by their public censures, they sought to guard the people against those ephemerous productions. It was this strange exertion of authority, which made Voltaire exclaim, *Long live the ministry of France; above all, long live the Duke of Choiseul!* *. Their circulation helped by ministry.

Malesherbes, who, having the superintendency over the whole of bookselling, and hence enabled to evade the law, both as to the introduction and circulation of these impious writings, was on that object, in perfect unison with D'Alembert. They both would willingly have hindered the champions of religion from printing their replies to that legion of infidels then rising in France. But the time was not yet come. With his pretended toleration, Voltaire was indignant, that under a phi-

* Let. of Voltaire to Marmontel, 1767.

losophic

losophic minister, the apologists of the Gospel, should still have access to the press, and D'Alembert is obliged to plead in his defence, that Malesherbes, so far from favoring the antiphilosophic works, had reluctantly been obliged *to submit to superior orders*, which he could not resist *. Not content with a simple connivance, such excuses were not satisfactory to Voltaire, nothing less than the authority of kings could second his zeal, and he has again recourse to Frederick. This inundation of impious books, was to have been the grand object of his colony. As yet unconsoled for the failure of that plan, he writes to the king of the Sophisters, " Was I younger, had I health, " I would willingly quit, the house I have built, " the trees I have planted, to go and dedicate " with two or three philosophers, the remainder of " my life, under your protection, to the printing " of a few useful books. *But, Sire, cannot you, " without exposing yourself, have some of the Berlin " booksellers encouraged to reprint them, and to dis- " tribute them throughout Europe, at a price low " enough to ensure their sale* †."

Concert of Voltaire and Frederick on this object.

This proposal, which transformed the king of Prussia into the hawker-general of Antichristian pamphlets, did not displease his protecting majesty. " You may (answers Frederick) *make*

* Let. of 15th Jan. 1757. † 5th April 1767.

" *use*

" *uſe of our printers as you pleaſe,* they enjoy per-
" fect liberty, and as they are connected with
" thoſe of Holland, France and Germany, I have
" no doubt, but that they have means of con-
" veying books whitherſoever they may think
" proper *."

Even at Peterſburg, Voltaire had found hawkers of theſe impious productions. Under the protection, and by the influence of Count Schouvallow, Ruſſia was to petition Diderot, *for leave to be honoured with* the impreſſion of the Encyclopedia, and Voltaire is commiſſioned to announce that triumph to Diderot †. The moſt impious and moſt ſeditious work Helvetius had written, was then reprinting at the Hague, and the Prince Gallitzin dares to dedicate it to the Empreſs of all the Ruſſias. Here Voltaire's zeal was out-run by his ſucceſs. He could not help remarking, with what amazement the world would ſee ſuch a work inſcribed to the moſt deſpotic ſovereign on earth; but whilſt he ſmiled at the imprudence and folly of the prince adept, he exultingly beheld *the flock of ſages ſilently increaſing*, ſince princes themſelves were no leſs eager than himſelf, in the circulation of theſe antichriſtian writings. We find this account repeated three different times in his letters to D'Alembert, ſo great was his joy, and ſo confi-

* 5th May, 1767. † Let. of Voltaire to Diderot.

dent

dent was he of annihilating all idea of Chriſtianity in the minds of the people by this means.

In this chapter we have only treated of the ſolicitude with which the chiefs ſought to infuſe the poiſon of their writings into the minds of the people; later we ſhall ſee the means employed by the ſect, to extend it to the hovel or the cottage, and to imbibe that low rabble with its impious principles, though we have ſeen Voltaire ſo little deſirous of ſuch a conqueſt.

Note to CHAP. IX.

On thoſe Works which are more particularly recommended by the Conſpirators.

Their doctrine.

Were I leſs acquainted with a certain, though numerous claſs of readers, I might look upon the obſervations I am about to make, on the doctrine of thoſe works which the chiefs of the conſpiracy, independently of their own, ſought to circulate through all claſſes of ſociety, as ſuperfluous. I have not only to ſatisfy men difficult of conviction, but perſuade men who will reſiſt evidence itſelf, unleſs it overwhelms them. In ſpite of all the proofs we have already adduced of the conſpiracy formed and carried on by Voltaire, D'Alembert, Frederick, Diderot and their adepts againſt the vitals of Chriſtianity, will nobody recur again to ſay, that the Sophiſters only levelled their writings at the abuſes, or at leaſt that Catholicity was their only aim, and that they never meant to attack the divers other religions that are within the pale of Chriſtianity, whether at Geneva or London, in Germany or Sweden. The extreme falſity of ſuch an argument renders it abſurd. If we do but reflect for a moment on the nature of thoſe works, which the Sophiſters circulated with

with so much zeal; could they wish to disseminate other principles than those preached up in these works? Let us appeal to them and see if the destruction of abuses, or even of Catholicity alone, could have been their sole object. That the conspiracy was general, proved by these works.

The works we have seen so higly recommended by Voltaire and D'Alembert, are particularly those of Freret, Boulanger, Helvetius, John Meslier, Dumarsais and Maillet, or at least they bear the name of these Sophisters. They are once more, THE PHILOSOPHIC SOLDIER, THE DOUBTS OR THE SAGE'S SCEPTICISM, GOOD SENSE, whose authors remain unknown. I will lay before the reader the divers opinions, broached by these writers, so much commended by the Sophisters, concerning those points which cannot be invalidated, without overthrowing the very foundation of Christianity. Then let any one conclude that the conspiracy only impugned abuses, or some particular branch of Christianity.

The absolute belief of the existence of a God, belongs to every religion that is Christian; let us then examine their doctrine as to a GOD.

Freret tells us expressly, "*The universal cause, that* GOD "*of the philosophers, of the Jews and of the Christians, is but a* "*chimera and a phantom.*" The same author continues, "Imagination daily creates fresh chimeras, which raise in "them that impulse of fear, and such is the phantom of "the Deity *." Doctrine of these works: Of God.

The author of *Good Sense*, or of that work which D'Alembert wishes to see abridged, in order to sell it for five-pence to the poor and ignorant, is not so emphatical; but what is his doctrine? "*That the phenomena of nature only* "*prove the existence of* GOD *to a few prepossessed men*," that is to say, full of false prejudices; "that *the wonders of nature*,

* Letter from Thrasybulus to Lucippus, page 164 and 254.

" *ſo far from beſpeaking a* GOD, *are but the neceſſary effects of* " *matter prodigiouſly diverſified* *."

The Philoſophic Soldier does not deny the exiſtence of GOD, but ſets off, in his firſt chapter, by a monſtrous compariſon *between Jupiter* and *the* GOD *of the Chriſtians*, and the pagan god carries all the advantage of the diſcuſſion.

According to the *Chriſtianity Unveiled*, which appeared under the name of Boulanger, it *is more reaſonable* to admit with Manes of *a twofold God*, than of the GOD of Chriſtianity †.

The author of *the Doubts* or of Scepticiſm, informs the world, " That they cannot know whether a GOD really " exiſts, or whether there exiſts the ſmalleſt difference " *between good and evil or vice and virtue.*" Such is the drift of the whole of that work ‡.

On the Soul.

We find the ſame oppoſition to Chriſtianity in their doctrines on the ſpirituality of the SOUL. With Freret, " every thing that is called *Spirit* or SOUL, has *no more* " *reality* than *the phantoms, the chimeras* or *the ſphinxes* §."

The Sophiſter of the pretended *Good Senſe*, heaps up arguments anew to prove, that it is the body that feels, thinks and judges, and that the SOUL *is but a chimera* ‖.

Helvetius pronounces, " That we are in an error, when " we *make of the* SOUL *a ſpiritual being*; that *nothing* can be " more *abſurd*, and that the SOUL *is not a diſtinct being from* " *the body* **."

Boulanger tells us decidedly, " That the *immortality of the* " SOUL, ſo far from ſtimulating man to the practice of

* No. 36 et paſſim. † Page 101.

‡ Particularly No. 100 and 101.

§ Letter from Thraſybulus. ‖ No. 20 and 100.

** Of the Spirit, and of Man and his Education, No. 4 and 5.

" virtue,

" virtue, is nothing but a *barbarous, desperate, fatal tenet*, and " contrary to all legislation *."

If from these fundamental tenets, essential to every religion, as well as to Catholicity, we pass on to MORALITY, we shall find Freret teaching the people, that " all ideas *of* " *justice and injustice, of virtue and vice, of glory and infamy*, " are purely arbitrary and dependent on custom †." On Morality.

Helvetius will one while tell us, that the only rule by which *virtuous actions* are distinguished from *vicious ones*, is the law of princes, and public utility. Elsewhere he will say, " that *virtue*, that *honesty*, with regard to individuals, " is no more than the *habit of actions personally advantageous*, " and that *self-interest* is the sole scale by which the actions " of man can be measured." Infine, " that if the virtuous " man is not happy in this world, then will be the time " to cry out, *O Virtue! thou art but an empty dream* ‡."

The same Sophister also says, that " *sublime virtue, en-* " *lightened wisdom*, are only the fruits of those passions *called* " *folly*. Or that stupidity is the necessary consequence of " the cessation of passion. That to moderate the passions, is " to ruin the state ||. That *conscience* and *remorse* are nothing " but the *foresight* of those physical penalties, to which " crimes expose us. That the man who is above the law, can " commit, without remorse, the dishonest act that may serve " his purpose §." That it *little imports* whether *men are vicious*, if they be but enlightened **.

And the fair sex will be taught by this author, that " MODESTY is only an *invention of refined voluptuousness*:

* Antiquity Unveiled, page 15.

† Letter of Thrasybulus.

‡ On the Mind. Discourse 2d and 4th.

|| Idem. Discourse 2d and 3d, chap. 6, 7, 8 and 10.

§ Idem. Of Man, vol. 1st, sec. 2d, chap. 7.

** Idem. No. 9, chap. 6.

" that MORALITY has nothing to apprehend from *love*, for " it is the paſſion that *creates genius*, and *renders man virtu-* " *ous* *." He will inform children, that " the command- " ment of loving their father and mother, is more the work " of education than of nature †." He will ſay to the mar- ried couple, that " the law which condemns them to " live together, becomes *barbarous and cruel* on the day they " ceaſe to love each other ‡."

In vain ſhould we ſeek among the other works that the chiefs of the conſpirators wiſhed to circulate a more Chri- ſtian MORALITY. Dumarſais, as well as Helvetius, knows no other virtue but what *is uſeful*, nor vice but that which *is hurtful* to man upon earth ||. The *Philoſophic Soldier*, thinks that ſo far from being able to offend God, *men are obliged to execute his laws* §. The author of the *Good Senſe* ſo much praiſed by the leaders, tells them that to think we can offend God, is *to think ourſelves ſtronger than God* **. He would even teach them to anſwer us, " If your God leaves " to men the *liberty of damning* themſelves, *why ſhould you* " *meddle with it?* Are you *wiſer* than that God whoſe rights " you wiſh to avenge ††."

Boulanger, in that work ſo much admired by Frederick and Voltaire, aſſerts that the *fear of God*, ſo far from being the beginning of wiſdom, *would rather be the beginning of folly* ‡‡.

It would be uſeleſs to the reader, and irkſome to us, were we to carry theſe quotations any farther. Thoſe who wiſh to ſee theſe texts and numberleſs others of the ſame kind, may peruſe the HELVIAN LETTERS. But certainly there

* Of the Mind. Diſ. 2d, chap. 4 and 15, &c.
† Of Man. Chap. 8. ‡ Ibid. Sect. 8, &c.
|| Eſſay on Prejudices, chap. 8. § Chap. 20.
** Sect. 67. †† Sect. 135. ‡‡ Chriſtianity unveiled, in a note to page 163.

is

is enough here to demonſtrate, that conſpirators who wiſhed to circulate ſuch works, were not levelling ſolely at the Catholic religion, much leſs at a few abuſes. No evidently every altar where Chriſt was adored, was to be overthrown, whether Anglican, Calviniſt or Proteſtant.

The baſe project of throwing into circulation four or five thouſand copies of John Meſlier's Laſt Will, would fully prove the abſolute deſign of annihilating every veſtige of Chriſtianity, ſince this Laſt Will or Teſtament is nothing but a groſs declamation againſt the doctrines of the Goſpel.

CHAP. X.

Of the Spoliations and Violences projected by the Conſpirators, and concealed under the Name of Toleration.

What their toleration really was.

PERHAPS of all the arts put in practice by the conſpirators, none has ſucceeded better with them, than that perpetual appeal in all their writings to *toleration, reaſon, and humanity*; of which Condorcet tells us they had made their *war hoop* *. In fact it was natural enough, that men who appeared ſo deeply impreſſed with theſe ſentiments ſhould gain the attention of the public: But were they real? Did the conſpiring Sophiſters mean to content themſelves with a true toleration? As they acquired ſtrength, did they mean to grant to others what they aſked for themſelves? Theſe queſtions are eaſily ſolved, and it would be uſeleſs for the reader to ſeek the definition of each of theſe high-ſounding words impoſed upon the public, when their private and real ſentiments are to be ſeen in their continued cry of *Cruſh religion*. To caſt an eye on their correſpondence, is ſufficient to identify the plans of theſe conſpiring So-

* Sketch on Hiſtory. Epoch 9.

phiſters,

phiſters, with thoſe of the Jacobins their ſucceſſors; do not the Petions, the Condorcets, and the Robeſpierres, adopt their wiſhes and execute their plans under the ſame maſk of toleration.

Plunder, violence and death has been the toleration of the revolutioniſts. Nor were any of theſe means foreign to the firſt conſpirators, whoſe language the latter had adopted. As to ſpoliations, I have already ſaid that Voltaire, as early as the year 1743, was plotting with the King of Pruſſia to plunder the eccleſiaſtical princes and the religious orders of their poſſeſſions. In 1764, we have ſeen him ſending a memorial to the Duke of Praſlin, on the abolition of tythes, in hopes of depriving the clergy of their ſuſtenance *. In 1770, he had not abandoned his plan when he writes to Frederick, "I wiſh to God that Gangannelli had ſome good domain in your neighbourhood, and that you were not ſo far from Loretto. It is noble to ſcoff at theſe Harlequin *Bull-givers*. I like to cover them with ridicule, but *I had rather* PLUNDER *them* †."

Spoliations premeditated by Voltaire.

Theſe various letters prove to the reader, that the chief of the conſpirators only anticipated the plundering decrees of the Jacobins, or even the revolutionary incurſion their armies have made to Loretto.

* Let. from Voltaire to the Count D'Argental, 1764.

† 8th June, 1770.

Rejected and approved by Frederick.

Frederick, assuming the kingly tone, seems for an instant so shocked at these spoliations, as to have forgotten that he had been the first to propose them. He answers, "Were Loretto adjoining to my villa, I should not touch it. Its treasures might tempt a Mandrin, a Conflans, a "Turpin, a Rich .... or their fellows. It is "not that I reverence donations consecrated by "sottish stupidity, but what the public venerates "is to be spared. When one looks upon one's self, "as gifted with superior lights, out of compassion "for others, in commiseration for their weakness, one should not shock their prejudices. It "is a pity that the pretended philosophers of our "days are not of the same way of thinking *." But soon the Sophister prevails over the monarch, and Frederick is no longer of opinion that spoils of the church are to be left to a Mandrin: the very next year coinciding with Voltaire he writes to him, "If the new minister of France is a man "of sense, he will neither be weak nor foolish "enough to restore Avignon to the Pope †." He recurs to his means of *silently undermining the edifice*, by first plundering the religious orders, that they might then strip the bishops ‡.

* Let. 7th July 1770. † Let 29th June 1771.
‡ 13th Aug. 1775.

D'Alembert,

D'Alembert, on his ſide adviſed, that the clergy ſhould be firſt deprived of that conſequence they enjoyed in the ſtate, before they were plundered of their poſſeſſions. In ſending to Voltaire his taſk almoſt ready made, that he might ſpeak out what he dared not utter himſelf, he tells him, "that "he muſt not forget, if it could be done deli- "cately, to add to the firſt part a little appendix, "or an engaging poſtſcript on the danger there "is both for ſtates and kings, to ſuffer the clergy "to form a ſeparate and diſtinct body, with the "privilege of holding regular aſſemblies *."

D'Alembert's advice.

As yet this doctrine was new both to king or ſtate; they had never perceived this pretended danger of letting the clergy form a diſtinct body in the nation, as did the nobility and the third order; but theſe conſpiring chiefs were anticipating the horrors of the revolution, the plunders and murders of their Jacobin ſucceſſors and diſciples.

The violent and ſanguinary edicts, the decrees of deportation and of death, were not foreign to the wiſhes of the conſpiring chiefs. However frequent the words of toleration, humanity or reaſon, may be in Voltaire's mouth, it would be a great error in judgment to think, that thoſe were the only arms he wiſhed to employ againſt the Chri-

Voltaire's wiſh for violent meaſures.

* Letter 95, 1773.

ſtian

ſtian religion. When he writes to Count Argental, "Had I but a hundred thouſand men, I well "know what I would do with them*." Or when he wrote to Frederick, "Hercules went to "fight the robbers and Bellerophon chimeras; I "ſhould not be ſorry to behold Herculeſes and "Bellerophons delivering the earth both from "Catholic robbers and Catholic chimeras†." Doubtleſs it was not toleration that dictated thoſe wiſhes, and one is tempted to conclude, that he would not have been ſorry to behold the maſſacre of the clergy, by the Herculeſes and Bellerophons of the butchering September. Have we not ſeen him wiſhing to behold *every Jeſuit at the bottom of the ocean, each with a Janſeniſt hung to his neck?* When with the view of avenging Helvetius and philoſophiſm, he does not bluſh to aſk, *Could not the moderate and diſcreet propoſal of ſtrangling the laſt Jeſuit with the guts of the laſt Janſeniſt*, bring matters to ſome compromiſe? In reading this, could we reaſonably infer, that the humanity and toleration of Voltaire would have been greatly ſhocked at the ſight of thoſe ſhips, ſtowed with the Catholic clergy by a Lebon, as a preparatory ſtep to ſubmerging them in the ocean!!!

Frederick's ſimilar wiſh.

Frederick ſeemed to be nearer ſimple toleration when he anſwered Voltaire: "It is not the lot of

* 16th Feb. 1761. † 3d March, 1767.

"arms

" arms to deſtroy the wretch. It will periſh by " thoſe of truth *." At length he begins to think that force muſt ſtrike the laſt blow at religion. He is not averſe to this force, and one ſees him willing to employ it had the occaſion offered, when he wrote to Voltaire, " To Bayle, your fore- " runner, and to yourſelf no doubt, is due the " honor of that revolution working in the minds " of men. But to ſpeak with truth, it is not yet " complete; bigots have their party, and *it will* " *never be perfected but by a ſuperior force: from* " *government muſt the ſentence iſſue, that ſhall cruſh* " *the wretch.* Miniſters may forward it, *but the* " *will of the ſovereign muſt accede.* Without doubt " this will be effectuated in time, but neither of " us can be ſpectators of that long-wiſhed for " moment †."

There can be no doubt but what that long-ſought for moment was that, when impiety enthroned, ſhould caſt aſide the maſk of toleration, which it had neceſſarily diſguiſed itſelf with: Julian-like, would not Frederick alſo have had recourſe to ſuperior force at that deſired period? would he not have ſeconded the ſophiſms of the conſpirators with that ſentence which was to iſſue from the ſovereign? He would have ſpoken as a maſter, and under Frederick might not the reigns

* 25th March, 1767. † Let. 95, 1775.

of

of a Domitian or a Julian have been renewed, when apoſtacy, exile or death, were the only alternatives left to a Chriſtian's choice. But how to reconcile this ſuperior force, this ſentence of the government, that is *to cruſh*, with what D'Alembert ſays of that prince in a letter to Voltaire, is difficult: "I believe him at his laſt ſhift, and it "is a great pity. Philoſophy will not eaſily find "like him a prince, tolerant through indifference, "which is the true ſtyle, and an enemy to ſuper-"ſtition and fanaticiſm *."

The frantic wiſh of D'Alembert.

But with D'Alembert even that mode of tolerating, through indifference, did not exclude underhand perſecutions; nor would it have been incompatible with this man's rage and phrenzy, ſo openly expreſſed in his letters to Voltaire, to ſee a whole nation deſtroyed ſolely for having ſhewn its attachment to Chriſtianity. Could toleration, through indifference, dictate the following lines? "Apropos of the King of Pruſſia, he has at length "got a-head again. And I, as a Frenchman "and a thinking being, am quite of your opi-"nion, that it is a great happineſs both for France "and for philoſophy. Thoſe Auſtrians are a ſet "of inſolent capuchines who hate and deſpiſe us, "*and whom I could wiſh to ſee annihilated with* "*the ſuperſtition they protect* †."

* Letter 195, an. 1762. † To Voltaire, 12th Jan. 1763.

It

It would be uſeleſs to remark in this place, that theſe very Auſtrians which D'Alembert wiſhes to ſee annihilated, were then the allies of France, at war with that very King of Pruſſia whoſe victories he celebrates. Theſe circumſtances might ſerve to ſhow, how much more philoſophiſm ſwayed the heart of the Sophiſter than the love of his country, or that toleration would not have hindered the conſpirators from betraying their king or country, could they by that have made a new attack on Chriſtianity.

We plainly ſee that all theſe inhuman wiſhes were rather dropped unawares, than the awowed object of their correſpondence. They were preparing the road for thoſe ſeditious and ferocious minds, who were to perpetrate what the Sophiſters yet could only deviſe and ſcheme. The day of rebellion and murder was not yet come, with the ſame wiſhes circumſtances had not diſtributed to them the ſame parts to act. Let us then examine what characters the firſt chiefs performed, and by what ſervices each one in particular, ſignalizing his zeal in the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy, prepared the reign of their revolutionary adepts.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Part, Miſſion and private Means of each of the Chiefs of the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy.

IN order to attain the grand object of the conſpiracy, in ſhort to cruſh the Chriſt whom they purſued with unrelenting hatred, all the general plans and means they had concerted were judged inſufficient. Each one in particular was to concur with his own means, with thoſe which his faculties, his ſituation or peculiar miſſion enabled him to exert. Voltaire was endowed with all thoſe talents which adorn the eminent writer, and no ſooner was the confederacy formed than he turned them all againſt his God. During the laſt five and twenty years of his life he declares himſelf, that *he had no other object in view than to vilify the wretch**. Until that period, he had ſhared his time between poetry and impiety, but henceforward he is ſolely impious. One might have thought that he alone wiſhed to vomit forth more blaſphemies and calumnies againſt the God of Chriſtianity, than had done the whole claſs of Celſi,

Voltaire's ſervices:

his ardor:

* Letter to Damilaville, 15th June 1762.

or

or Porphyrii during all ages. In the numerous collection of his works more than forty volumes in 8vo, Romances, Dictionaries, Hiſtories, Memoirs, Letters or Commentaries, flowed from his pen, imbittered with rage and the wiſh of cruſhing Chriſt.

In this immenſe collection it would be in vain to ſeek any particular ſyſtem of Deiſm, of Materialiſm or Scepticiſm. They all form one common maſs. We have ſeen him conjuring D'Alembert to unite all theſe diverging ſects in the common attack againſt Chriſt, and his own heart may be ſaid to have been their focus. He cared not from whence aroſe the ſtorm, or whoſe the hand that ſtruck, for the ſubverſion of the altar was his only aim. The religious authors and we ourſelves, have ſhown him fickle in his ſyſtems and daily adopting new opinions, and that from his own works *; one beheld twenty different men in him alone, but each of them equally hateful. Rage accounts for his contradictions; his hypocriſy even flows from the ſame ſource. This latter phenomenon is not ſufficiently known, it muſt have its page in hiſtory; but let Voltaire himſelf ſpeak as to the extent and original cauſe of ſo baſe a conduct. his contradictions.

During that inundation of Antichriſtian books in France, government would ſometimes, though Of his hypocriſy and communions.

* See the Helvian Letters, and particularly letter 34 and 42.

remiſſly,

remiſſly, take cognizance of their authors. Voltaire himſelf had been proſecuted, on account of his firſt impious writings. When declared premier chief, he thought that more caution became his pre-eminence, leſt any legal proof ſhould be acquired of his impiety. The better to attack, and the more ſecurely to *cruſh Chriſt*, he conceals himſelf under his very banners; frequenting his temples, being preſent at his myſteries, receiving into his mouth the God he blaſphemed: and if annually at Eaſter he received, it was but to blaſpheme his God more audaciouſly. To ſo monſtrous an accuſation, unconteſtable proofs muſt be brought.

On the 15th of Jan. 1761, Voltaire ſends a performance, I know not what, but which the editor of his works ſuppoſes to be an epiſtle to Mademoiſelle Clairon a famous actreſs in thoſe days, to one of his female adepts, the Counteſs of Argental, whom he ſtyles his angel. Beyond a doubt it was a moſt ſcandalous production, ſince only the choſen of the elect are favored with it, or rather that Voltaire *dares* ſend it to. In fine, whatever was the ſubject, it was accompanied with the following letter.

" Will you amuſe yourſelf with the peruſal " of this ſcrap: will you read it to Mademoiſelle " Clairon? None but yourſelf and the Duke de " Choiſeul are in poſſeſſion of it: you will pre- " ſently tell me that I grow very daring and " rather

" rather wicked in my old age: wicked! No,
" I turn Minos, I judge the perverſe. But take care
" of yourſelf. There are people who do not for-
" give.—I know it, and I am like them. I am
" now ſixty-ſeven years old, I go to the parochial
" maſs. I edify my people. I am building a
" church, *I receive communion*, and I will be buried
" there, zounds, in ſpite of all the hypocrites.
" I believe in Jeſus Chriſt conſubſtantial with
" God, in the Virgin Mary mother of God.—Ye
" baſe perſecutors what have you to ſay to me.—
" But you have written the Pucelle—No, I never
" did.—It is you who are the author of it, it was
" you gave ears to Joan's palfrey.—I am a good
" Chriſtian, a faithful ſervant of the king, a good
" lord of the pariſh and a proper tutor for a daughter.
" I make curates and Jeſuits tremble. I do what I
" pleaſe with my little province as big as the palm of
" my hand (his eſtate extended about ſix miles);
" I am a man to diſpoſe of the Pope whenever
" I pleaſe.—Well, ye raggamuffins, what have
" you to ſay to me.—Theſe, my dear angels, are
" the anſwers, I would make to the Fantins,
" Griſels, Guyons or to the little black mon-
" key, &c. &c."

The female adepts might laugh at the tone and ſtyle of ſuch a letter, but will the judicious reader ſee it in any other light, than as the production of an inſolent old man, who proud of his protections

is nevertheleſs determined to impudently lie, and to ſet forth the moſt orthodox profeſſion of faith, ſhould the religious authors accuſe him of impiety, to combat the laws with denials or his ſacrilegious *communions*; and the infidel talks of hypocrites and baſe cowards!

Such odious artifice ſeems to have ſhocked the Count D'Argental himſelf, for on the 16th of January following, Voltaire writes to him, "That "had he a hundred thouſand men he knows what "uſe he would make of them; but as I have them "not, *I will receive at Eaſter*, and you may call "*me hypocrite as much as you pleaſe*; yes by God, "I will receive the ſacrament, and that in com- "pany with Mad. Denis and Mademoiſelle Cor- "neille, and if you ſay much, I will put the *Tan- "tum ergo* into verſe and that in croſs rhimes."

It appears that many more of the adepts were aſhamed of this meanneſs in their chief. He at length thinks himſelf bound to write to D'Alembert on the ſubject, and tells him, "I know "there are people who ſpeak ill of my Eaſter "devotions. It is a penance I muſt reſign my- "ſelf to, in expiation of my ſins.—*Yes, I have "received my Eaſter communion, and what is more, "I preſented in perſon, the hallowed bread*; after "this, I could boldly defy both Moliniſts and "Janſeniſts *."

* 27th of April 1768.

If

If these last words do not sufficiently declare the motives of his hypocrisy, the following letter, again to D'Alembert, will do away all doubt. It is only three days posterior to the last. "In "your opinion, what are the sages to do when "they are surrounded by senseless barbarians? "There are times when *one must imitate their dis-* "*tortions and speak their language. Mutemus cly-* "*peos* (let us change our bucklers). In fine, "what I have done this year, *I have already done* "*several times*, and please God I will do it again *." This is the same letter in which he particularly recommends that *the mysteries of Mytra should not be divulged*, and concludes it with this terrible sentence against Christianity, *For the monster must fall pierced by a hundred invincible hands; yes, let it fall beneath a thousand repeated blows.*

With this profound dissimulation †, Voltaire combined all that dark-dealing activity, which the oath

* 1st of May 1768.

† If I am to credit men who knew Voltaire in the earlier part of his literary triumphs, he was then no stranger to this profound hypocrisy. The following is an anecdote I learned of men who knew him well. By one of those fantastical chances, Voltaire had a brother, an arrant Jansenist, professing all that austerity of manners which that sect affected. The Abbé Arouet heir to a considerable fortune would not see his impious brother, and openly said that he would not leave him a halfpenny. But his health was weak, and his

oath of cruſhing the God of Chriſtianity could ſuggeſt to the premier chief of the Antichriſtian Sophiſters. Not content with his partial attacks, he had recourſe to whole legions of adepts from the eaſt to the weſt; he encouraged them, he preſſed and ſtimulated them in this warfare. Preſent every where by his correſpondence, he would write to one, "Prevail on all the brethren, "to purſue *the wretch in their diſcourſes and in* "*their writings, without allowing him one moment's* "*reſpite.*" To another he would ſay, "*make as* "*much as poſſible, the moſt prudent efforts to cruſh* "*the wretch.*" Should he obſerve any of the adepts leſs ardent than himſelf, he would extend his Philippics to all: "*They forget* (ſays he) *that* "*the moſt material occupation ought to be to cruſh*

His preſſing exhortations to the adepts.

life could be of no long duration, Voltaire had not given up all hopes of the inheritance; he turns Janſeniſt and acts the devotee; on a ſudden he appears in the Janſeniſtical garb, with a large ſlouched hat, he runs from church to church. He took care to chooſe the ſame hours as the Abbé Arouet, and there with a deportment as contrite and humble as Deacon Paris himſelf, kneeling in the middle of the church, or ſtanding with his arms croſſed on his breaſt, his eyes caſt on the ground, on the altar or on the Chriſtian orator, he would hearken or pray with all the compunction of the penitent ſinner reclaimed from his errors. The Abbé believed in his brother's converſion, exhorted him to perſevere and died leaving him all his fortune. But the Janſeniſt's caſh was all that Voltaire retained of his converſion.

"*the*

" *the monſter* *." The reader has not forgotten that monſter, wretch and Chriſt or religion, are ſynonimous in his mouth. Satan could not have been more ardent, when, in the war of hell againſt heaven, he ſought to ſtir up his legions againſt the Word; he could not more urgently exclaim, we muſt triumph over the Word or meanly ſerve: ſhame in defeat, could not be expreſſed more forcibly by Satan than by Voltaire, when he cries out to his adepts, " *Such is our poſition, that* " *we ſhall be the execration of mankind, if* (in this " war againſt Chriſt) *we have not the better ſort of* " *people on our ſide*; we muſt therefore gain them " coſt what it will; *cruſh the wretch*, I tell you, " *then cruſh the wretch* †."

So much zeal had made him the idol of the party. The adepts flocked from all parts to ſee him, and went away fired with his rage. Thoſe who could not approach him, conſulted him, laid their doubts before him; would crave to know whether there really was a God, if they really had a ſoul. Voltaire, who knew nothing of the matter, ſmiled at his own power, but always anſwered that the God of the Chriſtians was to be cruſhed. Such were the letters he received every week ‡. His correſpondence.

* See letters to Thiriot, Saurin and Damilaville.

† Let. to D'Alembert, 129.

‡ Voltaire's let. to Mad. du Deffant, 22d July 1761.

He wrote himſelf a prodigious number in the ſame blaſphemous ſtyle. One muſt have ſeen the collection, to believe that the heart or hatred of one ſingle man could dictate, or that his hand could pen them, and that without alluding to his many other blaſphemous works. In his den at Ferney, he would be informed of, and ſee all; he would even direct every thing that related to the conſpiracy. Kings, princes, dukes, marquiſſes, petty authors or citizens, might write to him, provided they were but impious. He would anſwer them all, ſtrengthen them, and encourage them in their impiety. Infine, to his extreme old age, his life was that of a legion of devils, whoſe ſole and continued object, was to cruſh Chriſt and overthrow his altar.

Frederick's ſervices.

Frederick the Sophiſter, though on a throne, was not leſs active, nor leſs aſtoniſhing for his activity. This man, who alone did for his ſtates all that a king could do, and more even than both king and miniſters in moſt other countries do, out-ſtripped the Sophiſters alſo, in their Antichriſtian deeds. As a chief of the conſpiracy, his part, or folly, was to ſee and protect the inferior adepts, if any of them chanced to fall Victims to what was called fanaticiſm. When the Abbé Deſprades was obliged to fly the cenſures of the Sorbonne and the decrees of the parliament, the ſophiſtical monarch preſents him with a canonicate at Breſlaw.

ſlaw *. A hair-brained youth flies the vengeance of the laws, after having broken the public monuments of religion, he is received, and the colours of a regiment are entruſted to his hands †. His treaſures are exhauſted for his armies, but not ſo for the adepts. In the very height of war, their penſions, and particularly D'Alembert's, are regularly paid.

He was ſometimes ſeen to lay aſide the Sophiſter, and think it beneath a monarch to be connected with a ſet of *blackguards, coxcombs and viſionary fools* ‡. But thoſe were little ſallies which the Sophiſters eaſily overlooked; his philoſophiſm would return, he was one of their's again, and his hatred to Chriſtianity would once more engage his whole attention. He would then ſpur on Voltaire himſelf; he would urge and ſolicit him impatiently for new writings, and the more impious the work, the more he approved of it. Then with Voltaire and D'Alembert, he would demean himſelf even to their artifices; he would above all admire the hand that ſtruck unſeen, or as he expreſſes himſelf, that method of filliping the *wretch*, while loading him with civilities §.

Then aſſuming the character of baſe flattery, he would ſtyle Voltaire the God of Philoſophy.

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, 2 and 3.
† Ibid, 211. ‡ His Dialogues of the Dead.
§ 16 March 1771.

"He would figure him ascending Olympus, "loaded and satiated with glory, *the conqueror of* "*the wretch*, supported by the genii of Lu- "cretius and Sophocles, of Virgil and Locke, "seated on a car beaming with light, and placed "between Newton and Epicurus *." He paid homage to him for the Antichristian revolution, which he saw preparing †. Unable to triumph by so many titles himself, he would acquire that of being laborious, and all those impious works, whether in rhyme or in prose, and published under his name, are not the only productions of the royal Sophister. Many are those which he privately ushered into circulation, and which never could have been thought to be those of a man who had the duties of the throne to fulfil. Such, for example, that extract of Bayle, more impious than Bayle himself; he only rejects the useless articles, in order to condense the poison of the rest. His *Akakia*, and that *Discourse on the History of the Church*, so much extolled as well as its preface, by the abettors of impiety. Infine, such were his numberless productions, in which Voltaire finds no other fault but the eternal repetitions (like his own), of the same arguments against religion ‡.

* 25th Nov. 1766. † Let. 154, anno 1767.

‡ Correspondence of Voltaire and King of Prussia, let. 133, 151, 159, &c. &c.

Hence

Hence we see that it was not enough for Frederick to forward the conspiracy by his counsels; to give refuge to its agents; but he would also, by his constancy and application to infect Europe with his impieties, attain to the rank of chief. If he was inferior to Voltaire, it was by his talents, and not from his hatred; but had Voltaire been destitute of the support of a Frederick, he could not have risen to the height he did. Possessed of the secret, he would willingly have initiated all kings to the mysteries of the conspiracy, and of all, he was the king who gave it the chief support. His example was still more powerful than his writings, and it may be justly said that, his reign was that of the sceptered infidel.

Diderot's services.

Placed in an humbler sphere, Diderot and D'Alembert began their mission, or parts, by a game, which well characterized their apostleship. Both were already actuated by its zeal, but neither had yet acquired that reputation which they afterwards gained, more by their impiety, than by their abilities. The coffee-houses of Paris were their first stage. There unknown, first in one then in another, they would begin an argument on religious matters, Diderot the assailant and D'Alembert the defendant. The objection was forcible and pointed, the energy and tone of Diderot was invincible. The reply was weak, but made with all the apparent candour of a Christian, who wished

wiſhed to maintain the honor and truth of his religion. The idle Pariſians, who generally reſorted to theſe places, would hearken or admire, and ſometimes take a part in the diſpute. Diderot then inſiſted, reſumed and preſſed the argument. D'Alembert in return, owned that the difficulty appeared unanſwerable, and then withdrew as if aſhamed, and regretting, that neither his divinity, nor his love for religion, could furniſh him with arguments for its defence. Soon after our two friends would meet to felicitate each other on the good ſucceſs of their ſham conflict, and on the impreſſion they had made upon the croud of ignorant hearers, who had been completely duped. They made a freſh appointment; the diſpute was taken up again, the hypocritical advocate for religion, makes a new diſplay of his zeal, but ſubmits to the ſuperior arguments of Atheiſm. At length the police, informed of their game, attempted to put a ſtop to it: but it was too late; theſe ſophiſms had ſpread through the different ſocieties, never more to be eradicated. Hence aroſe, in great part, that fury which ſoon became faſhionable, with all the youth of Paris, of diſputing on matters of faith, and that ſtill greater folly of looking on objections as inſuperable, which immediately diſappear when in ſearch of truth, we ſeek to know it, and follow it in ſpite of thoſe paſſions which militate againſt it. It was on this occaſion, of the coffee-

coffee-houſe diſputations, that the lieutenant of the police, upbraiding Diderot with propagating Atheiſm, that madman proudly anſwered, *It is true, I am an Atheiſt, and I glory in it.* Why Sir, replied the miniſter, you would know, were you in my place, that had no God exiſted, it would be neceſſary to have invented one.

However much the brain of this Atheiſt might have been heated, the fear of the Baſtille put a period to his apoſtleſhip. The miniſter would have been more correct in his office, had he threatened him with Bedlam. We refer the reader to the Helvian Letters, where are recorded his numberleſs titles to a place there*. He was in reality the boaſting madman of the conſpiracy. They wanted a man of this caſt, who would utter all the abſurd and contradictory impieties which his brain could invent. Such are thoſe ideas with which he filled his different writings, his pretended *Philoſophic Thoughts*, his *Letter on the Blind*, his *Code* and his *Syſtem of Nature*.

This laſt work gave great offence to Frederick, who even refuted it, for reaſons we ſhall explain in the Antimonarchial Conſpiracy. And indeed D'Alembert always kept the authors name a profound ſecret. He would not even own it to Vol-

* Let. 57 and 58.

taire,

taire, though he was as well acquainted with it as myself. Diderot, was not the sole author of this famous system. To build this chaos of nature, which destitute of *intelligence*, had made man intelligent, he had associated with two other Sophisters, whose names I will not hazard, for fear of error, not paying sufficient attention to them to be certain; but as to Diderot, I am sure, being previously acquainted with him. It was he who sold the manuscript, to be printed out of France, for the sum of one thousand livres. I know the fact from the man who paid them and owned it, when he had learned to better know those impious Sophisters.

Notwithstanding all these follies, Diderot, was not the less, in Voltaire's eyes, the *illustrious philosopher, the brave Diderot*, and one of the most useful *knights* of the conspiracy *. The conspirators proclaimed him the *Great Man*; they sent him to foreign courts as the *Admirable Man*; and when he had been guilty of some notable piece of folly, they were silent, or even disowned him. This was the case in particular, when at the court of the Empress of Russia.

Formerly at all courts, a fool was kept for their amusement; fashion had substituted a French phi-

* Let. from Voltaire to Diderot, 25th of Dec. 1761, and to Damilaville, 1765, &c.

losopher,

loſopher, and little had been gained in point of common ſenſe. But the Empreſs Catherine, ſoon perceived that much might be loſt with reſpect to public tranquillity. She had ſent for Diderot, ſhe judged his *imagination to be inexhauſtible.* She claſſed him *among the moſt extraordinary men that ever exiſted* *. She was correct in her judgement, for Diderot behaved himſelf in ſuch an extraordinary manner, that her majeſty thought it neceſſary to ſend him back to the place he came from. He comforted himſelf for his diſgrace, with the idea that the Ruſſians were not yet ripe for the ſublimity of his philoſophy. He ſets off for Paris in a bannian, with a velvet cap on his head. His footman, like a king at arms preceded, and when they were to paſs through any town or village, he would cry out to the gazing multitude, it is Diderot the great man that paſſes †. Such was his equipage from Peterſburg to Paris. There he was, to ſupport the character of the extraordinary man, whether writing in his ſtudy, or dealing out in divers companies, his philoſophic abſurdities; always the boſom friend of D'Alembert, and the admiration of the other Sophiſters. He finiſhed his apoſtleſhip by *his Life of Seneca*, in which he ſees no other difference between him and his dog

* Catherine to Voltaire, let. 134, anno 1774.

† Feller's Hiſtorical Dictionary.

but

but that of their dreſs: and by his *New Philoſophical Thoughts*, where God is ſuppoſed to be the *Animal Prototype*, and mortals ſo many little particles flowing from this great animal, and ſucceſſively metamorphoſed into all ſorts of animals until the end of time, whence they are all to return to the divine ſubſtance, whence they had originally emanated *.

Diderot would madly utter all thoſe abſurdities, which Voltaire would impiouſly aſſert. None gained credit it is true, but religious truths were enfeebled by theſe aſſertions wrapped in frothy diſcourſe and philoſophic pomp. Men ceaſed to believe the religion of Chriſt, ever reviled in theſe writings, and that was all the Sophiſters aimed at. Hence was the part which Diderot acted, ſo eſſential to the conſpiracy.

Who can combine this antichriſtian zeal, ever boiling ever emphatic when his imagination is heated, with that real admiration which he often expreſſed for the Goſpel. The following is an anecdote I had from Mr. Beauzet, a member of the academy. One day going to ſee Diderot, he found him explaining a chapter of the Goſpel to his daughter, as ſeriouſly and with the concern of the moſt Chriſtian parent. Mr. Beauzet expreſſed his ſurprize. " I underſtand you, ſaid Diderot,

* New Philoſophical Thoughts, page 17 and 18. The whole is expoſed in the Helvian Letters, No. 49.

" but

"but in truth where could I find, or what better "leſſons could I give her?"

D'Alembert would never have made ſuch an avowal. Though the conſtant friend of Diderot we find throughout their lives, and their philoſophic courſe, that ſame difference which marked their firſt eſſays in the apoſtleſhip. Diderot ſpoke out whatever he thought for the moment, D'Alembert never but what he wiſhed to ſay. I will defy any one to find his real opinion on *God* or on the *ſoul*, elſewhere than in his private correſpondence with the conſpirators. His works have all the darkneſs and cunning of iniquity, but he is the fox that infects and then burrows himſelf. Eaſier would it be to follow the twiſtings of the eel, or trace the windings of the ſerpent gliding through the graſs, than the tortuous courſe he follows in thoſe writings which he owns *.

D'Alembert's ſervices.

Nobody

* From the criticiſm made of his works in our Helvian Letters; the reſult is this: D'Alembert will never declare himſelf a ſceptic, or whether he knows of the exiſtence of a God or not. He will even let you think that he believes in God; but will begin by attacking certain proofs of a Deity; he will tell you that through zeal for the Deity, man muſt know how to chooſe among thoſe proofs. He will end by attacking them all, with a *yes* on one object, and a *no* a little later on the ſame; he will entangle the minds of his readers, he will raiſe doubts in them, and ſmile to ſee them fallen without

Nobody was ever more true to Voltaire's maxim of *ſtrike, but hide your hand.* The avowal he makes of his *bows* to religion, while he is ſtriving to pull it to pieces *, might diſpenſe the hiſtorian from ſeeking thoſe numerous proofs with which the works of this Sophiſter abound. To make himſelf amends for this perpetual reſtraint under which, from his diſſimulation, he was forced himſelf to write, by means of his pupils or in their productions he would ſpeak more

without perceiving it, into the very ſnare he had prepared for them. He never tells you to attack religion, but he will tempt you with a ſtand of arms, or place them in your hands ready for combat. *(See his Elements of Philoſophy and our Helvian Letters, No.* 37.) He will never declaim againſt the morality of the church or the commandments of God, but he will tell you that *there does not exiſt a ſingle catechiſm on morality, fitted to the capacities of youth*; and that it is to be hoped there will at length appear a Philoſopher who will confer that gift (See Elem. of Phil. No. 12.). He will not pretend to deny the ſweets of virtue, but he will tell you, "that all philoſophers would have better known our nature, "had they been ſatisfied with ſimply confining the happineſs "of this life to the exemption from pain." *(Preface of the Encyclopedia).* He will not offend his reader by obſcene deſcriptions, but he will tell him, Art. HAPPINESS, "Men all "agree as to the nature of happineſs; they declare it to be "the ſame as pleaſure, or at least that they are indebted to "pleaſure for all that is moſt delicious in it." And thus his young pupil is transformed into an Epicurean without knowing it.

* Let. to Voltaire, No. 151.

daringly

daringly. When he returned them their works, he would artfully insinuate an article or plan a preface, but so much the worse for the pupil, if he underwent the punishment incurred by the master. Morellet, as yet a youth, though already a graduate among the divines of the Encyclopedia, had just published his first essay in philosophism. This was a manual with which Voltaire was enchanted; above all he valued the Preface, *it was one of the finest lashes ever given by Protagoras.* The youth was taken up and sent to the Bastile. The real Protagoras or D'Alembert, who had so well taught him the art of *lashing*, never owned the whip, as may be supposed *.

On the whole, D'Alembert would have been but of little use to the conspirators, had he confined himself to his pen. In spite of his quibbling style and of his epigrams, his talent of wearying his readers left them an antidote. Voltaire, by giving him another mission suited his genius better. He had reserved to himself the ministers, dukes, princes and kings, and all those sufficiently initiated to forward the conspiracy. But charged D'Alembert, with the care of training the young adepts: "*Endeavour*," he writes expressly,

Is charged with training youth.

* Letter from D'Alembert to Voltaire, anno 1760, and of Voltaire to Thiriot, 26th Jan. 1762.

" *endeavour on your part, to enlighten youth as much* " *as you are able* *."

Never was miſſion more actively, more zealouſly, nor more ably fulfilled. It is even to be remarked, that however hidden D'Alembert may have been in all the other parts he acted in the conſpiracy, he was not averſe to having his zeal in this particular rather obſerved. He was the general protector of all young men who came to Paris poſſeſſed of any talent. Had they any fortune of their own, he dazzled them with crowns, premiums, or even with the academic ſeats, of which he abſolutely diſpoſed, either as perpetual ſecretary, or as irreſiſtible in all thoſe petty intrigues wherein he ſo much excelled. The reader has already ſeen what a party-ſtroke it was for the conſpirators, to have filled this tribunal of European Mandarines preſiding over the empire of letters, with their adepts. But his power in this extended far beyond Paris. He writes to Voltaire, " I have " juſt got Helvetius and the Chevalier de Jeau- " court, admitted into the academy at Berlin."

D'Alembert was particularly attentive to ſuch of the adepts as were intended to train others, or to fulfil the functions of private or public profeſſors, or of tutors in private families; but particularly in the latter, when the pupil, by his rank or wealth,

* 15th Sep. 1762.

could

could hereafter be a protector of the conspirators, or more amply remunerate his teacher. This was the true method of imbibing youth with the real principles of the conspiracy. D'Alembert was perfectly aware of its importance, and judged his means so well that he succeeded in spreading such tutors and preceptors, throughout all the countries of Europe, and deserved the title of the most fortunate propagator of philosophism.

The proofs he cites of their progress, will suffice to show the choice he had made. "There is "my dear philosopher, he exultingly writes to "Voltaire, there is what was pronounced at Cas- "sel on the 8th of April, in presence of his high- "ness the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, of six "princes of the empire and of a most numerous "assembly by *a professor of history which I gave to "his Highness the Landgrave.*" This was a discourse full of the grossest invectives against the church and the clergy as *obscure fanatics, ye praters crosiered or unmitred, with or without a cowl*; and such was the style of the professor, such the proofs adduced by D'Alembert of the victories daily gained by his adepts over religious ideas, and of the sentiments they instilled into ther pupils *.

It imported above all to the conspirators to place such tutors about young princes and children

* Letter 78, anno 1772.

hereafter deſtined to govern nations. The correſpondence of Voltaire and D'Alembert lays open their intrigues on this point, and what powerful ſupport they expected from it.

The court of Parma was ſeeking men worthy of preſiding over the education of the young Infant. In placing the Abbés de Condilhac and de Leire at the head of his inſtructors they flattered themſelves with having ſucceeded, as they little thought that theſe two men were to inſpire the young prince with the irreligious ideas of the Sophiſters. The Abbé de Condilhac in particular, had by no means the reputation of an Encyclopedian philoſopher. It was even late when they became ſenſible of their error, which could only be remedied by the total ſubverſion of all that theſe two tutors had done. The whole would have been foreſeen, had they known that Condilhac was the particular friend of D'Alembert, who always looked up to him as a man precious to the ſelf-created philoſophers, or had they known that the choice of theſe two men, was only the effect of an intrigue in which Voltaire glories, when he writes to D'Alembert, "It appears to me that the Parmeſan child "will be well ſurrounded. He will have a Con- "dilhac and a de Leire. If with all that he is a "bigot, grace muſt be powerful indeed *."

* Let. from Voltaire to D'Alembert, No. 77, and from D'Alembert, No. 151.

Theſe

Theſe wiſhes and artifices of the ſect were ſo well handed down, that in ſpite of Louis the XVIth's attachment to religion, they ſought to place new Condilhacs about the heir to the crown; they ſucceeded in diſcarding every biſhop from the education of the young Dauphin, they would have willingly excluded all eccleſiaſtics; but deſpairing of ſo complete a ſucceſs, they ſought to make the choice fall on ſome clergyman, who, like Condilhac, would inſpire the illuſtrious pupil with all the principles of the Sophiſters. I am acquainted with one of thoſe men whom they dared to tamper with. They offered him the place of tutor to the Dauphin, being, as they ſaid, ſure of getting it for him, and of thereby making his fortune; *but on condition* that when he taught the young prince his Catechiſm, he would take care to inſinuate, that all religious doctrine, as well as all the myſteries of Chriſtianity were only prejudices and popular errors, which a prince ſhould be informed of, but never credit; and that in his private leſſons he would inſtil, as true doctrine, all the errors of philoſophiſm. Fortunately this prieſt anſwered, that he knew not how to ſacrifice his duty to his fortune; more fortunately ſtill Louis XVI. was not a man to encourage ſuch intrigues. The Duke D'Harcourt, named to preſide at the education of the Dauphin, took the advice of ſome biſhops, and choſe, to read lectures on religion to his pupil, a clergyman perfectly

fectly competent to the task, as he was then superior of the College of La Fleche. Alas! why must we felicitate this tender youth on his death though premature. When the Sophisters of incredulity could not yet flatter themselves with the subversion of the throne of his ancestors, were they not infusing their poisons to transform him at least into an impious king. And when the throne was overturned, would he, more than his young brother, have escaped the hands of the Sophisters of rebellion.

Many other adepts, with the same zeal to enthrone philosophism and to prepare the way for the Antichristian Revolution, in divers other courts, showed the same activity. At Petersburg they had beset the Empress; they had persuaded her that some Sophister, and that of the first class, ought to be entrusted with the education of her son. D'Alembert was named, and the Count Schouvallow is ordered by his sovereign to make the proposal in her name. D'Alembert simply received the offer as a proof *that Voltaire had no reason to be displeased with his mission, and that philosophy was sensibly reaching the throne* *. Whatever advantages he might have expected to reap from such a commission, he prudently declined; he preferred the petty empire he swayed in Paris, as chief of the adepts, to the precarious favor of

* Let. 106 and 107, anno 1762.

courts,

courts, and of that in particular whoſe diſtance from the center of the conſpiracy, could not have permitted him to act the ſame part in it.

King of the young adepts, he did not confine his protection to thoſe of Paris alone, but to the remoteſt parts of Ruſſia would he extend his paternal care; he would follow their progreſs, their deſtiny, or protect them in adverſity. When he found his power inſufficient, he would have recourſe to Voltaire's credit; he would write, for inſtance: "The poor Bertrand is not lucky. He "had petitioned fair Kate (the Empreſs of Ruſ- "ſia) to reſtore to liberty five or ſix giddy-headed "Velches. He had conjured her, in the name "of philoſophy; he had drawn up, under that "ſacred name, the moſt eloquent pleading that from "memory of monkey was ever made, and Kate "pretends not to underſtand it *." This was as much as to ſay to Voltaire, try in your turn whether you can ſucceed better, and do for them what you have ſo often done for other adepts whoſe misfortunes I have made known to you.

This underſtanding equally ſubſiſted in all that regarded the conſpiracy; little ſatisfied with pointing out works that were to be refuted, or with giving the ſketch of ſome new impious work, he would alſo be the ſpy over every religious author. It has often been an object of ſurpriſe, to

How he ſerves Voltaire as a ſpy.

* Letter 88, anno 1773.

ſee Voltaire, ſo familiar with the anecdotes of the private lives of thoſe whoſe works he pretended to refute, though generally they are ſlanderous, ſometimes ridiculous, but always foreign to the queſtion. He was indebted to D'Alembert for them. Whether true or falſe, the latter always choſe ſuch as could attach ridicule to the perſon of the authors, knowing how well Voltaire could ſubſtitute ridicule for proof, or for ſound argument. Thoſe who doubt of this fact, may conſult D'Alembert's letters on the Pere Bertier, or the Abbé Guenèe, whom Voltaire, himſelf, could not but admire, or in thoſe concerning Meſſrs. le Franc, Caveirac or Sabbatier, and on many others whom Voltaire hardly ever combats, but with the weapons D'Alembert had furniſhed him with.

His petty ſocieties and clubs.

On his ſide Voltaire ſpared nothing which could raiſe the conſideration of D'Alembert. He would recommend him to all his friends; he would introduce him into every little ſociety, or petty philoſophic club, for theſe were already forming in Paris, to be one day abſorbed by the great club of the Jacobins. Some indeed would have been ſtyled ariſtocratical, as they were the weekly meetings of *counts, marquiſſes or chevaliers*, perſonages already too conſequential to bend their knee before the altar of their God. Here would they debate on prejudices, ſuperſtition or fanaticiſm. They would ſcoff at I. C. and his prieſts,

or

or ſmile at the ſimplicity of the adoring populace. They alſo thought of ſhaking off the yoke of religion, leaving indeed, juſt what was neceſſary to keep the rabble in awe. The female adept, the Counteſs du Deffant held the chair, and continued her philoſophic education under the particular direction of Voltaire, by whoſe orders ſhe ſtudies Rabelais, Polymbrock, Hume, the Tale of the Tub, and ſuch like romances *.

D'Alembert was far from being at his eaſe in theſe ariſtocratical clubs, he even diſliked this female adept. Voltaire on the contrary, knowing what advantages were to be drawn from them, wiſhed him to belong to them all, and would introduce him by his letters. His introduction was leſs difficult into ſome other clubs, and particularly into that where Mad. Necker preſided, when ſhe had ſnatched the ſceptre of philoſophy from the hands of all the other adepts of her ſex †.

Our two chiefs, mutually helped each other by imparting their plans for drawing off the people from their religion. One, in particular, moſt certainly cannot be omitted in theſe memoirs, it denotes too well, the intentions of the conſpirators,

His plan for rebuilding the temple of Jeruſalem.

* Letters of Voltaire to Mad. Deffant, particularly 13th Oct. 1759.

† See the correſpondence of D'Alembert, let. 77, and following of Voltaire to Mad. Fontaine, 8th Feb. 1762, to D'Alembert, No. 31, anno 1770.

it ſhows how far their views extended. It is true, that it was not the invention of D'Alembert, but he was aware of the advantages philoſophiſm would derive from it, and however ſtrange the plan, he flattered himſelf with the execution of it.

It is well known what ſtrength the Chriſtian religion draws from the fulfilling of the prophecies, and particularly from thoſe of Daniel and of Chriſt himſelf, on the fate of the Jews and of their temple. Julian the apoſtate, in order to give the lie to Chriſt and to the prophet Daniel, had ſought to rebuild the temple. It is alſo known that flames, burſting forth from the earth, at divers times and devouring the workmen, had obliged him to deſiſt from the undertaking. D'Alembert was not ignorant of this act of the divine vengeance, having been aſcertained by a multitude of eye witneſſes. He had undoubtedly ſeen it recorded in Ammianus Marcellinus; an author of unqueſtionable authority, for he was a friend of Julian, and a Pagan like him. But this did not hinder him from writing to Voltaire, "You probably know, that at this "preſent time, there is at Berlin, one of the cir- "cumciſed, who expecting Mahomet's paradiſe, "is in the mean time, gone to wait on your for- "mer diſciple, in the name of the Sultan Muſta- "pha. In writing to that country the other day, "I mentioned, that if the king would but juſt ſay "a word,

" a word, it would be a fine opportunity to have " the temple of Jeruſalem rebuilt *."

That word was not ſaid by the former diſciple, and D'Alembert gives the following reaſon to Voltaire. " I have no doubt but that we ſhould " have ſucceeded in our negociation on the re-edi- " fication of the temple of the Jews, if your " former diſciple had not been afraid of loſing " ſome circumciſed worthies, who would have " carried away thirty or forty millions with " them †." Thus in ſpite of all their inclination to give the lie to the God of the Chriſtians, even to the ſordid intereſt of the conſpirators, was to add a new proof to his doctrines.

Eighteen years after Voltaire had not given up the plan, nor loſt all hopes of accompliſhing it. Seeing that D'Alembert had not ſucceeded with Frederick, he endeavoured to prevail with the Empreſs of Ruſſia. He writes to her, " If your " Majeſty is in a regular correſpondence with Aly " Bey, I implore your protection with him; I " have a little favor to aſk of him, it is to rebuild " the temple of Jeruſalem, to recal the Jews, who " will pay him a large tribute, and thereby make a " mighty lord of him ‡."

Voltaire was nearly eighty when he ſtill perſiſted in this plan, by which he was to prove to

* 18th Dec. 1763. † 29th Dec. 1763.
‡ 6th July 1771.

the

the people, that Chriſt and his prophets, were impoſtors. Frederick and D'Alembert, were alſo far advanced in their career, and the time was not far off, when they were to appear before that very God whom they had daringly ſtyled wretch, and againſt whom they had never ceaſed to conſpire.

I have now laid before my readers, the means, the conſtancy with which they ſought to overturn the altars, to annihilate the dominion of the faith, to deſtroy the prieſts of that God, and to ſubſtitute the hatred and ignominy of him whom the Chriſtians adore, to his religion. I had promiſed not ſo much the hiſtory, as the real demonſtration of the conſpiracy; and whether as to its object, its extent, or its means, I have not reſorted to hearſay or vague report, for proof. My proofs are their own; the approximation of their letters, of their mutual communications, carries conviction. My readers may henceforth reconcile this conſpiracy, and its means, with that revolution operated by the Jacobins. They may already perceive, that the latter, in deſtroying the altars of Chriſt, only execute the plots of the Sophiſters, their fore-runners and maſters.

Was there a temple to be overthrown, a depredatory decree againſt the church, to be paſſed by the Jacobins, of which we have not already ſeen the plan! Are not the Marats and the Robeſpierres, figured by Voltaire in his Hercules and

Belle-

Bellerophon? Or where whole nations are to be crushed in hatred to Christianity, have we not seen the wish formally expressed by D'Alembert? Every thing teaches us, the hatred of the father gaining strength in the breast of the son, and the plots propagating, that when force shall coalesce with impiety they can only generate a race brutal and ferocious.

But this force to be acquired by the conspirators supposes a successive progress. Before it could throw off the mask, it was requisite that the number of the adepts should be augmented, and that the arms of the multitude should be secured to them. I am about to show their successes under the reign of corruption, in the divers orders of society, during the lives of the chiefs. Hence history will hereafter more easily conceive and explain what they were during the reign of terror and devastation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Progreſs of the Conſpiracy under Voltaire.—Firſt Claſs of Protectors.—Crowned Adepts.

That the hiſtorian muſt be true.

VOLTAIRE's grand object, as we have ſeen, was to hurry away that whole claſs of men, ſtyled by the conſpirators the better ſort, and inſtill into their minds his hatred for Chriſt and his religion: to have left his goſpel to none but the rabble, and to them only, in caſe they could not efface it from their minds. Under this denomination of better ſort, they comprehended all who were illuſtrious, either by power, rank or riches; and, after them, all people of education or inſtruction and honeſt citizens, ranking above what Voltaire calls rabble, footmen, cooks, &c. It is an obſervation worthy the hiſtorian, that the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy firſt makes its progreſs in the moſt illuſtrious part of this claſs; among princes, kings, emperors, miniſters and courts; in fine, among thoſe who may be ſtyled the Great.

If a writer dares not utter truths like theſe, let him throw aſide his pen; he is unworthy of treating ſuch important ſubjects of hiſtory. He who has not the courage to tell kings, that they were

were the first to league in the conspiracy against Christ and his religion, and that it is the same God who has permitted the conspirators, first to threaten, shake and silently undermine their thrones; then openly to scoff at their authority. The man, I say, who dares not hold such language is only abandoning the powers of the earth to their fatal blindness. They would continue to hearken to the impious, to protect impiety, and support its dominion, to let it circulate and spread from the palace to the city, from the towns to the country, from the master to the servant; infine, from the lords to the people. And would not such crimes call down vengeance from heaven? Will not heaven have too numerous crimes to avenge upon nations, not to curse them with luxury and discord, with ambition and conspiracies, or with all those scourges which portend the downfal of nations. Had the monarch alone, throughout his empire, raised his head against his God, who has told us that the crimes of the chief shall not be avenged upon his people. Once more let the historian be silent, if he dares not utter the truth. Should he seek the causes of a revolution in its agents, he would meet a Necker, a Brienne, a Philippe D'Orleans, Mirabeaux, and Robespierres; a confusion in the finances, factions among the great, insubordination in the armies, the people agitated and disquieted,

quieted, infine seduced. Will he, for that, know from whence these Neckers, Mirabeaux, or Robespierres, have arisen; whence this confusion in finance, this spirit of faction, this insubordination of the armies, or the seduction of the divers classes of the state? He will have seized but the last thread of the conspiracy. He will have seen empires in their agony, but he will have overlooked that slow fever which consumes them, whilst the violence of the fit is reserved to that last crisis which precedes dissolution. He will describe the calamities which every one has seen, but will he be the nearer the remedy. Let the historian reveal the secrets of the masters of the earth, to ward from them the conspiracy which shall fall back upon them; and we, what secrets do we reveal, secrets publicly printed for these ten years past, in their own correspondence with the chief of the conspiracy. It is too late to attack us on that point. Those letters were printed, to the great scandal of the public, to discover the favor of the impious man with the sovereigns of the earth; and when we show this protection avenged upon the sovereigns, it is not their shame we are seeking to divulge, it is their misfortunes and those of their people that we make known; the remedy then spontaneously manifesting itself, may avert or prevent, much greater evils. Such a motive is more than an equivalent, to all that could induce us to be silent.

In

In the correſpondence of the conſpirators there is more than one letter which depoſes againſt the Emperor Joſeph II. with all the poſſible evidence of ſuch teſtimony, that he was initiated and had been admitted into all the myſteries of the Anti-chriſtian Conſpiracy by Frederick. Joſeph II.

In the firſt of theſe letters, Voltaire announced his victory in theſe terms: " You have afforded " me great pleaſure by reducing the infinite to " its real value. But here is a thing far more " intereſting: *Grimm aſſures us, that the Emperor* " *is one of ours. That is lucky*, for the Ducheſs " of Parma, his ſiſter, is againſt us *."

In another letter, Voltaire exulting in ſo important a conqueſt, writes to Frederick, " A Bo-" hemian of great wit and philoſophy, called " Grimm, has informed me that you had initiated " the Emperor into our holy myſteries †." In a third in fine, Voltaire, after enumerating the princes and princeſſes whom he reckoned among the adepts, adds theſe words: " You have alſo " flattered me with the Emperor's being in the " way of perdition; *that would be a good harveſt* " *for philoſophy* ‡." This alludes to a letter written by Frederick to Voltaire a few months before, in which he ſays, " I am ſetting off for Sileſia,

* 28th of Oct. 1769. † No. 162, Nov. 1769.
‡ Letter No. 181, 21ſt of Nov. 1770.

" and ſhall meet the Emperor, who has invited " me to his camp in Moravia; not to fight as " formerly, but to live as good neighbours. He " is an amiable prince and full of merit. *He likes* " *your works and reads them as much as he can.* " He is the *very reverſe of being ſuperſtitious.* In " fine, he is an Emperor ſuch as Germany has not " ſeen long ſince. We neither of us like the " ignorant and barbarous, but that is not a reaſon " for exterminating them *."

Now that we are acquainted with Frederick's idea of a prince, *The very reverſe of being ſuperſtitious* and *who reads Voltaire's works as much as he is able*, his encomiums are eaſily underſtood. They truly point out an Emperor ſuch as Germany had not long ſince beheld, in fine, an Emperor as irreligious as Frederick himſelf. Both the date and laſt words, *But that is not a reaſon for exterminating them*, recalls to mind a time when Frederick, thinking the Sophiſters too daring and haſty, ſought himſelf to repreſs their imprudence, leſt it might overthrow the whole political ſyſtem of governments. It was not yet time to employ *ſuperior force* or to paſs the *laſt ſentence.* The war then reſolved on between Frederick and Joſeph againſt Chriſt was not to be a war of Neros and Dioclefians; it was to ſilently undermine. Such

* 18th of Auguſt 1770.

was

was that which Joseph waged, as soon as the death of Maria Teresa left him at liberty to act. He carried it on with hypocrisy, for Joseph, as unbelieving as Frederick, wished to be looked upon as a very religious prince, and would protest that the slightest atttack on Christianity was the most distant from his ideas. During his travels through Europe he continued to approach the sacraments, and perform his Easter devotions at Vienna and Naples, with that exterior piety, which could not seem to coincide with the hypocrisy of those of Voltaire at Ferney. He carried his dissimulation so far, that in passing through France, he refused to call at Ferney, though very near and expected there by Voltaire. It is even said, that in turning away he affectedly said, *That he could not bear to see a man, who, by calumniating religion had given the severest blow to humanity*; what credit is to be given to these words, I will not pretend to decide, but certain it is, that the philosophers did not the less look upon Joseph as one of theirs. This slight of Voltaire was soon pardoned; they spread every where, that his admiration had not diminished for the premier in impiety; that he would have willingly visited him, but that he had refrained through regard for his mother, *who at the solicitations of the priests, had made him promise that he would not see him during his journey* *.

* See note to the letter of the Count de Touraille, 6th of Aug. 1777, General Correspondence of Voltaire.

Notwithſtanding his reſerve and his diſſimulation, the war which Joſeph waged, ſoon became one of authority and oppreſſion, of rapine and violence, and was well nigh ending in the extermination of his own ſubjects. He began by the ſuppreſſion of a large number of monaſteries; this we have ſeen was a leading feature in Frederick's plan; he ſeized on a great part of the eccleſiaſtical property; ſo would Voltaire have done, when he exclaims, *But I had rather plunder them*; Joſeph II. tore from their cells and cloiſters, even to thoſe Carmelite nuns, whoſe extreme poverty could afford no bait to avarice and whoſe angelic fervor left no room for reform. He was the firſt who gave to his age the public ſhow of holy virgins reduced to wander into diſtant countries, even as far as Portugal, to ſeek an aſylum for their piety. Innovating at pleaſure in the church, he only anticipated that famous conſtitution of the clergy, called *civil* by the Jacobin legiſlators, and which prepared the way to the butchery at the Carmes. The ſovereign pontiff thought it incumbent on him to leave Rome and paſs into Auſtria, and in the capacity of common father of the faithful, perſonally to repreſent to the emperor the laws and rights of the church. Joſeph II. receives him with reſpect, and permits all that homage and public veneration ſhould be ſhown to Pius VI., which both his virtues and dignity equally commanded.

manded. He did not for that ceaſe to continue his war of oppreſſion. He did not expel the biſhops, but he gave them much trouble; for conſtituting himſelf in ſome ſort the ſuperior of a ſeminary, he would permit no lectures to be read but by thoſe profeſſors he had choſen, and whoſe doctrine like that of *Camus* tended only to forward the grand apoſtacy; at length theſe ſecret perſecutions and depredations gave riſe to murmurs. The wearied Brabanters revolted. Since that, we have ſeen them call in thoſe Jacobins who promiſing them the free exerciſe of their religion, and more artful than Joſeph, are now conſummating his work. Had they been leſs tormented by Frederick's adept in matters of faith, the Brabanters would have been leſs impatient under the yoke of Auſtria: had they been penetrated with a greater zeal and affection for the Emperor Joſeph, they would have better ſeconded, and have had more confidence in the virtues of Francis II. They would with greater force have oppoſed that invaſion which we have ſeen extend to the very banks of the Danube. Should hiſtory lay the blame on Joſeph, let it look back to that day, when by Frederick, he is initiated into the myſteries of Voltaire. It is the emperor *adept*, that ſhall be found guilty of this war of extermination, which has threatened even to his throne.

In the ſequel of this work we ſhall ſee Joſeph repenting of the war he had waged againſt Chriſt, when he beheld philoſophiſm attacking both himſelf and his throne. He will then attempt but too late to repair his fault. He will fall a melancholy victim.

Many other ſovereigns are mentioned in the correſpondence of the conſpirators, as having imprudently engaged in theſe plots. D'Alembert complaining to Voltaire of the obſtacles he ſometimes encountered, and which he terms *perſecutions*, from the public authorities, at length conſoles himſelf by adding, "But we have on our "ſide, the Empreſs Catherine, the King of Pruſſia, "the King of Denmark, the Queen of Sweden "and her ſon, many princes of the empire and "all England*." Much about the ſame time, Voltaire writes to the king of Pruſſia, "I know "not what Muſtapha thinks (on the immortality "of the ſoul); my opinion is, that he does not "think at all. As for the *Empreſs of Ruſſia, the "Queen of Sweden, your ſiſter, the King of Poland, "and Prince Guſtavus* ſon of the Queen of Sweden, "I imagine that I know what they think †."

Voltaire effectually knew it. The letters of theſe ſovereigns could not leave him in the dark; but had we not thoſe letters to adduce in proof,

* 28th of Nov. 1770. † 21ſt of Nov. 1770.

we

we now see an Emperor, an Empress, a Queen and four Kings who had already enlisted under the banners of the conspirators.

False consequences to be avoided in speaking of the royal adepts.

In baring to the light this horrid conspiracy, let not the historian abandon himself to false declamation nor draw inferences still more deceitful. Let him not pretend to say to the people, your kings have shaken off the yoke of Christ, it is but just, that you should throw off that of their dominion; such reasoning would be to blaspheme Christ, his doctrines and his examples. The arm of vengeance is reserved to God alone. For the happiness of subjects, to preserve them from revolutions and all the horrors of rebellion, he alone can smite the apostate on the throne. Let not the Christian apostatize, but let him be subject to his lawful prince. To join revolt to impiety is not averting the scourge of heaven; that would be only adding anarchy, the most terrible of political scourges; that would not be a bar against the Sophister of impiety, but the consummation of the conspiracy of the Sophisters of sedition, against the throne and all the laws of civil society. Such was the fate of the unfortunate Brabanters when in rebellion against the Emperor Joseph. They pretended to the right of rejecting their lawful sovereign, and they are become the prey of Jacobins; they called insurrection to the aid of reli-

gion, and that religion proſcribes inſurrection againſt all lawful authority. At the time that I am now writing, the fulminating reports made to the Convention, forbode thoſe dreadful decrees which levelling the religious worſhip, the privileges and the churches of the Brabanters to the ſtandard of the French revolution, ſhall puniſh them for their error. When therefore the hiſtorian ſhall report the names of thoſe ſovereigns, who unfortunately were initiated and conſpired againſt their God, let his intention be to recall them to their religion, let him not be led away into falſe conſequences, ſo contrary to the peace of nations. Then let him inſiſt on the duties which religion impoſes on the people; let him teach them what they owe to Cæſar and to every public authority.

Catherine II. Empreſs of Ruſſia.

Among the royal protectors all are not to be claſſed with Voltaire, Frederick or Joſeph. All had taſted of the impious cup of incredulity, but all did not equally wiſh to imbibe their people with its poiſon.

Immenſe was the diſtance between Frederick and this Empreſs, in whom the conſpirators placed ſo much confidence. Seduced by the talents and homage of their premier chief, Catherine may have been indebted to him for her firſt taſte for literature; ſhe almoſt devoured thoſe works, which ſhe had miſtaken for maſterpieces, whether in hiſtory

hiſtory or philoſophy, totally ignorant of their being diſguiſed ſolely to forward the ends of impiety. On the fallacious encomiums of the Sophiſters, ſhe boldly pronounced, *That all the miracles in the world could never efface the* pretended *blot of having hindered the printing of the Encyclopedia**. But we never ſee her, like Frederick, to obtain the fulſome flatttery of the Sophiſters, pay to impiety that degrading court. Catherine would read their works, Frederick would circulate them, compoſe himſelf and wiſhed to ſee them devoured by the people. Frederick would propoſe plans for the deſtruction of the Chriſtian religion, Catherine rejected all thoſe propoſed to her by Voltaire. She was tolerant by nature, Frederick only from neceſſity. He would have been no longer ſo, had his policy permitted him, in following the dictates of his hatred, to call in *a ſuperior force* to effect the overthrow of Chriſtianity †.

Never-

* Her correſpondence with Voltaire, letter 1, 2, 3 and 8.

† Thoſe who, as men of literature, ſhall criticize the correſpondence of this Empreſs, will find an amazing difference between hers and that of the King of Pruſſia. The former is that of a woman of wit, who often plays upon Voltaire in the moſt agreeable manner. With her light ſtyle and full of taſte, ſhe never forgets her dignity; ſhe at leaſt will not be ſeen to degrade herſelf to that groſs dialect of abuſe and blaſphemy; while Frederick in his, truly the pedantic Sophiſter,

Nevertheleſs, Catherine is alſo a royal adept, ſhe has the ſecret of Voltaire, ſhe applauds the moſt famous of our infidels *. She is even willing to entruſt the heir of her crown into the hands of D'Alembert; her name conſtantly appears among the protecting adepts in the writings of the Sophiſters, nor can the hiſtorian hide it.

Chriſtiern VII. King of Denmark.

The claims of Chriſtiern VII. King of Denmark, to the title of adept, are alſo founded on his correſpondence with Voltaire. Among the numerous ſervices rendered by D'Alembert, I ſhould not have omitted the pains he had taken to prevail on different powers and great perſonages, to ſubſcribe to the erection of a ſtatue in honor of Voltaire. I could have ſhewn the Sophiſter of Ferney, modeſtly preſſing D'Alembert to get theſe ſubſcriptions, and that in particular from the King of Pruſſia, who hardly waited their ſolicita-

phiſter, will be as void of ſhame in his impiety, as he is of dignity in his encomiums. When Voltaire wrote to Catherine, "We are three, Diderot, D'Alembert and myſelf, who "raiſe altars to you." She anſwers, "Pray leave me, if "you pleaſe on earth, there I ſhall be more at hand to "receive your letters and thoſe of your friends." Nothing ſo perfectly French can be found in Frederick's, we only have to regret, that it was addreſſed to a ſet of infidels. Catherine wrote Voltaire's own language in perfect purity, while Frederick could have had little pretenſions to the hero, had he not handled his ſword better than his pen.

* 26th Dec. 1773, and No. 134, anno 1774.

tations.

tations. This triumph of their chief was too desirable for the conspirators; Christiern VII. eagerly contributed. A first letter, with a few compliments, could not constitute an adept, but we have Voltaire's own word for it. He mentions him, and besides, among these compliments we find one so much in the style of Frederick, "You are "now occupied in delivering a considerable num- "ber of men from *the yoke of the clergy, the hard- "est of all others*, for the duties of society are "only imprinted in their heads, *and never felt in "their hearts. This is well worth being revenged of "the barbarians* *." Unfortunate monarchs! Such was the language held to Mary Antoinette, in the days of her prosperity, by those corruptors. But in her misfortunes, when she witnessed the loyalty and the sensibility of those *barbarians*, at the Thuleries, she exclaimed, "Oh! how we have been de- "ceived! We now plainly see how much the "clergy distinguish themselves among the faithful "subjects of the king †." May the king that is led away by philosophism never be reduced to the same experiment; may he learn at least from one

* Let. to Voltaire, 1770.

† I heard this anecdote in the midst of the revolution, and such expressions were necessary to shew, that she was recovered from those prejudices she had imbibed against the clergy, and which appeared to have redoubled, after the second journey which her brother made to Versailles.

revolution,

revolution, that there is a yoke more *hard* and terrible than that of the clergy, which Voltaire his maſter had taught him to calumniate.

It is our duty to add, that with regard to this prince, as well as to many others who were ſeduced by the Sophiſters, the conſpirators had taken advantage of their youth. At that period of life, the writings of Voltaire could eaſily make impreſſion on men, who for being kings, were not better verſed than other people, in what they had not learned, nor were they able to diſcriminate truth from error, in objects where the want of knowledge is more to be dreaded, than inclination or the paſſions.

At the time of his journey into France, Chriſtiern was but ſeventeen years of age, and already, to uſe D'Alembert's expreſſion, he had *the courage to ſay at Fontainbleau*, that Voltaire *had taught him to think* *. Men of a different way of thinking, about the court of Lewis XV. wiſhed to hinder his young majeſty from learning ſtill more to think like Voltaire, and from ſeeing in Paris, the adepts or moſt celebrated of his diſciples. Theſe however, obtained admiſſion, and to judge how well they underſtood improving their opportunity, we need only hear D'Alembert writing to Voltaire, "I had ſeen that prince at his own apart-

* Letter of 12th Nov. 1768.

"ments,

" ments, together with several of your friends. " He spoke much about you, *of the services your* " *works had rendered, of the prejudices you had root-* " *ed out,* of the enemies your *liberty in thinking* " had made you. You easily guess what my " answers were *." D'Alembert has a second interview, and again writes, " The King of Den- " mark scarce spoke to me but of you.—I can " assure you, he had rather have seen you at Paris, " than all the entertainments with which they " have surfeited him." This conversation had been but of short duration; but D'Alembert made amends in a discourse which he pronounced at the academy on philosophy, in presence of the young monarch. Numerous were the adepts present, and they applauded; the youthful monarch joins in the applause †. Infine, such is the opinion he carries away of that pretended philosophy, thanks to D'Alembert's new lectures, that no sooner is he informed of a statue to be erected to the premier chief of the conspirators, than he sends a very *handsome subscription,* for which Voltaire acknowledges himself to be indebted to the lessons of the academical adept ‡. How much these lessons have since been forgotten by Christiern VII., I cannot pretend to say. Sufficient

* 6th Dec. 1768. † Let. 17th Dec. 1768.
‡ Letter from Voltaire to D'Alembert, 5th Nov. 1770.

events

events have taken place since his Danish majesty had learned *to think* from Voltaire, which may have given him a very different opinion of the *services* that the WORKS of his master have rendered to empires.

Gustavus III. King of Sweden.

Similar artifices were made use of with regard to Gustavus, King of Sweden. That prince also came to Paris, to receive the homage and lessons of the self-created philosophy. He was as yet but Prince Royal, when already extolling him as one whose protection was insured to the sect, D'Alembert writes to Voltaire, "You love REASON AND "LIBERTY, my dear brother, and one can hardly "love one without the other. Well then, here "is a *worthy republican philosopher* that I present "you, who will talk PHILOSOPHY and LIBERTY "with you. This is Mr. Jennings, chamberlain "to the King of Sweden.—He has besides com- "pliments to pay you from the *Queen of Sweden* "*and the Prince Royal, who in the North* PROTECT "*that philosophy* so ill received by the princes in "the South. Mr. Jennings will inform you of "the *progress* REASON *is making in Sweden* under "those happy auspices *."

At the time that D'Alembert was writing this letter, Gustavus, who was soon to restore royalty to the rights it had lost long since in Sweden,

* 19th Jan. 1769.

was

was no doubt ignorant that those great men, which he so much protected, were *philosophers* superlatively *republican*. He was equally ignorant what would one day be for him, the last fruit of this conspiring philosophy, when on his accession to the throne he writes to their premier chief, "I "daily pray the Being of beings, that he may "prolong your days, so precious to humanity and "so necessary to the progress of REASON and "TRUE PHILOSOPHY *."

The prayer of Gustavus was heard, the days of Voltaire were prolonged, but he who was to suddenly shorten the days of Gustavus was born; he, grasping the dagger, was soon to sally forth from the occult school of Voltaire. For the instruction of kings, let the historian compare the gradual steps of this unfortunate prince and those of the adept and his assassin.

Ulrica of Brandenbourg had been initiated into the mysteries of the Sophisters by Voltaire himself. So far from rejecting his principles, she did not even feel herself outraged at the declaration of a passion, which he was daring enough to express †. When Queen of Sweden, she more than once pressed the Sophister to come and end his days

* 10th Jan. 1772.

† It was for this princess that Voltaire composed the Madrigal *Souvent un peu de Vérité.*

near

near her perſon *. She knew no means of giving a ſtronger proof of her ſtaunchneſs in the principles ſhe had received, than during Voltaire's firſt reſidence at Berlin, to make the infant king imbibe them with his milk. She initiated Guſtavus, and wiſhed to be the mother of the Sophiſter as well as of the king; and indeed we conſtantly ſee both the mother and the ſon ranking together among the adepts, of whom the Sophiſters thought themſelves the moſt ſecure. Such then was the gradation of the unfortunate Guſtavus. Voltaire initiated Ulrica, and Ulrica initiates her ſon.

On the other ſide, Voltaire initiated Condorcet, and Condorcet, ſeated in the club of the Jacobins, initiated Ankeſtron. A pupil of Voltaire, Ulrica, teaches her ſon to ridicule the myſteries and ſcoff at the altars of Chriſt. Condorcet alſo, a diſciple of Voltaire, teaches Ankeſtron to ſcoff at the throne and ſport with the lives of kings.

When public report announced that Guſtavus III. was to command in chief the confederate armies againſt the French revolution, Condorcet and Ankeſtron were members of the great club; and the great club reſounded with the cry of, Deliver the earth from kings! Guſtavus was doomed for the firſt victim, and Ankeſtron offers him-

* Her letters to Voltaire, anno 1743 and 1751.

ſelf

ſelf for the firſt executioner. He leaves Paris, and Guſtavus falls beneath his blows *.

The Jacobins had juſt celebrated the apotheoſis of Voltaire, they alſo celebrate that of Ankeſtron.

Voltaire had taught the Jacobins that *the firſt of kings was a ſucceſsful ſoldier*; and they teach Ankeſtron that the firſt hero was the aſſaſſin of kings; and they placed his buſt beſide that of Brutus.

Kings had ſubſcribed to the erection of a ſtatue to Voltaire, the Jacobins erect one to Ankeſtron.

Laſtly, Voltaire's correſpondence ſhows Poniatowſki, King of Poland, to have been of the number of the protecting adepts. That king had known our philoſophers in Paris, who was one day to fall a victim to philoſophiſm! He had done homage to their chief, and written to him, "Mr. "de Voltaire, every contemporary of a man like "you, that knows how to read, who has travelled, "and has not been acquainted with you, muſt feel "himſelf unhappy; you might be allowed to ſay, "*Nations ſhall pray that kings may read me* †." At this day, when the king has ſeen men, who, like himſelf, had read and cried up the works of Voltaire, attempting in Poland the revolution they

Poniatowſki, King of Poland.

* Journal of Fontenai.

† 21ſt of Feb. 1767.

had wrought in France; at this day, when victim of that revolution, he has ſeen his ſceptre vaniſh from his hand, how different muſt be his prayer? Does he not repent that nations have known Voltaire, or that kings had ever read his works? But thoſe days that D'Alembert had foretold, and which he longed to ſee, are at length come, and that without being foreſeen by the royal adepts. When the misfortunes of religion ſhall fall back upon them, let them read the prayer which D'Alembert expreſſes in his ſtyle, often low and ignoble, to Voltaire, "Your illuſtrious and former protector (the King of Pruſſia) began the "dance, the King of Sweden led it on, Catherine "imitates them, and bids fair to outdo them "both. How I ſhould laugh to ſee the ſtring run "off in my time." And indeed the ſtring has begun to run with a vengeance. Guſtavus, King of Sweden, dies by the dagger: Lewis XVI. King of France, on the ſcaffold: Lewis the XVII. by poiſon. Poniatowſki is dethroned; the Stadtholder is driven from his country, and the adepts, diſciples of D'Alembert and his ſchool, laugh as he would have done himſelf, at thoſe ſovereigns, who protecting the impious in their conſpiracy againſt the altar, had not been able to foreſee that the diſciples of thoſe ſame conſpirators would conſpire againſt their thrones.

Theſe

These reflections anticipate, against my will, what I have to unfold in this second conspiracy; but such is the union of the Sophister of impiety with the Sophister of rebellion, that it is hard to separate the progress of one from the ravages of the other. It is the intimacy of this union, which has forced us to lay before the eyes of the protecting monarchs, one of the most important lessons that history could produce.

I cannot finish this chapter without remarking, that among the kings of the North, in whose protection the Sophisters so often exult, the name of his Britannic Majesty is not so much as mentioned. This silence of the conspirators, is above all the encomiums they could bestow. Had they sought a king beloved by his subjects, and deservedly so; had they sought I say, a king good, just, compassionate, beneficent, jealous of maintaining the liberty of the laws and the happiness of his empire, then George III. might have been extolled as the Solomon of the North, he would have been their Marcus Aurelius, or Antoninus. They found him too wise to coalesce with vile conspirators, who knew no merit but impiety, and hence the true cause of their silence. It is noble for a prince to be nul in their records, whilst, in this terrible revolution, he has been so conspicuous by his activity in stopping its progress, by his greatness and compassionate generosity in relieving its victims.

It is alſo a juſtice, which the hiſtorian owes to the kings of the South, to ſay, that the conſpirators, ſo far from ranking them among their adepts, complained that they had not yet attained to the height of their ſophiſticated philoſophy.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Adept Princes and Princeſſes.

IN the ſecond claſs of protecting adepts, I ſhall comprehend thoſe perſons, who, without being on the throne, enjoy a power over the people, nearly equal to that of kings, and whoſe authority and example, adding to the means of the conſpirators, gave them reaſon to hope that they had not ſworn in vain, the deſtruction of the Chriſtian religion.

Frederick Landgrave of Heſſe-Caſſel.

In this claſs of protectors, Voltaire particularly mentions the Landgrave of Heſſe Caſſel. The care, with which D'Alembert had choſen the profeſſor of hiſtory we have already mentioned, ſhows how much the Sophiſter abuſed his confidence. He was much impoſed upon when he confided in the philoſophy and the lights of Voltaire; he permitted him in ſome ſort, to direct his ſtudies, and it was difficult to fall into the hands of a more perfidious tutor. A letter, in date of the 25th Aug. 1766, will ſuffice to ſhow in what ſources the auguſt pupil was directed to ſeek leſſons of wiſdom. "Your Serene Highneſs has ſhown, "the corruptor writes, a deſire of ſeeing ſome

" new productions worthy your attention. There is " one which has just made its appearance, entitled " *The necessary Collection.* You will find there, in " particular, a work of Lord Bolingbroke's, which " appears to me one of the most forcible things ever " written against superstition. I believe it is to " be found at Frankfort; but I have a copy of it " sewed, which I will send to your Highness, if " agreeable."

For a prince, who really was desirous of instruction, what lessons he was to find in this collection! The name of Bolingbroke does not sufficiently denote, how far they intended to pervert his religion; but we know that Voltaire often published, under that name, works far more impious than those of the English philosopher; and that he was the author of several of those, which he particularly recommended in that collection.

Left to himself for the solution of doubts, nourished by such readings, and unfortunately prejudiced against those who might have solved them, he threw himself headlong into those studies, which he had mistaken for those of truth, and of the most transcendent philosophy. When he could receive these lessons from Voltaire himself, the illusion was so great, that his Highness would flatter himself, and really believe that he had found a means of soaring far above the vulgar. He would lament the absence which deprived him of the lessons of his

his master, and thinking himself under real obligations, he would say to him, "I left Ferney "with the greatest regret.—I am delighted to "find you approve of my way of thinking: I try "as much as possible to divest myself of all pre- "judices, and if in that, I differ in opinion from "the vulgar, it is to my conversation with you, "and to your works, that I am solely indebted "for it*."

That he might adduce some proof of his proficiency in the school of philosophism, the illustrious adept was wont to impart to his master, the new discoveries he had made, and which he looked upon as unanswerable objections against the sacred writ. "I have been making, would he write "to his hero, for this some time past, reflections "on Moses, and on some of the historians of the "New Testament, to me apparently just; might "not Moses be a natural child of Pharoah's "daughter, whom that princess caused to be "brought up? It is not credible that the daughter "of a king, should have taken such care of an "Hebrew child, whose nation was so much ab- "horred by the Egyptians †." Voltaire could easily have solved such a doubt, by making his pupil observe that he was gratuitously slandering the fair sex, whose benevolence and tenderness

* 9th Sept. 1766. † Let. 66.

would readily lead them to take compaſſion on a child, expoſed to ſuch a danger. Many would naturally do what Pharoah's daughter did, and would preciſely ſhow it greater care and attention, was the child expoſed to national enmities. Had Voltaire wiſhed to give his illuſtrious pupil the rules of ſound criticiſm, he would have hinted, that to deſtroy a fact both ſimple and natural, his Highneſs ſuppoſed one truly incredible. A princeſs who wiſhes to give her child a brilliant education, and begins by expoſing it to be drowned, for the pleaſure of going to ſeek it on the banks of the Nile, at a given time. An Egyptian princeſs, who, loving her child, and knowing how much the Egyptians hated the Iſraelites, cauſes this child to be ſuckled by an Iſraelite, leaves it to believe, that it was born of that nation, which its mother deteſts, and afterwards to render this child odious to the Egyptians, perſuades them of the ſame. A myſtery, ſtill more ſingular, is that the birth of an infant, who became the man, the moſt tremendous to the Egyptians, has always remained a ſecret. That the whole court of Pharoah, obſtinately believed him to be an Iſraelite, and that at a time when, to have declared Moſes an Egyptian, would have ſufficed to deſtroy his power with the Iſraelites and to have ſaved Egypt. Such arguments might have been made uſe of by Voltaire, to make his Highneſs ſenſible of the impropriety in ſound criticiſm,

ticiſm, of combating a fact both ſimple and natural, by ſuppoſitions the moſt diſtant from probability. But ſuch ſuppoſitions were conſonant with that hatred which Voltaire bore to Moſes and the Sacred Writ; he was better pleaſed to ſee his diſciples ignorantly launching into incredulity, than to ſhow them the rules of ſound criticiſm.

Voltaire again applauded his adept, when his Highneſs pretends that the *brazen ſerpent*, iſolated on the mountain, *did not a little reſemble the god Eſculapius*, in the temple of Epidaurus, holding a ſtick in one hand and a ſerpent in the other, with a dog at his feet. That the cherubims, diſplaying their wings over the ark, *were not unlike the ſphinx* with the woman's head, and the four claws, body, and tail of a lion. That *the twelve oxen ſtanding under the brazen ſea*, and bearing that enormous veſſel, twelve cubits in breadth and five in height, filled with water for the ablutions of the Iſraelites, bore a ſtrong reſemblance to the god Apis, or to the ox elevated on the altar and beholding all Egypt at its feet*.

His Highneſs concludes, that Moſes appeared to have introduced among the Jews, many ceremonies which he had taken from the Egyptians †. The hiſtorian will at leaſt remark, that it would have been eaſy for the conſpirators to have unde-

* Let. 66. † Ibid.

ceived

ceived an adept who ſought only to be inſtructed. While we lament his Highneſs having been the dupe of ſuch maſters, in juſtice we are obliged to ſhow how frankly he ſought the truth, when he continues to Voltaire, "As to what regards the "New Teſtament, there are ſtories in it, which "*I ſhould wiſh to be better informed of.* I cannot "underſtand the maſſacre of the innocents. How "could King Herod have ordered all thoſe infants "to be ſlain, he not having had the power of life "and death, as we ſee in the hiſtory of the Paſ- "ſion, and that it was Pontius Pilate, governor "for the Romans, who condemned Jeſus Chriſt "to death*."

Had he recurred to the proper ſources of hiſtory, had he conſulted any other but that profeſſor of hiſtory which D'Alembert had given him, or any other maſters than thoſe vain Sophiſters, this prince, who wiſhed for and deſerved better information, would have ſeen this ſlight difficulty vaniſh from before his eyes. He would have learned, that Herod of *Aſcalon*, ſurnamed the *Great*, and who might have been more properly called the ferocious, he who ordered the maſſacre of the Innocents, was king of all Judea and of Jeruſalem, and is not the perſon mentioned in the Paſſion. He would, moreover, have learned that the latter was Herod *Antipas*, who had only been able

* Let. 66.

to obtain of the Romans one third part of his father's dominions, and being ſimply Tetrarch of Galilea, he had not the ſame power over the other provinces. Hence there can be little room for ſurpriſe at his not exerciſing the power of life and death in Jeruſalem, though we ſee Pilate inviting him to exerciſe that right, by ſending Jeſus Chriſt before him, as he had before judged and cauſed to be beheaded St. John the Baptiſt.

As to the ferocious Herod of *Aſcalon*, his Highneſs would have learned, that this prototype of Nero, had cauſed the infants at Bethlehem to be ſlain, by the ſame power with which he had murdered Ariſtobulus and Hircanus, the one the brother, the other an octagenarian and grand-father to the queen; by the ſame power did he put to death Marianne his queen and her two children; Sohemus his confidant and numbers of his friends and nobles of his court, who had had the misfortune to diſpleaſe him. On reading of theſe numerous murders, of ſuch unheard-of tyranny, and particularly when he learned that this Herod of *Aſcalon*, on the point of death and fearing leſt the day of his deceaſe ſhould prove a day of public rejoicing, had cauſed all the chiefs of the Jews to be ſhut up in the Circus, commanding they ſhould be maſſacred at the moment he himſelf expired; ſuch lectures, I ſay, could have left little doubt in the mind of the illuſtrious adept,

adept, whether this Herod exercised the right of life and death. He then would never have suspected the Evangelists of forging a fact like that of the massacre of the innocents, a fact so recent, that many Jews then living had been witnesses to it. He would have reflected that impostors would not expose themselves to be so easily discovered and that in so public a manner; and all his objections against this massacre of the innocents, would not have availed against his faith in the Gospel.

But he was nurtured in the same objections with his master, he studied the sacred writ through the same medium; and Voltaire, who had fallen into thousands of the grossest errors on those sacred writings, carefully avoided referring his disciples to those answers which he had received from the religious writers *.

Though we blend these slight discussions with our memoirs, we will not add to the bitterness with which so many princes, who have been seduced by these impious chiefs of the Sophisters, now reproach themselves. We will not say to them, " With what strange blindness were you " smitten. It was your duty to study the sacred " writings, to learn how to become better, and to " render your subjects more happy, and you have " debased yourselves to entering the lists with the

* See the errors of Voltaire in the Letters of some Portuguese Jews.

" consPi-

" conſpirators, that like them you may diſpute " againſt Chriſt and his prophets. If doubts ariſe " on religion, why appeal to thoſe who have ſworn " its ruin. The day will come when the God " of the Chriſtians ſhall raiſe doubts on your " rights, and will refer your ſubjects to the Jaco- " bins for their ſolution. They are in your " dominions, ſeated in your palaces ready to " applaud, as Voltaire did, at your objections " againſt Chriſt and his prophets. Anſwer to " their ſword, the objections they make to your " laws." Let us forbear theſe reflections, let us ſimply remark, as hiſtory muſt, how very unfortunate theſe princes muſt have been, who ſeeking inſtruction had applied to men, whoſe ſole object was to make them efficient to the deſtruction of the altar, as the firſt ſtep towards the overthrow of their thrones.

Duke of Brunſwick.

In the number of the protecting adepts hiſtory will find itſelf neceſſitated to inſert the names of many princes, whoſe ſtates at this preſent moment feel the ſweets of this new philoſophy. In the account given by D'Alembert to Voltaire of thoſe foreign princes who would not travel through France, without doing homage to the conſpiring Sophiſters, we ſee him extol the *Duke of Brunſwick* as deſerving *the kindeſt welcome*, and particularly ſo, when put in competition with the *Prince of Deux Ponts*, who only protects *Frerons and ſuch like*

like rabble, that is to say religious authors *. The Jacobin army at this day proves which of those two princes was most mistaken in his protection. It will be still better seen when in these memoirs, we shall treat of the last and deepest conspiracy of the Jacobins.

Louis Eugene, Duke, and Louis Prince of Wirtemberg.

To this prince we must add Louis Eugene Duke of Wirtemberg, and Louis Prince of Wirtemberg: both equally gloried in the lessons they received from Voltaire. The former writes to him, "When at Ferney I think myself a greater "philosopher than Socrates himself †." The latter, not content with encomiums on the premier chief, petitions for the most licentious and the most impious work Voltaire had ever penned, I mean the poem of Joan D'Arc or the Maid of Orleans.

Charles Theodore, Elector Palatine.

Charles Theodore, Elector Palatine, would one while solicit the impious Sophister for the same master-piece of obscenity, or for philosophic lectures; at another time he would press and conjure him to repair to Manheim, that he might there receive his lectures anew ‡.

The Princess Anhalt-Zerbst.

Even to those adepts who through modesty, should have shrunk back at the very name of such a production, even to the Princess Anhalt-Zerbst, sends thanks to the author, who had been impu-

* 23d June, 1766. † 1st Feb. 1766.
‡ Letters of the 1st May, 1754, and No. 38 anno 1762.

dent

dent enough to send her a present more worthy the Aretino *.

The historian cannot but remark the eagerness of these mighty adepts for so profligate a work. This is an awful example of what charms depravity of morals gave to the productions of the Sophisters; the empire of the conspirators will cause less surprise when we reflect how prevalent their sophisms became over the mind, when they had once tainted and perverted the heart. This is a reflection we reluctantly make, but it is too apposite to the history of Philosophism, and to the cause and progress of the Antichristian Conspiracy, to be suppressed. We know the reverence due to great names, but we cannot, on that consideration, hide the truth. Let those look to it, whose misconduct is exposed to view; for to conceal it longer would be to betray at once their own interest, and that of their people, the safety of their thrones, and that of the altar.

Her Highness Wilhelmina, Margravine of Bareith, ranking among the protecting adepts, affords to the historian the opportunity of laying open a new cause of the progress of the Antichristian Sophisters, of the weight they acquired from the vanity of their school, and from their

* Letters of the Princess Anhalt-Zerbst, 9th and 39th.

preten-

pretenſions to a ſuperiority of light above the vulgar.

It is far from being the lot of all men to argue with equal ſucceſs on religious or philoſophical topics. Without being wanting in the reſpect due to that precious half of mankind, we may obſerve in general, I think, that women are not born with a mind ſo congenial with philoſophy, metaphyſics, or divinity, as men. Nature has compenſated this want of reſearch and meditation, by the gift of embelliſhing virtue, by that ſweetneſs and vivacity of ſentiment, which often proves a ſurer guide than all our reaſonings. They do the good peculiarly allotted to them, better than we do. Their homes, their children, are their real empires, that of their leſſons lies in the charm of example, more efficacious than all our ſyllogiſms. But the philoſophic woman, philoſophizing like a man, is either a prodigy or a monſter, and the prodigies are not common. The daughter of Necker, the wife of Roland, as well as Meſdames du Deffant, D'Eſpinaſſe, Geoffrin, and ſuch like Pariſian adepts, in ſpite of all their pretenſions to wit, can lay no claim to the exception. If the reader is indignant when he finds the name of the Margravine of Bareith on the ſame line, let his indignation turn againſt the man who inſpired her with ſuch pretenſions. Let an opinion be formed of the maſters,

masters, by the tone she assumed with them to insure their approbation. Here is a specimen of the style of this illustrious adept, aping the principles and the jests of Voltaire, in order to captivate his approbation, at the expence of St. Paul.

"Sister Guillemetta to Brother Voltaire, greeting. I received your consoling epistle. I can "swear by my favorite oath, that it has edified "me infinitely more than that of St. Paul to "Dame Elect. The latter threw me into a certain "drowsiness that had the effect of opium, and "hindered me from perceiving the beauties "of it. Yours had a contrary effect; it drew "me from my lethargy, and put all my vital "spirits in motion again *."

We have no knowledge of any Epistle of St. Paul to Dame Elect; but Sister Guillemetta, like Voltaire, burlesquing what she had, as well as what she had not read, means no doubt to speak of St. John's Epistle to Electa. This contains no other compliment but that of an apostle applauding the piety of a mother, who rears her children in the way of life, exhorting her to charity, and guarding her against the discourse and schools of seducers. It is rather unfortunate that such lessons should have been opium for the illustrious adept. It is probable that Voltaire would have found a dose in the following letter, had it come from any other hand but that of Sister Guillemetta. We

* 25th Dec. 1755.

will however copy it, as making an epoch in the annals of philoſophiſm. We ſhall there ſee the female adept attempting to give leſſons to Voltaire himſelf, anticipating Helvetius by mere dint of genius, and without perceiving it copies Epicurus. Before ſhe commences, Siſter Guillemetta aſſures Voltaire of the friendſhip of the Margrave, and had carefully invoked the *Genius of Bayle**. One day ſhe thought herſelf inſpired with the whole of it, and immediately writes *to Brother Voltaire*, "God, you ſay (in the Poem of the Law of "Nature), has beſtowed on all men juſtice and "conſcience to warn them, as he has given them "all what is needful. As God has beſtowed on "man juſtice and conſcience, theſe two virtues "muſt be innate in man, and become an attribute "of his exiſtence. Hence it neceſſarily follows, "that man muſt act in conſequence, and that he "cannot be juſt or unjuſt, or without remorſe, "being unable to combat an inſtinct annexed to "his eſſence. Experience proves the contrary. If "juſtice was an attribute of our being, chicane "would be baniſhed. Your counſellors in parliament would not loſe their time as they do, in "diſturbing all France about a morſel of bread "given or not. The Jeſuits and the Janſeniſts, "would equally confeſs their ignorance in point "of doctrine—Virtue is barely accidental—Aver-

* 19th July, 1752.

"ſion

" ſion to pain and love of pleaſure, have induced " men to become juſt—Diſorder can beget no- " thing but pain—Quiet is the parent of plea- " ſure, I have made the human heart my par- " ticular ſtudy, and I draw my concluſions on " what has been, from what I ſee *."

There is extant a play intitled, *Divinity dwindled into a Diſtaff.* This letter of her Highneſs the Margravine of Bareith, dwindled into Siſter Guillemetta, may perhaps furniſh the ſame idea for philoſophy. But handing over the female Socrates to the Molieres of the day, the hiſtorian will draw from the errors of this female adept, a more ſerious leſſon on the progreſs of the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy. He will behold a new cauſe in the mortifying limits of the human intellect, and the vanity of its pretenſions, which in certain adepts ſeem preciſely to expand itſelf, in as much as nature had from the weakneſs of their underſtanding, ſeemed naturally to inſinuate modeſty and humility.

Siſter Guillemetta fears for liberty, if it be true that God has given to man a conſcience, the neceſſary ſenſe of right and wrong. She was then ignorant that man, with the eyes that God has given him to ſee and know his road, is nevertheleſs free to go where he pleaſes. She has

* 1ſt Nov. 1759.

made a particular ſtudy of the human heart, and ſhe has not yet learned, that man often ſees what is beſt, but will do the worſt! She thinks herſelf in the ſchool of Socrates, and with Epicurus, ſhe only ſees the *averſion of pain and the love of pleaſure*, as the principle of juſtice and virtue. She tells us, in fine, probably without even perceiving it, that if chicane is not baniſhed, it is becauſe our attornies have not a ſufficient averſion to indigence; that if our veſtals are not all chaſte, it is becauſe they do not ſufficiently love pleaſure; and after that, in preſence of her Highneſs, Parliaments, Jeſuits, Janſeniſts, and undoubtedly the whole Sorbonne, with the whole faculty of divinity, muſt confeſs their ignorance *in point of doctrine*.

Frederick William, Prince of Pruſſia.

With more genius but leſs confidence in his own lights, Frederick William, Prince Royal of Pruſſia, preſents us with quite another ſpecies of adept. Indefatigable in the field of victory, he dares not anſwer for himſelf: he knows what he could wiſh to believe, but not what he ought to believe; he fears to loſe himſelf in reaſoning. His ſoul repeats that he muſt be immortal, he fears her voice miſleads him, and Voltaire is to decide for him; when in the field of Mars, he has the confidence and activity of a hero; but when he is to reflect on futurity, he has all the modeſty and the humility of a diſciple, almoſt the unconcern

of

of a ſceptic. The authority of his maſter is to ſave him the trouble of reſearch, and his maſter again is Voltaire. "Since I have taken the liberty of converſing with you, he reſpectuouſly writes, ſuffer me to aſk for my own inſtruction only, whether as you advance in years, you find no alteration to make in your ideas on the nature of the ſoul. I don't like to bewilder myſelf in metaphyſical reaſonings, but I could wiſh not to die entirely, and that ſuch a genius as yours were not annihilated *."

Like a man who can aſſume every tone, Voltaire anſwered, "The King of Pruſſia's family is much in the right, not to conſent to the annihilation of his ſoul.—It is true that it is not well known what a ſoul is, as nobody has ever ſeen one. All that we know is, that the eternal Maſter of nature has endowed us with the faculty of feeling and knowing virtue. That this faculty ſurvives us after our death, is not demonſtrated; but then the contrary is not better proved. There are none but quacks who are certain, we know nothing of the firſt principles—Doubt is not an agreeable ſtate, but certainty is a ridiculous one †."

I know not what effect this letter had on the ſerene and reſpectful diſciple, but we ſee the pre-

* 12th Nov. 1770. † 28th Nov. 1770.

mier chief varying his means of power over his princely adepts, as much as he did over the citizens of Harlem. When the King, Frederick, wrote to him in so resolute a tone, *man once dead there is nothing left*; he takes care not to reply, that certainty is *a ridiculous state*, that *quacks only are certain*. No, Frederick, King of Prussia, is always the first of philosophic kings *. And a week after, Frederick, Prince Royal, only wishes to be confirmed on the immortality of his soul, then it is, that notwithstanding all the troubles and disquietudes of scepticism, the doubts of the sceptic is the only rational state for the true philosopher. Such a state will suffice, as he then beholds his adepts no longer belonging to the religion of Christ, and that is sufficient for his plans. He will lead the king materialist, and resolute in his opinions, notwithstanding his own irresolution and uncertainty, by encomiums and admiration. He leaves Eugene of Wirtemberg in astonishment at the master he coincides with in opinion. Wilhelmina of Bareith, more daring than her master, is permitted to argue. He cuts short, and threatens with ridicule and quackery, the humble adept who seeks to reclaim and allay the ire of his master. To one he dictates his principles; to another he peremptorily declares that

* See their letters, 30th Oct. and 21st Nov. 1770.

man

man is condemned to the total ignorance of the *first principles*. He is not the leſs the idol of the aſtoniſhed princes. He does not the leſs transform them into the protectors of his ſchool and of the conſpirators; and ſuch is the ſucceſs with which he flatters himſelf, that writing to his dear Count D'Argental, he ſays, "At preſent there is not a "German prince who is not a philoſopher*."—That is to ſay, the philoſophiſt of impiety! There are certainly exceptions to be made from ſuch an aſſertion, but it will prove at leaſt how much theſe abettors of impiety flattered themſelves with the progreſs they were making among ſovereigns and princes,—and to whom impiety was one day to prove ſo fatal!

* 26th Sept. 1766.

CHAP. XIV.

Third Claſs of protecting Adepts.—Miniſters, Noblemen and Magiſtrates.

IT was in France that philoſophiſm had taken all the forms of a true conſpiracy; and it was in France alſo, that it had made its greateſt ravages among the rich and powerful. It had not gained the throne of Bourbon as it had many of the northern thrones, but it would be vain for hiſtory to diſſimulate, that Lewis XV. without being of the conſpiracy, powerfully helped the Antichriſtian conſpirators. He never had the misfortune of loſing his faith, he even loved religion; but during the laſt thirty-five years of his life, he ſo little practiſed it, the diſſoluteneſs of his morals and public triumph of his courtezans anſwered ſo little to the title of his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, that he might nearly as well have been a diſciple of Mahomet.

Errors of Louis XV.

Sovereigns are not ſufficiently aware of the evils they draw on themſelves by ſwerving from morality. Some have ſupported religion only as a curb on their ſubjects; but woe be to him who only

only views it in that light. In vain ſhall they preſerve its tenets in their hearts, it is their example that muſt uphold it. Next to the example of the clergy, that of kings is the moſt neceſſary to reſtrain the people. When religion is uſed only as a policy, the vileſt of the populace will ſoon perceive it; they will look upon it as a weapon uſed againſt them, and ſooner or later they will break it, and your power vaniſhes. If without morals you pretend to religion, the people will alſo think themſelves religious in their profligacy; and how often has it been repeated, that laws without morals are but a mere phantom. But the day will come when the people, thinking themſelves more conſequential, will throw aſide both morals and tenets, and then where ſhall be your curb.

Such were the diſcourſes often held by the Chriſtian orators in preſence of Lewis XV. He without morals was ſoon ſurrounded by miniſters deſtitute of faith, who could have ſeldomer deceived him, had his love for religion been ſtimulated by practice. After the death of the Cardinal de Fleury ſome are to be found, the Marechal de Belleiſle and Mr. de Bertin for example, who are not to be confounded in that claſs of adepts; but then we ſucceſſively find near his perſon Mr. Amelot in the foreign department, Mr. D'Argenſon in the ſame; the Duke de Choiſeul, de Praſlin

and

and Mr. de Malesherbes, also the Marquise de Pompadour as long as she lived, and all these were initiated and intimately connected with Voltaire and his conspiracy. We have seen him make application to Mr. Amelot on the destruction of the clergy. This minister had sufficient confidence in Voltaire to intrust him with a secret and important mission to the King of Prussia, and Voltaire in return, does not conceal from him the use he had made of his mission against the church. He confided no less in that *Duke de Praslin*, to whom he had sent his memorial on the tythes, in hopes of depriving the clergy of the greatest part of their sustenance *. This confidence from the premier chief sufficiently denotes the sentiments of those men to whom he sent his plans for execution.

Mr. Amelot.

Duke de Praslin.

A minister whose assiduity in corresponding with Voltaire, indicates more clearly their perfect coincidence with each other, was the Marquis D'Argenson, whom we have already noticed, tracing the plan for the destruction of the religious orders. It was he who first protected Voltaire at court and with the Marquise de Pompadour; he was also one of the most impious of his disciples, and to him it is, that Voltaire writes constantly, as to one of the adepts with whom he was

Marquis D'Argenson.

* Letter to Count D'Argental, anno 1764.

most

moſt intimate. If any thing, he appears more reſolute in his antireligious opinions than his maſter, his philoſophiſm coincided more with that of the King of Pruſſia's, for he was alſo convinced that he was not two-fold, and that he had nothing to fear or hope for, when once his body ſhould reſt in eternal ſleep *.

Duke de Choiſeul.

More zealous and more active than the Marquis D'Argenſon for the reign of impiety, the Duke de Choiſeul better knew and more powerfully ſeconded the ſecrets of Voltaire. We have already ſeen him extolling this great protector in his quarrels with the Sorbonne; we have already ſeen why this duke, adopting and preſſing the execution of D'Argenſon's plans againſt the religious orders, began by that of the Jeſuits. It would be uſeleſs to inſiſt on this miniſter, his impiety is too well authenticated, and leſt he might be miſtaken for a Chriſtian, he wiſhed to refuſe himſelf Chriſtian burial, and to be buried, far from any religious monument, in the midſt of his park where his cattle fed.

Maleſherbes before the revolution.

Thus did this ſeries of Antichriſtian miniſters, each partially anticipate the Jacobins in the overthrow of the altar. It was to the man, who was one day to ſee that very revolution in all its horrors, and at length fall a victim to it, that

* See in the General Correſpondence, the letters of Mr. D'Argenſon.

theſe

these impious chiefs pay their greatest homage, it was to him they were chiefly indebted. And this protector of the conspiracy against his God, was Malesherbes; this name, I am aware, will recall to mind many moral virtues, it will recall his benevolence when alleviating the rigor of the prisons, when remedying the abuse of the *Lettres de Cachet*; but France shall, nevertheless, demand of him her temples in ruin; for it was he who above all other ministers abused his authority to establish the reign of impiety in France. D'Alembert, who knew him well, always vouches for his reluctantly executing the *superior orders* issued in favor of religion, and for his favoring philosophism whenever circumstances would permit; and unfortunately he knew but too well how to avail himself of circumstances. By his office he particularly presided over the laws relative to the press, but with a single word he effaced all distinctions in books, whether impious, religious or seditious, he declared them all to be *a mere object of commerce.*

Liberty of the press dangerous in France.

Let politicians of other nations argue on that object in consequence of what experience has taught them in their own countries; but it is an incontrovertible fact, that France owes the misfortunes of the revolution to the great abuse of the press, and to that real inundation of bad books at first only impious, but latterly both impious and

and ſeditious. There are alſo many reaſons peculiar to France which rendered the abuſe of the preſs more fatal than elſewhere.

Without pretending to raiſe the merit of the French writers, it may be obſerved, and I have often heard foreigners repeat it, that there is a certain clearneſs, proceſs and method peculiar to them, which by putting our French books more within the reach of the commonality of readers, makes them in ſome ſort more popular and thence more dangerous when bad.

Our frivoloufneſs may be a failing, but that failing made a book more ſought for in France, than would the profoundeſt meditations of an Engliſhman. Neither truth nor error could pleaſe a Frenchman when latent, he likes to ſee clearly; epigram, ſarcaſm, in fine all what may be called wit, is what he delights in. Even blaſphemy, elegantly ſpoken, will not diſpleaſe a nation, unhappily gifted with the talent of laughing on the moſt ſerious ſubjects, and who will pardon every failing in him who can divert them. It was to this unfortunate taſte that the impious writings of Voltaire owed their chief ſucceſs.

Whatever may be the reaſon, the Engliſh alſo have their books againſt the Chriſtian religion; they have their Collins, their Hobbes, their Woolſtons, and many others, where in ſubſtance is to be found, all that our French Sophiſters have only

only repeated after their way, that is to ſay, with that art which adapts every thing to the moſt vulgar minds. In England Hobbes and Collins are almoſt forgotten or unknown. Bolingbroke, and other authors of the ſame claſs, are little read, though of greater merit as literary men, by a people who knows how to occupy itſelf with other things. In France, from the idle marquis or counteſs unto the attorney's clerk, or even to the petty citizen, who had far other occupations, theſe impious productions, and particularly Voltaire's, were not only read, but each would have his opinion and criticiſe every new publication of the ſort. The French, in general, were great readers, and every citizen would have his library. Thus in Paris a bookſeller was ſure of ſelling as many copies of the moſt pitiful performance, as are generally ſold in London of a work of no ſmall merit.

In France an author was as paſſionately cried up as a faſhion; the Engliſhman, who deigns to read his work, paſſes judgment on it and remains unconcerned. Can this ariſe from good ſenſe or indifference, or may it not be a mixture of both. Notwithſtanding all the benefactions received from the Engliſh, I will not pronounce; neither flattery nor criticiſm is within my ſphere; but an undoubted fact, and which ought to have taught Maleſherbes, is that in France, ſtill leſs than elſewhere, a book either

either impious or ſeditious never could be looked upon as a mere article of commerce. The greater readers, arguers, and the more volatile the French people were, the more the miniſter ſuperintending the preſs, ſhould have enforced the laws enacted to repreſs the licentiouſneſs of it, which, on the contrary, he favored with all his power. His condemnation is recorded in the encomiums of the conſpirators, it was he, they ſaid, who *broke the ſhackles of literature* *.

In vain would it be objected that the miniſter left the ſame liberty to the religious writers. In the firſt place, that was not always true, it was much againſt his will that he ſuffered works, refuting the Sophiſters, to appear †; and what a miniſter allows with reluctance, he finds abundant means of preventing. Could a miniſter be innocent, when letting a poiſon infuſe itſelf throughout the public, under pretext that he did not forbid the ſale of the antidote? Moreover, however well written a religious work may be, it has not the paſſions to ſecond it; much more talent is required to make ſuch a performance palatable. Any fool may attract the people to the theatre, but the eloquence of a Chryſoſtom is neceſſary to tear them from it. With equal talent, he who pleads for licence and impiety, will carry more

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, No. 128.

† Ibid. let. 22 and 24.

weight

weight than the moſt eloquent orator, who vindicates the rights of virtue and morality. The religious apologiſt requires a ſerious and an attentive reading, with a ſtedfaſt deſire of finding the truth, and ſuch a ſtudy fatigues, whereas, depravity requires none; in a word, it is far more eaſy to irritate, and throw the people into revolt, than to appeaſe them, when once put in motion.

Maleſherbes during the revolution.

At length Maleſherbes, ſeeing the revolution conſummated in the death of Lewis XVI. gave ſigns of a tardy repentance. His zeal, in that moment did not hinder men, who had deeply felt his fault, from exclaiming, "Officious defender, ceaſe "to plead for that king you yourſelf betrayed, it "is too late. Ceaſe to accuſe that legion of re- "gicides, who demand his head; Robeſpierre is "not his firſt executioner; it was you that long "ſince prepared his ſcaffold, when you ſuffered "thoſe impious works, that called the people to "the deſtruction of the altar and of the throne, "to be openly ſold and diſplayed in the porticos "of his palace. That unfortunate prince con- "fided in you, he had imparted his authority to "you, to repreſs the impious and ſeditious writers, "and you permitted the people to inhale blaſ- "phemy and hatred of kings, from a Ray- "nal, an Helvetius or a Diderot, and you pre- "texted commerce. If then, to day, this people, "in the frantic criſis of thoſe poiſons you have "circulated

" circulated in their veins, call aloud for the head " of Lewis XVI. It is too late to make a parade " of his defence, or to criminate the Jacobins."

Men of meditation and reflection, had long ſince foreſeen the reproach that hiſtory would one day make to Maleſherbes. They never paſſed the galleries of the Louvre, without exclaiming in the bitterneſs of their ſouls, *Unfortunate Lewis XVI! It is thus that you are ſold at the gates of your own palace!*

Maleſherbes, at length, leaving the miniſtry overpowered by the reclamations of the friends of religion, his ſucceſſors undertook or pretended to undertake, to enforce the former laws. But preſently, under the title of *Fables*, the Sophiſters ſought to ſpread their poiſon anew, and charmed with their ſucceſs D'Alembert writes to Voltaire, " The luck of it is, that theſe fables, far ſuperior " to Eſop's, are ſold here (at Paris) pretty freely. " I begin to think the trade (of bookſelling) will " have loſt nothing by the retreat of Mr. de " Maleſherbes *." It in truth loſt ſo little, that the writers in defence of the altar and the throne, were the only ones thwarted in their publications †.

Mean-

* Let. 121.

† We know of ſeveral excellent works which never could gain admiſſion into France. Such was the caſe with Feller's

Meanwhile the conſpirators carefully calculated their ſucceſſes with miniſtry. At the period when Lewis XVI. aſcended the throne, they were already ſuch, that Voltaire, writing to Frederick, expreſſes his hopes in the following terms: "I "know not whether our young king will walk in "your footſteps, but I know that he has taken *philoſophers for his miniſters*, all, except one, who is "unfortunately a bigot. There is Mr. Turgot, "who is worthy of your Majeſty's converſation. "The prieſts are in deſpair. THIS IS THE COM-"MENCEMENT OF A GREAT REVOLUTION *."

Voltaire, in this, is correct to the full extent of the term. I remember, in thoſe days, to have

PHILOSOPHICAL CATECHISM, becauſe it contains an excellent refutation of the ſyſtems of the day. We are acquainted with ſeveral authors, and we might cite ourſelves, to whom greater ſeverity was ſhown, than the law could countenance, whilſt it was openly tranſgreſſed in favor of the conſpirators. Mr. Lourdet, of the Royal College, the cenſor of our Helvian letters, needed all his reſolution and firmneſs to maintain his prerogative and ours, by publiſhing that work which the Sophiſters would fain have ſuppreſſed, and that before the firſt volume was half printed. The ſame cenſor reclaimed in vain the power of the laws, to ſtop the publication of Raynald's works. That ſeditious writer had daringly preſented his pretended PHILOSOPHIC HISTORY to the cenſure, and inſtead of the probate, he received the reproaches of juſt indignation. In ſpite of cenſure or laws, his work appeared the next day, and was expoſed for public ſale.

* Let of 3d Aug. 1775.

ſeen

ſeen venerable eccleſiaſtics bewailing the death of Lewis XV. while all France and myſelf among others, were in expectation of better days. They would ſay, the king we loſe, truly had many failings, but he that ſucceeds is very young, and has many dangers to encounter. They foreſaw that ſame revolution which Voltaire foretels to Frederick, and they ſhed tears over it, in the bitterneſs of their hearts. But let not the hiſtorian blame the young prince for the unhappy choice in which Voltaire ſo much exults. Lewis XVI. to ſucceed the better in this choice, had done all that diffidence in his own abilities, or that the love of his ſubjects or of religion could ſuggeſt. This we ſee by the deference he paid to the laſt advice he received from his father, from that Dauphin whoſe virtues had long been the admiration of France, and whoſe death plunged it into univerſal mourning. This is again to be ſeen in the eagerneſs with which Lewis XVI. called to the miniſtry that man, who in Voltaire's ſtyle, was unfortunately a bigot. This was the Mareſchal de Muy. When the hiſtorian ſhall diſcover the throne ſurrounded by ſo many perfidious agents of its authority, let him remember to avenge piety and Chriſtian fervor, courage and fidelity, infine all the virtues of a true citizen, when he ſhall treat of the memory of this Mareſchal. Mr. de Muy had been the companion and boſom friend of the Dauphin,

The Mareſchal de Muy to be excepted.

father of Lewis XVI. and such a friendship is more than an equivalent for the scurrilous abuse of Voltaire. The Mareschal de Saxe, was soliciting for one, whom he protested, the place of companion (menin) to the young prince. On being told that it was intended for Mr. de Muy, he replied, *I will not do Mr. Le Dauphin the injury of depriving him of the company of so virtuous a man as the Chevalier de Muy, and who may, hereafter, be of great service to France.* Let posterity appreciate such a commendation, and could the Sophister but hear and blush!

Mr. de Muy, was the man who bore the greatest resemblance to the Dauphin, who loved him. In him were to be found the same regularity and amenity of manners, the same beneficence, the same disinterested zeal for religion and the public welfare. It was through his means that the prince, unable to visit the provinces in person, was acquainted with the misfortunes and grievances of the people; he sent him to examine their situations, and they were occupied together in seeking those remedies which the prince's premature death, alas! hindered from being carried into execution. When, during the war, Mr. de Muy was called upon to give proofs of his fidelity in the victorious fields of Crevelt and Warbourg, the Dauphin would daily offer the following prayer for his safety: "My "God, may thy sword defend, may thy shield "protect

" protect the Count Felix de Muy, to the end, " that if ever thou makeſt me bear the heavy bur- " then of a crown, he may ſupport me by his " virtue, his counſels and his example."

When the God of vengeance ſtruck France with its firſt ſcourge, when the hand of death had mortally ſtruck the Dauphin, Mr. de Muy by his bedſide, bathed in the tears of friendſhip, hears the prince, in a voice that could rend the heart aſunder, pronounce theſe laſt words: " Do not abandon " yourſelf to ſorrow. Preſerve yourſelf, to ſerve " my children. Your knowledge, your virtues " will be neceſſary to them. Be for them, what " you would have been for me. Beſtow on my " memory, that mark of kindneſs; but above all, " let not their youth, during which God grant " them his protection, keep you at a diſtance " from them."

Lewis XVI. aſcending the throne, recalled theſe words to Mr. de Muy, conjuring him to accept of the miniſtry. Though he had refuſed it in the preceding reign, he could not withſtand the entreaties of the ſon of his departed friend. In a court univerſally aſſaulted by impiety, he taught it that the Chriſtian hero would, in no ſituation, be aſhamed of his God.

When he commanded in Flanders, he had the honor of receiving the Duke of Glouceſter, brother to the King of England, at a time when the

Catholic church commands abſtinence from meat. True to his duty, he conducted the Duke to his table, ſaying, "My religion is ſtrictly obſerved in "my houſe; had I ever the misfortune to infringe "that law, I ſhould more carefully obſerve it, on "a day when I have ſo illuſtrious a prince, for a "witneſs and cenſor of my conduct. The Eng- "liſh punctually follow their religion; out of "reſpect for your Royal Highneſs, I will not "exhibit the ſcandal of a looſe Catholic, who "could dare violate his, in your preſence."

If ſo much religion, in the eyes of philoſophiſm, is only unfortunately being a bigot, let it look to the thouſands of unhappy creatures that religion relieved, by the hands of Mr. de Muy. Let it behold the ſoldiery, rather led by his example than by the laws of courage and diſcipline. Let it learn, that the province in which he commanded, ſtill gratefully remembers and bleſs their former governor, in ſpite of the revolution, which ſeems to have tinged the human mind with the black hue of ingratitude *.

One of the great misfortunes of Lewis XVI. was to loſe this virtuous miniſter at an early pe- Maure- pas. riod. Maurepas was by no means the proper perſon to replace him in the confidence of the young king. His father even, who mentioned

* See Mr. Le Tourneur de Treſſol, on this Mareſchal, alſo Feller's Hiſt. Dict.

him

him in his will, had been miſled by the averſion this former miniſter had ſhown to the Marquiſe de Pompadour, and his long exile had not wrought the change in him, which the Dauphin had ſuppoſed. The attention, however, which the young prince paid to the counſels of his father ſhow how ardently he wiſhed to ſurround himſelf with miniſters ſeconding his views, for the good of the people. He could have made a better choice, had he known what had miſled the Dauphin. Maurepas was now old and decrepid, but had all the vices of youth. Voltaire transforms him into a philoſopher, and he coaleſced with the ſect through levity and indolence. He believed in nothing; he was without hatred againſt the altar, as without affection for the Sophiſters. He would with equal indifference, wittily laſh a biſhop or D'Alembert. He found D'Argenſon's plan for the deſtruction of the religious orders, and he followed it. He would have ſoon ſet aſide the impious miniſter, had he known him that would conſpire againſt the religion of the ſtate. An enemy to all convulſions, and without any fixed principles on Chriſtianity, he thought it at leaſt impolitic to attempt its deſtruction. He certainly was not one of thoſe men capable of ſtopping a revolution, but he did not forward it. He rather let others do the harm, than he did it himſelf; but unfortunately that harm which he let others do, was great. Under his ad-

miniſtration philoſophiſm made a terrible progreſs. Nothing proves it better than the choice of that Turgot, whoſe nomination is celebrated by Voltaire as the *beginning of a great revolution.*

Turgot. The philanthropy of this man has been much extolled, but it was that of a hypocrite, as the reader will be convinced of, by the following letter from D'Alembert to Voltaire: "You will "ſoon receive another viſit, which I announce to "you. It is that of Mr. de Turgot, a maſter of "Requeſts, full of philoſophy, a man of great "parts and learning, a great friend of mine, and "who wiſhes to ſee you in luck. I ſay luck for "*propter metum Judæorum* (for fear of the Jews); "we muſt not brag of it too much, nor you "neither *."

If at firſt ſight the ſignification of the fear of the Jews is not underſtood, D'Alembert will explain it in a ſecond portrait of his friend: "This "Turgot, he writes, is a man of wit, great "inſtruction and very virtuous; in a word, he is "a worthy *Cacouac*, but has good reaſons for not "ſhowing it too much, for I have learned to my "coſt, that the *Cacouaquery* (philoſophiſm) is "not the road to fortune, and he deſerves to "make his †."

Voltaire had an interview with Turgot, and formed ſo true a judgment of him, that he an-

* Letter 64, anno 1760. † Letter 76.

ſwers,

ſwers, " If you have many licentiates of that ſtamp " in your ſect, I fear for the *wretch, ſhe* is loſt to " good company *."

To every man who underſtands the encomiums of Voltaire or D'Alembert, this is as much as to ſay, Turgot is a ſecret adept, he is an ambitious hypocrite and will at once be a traitor to his God, his king and his country: but with us, we call him virtuous, he is a conſpirator of the true ſtamp, neceſſary to compaſs the overthrow of Chriſtianity. Had Voltaire or D'Alembert ſpoken of an eccleſiaſtic, or a religious writer who had only the virtues of a Turgot, what a monſter we ſhould have ſeen ariſe from his pen. Let the impartial hiſtorian examine, and lay aſide theſe uſurped reputations of virtue, let him ſay with truth, that Turgot, rich and above the common run of citizens, and ſtill aiming at dignities and further fortune, cannot be called a real philoſopher. Turgot being the adept of the conſpiring Sophiſters and a maſter of requeſts, is already perjured. He will be far more ſo when he arrives at the miniſtry. For by the ſtanding laws of the ſtate, he could only enjoy theſe dignities, by affirming both by himſelf and others, his fidelity to the king, to religion and to the ſtate. He had already betrayed religion and the ſtate, he will ſoon betray his king. He belonged to that ſect of Œconomiſts who deteſted

* Letter 77.

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the French monarchy, and only ſuffered a king, in order to treat him as did the firſt rebels of the revolution.

At length, carried to the miniſtry, by the cabals of the ſect, he uſes all his power to inſpire the young king with his diſguſt for the monarchy, and with his principles on the authority of a throne, he had ſworn to maintain as miniſter. He would willingly have transformed him into a Jacobin king. He firſt inſinuates thoſe errors, which are one day to throw the ſceptre into the hands of the people, and overturn the altar and the throne; if thoſe are the virtues of a miniſter, they are thoſe of a treacherous one; if errors of the mind, they are of a mad-man. Nature had endowed him with the deſire of relieving his fellow-creatures. He heard the declamations of the Sophiſters againſt the remains of the feudal ſyſtem, under which the people ſtill labored, and what with the Sophiſters, was a mere tool of their hatred for kings, he miſtook for the cry of compaſſion. He was blind to what all the world ſaw, and that particularly on the Corvees. He would not hearken to the voice of hiſtory, which told him that the ſhackles of the feudal ſyſtem had as yet been only broken, by the wiſdom and mature deliberation of the monarch, foreſeeing the inconveniences and the means of covering the loſſes of the ſuppreſſion. But he would be

haſty

hasty and he ruined every thing. The Sophisters thought his dismission too early, but alas! it was not early enough; for he had already tainted the throne with those revolutionary ideas on the sovereignty of the people; he had then forgotten that this was making all power depending on their caprice; he pretended to make the people happy by placing arms in their hands, with which they destroyed themselves. He thought to re-establish the laws in all their purity, and he only taught rebellion; he misleads the youthful monarch, too unexperienced, to unravel the sophisms of the sect; the very goodness of his heart leads him still more astray. In the pretended rights of the people, he only sees his own to be sacrificed, and it is from Turgot, we are to trace that fatal error of his insurmountable patience and fatal condescension for that people, whose sovereignty led to the scaffold himself, his queen and his sister.

Turgot is the first minister who shows that revolutionary spirit, at once antichristian and anti-monarchial. Choiseul and Malesherbes were more impious than Turgot, Choiseul perhaps was even more wicked, but never before had a minister been known, seeking to destroy the principles of that authority, in the mind of the king, which he imparted to them. It was reported that Turgot had repented on seeing the sovereign mob threatening his person, on seeing them bursting open

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the magazines of corn, and throwing both corn and bread into the river and that under pretence of famine; it was then, as reported, that seeing his errors, he had laid open to Lewis XVI. all the plans of the Sophisters, and that these latter ever-after sought to destroy the idol they had set up. This anecdote, unfortunately for the honor of Turgot, is unfounded. Before his elevation to the ministry, he was an idol of the conspirators, and such he remained, until his death. Condorcet has also been his panegyrist and historian, and he would not have been tolerant on the repentence of an adept.

Scourges have fallen successively on France since the revolution, but prior to it they had succeeded each other in the persons of Lewis XVIth's ministers. Necker appeared after Turgot, and Necker re-appears after Briennes. And his virtues were extolled by the Sophisters nearly as much as he extols them himself. This is another of those reputations, which the historian must judge by facts, not for the mere pleasure of detecting the conspiring hypocrite, but because *these unmerited reputations were a means employed* for the consummation of the conspiracy.

Necker. Necker, as yet a banker's clerk, was employed by some speculators both as the confidant and agent, in a business which was suddenly and greatly to augment their fortunes. They had the secret of an approaching

approaching peace, which was conſiderably to enhance the value of the Canada Bills; one of the conditions of the future peace being, the payment of thoſe bills which had remained in England: they let Necker into the ſecret, on condition that for their common emolument, he would write to London to have a number of theſe bills bought up at the low price which the war had reduced them to. Necker engaged in the aſſociation, and through the credit of his maſter, the bills were monopolized. His aſſociates, returning to know the ſtate of the bargain, he told them that the ſpeculation had appeared ſo hazardous and bad, that he had deſiſted from and countermanded the purchaſe. Peace comes, and Necker is in poſſeſſion of theſe bills on his own account alone, and theſe make near three millions Tournois.—Such was the virtue of Necker when a clerk!

Now rich, he calls the Sophiſters to his table; his houſe becomes a weekly club, and the new Mecenas is well repaid for his good cheer by the encomiums and flattery of his gueſts. D'Alembert, and the chiefs of the conſpirators, punctually attended theſe aſſemblies every Friday *. Necker hearing of nothing but philoſophy, would be a philoſopher, as ſuddenly as he became a lord, and the intrigue and encomiums of the ſect would

* Correſpondence of Voltaire and D'Alembert, Let. 31, anno 1770.

transform

transform him into a Sully. At length Lewis XVI. hearing so much of the talents of this man in finance, called him to the ministry as Comptroller General. Among the many means of the conspirators, the most infallible was to introduce disorder in the finances. Necker succeeded completely in this plan, by those exhorbitant loans which nothing could have hidden from the public, but that blind confidence, and those encomiums perpetually thrown out by the sect.—But let Necker have acted from the impulse of conspirators, like an ignorant minister who knew not whither he was driven, or knowingly hollowed out the abyss, it is not his pretended virtue that is to plead his defence. Is it not probable that the man, who, when recalled for the second time to the ministry, could dare to starve the people in the midst of plenty, in order to convulse them into a revolution, could also attempt to ruin the finances to produce the same convulsive state? Such a virtue as his may be nearly classed with the blackest guilt.

At the time when Necker was recalled to replace Briennes in the ministry, at the time when his great generosity to the people was cried up, and that all France was stunned with his great feats, at that very time was he, in concert with Philippe D'Orleans, starving the people into revolt against their king, the nobles and the clergy.

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This virtuous man had bought up all the corn, had ordered it to be ſhut up in ſtore-houſes, or in barges ſent it from one place to another, forbidding the intendants to allow of the ſale of any corn, until they had received his orders. The magazines remained ſhut. The boats erred from port to port. The people clamorouſly called for bread, but in vain! The parliament of Rouen, concerned for the ſtate to which the province of Normandy was reduced, deſired its preſident to write to the miniſter (Necker) to demand the ſale of a great quantity of corn which they knew to be then in the province. His letter was not anſwered. The firſt preſident received a ſecond ſummons from his body, to expatiate in the moſt preſſing manner on the wants of the people; at length Necker anſwers, that he has ſent his orders to the Intendant. His orders are executed, but the Intendant is obliged, for his own juſtification, to lay them before the parliament, and ſo far were they from what was expected, that they were barely an inſtruction to put off the ſale, and to invent divers pretexts and excuſes to elude the demands of the magiſtrates, and to rid him of their applications. Meanwhile the veſſels laden with corn, proceeded from the ports to the ocean, from the ocean to the rivers, or ſimply to the interior of the provinces. At the period when Necker was driven from the miniſtry for the ſecond time, the people were deſtitute of bread.

The

The parliament had then obtained proof that the ſame boats, laden with the ſame corn, had been from Rouen to Paris, and from Paris back again; then embarked at Rouen for the Havre, and thence returned again half rotten. The *Attorney General* profited of this ſecond diſmiſſion to ſend circular orders to ſtop theſe proceedings, and to give the people the liberty of buying this corn. At the expulſion of this miniſter, the populace of Paris, ſtupidly ſovereign, run to arms, and demand their Necker, carrying his buſt through the ſtreets with that of Philippe D'Orleans, and never were two aſſaſſins better coupled in their triumph. The populace would have its executioner, which it ſtupidly ſtiled its father; and Necker, on his return, ſtarves it anew. Scarce had he heard of the orders which the *Attorney General* of the Parliament of Normandy had given, when the revolutionary agents are ſent from Paris, the people are ſtirred up againſt the magiſtrate, his manſion is forced and pillaged, and a price is put upon his head!— Such were the virtues of the adept Necker, when miniſter and protector of the conſpirators.

For the authenticity of theſe facts, the hiſtorian will appeal to the chief magiſtrates of the parliament of Rouen. If to ſhew the chief agent of ſuch horrid deeds, I have been obliged to anticipate on the ſecond part of this work; it is becauſe Necker had conſpired againſt the throne, equally

as

as againſt the altar. It was through him the Sophiſters were to draw the Calviniſts into their party, but pretending to the faith of Geneva he was really a Deiſt. Had not the Calviniſts been blind to conviction, they could have ſeen it in his writings or in his univerſal connections with the impious. For this empty and vain man aimed at every thing. From a Clerk he became Comptroller-General; next a protecting Sophiſter, and hence concluded he was a divine. He publiſhed his ideas on RELIGIOUS OPINIONS, and this work was nothing leſs than Deiſm, and that is not judging ſeverely a work, which does not look upon the exiſtence of God as proved; for what can the religion of that man be, who doubts of the exiſtence of a God? This work obtained for its author an academic crown, as being the beſt production of the day; that is to ſay, that could inſinuate the moſt impiety the leaſt perceived.

After what has been ſaid of the miniſter Briennes, Briennes, the intimate friend of D'Alembert, after the wickedneſs of this man has been ſo public, I ſhould not mention him had I not to diſcover a plot, the like of which hiſtory would bluſh to ſhow, and none but the annals of the modern Sophiſters could produce. Under the name of Œconomiſts, the conſpirators held ſecret meetings (which later we ſhall lay open to the public), and impatiently waited the death of Mr.

de Beaumont, Archbiſhop of Paris, to give him a ſucceſſor, who entering into their views, and, under the pretext of humanity, kindneſs and toleration, was as patiently to endure with Philoſophiſm, Janſeniſm and all other ſects, as Mr. de Beaumont had ſtrenuouſly oppoſed them. He was to be particularly indulgent as to the diſcipline of the pariſh clergy, even to let it decay in a few years. On tenets he was to be equally patient. He was to repreſs the zeal of thoſe who appeared too active; to interdict them, even to diſplace them as men too ardent or even turbulent. He was carefully to receive all accuſations of this ſort, and replace the over-zealous by men whom the Sophiſters had prepared and would recommend, particularly for dignitaries. By this plan the pariſh churches, as yet adminiſtered by a moſt edifying clergy, were ſoon to be overrun by the moſt ſcandalous. Sermons and catechiſtical lectures becoming daily leſs frequent; in fine, all inſtructions running in the philoſophic ſtrain, bad books daily multiplying; the people ſeeing in their pariſhes none but a clergy ſcandalous in their morals, and little zealous in their doctrine, were naturally to abandon the churches and their religion. The apoſtacy of the capital was to carry with it that of the moſt eſſential dioceſe; and hence the evil was to ſpread far around. Thus without violence, *without being perceived,*

ceived, by the ſole connivance of its chief paſtor, religion was to be cruſhed in the capital; not but what Briennes might have given ſome exterior ſigns of zeal, had the circumſtances required *.

Nothing but the ambition of a Briennes, and the wickedneſs of his heart, could have made him accept the archbiſhopric on ſuch conditions. The agreement made, the Sophiſters put all their agents in motion. The court is beſet; an artful man, of the name of Vermon, who had been made reader to the queen by Choiſeul, on the recommendation of Briennes, ſeized on this opportunity to make ſome return to his protector. The queen recommended the protector of Vermon, and ſhe thought ſhe was doing well; the king thought he did ſtill better in nominating the man, whoſe moderation, whoſe prudence and whoſe genius, were ſo perpetual a topic, to the Archbiſhopric of Paris: and during one day Briennes was really named. But no ſooner was it known either at court or in Paris, than every Chriſtian ſhuddered at the news. The king's aunts and the Princeſs de Marſan in particular, immediately foreſaw the ſcandal with which France was threatened, and the king prevailed upon by their prayers, annulled what he had already done. The archbiſhopric was given to a man whoſe modeſty,

* See hereafter the declaration of Mr. le Roi.

zeal and impartiality, would form the ſtrongeſt contraſt, with the vices of Briennes. Unfortunately for France neither the king nor particularly the queen were ſufficiently convinced, to loſe all confidence in the pretended virtues of this man, nor did the conſpirators lay all hopes aſide of hereafter raiſing him to a more exalted ſtation.

Like to the thunder-bolt hidden in the clouds, blackened by the tempeſt and waiting the convulſion of the heavens to break forth, ſo did Briennes, from the dark cloud which threatened France, convulſed during the ſitting of the Notables, called by Calonne, burſt forth prime miniſter. To ſhow his ſubſerviency to the Sophiſters, he began by that famous edict which Voltaire had ſolicited twenty years before in behalf of the Huguenots, though he had looked upon them as *mad* and *raving mad* *; by that edict ſo long wiſhed for by D'Alembert, as a means of *duping* the Proteſtants and of *cruſhing* Chriſtianity, without its *even being perceived* †. Offspring of the tempeſt, he is at length overpowered by thoſe billows which carried Necker to the helm, and which Necker holds ſolely to immerſe his king, the nobility and the clergy into that ſea of impious ſophiſtry and frantic rage, which the conſpirators

* Letter to Marmontel, 21ſt Auguſt 1767.

† Letter 4th of May 1762.

had

had created.—Briennes died covered with infamy, but without remorse or giving signs of repentance.

By the same intrigue that had carried Briennes to the prime ministry, Lamoignon, whose ancestors had been an ornament to the magistracy, obtained the seals. He was notoriously like many other courtiers, an unbeliever, but he was also one of the conspirators. His name is to be found in their most secret committees. On his disgrace which soon followed that of Briennes, he *philosophically* shot himself.—Two such men at the head of the ministry! what means had they not, of countenancing and forwarding the Antichristian Conspiracy! Lamoignon.

Posterity will find it difficult to conceive that a monarch so religious as Lewis XVI. should have been surrounded by such a set of impious ministers. Their surprise will be much lessened, when they consider that the conspirators aimed mostly at the higher orders of society, and that they wished to destroy religion in those chiefly who approached the person of the monarch *. To the passions of this privileged class, let the facility of satisfying them be added, and we shall easily conceive with what facility Voltaire could attack a religion which so much militated against those passions. Without doubt, eminent virtues and Why so many impious ministers.

* Voltaire to Diderot, 25th December 1762, to D'Alembert and Damilaville.

the moſt diſtinguiſhed piety were to be found among the nobility and grandees of the court: for inſtance, Madame Elizabeth, ſiſter to the king, Meſdames de France the king's aunts, the Princeſſes de Conti, Louise de Condé, de Marſan, the Duc de Penthievre, the Mareſchal de Mouchi, de Broglie, and many other diſtinguiſhed perſonages who would have done honor to the brighteſt ages of Chriſtianity. Among the miniſters themſelves, hiſtory will except Mr. de Vergennes and Mr. de St. Germain, and perhaps ſome others who could not be challenged by impiety; throughout the whole claſs of the nobility theſe exceptions may be more frequent than might be ſuppoſed, but nevertheleſs it is unfortunately true to ſay, that Voltaire had made ſurpriſing progreſs among the great, and that will eaſily account for the moſt unhappy choices Lewis XVI. had made; virtue ſeeks obſcurity and is little jealous of elevation. None but the ambitious were foremoſt on the ranks, and the Sophiſters would ſtun the ill-fated monarch with the praiſes of thoſe whom they thought would beſt ſecond their views, and who had been initiated in their myſteries. Not only the throne, but the public itſelf was to be overpowered by the praiſes which they laviſhed on the adept they wiſhed to elevate to the miniſtry. Their intrigues were more ſecret and ſurpaſſed the art of courtiers themſelves; beſides, acting under the influence of public opinion,

opinion, how could they not direct the choice of a young prince whose greatest failing was diffidence in his own judgment. By such arts were the Turgots, the Neckers, the Lamoignons, the Briennes successively forced into the councils of Lewis XVI., passing over in silence those subaltern ministers and first clerks, importantly great, whose services the conspiring Sophisters carefully secured.

Thus protected, impiety soared above the laws nearly silenced. It was in vain for the clergy to reclaim the hand of power, for it connived at the conspirators; their writings were circulated and their persons secure. Voltaire even writes to D'Alembert, "Thanks to a priest about the "court, I should have been undone had it not "been for *the Chancellor*, who at all times has "shown me the greatest kindness *." This shows how little any reclamations of the clergy could avail even against the chief of the conspirators. This letter discovers a new protector of the Sophisters in the person of Mr. de Meaupou; his ambition and his connection with the chief of the conspirators had always been hidden under the mask of religion. M. Meaupou.

In a letter written also to D'Alembert, we see what immense use such protections were of, not only to Voltaire but also to the other adepts. He

* Letter 133, anno 1774.

ſpeaks of Choiſeul. "I have the greateſt obli-
"gations to him. It is to him alone that I owe
"all the privileges I have on my eſtate. Every
"favor that I have aſked *for my friends* he has
"granted *."

Some of theſe protectors alſo aimed at being authors, and without Voltaire's talents ſought to inſpire the people with the ſame principles. Of this number was the Duke D'Uſez who, to verify the expreſſion of Voltaire that he was ſtronger in mind than in body, had undertaken a work in favor of liberty and equality applied to our belief in matters of faith, without conſulting either church or paſtor. Voltaire only wiſhed to ſee it finiſhed to declare the work as uſeful to ſociety as it was to the duke himſelf †. This work never appeared, ſo we know not how to claſs the genius of the noble divine.

Duc D'Uſez.

In Voltaire's letters we find many other great perſonages who ſwell the liſt of adepts and protectors, many names already famous in hiſtory; ſuch was the deſcendant of a *Crillon* or a *Prince of Salme*, both worthy of better days according to Voltaire; but let not the reader miſtake them, for the age of the Bayards and of thoſe bold knights of former times; no, it is of an age worthy of *their modeſty and their philoſophic ſcience*. We

Other great perſonages.

* Letter 110, anno 1762.

† Voltaire to the Duc D'Uſez, 19th Nov. 1760.

ſee

ſee Voltaire placing all his hopes in the prince of Ligne for the propagation of his ſophiſticated ſcience throughout Brabant; and the Duke of Braganza, is as much extolled for the ſimilarity of his ſentiments.

Among the Marquiſſes, Counts and Chevaliers, we find the Marquis D'Argence de Derac, a brigadeer-general, zealous in the deſtruction of Chriſtianity in the province of Angoumois, and modernizing his fellow-countrymen, with his philoſophic ideas.—The Marquis de Rochefort, Colonel of a regiment, who through his philoſophiſm had gained the friendſhip of Voltaire and D'Alembert. —The Chevalier Chattellux bold but more adroit in the war againſt Chriſtianity. In fine, were we to credit Voltaire, nearly all thoſe whom he was acquainted with in this claſs, were what he ſtyles honeſt men in a letter to Helvetius in 1763. "Believe me, he writes, that Europe is full of "men of reaſon, who are opening their eyes to "the light. Truly the number is prodigious. "I have not ſeen for theſe ten years paſt *a ſingle* "*honeſt man* of whatever country or religion he "may have been, *but what abſolutely thought as* "*you do.*" It is probable, and it is to be hoped that Voltaire greatly exaggerated his ſucceſs. It would be impoſſible to conceive, that of the numbers of the nobility who went to contemplate the Grand Lama of the Sophiſters at Ferney, the

greateſt

greateſt part were not attracted by curioſity, rather than impiety. The ſureſt rule by which we may diſtinguiſh the true adepts, is by the confidence he placed in them, or whether he ſent them the productions of his own pen or thoſe of other conſpirators. At that rate even the liſt would greatly extend. Many ducheſſes and marchioneſſes would be found, as philoſophic as Sifter Guillemetta. But let them be forgotten thoſe adepts more dupes than wicked, more unfortunate are they ſtill, if they are above being pitied.

Count D'Argental.

Of theſe protectors, the Count D'Argental honorary counſellor of the parliament, is to be particularly diſtinguiſhed. Nearly of the ſame age as Voltaire, he always had been his boſom friend. All that Mr. de la Harpe ſays of the amiability of this Count, may be true, but however amiable, it will alſo be true to ſay, that both the Count and Counteſs D'Argental were the dupes of their admiration and friendſhip for Voltaire. He correſponds as regularly with theſe two adepts as he did with D'Alembert, and as confidently exhorts them to cruſh the wretch. He ſtyles them his two angels. He employed the Count as general agent for all higher protections, that he might ſtand in need of, and few agents were more devoted or more faithful, that is to ſay more impious *.

* See General Correſpondence.

A name

A name of greater importance, and that is not to be overlooked among the protecting adepts, is that of the Duc de la Rochefoucault. To him who knows how much the Duke muſt have been miſtaken in his own wit, it will be matter of little ſurpriſe to ſee him ſo ſeldom mentioned in Voltaire's correſpondence; but facts ſupply the place of written proofs. The Duke had been weak enough to allow himſelf to be perſuaded, that impiety and Philoſophiſm could alone give him a reputation. He protected the Sophiſters, and even penſioned Condorcet. It would have been happy for him had he not waited for the murderers ſent by Condorcet himſelf, to learn what were the real principles of this Philoſophiſm. Duc de la Rochefoucault.

In foreign courts, many great perſonages thought to ſoar above the vulgar, by this ſame Sophiſtry. Voltaire could not ſufficiently admire the zeal of Prince Gallitzin, in dedicating the moſt impious of Helvetius's works to the Empreſs of Ruſſia *. He was ſtill more delighted with Count Schouwallow, the powerful protector of the Sophiſters at that Court, and with all thoſe, by whoſe intrigues D'Alembert had been nominated for the education of the heir to the Imperial diadem.

In Sweden, whence the Chamberlain Jennings, under the auſpices of the King and Queen, had gone to announce to the patriarch of Ferney, the

* Let. 117, to D'Alembert.

great

great progreſs of Philoſophiſm in that country *, an adept was to be found far more extolled by the conſpirators. This was the Count de Creutz, ambaſſador in France, and afterwards in Spain. He had ſo well blended his embaſſy with the apoſtleſhip of impiety, that Voltaire, enraptured, was inconſolable at his departure from Paris. He writes to Madame Geofrin, "Had there been an Em-"peror Julian on earth, the Count de Creutz "ſhould have been ſent on embaſſy to him, and "not to a country where Auto-da-fe's are made. "The ſenate of Sweden muſt have been mad, "not to have left ſuch a man in France; he would "have been of uſe there, and it is impoſſible "that he ſhould do any good in Spain †."

But this Spain, ſo much deſpiſed by Voltaire, could produce a D'Aranda, whom he ſtyles the *Favorite of Philoſophy*, and who daily went to ſtimulate his zeal, in the company of D'Alembert, Marmontelle, and Mademoiſelle D'Eſpinaſe, whoſe club nearly equalled the French Academy.

Other dukes and grandees were to be found in Spain, equally admiring the French Sophiſtry. In particular the Marquis de Mora and the Duke of Villa Hermoſa ‡. In this ſame country, ſo much deſpiſed by the Sophiſters, we find D'Alembert diſtinguiſhing the Duke of Alba. It is of him

* Let. to D'Alembert, 19th Jan. 1769.

† 21ſt May, 1764. ‡ Let. of Voltaire, 1ſt May 1768.

that

that he writes to Voltaire, " One of the firſt " grandees of Spain, a man of great wit, and the " ſame perſon who was ambaſſador in France, under " the name of Duke of Hueſcar, has juſt ſent me " twenty guineas towards your ſtatue; condemned, " he ſays, ſecretly to cultivate my reaſon, I joy- " fully ſeize this opportunity of publicly teſtifying " my gratitude to the great man, who firſt pointed " out the road for me *."

It was at the ſight of ſo numerous a liſt of diſciples, that Voltaire exclaimed, " Victory declares " for us on all ſides; I do aſſure you that in a little " time, nothing but the rabble will follow the ſtan- " dard of our enemies †." He did not ſufficiently dive into futurity, or he would have ſeen that rabble miſled one day by the ſame principles, and ſacrificing its maſters on the very altar they had raiſed to impiety.

As to D'Alembert, he could not contain himſelf, when informed of the numerous admirers that flocked to Ferney. " What the devil, would he " write, forty gueſts at table, of whom two maſ- " ters of requeſts and a counſellor of the grand " chamber, without counting the Duke of Villars " and company ‡." Dining at Voltaire's, to be ſure, is not an abſolute proof of the philoſophiſm of the gueſt, but it ſhews, generally, men who admired

* Let. 108, anno 1773.

† Let. to Damilaville.

‡ Let. 76, anno 1760.

mired the chief of that impiety, which was one day to be their ruin.

It was not by chance that D'Alembert mentions the counſellor of the grand chamber. He was fully aware of what importance it was for the conſpirators, to have protectors, or even admirers, in the higher orders of the magiſtracy. Voltaire was of the ſame opinion when he writes, " Luckily " during theſe ten years paſt, that parliament (of " Thouloufe) has been recruited by young men " of great wit, who have read, and who think like " you *." This letter alone denotes how much the tribunals were relaxed, for many years preceding the revolution. They were veſted with all the authority neceſſary for ſtopping the circulation of theſe impious and ſeditious works, and of taking cognizance of their authors, but they had ſo much neglected it, that in the latter times, a decree of the parliament was a means of enhancing the price, and extending the circulation of a work.

Voltaire, notwithſtanding the numerous conqueſts made in theſe temples of juſtice, often complains of ſome of thoſe reſpectable corps, as ſtill containing magiſtrates who loved religion. But in return he extols the philoſophic zeal of thoſe of the South. " There (he writes to D'Alembert) " you go from a *Mr. Duché* to a *Mr. de Caſtillon*,

* Let. 11, anno 1769.

" Grenoble

" Grenoble can boaſt of a *Mr. Servan.* It is im-
" poſſible that reaſon and toleration ſhould not
" make the greateſt progreſs under ſuch maſters*."
This hope was the better founded, as theſe three magiſtates, here named by Voltaire, are preciſely thoſe, who by their functions of attorney or ſolicitor generals, were obliged to oppoſe the progreſs of that reaſon, ſynonimous with impiety in the mouth of Voltaire; and to uphold the power of the law againſt thoſe daily productions and their authors.

Mr. de la Chalotaix is of all others, the ſolicitor general who ſeems to have been in the cloſeſt intimacy with Voltaire. It is in their correſpondence, that we ſee how much the conſpirators were indebted and how grateful they were to him, on account of his zeal againſt the Jeſuits, and how much the deſtruction of that order, was blended with that of all other religious, in their plans for the total overthrow of all eccleſiaſtical authority †.

But in ſpite of all this Philoſophiſm, which had crept into the body of the magiſtracy, we meet with men venerable, and whoſe virtues were the ornament of the higheſt tribunals; particularly the grand chamber of the parliament of Paris, ap-

* Let. of the 5th Nov. 1770.

† See their correſpondence, particularly Voltaire's letter to Mr. Chalotaix, 17th May 1762.

peared

peared so opposite to his impiety, that he despaired of ever philosophizing it. He even does it the honor of ranking it with that *populace* and *those assemblies of the clergy*, that he despaired of ever rendering *reasonable*, or rather impious *.

There even was a time, when he expresses his indignation to Helvetius in the following terms. "I believe that the French are descended from "the centaurs, who were half men and *half pack-* "*horses.* These two halves have been separated, "and there remained, *men like you and some others*, "also horses, *who have bought the offices of coun-* "*sellor* (in parliament), or who have made "themselves doctors of Sorbonne †."

It is an agreeable duty I fulfil, when I show proof of this spite of the Sophisters against the first corps of the French magistracy. It is certain that at the time of the revolution, many magistrates were yet to be found, who better informed of the intrigues of the Sophisters, would willingly have given greater vigour to the laws for the support of religion. But impiety had intruded even into the grand chamber. Terrey, as yet only known as a wicked minister, is not sufficiently so as a Sophister.

Trait of the Abbé Terrey.

Whatever may be the blackness of many facts mentioned in these memoirs, few are of a deeper hue than the following one.

* Let. to D'Alembert, 13th Dec. 1763. † July 22d, 1761.

The

The bookſeller Le Jay, was publicly ſelling one of thoſe works, the impiety of which ſometimes commanded the attention of the parliament. That ſold by Le Jay was ordered to be publicly burnt and the author and ſellers to be proſecuted. Terrey offered himſelf to make the neceſſary perquiſitions, and was to report to parliament. He ordered Le Jay before him, and I will lay before the reader the very words I heard the bookſeller make uſe of, when he gave an account of what had paſſed on the occaſion. As to the title of the work, I am not quite certain whether he mentioned it or not, but I perfectly remember what follows :—" Ordered before Mr. Terrey, counſellor in parliament; I waited on him. He " received me with an air of gravity, ſat down on " a couch, and queſtioned me as follows :—Is it " you that ſell this work condemned by a decree " of the parliament? I anſwered, Yes, my Lord. " How can you ſell ſuch dangerous works? As " many others are ſold.—Have you ſold many of " them? Yes my Lord.—Have you many left? " About ſix hundred copies.—Do you know the " author of this bad work? Yes, my Lord.—Who " is it? You, my Lord!—How dare you ſay ſo; " how do you know that? I know it, my Lord, " from the perſon of whom I bought your ma- " nuſcript.—Since you know it all is over; go, " but be prudent."

It may be eaſily conceived that this interrogatory was not reported to the parliament, and the reader will equally underſtand what progreſs the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy made in a country, where its adepts were ſeated in the very ſanctuary of the laws.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

The Claſs.—Of Men of Letters.

THE paſſions and the facility of gratifying them, the yoke of religion once thrown off, had given the conſpirators great power among the higher claſſes of ſociety; and the empty hopes of a reputation brought over to their ſtandards all thoſe who pretended to literary fame. The great talents of Voltaire, and a ſucceſs perhaps ſuperior to his talents, proclaimed his ſway abſolute, over the claſs of men of letters. Humbly thoſe men followed his triumphant car, who above all others will proudly flatter themſelves with the perfection of their own ideas. It was only neceſſary for him to give the faſhion. Like to thoſe frivolous nations where the high-flown courtezans, by their ſole example, can introduce the moſt wanton faſhions in attire, juſt ſo does the premier chief. Scarce had he ſhown his bias towards impiety, when the men of letters would all be impious.

From that cloud of writers and adepts, a man ſhone forth who might have diſputed with him the palm of genius; and who, for celebrity, needed not to reſort to impiety. This was Jean Jaques Rouſſeau. Rouſſeau.

Rouſſeau. That famous citizen of Geneva, ſublime when he pleaſes in his proſe, rivalling Milton or Corneille in his poetry, could have rivalled Boſſuet under the banners of Chriſtianity. Unfortunately for his glory, he was known to D'Alembert, Diderot and Voltaire, and for a time he leagued with them, and ſought like them, the means of cruſhing Chriſt and his religion. In this ſynagogue of impiety, as in that of the Jews, teſtimonies did not agree; diviſions enſued, but though ſeparated, their attacks were bent againſt Chriſtianity. This is to be ſeen in a letter from Voltaire to D'Alembert, where he ſays, "What a pity it "is that Jean Jaques, Diderot, Helvetius and "you, with other men of your ſtamp, ſhould not "have been unanimous in your attacks on *the* "*wretch*. My greateſt grief is, to ſee the im- "poſtors united, and the friends of truth di- "vided *."

When Rouſſeau ſeceded from the Sophiſters, he did not by that forſake either his own or their errors; he ſeparately carried on the war. The admiration of the adepts was divided. In either ſchool, impiety had only varied its weapons, nor were opinions more conſtant or leſs impious.

Voltaire was the moſt active, but vigor was given to Jean Jaques. With the ſtrength of Hercules he alſo partook of his delirium. Voltaire

* No. 156, anno 1756.

laughed

laughed at contradiction, and his pen flew with every wind. Jean Jaques would insist on the paradoxes fostered in his brain, and brandishing his club on high, he would equally strike at truth or falsehood. The former was the vane of opinion, the latter the Proteus of Sophistry. Both equally distant from the schools of wisdom, both wished to lay the foundations and first principles of philosophy.

The *pro* and *con* was equally adopted by them, and both found themselves condemned to the most humiliating inconstancy. Voltaire, uncertain as to the existence of a God, or of a future state, applies to Sophisters bewildered like himself, and remains perplexed. Jean Jaques, as yet a mere youth, says to himself, "I am going to throw "this stone against that tree opposite to me: If "I hit, a sign of salvation; if I miss, a sign of "damnation." Jean Jaques hits, and heaven is his lot. This proof sufficed for the philosopher long after his youthful days; and he was far advanced in years when he says, "Ever after that "I never doubted of my salvation *."

Voltaire one day believed he could demonstrate the existence of the *Author of the Universe*; he then believed in an all-powerful God, who remunerated virtue †. The day after, the whole of

* His Confessions, book 6th.

† Voltaire on Atheism.

this demonſtration is dwindled into probabilities and doubts, which it would be the ſummit of ridicule to pretend to ſolve *.

The ſame truth is one day evident to Jean Jaques, nor does he doubt of it after having demonſtrated it himſelf. He beheld the Deity all around him, with him, and throughout nature on that day, when he exclaimed, "I am certain that "God exiſts of himſelf †." But the day following, the demonſtration was forgotten, and he writes to Voltaire, "Frankly I confeſs that (on the exiſtence "of God), neither the *pro* nor the *con* appears to "me demonſtrated." With Jean Jaques as with Voltaire, *Theiſm and Atheiſm* could only found their doctrine on *probabilities* ‡. And they both believed in one only principle or *ſole Mover* ‖. But at another time they could not deny but what there were two principles or two cauſes §.

Voltaire, after having written that Atheiſm would people the earth with robbers, villains and

* Voltaire on Atheiſm; and on the Soul by Suranus.

† The Emile and Let. to the Archbiſhop of Paris.

‡ Letter to Voltaire, vol. 12. Quarto edit. of Geneva.

‖ Voltaire on the Principle of Action.—Jean Jaques in the Emile, vol. 3, page 115, and Letter to the Archbiſhop of Paris,

§ Voltaire, Queſt. Encyclop. vol. 9.—Jean Jaques, Emile, vol. 3, page 61, and Let. to the Archbiſhop of Paris.

mon-

monſters*, would acquit Atheiſm in Spinoſa, and even allow of it in a Philoſopher †, and profeſſed it himſelf when he writes to D'Alembert, "I know "of none but Spinoſa who has argued well ‡." That is to ſay, I know of no true philoſopher but he to whom all matter and this world is the ſole God; and after having tried every ſect, he ends by preſſing D'Alembert to unite all parties in the war againſt Chriſt. Jean Jaques had written that the Atheiſts deſerved puniſhment; that they were *diſturbers of the public peace*, and as ſuch guilty of death ‖. Then thinking he had fulfilled Voltaire's wiſh, writes to the miniſter Vernier, "I "declare that my ſole object in the New Eloiſa, "was to unite the two oppoſite parties (the "Deiſts and Atheiſts), by a reciprocal eſteem for "each other, and to teach the philoſophers that "one may believe in God without being a hypo-"crite, or deny him without being a raſcal §." And this ſame man writes to Voltaire, that an Atheiſt cannot be guilty before God. That ſhould the law find the Atheiſt guilty of death, it was the denounciator who ſhould be burned as ſuch **.

* On Atheiſm. † Axiom 3.
‡ Letter to D'Alembert, 16th June, 1773.
‖ Emile, vol. 4, page 68. Social Contract, chap. 8.
§ Letter to Mr. Vernier.
** Letters to Voltaire, vol. 12, and New Eloiſa.

Voltaire would blaſpheme the law of Chriſt, retract, receive the ſacrament, and preſs the conſpirators to cruſh the wretch! Jean Jaques would lay aſide Chriſtianity, or reſume it again, and with Calvin will partake of the Laſt Supper *; will write the moſt ſublime encomiums on Chriſt that human eloquence could deviſe, and then finiſh by blaſpheming that ſame Chriſt as a fanatic †. If the Antichriſtian Revolution was one day to carry Voltaire triumphantly to the Pantheon, Rouſſeau had the ſame rights to the inauguration of the Sophiſters of Impiety. We ſhall ſee him gain far other claims on the Sophiſters of rebellion. If the former ſecretly ſolicits kings to ſubſcribe to his ſtatue, the latter openly writes that at Sparta one would have been erected to him.

* D'Alembert writes to Voltaire, in ſpeaking of Rouſſeau, "I pity him, and if his happineſs depends on his approaching the Holy Table, and in calling holy a religion which he has ſo much vilified, I own that my eſteem is greatly diminiſhed." (Let. 105, anno 1762). He might have ſaid as much of Voltaire's communions, but he never dared. He even ſeeks to give him a plea for his hypocriſy, when he ſays, "Perhaps I am in the wrong, for certainly you are better acquainted than I am, with the reaſons that determined you." He does not mention his eſteem being diminiſhed; on the contrary, Voltaire is always his *dear and illuſtrious maſter!* Letter 31ſt May, 1768.

† His Confeſſion and Profeſſions of the Savoyard Vicar.

With

With ſo ſimilar a conduct, each of theſe chief had his diſtinctive characteriſtics. Voltaire hated the God of the Chriſtians. Jean Jaques admired but blaſphemed him, and pride wrought in the latter, all that jealouſy and hatred produced in the former; and it will long be a doubt which has been moſt fatal to Chriſtianity, the one by his atrocious ſarcaſms and impious ſatire, the other by his ſophiſtry under the cloak of reaſon.

After their ſeparation, Voltaire hated Jean Jaques, ſcoffed at him, and would have him chained as a madman *. But he could not hide his joy, when the Profeſſion of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar, written by this madman, was the book out of which youth were taught to read †. Jean Jaques would at the ſame time deteſt the chiefs of the conſpirators, expoſe them and be hated by them: he would preſerve their principles, court their friendſhip and eſteem anew, and that of the premier chief in particular ‡.

If to define the Sophiſter of Ferney was a difficult taſk, is it not equally ſo, to paint the citizen of Geneva? Jean Jaques loved the ſciences and is crowned by thoſe who reviled them; he wrote againſt the theatre and compoſed operas; he ſought friends

* Letter to Damilaville, 8th May 1761, and War of Geneva.

† Letter to the Count D'Argental, 26th Sept. 1766.

‡ See his letters, and the Life of Seneca by Diderot.

and

and is famous for his breaches of friendſhip. He extols the charms of virtue, and he bends the knee before the proſtitute de Varens. He declares himſelf the moſt virtuous of men and under the modeſt title of his Confeſſions, he retraces in his old age the diſſolute ſcenes of his youth. To tender mothers he gives the moſt pathetic advice in nature; and ſmothering in himſelf the cries of that ſame nature, he baniſhes his children to that hoſpital where, from the ſhame of its birth, the unfortunate babe is condemned to the perpetual ignorance of its parents. The fear of ſeeing them, makes him inexorable to the entreaties of thoſe who would have provided for their education *. A prodigy of inconſiſtency even to his laſt moments; he wrote againſt ſuicide, and perhaps it is treating him too favorably, not to aſſert that he himſelf had prepared the poiſon, which cauſed his death †.

However inconſiſtent, error is inculcated by the Sophiſter of Geneva, with all the powers of genius, and many have loſt their faith by his works, who would have reſiſted all other attacks. To be cradled in one's paſſions, gave empire to Voltaire; but to reſiſt Jean Jaques the acuteſt ſophiſms were to be ſeen through: youth was led away by the former, whilſt thoſe who were ad-

* See his Confeſſions.

† See his life by the Count Barruel de Beauvert.

vanced

vanced in age fell a victim to the latter, and a prodigious number of adepts owed their fall to these two writers.

Indignantly would the manes of Buffon see his name classed, after that of Jean Jaques, among the conspiring adepts. But difficult would it be for the historian, when speaking of those who have adopted the fashion set by Voltaire, not to sigh at pronouncing the name of the French Pliny. He certainly was rather the victim than the associate of the conspirators. But who can erase Philosophism from his writings? Nature had lent her genius and why would he not content himself with what she had placed before him. No, he would ascend higher, he would explain those mysteries reserved to revelation alone; and soaring above his sphere, he often shows himself the disciple of Maillet and Boulanger. To give the history of nature, he destroys that of religion. He was the hero of those men whom D'Alembert had sent to split mountains and seek from the depths of the earth, arguments to belie Moses and the first pages of holy writ. In the praises of the Sophisters he consoles himself for the censures of the Sorbonne; but the punishment attached to the fault itself, for he only belied his own reputation on his knowledge of the laws of nature. They appeared to be null when he treated of the earth formed by the waters, or by fire, and of his endless epochs. Buffon.

And

And to falsify the scriptures, he makes nature as inconsistent as his own systems. His style elegant and noble has always been admired, but found insufficient to save his works from the smile of the real philosopher; and his glory, like his comet, vanished in his dreams of incredulity. Happy, if in retracting his errors, he had been able to destroy that spirit of research in the adepts who only studied nature through the medium of Voltaire *.

After these two men so justly distinguished by the grandeur of their style, the remaining adepts chiefly owe their celebrity to their impiety; nevertheless two might have done honor to science by
Freret. their learning. The first, which is Freret, had from his immense memory nearly learned Bayle's Dictionary by heart. But his letters to Thrasybulus, the offspring of his Atheism, shows that his vast memory was more than outweighed by his want of judgment.

* D'Alembert and Voltaire ridiculed all those vain systems of Bailly and Buffon on the antiquity of the world and of its inhabitants. They would call these systems, *Nonsense, Follies, an Excuse for the want of Genius, Shallow Ideas, Vain and ridiculous Quackery* (Letter to Voltaire, 6th March 1777); but D'Alembert took care to keep his opinions secret on this subject. By discrediting these systems he feared lest he should discourage those adepts whom he had sent to forge new ones in the Appenines, in order to give the lie to Moses and the sacred writ.

The

The second was Boulanger, whose brain over- Boulanburdened with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac and ger.
Arabic, had also adopted all the extravagancies of Atheism; but retracted in the latter part of his life, execrating the sect that had misled him. We shall soon see that all those posthumous works attributed to these writers, were never written by them.

Fain would the Marquis D'Argens have figured Marquis among the *learned* Sophisters; but his *Chinese and* D'Argens *Cabalistic Letters*, and his *Philosophy of Good Sense*, only prove, that to Bayle's Dictionary he was indebted for his pretended reputation. He was a long while a friend of Frederick's, and his impiety entitled him to that friendship. It is from his brother, the President D'Eguille, that we have learned, that after several discussions on religion, with persons better versed in that science than Frederick, he submitted to the light of the Gospel, and ardently wished to do satisfaction for his past incredulity.

As to La Metrie the doctor, if he appeared to La Merave, it was only from the sincerity of his heart. trie.
His *man-machine*, or his *man-plant*, only caused the sect to blush from the open manner in which he had said, what many of them wished to insinuate.

Down to the first days of the revolution, the Marmon-Sophisters conspiring against their God, thought tel.
they could glory in the talents and co-operation of Marmontel.

Marmontel. But let us not add to the ſorrows of the man, who needed only the firſt days of the revolution, to ſhrink with horror from thoſe conſpiracies which had given it birth. Of all the Sophiſters, who have outlived Voltaire, Mr. de Marmontel is the one who moſt wiſhed to hide his former intimacy with the Antichriſtian chiefs. But alas, it is to thoſe connections that he owes his celebrity far more than to his *Incas*, his *Beliſarius* or to his *Tales*, intermingled with Philoſophiſm. We could wiſh to hide it, but Voltaire's own letters convict the repenting adept of having acted, and that during a long time, a very different part among the conſpirators. Voltaire was ſo well convinced of Mr. de Marmontel's zeal, that thinking himſelf on the point of death, he bequeathed La Harpe to him. This laſt will is worded thus, " I recommend La Harpe to you, when I am no more; " *he will be one of the pillars of our church.* You " muſt have him received of the academy. After " having gained ſo many prizes, it is but juſt that " he ſhould beſtow them in his turn *."

LaHarpe. With a taſte for literature, and ſome talents, which in ſpite of his critics, diſtinguiſh him above the common rank of the writers of the day, Mr. de la Harpe might have rendered his works uſeful had he not, from his youth, been the ſpoilt child

* Voltaire to Marmontel, 21ſt Aug. 1767.

of

of Voltaire. At that age, it is eaſy to believe one's ſelf a philoſopher, when one diſbelieves one's catechiſm, and the young La Harpe blindly followed the inſtructions of his maſter. If he never was the pillar, he might be correctly ſtyled the trumpeter of the new church, by means of the *Mercure*, a famous French journal, which by its encomiums, or its weekly criticiſms, nearly decided the fate of all literary productions *.

The encomiums which Voltaire laviſhed on that journal, after La Harpe had undertaken the direction of it, ſhow how little governments are aware of the influence of ſuch journals over the public opinion. Above ten thouſand people ſubſcribed, and many more peruſed the *Mercure*; and influenced by its ſuggeſtions, they by degrees became as philoſophic, or rather impious, as the hebdomadary Sophiſter himſelf. The conſpirators ſaw what advantvge could be reaped from this li-

* We learn, by the public newſpapers, that Mr. de la Harpe was converted, when in priſon, by the Biſhop of St. Brieux. I ſhould be little ſurpriſed at it. The examples of this prelate, with the fruits of Philoſophiſm in this revolution, muſt ſtrongly impreſs the man who, with a ſound judgment, can compare them with the leſſons and promiſes of his former maſters. If the news of this converſion be true, I ſhall have ſhown him conſecrating his talents to error, and nobody will applaud him more than myſelf, in ſeeing him direct them in future towards truth alone.

terary

terary dominion. La Harpe ruled the ſceptre during many years, then Marmontel jointly with Champfort, as Remi who was little better, had held it before them. I one day aſked the latter, how it was poſſible, that he had inſerted in his journal, one of the wickedeſt and falſeſt accounts poſſible, of a work purely literary, and of which I had heard him ſpeak in the higheſt terms. He anſwered me, that the article alluded to had been written by a friend of D'Alembert's, and that he owed his journal, his fortune even to D'Alembert's protection. The injured author wiſhed to publiſh his defence in the ſame journal, but it was all in vain. — Let the reader judge from thence how powerfully the periodical papers contributed to the deſigns of the conſpirators, and it was by them that the public mind was chiefly directed to their deſired object.

This ſect diſpoſed of reputations by their praiſes or their critics, as it beſt ſuited them. By theſe journals they reaped the two-fold advantage of pointing out to thoſe writers, who hungered after glory or bread *, what ſubjects they were to inveſtigate;

* The Sophiſters were ſo well acquainted with the powers of a journal, that they muſtered up their higheſt protections againſt the religious authors who would diſpute one with them. When Voltaire was informed that Mr. Clement was to ſucceed to Mr. Freron, whoſe pen had long been conſecrated

veſtigate, and of calling by means of their literary trump, the attention of the public only on thoſe works, which the ſect wiſhed to circulate, or had nothing to fear from.

By ſuch artifices, the La Harpes of the day forwarded the conſpiracy as much if not more, than the moſt active of the Sophiſters, or their moſt impious writers. The ſophiſtical author would mingle or condenſe his poiſon in his productions, whilſt the journaliſt adept would proclaim it, and infuſe it throughout the capital, or into all parts of the empire. The man, who would have remained ignorant of the very exiſtence of an impious or a ſeditious work, the man, who would have neither ſpent his time nor his money, on ſuch productions, imbibed the whole of their poiſon from the perfidious extracts made by the ſophiſtical journaliſt.

Above all the adepts, far more than Voltaire himſelf, did a fiend called Condorcet, hate the ſon of his God. At the very name of the Deity, the monſter raged, and it appeared as if he wiſhed to revenge on heaven, the heart it had given him. Cruel and ungrateful, the cool aſſaſſin of friendſhip and of his benefactors, he would willingly have Condorcet.

crated to the vindication of truth, he did not bluſh at ſending D'Alembert to the chancellor in hopes of hindering Mr. Clement from continuing Freron's journal. (Let. 12th Feb. 1773).

directed the dagger againſt his God, as he did againſt La Rochefoucault. Atheiſm was but folly in La Metrie, madneſs in Diderot, but in Condorcet, it was the phrenzy of hatred and the offſpring of pride. It was impoſſible to convince Condorcet, that any thing but a fool could believe in God. Voltaire, who had ſeen him when a youth, little foreſaw what ſervices he was to render to the conſpiracy, even when he wrote, "My "great conſolation in dying is, that you ſupport "the honor of our poor Velches, in which you "will be well ſeconded by Condorcet *!"

It could not have been on the talents of this man, that the premier reſted his hopes. Condorcet had learned as much geometry as D'Alembert could teach him; but as to the Belles Lettres, he was not even of the ſecond claſs. His ſtyle was that of a man who did not know his own language, and his writings, like his ſophiſms, required much ſtudy to be underſtood. But hatred did for him what nature has done for others. Perpetually plodding at his blaſphemies, he at laſt ſucceeded in expreſſing them more clearly; for the amazing difference which is obſervable between his former and his latter works, can only be explained after that manner. It is more remarkable in his poſthumous work on the human mind, where

* Let. to D'Alembert, No. 101, anno 1773.

his

his pen can hardly be traced, excepting in a few paſſages, though his genius haunts every page. There he is to be ſeen, as during his life time, in his ſtudies, in his writings or converſation, directing every thing towards Atheiſm, ſeeking no other object in this work, than to inſpire his readers with his own frantic hatred againſt his God. Long ſince had he waited for the downfal of the altar, as the only ſight his heart could enjoy. He beheld it, but was ſoon to fall himſelf. His end was that of the impious man, a vagabond and wanderer, ſinking under pain miſery and the dread of Robeſpierre, without acknowledging the hand of God, that ſtruck him by that of the ferocious dictator. Alas, if he died as he lived, will not the firſt inſtants of his conviction and repentance be thoſe, when he ſhall hear that God, whom he blaſphemed and denied, confeſſed by the mouths of thoſe awful victims of eternal vengeance ! !

During his lifetime, ſo great was his hatred, that adopting error, in order to rid men of that fear of an immortal God in heaven, he did not heſitate in hoping that his philoſophiſm would one day render men immortal upon earth. To belie Moſes and the prophets, he became himſelf the prophet of madneſs. Moſes had ſhown the days of man decreaſing unto the age at which God had fixed them, and the royal prophet had declared the days of man to extend from ſixty to

ſeventy, and at the moſt to eighty years, after which all was trouble and pain. And to the oracles of the Holy Ghoſt, Condorcet would oppoſe his! When he calculates his philoſophic revolution, which begins by dragging ſo many to their graves, he adds to the creed of his impiety, that of his extravagancies; and without heſitation he pronounces that, " *we are to believe that the life* " *of man muſt perpetually encreaſe*, if phyſical revolu- " tions do not obſtruct it. That we are ignorant of " the extreme term, which it is never to exceed. " We do not even know, *whether nature in its gene-* " *ral laws* has fixed that extreme term!" Thus in his pretended *Philoſophic Sketch of the Progreſs of the human Mind* *, after having built his entire hiſtory on the hatred of Chriſt, and left no hopes to man but in Atheiſm, we ſee this Sophiſter of falſehood, ſetting up for a prophet, and foreſeeing all the fruits of his triumphant philoſophy. It is in the very moment of the overthrow of the altar, that he tells us, that henceforth the days of man ſhall be lengthened, and that in lieu of an eternal God in heaven, man may become immortal on earth, as if at the very moment of its triumph, Philoſophiſm, and the pride of the whole ſect, were to be humbled through the extravagancies of the moſt impious and deareſt of its adepts. A life

* Epoch 10th, page 382.

wholly

wholly ſpent in blaſphemy, could never have but frenzy for its end.

This name of Condorcet, will appear again in theſe memoirs, and we ſhall ſee him hating kings nearly as much as he did his God. Helvetius, and many others before him, had fallen a victim to this double hatred, though their hearts ſeemed capable of neither.

Helvetius.

The unfortunate Helvetius, the child of a virtuous father, followed his ſteps till beyond his early youth. An exemplary piety had been the fruits of a good education, when he became acquainted with Voltaire. He at firſt ſought him as a maſter, and his love for poetry had inſpired him with admiration for him. Such was the origin of their intimacy, and never was connection more perfidious. In lieu of poetry, impiety conſtituted his lectures, and in the ſpace of one year, Voltaire transforms his pupil into a more impious and determined Atheiſt than he was himſelf. Helvetius was rich, and is at once actor and protector. Laying aſide the Goſpel, like the generality of the Sophiſters, who while they pretend to ſuperior underſtanding, in crediting the myſteries of Revelation not only believe in all the abſurdities of Atheiſm, but are the ſport of their own puerile credulity in all that can be turned againſt religion. Helvetius's work on the *Spirit*, and which Voltaire calls *Matter*, is filled with ridicu-

culous ſtories, and fables which he gives for truths, and which are all beneath criticiſm. This is nevertheleſs the work of a man who pretends to reform the univerſe, but who equally diſguſts his readers by the licentiouſneſs and obſcenity of his morals, and by the abſurdity of his materialiſm.

Helvetius alſo wrote on *Happineſs*, but appears himſelf to have been a perfect ſtranger to it. In ſpite of all his philoſophy, he was ſo tender to the beſt-founded cenſure, that he loſt his reſt, went a travelling, and only returned to brood over the hatred he had vowed to kings and the church. Naturally of a good and gentle diſpoſition, his work *on Man and his Education*, proves how much Philoſophiſm had altered that diſpoſition. There he gives full ſcope to the groſſeſt calumny and abuſe, and denies daily facts, the moſt publicly atteſted *.

I have

* I would willingly have acquitted Helvetius of this poſthumous work, by ſaying, that it might have been an offspring of that ſame committee, which had fathered ſo many other impious works on the dead. But then Voltaire could not have mentioned that work to his brethen at Paris, as one that they muſt be acquainted with. In three ſucceſſive letters, he attributes it to Helvetius. He cenſures him on hiſtory, as we have done, and D'Alembert, who could not be ignorant of its author, does not undeceive him. The ſhame then of this work, muſt attach to Helvetius. This man writes, in a city where its archbiſhop, and its paſtors were remarkable for their

I have already ſpoken of RAYNALD; it is not worth our while to call DESLISLE from the oblivion which both he and his work on the *Philoſophy of Nature*, have ſo long been buried in. Still leſs that ROBINET and his book *of Nature*, which is only remembered on account of his ſtrange explanations of the intellect by *oval fibres*; of memory by *undulated or ſpiral fibres*; of will by *fretted fibres*; pleaſure and pain by *bundles of ſenſibility*, and learning by *humps in the underſtanding*, and a thouſand ſuch like vagaries, ſtill more ridiculous if poſſible *.

I ſhall mention TOUSSAINT, as this man ſhows to what a height Atheiſm raged among the conſpirators. He had undertaken the part of the corruption of morals. Under the maſk of moderation, he ſucceeds by telling youth, that *nothing was to be feared from love*, this paſſion *only perfecting them*. That between man and woman *that* was a ſuffi-

their care and charity to the poor, that the clergy were ſo hard-hearted that the poor were never ſeen to beg an alms of them; and it was in that ſame city where the rectors were perpetually ſeen ſurrounded by, and alleviating the diſtreſſes of thoſe ſame poor. (See his work on Man, &c.) Such were the calumnies his hatred invented, though contradicted by daily facts. He might have ſaid, with more truth, that many applied for alms, to eccleſiaſtics and religious houſes, when they dared not aſk them elſewhere.

* Of Nature, vol. the 1ſt, book 4th, chap. 2, &c. &c.

† On Morals, part 2 and 3.

cient claim on each other without matrimony *. *That children are not more beholden to their fathers for their birth, than for the champagne they had drunk, or the minuet they had been pleaſed to dance* †. That vengeance being incompatible with God, the wicked had nothing to fear from the puniſhments of another world ‡. Notwithſtanding all this doctrine, the conſpirators looked upon him as a timid adept, becauſe he owned a God in heaven, and a ſoul in man; and to puniſh him they ſtyled him the *Capuchin Philoſpher*. Happily for him he took a better way of puniſhing them, by abandoning their cauſe and recanting from his errors ‖.

In vain ſhould I name a croud of other writers of the ſect. Voltaire had ſo perfectly brought theſe Antichriſtian productions into faſhion, that this ſpecies of literature was the reſource and livelihood of thoſe miſerable ſcribblers, who fed upon their traffic in blaſphemy. Holland in particular, that miry bog, where the demon of avarice, enthroned under the auſpices of a few bookſellers, for a doit would have made over every ſoul, every religion to impiety, was the grand aſylum of theſe ſtarving infidels. Marc Michel appears to have been the bookſeller, who bought their blaſphemies

* On Morals, part 2 and 3. † Ibid, part 3, article 4.
‡ Ibid. part 2, ſec. 2.
‖ See his Expoſtulations on the Book of Morals.

at

at the higheſt price. He kept in his pay one Laurent, a monk, who had taken refuge at Amſterdam, and is the author of the *portable divinity*, and ſo many other impious works recommended by Voltaire, in ſhort, of the *Compere Mathieu*. This monk had other co-operators, whom Marc Michel paid by the ſheet. It is Voltaire himſelf who gives us this account, and theſe are the works he perpetually recommends the circulation of, as thoſe of a philoſophy which diffuſed a new light to the univerſe *.

We ſhall ſoon ſee the preſſes of the ſecret confraternity vying with thoſe of Holland, in the deluging of Europe, with theſe vile productions. Their immenſe number brought them into ſuch repute, that many years before the revolution, there was not a petty poet, not a novel writer, but muſt needs pay his tribute to the Philoſophiſm of impiety; one would have thought that the whole art of writing and of getting readers, conſiſted in epigrams and ſarcaſms againſt religion; that all ſciences, even the moſt foreign to religion, had equally conſpired againſt the God of Chriſtianity.

* Let. to the Count D'Argental, 26th Sept. 1761. To D'Alembert, 13th Jan. 1768. To Mr. Deſbordes, 4th Apr. 1768.

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The hiſtory of mankind was transformed into the art of diſtorting facts, and of directing them againſt Chriſtianity and Revelation; Phyſics or the hiſtory of Nature, into anti-Moſaic ſyſtems. Medicine had its atheiſm, and Petit taught it at the ſchools of ſurgery. La Lande and Dupui imbibed their lectures on aſtronomy with it, while others introduced it even into grammar; and Condorcet, proclaiming this progreſs of Philoſophiſm, exults in ſeeing it *deſcend from the northern thrones into the univerſities**. The young men walking in the footſteps of their maſters, carried to the bar all thoſe principles, which our romancing lawyers were to diſplay in the Conſtituent Aſſembly. On leaving the college, the attorneys clerks, or thoſe of a counting-houſe, only ſeemed to have learned their letters in order to articulate the blaſphemies of Voltaire or Jean Jaques. Such was the riſing generation, who ſince the expulſion of their former maſters, were to be found prepared for the grand revolution. Hence aroſe the Mirabeaux and Briſſots, the Caras and Garats, the Merciers and Cheniers. Hence in a word, all that claſs of French literators, who appear to have been univerſally carried away by the torrent of the French Revolution.

* See his artful edition of Paſcal, Advertiſement, page 5.

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An apoſtacy ſo univerſal does not prove that literature and ſcience are prejudicial in themſelves, but it ſhews that men of letters, deſtitute of religion, are the moſt dangerous ſubjects in the ſtate. It is not abſolutely in that claſs that a Robeſpierre and a Jourdan is found; but it can afford a Petion or a Marat. It can afford principles, ſophiſms, and a morality, which terminate in Robeſpierres or in Jourdans; and if theſe latter murder a Bailly, terrify a Marmontel, and impriſon a La Harpe, they only terrify, murder, or impriſon their progenitors.

CHAP. XVI.

Conduct of the Clergy towards the Antichriſtian Conſpirators.

WHILST apoſtacy bore ſway in the palaces of the great, in the Schools of ſcience, and that all the higher claſſes of citizens were led away from the worſhip of their religion, ſome by example, others by the artful ſophiſms of the conſpirators, the duties of the clergy could not be doubtful. It was they who were to oppoſe a bank to the fetid torrent of impiety, and ſave the multitude from being ſwept away by its waters. Far more than its honor or its intereſt, its very name called on the clergy by the moſt ſacred ties of duty and of conſcience, to guard the altar againſt the attacks of the conſpirators. The leaſt backwardneſs in the combat would have added treaſon to apoſtacy. Let the hiſtorian who dared ſpeak the truth on kings, be true on the merits of his own body, and whether it redounds to the honor or diſgrace of his brethren, let him ſpeak the truth. Hence the future clergy will learn the line of conduct they are to follow, from what has been done.

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The conſpiracy againſt Chriſt is not extinct, it may be hidden; but ſhould it burſt forth anew, muſt not the paſtor know how far his conduct may influence or retard its progreſs?

If under the name of Clergy, were comprehended all thoſe who in France wore the half-livery of the church, all that claſs of men who in Paris, and ſome of the great towns, ſtyled themſelves Abbés, hiſtory might reproach the clergy with traitors and apoſtates, from the firſt dawn of the conſpiracy. We find the Abbé de Prades the firſt apoſtate, and happily firſt to repent. The Abbé Morellet, whoſe diſgrace is recorded in the repeated praiſes of Voltaire and D'Alembert *. The Abbé Condilhac, who was to ſophiſticate the morals of his royal pupil, and particularly that Abbé Raynald, whoſe name alone is tantamount to twenty demoniacs of the ſect. Sophiſters under title of Abbés.

Paris ſwarmed with thoſe Abbés; we ſtill ſay, the Abbé Barthelemi, the Abbé Beaudeau, again the Abbé Noel, the Abbé Syeyes. But the people on the whole, did not confound them with the clergy. They knew them to be the offſpring of avarice, ſeeking the livings but laying the duties of the church aſide, or through œcono-

* Letter to D'Alembert, No. 65, anno 1760. To Thiriot, 26th Jan. 1762.

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my adopting the dress while they dishonored it by their profligacy and irreligious writings. The numbers of these amphibious animals, and particularly in the metropolis, may be one of the severest reproaches against the clergy. However great the distinctions made between these and the latter may have been, the repeated scandals of the former, powerfully helped the conspiracy, by their laying themselves open to satire, which retorted upon the whole body, and affected the real ministers of the altar. Many of these Abbés who did not believe in God, had obtained livings through means of the Sophisters, who by soliciting dignities for their adepts, sought to introduce their principles, and dishonor the clergy by their immorality. It was the plague they spread in the enemy's camp, and not daring to face them in the field, they sought to poison their springs.

Conduct of the true clergy, and what may be objected against them.

If under the title of Clergy we only comprehend those who really served at the altar, the conspirators never prevailed against them. I have searched their records, I have examined whether among the bishops and functionary clergy, any of these adepts were to be found, who could be classed with the conspiring Sophisters. Antecedent to the Perigords, D'Autuns, or the apostacy of the Gobets, Gregoires, and other constitutionalists, I only meet with the name of Briennes, and one Judas seated in the College of the Apostles during

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the ſpace of thirty years ſhould ſuffice *. That Meſlier, rector of Etrépigny in Champagne might be added, were it certain that his impious *Laſt Will and Teſtament*, was not a forgery of the Sophiſters, attributed to him after his death.

In the times when the revolution drew near Philoſophiſm attached itſelf to the convents of men and ſoon produced Dom Gerles and his con-

* It is true that Voltaire in his correſpondence, ſometimes flatters himſelf with the protection of the Cardinal de Bernis, who was then but the youthful favorite of the Marquiſe de Pompadour, or the ſlender poet of the Graces. The miſtakes of a young man are not ſufficient to prove his concert with conſpirators, whom he never after ſupported unleſs in the expulſion of the Jeſuits. But could not what D'Alembert ſaid of the parliaments apply to him, " For-" give them, Lord, for they know not what they do, nor " whoſe commands they obey." D'Alembert writes in a quite other ſtyle, when he ſpeaks of Briennes; he ſhews him acting the moſt reſolute part of a traitor, in ſupport of the conſpiracy, and ſimply hiding his game from the clergy. (See particularly letter of the 4th and 21ſt Dec. 1770).

I found ſome few letters alſo, mentioning the Prince Lewis de Rohan, ſeconding their intrigues on the reception of Marmontel at the academy, condeſcending, as D'Alembert ſays, *from Coadjutor of a Catholic Church*, to become *the Coadjutor of Philoſophy*. (Let. 8th Dec. 1763). If ſuch an error in a prince, naturally noble and generous, proves that he was miſtaken in thinking that he barely protected literature, in the perſon of an adept, it does not for that prove him to have been initiated into the ſecrets of thoſe who abuſed his protection, and ended by ſporting with his perſon.

federates,

ſederates, but this belonged to a different claſs of conſpirators, who are to be the future object of our Memoirs. At all times the body of the clergy preſerved the purity of its faith, a diſtinction might have been made between the zealous edifying eccleſiaſtics, and the lax not to ſay ſcandalous ones; but that of believing and unbelieving could never ſtand. Never could the conſpirators exult in this latter diſtinction. Would they not have availed themſelves of their decreaſing faith, as they did of the incredulity of the miniſters of Geneva *. On the contrary, nothing but the moſt ſcurrilous abuſe is uttered againſt the clergy for their zeal in ſupport of Chriſtianity, and the ſatire of the Sophiſters redounds to their immortal honor.

The purity of faith alone was not ſufficient in the clergy; examples far more powerful than leſſons, were neceſſary to oppoſe the torrent of impiety. It is true that in the greater part of their paſtors the people beheld it in an eminent degree, but the majority will not ſuffice. Thoſe who are acquainted with the powers of impreſſion, know but too well, that one bad eccleſiaſtic does more harm than a hundred of the moſt virtuous can do good. All ſhould have been zealous but many were lax. There were among thoſe who ſerved

* See the Encyclopedia, article GENEVA; and letter of Voltaire to Mr. Vernes.

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the altars men unworthy of the ſanctuary. Theſe were ambitious men, who owing good example to their dioceſſes preferred the intrigues and pomp of the capital. It is true that ſuch a conduct could not have conſtituted vice in the worldling, but what may be light in the world, is often monſtrous in the church. The Sophiſters in particular with their morals, were not authoriſed to reprobate thoſe of the delinquent clergy. Where is the wonder that ſome few unworthy members ſhould have intruded on the ſanctuary, when the enemies of the church had poſſeſſed themſelves of its avenues, in order to bar the preferment of thoſe, whoſe virtues or learning they dreaded; how could it be otherwiſe, when the biſhops wiſhing to repel an unworthy member, Choiſeul anſwered, "Such are the men we want and will have:" or when the irreligious nobleman only beheld in the riches of the church, the inheritance of a ſon not leſs vicious than his father.

The clergy might certainly have thus replied to their enemies. And true it is, that if any thing could aſtoniſh hiſtory, it is not, that with all theſe intrigues and ambition, ſome few bad paſtors had been intruded on the church, but rather that ſo many good ones, worthy of their titles, yet remained. But the crimes of the firſt inſtigators, does not excuſe the ſcandals of thoſe paſtors who gave it. Let the future clergy find

this avowal recorded, let thoſe men be acquainted with whatever influenced the progreſs of the Antichriſtian Revolution, whoſe duty eſſentially militates againſt that progreſs, and renders the leaſt pretext given, criminal in them.

Their reſiſtance to impiety.

But hiſtory muſt alſo declare, that if the remiſſneſs of ſome few may have been a pretence for the conſpirators, that the majority made a noble ſtand againſt them, and though ſome few ſpots could be found, the body was nevertheleſs ſplendent with the light of its virtues, which ſhone forth with redoubled luſtre, when impiety at length, ſtrong in its progreſs, threw off the maſk. Then riſing above its powers the clergy are not to be intimidated by death, or the rigors of a long exile, and the Sophiſter unwillingly bluſhed at the calumnies he had ſpread, when he repreſented thoſe men as more attached to the riches than to the faith of the church. Their riches remained in the hands of the banditti, while that faith crowns the archbiſhops, biſhops and eccleſiaſtics butchered at the Carmes, or conſoles thoſe who have found a refuge in foreign countries, from the armies and bloody decrees of the Jacobins. Every where poor, and living on the beneficence of thoſe countries, but powerfully rich in the purity of their faith and teſtimony of their conſciences.

But

But the clergy had not waited these awful days to oppose the principles of the conspirators. From the first days of the conspiracy we can trace their opposition; scarce had impiety raised its voice when the clergy sought to confound it: the Encyclopedia was not half printed when it was proscribed in their assemblies; nor has a single one been held for these fifty years past, which has not warned the throne and the magistracy of the progress of Philosophism *.

At the head of the prelates who opposed it, we find Mr. de Beaumont archbishop of Paris, whose name history could not pass over without injustice; generous as an Ambrose, he was fired with his zeal and steadiness against the enemies of the faith. The Jansenists obtained his exile, and the Antichristians would willingly have sent him to the scaffold; but there would he have braved their poignards, as he did the Jansenists; when returning from his exile, he might be said to have acquired new vigor to oppose them both.

Many other bishops following his example, to the most unblemished morals, added their pastoral instructions. Mr. de Pompignan then Bishop of Puy refuted the errors of Voltaire and Jean Jaques; the Cardinal de Luynes warned his flock against the *System of Nature*; the Bishops of Bou-

* See the acts of the clergy since the year 1750.

logne, Amiens, Auch and many others, more powerfully edified their dioceſes by their example even than by their writings, nor did there paſs a ſingle year, but what ſome biſhop combated the increaſing progreſs of the impious conſpirators.

If the ſophiſtry of the ſect continued its ravages, it was not the fault of the biſhops or the religious writers. The Sorbonne expoſed it in their cenſures. The Abbé Bergier victoriouſly purſues Deiſm in its very laſt retrenchments, and makes it bluſh at its own contradictions. To the ſophiſticated learning of the conſpirators, he oppoſed a more loyal application and a truer knowledge of antiquity and of the weapons it furniſhed to religion *. The Abbé Guénée with all that urbanity and attic ſalt which he was maſter of, obliges Voltaire to humble himſelf at the ſight of his own ignorance and falſe criticiſm of ſacred writ †. The Abbé Gerard had found a method of ſanctifying novels themſelves. Under the moſt engaging forms, he reclaims youth from vice and its tortuous ways, and reſtores hiſtory to its primitive truth. The Abbé Pey had ſearched all the monuments of the church to reinſtate it in its real rights, and under the ſimple form of a catechiſm, we ſee the Abbé Feller, or Flexier

* His Deiſm refuted, and his Anſwer to Freret.

† Letters of ſome Portugueſe Jews.

Dureval,

Dureval, uniting every thing that reaſon, truth or ſcience can oppoſe againſt the Sophiſters.

Prior to all theſe champions of the faith, the Abbé Duguet had victoriouſly vindicated the principles of Chriſtianity, and the Abbé Houteville had demonſtrated the truth of it from hiſtory. From the firſt dawn of the conſpiracy, the Pere Berthier and aſſociates had, in the Journal de Trevoux, particularly expoſed the errors of the Encyclopediſts. In fine if the Celſi and Porphirii were numerous, religion had not loſt its Juſtins or its Origens. In theſe latter times as in the primitive days of Chriſtianity, he who ſincerely fought after truth muſt have found it in the victorious arguments of the religious authors, oppoſed to the ſophiſms of the conſpirators. And it may be ſaid that many points of religion had been placed in a clearer light, than they had been before, by theſe modern apologiſts.

The Chriſtian orators ſeconded their biſhops and perpetually called the attention of the people to their danger. The refutation of Philoſophiſm was become the object of their public diſcourſes. The Pere Neuville, and after him Mr. de Senez, in fine, the Pere Beauregard in particular, ſeem to have been fired by that holy zeal. That ſudden inſpiration with which he appeared to be ſeized in the Cathedral Church of Paris, is not yet forgotten; when thirteen years before the

revolution, expounding the different maxims and expoſing the plans of modern Philoſophiſm, he makes the vaults of the temple reſound with words too ſhamefully verified by the revolution, and exclaims in a prophetic ſtrain:

" Yes it is at the king—at the king and at " religion the philoſophers aim their blows. " They have graſped the hatchet and the ham- " mer, they only wait the favorable moment to " overturn the altar and the throne.—Yes, my " God, thy temples will be plundered and de- " ſtroyed; thy feſtivals aboliſhed; thy ſacred name " blaſphemed; thy worſhip proſcribed.—But what " ſounds, Great God, do I hear, what do I " behold! to the ſacred canticles which cauſed " the vaults of this temple to reſound to thy " praiſes, ſucceed wanton and prophane ſongs! " And thou infamous Deity of Paganiſm, impure " Venus, thou durſt advance hither even, and " audaciouſly in the place of the living God, ſeat " thyſelf on the throne of the Holy of Holies, and " there receive the guilty incenſe of thy new " adorers."

This diſcourſe was heard by a numerous audience, carried by their own piety or attracted by the eloquence of the orator; by adepts themſelves, who attended in hopes of carping at his expreſſions; by doctors of the laws whom we were acquainted with, and who often repeated them

them to us, long before we had ſeen them printed in various publications. The adepts cried out, ſedition and fanaticiſm. The doctors of the law only retracted the ſeverity of their cenſures after they had ſeen the prediction completely accompliſhed.

Such ſtrong cautions from the clergy, and the means they oppoſed, retarded the progreſs of the Sophiſters, but could not triumph over the conſpiracy. It was too deep, the black arts of ſeduction had been too well planned in the hidden dens of the conſpirators. I have ſtill to unfold ſome of their dark myſteries, and when light ſhall have ſhone upon them, with ſurpriſe ſhall the reader aſk, not how it was poſſible, with ſo much zeal on the part of the clergy, that the altar was overthrown, but on the contrary, how the fall of the temple had been ſo long delayed?

CHAP. XVII.

New and deeper Means of the Conspirators, to seduce even the lowest Classes of the People.

WHEN Voltaire had sworn to annihilate Christianity, he little flattered himself with drawing the generality of nations into his apostacy. His pride is often satisfied with the progress Philosophism had made among those *who governed, or were made to govern*, and among *men of letters* * ; for a long time he does not appear to envy Christianity, the inferior classes of society, which he does not comprehend under the appellation of the *better sort*. The facts, we are about to lay before the reader, will show to what new extent, the conspirators sought to carry their impious zeal, and by what artifices Christ was to be deprived of all worship, even from the lowest populace.

Origin of the Œconomists.

A doctor, known in France by the name of Duquesnai, had so well insinuated himself into the favor of Lewis XV. that the king used to call him his *thinker*. He really appeared to have deeply

* Let. to D'Alembert, 13th Dec. 1763.

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meditated on the happineſs of the ſubject, and he may have ſincerely wiſhed it; nevertheleſs he was but a ſyſtem-maker, and the founder of that ſect of Sophiſters called Œconomiſts, becauſe the œconomy and order to be introduced into the finances, and other means of alleviating the diſtreſſes of the people, were perpetually in their mouths. If ſome few of theſe Œconomiſts, ſought nothing further in their ſpeculations, it is at leaſt certain, that their writers, little hid their hatred for the Chriſtian religion. Their works abound in paſſages which ſhow their wiſh of ſubſtituting natural religion, at leaſt to the Chriſtian religion and revelation *. Their affectation of ſolely ſpeaking of agriculture, adminiſtration and œconomy, render them leſs liable to ſuſpicion, than thoſe conſpirators perpetually forwarding their impiety.

Their plan for free ſchools.

Duqueſnai and his adepts, had more eſpecially undertaken to perſuade their readers, that the country people, and mechanics in towns, were entirely deſtitute of that inſtruction neceſſary for their profeſſions. That men of this claſs, unable to acquire knowledge by reading, pined away in an ignorance equally fatal to themſelves and to the ſtate. That it was neceſſary to eſtabliſh free

* See the analyſis of thoſe works, by Mr. Le Gros, Prevoſt of St. Louis du Louvre.

ſchools,

ſchools, and particularly throughout the country, where children could be brought up to different trades, and inſtructed in the principles of agriculture. D'Alembert, and the Voltarian adepts, ſoon perceived what advantages they could reap from theſe eſtabliſhments. In union with the Œconomiſts, they preſented various memorials to Lewis XV. in which, not only the temporal but even the ſpiritual advantages of ſuch eſtabliſhments, for the people are ſtrongly urged. The king, who really loved the people, embraced the project with warmth. He opened his mind, on the ſubject, to Mr. Bertin, whom he honored with his confidence, and had entruſted with his privy purſe. It was from frequent converſations with this miniſter, that the memorial from which we extract the following account was drawn up. It is Mr. Bertin himſelf that ſpeaks.

The conſpirators ſupport the plan.

" Lewis XV., ſaid that miniſter, having entruſted me with the care of his privy purſe, it " was natural that he ſhould mention to me an " eſtabliſhment, of which his Majeſty was to de- " fray the expence. I had long ſince cloſely obſerved the different ſects of our philoſophers; " and though I had much to reproach myſelf as " to the practice, I had at leaſt preſerved the " principles of my religion. I had little doubt of " the efforts of the Philoſophers to deſtroy it. I " was ſenſible that they wiſhed to have the di-

" rection

" rection of these schools themselves, and by that
" means, seizing on the education of the people,
" under pretence that the bishops and ecclesiastics,
" who had hitherto superintended them and their
" teachers, could not be competent judges in sub-
" jects so little suited to clergymen. I appre-
" hended that their object was not so much to give
" lessons on agriculture, to the children of hus-
" bandmen and trades-people, as to withdraw
" them from their habitual instructions on their
" catechism, or on their religion.

" I did not hesitate to declare to the king, that
" the intentions of the Philosophers were very
" different from his. I know those conspirators,
" I said, and beware, Sire, of seconding them.
" Your kingdom is not deficient in free schools,
" or nearly free; they are to be found in every
" little town, and nearly in every village, and
" perhaps they are already but too numerous.
" It is not books that form mechanics and plow-
" men. The books and masters, sent by these
" philosophers, will rather infuse system than in-
" dustry, into the country people. I tremble
" lest they render them idle, vain, jealous, and
" shortly discontented, seditious, and at length re-
" bellious. I fear, lest the whole fruit of the ex-
" pence, they seek to put your Majesty to, will
" be to gradually obliterate, in the hearts of the
" people,

" people, its love for their religion and their " ſovereign.

" To theſe arguments, I added whatever my " mind could ſuggeſt, to diſſuade his Majeſty. I " adviſed him, in place of paying and ſending " thoſe maſters, which the Philoſophers had " choſen, to employ the ſame ſums, for multi- " plying the catechiſts, and in ſearching for good " and patient men, whom his Majeſty, in concert " with the biſhops, ſhould ſupport, in order to " teach the poor peaſantry the principles of reli- " gion, and to teach it them by rote, as the rec- " tors and curates do to thoſe children who do " not know how to read.

" Lewis XV. ſeemed to reliſh my arguments, " but the philoſophers renewed their attacks. " They had people about his perſon, who never " ceaſed to urge him, and the king could not per- " ſuade himſelf, that his *thinker*, Duqueſnai, and " the other Philoſophers, were capable of ſuch de- " teſtable views. He was ſo conſtantly beſet by " thoſe men, that during the laſt twenty years of " his reign, in the daily converſations which he " honored me with, I was perpetually employed " in combating the falſe ideas he had imbibed, on " the Œconomiſts and their aſſociates.

He diſcovers the means of the conſpirators.

" At length determined to give the king " proof poſitive that they impoſed upon him, I " ſought to gain the confidence of thoſe pedlars

" who

"who travel through the country, and expose "their goods to sale in the villages, and at the "gates of country seats. I suspected those in "particular who dealt in books, to be nothing "less than the agents of Philosophism with the "good country folks. In my excursions into "the country, I above all fixed my attention on "the latter. When they offered me a book to "buy, I questioned them what might be the "books they had? Probably Catechisms or "Prayer-books? Few others are read in the vil-"lages? At these words I have seen many smile. "No, they answered, those are not our works; "we make much more money of Voltaire, Dide-"rot, or other philosophic writings. What! says "I, the country people buy Voltaire and Diderot? "Where do they find the money for such dear "works? Their constant answer was, We have "them at a much cheaper rate than Prayer-"books; we may sell them at ten sols (5d.) a "volume, and have a pretty profit into the bar-"gain. Questioning some of them still farther, "many of them owned, that those books cost "them nothing; that they received whole bales of "them, without knowing whence they came, sim-"ply desired to sell them in their journeys at the "lowest price."

Such was the account given by Mr. Bertin, and particularly during his retreat at Aix la Chapelle.

pelle. All that he ſaid of thoſe pedlars perfectly coincides with what I have heard many rectors of ſmall towns and villages complain of. They looked upon theſe hawking bookſellers as the peſts of their pariſhes, and as the agents of the pretended philoſophers in the circulation of their impiety.

Lewis XV. warned by the diſcovery made by his miniſter, at length was ſatisfied that the eſtabliſhment of theſe ſchools ſo much promoted by the conſpirators, would only be a new mean of ſeduction in their hands. He abandoned the plan, but perpetually harraſſed by the protecting Sophiſters, he did not ſtrike at the root of the evil, and but feebly impeded its progreſs. The pedlars continued to ſerve the meaſures of the conſpirators, but this was but one of the inferior means employed to ſupply the delay of their free ſchools, as a new diſcovery brought one far more fatal to light.

The ſchool-maſters in the villages.

Many years prior to the French Revolution, a rector of the dioceſe of Embrun, had had frequent conteſts with the ſchool-maſter of the village, charging him with corrupting the morals of his pupils, and with diſtributing moſt irreligious books among them. The lord of the village, one of the protecting adepts, ſupported the ſchool-maſter; the good rector applied to his archbiſhop. Mr. Salabert D'Anguin, Vicar-general, deſired to

ſee

ſee the library of the maſter. It was filled with theſe ſort of works; but the delinquent, ſo far from denying the uſe he made of them, with a pretended ſimplicity, ſaid he had always heard thoſe works ſpoken of in the higheſt terms; and, like the hawkers, declared that he was not at the trouble of buying them, as they were ſent to him free of all coſts.

At about a league from Liege, and in the adjacent villages, maſters ſtill more perfidious, carried their means of corruption to a far greater extent. Theſe would aſſemble a certain number of trades-people and poor country fellows, who had not learned to read, on certain days, at particular hours. In theſe meetings, one of the pupils of the profeſſor would read in an audible voice, a chapter in ſome work with which he himſelf had already been perverted. For example one of Voltaire's romances, then the *Sermon of the Fifty*, the pretended *Good Senſe*, or other works of the ſect furniſhed by the maſter. Thoſe that abounded in calumny and abuſe againſt the clergy, were particularly read. Theſe meetings, the fore-runners of the Liege revolution, were only diſcovered when an honeſt and religious carpenter, who worked for a canon of that cathedral, declared the ſorrow he had conceived in finding his two ſons at one of theſe meetings reading ſuch lectures to about a dozen of country fellows. On this diſcovery,

very, a proper ſearch was made in the adjacent country, and many ſchool-maſters were found guilty of the ſame perfidy; and, terrible to ſay, by the exterior practice of their religion, theſe men had done away all ſuſpicion of ſuch infernal dealings. The reſearches were carried ſtill further, and the plots were traced up to D'Alembert; the following was the reſult of this new diſcovery. It is the very perſon to whom the honeſt carpenter opened his mind, and who made the neceſſary perquiſitions on ſo important an object, who gave me the following information.

D'Alembert's committee of education.

In ſeeking what men had been the promoters of theſe corrupters of youth, they were found to be protected by men whoſe connexions with the Sophiſters of the day, were no ſecret. At length they were traced to D'Alembert himſelf, and his office for tutors. It was to this office that all thoſe heretofore mentioned addreſſed themſelves, who wanted the recommendation of the Sophiſters to obtain a place of preceptor or tutor in the houſes of the great or wealthy. But at this period, private education was not the ſole object of D'Alembert. He now had eſtabliſhed a correſpondence throughout the provinces and beyond the kingdom. Not a place of profeſſor in a college, or of a ſimple ſchool-maſter in a village became vacant, but what he or his coadjutors were immediately informed of it by his agents. Alſo

of

of the perſons who petitioned for theſe places, of thoſe who ſhould be accepted or rejected, and of the means neceſſary to be employed, or perſons to be applied to, to obtain the nomination of an adept competitor, or of thoſe who were to be ſent from Paris; in ſhort, of the proper inſtructions to be given to the elected with regard to local circumſtances, or the more or leſs progreſs Philoſophiſm had made around them. Hence the impudence of the ſchool-maſter in the dioceſe of Embrun, and that hypocriſy in thoſe of the principality of Liege, where a government totally eccleſiaſtical was to be feared, and where infidelity had not yet made the ſame ravages it had in France.

It is thus that D'Alembert, faithful to the miſſion Voltaire had given him, *to enlighten youth as much as lay in his power* *, had extended his means of ſeducing them. Voltaire no longer regretted the colony of Cleves. That *manufacture* of impiety which was to have been its chief object, the philoſophic *confraternity*, like to *that of the Free-maſons*, the SECRET ACADEMY, more zealous in cruſhing Chriſt and his religion, than any other ever had been in the propagation of ſcience or learning, were now eſtabliſhed in Paris. And it was in the capital of the Moſt Chriſtian empire,

* Letter 15th of Sept. 1762.

that these associations were held, the parents of the revolution that was to bring devastation on France, and destruction on Christianity throughout the world. This was the last *mystery of Mytra*; this was the deepest intrigue of the conspirators; nor do I know that it has been laid open by any writer. In the correspondence of the Sophisters, no trace can be discovered of this intrigue, at least in what the adepts have published. They had their reasons for suppressing such letters, for even in the first days of the revolution, would not the people have been indignant on hearing of such means to wrest their religion from them, and never would such a mystery of iniquity have emerged from the darkness in which it had been conceived, if Providence had not ordained that the unfortunate adept we are about to speak of, tortured with remorse, should make an avowal of it.

Discovery of the secret academy, and of its means.

Before we publish his declaration ourselves, it is incumbent on us to say by what means we became acquainted with it, and what precautions we have taken to ascertain the authenticity of it. The honor and probity of the person who gave us the account, placed its veracity beyond all doubt, nevertheless we requested to have it under his signature. Still further, seeing that a great nobleman was mentioned as a witness, and even as the second actor in the scene, we did not hesitate in applying directly to him. This nobleman, of distinguished

honor,

honor, virtue and courage, bears the first distinction of French knighthood, and is in London at this present time. We attended to the recital he was pleased to make, and found it perfectly consonant with the signed memorial we had carried with us. If his name is omitted, it is only because he was loath to see it appear in a fact that criminates the memory of a friend, whose error was rather owing to the seduction of the Sophisters than to his own heart, and whose repentance in some sort atoned for the crime he had been guilty of. The following is the fact, which will complete the proofs, as yet only drawn from the letters of the conspirators themselves.

About the middle of the month of September, 1789, that is a little more than a fortnight antecedent to the atrocious 5th and 6th of October, at a time when the conduct of the National Assembly, having thrown the people into all the horrors of a revolution, indicated that they would set no bounds to their pretensions, Mr. Le Roy, Lieutenant of the King's Hunt, and an Academician, was at dinner at Mr. D'Angevilliers, Intendant of the Buildings of his Majesty, the conversation turned on the disasters of the revolution, and on those that were too clearly to be foreseen. Dinner over, the nobleman above mentioned, a friend of Le Roy, but hurt at having seen him so great an admirer of the Sophisters, reproached him

with it in the following expreſſive words. *Well, this however is the work of* PHILOSOPHY! Thunder-ſtruck at theſe words,—Alas! cried the Academician, *to whom do you ſay ſo? I know it but too well, and I ſhall die of grief and remorſe!* At the word *remorſe*, the ſame nobleman queſtioned him whether he had ſo greatly contributed towards the revolution, as to upbraid himſelf with it in that violent manner? "Yes, anſwered he, I have "contributed to it, and far more than I was aware "of. I was ſecretary to the committee to "which you are indebted for it, but I call hea-"ven to witneſs, that I never thought it would "come to ſuch lengths. You have ſeen me in "the king's ſervice, and you know that I love "his perſon. I little thought of bringing his ſub-"jects to this pitch, *and I ſhall die of grief and* "*remorſe!*"

Avowal and ſorrow of its ſecretary.

Preſſed to explain what he meant by this committee, this ſecret ſociety, entirely new to the whole company, the Academician reſumed: "This ſociety was a ſort of club that we had "formed among us philoſophers, and only ad-"mitted into it perſons on whom we could "perfectly rely. Our ſittings were regularly "held at the Baron D'Holbach's. Leſt our ob-"ject ſhould be ſurmiſed, we called ourſelves "Œconomiſts. We created Voltaire, though "abſent, our honorary and perpetual preſident.

"Our

" Our principal members were D'Alembert,
" Turgot, Condorcet, Diderot, La Harpe, and
" that Lamoignon Keeper of the Seals who, on
" his diſmiſſion, ſhot himſelf in his park."

The whole of this declaration was accompanied with tears and ſighs, when the adept, deeply penitent, continued: " The following were our oc- Their
" cupations; the moſt of thoſe works which object.
" have appeared for this long time paſt againſt
" religion, morals and government, were ours, or
" thoſe of authors devoted to us. They were all
" compoſed by the members or by the orders of
" the ſociety. Before they were ſent to the preſs,
" they were delivered in at our office. There we
" reviſed and corrected them; added to or cur-
" tailed them according as circumſtances required.
" When our philoſophy was too glaring for the
" times, or for the object of the work, we
" brought it to a lower tint, and when we thought
" that we might be more daring than the author,
" we ſpoke more openly. In a word, we made our
" writers ſay exactly what we pleaſed. Then the
" work was publiſhed under the title or name we
" had choſen, the better to hide the hand whence
" it came. Many ſuppoſed to have been poſthu-
" mous works, ſuch as *Chriſtianity Unmaſked*, and
" divers others, attributed to Freret and Boulan-
" ger, after their deaths, were iſſued from our
" ſociety.

" When

" When we had approved of those works, we " began by printing them on fine or ordinary " paper, in sufficient number to pay our expen- " ces, and then an immense number on the com- " monest paper. These latter we sent to hawkers " and booksellers free of costs, or nearly so, who " were to circulate them among the people at the " lowest rate. These were the means used to " pervert the people and bring them to the pre- " sent state you see them in. I shall not " see them long, *for I shall die of grief and re-* " *morse!*"

This recital had made the company shudder, nevertheless they could not but be struck at the remorse and horrid situation in which they beheld the speaker. Their indignation for Philosophism was carried still further, when Le Roy explained the meaning of ECR: L'INF (écrasez l'infame, *crush the wretch)*, with which Voltaire concludes so many of his letters. The reader will perceive, that in the whole of these Memoirs we had uniformly given the same explanation; and indeed the context of the letters makes the sense evident; but he revealed what we should not have dared assert on our own authority, that all those to whom Voltaire wrote under that horrid formula, were members or initiated into the mysteries of this secret committee. He also declared what we have already said on the plan of elevating Briennes

to

to the archbiſhopric of Paris, and many other particulars, which he related, and that would have been precious for hiſtory, but have eſcaped the memory of thoſe preſent. None of them could give me any information as to the exact time when this ſecret academy was formed; but it appears from the diſcovery made by Mr. Bertins, that it muſt have exiſted long before the death of Lewis XV.

I think it neceſſary, on this occaſion, to lay before my reader a letter of March 1763, which Voltaire writes to Helvetius. "Why, ſays he to "his zealous brother, do the worſhippers of rea- "ſon live in ſilence and fear? They are not ſuf- "ficiently acquainted with their own ſtrength. "*What ſhould hinder them from having a little preſs* "*of their own*, and from publiſhing ſmall works, "ſhort *and uſeful, and which ſhould only be confided* "*to their friends.* This was the method followed "by thoſe who printed the laſt will of the good "and honeſt curate (Meſlier), his teſtimony is "certainly of great weight. It is further *certain*, "*that you and your friends could, with the greateſt* "*facility, pen the beſt works poſſible, and throw them* "*into circulation without expoſing yourſelves in the* "*leaſt.*"

There alſo exiſts another letter, in which Voltaire, under the name of *Jean Patourel*, heretofore a Jeſuit, and in his ironic ſtyle, ſeeming to feli-

citate Helvetius on his pretended converſion, deſcribes the method employed for the circulation of thoſe works, among the lower claſſes. " In oppoſition to the *Chriſtian pedagogue*, and the *Think well on it*, books formerly ſo much famed for the converſions they had wrought; pretty little philoſophic works are *cleverly* circulated; theſe little books rapidly ſucceed each other. *They are not ſold, they are given to people who can be relied on, who in their turn diſtribute them, to women and young people.* At one time it is the *Sermon of the fifty*, attributed to the King of Pruſſia; at another *an extract from the will*, of the unfortunate curate Jean Meſlier, who, on his death-bed, implored forgiveneſs of his God, for having taught Chriſtianity, or laſtly, *the Catechiſm of the honeſt man*, written by a certain Abbé Durand, (that is Voltaire himſelf) *."

Theſe two letters may throw great light on the ſubject. Firſt, we ſee Voltaire giving the plan of a ſecret ſociety, which perfectly coincides with the one deſcribed by Le Roi; ſecondly, that one of a ſimilar nature exiſted at Ferney; thirdly, that it had not taken place, at the period when theſe letters were written, as he preſſes the eſtabliſhment of it. But on the other ſide, the pretended poſthumous works of Freret and Boulanger, which the adept Le Roi

* Let. to Helvetius, 25th Aug. 1763.

declares

declares to have been issued from this secret academy, holding its sittings at the Baron D'Holbach's, were published in 1756 and 1757*. It therefore appears that this secret committee was established at Paris, between the years 1763 and 1766. That is to say, that for three and twenty years preceding the revolution, they had been incessantly attempting to seduce the people by those artifices and intrigues, the shame of which, drew the above avowal from its repenting secretary. Such would have been the manufacture of Voltaire's colony. When established.

It was with truth, that this unhappy adept repeated, *I shall die of grief and remorse*; for he did not survive his avowal three months. When he mentioned the principal members, he added that all those to whom Voltaire wrote under the abominable formula of *Crush the Wretch*, were either members, or initiated into the mysteries of this secret academy. Other adepts of the academy.

In following this rule the first of these adepts will certainly be Damilaville, who exulted so much on hearing that none but the rabble were left to worship Christ; for it is to him in particular, that Voltaire always ends his letters by, crush the wretch. This man was himself very little above that rabble he so much despised. He had made a small Damilaville.

* See L'Antiquité devoilée, Amsterdam, anno 1766, and l'Examen des Apologistes du Christianisme, anno 1767.

fortune

fortune by being one of the clerks in the office for the tax called the Vingtiemes, and had a ſalary of about 1801. per ann. His philoſophy had not taught him the ſpirit of poverty, as we ſee Voltaire excuſing himſelf, on his not having been able to procure him a more lucrative employment *.

The diſtinctive character, which Voltaire gives him in one of his letters, is that of *hating God*; could that have given riſe to their great intimacy? It was through his means, that he tranſmitted his moſt impious productions or particular ſecrets to the conſpirators. We ſhould have remained in the dark, as to his literary talents, had it not been for a letter from Voltaire to the Marquis de Villevieille, which ſo perfectly deſcribes the meanneſs of the Sophiſters, and how diſtant they were from the true Philoſopher, ready to ſacrifice every thing in the cauſe of truth. "No, my dear friend (ſays "Voltaire to the Marquis), the modern Socrateſes "will not drink hemlock. The Athenian Socrates, "with reſpect to us, was a very imprudent man, "an eternal quibbler, and who fooliſhly ſet his "judges at defiance.

"Our philoſophers of theſe days, are wiſer than "that. They are not poſſeſſed with that fooliſh "vanity of putting their names to their works. "They are inviſible hands, who, from one end of

* Gen. Cor. let. to Damilaville, 2d Dec. 1757.

"Europe

" Europe to the other, pierce fanaticiſm with the " ſhafts of truth. Damilaville is juſt dead, he " was the author of *Chriſtianity unmaſked* (which " he had publiſhed as a poſthumous work of " Boulanger's) and of many other writings. *It* " *was never known, and his friends kept his ſecret* " *with a fidelity worthy of Philoſophy* *."

Such then is the author of that famous work, which the Sophiſters had given us, as flowing from the pen of one of their moſt learned adepts. Damilaville, under the name of Boulanger, from his publican-office, ſallies forth the phœnix of modern Philoſophiſm, and with the courage of a Sophiſter, ſhrinks from his own works, leſt they coſt him dearly, if ever called upon to ſupport his principles before the tribunals. He alſo would have ſhrunk from the hemlock potion, in the infamy and eternal ſhame, that ſuch abominable calumnies as he had vomited forth againſt Chriſtianity, muſt have overpowered him with.

This adept, ſo worthy of Voltaire's and D'Alembert's friendſhip, died a bankrupt clerk in office, and had been parted from his wife, for the laſt twelve years. Voltaire is his panegyriſt when he ſays, " I ſhall always regret Damilaville, I " loved the intrepidity of his ſoul, he was enthu-

* 20th Dec. 1768.

" ſiaſtic

"fiaſtic like St. Paul, he was a neceſſary man*." Decency forbids us to quote the remainder of the panegyric.

Next to this Sophiſter, whoſe chief merits appear to have been his enthuſiaſtic Atheiſm, we find the Count D'Argental. I have already ſpoken of his intimacy with Voltaire, and only mention him, as one of thoſe initiated in the ſecret myſteries of the ſecret academy; being one of thoſe correſpondents with whom Voltaire expreſſes himſelf in the moſt unreſerved manner on his plan of cruſhing Chriſt †.

Count D'Argental.

Thiriot. On the ſame claim a ſort of ſcribbler called Thiriot is to be aggregated to the academy. Neither more elevated than Damilaville in rank or fortune; he for a longer time ſubſiſted on Voltaire's benefactions, who firſt made him his diſciple and then his agent. Brother Thiriot added ingratitude to his impiety, and Voltaire complained bitterly of him. But Thiriot notwithſtanding his ingratitude, always remained impious, which reconciled him to Voltaire and preſerved him within the fraternal embrace of the conſpirators ‡.

* 23d December 1769, 13th of January, &c.

† See numbers of letters in the General Correſpondence.

‡ See Correſpondence and Letters to D'Alembert, and letters from the Marchioneſs of Chatellet to the King of Pruſſia.

It

It is with concern that Mr. Saurin is seen a member of this academy. Certainly it is not his literary works which raise this sentiment, for were it not for his Tragedy of Spartacus, both his prose and verse, would equally be forgotten; but we are told that it was rather to his want of fortune, than to his disposition, that he owed his connexions with the Sophisters. He is even said to have been a man of great probity, but that he was drawn into that society, for the consideration of a pension of a thousand crowns which Helvetius paid him. What an excuse! And where is the probity of the man who will sacrifice his religion to his interest; and for a pension coalesce with those who conspire against his God? We see Voltaire writing to Saurin himself, and placing him on the same line with Helvetius and the initiated brethren, entrusting him with the same secrets, and exhorting him to the same warfare against Christ. As we have never seen him disclaim the connexion, the shame of it must attach to him *. Saurin.

A Swiss Baron of the name of Grimm must necessarily find his place here. He was the worthy friend and co-operator of Diderot, like him travelling to Petersbourg to form adepts, then returning to Paris, he also joins in his absurdities, Grimm.

* Voltaire to Mr. Saurin, anno 1761; and to Damilaville, 28th December 1762.

repeats

repeats after him, that *between a man and his dog there is no other difference but their dreſs*, and exults in being able to apprize Voltaire, that the Emperor Joſeph II. was initiated into his myſteries.

Baron D'Holbach.

We will terminate our liſt by the German Baron D'Holbach, who deſtitute of abilities lends his houſe. He had acquired at Paris, the reputation of a lover and protector of the arts, nor did the Sophiſters contribute a little to it. This was a cloak to their meetings at his houſe. Unable to vie with the poet he wiſhes to be the Mecenas. Nor is he the only perſon who has owed his reputation to his purſe, and to his having diſpoſed of it in favor of the Sophiſters. In ſpite of theſe pretences, ſought for coloring the frequent meetings of the adepts, the public repute of thoſe who reſorted to his houſe, had thrown ſuch an odium on him, that it was openly ſaid, that to gain admittance at his houſe, it was neceſſary, as in Japan, to trample on the croſs.

Such then were the members of this famous academy, whoſe ſole object was to corrupt the minds of the people and prepare the way to univerſal apoſtacy, under the pretext of their happineſs, public œconomy, or the love and advancement of the arts. Here are fifteen of its members which we have mentioned, Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, Helvetius, Turgot, Condorcet, La Harpe, the keeper of the ſeals Lamoignon, Damilaville, Thiriot,

Thiriot, Saurin, the Count D'Argental, Grimm, the Baron D'Holbach, and the unfortunate Le Roi, who died consumed with grief and remorse, for having been the secretary to so monstrous an academy.

If at present we ascend back to the real founder of this academy, to Voltaire's letter to Helvetius, already quoted, the following one to D'Alembert should be added: "Let the Philosophers unite "in *a brotherhood like the Free-Masons*, let them "assemble and support each other; let them be "faithful to the association. Then I would let "myself be burnt for them. This SECRET ACA-"DEMY will be far superior to that of Athens, "and to all those of Paris. But every one thinks "only for himself, and forgets that his most sacred "duty is to *crush the wretch*." This letter is dated 20th of April 1761. Confronting it with the declaration of Le Roi, we see how faithfully the Parisian adepts had followed the plans of the premier chief. Often did he lament his inability of presiding over their toils but at a distance; and it was difficult to persuade him, that the capital of the most Christian empire, was a proper seat for so licentious an establishment. It was for that reason we see him pursuing his favorite plan of the philosophic colony, even after the establishment of the secret academy. But the time came when the direful success of the latter more than com-

compensated the loss of the former. Triumphant in Paris and surrounded by the adepts, he was one day to reap the fruits of such unrelenting constancy in the warfare he waged during the last half century against his God.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the General Progreſs of the Conſpiracy throughout Europe.—Triumph and Death of the Chiefs.

AS the conſpirators advanced in their arts of ſeduction, their hopes are daily heightened by ſome new ſucceſs. They were already ſuch, that a few years after the Encyclopedia had firſt appeared, we find D'Alembert confidently writing to Voltaire, "Let Philoſophy alone, and in twenty "years the Sorbonne, however much Sorbonne "it may be, will outſtrip Lauſanne itſelf." That is to ſay, that in twenty years time (and this was written 21ſt July 1757), the Sorbonne would be as incredulous and Antichriſtian as a certain miniſter of Lauſanne (Voltaire himſelf) who furniſhed the moſt impious articles that are to be found in the Encyclopedia. Hopes of the conſpirators.

Soon after, Voltaire improving on D'Alembert, ſays, twenty years more, *and God will be in a pretty plight* * ! That is to ſay, twenty years more, and not an altar of the God of the Chriſtians ſhall remain.

* 25th Feb. 1758.

Their progress. Every thing indeed seemed to forbode the universal reign of impiety throughout Europe. The district which had fallen in particular to Voltaire, was making such an awful progress, that eight years after he writes, that *not a single Christian was to be found from Geneva to Berne* *. Every where else, to use his expressions, the *world was acquiring wit apace*, and even so fast, *that a general revolution in ideas threatened all around.* Germany in particular, gave him great hopes †. Frederick, who as carefully watched it, as Voltaire did Switzerland, writes, that "philosophy was beginning to "penetrate even into superstitious Bohemia, and "into Austria, the former abode of superstition ‡."

In Switzerland.

In Germany.

In Russia. In Russia the adepts gave if any thing, still greater hopes. This protection of the *Scythians*, is what consoles Voltaire for the persecutions which befel the sect elsewhere ||. He could not contain himself for joy, when he wrote to D'Alembert how much the brethren were protected at Petersburg, and informed him, that during a journey made by that court, the Scythian protectors had each one, for his amusement, undertaken to translate a chapter of Belisarius into their language: that the Empress had undertaken one herself, and

* 8th Feb. 1766. † 2d Feb. 1765.

‡ Let. to Voltaire, 143, anno 1766.

|| Let. to Diderot, 25th Dec. 1762.

had

had even been at the trouble of reviſing the tranſlation of this work, which in France had been cenſured by the Sorbonne *.

D'Alembert wrote, that in Spain Philoſophiſm was *undermining* the Inquiſition †, and according to Voltaire, a great *revolution was operating in ideas* there, as well as *in Italy* ‡. A few years after we find this Italy ſwarming with men thinking like Voltaire and D'Alembert, and that their ſole intereſt prevented them from openly declaring for impiety ‖ In Spain. In Italy.

As to England they made but little doubt of its falling an eaſy prey. To hear them ſpeak, it was overrun with Socinians who ſcoffed at and hated Chriſt, as Julian the apoſtate hated and deſpiſed him, and who only differed in name from the philoſophers §. In England.

Finally, according to their calculations, Bavaria and Auſtria alone (this was during the lifetime of the Empreſs Queen) continued to ſupport the divines and defenders of religion. The Empreſs of Ruſſia *was driving them on glorioufly*, and they were at *their laſt gaſp in Poland*, thanks to the King Poniatowſki. They were *already over-*

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, July 1767.
† 3d May, 1773.
‡ Let. to Mr. Riche, 1ſt March 1768.
‖ Voltaire to D'Alembert, 16th June 1773.
§ Let. to the King of Pruſſia, 15th Nov. 1773.

thrown in Prussia, through the care of Frederick, and *in the north of Germany* the sect daily gained ground, thanks to the Landgraves, Margraves, Dukes and Princes, adepts and protectors *.

In France. Far otherwise did matters stand in France. We often see the two chiefs complaining of the obstacles they had to encounter in this empire, the favorite object of their conspiracy.

The perpetual appeals of the clergy, the decrees of the parliaments, the very acts of authority which the ministers, though friendly to the conspirators, were obliged to exert in order to hide their predelection, were not totally ineffectual. The bulk of the nation still remained attached to its faith. That numerous class called the people, in spite of all the intrigues of the secret academy, still flocked to the altar on days of solemnity. In the higher classes, numerous were the exceptions to be made of those who still loved religion. Indignant at so many obstacles, Voltaire would perpetually stimulate his countrymen, whom he contemptuously calls his *poor Velches*. Sometimes however he was better pleased with them, and would write to his dear Marquis Villevieille, "*The people* "*are mighty foolish, nevertheless Philosophism makes* "*its way down to them.* Be well assured for in- "stance, that there are not twenty people in

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, 1st Sept. 1767.

"Geneva

"Geneva who would not abjure Calvin as ſoon "as they would the Pope, and that many phi- "loſophers are to be found in Paris behind the "counter*." But generally ſpeaking, his complaints about France predominate in his correſpondence with the conſpirators; ſometimes he would deſpair of ever ſeeing Philoſophy triumph there. D'Alembert, on the ſpot, judged of matters very differently, and though every thing did not anſwer his wiſhes, nevertheleſs he thought himſelf authoriſed to flatter Voltaire, that though *philoſophy might receive a temporary check, it never could be got the better of* †.

About the period when D'Alembert writes this, it was but too true that Philoſophiſm could flatter itſelf with the hopes of triumphing over the attachment of the French nation to their religion. During the laſt ten or twelve years, impiety had made a dreadful progreſs, the colleges had ſent forth a new generation educated by new maſters, and they were nearly void of all knowledge, and particularly deſtitute of religion or piety. It perfectly coincided with Condorcet's expreſſion, that Philoſophiſm *had deſcended from the thrones of the North into the very univerſities* ‡. The religious generation was nearly extinct, and the revealed

* 20th Dec. 1768. † 25th Jan. 1776.

‡ See his Preface to his edition of Paſchal's Thoughts.

truths were obliged to give place to the empty ſounds of reaſon, philoſophy, prejudices, and ſuch like. In the higher claſſes impiety made large ſtrides, whether at court or in the tribunals; from the capital it gained the provinces, and the maſter ſhows the example to the ſervant. Every body would be a Philoſopher, whether miniſter or magiſtrate, ſoldier or author. He that wiſhed to follow his religion, was expoſed to all the ſarcaſtic irony of the Sophiſters, and that particularly among the great, where it required as much courage to profeſs one's religion, ſince the conſpiracy, as it did audacity and raſhneſs to declare one's ſelf an Atheiſt before.

Triumph of Voltaire.

Voltaire was at that time in his eighty-fourth year. After ſo long an abſence, and always under the power and laſh of the law, he ſhould only have appeared publicly in Paris, to controvert thoſe impieties, which had brought the animadverſion of the parliament on him. D'Alembert and his academy reſolve to overcome that obſtacle. In ſpite of religion they eaſily ſucceed, and miniſters, chiefly adepts, abuſing the clemency of Lewis XVI. obtain the recal of this premier chief, under pretence that this aged man had been ſufficiently puniſhed by his long exile, and that in favor of his literary trophies, his failings might be over-looked. It was agreed that the laws ſhould be ſilent with regard to him on his approach to Paris; the magiſtrates

ſtrates ſeemed to have forgotten the decree they had paſſed againſt him. This was all the conſpirators wiſhed. Voltaire arrives in Paris, he receives the homage of the ſect, and his arrival conſtitutes their triumphal day. This man, bending under the weight of years, ſpent in an unrelenting warfare, whether public or private, againſt Chriſtianity, is received in the capital of his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, amidſt thoſe acclamations which were wont to announce the arrival of the favorite child of victory returning from the arduous toils of war.

Whitherſoever Voltaire bent his ſteps, a croud of adepts, and the gazing multitude, flocked to meet him. All the academies celebrate his arrival, and they celebrate it in the Louvre, in the palace of the kings, where Lewis XVI. is one day to be a priſoner and victim to the occult and deepeſt conſpiracies of the Sophiſters. The theatres decreed their crowns to the impious chief; entertainments in his honor, rapidly ſucceed each other. Intoxicated with the incenſe of the adepts, through pride he fears to ſink under it. In the midſt of theſe coronations and acclamations, he exclaimed, *You then wiſh to make me expire with glory!*—Religion alone mourned at this ſight, and vengeance hung over his head. The impious man had feared to die of glory, but rage and deſpair was to forward his laſt hour ſtill more than his death.

his great age. In the midſt of his triumphs, a violent hemorrhage raiſed apprehenſions for his life. D'Alembert, Diderot and Marmontel, haſtened to ſupport his reſolution in his laſt moments, but were only witneſſes to their mutual ignominy as well as to his own.

Here let not the hiſtorian fear exaggeration. Rage, remorſe, reproach and blaſphemy, all accompany and characterize the long agony of the dying Atheiſt. This death, the moſt terrible that is ever recorded to have ſtrucken the impious man, will not be denied by his companions of impiety; their ſilence, however much they may wiſh to deny it, is the leaſt of thoſe corroborative proofs, which could be adduced. Not one of the Sophiſters has ever dared to mention any ſign given, of reſolution or tranquillity, by the premier chief, during the ſpace of three months, which elapſed from the time he was crowned at the theatre, until his deceaſe. Such a ſilence expreſſes, how great their humiliation was in his death.

It was on his return from the theatre, and in the midſt of the toils he was reſuming, in order to acquire freſh applauſe, when Voltaire was warned, that the long career of his impiety was drawing to an end.

In ſpite of all the Sophiſters, flocking around him, in the firſt days of his illneſs he gave ſigns of wiſhing to return to the God he had ſo often blaſ-

phemed.

phemed. He calls for the prieſts who miniſtered to *Him* whom he had ſworn *to cruſh*, under the appellation of *the wretch*. His danger encreaſing, he wrote the following note to the Abbé Gaultier. "You had promiſed me, Sir, to come and hear "me. I intreat you would take the trouble of "calling as ſoon as poſſible. *Signed*, VOLTAIRE. "Paris, the 26th Feb. 1778."

A few days after he wrote the following declaration, in preſence of the ſame Abbé Gaultier, the Abbé Mignot and the Marquis de Villevieille, copied from the minutes depoſited with Mr. Momet, notary at Paris.

"I, the underwritten, declare, that for theſe "four days paſt, having been afflicted with a vo- "miting of blood, at the age of eighty-four, and "not having been able to drag myſelf to the "church, the Rev. the Rector of St. Sulpice, "having been pleaſed to add to his good works, "that of ſending to me the Abbé Gaultier, a "prieſt; I confeſſed to him, and if it pleaſes God "to diſpoſe of me, I die in the *Holy Catholic* "*Church*, in which I was born; hoping that the "divine mercy, will deign to pardon all my faults: "if ever I have ſcandalized the Church, I aſk "pardon of God and of the Church. 2d March "1778. *Signed*, VOLTAIRE: in preſence of the "Abbé Mignot my nephew, and the Marquis de "Villevieille my friend."

After

After the two witneſſes had ſigned this declaration, Voltaire added theſe words, copied from the ſame minutes: "The Abbé Gaultier, my "confeſſor, having apprized me, that it was ſaid "among a certain ſet of people, I ſhould proteſt "againſt every thing I did at my death; I declare "I never made ſuch a ſpeech, and that it is an old "jeſt attributed, long ſince, to many of the learned, "more enlightened than I am."

Was this declaration a freſh inſtance of his former hypocriſy? Unfortunately, after the explanations we have ſeen him give of his exterior acts of religion, might there not be room for doubt? Be that as it may, this is a public homage, paid to that religion in which he declared he meant to die, notwithſtanding his having perpetually conſpired againſt it, during his life. This declaration is alſo ſigned by that ſame friend and adept the Marquis de Villevieille to whom eleven years before, Voltaire was wont to write, "*Conceal your march from the* "*enemy* in your endeavours to cruſh the wretch *."

Voltaire had permitted this declaration to be carried to the rector of St. Sulpice, and to the Archbiſhop of Paris, to know whether it would be ſufficient. When the Abbé Gaultier returned with the anſwer, it was impoſſible for him to gain admittance to the patient. The conſpirators had

* 27th April 1767.

ſtrained

ſtrained every nerve to hinder the chief from conſummating his recantation, and every avenue was ſhut to the prieſt, which Voltaire himſelf had ſent for. The demons haunted every acceſs; rage ſucceeds to fury, and fury to rage again during the remainder of his life. Then it was that D'Alembert, Diderot, and about twenty others of the conſpirators, who had beſet his apartment, never approached him, but to witneſs their own ignominy, and often he would curſe them and exclaim, " Retire, it is you that have brought " me to my preſent ſtate; begone, I could have " done without you all, but you could not exiſt " without me, and what a wretched glory have you " procured me !"

Then would ſucceed the horrid remembrance of his conſpiracy; they could hear him, the prey of anguiſh and dread, alternatively ſupplicating or blaſpheming that God whom he had conſpired againſt, and in plaintive accents would he cry out, Oh Chriſt! Oh Jeſus Chriſt! And then complain that he was abandoned by God and man. The hand which had traced in ancient writ the ſentence of an impious reviling king, ſeemed to trace before his eyes CRUSH THEN, DO CRUSH THE WRETCH. In vain he turned his head away, the time was coming apace when he was to appear before the tribunal of him he had blaſphemed, and his

phyſicians,

phyſicians, particularly Mr. Tronchin, calling in to adminiſter relief, thunderſtruck retire, declaring the death of the impious man to be terrible indeed. The pride of the conſpirators would willingly have ſuppreſſed theſe declarations, but it was in vain: the Mareſchal de Richelieu flies from the bed-ſide declaring it to be a ſight too terrible to be ſuſtained, and Mr. Tronchin, that the furies of Oreſtes could give but a faint idea of thoſe of Voltaire.

Thus died on the 30th of May 1778, rather worn out by his own fury than by the weight of years, the moſt unrelenting conſpirator againſt Chriſtianity, that had been ſeen ſince the time of the apoſtles. His perſecution longer and more perfidious than thoſe of Nero or Diocleſian had YET only produced apoſtates, but they were more numerous than the martyrs made in the former perſecutions.

D'Alembert ſucceeds him.

The conſpirators in loſing Voltaire, had loſt every thing on the ſide of talents; but his arms of impiety they had remaining in his numerous writings. The arts and cunning of D'Alembert proved more than a ſuccedaneum to the genius of their deceaſed founder, and he is proclaimed chief. The ſecret committee of education in Paris, the country conventicles and the correſpondence with the village ſchool-maſters owed their origin

origin to him. He continued to direct the works of the secret academy, in the propagation of impiety, until called upon to appear before that same God who had already judged Voltaire. He died five years after his patron, that is in November 1783. Left remorse should compel him to similar recantations, which had so much humbled the sect, Condorcet undertook to render him inaccessible; if not to repentance and remorse, at least to all who might have availed themselves of his homage done to religion. He dies.

When the Rector of St. Germain's, in quality of pastor presented himself, Condorcet, like to the devil who watches over his prey, ran to the door and barred his entrance! Scarce had the breath left his body when the pride of Condorcet betrays his secret. D'Alembert really had felt that remorse which must have been common to him with Voltaire; he was on the eve of sending, as the only method of reconciliation, for a minister of that same Christ against whom he had also conspired; but Condorcet ferociously combated these last signs of repentance in the dying Sophister, and he gloried in having forced him to expire in final impenitence. The whole of this odious conflict is comprized in one horrid sentence; when Condorcet announced the decease of DAlembert and was relating the circumstances, he did not

not bluſh to add, *Had I not been there he would have flinched alſo* *.

Frederick

Frederick alone had ſucceeded or pretended to have ſucceeded in perſuading himſelf that death was but an eternal ſleep †. And he alone appears to have been an exception from among the chiefs of the conſpiracy, with whom the approach of death had ſubſtituted, in lieu of their pretended hatred for the *wretch*, the fear of his judgments.

Diderot that hero of Atheiſm, that conſpirator who long ſince had carried his audacity againſt his Chriſt and his God, to inſanity; Diderot I ſay, is he who was neareſt to a true reconciliation. This is another of thoſe myſteries of iniquity carefully hidden by the Antichriſtian conſpirators.

* Hiſtorical Dictionary, Article D'Alembert. It is true that Condorcet, ſorry to have inadvertantly revealed the ſecret of his aſſociate's remorſe, ſought to deſtroy the effect of it. It is true, that queſtioned another time on the circumſtances of D'Alembert's death, he anſwered in his philoſophic jargon, *that he did not die like a coward.* In fine it is true that in his firſt letter to the King of Pruſſia, in date of the 22d Nov. 1783, he repreſents D'Alembert dying with a tranquil courage, and with his uſual ſtrength and preſence of mind. But it was too late to lead Frederick into error on that ſubject, as the adept Grimm had already written, *That ſickneſs had greatly weakened D'Alembert's mind in his laſt moments* (11th of November 1783.)

† Vide ſupra.

When

When the Empreſs of Ruſſia purchaſed Diderot's library, ſhe left him the uſe of it during his life. Her munificence had enabled him to have near his perſon, in quality of librarian, a young man who was far from partaking in his impiety. Diderot liked him much, and he had particularly endeared himſelf by the attentions he had ſhown Diderot during his laſt illneſs. It was he who generally dreſſed the wounds in his legs. Terrified at the ſymptons he perceived, the young man runs to acquaint a worthy eccleſiaſtic, the Abbé Lemoine, then reſident at the houſe called the Foreign Miſſions, Rue du Bac Fauxbourg, St. Germain. By his advice the young man prays during half an hour in a church, begging of Almighty God, that he will direct him in what he ſhould ſay or do, to enſure the ſalvation of one, who though he deteſted his impieties, he could never loſe ſight of as his benefactor. Riſing from his prayers he returns to Diderot and the ſame day when dreſſing his wounds, he ſpoke as follows:

" Mr. Diderot, you ſee me this day more anxi-
" ous than ever on your fate, do not be ſurpriſed,
" I am aware how much I am indebted to you,
" it is by your kindneſs that I ſubſiſt, you have
" deigned to ſhow greater confidence in me than
" I had reaſon to expect. I cannot prove un-
" grateful, I ſhould for ever accuſe myſelf of in-
" gratitude,

" gratitude, were I to hide the danger, which " your wounds declare you to be in. Mr. Dide- " rot, you may have diſpoſitions to make, and " above all you have precautions to take, for the " world you are about to enter. I am but a young " man I know; but are you certain that your " philoſophy has not left you a ſoul to ſave? I " have no doubt of it, and it is impoſſible for " me to reflect on it, and not warn my benefactor " to avoid the eternal misfortune which may await " him. See, ſir, you have yet ſufficient time " left, and excuſe an advice which gratitude and " your friendſhip forces from me."

Diderot heard the young man with attention, and even melted into tears, thanked him for his frankneſs and the concern he had ſhown for him. He promiſed to conſider and to reflect what line of conduct he ſhould hold in a ſituation which he owned to be of the greateſt importance.

The young man waited his deciſion with the greateſt impatience, and the firſt ſigns were conformable to his wiſhes. He ran to inform the Abbé Lemoine that Diderot aſked to ſee a clergyman, and the Abbé directed him to Mr. de Terſac, Rector of St. Sulpice. Mr. de Terſac waited on Diderot and had ſeveral conferences with him, he was preparing a public recantation of his paſt errors, but unfortunately he was watched by the conſpirators. The viſit of a prieſt to Diderot had

had given the alarm to the Sophiſters, who would have thought themſelves diſhonored by the dereliction of ſo important a chief. They ſurround him, they perſuade him that he is impoſed upon, that his health is not in ſo bad a ſtate, and that a little country air would immediately recover him. Diderot was for a long time deaf to all the arguments Philoſophiſm could invent, but at length conſented to try at leaſt the country air. His departure is kept ſecret and the wretches who carry him away, knew that his laſt hour was approaching faſt. The Sophiſters who were in the plot pretended to think him ſtill in Paris, and the whole town is miſled by daily reports; while thoſe jailors who had ſeized on his perſon, watched him till they had ſeen him expire; then continuing their horid duplicity they bring back the lifeleſs corpſe to Paris and ſpread the report that he had died ſuddenly at table. He expired the 2d of July 1784, and was repreſented as having died calm, in all his Atheiſm, without giving any ſigns of remorſe. The public are again miſled and thus many are corroborated in their impiety, who might have followed the example of this chief, had he not by the moſt unheard-of cruelty, been deprived of all ſpiritual relief in his laſt moments.

Thus in the whole of this conſpiracy, from its origin to the death of its firſt promoters, we have ſeen but one continued chain of cunning, art

and ſeduction; of the blackeſt, falſeſt and moſt diſguſting means employed in that tremendous art of ſeducing the people. It was on theſe horrid arts that Voltaire, D'Alembert and Diderot had built all their hopes of working the univerſal apoſtacy, and in their laſt moments they are a prey to theſe very arts. In that awful moment when glory vaniſhes and that the empty name they had acquired by their deceit is no more, the diſciple of ſeduction lords it over his maſter. When their reaſon calls on them to make uſe of that liberty, (ſo much cried up when oppoſed to their God) to reconcile themſelves with him they had blaſphemed, even to their very remorſe, is ſacrificed to the vanity of their ſchool: when it calls on them to uſe that courage they had ſhown when blaſpheming, it fails them in their repentance, and they ſhow none but the ſlaviſh ſymptoms of weakneſs and fear. Under the ſubjection of their adepts, they expire fettered in thoſe chains which they themſelves had forged, and conſumed by that impiety, which their hearts then abhorred.

At the time of their death, hatred to Chriſtianity and the conſpiracy againſt the altar, was not the only object of their ſchool. Voltaire had been the father of the Sophiſters of impiety, and he lived to be the premier chief of the Sophiſters of rebellion. He had ſaid to his firſt adepts, "Let us cruſh the altar, "let the temples be deſtroyed and let not a ſingle "worſhipper

"worſhipper be left to the God of the Chriſtians;" and his ſchool ſoon re-echoed with the cry of, "Let us break the ſceptres, let the thrones be de-"ſtroyed, and let not a ſingle ſubject be left to the "kings of the earth." It is from their mutual ſucceſs, the combined revolution is to be generated, which graſping the hatchet, ſhall in France overthrow the altar and the throne, murder the pontiffs, ſtrike off the head of the monarch, and proudly menace the kings of the earth and all Chriſtian altars, with a ſimilar fate.—We have now given the hiſtory of the plots and of the means of the ANTICHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY, or of the *Sophiſters of Impiety*. Before we begin that of the ANTI-MONARCHIAL CONSPIRACY, or of the *Sophiſters of Rebellion*, let us reflect on the extraordinary illuſion Philoſophiſm has put upon all nations, which may be conſidered as having been one of the moſt powerful agents of the ſect.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the great Deluſion which rendered the Conſpiracy againſt the Altar ſo ſucceſsful.

IN the firſt part of theſe Memoirs on Jacobiniſm, our object was to demonſtrate the exiſtence, to unmaſk the chiefs and deduce the means and progreſs of a conſpiracy, planned and executed by men, known by the name of Philoſophers, againſt the Chriſtian religion, without diſtinction of Proteſtantiſm or Catholicity, without even excepting thoſe numerous ſects which had ſprung up in England or Germany, or in any other part of the univerſal world, provided they did but adore the God of Chriſtians. To unfold this myſtery of impiety, we had promiſed to adduce our proofs ſolely from their own records, that is from their letters, writings or avowals, and we flatter ourſelves with having given real hiſtorical demonſtration of it, ſufficient to convince the reader, the moſt difficult of conviction. Let us for a moment examine what pretenſions its authors could have had to be ſtyled PHILOSOPHERS, a name which gave them ſo much weight in their conſpiracy.

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The generality of men attending rather to words than things, this affectation of dominion over wiſdom and reaſon, proved a very ſucceſsful weapon in their hands. Had they called themſelves unbelievers or the declared enemies of Chriſtianity, Voltaire and D'Alembert would have been the execration of all Europe, while only calling themſelves PHILOSOPHERS, they are miſtaken for ſuch. Is not their ſchool to this day, venerated by many as that of Philoſophy, notwithſtanding the numerous maſſacres, and all the horrid diſaſters which we have ſeen naturally flowing from their conſpiracy. And every man who will adopt their way of thinking on religion, ſtyles himſelf a Philoſopher!——

Deluſion on the word Philoſophy.

This is a deluſion of more conſequence than can be imagined, and has carried the number of adepts perhaps farther than any other of their artifices. As long as their ſchool ſhall be miſtaken for that of reaſon, numberleſs will be the thoughtleſs perſons who, pretending to depth of thought, will adopt the ſentiments of a Voltaire or a Diderot, of a D'Alembert or a Condorcet, and conſpire like them againſt the altar; and that diſaſtrous blaſt will once more ſpread around the throne, and over all the orders of ſociety.—Their oaths, their wiſhes and their plots have been laid open; whence then are their pretenſions to wiſdom? Is it not the hiſtorian's duty to tear off that maſk of hypocriſy, which has miſled ſuch numbers of

adepts, who miſerably ſeeking to ſoar above the vulgar, have only ſunk into impiety, gazing after this pretended Philoſophy. The empty ſounds of *Reaſon*, *Philoſophy* and *Wiſdom*, have made them believe themſelves inſpired, when like Voltaire, they hated or deſpiſed the religion of Chriſt. But it is time they ſhould know that they have only been the dupes of deſigning men. Let them hearken, the numerous proofs we have adduced, give us a right to be heard when we tell them, "that at the ſchool of the conſpirators they have "miſtaken the leſſons of hatred and phrenzy, for "thoſe of reaſon; they have been the dupes of "folly and madneſs, under the cloak of reaſon; "of ignorance, under the pretence of ſcience; of "vice and depravity, under the maſk of virtue, "and their zeal for Philoſophy, ſtill makes them "err through all the tortuous windings of wicked-"neſs and impiety." We do not pretend, in holding ſuch language, to diſpute the talents of the premier chief. That his poetic genius ſhould enjoy itſelf in fictions, on the banks of Parnaſſus, or on the heights of Pindus, is much to be admired; but is he for that, to ſubſtitute thoſe fictions for truths? The greater his genius, the leſs we are aſtoniſhed to ſee him entangled, when he has once adopted error. If ſtupidity can never attain to genius, the genius that dares to ſoar above reaſon, is not for that the leſs within the regions of delirium.

delirium. In a raging fever, will not your ſtrength be redoubled, but what more humbling ſight for man! Where then the excuſe of genius or of talents in the Sophiſter conſpiring againſt his God? Can the adepts, who believe their maſter to be a Philoſopher even to his laſt moments, admire that frantic rage in which he expired? But firſt let them tell us what other titles he may have to the empire of reaſon.

What Philoſophy can there be in that extraordinary *hatred* which Voltaire had ſworn againſt the God of Chriſtianity? That a Nero ſhould have ſworn to cruſh the Chriſtians and their God, may be explained, becauſe the idea could only have been that of a cruel monſter. That a Diocleſian ſhould have ſworn it, may be underſtood, becauſe the idolatrous tyrant thought to appeaſe the anger of his gods and avenge their glory. That a Julian, mad enough to reſtore the worſhip of idols, ſhould have ſworn it, appears only to have been a conſequence of his former delirium. But that a pretended ſage, who neither believes in the God of the Chriſtians, nor in the Gods of the Pagans, and that knows not in what God to believe, ſhould vent all his rage and fury preciſely againſt Chriſt, is one of thoſe phenomenons of modern Philoſophiſm, which can be explained but as the delirium of the impious man.

I do not pretend by this to exclude from the ſchool of reaſon every one who is not fortunate enough to be within the pale of Chriſtianity; let that man rank with an Epictetus or a Seneca, or before the Chriſtian æra, with a Socrates or a Plato, who has been unfortunate enough not to have known the proofs of Chriſtianity. But this real Philoſophy of reaſon ſought, what Voltaire has conſpired to deſtroy. The greateſt of Socrates's diſciples pants for the coming of that juſt man who ſhall diſſipate the darkneſs and the doubts of the ſage; I hear him exclaim, "Let him come "that man, let him come who will teach us our "duties towards the Gods, and our duty towards "man. Let him come inceſſantly; I am ready "to obey whatever he may ordain, and I hope he "will make me a better man *." Such is the language of the Philoſophy of reaſon. I think I behold him again, when in the bitterneſs of his heart he foreſees, that ſhould this juſt man appear upon earth, he would be ſcoffed at by the wicked, buffeted and ſcourged, treated in a word as the outcaſt of men †. That man has appeared ſo much ſought for by the Pagan Philoſopher, and the conſpiring Sophiſters, a D'Alembert or a Voltaire, ſeek to cruſh him and yet pretend to the Philo-

* Plato in his ſecond Alcibiades.
† Ibid.

ſophy

ſophy of reaſon. Let their diſciples anſwer for them. If in the ſon of Mary they will not acknowledge the Son of the Eternal Father, let them own him at leaſt to be that juſt man ſought for by Plato—what then are their pretenſions to the Philoſophy of reaſon in conſpiring againſt him? If the awful teſtimony of the ſun being darkened, the dead riſing from their graves, the veil of the temple being rent, cannot convince them; let them at leaſt admire the moſt holy, the juſteſt of men, the prodigy of goodneſs and meekneſs, the apoſtle of every virtue, the wonder of oppreſſed innocence praying for his executioners—where then is their Philoſophy when they conſpire againſt the Son of Man? Yes, Philoſophy they had, but it was that of the Jews, that of the ſynagogue, whence iſſued thoſe blaſphemous cries of, "Crucify him, "crucify him!" or *cruſh the wretch!* Judas himſelf confeſſes him to be the juſt man, and ſhall he approach to perfection when compared to their ſchool of modern Philoſophy. Oh, what a Philoſophy! that after ſeventeen centuries repeats the blaſphemous cries which reſounded in the courts of Pilate or Herod, againſt the Holy of Holies!—In vain ſhall the diſciple deny the hatred of Voltaire againſt the *perſon* of CHRIST; does he not particularly diſtinguiſh Damilaville for that hatred, does he not ſign himſelf *Chriſt-moque* (Chriſt-ſcoffer), juſt as he terminates his letters by

cruſh

cruſo the wretch, or talks of the *Chriſticole* ſuperſtition*? Yet whilſt the Sophiſter denies the power of Chriſt, he cannot refuſe acknowledging his wiſdom, his goodneſs, and his virtue.

But they may object, that it is not ſo much at the perſon as at the *religion* of Chriſt they aim their blows. Where then is the Philoſophy in attacking a religion whoſe eſſence is to enforce every virtue, and condemn every vice. Either before or after Chriſt, has there ever appeared a Philoſopher, who has even formed the idea of a virtue of which this religion does not give the precept or ſet the example? Is there a crime or a vice which it does not condemn and reprobate? Has the world ever ſeen a ſage, impreſſing ſuch divine doctrines with more powerful motives? Either before or ſince Chriſt, did there ever exiſt laws more conducive to the interior happineſs of families, or to that of empires? Laws that teach men the reciprocal ties of affection; laws in ſhort that more peremptorily command us to afford each other mutual aſſiſtance? Let the Philoſopher appear who pretends to perfect this religion; let him be heard and judged. But ſhould he, like Voltaire and his adepts, only ſeek to deſtroy it, let him be compriſed in the common ſentence of madman, and of enemy to humanity.

* Letter to the Marq. D'Argence, 2d March 1763.

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It is only at the altars, at the *myſteries* of that religion, and not at the *morality* of it, they aim their blows.—In the firſt place that is not true, as we have already ſeen and ſhall ſee again. Their attack was common on the morality of the Goſpel, as well as on the myſteries or the altars of Chriſtianity.—But had it been true, what is there to be found in theſe myſteries, ſufficient to render the Chriſtian religion ſo hateful in the eyes of the Philoſopher? Do any of them favor the crimes and faults of men? Do any of them counteract his affection for his neighbour, or render him leſs attentive to his own duties, leſs faithful to friendſhip or gratitude, or leſs attached to his country? Is there a ſingle myſtery which does not elevate the Chriſtian, ſtimulate his admiration for his God, or ſpur him on to his own happineſs, and to the love of his neighbours? The ſon of God expiring on a croſs, to open the gates of heaven to man, to teach him what he has to dread, ſhould he by his crimes, be unfortunate enough to cloſe them again. The bread of angels, given only to thoſe who have purified themſelves from the droſs of ſin: thoſe words pronounced on the man repenting of his crimes, and firmly purpoſing rather to die than to fall into them anew. The awful ſight of a God who comes to judge the living and the dead; to call to him thoſe who have loved, cloathed and fed their brethren, while he

caſts

casts into eternal flames the ambitious man, the traitor and the tyrant; the hard-hearted rich, the bad servant, and the violator of the nuptial tie. Lastly, all persons who have not loved and helped their neighbour. Are all these, I say, mysteries at which the philosopher should direct his hatred, or can reason, on such a plea, authorise his conspiracy against the religion of the Christians.

Should Voltaire and his disciples refuse to believe these *mysteries*, does it import to them that other people should not equally disbelieve them. Is the Christian more dangerous to them because he that forbids me to injure my brother, is the same God before whom we are both one day to appear in judgment. Is that God less tremendous to the wicked, or less favorable to the just, because on his word we believe him to be one in essence, though three in persons? This hatred of Voltaire must be a phrenzy which the very infidels themselves, could not ground on such pretexts. What frantic rage must it be that blinds the Sophisters, when in contradiction with themselves, they applaud the toleration of the ancient Philosophers, who, though disbelieving the mysteries of Paganism, never attempted to rob the people of their religion; whilst on the other side they incessantly conspire against Christianity under pretence that it contains mysteries.

Another

Another objection not less extravagant, is that against *Revelation* itself. It is God, they say, whom the Christians declare to have spoken; hence there can be no further liberty of opinion in man on matters of faith. The Sophister of liberty and equality is then authorised to rise in arms against Christianity and its mysteries. Such are their arguments. But to what lengths does their phrensy carry them? Voltaire, D'Alembert, and Diderot, conspire to overthrow every altar, Roman or Lutheran, Calvinist or Anglican, and that in order to avenge the rights of liberty and toleration in matters of faith. What bedlamite idea is this? Can reason be traced through plots and conspiracies, of which the sole tendency is the overthrow of the universal religion of Europe, under pretence of liberty of worship: we have heard Voltaire invoking Belerophons and Herculesses to his aid, to crush the God of the Christians; D'Alembert, expressing the frantic wish of seeing a whole nation annihilated for its attachment to that God and his worship; have we not seen them for half a century past, meanly conspiring and using all the artifice of cunning intrigue to rob the world of its religion? And because they utter the empty sounds of LIBERTY, EQUALITY, and TOLERATION, you will mistake their voice for that of Philosophy!—Far from us the idea of such Philosophy; terms themselves must have been changed, for this

must

must be extravagance and absurdity; and is not such REASON madness and phrenzy? Such must be the explanation of these words to expound the REASON and PHILOSOPHY of a Voltaire or a D'Alembert, conspiring to crush the religion of Christ.

I could wish not to have to mention Frederick again. I reflect that he was a king; but alas! he is also the royal Sophister. Let us then examine how far philosophy misled him, and whether his wisdom extended beyond the genius of the meanest adept.

Frederick wrote, but why? It is a problem. Was it to impose on the public, or to delude himself? decide it who can. Probably for both, which he seems to have succeeded in. Frederick would sometimes write in favor of Toleration, and he was believed to be tolerant. In the *Monthly Review*, October 1794, page 154, we see him cried up as a model of toleration, and the following passage of his works is quoted: "I never will constrain opinions on matters of religion. I dread "religious wars above all others. I have been so "fortunate that none of the sects who reside in "in my states, have ever disturbed civil order. "We must leave to the people the objects of "their belief, the form of their devotion, their "opinions, and *even their prejudices*. It is for this "reason I have tolerated priests and monks, IN

SPITE

" SPITE *of Voltaire and D'Alembert, who have* " QUARRELLED WITH ME ON THIS HEAD. I have " the greateſt veneration for all our modern Phi- " loſophers, but indeed I am compelled to ac- " knowlege that a GENERAL TOLERATION is not " the *predominant virtue in theſe gentlemen.*" From this the editors draw many excellent concluſions by objecting the wiſdom of Frederick's doctrine to the atrocious perſecutions and ferocious intolleration of the French Sophiſters; but the reader who has ſeen him ſtimulate theſe ſame Philoſophers to overthrow the altar, *to cruſh the wretch:* who has ſeen him trace the plan ſo much admired by Voltaire as that of *a Great Captain* for the deſtruction of the prieſts and monks, in order to attack the biſhops and to compaſs the overthrow of religion*: who has heard him decide that the Antichriſtian Revolution, which he ſo *much longed to ſee*, could only be accompliſhed *by a ſuperior force* and that *the ſentence* which was difinitively *to cruſh* religion was *to iſſue from government* †; will the reader I ſay, recognize the toleration of the ſophiſtical monarch! No, he will paſs the ſame judgment on the Sophiſter which the editors have paſſed on the diſciples of that ſchool. " When SUCH MEN tell us their *object* " *is to carry into practice all the perfection of Theory,*

* Vide ſupra, Chap. VI.

† 24th March 1767, 13th Auguſt 1775.

" we

" we know not which we ought principally to " feel *our* DISGUST *or* INDIGNATION." But let us revere the monarch, let us vent our indignation againſt that frantic Philoſophiſm which involves in darkneſs the royal adept on his throne, as it did his maſters in their ſanhedrims and ſecret academies, eradicating from man every ſymptom of reaſon.

If any thing could paint the folly of the maſters in ſtronger colors, it would be that empty pride of the adepts at the period when they look upon the grand object of their conſpiracy to be accompliſhed. Religion was mourning over her altars overthrown, her temples profaned; when Condorcet exalting the triumph of Voltaire, exclaims: " Here at length it is permitted openly to pro- " claim the right, ſo long diſuſed, of reducing " all opinions to the ſtandard of *our own reaſon*; " that is to ſay, to employ, in order to attain to " truth, the *only implement* that has been given " us to recognize it. Man learns with a certain " pride, that he is not deſigned by nature to " believe on the affirmation of others; and the " ſuperſtitions of antiquity, the degradation of " reaſon in the phrenſy of a ſupernatural faith, " are vaniſhed from ſociety as they were from " Philoſophy *."

* Sketch on the Progreſs of Mind, epoch 9.

Condor-

Condorcet when writing these words no doubt meant to describe the triumph of reason, over revelation and over the whole Christian religion. The adepts applaud, and like him, believe in the pretended triumph of reason. But it had not less cause than religion to mourn over such triumphs. Was it then, to reinstate man in the right of bringing his *opinions* to the test *of reason*, that the Sophisters had with unrelenting fury conspired against the religion of Christ? What could they have intended by this test? Was it to exercise the right of only believing what their reason when convinced, invited them to believe? If so, where the necessity of conspiring? Does the religion of Christ command man to believe what his enlightened reason does not induce him to believe? Is it not to convince our reason that Christianity surrounded itself with incontestable proofs, that Christ and his Apostles wrought numberless miracles, that religion has preserved its records, and that her pastors invite the Christian to the spirit of research, that he may know what has been proved and what he ought to believe; that her apostles formally declare, that *his faith, his submission should be reasonable* (rationabile obsequium vestrum); and can the Sophister hence infer that conspiracies and the darkest plots are necessary to vindicate the rights of reason believing in religion? A religion whose God is the God of reason;

whose tenets are the tenets of reason; whose rights are the rights of reason rejecting sophistry and false prejudices, but whose duty is to believe from the numerous proofs of the power, of the sanctity, of the wisdom and sublimity of the God who speaks, and on the authenticity of his word.

If by the rights of reason the Sophister means the right of only believing what his reason can conceive, and that ceases to be mysterious; then these rights of reason must truly border on phrensy. The Sophister is no longer to believe in the light of the day nor the darkness of the night, till light and its action on man shall cease to be a mystery; no longer shall he believe in the oak towering over the forest, raised from an acorn; nor in the humble flower glowing in the brightest colors; no longer shall he believe in man, succeeding from generation to generation; nature shall be denied, and his own existence remain a doubt until all is clearly conceived by his reason, and that the veil of mystery spread over these various objects shall be rent asunder.—Thus to attain the honors of incredulity, he submits to the garb of folly.

How different is the language of the real sage! His reason declares that objects once proved are to be believed, however mysterious they may be, under the penalty of absurdity; for then they are believed to exist because their existence is demon-

demonſtrated, and not as the Sophiſter would pretend, becauſe their nature is inconceivable.

But another right equally inconceivable and triumphantly inculcated by Condorcet is that of being reduced *in order to attain to truth, to the only implement that has been given us to diſtinguiſh it!* If then nature has left me in the dark, on objects of the greateſt importance, on my future ſtate; on the means of avoiding a deſtiny I dread, or of obtaining the lot I deſire; the man who ſhall diſſipate the miſt with which I am ſurrounded, will have robbed me of my rights? Why did he not ſay that the right of the blind man is alſo to keep to the only inſtrument nature had given him, and that it would be encroaching on his rights if he that has eyes, ſhould attempt to lead him? Why did he not conclude that the blind man had alſo learned with a *ſort of pride* that nature had never deſigned that he ſhould believe in light on the aſſertion of another.—What philoſophic pride is that of the Sophiſter! His reaſon is degraded by a *ſupernatural faith!*—Chriſtianity, he thinks, has debaſed his reaſon by raiſing it above the ſphere of this world; he thinks the God of Chriſtians has vilified man by explaining to him his eternal deſtiny, and leaving him the memory of his miracles as a proof of his word.—Such a pretenſion was the grand plea for the Antichriſtian Conſpiracy, and dared they invoke

the name of reaſon? Were they believed to be Philoſophers? And do many as yet labor under this error?—But let us return to their maſters, to Voltaire, D'Alembert and Diderot, let us ſhow to the adepts, the unfortunate dupes of ignorance alſo decorated with the title of Philoſophers. —To accompliſh this, it will only be neceſſary, to point out the moſt formal avowals and mutual confidences of theſe pretended Philoſophers.

Dupes of ignorance.

Does God exiſt, or does he not?—Have I a ſoul to ſave, or have I not?—Is this life to be entirely ſpent for my preſent intereſt?—Am I to believe in a future ſtate?—Is this God, this ſoul and this future ſtate what I am told, or am I to believe quite another thing?—Such certainly are the elementary queſtions of true ſcience, of Philoſophy the moſt appoſite to the happineſs of man both in itſelf and in its conſequences. On queſtions of ſuch importance, what do theſe aſſuming ſages reply, what are their mutual anſwers to each other, at the very time they are conſpiring againſt Chriſt? Has not the reader ſeen their letters, their own expreſſions; did not theſe men, who pretended to the empire of knowledge, formally and repeatedly declare that they were unable even to form an opinion on any of theſe queſtions. Voltaire conſulted by the citizen or by the prince, conſults D'Alembert in his turn, whether there is a God, whether he has a ſoul; and a *non liquet* (I do not know),

know), is the anſwer he receives—Theſe muſt be ſtrange Philoſophers indeed, uncertain on the very principles of Philoſophy; whence can they aſſume the title of rulers of reaſon, they who are ignorant of that ſcience on which the morals, principles and baſis of ſociety reſt; on which the duties of man, of the father of a family and of the citizen, of the prince and of the ſubject, on which in ſhort, their conduct and happineſs entirely depend? What can be their ſcience on man if they are perfectly ignorant of his nature? What can be their doctrine on his duties; on his grand concerns; if they are ignorant of his future deſtiny? What is that Philoſophy which barely teaches me that I am ever to be in the dark with regard to thoſe objects, which moſt concern me and thoſe I am to live with?

We have ſeen D'Alembert, in order to hide his ignorance, abſurdly excuſing it by anſwering, that it could be of little concern to man, not to be able to ſolve theſe queſtions on the ſoul, on God, or on a future ſtate *. We have ſeen Voltaire declaring that nothing was known of theſe firſt principles, yet own that uncertainty was a diſagreeable ſtate; but pleading this uncertainty itſelf, he adds, that certainty is a ridiculous ſtate or that of a quack †. Thus becauſe the former

* Letter to Voltaire 25th of July and 4th of Auguſt 1770.
† Letter to the Prince Royal of Pruſſia, 28th Nov. 1770.

is ignorant on these questions, it can little import man to know whether his concerns extend no further than this mortal life, or whether a happy or an unhappy eternity is to be his fate. Because the latter is equally ignorant, though more unhappy in his ignorance, man is to despise whoever shall pretend to dispel his doubts; Christ and his Apostles are to be treated with ridicule, and certainty shall be the doctrine of a Quack! —This cannot be ignorance alone, it must be pride and folly; what! Man is to be buried in darkness, because the jealous eye of the Sophister is dazzled with the light.

Dupes of depravity mistaken for virtue,

Hatred, jealousy and destruction contain the whole science of these pretended sages. Hate the Gospel, calumniate its author, overthrow his altars, and your science will be that of the modern Philosopher. Profess yourself a Deist, an Atheist, a Sceptic, a Spinosist, in short, whatever you please; deny or affirm, set up a doctrine or a worship in opposition to the religion of Christ, or set up none, that is not what either the sect or Voltaire himself requires to constitute a modern Philosopher. When asked what doctrine he wished to substitute to that of Christ, did he not think himself authorised to answer, I have delivered them from the physicians (he called the clergy physicians), what farther service do they require? Require! have you not infected them with the plague?

plague? Have you not unbridled every paſſion? And what remedies have you left them? In vain were it for us to challenge Voltaire and his panegyriſt Condorcet, they will not anſwer.—No, follow their example; declare all religious truths to be erroneous, falſe, or popular prejudices, to be ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm; glory in deſtruction, little troubling yourſelf with ſubſtituting ſcience for ignorance, or truth for error; to have deſtroyed will ſuffice, and for that you ſhall be entitled to the high-ſounding name of a modern Philoſopher.

At this rate, the reader's ſurpriſe muſt ceaſe, at the numerous tribe of Philoſophers to be found in every rank, of all ages and ſexes. But at ſuch a rate can an honeſt man pride himſelf in the title of Philoſopher. Such a ſcience is, alas! but too eaſily acquired. It is as yet a problem why Voltaire, on his outſet, ſeemed to confine his views to the higher claſſes, to kings, nobles and the rich, why he ſhould have excluded *beggars and the rabble.* On ſeeing the gueſts ſmile at the blaſphemies uttered at table, will not the footman ſoon equal his maſter in the Philoſophic ſcience, will he not alſo learn to ſcoff at the pontiff and the paſtor, at the altar and the goſpel! Will not the butchering Marſeillois, like Condorcet, glory in having caſt off thoſe vulgar prejudices, when in thoſe bloody murders of September, he overthrows the altar and ſtains its ſteps with the blood of its prieſts and pontiffs. Like

Voltaire, will he not ſtyle this, the Age of Reaſon, and of enlightened Philoſophy? Harangue the vileſt of the populace; tell them that the prieſts are impoſing on them, that hell is of their invention, that the time is come to throw off the yoke of fanaticiſm and ſuperſtition, to aſſert the liberty of their reaſon; and in a few minutes, the ignorant plough-boy will rival, in Philoſophic ſcience, the moſt learned of the adepts. The language may vary, but the ſcience will be the ſame. They will hate with the adept, and will deſtroy what he wiſhed to cruſh. The more ignorant and ferocious they are, the more eaſily ſhall they adopt your hatred, which conſtitutes the whole of this ſophiſticated ſcience.

If adepts are ſought for in another line, it is eaſy to increaſe their numbers, but without adding to the ſcience of the ſect. Thus let the daughter of Necker but find ſome impertinent ſarcaſm of hers againſt the Goſpel, taken for wit by D'Alembert, and ſhe immediately becomes as Philoſophic as he, and as void of religious prejudices as ſiſter Guillemetta. It had aſtoniſhed many to ſee the numbers of young ſops, who were already ſtyled philoſophers, when they ſcarce had had time to read any thing, except a few impious pamphlets. But this age of enlightened Philoſophy, can no longer be a ſubject of ſurpriſe.

What!

What! shall every wanton coquette partake of this Philosophy, shall every husband or wife, who scoffs at conjugal fidelity, shall every son who, throwing aside all sentiments of duty, and denying the authority of a parent, shall they all be styled Philosophers? The courtier destitute of morals, or the man who is a slave to, and imprudently gives loose to his passions, they also will glory in the name of Philosopher! Voltaire, in spite of all their vices, rejects none of these from his school, provided they have the necessary requisites of scoffing at the mysteries, of insulting the priesthood, and hating the God of the gospel. Certainly these cannot be simply the dupes of ignorance, mistaken for science. No; these must be the children of corruption substituted for the school of virtue. That folly, that frantic rage which consumes Voltaire, conspiring against his God, or setting heaven at defiance, when he writes to D'Alembert, *twenty years more and God will be in a pretty plight*, or when he repeatedly writes to Damilaville, *crush, crush the Wretch*; that I say may be more worthy of pity than of blame. Yes, Voltaire in the phrensy of his rage is to be pitied. That multitude of adepts, of noblemen, ministers, and citizens, are to be excused, who without having the least idea of Philosophy, have believed themselves Philosophers, being misled by those impious Sophisters. I will not even ask them, since when could the bare title of

Philosopher,

Philoſopher, aſſumed by Frederick and Voltaire, ſuffice to conſtitute them maſters in a ſcience of which they openly profeſſed their ignorance and contempt: I will not tell them, that if Frederick, conſummate in the art of war, could form warriors; that if Voltaire, rivalling Corneille, could give leſſons to the poet, nevertheleſs they were both equally ignorant in point of religion. I will not ſay to them, that this latter is a ſcience like all others, requiring great application and ſtudy, in order to excel; that it was abſurd to look for maſters and teachers in men who blaſphemed what they neither underſtood nor ſought to underſtand; in men, who often ſtammering out a petty ſophiſm, which they deemed unanſwerable, reſembled the child, who daſhes the watch on the ground becauſe the ſpring is hidden from him. Such would be the reflexions of common ſenſe, which ſhould have rendered the ſchool of the Sophiſters at leaſt ſuſpected, if not abſurd and ridiculous to its adepts; when Frederick combats the Sorbonne, or Voltaire St. Thomas; when D'Alembert attacks St. Auguſtin, or Siſter Guillemetta St. Paul.

It is poſſible, that all theſe great Sophiſters, debating on divinity, religion and tenets, may have been miſtaken by the ignorant adepts for learned doctors. But when the whole ſchool, treating of morality and virtue, pretend to direct them ſolely by the rules of natural religion, the very ſhadow

of

of a pretext for their deluſion, diſappears. From caſting an eye on the ſect, could they perceive a ſingle adept who, under the direction of Voltaire or D'Alembert, had quitted his religion to become a better father or a better ſon, a better huſband or a better man, in ſhort more virtuous! Would not the ſimple reflexion have ſufficed, that this pretended Philoſophy of virtue had regularly been the refuge of all thoſe men who were publicly known to ſcoff at every duty, at all morality: that when the friends to religion reproached them with the diſſoluteneſs of their morals, they as conſtantly anſwered with a ſort of ſneer, ſuch reproaches may do for men, who have not as yet ſhaken off the prejudices of the Goſpel—but we are Philoſophers, and we know what to believe!!

It would be impoſſible to hide, that every vice was cloaked under ſuch a Philoſophy; the faithleſs wife, the profligate youth, the man practiſing every art, whether juſt or unjuſt, to attain his ends, even to the looſe women whoſe characters were openly diſparaged, all decorated themſelves with the high-ſounding name of Modern Philoſophers. None would have dared to juſtify their criminal conduct by anſwering,—I am a Chriſtian,—I believe in the Goſpel.—Let not the chiefs charge the error and ignorance on the diſciples. The adept knew but too well that nothing but the name of virtue remained

mained in the school of the Sophisters; that the greater progress he made in their science, the more he adopted their principles, by setting at defiance the reproach of the virtuous man, and by smothering the cries of his own conscience. It is true they had not barefacedly blasphemed the morality of the Gospel, but they had erased from their code all those virtues *which religion maintains to be descended from heaven.* He had seen the long list of those which they called *sterile and imaginary virtues,* or *virtues of prejudice*; he had seen erased from their code, all that list of real virtues such as modesty and continence, conjugal fidelity and filial piety, gratitude and forgiveness of injuries, disinterestedness, even probity itself*. To these virtues they had substituted ambition, pride, vain glory, the pleasures and the passions. Their morality acknowledged no other virtue than that *which is advantageous*; nor vice but that *which is hurtful* in this world; and virtue is declared to be but *an empty dream* if the virtuous man is unhappy†. Personal interest is laid down as the sole principle of all Philosophic virtues; they sometimes indeed name *beneficence* as one, but that is merely as an excuse to dispense them from the practice of every other virtue. *Friend, do good to*

* See the original texts quoted in the Helvian Letters, vol. 5.

† Vide supra, note to 9th chapter.

us and we will overlook every thing else, is the expreſs doctrine of Voltaire *: but that was not all. It was neceſſary to bring the adepts to doubt even of the exiſtence of virtue, to doubt whether in morality there exiſted a right and wrong, and it was to ſuch a queſtion that Voltaire did not bluſh to anſwer, *non liquet* (it is not known) †. As a further ſtep they were to decide, that all that is called "perfection, imperfection, righteouſneſs, "wickedneſs, goodneſs, falſehood, wiſdom, folly, "only differed from each other by their ſenſations "of pleaſure or pain ‡." "That the more the "Philoſopher examined the nature of things, the "leſs he dared to aſſert that it depended any "more on man to be puſillanimous, choleric, vi-"cious or voluptuous, than it did to be ſquint-"eyed, hump-backed or lame §." Such were the leſſons of the conſpiring Sophiſters, and can it be believed that ſuch leſſons could be miſtaken for thoſe of virtue and Philoſophy?

Had the adept been certain as to the exiſtence of vice and virtue, of what conſequence would this diſtinction have been to him, when his maſters teach him, that man is born for happineſs, and that the latter conſiſts *in pleaſure, or the abſence of pain.*

* Fragments on divers ſubjects, Art. VIRTUE.
† Philoſophical Dictionary, Art. TOUT EST BIEN.
‡ Let of Thraſybulus.
§ Encyclopedia, Geneva edition, Art. VICE.

pain *. When laying aside all solicitude for his soul, he is taught that *the motto of the wise man ought to be to watch over his body* †; or that it is by *pleasure* that God *stimulates to virtue* ‡. Such are the lessons taught by Voltaire, Diderot and D'Alembert, the chiefs of the conspirators.

What motives to virtue did these chiefs suggest to their adepts when they declared that a God neither *regards their virtues nor their vices*, that *the fear of this* GOD *is an absolute folly!* Or when wishing to stifle all remorse of conscience, they tell them that "the man void of fear is above the "laws—That a bad action, when useful, can be "committed without remorse—That remorse is "no other than the fear of men and of their "laws." When carrying their doctrine beyond all absurdity, they on one side assert the liberty of opinions in order to leave man free to choose the false, while, on the other side they destroy in him all liberty of action to smother all symptoms of remorse ‖.

Such was the doctrine of the Sophisters. In vain would they attempt to deny it; all their writings are full of it, and particularly those which they most extolled as their principal master-pieces.

* Encyclopedia, Art. HAPPINESS, and Preface.

† D'Alembert on the Elements of Philosophy, No. 5.

‡ Voltaire's Discourse on Happiness.

‖ See their texts quoted in the Helvian Letters, vol. 3.

What

What could have been the conduct of these great philosophers, had they undertaken to draw up a code of villainy and depravity? What more could be required to demonstrate to the world that this pretended age of philosophy was no other than that of vice; than that of wickedness organized into principles and precepts for the use of the abandoned, to whom they might be advantageous.

Dupes of wickedness.

The only plea that can be left to the numbers of adepts who styled themselves Philosophers, in alleviation of their criminality, is the amazing constancy and artfulness which it required from the chiefs, to propagate their principles, and ensure the success of their conspiracy.

But with these artifices, these intrigues, what was their philosophy? Let us suppose that during the life-time of Voltaire, of Frederick, or of D'Alembert, and before depravity had attained to such a height, let us suppose that the frequent and repeated orders given to the conspirators, of *strike, but hide your hand,* had been known; let us suppose that the people had been acquainted with all the tortuous means secretly used to seduce them, would any one then have traced the actions of the Philosopher, in such dark hypocrisy, in such perpetual dissimulation, or in the ambushes which were their only means of success.

At the time when D'Alembert and Condorcet, Diderot, Helvetius and Turgot, held their sittings at

at the Hotel D'Holbach, under the name of Œconomiſts, and under the pretence of meditating on the happineſs of the people, had it been known by that ſame people, that they were only plotting againſt the altars of the God whom it adored; had it been known that thoſe teachers, who had been appointed to inſtruct the riſing generation, were only the impious emiſſaries of D'Alembert, ſent to corrupt its morals; that all thoſe hawkers of books ſold at ſo low a rate, were the agents of the ſecret academy, employed to circulate its poiſons from towns to villages, and thence to the pooreſt cottages; would ſuch means, I aſk, have entitled the ſect to that reſpect and veneration which it has uſurped? Their wicked plots, once detected, could ſuch ſages have ſufficed to have given to the century they lived in the appellation of the Philoſophic Age? No: without doubt, horror would have ſucceeded to this admiration, and had the laws remained ſilent, public indignation would have avenged Philoſophy of the infamous plots carried on under the cloak of its name.

Let then this age of pretended Philoſophy, caſt off the deluſion under which it has been led away, a deluſion ariſing perhaps more from its own vices and corruption, than from the arts of the conſpirators; let it bluſh and repent. That unpoliſhed multitude, confeſſing its inexperience in the ways of

of the Sophiſters, whom inſtinctive virtue ſo long preſerved from the arts of ſeduction, may be excuſable; but let thoſe thouſands of adepts, who are to be found in the courts and palaces of the great, in the ſeats of literature, let them reflect on and ſcrutinize their paſt conduct. In adopting impiety they believed themſelves Philoſophers. In throwing off the yoke of the Goſpel, and laying aſide its virtues rather than its myſteries, they miſtook the empty ſounds of *prejudice* and *ſuperſtition*, perpetually repeated by the Sophiſters, for profound reaſoning. They were ignorant that the word prejudice only ſignifies an opinion void of proofs; and that they themſelves had become ſlaves to prejudice, by caſting off a religion of which they gloried in not having ſtudied the proofs, while yet they read all the calumnies that its enemies could compile againſt it. Let them ſeek ſtill further claims to this Philoſophy in their own hearts: was it not to that lukewarm wearineſs for the virtues of the Goſpel they were indebted for their admiration of the conſpirators? Was it not the love of their paſſions which made them a prey to incredulity, far more than all the intrigues and ambuſhes of the Sophiſters? It is much to be feared, that that man is already wicked, who makes himſelf ſo happy and glories ſo much in following the apoſtles of wickedneſs; or ſmall indeed muſt have been his portion of Philoſophy, if ſuch

duplicity, ſuch meanneſs, and ſuch conſpiracies could have been miſtaken for wiſdom or virtue.

Whatever may have been the cauſes, it was ordained, that an age duped by the intrigues and conſpiracies of impiety ſhould glory in ſtyling itſelf the *Age of Philoſophy*. It was ordained that an age, a dupe to the frantic rage of impiety ſubſtituted to reaſon, a dupe to the oaths of hatred and the wiſh of cruſhing all religion, miſtaken for toleration, for religious liberty and equality, to ignorance for ſcience, to depravity for virtue, a dupe in ſhort to all the intrigues and plots of the the moſt profound wickedneſs miſtaken for the proceedings and means of wiſdom; it was ordained, I ſay, that this *Age of Philoſophy* ſhould alſo be a dupe to the plots of the rebellious Sophiſters, miſtaken for the love of ſociety and the baſis of public happineſs.

The conſpiracy againſt the altar, the hatred ſworn by the chiefs againſt their God, were not the only legacies bequeathed by the chiefs to this ſchool of modern philoſophy. Voltaire was the father of the Sophiſters of Impiety, and before his death he becomes the chief of the Sophiſters of Rebellion. He had ſaid to his firſt adepts, Let us cruſh the altar, and let not a ſingle altar nor a ſingle worſhipper be left to the God of Chriſtians; and his ſchool ſoon reſounded with the cry of, *Let us cruſh the ſceptre*, and let not a ſingle throne

throne, nor a ſingle ſubject be left to the kings of the earth! It was from the mutual ſucceſs of theſe two ſchools, that the revolution was to be generated in France, which, graſping the hatchet, was at the ſame time to deſtroy the altar of the living God, and imbrue its ſteps with the blood of its pontiffs; to overturn the throne, and ſtrike off the head of the unfortunate Lewis XVI.; menacing all the altars of Chriſtendom, all the kings of the earth with a ſimilar fate. To the plots contrived under the veil of liberty and equality, *applied to religion*, and of religious toleration, are to ſucceed thoſe begotten under the veil of *political* liberty and equality. The myſteries of the ſecond conſpiracy, of the *Sophiſters of Rebellion*, combining with thoſe of *Impiety*, in order to generate the modern JACOBINS, will be the object of the Second Part of theſe Memoirs.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

ERRATA.

Page	*Line*			
21,	5,	*for* decidely,	*read*	decidedly.
ib.	10,	as it,		as that it
29,	14,	thoſe which		thoſe whom.
ib.	16,	*dele* namely.		
40,	17,	torturous,		tortuous.
57,	12,	redaction,		compiling.
71,	14,	nor in,		or in.
75,	3,	was,		were.
78,	2,	but what,		with whom.
ib.	13,	by whom,		but that.
80,	ult.	he might,		he may.
88,	ult.	compulſed,		ſearched.
101,	19,	*dele* in,		
104,	28,	all what,		all that.
111,	19,	which intrigue,		whom intrigue.
113,	8,	ſtared him,		ſtared them.
117,	4,	they met,		but met.
120,	10,	Jane Chauvin,		Jean Chauvin.
137,	8,	part its		part of its.
ib.	13,	*dele* to.		
144,	6,	later,		hereafter.
155,	18,	but what that,		but the.
188,	17,	approximation,		compariſon.
206,	2,	which may have,		to have.
222,	24, 26,	*dele* to.		
226,	5,	copies,		copying.
229,	4,	reſpectuouſly,		reſpectfully.
244,	4,	proteſted,		protected.
255,	6,	erred,		wandered.
285,	20,	do ſatisfaction,		atone.
334,	27,	which we,		whom we.
347,	24,	reviling,		revelling.
368,	12,	to be,		as,