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.

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 ANTICHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY, or that of the *Sophisters of Impiety* against the God of Christianity, and a-

gainſt 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.

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,

* 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 ARRIÈRES LOGES, and that we have tranſlated by OCCULT LODGES.

" with the moſt juridical regularity and exact-
" neſs. The reflexions and reaſonings are in-
" terſperſed with infinite judgment, and in their
" moſt proper places, for leading the ſentiments
" of the reader and preventing the force of plau-
" ſible 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 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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ADEPTS AND PROTECTORS.

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 her 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?

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 misfor-

tunes 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 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 Exminiſter, 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 villany, 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 of the revolution.

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

This error is the favorite theme of the Jacobin miſſionaries; it was this that gained them their firſt in-

ſtruments 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 theſe maſſacres, thoſe convulſive diſorders, and 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 poſſible to make them conceive to what lengths the plans and plots of the conſpirators would carry them!

That theſe plots ſhould be known, the intereſt of all nations;

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.

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 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 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 aequainted 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 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. 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 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 religion or their government may be, to what-
" ever 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 ac-
" compliſhed, their religion with its pontiffs, their
" government with its laws, their magiſtrates and
" their property, all would be ſwept away in the com-
" mon 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 in-
" trigues."

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

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.

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, Voltaire

the ſpirit of meditation, of 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.

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

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

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 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-emi-

nence, 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 ſuffice 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.

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.

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

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

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 tranſcendent 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

* Letter from Voltaire to D'Alembert, 20th April 1761.
† Particularly Let. 100, from D'Alembert, 4th May 1762.

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'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, 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 what-"ever regards the *God made man*, diſpleaſes me in the "mouth of a Philoſopher, who ſhould be above pop-"ular error. Leave to *the great Corneille*, when *doat-"ing and fallen back to childhood*, 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.§ 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 (how-"ever people may enliſt under the banners of Fanat-"iciſm) I never ſhall. I may indeed compoſe a few "Pſalms to give a good opinion of my orthodoxy. "Socrates incenſed the houſehold Gods, ſo did Cice-"ro, and he was not credulous. We muſt give way

* Let. 53, anno 1738.
† Their letters in 1737.
‡ Let. of 16 Sept. 1771.
§ Ibid.
‖ Let. of 4th Dec. 1775.

" to the fancies of a frivolous people, to avoid perſe-
" cution and blame. For after all what is moſt deſir-
" able 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 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 misfor-" tunes of mankind! He would have been more cor-" rect, had he ſimply ſaid, that the ambition and ſelf-" intereſt of men, cloaked under the veil of religion, " had fought 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 mo-" rality:—The forgiveneſs of injuries, charity, hu-" manity, were not theſe preached by Jeſus in his ex-" cellent 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 protected in France, *the fine arts and higher ſciences muſt fall*, and that *the ruſt of ſuperſtition will completely deſtroy a people, otherwiſe amiable and born for ſociety*.**

* Let. of 7th Jan. 1740. † Let. to Voltaire 143, anno 1766.
‡ Let. of 5th April 1764.
§ Examination of the Syſtem of Nature, by Frederick, King of Pruſſia.
‖ Let. of 12th Aug. 1773. ¶ Let. 20th July 1775.
** Let. to Voltaire, 30th July 1777.

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 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 ſometimes 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 ſuppoſed 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 on- " ly reiterated his declaration.—I have done my ut- " most not to believe La Metrie; and yet, in reading " 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 no- " tice 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 saying much.—You may easily guess what re- " flexions, what a recoil upon myself and what per- " plexity, 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 instruc- " tion I will compile a dictionary 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.* " 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 re-

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

"member 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 Frederick 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 Frederick was once more the *Solomon 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 Didoret, 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 Frederick.

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 Frederick, 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 he expresses

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

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 Justin- "ian, 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 an- "imates nature? In that case could the soul of Ra- "vaillac be equal to that of Henry IV. or had they "neither of them a soul? May the heroic philosophers "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 concerning the existence of "God, the Author of the *System of Nature* seems too "resolute and dogmatic, and on this subject scepti- "cism 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 philosopher of my

‡ Letter 179, 12th Oct. 1770.
* Letter 36, anno 1770. † Letter 38, ibid.

"acquaintance," says he, "a man pretty resolute in "his opinions, thinks that we have a sufficient degree "of probability, to constitute a certainty that *post mor-* "*tem 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, 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 decidedly writes, "I am "well assured that I am not twofold; hence, I con- "sider 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 that it has the prop- "erty 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 foundations are "undermined, but all that, gives me very little con- "cern."‡

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. 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*

* Letter of 30th Oct. 1770. † Letter of 4th Dec. 1775.
‡ Letter 8th Apr. 1776. ‖ Philosophical Thoughts, No. 20.
§ The Code of Nature. ¶ Philosophical Thoughts, No. 21.
** Idem, No. 33.

*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 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.

* Idem, No. 22. † Idem, No. 28.
‡ Life of Seneca, page 377.

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.**

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 fought 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 im-

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

piously 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 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 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 wreteh!* (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 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 hear-"ing people repeat that twelve men have been ſuffi-"cient to eſtabliſh Chriſtianity, and I will prove that "one may ſuffice to overthrow it."§ In the mouth

* 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.

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, 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 whom he particularly wishes D'Alembert to rally, the more effectually *to crush the wretch*, are 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 but the rabble will fol- "low 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 edu- "cation. Courage brave Diderot, intrepid D'Alem- "bert, form with my dear Damilaville and rush for- "ward on those fanatics and knaves; pity poor Pas- "chal, 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 fa-

* Let. to D'Alembert 24th July 1760.
† Let. 37th to D'Alembert, 1770.
‡ Let. to Damilaville, anno 1765.

thers or on any other man who dares defend the religion of Chriſt.

The ſenſe of this atrocious watchword 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 publiſhed* againſt Chriſtianity. The fact really is, that Boulanger, unfortunately more known by his impiety that by his converſion, *is ſtill ſuperior to Celſus himſelf.** With Frederick.

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.‡ With D'Alembert.

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.* ‖ Extent of the conſpiracy.

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, tho' ſeparated from Rome, had retained their belief of Chriſt, and were therefore to ſhare the fate of the former.

* 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,

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 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 overtun 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*

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

mad;* 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 be- "hold toleration established, *the Protestants recalled*, "the priests married, confession abolished, and fanati- "cism 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 con- "tempt into which *the wretch* is fallen among the bet- "ter sort of people throughout Europe. *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*. *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 "follow 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.

* Let. to Marmontel, 21st Aug. 1767.
† Let. to the Marquis D'Argence de Dirac, Mar. 2d 1763.
‡ May 4th 1762. ‖ Sept. 2d 1768. § 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§ (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 maſonary. 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

* Let. of D'Alembert, No. 77.
† Voltaire to Thiriot, 26th Jan. 1762.
‡ Let. 90. § Let. 22d March, 1774.
‖ Voltaire to Damilaville, 25th Auguſt, 1766.
¶ Let. of D'Alembert, No. 76.
** Let. to D'Alembert, No. 35.

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 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'A-"gueſſeau, was a T.... He would have hindered "the nation from thinking! 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 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 groſsly; 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.

Their ſecrecy.

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 mon"ſter (religion) muſt fall, pierced by a hundred in"viſible hands; yes, let it fall beneath a thouſand "repeated blows."*

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 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 tortuous 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 ut-

Their leſſons on the art of ſecrecy.

"moſt 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."†

* Let. to D'Alembert, April 27th, 1768.
† Let. to D'Alembert, May, 1761.

"The Nile, it was said, spread around its fertilizing "waters, though it concealled its head; *do you the* "*same*, you will secretly enjoy your triumph. I re- "commend *the wretch to you.*"* "We embrace the "worthy knight and exhort him to conceal 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) peo- "ple are so obstinately bent on believing me the au- "thor of the *Philosophical Dictionary*. The greatest "service you can do me, is to assert, though you pledge "your share in Paradise, that I have no hand in that "hellish work. There are three or four people, who "perpetually 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 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.

In every plot, union is as essential to the conspirators, as secrecy to the cause, and so it is often and particularly recommended. Among others we find the following instructions: "Oh, my philosophers, we "should march closed, as the Macedonian phalanx, it Union of the conspirators.

* Let. to Helvetius, May 11th 1761.
† Let. to Mr. de Vielleville, 26th April 1767.
‡ Let. to D'Alembert, 152 and 219.
§ Let. from Voltaire to Thuriot, 19th Nov. 1760.
‖ Let. to Voltaire, 16th May 1771.

" 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 ſuperior to that of Athens, and " to all thoſe of Paris."*

If any diſſention, perchance, happened among the conſpirators, the chief immediately wrote to appeaſe them: he would ſay, " Ah poor brethren, the primi- " tive 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."‡

Ardor and conſtancy in the plot

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 ſufficient- " ly zealous, you bury your talents, you ſeem only to " contemn whilſt you ſhould abhor 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

* Let. to D'Alembert, No. 85 anno 1761, and No. 2, anno 1769. † Let. to D'Alembert, No. 66.
‡ Let. to D'Alembert, No. 37, 1770.
§ Let. to D'Alembert, 28th Sept. 1763.
‖ Let. to Damilaville.

means of D'Alembert, "Such is our situation that we "shall be the execration of mankind, 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 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.*† Open avowal of Voltaire.

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 existance 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.

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 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, Epoch of the conspiracy.

* 13th Feb. 1764. † Voltaire to D'Alembert, let. 142.
‡ Life of Voltaire, edit. of Kell.

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 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 firſt chief had 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 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 pontiffs? 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. Relation between the Sophiſters and the Jacobins.

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 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.†

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

† See the whole of their correſpondence.

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 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 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, ſucceſſivly employed by the Sophiſters during the half century, which prepared ſuch ſcenes of blood and confuſion.

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

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 guillotines, or forced requisitions in battle array, 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 phi- The Encyclopedia projected.

* Letter of Frederick to Voltaire, 5th May, 1767.
† 29th July 1775. ‡ 31st July 1762.

loſophizing 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.

Its ſuppoſed object.

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

Its ſecret object.

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 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 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 compiling 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.

Proofs.

As to the fact.

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

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

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.

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 indeed, 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 writing, 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 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 lit-"tle, as in certain places he has ſhown his fangs a "little too much. *This is the time for ſtepping back to*

* 18th Letter to D'Alembert.
† 10th Oct. 1764. ‡ Let. of the 9th of Oct. 1755.
§ 16th July 1762.

" *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 privi-* " *lege, I defy you to make them better.* There are arti- " cles *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 we ſhould not have dared utter twenty years* " *ago.*"‡ Or when he writes to Damilaville, " I can " be concerned for a good dramatic performance, but " could be far more pleaſed with a good philoſophical " work that ſhould forever 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-opera- " ting 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 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.

* 21ſt July 1757. † Ibid.
‡ Let. to D'Alembert, 13th Nov. 1756. § 23d May 1764.

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.

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.†

Obſtacles and ſucceſs of the Encyclopedia.

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

* See his letters of the years 1755-6.

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

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 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 Encyclopedia, who seemed much surprised that the articles 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 Raynal, 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 dismission, 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 in advancing his own impious propositions for those of religion. It was the cunning of this thesis which had missed 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*

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

*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 authorities 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 igno- " rant, valued themſelves on knowing every thing, " who ſeeking to diſtinguiſh themſelves by that vexa- " tious 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 ev-* " *ery thing half examined, ill digeſted, good, bad, and in-* " *different, but always 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

* Feller's Hiſt. Dict.

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

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, leſt the part treating of religion, ſhould fall into the hands of its greateſt enemies. What was eaſy to foreſee came to paſs. 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.

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.

Note referred to in Page 34.

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 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 ridicu- "lous, 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 de- "bated 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 *imperceptible,* "it is not the less *real;* that it *connects* all things 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 mo- "ment of our existence, we are by *no means masters of our mo-* "*tions;* 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,* or *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 miniſters 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 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.

General wiſh of the conſpirators as to religious orders.

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 written to the miniſter Amelot. "In the laſt interview I had with his "Pruſſian majeſty, I ſpoke to him of a pamphlet that "appeared in Holland about ſix weeks back, in which "the ſecularization of eccleſiaſtical principalities in fa"vour of the Emperor and Queen of Hungary, was

Frederick's firſt plan to overthrow the church.

" 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 buſineſs
" of the church was to ſupplicate God and the princes;
" that by his inſtitution, the Benedictine would have
" no claim to ſovereignty, and that this decided opin-
" ion of mine, had gained me many enemies among
" the clergy. He owned 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 conſcientiouſly 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. 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 profeſſions was to be delayed until that age, when people are already engaged in ſome other ſtate of life. The poſſeſſions of the ſuppreſſed were 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

D'Argenſon's plan.

* General correſpondence, 8th Oct. 1743.

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.

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 govern-
"ment 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

* He is at preſent in London.
† Let. to Damilaville, 9th Jan. 1762.
‡ Let. to Marmontel, 13th Aug. 1760.

" his opinions, but would have bluſhed not to have " partaken of them."*

Choiſeul's underſtanding with the Sophiſters.

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 re- " peat it, I don't miſlead you, he will be proud of ſerv- " ing you :"† or to Marmontel, " We have been a " little alarmed by certain panics, but never was fright " ſo unfounded. The Duke de Choiſeul and Mad. " de Pompadour know the opinions of the *uncle* and " of the *niece*. You may ſend any thing without dan- " ger." 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.*"‡

Reſolves the deſtruction of the Jeſuits: why he begins with them.

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 prognoſticated 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, and the Jeſuits were excepted. Unfortunately theſe were exactly the men with 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 (an- " ſwered Choiſeul), I will deſtroy none but the Jeſu- " its; 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 that 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

* Condorcet's Sketch on Hiſtory, 9th Epoch.
† Let. to D'Alembert, No. 68, anno 1760.
‡ Let. to Marmontel, 13th Aug. 1760, and 2d Sept. 1767.

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, 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 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 Life-guards of the Pope.**

* Let. of the King of Pruſſia to Voltaire, No. 154, an. 1767.

Opinion of the bishops on the Jesuits.

When fifty French prelates, cardinals, arch-bishops 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 may understand 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

† Opinion of the Bishops, 1761.
‡ Let. of Voltaire to Marmontel, 13th Aug. 1760.
§ Let. to Chabanon.

protectors of the Sophiſters, and the miniſter 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 eſtab-"liſhed, 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 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 preſ-"ent 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 "*philoſophy would decide that both the ſociety of Jeſus*

* Let. from Voltaire to Marmontel, 21ſt Aug. 1767.
† Let. 100.

" *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 College at " Paris) is of more importance to us than that of " Martinico. Upon my word this is becoming seri- " ous, and the people of the parliament don't mince " the matter. They think they are serving religion, " while *they are forwarding reason without the least sus-* " *picion.* 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 delivered from all " that Jesuitical rabble, but will reason 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 yesterday, 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 favor of people, on whom " you have cast so much ridicule. *Believe me, let us* " *have no human weakness.* Let the Jansenitical rab- " ble rid us of the Jesuitical, and do not prevent one " spider from devouring another."‖

Avowal of Voltaire.

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. Votaire how-

* Letter 98, 1761. † Let. 100. ‡ Let. 90, anno 1761.
§ Let. 102. ‖ Let. 15th of Sept. 1762.

ever was not leſs active in compoſing and circulating memorials againſt them.*

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 Bour- "deaux. 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 adepts he ſhared it. "I rejoice "with my brave *chevalier* (he would write to the Marq. "de Vielleville) on the expulſion of the Jeſuits; Ja- "pan led the way in driving out thoſe knaves of "Loyola; 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 wor- "thy 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

* Let. to the Marquis D'Argence de Dirac, 26th Feb. 1762.
† Let. of the 29th Nov. 1761. ‡ 5th Nov. 1773.
§ 27th April, 1767.
‖ I have ſeen well-informed perſons, who thought that the perſecution in Portugal was not entirely unconnected with 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

truth is, that with the reſt of 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 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 protection (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, in fine, as they tell us, we are to love God. But, *placed as I am, I muſt content myſelf with giving a few ſillips*, apologizing for the great liberty taken, and I do not think but what I have hit it off pretty well."‡

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.

† Let. to Damilaville, 2d March, 1763. ‡ 3d Jan. 1765.

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 ſearched, it would be in vain to ſeek a conſpiracy whoſe intruges, whoſe cunning was of a deeper hue, and that from its own confeſſion.

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 motly 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 pre-"ſerve a ſeed of ſo precious and uncommon a plant, "to furniſh thoſe who may wiſh to cultivate it here-"after."* 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 infidel, ſays he, I have preſerved "that order after a faſhion, and for the following "reaſons:

Avowal and ſtrange conduct of Frederick.

"Not one Catholic man of letters is to be found in "theſe regions, except among the 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 ſub-"ſiſt to furniſh profeſſors, where they dropped off; "and the foundation could ſuffice for ſuch an ex-"pence; 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

* 7th July, 1770.

" been obliged to go and finiſh their ſtudies in Bohe-
" mia, which would have been contrary to the funda-
" mental 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 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 founda-
" tions 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 (Vol-
" taire) 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 Jeſ-
" uits are driven out of the kingdom. Moreover the
" courts of Verſailles, of Vienna and Madrid have
" applied to the Pope for the ſuppreſſion of divers con-
" vents. It is ſaid the holy father, though in a rage,
" will be obliged to conſent. Oh! cruel revolution,
" what are we not to expect in the next century, the
" axe is at the root of the tree. On one ſide the phi-
" loſophers openly attack the abuſes of a fainted ſu-
" perſtition; on the other, *princes by the abuſes of diſ-*
" *ſipation* 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 founda-

* 8th November, 1777. † Letter 154, anno 1767.

" tions, is on the eve of falling, and nations shall in-
" scribe on their annals, that Voltaire was the promo-
" ter of the revolution, operated, during the nine-
" teenth 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. Further avowals of D'Alembert and Voltaire.

" My venerable Patriarch, do not accuse me of want
" of zeal in the good cause, no one perhaps serves it
" more than myself. Do you know with what I am
" occupied at present? With nothing less than the ex-
" pulsion of the Jesuitical rabble, from Silesia; and
" your former disciple is but too willing, on account
" of the numerous and perfidious treacheries he expe-
" rienced through their means, as he says himself,
" during the last war; I do not send a 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 *dila-*
" *tory*, 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 prop-
" erly 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,

* 5th May, 1767.
† D'Alembert to Voltaire, 15th Dec. 1763.

may be looked upon as an anſwer 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 recal 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; 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 recal, and the conſpirators fill Paris and Verſailles

* 24th July 1767.
† D'Alembert to Voltaire, 4th May 1767.
‡ See Letters of 26th Feb. 5th and 22d March 1774.

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 ha- "ving ſeen the Jeſuits expelled."*

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. *Reaſon 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; 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;

Miſtake of the Sophiſters on this abolition.

* Let. to D'Alembert. 27th April 1771.
† 23d June 1777. ‡ 8th Dec. 1776.

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 religous and prophane, muſt have been of the greateſt utility both to church and ſtate. The conſpirators were not long before they 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. VI.

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

Charges againſt 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 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 laity, 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 judgment. In the annals of the conſpiring Sophiſters, ſhall he find teſtimony borne of their ſervices, and every 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 Bellerophon 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 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 indifference, the preſent objects "of their veneration. The point would *be to deſtroy* "*the cloiſters*, at leaſt to begin by leſſening their num-"ber. The time is come, the French and Auſtrian "governments are involved in debt; they have ex-"hauſted the reſources of induſtry to diſcharge them, "and they have not ſucceeded; the lure of rich ab-"beys and well-endowed convents, is tempting. By "repreſenting to them the prejudice cloiſtered perſons "occaſion to the population of their ſtates, as well "as the great abuſe of the numbers of *Cucullati*, who "are ſpread throughout the provinces; alſo the facil-"ity of paying off part of their debts, with the trea-"ſures of thoſe communities, who are without heirs;

Frederick's plan.

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

* 3d March, 1767.

" 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 promoter " of all those books, which attack popular superstition, or the false zeal that would support 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 the first " step, and when the people are cooled, *the bishops " will be but little personages, whom sovereigns in pro- " cess 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 friarhood, is worthy a great captain. The religious orders once " abolished, *error* is exposed to universal 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 sufficiently 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 eminently 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

* 5th April 1767.

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 support 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 sovereigns? 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 that you say of our German bishops is but too true; they are the hogs fattened on the 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 allow 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 corres-

* 13th August 1775.

pondence? 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 pontiffs, to ſeduce the people from its worſhip? 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 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 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 fervor 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 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 affixing 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 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.

Briennes' underſtanding with D'Alembert.

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

* 20th June and 21ſt December 1770.

" judge raſhly——I would lay a hundred to one, that " things have been miſrepreſented, and that his miſ- " conduct has greatly exaggerated. I know his " way of thinking too well, not to be aſſured that he " only did on that 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 withſtood, during a whole year, " the joint clamours of the parliament, the biſhops, " and the aſſembly of the clergy;" and that it was abſolutely neceſſary *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, whom 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.

Means and ſucceſs of Briennes.

To the edict on the age for profeſſions he added another, ſuppreſſing all convents in towns that conſiſted of leſs than twenty religious; and elſewhere, 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 contri-

* 4th Dec. 1770. † 21ſt Dec. 1770.

ved 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 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 them 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 honor, 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 charity, 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.

His attempt fruitleſs againſt the nuns.

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

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. 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 worthy of Nero, exulting in the flames of burning Rome, are neceſſary to drive them from the altar, cannons and the ſatelites of that Conſtituent 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.

Theſe plans conſummated by the National Aſſembly.

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, Object of this colony.
" Could not five or ſix men of parts, who rightly un-
" derſtood each other, ſucceed after the example of
" twelve ſcoundrels, who have already ſucceeded."*
The object of this underſtanding has already been explained in a letter before quoted. " Let the real phi-
" loſophers unite in a brotherhood, like the Free-ma-
" ſons; 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, and forgets that his moſt ſacred duty *is to*
" *cruſh the wretch.*"†

The conſpirators never loſt ſight of this moſt ſacred duty, but 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 Frederick ſeconds this plan.
by the editor of their correſpondence, for leave " to
" eſtabliſh at Cleves a little colony of French philoſo-
" phers, 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

* Let. 69, anno 1760.
† Let, 85, to D'Alembert, 1761.

" convenient for them, and what I can diſpoſe of in " their favor."*

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, is anſwered, " You " ſpeak of a colony of philoſophers, who wiſh to eſ- " tabliſh 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 coun- " trymen. 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 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 opportu- " nity?" 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.

* 24th October 1765.

† Letter 146, anno 1766.

" 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 Landgrave 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.†

Coolneſs of the conſpirators for this colony.

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 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 coun- " try for the *fooleries of Jean 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 " ſecurity." 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 of the 6th of Auguſt 1766.
† Letter of the Landgrave, 9th Sept. 1766.
‡ Letter to Damilaville, 18th of Auguſt 1766.
§ Letter to Damilaville, 25th of Auguſt 1766.

Voltaire's regret on its failure.

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 tranſmi- "gration 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 followers, 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."§

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

‡ Nov. 1769. § 12th of October 1770.

CHAP. VIII.

Fifth Means of the Conspirators.—The Academic Honors.

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 Bruyére, 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 of his work, in which all the objectionable parts had been omitted. Such a low trick was beneath Montesquieu, repentance 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. First object of the academies.

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 D'Alembert's plan on the academies.

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 plot framed between him and Voltaire, for the admiſſion of Diderot, will be ſufficient to evince what great advantages they expected would accrue 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-Pompignan: it would willingly give him a moſt ſwinging ſlap.—I will make a "bonfire on Diderot'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 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 benefitted 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

* 9th of July 1760. † 18th July 1760.

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 "deſpiſes."‡ 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 fanati-"ciſm 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 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 com-"pletion 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 underſtand: *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 benefitted by it;* or in other words, the war we are waging againſt Chriſtianity. Theſe words will explain all his agitation. And to have admitted within the ſanctuary of letters, the man the moſt notorious for his incredulity, would it not have been corrobating the fault government had committed, in letting itſelf be led away

‡ 28th July 1760. § Let. 153, anno 1760.
‖ Let. 11th of Auguſt 1760.

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 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

* Letter from Voltaire to Damilaville, 1767.
† Letter of D'Alembert, 27th Dec. 1777.
‡ Letter of Voltaire, 8th of Feb. 1776.

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 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'A- "lembert. 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 ſenti- "ments and opinions differed ſo widely from thoſe of "his brethren? D'Alembert without heſitation (ad- "ded Mr. Beauzet) anſwered, I am ſenſible of your "amazement, but we were in want of a ſkilful gram- "marian, 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 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 Chriſtanity, 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 Anti-chriſtian 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 throughout Europe. Concert of the chiefs in their writings.

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 Chriſtianty, 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 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.

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, Cunning of D'Alembert with regard to ſyſtems.

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 philosophical. In vain did religion, "so simple and precise 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, 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

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

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 Mo-"ſes*. He will not ſay a word of this to the maſter "of the ſacred palace, but if perchance, *he ſhould diſ-"cover that the world is more ancient than even the ſep-"tuagint pretend, he will not keep it a ſecret from you*."*

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. D'Alembert directs Voltaire in his writings.

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*.

Voltaire did not fail, on his part, to inform D'Alembert and the other adepts, of what he himſelf Their concert

* Let. 137, 1763.
† Let. of D'Alembert, 18th Jan. and 9th Feb. 1773.
‡ Particularly let. of 26th Feb. and 22d March 1774.

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 of its maintenance by aboliſhing tythes.*

Theſe ſecret memorials, the anecdotes, whether true or ſlanderous againſt the religious writers, were all concerted among the conſpirators and their chiefs.† Even 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 cheerfulneſs, 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."‡

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 Voltare alone preſided over this traffic of impiety, ſuch was his zeal in promoting the ſale of them. He received notice of the publications,

* Let. to the Count D'Argental, 1764.
† Letters of Voltaire and D'Alembert, 18 and 20.
‡ Let. 128. ‖ Let. to D,Alembert, 67.
§ Le Militaire Philoſophe, Les Doubts, l'Impoſture Sacerdotale, Le Poliſſoniſme devoilé.

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 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.*† Circulation of theſe works urged.

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 beloved, 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.‖

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 D'Alembert's excuſe.

* 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. § Let. 102,

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.**

Their circulation helped by miniſtry.

Theſe low intrigues were not the only means the Sophiſters reſorted to, to evade the law, and overrun all Europe with theſe Antichriſtian productions. 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 fought 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!*†

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 philoſophic 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

* Let. 146. † Let. of Voltaire to Marmontel, 1767.
‡ Let. of 15th Jan. 1757.

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, un- "der your protection, to the printing of a few useful "books. *But, Sire, cannot you, without exposing your- "self, have some of the Berlin booksellers encouraged to "reprint them, and to distribute 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 use of our printers as you "please*, they enjoy perfect liberty, and as they are "connected with those of Holland, France and Ger- "many, I have no doubt, but that they have means "of conveying books whithersoever they may think "proper."‡

Even at Petersburgh, 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

† 5th April 1767. ‡ 5th May 1767.
§ Let. of Voltaire to Diderot.

confident 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; hereafter 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.

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 ſo much zeal; could they wiſh to diſſeminate other principles than thoſe preached upin 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.

Their doctrine.

That the conſpiracy was general, proved by theſe works.

The works we have ſeen ſo highly 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, "Im- "agination 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 exiſt-* "*ence of* GOD *to a few prepoſſeſſed men,*" that is to ſay, full of falſe prejudices; "that *the wonders of nature, ſo far from be-* "*ſpeaking a* GOD, *are but the neceſſary effects of matter prodi-* "*gioufly 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.‖

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.*"§ On the Soul.

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 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 virtue, "is nothing but a *barbarous, deſperate, fatal tenet*, and con- "trary 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

* Letter from Thraſybulus to Lucippus, page 164 and 254.
† 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.
†† Antiquity Unveiled, page 15. ‡‡ Letter of Thraſybulus.

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." In fine, "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*, *enlightened 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*: that "MORALITY has nothing to apprehend from *love*, for it is the "paſſion that *creates genius*, and *renders man virtuous*."§ He will inform children, that "the commandment of loving their "father and mother, is more the work of education than of "nature."¶ He will ſay to the married 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 Chriſtian 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 is enough

* 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.
§ Of the Mind. Diſcourſe 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.

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 Sophiſters, 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.

Spoliations premeditated by Voltaire.

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 Ganganelli "had ſome good domain in your neighbourhood, and

* Sketch on Hiſtory. Epoch 9.

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

" 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 PLUN-* " *DER them.*"*

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.

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 pub- " lic venerates is to be ſpared. When one looks upon " one's ſelf, as gifted with ſuperior lights, out of com- " paſſion for others, in commiſeration for their weak- " neſs, 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 Avig- " non 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.§

D'Alembert's advice.

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 delicately, 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 bo-

* 8th June, 1770.
† Let. 7th July 1770.
‡ Let. 29th June 1771.
§ 13th Aug. 1775.

" dy, with the privilege of holding regular assem-
" blies."*

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.

Voltaire's wish for violent measures.

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 Christian 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, " Her-
" cules went to fight the robbers and Bellerophon chi-
" meras; 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 arms
" to destroy the wretch. It will perish by those of
" truth."§ At length he begins to think that force

* Letter 95, 1773.
† 16th Feb. 1761
‡ 3d March, 1767.
§ 25th March, 1767.

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 forerunner, 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 the 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 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'lembert 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 indif-"ference, which is the true ſtyle, and an enemy to "ſuperſtition 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 French-"man and a thinking being, am quite of your opin-"ion, that it is a great happineſs both for France and

* Let. 95, 1775. † Letter 195, an. 1762.

" for philoſophy. Thoſe Auſtrians are a ſet of inſo-
" lent capuchines who hate and deſpiſe us, *and whom*
" *I could wiſh to ſee annihilated with the ſuperſtition they*
" *protect.*"†

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 avowed 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.

† To Voltaire, 12th Jan. 1763.

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 villify 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, 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. Voltaire's ſervices: his ardor;

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 con- his contradictions.

* Letter to Damilaville, 15th June 1762.

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

traditions; 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.

Of his hypocriſy and communions.

During that inundation of Antichriſtian books in France, government would ſometimes, though 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, unconteſtible 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 favoured 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 preſently tell me that I grow "very daring and 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 "forgive.—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 Chriſ-

" tian, 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 " monkey, &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 " company with Mad. Denis and Mademoiſelle Cor- " neille, and if you ſay much, I will put the *Tantum* " *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 myſelf to, in expiation of my ſins.—*Yes, I have* " *received my Eaſter communion, and what is more, I pre-* " *ſented in perſon, the hallowed bread*; after this, I could " boldly defy both Moliniſts and Janſeniſts."*

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*

* 27th of April 1768.

" *their diſtortions and ſpeak their language. Mutemus clypeos* (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.*

His preſſing exhortations to the adepts.

With this profound diſſimulation,‡ Voltaire combined all that dark-dealing activity, which the 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 pru-* " *dent efforts to cruſh the wretch.*" Should he obſerve any of the adepts leſs ardent than himſelf, he would extend his Phillipics to all: " *They forget* (ſays he) *that the* " *moſt material occupation ought to be to cruſh the monſter.*"§ The reader has not forgotten that monſter, wretch and

† 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 Abbè 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 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.

§ See letters to Thiriot, Saurin and Damilaville.

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 part* "*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.† 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. In fine, 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. His correſpondence.

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 Frederick's ſervices.

* Let. to D'Alembert, 129.

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

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.* 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. "He "would figure him ascending Olympus, loaded and "satiated with glory, *the conqueror of the wretch*, supported by the genii of Lucretius 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

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, 2 and 3.
† Ibid. 211.
‡ His Dialogues of the Dead.
§ 16 March 1771.
‖ 25th Nov. 1766.
¶ Let. 154, anno 1767.

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. In fine, 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.*

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 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

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

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-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 Voltaire, 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

* Let. 57 and 58.

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 philoſopher, 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 judgment, 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*

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

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

‡ Feller's Hiſtorical Dictionary.

Life of Seneca, in which he ſees no other difference between him and his dog 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, but in truth where could I find, or what better leſſons could I give her?"

D'Alembert's ſervices.

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.†

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

† From the criticiſm made of his works in our Helvian Letters; the reſult is this: D'Alembert will never declare himſelf a

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 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.†

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 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.

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

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: "*Endeavor*," he writes expreſsly, "*endeavour on your part, to enlighten youth as much as you are able.*"*

Is charged with training youth.

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 "Jeaucourt, 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, 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

* 15th September, 1762.

"philosophers," exultingly writes to Voltaire, there "is what was pronounced at Cassel on the 8th of A-"pril, in presence of his highness 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 their pupils.*

It imported above all to the conspirators to place such tutors about young princes and children 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 Condilhac and a de Leire. If with all that "he is a bigot, grace must be powerful indeed."†

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

* Letter 78, anno 1772.

† Letter from Voltaire to D'Alembert, No. 77, and from D'Alembert, No. 151.

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 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 diverſo 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

* Let. 106 and 107, anno 1762.

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 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 romotest 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 "Russia) to restore to liberty five or six giddy-headed "Velches. He had conjured her, in the name of phi-"losophy; he had drawn up, under that sacred name, "the most eloquent pleading that from memory of mon-"key was ever made, and Kate pretends not to under-"stand 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 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.

How he serves Voltaire as a spy.

On his side Voltaire spared nothing which could raise the consideration of D'Alembert. He would recom-

His petty societies and clubs.

* Letter 88, anno 1773.

mend 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 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.†

His plan for rebuilding the temple of Jeruſalem.

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, 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

* 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.

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 circumciſed, who ex- "pecting Mahomet's paradiſe, is in the mean time, "gone to wait on your former diſciple, in the name of "the Sultan Muſtapha. In writing to that country "the other day, I mentioned, that if the king would "but juſt ſay 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-edification of the tem- "ple 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 cor- "reſpondence with Aly Bey, I implore your protec- "tion 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 the people, that Chriſt and his prophets, were impoſters. Frederick

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

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 hereſay or vague report, for proof. My proofs are their own; the compariſon 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 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. XII.

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

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 inſtil 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. That the hiſtorian muſt be true.

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 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; in fine, 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 downfall of na-

tions. 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, in fine 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 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 Antichriſtian 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 aſ-*

" *ſures us, that the Emperor is one of ours. That is lucky,* " for the Dutcheſs of Parma, his ſiſter, is againſt us."*

In another letter, Voltaire exulting in ſo important a conqueſt, writes to Frederick, " A Bohemian of " great wit and philoſophy, called Grimm, has infor- " med 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, 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 exterми- " nating 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 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 attack on Chriſtianity was the moſt diſtant from his ideas.

* 28th of Oct. 1769. † No. 162, Nov. 1769.
‡ Let. No. 181, 21ſt of Nov. 1770. § 18th of Auguſt 1770.

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.**

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 Voltiare 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

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

that homage and public veneration ſhould be ſhown to Pius VI. which both his virtues and dignity equally commanded. 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 Muſ- "tapha thinks (on the immortality of the ſoul;) my

* 28th of Nov. 1770.

" 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, 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 religion, 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 recal them to their religion, let him not be led away into

† 21ſt of Nov. 1770.

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.

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. Catherine II. Empreſs of Ruſſia.

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 maſter-pieces, whether in 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 flattery 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.†

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

† Thoſe who, as men of literature, ſhall criticiſe 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, 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

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 conſtanly 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 ſolicitations. 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 hardeſt 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 "deceived! 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

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.

† 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.

he learn at leaſt from one 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 apartments, " together with ſeveral of your friends. He ſpoke " much about you, *of the ſervices your works had ren-* " *dered, of the prejudices you had rooted out*, of the ene- " mies 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 Denmark 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.‡ In fine, 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

* Letter of 12th Nov. 1768.
† 6th Dec. 1768. ‡ Let. 17th Dec. 1768.

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 events have taken place ſince his Daniſh majeſty had learned *to think* from Voltaire, to 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 compliments "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, 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.

‖ Letter from Voltaire to D'Alembert, 5th Nov. 1770.
§ 19th Jan. 1769. ¶ 10th Jan. 1772.

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 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 himſelf 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.

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

† Her letters to Voltaire, anno 1743 and 1751.

‡ Journal of Fontenai.

Poniatowski, King of Poland.

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 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 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

* 21ſt of February 1767.

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. 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 wor- "thy 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 Bo- "lingbroke'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 High- "neſs, 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 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 prejudices, 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 in-"debted 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 ma-"king, would he write to his hero, for this ſome time "paſt, reflections on Moſes, and on ſome of the hiſ-"torians 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 abhorred by the Egyp-"tians."† 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 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

* 9th Sept. 1766. † Let. 66.

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, 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 undeceived 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

* Let. 66. † Ibid.

"New Teſtament, there are ſtories in it, which *I "ſhould wiſh to be better informed of.* I cannot under- "ſtand 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 Paſſion, and that it was Pon- "tius Pilate, governor for the Romans, who condem- "ned 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 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, commading they ſhould be maſſacred at the moment he

* Letter 66.

himself expired; such lectures, I say, could have left little doubt in the mind of the illustrious 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 conspirators, that like them you may dis-"pute 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 Jacobins 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

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

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

† 23d June, 1766. ‡ 1st February, 1766.
‖ Letters of the 1st May, 1754, and No. 38 anno 1762.
§ Letters of the Princess Anhalt-Zerbst, 9th and 39th.

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 Barieth, 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 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, Geofrin, 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 Barieth 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, 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 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 copying 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 at- " tribute of his exiſtence. Hence it neceſſarily fol- " lows, 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 looſe their " time as they do, in diſturbing all France about a mor- " ſel of bread given or not. The Jeſuits and the Jan- " ſeniſts, would equally confeſs their ignorance in point " of doctrine—Virtue is barely accidental—Averſion " to pain and love of pleaſure, have induced men to " become juſt—Diſorder can beget nothing but pain— " Quiet is the parent of pleaſure, I have made the hu-

* 25th Dec. 1755. † 19th July, 1752.

" man heart my particular ſtudy, and I draw my con-
" cluſions 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 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 tell 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

* 1ſt Nov. 1759.

is to reflect on futurity, he has all the modesty and the humility of a disciple, almost the unconcern 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 respectfully 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 demon- "strated; 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 a- "greeable 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 premier 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

* 12th Nov. 1770. † 28th Nov. 1770.
‡ See their letters, 30th Oct. and 21st Nov. 1770.

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 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 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 Mr. de Maleſherbes, alſo the Marquiſe de Pompadour as long as ſhe lived, and all theſe were initiated and intimately connected with Voltiare and his conſpiracy. We have

Mr. Amelot.

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

Duke de Praſlin.

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.

Marquis D'Argenſon.

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 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 twofold, 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

* Letter to Count D'Argental, anno 1764.

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

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 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 recal to mind many moral virtues, it will recal 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 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 frivolouſneſs 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 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 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 ſuperintend-

ing 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 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 regicides, 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 porti-"cos of his palace. That unfortunate prince confided "in you, he had imparted his authority to you, to re-"preſs the impious and ſeditious writers, and you per-"mitted the people to inhale blaſphemy and hatred of "kings, from a Raynal, an Helvetius or a Diderot,

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, No. 128.
† Ibid. let. 22 and 24.

" and you pretexted commerce. If then, to-day, this " people, in the frantic criſis of thoſe poiſons you have " 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 Male- " ſherbes."* 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.†

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,

* Let. 121.

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

" except one, who is unfortunately a bigot. There is " Mr. Turgot, who is worthy of your Majesty's conver- " sation. The priests are in despair. THIS IS THE " COMMENCEMENT OF A GREAT REVOLUTION."*

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

The Mareschal de Muy to be excepted.

* Letter of 3d August, 1775.

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 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 the Count "Felix de Muy, to the end, that if ever thou makeſt "me bear the heavy burthen of a crown, he may ſup"port 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 re"ligion 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 illuſtri-
"ous a prince, for a witneſs and cenſor of my conduct.
"The Engliſh 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 period. Maurepas was by no means the proper perſon to replace him in the confidence of the young king. His father even, who mentioned 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 ca- Maurepas.

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

pable 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 adminiſtration 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 rea- "ſons 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 anſwers, "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

* Letter 64, anno 1760. † Letter 76. ‡ Letter 77.

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 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 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 unexperinced, 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 antimonarchial. 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 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. Condoreet has alſo been his panegyriſt and hiſtorian, and he would not have been tolerant on the repentance 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 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 in 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 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 exorbitant 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, star-

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

ving the people into revolt againſt their king, the nobles and the clergy. 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 wandered 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 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, carying 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 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, 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 Briennes.

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*, 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, 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

* See hereafter the declaration of Mr. le Roi.

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 had created.—Briennes died covered with infamy, but without remorſe or giving ſigns of repentance.

Lamoignon.

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!

Why ſo many impious miniſters.

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

* Letter to Marmontel, 21ſt Auguſt 1767.

† Letter 4th of May 1762.

‡ Voltaire to Diderot, 25th December 1762, to D'Alembert and Damilaville.

which so much militated against those passions. Without doubt, eminent virtues and 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, 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

* Letter 133, anno 1774.

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 ſpeaks of Choiſeul. "I have the greateſt obligations 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. Due 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 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. Other great perſonages.

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

* Letter 110, anno 1762.

† Voltaire to the Duc D'Uſez, 19th Nov. 1760.

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 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 Siſter 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'Agental.

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.*

Duc de la Rochefoucault.

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

* See General Correſpondence.

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.

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 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 Emperor 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.

* Let. 117, to D'Alembert.
† Let. to D'Alembert, 19th Jan. 1769. ‡ 21st May, 1764.

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 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; condem-"ned, 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, noth-"ing but the rabble will follow the ſtandard of our ene-"mies."‡ 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 maſters 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 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 author-

* Let. of Voltaire, 1ſt May 1768. † Let. 108, anno 1773.
‡ Let. to Damilaville. § Let. 76, anno 1760.
‖ Let. 11, anno 1769.

ity 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 the 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*, Grenoble can boaſt of "a *Mr. Servan*. It is impoſſible that reaſon and tol- "eration ſhould not make the greateſt progreſs under "ſuch maſters."* This hope was the better founded, as theſe three magiſtrates, 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, appeared 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.‡

* Let. of the 5th Nov. 1770.

† See their correſpondence, particularly Voltaire's letter to Mr. Chalotaix, 17th May 1762.

‡ Let. to D'Alembert, 13th Dec. 1763.

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 counſellor* (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.

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 be-"before Mr. Terrey, counſellor in parliament; I wait-"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 comdemned 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,

* July 22d, 1761.

" my Lord, from the perſon of whom I bought your " manuſcript.—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. 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.

Rouſſeau. 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. 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 fought 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 impoſ-"tors united, and the friends of truth divided."*

* No. 156, anno 1756.

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 laughed at contradiction, and his pen flew with every wind. Jean Jaques would inſiſt on the paradoxes feſtered 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 oppo- "ſite 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 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

* His Confeſſions, book 6th. † Voltaire on Atheiſm.
‡ Voltaire on Atheiſm; and on the Soul by Suranus.
§ The Emile and Let. to the Archbiſhop of Paris.

" (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 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 be- " ing a hypocrite, or deny him without being a raſ- " cal."†† 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.‡‡

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

* 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.

§ 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.

§§ D'Alembert writes to Voltaire, in ſpeaking of Rouſſeau, " I pity him, and if his happineſs depends on his approaching

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.

With ſo ſimilar a conduct, each of theſe chiefs 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 and is famous for his breaches of friendſhip. He extols the

" 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.

* Let. 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.

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 advanced in age fell a victim to the latter, and a prodigious number of adepts owed their fall to theſe two writers.

Buffon.

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 depts of the earth, arguments to belie Moſes and the firſt pages of holy writ. In the praiſes of the Sophiſ-

§ See his Confeſſions.
‖ See his life by the Count Barruel de Beauvert.

ters 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. 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.*

And 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 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. Freret.

The ſecond was Boulanger, whoſe brain overburdened with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac and 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. Boulanger.

Fain would the Marquis D'Argens have figured among the *learned* Sophiſters; but his *Chineſe and 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, Marquis D'Argens.

* 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 Appennines, in order to give the lie to Moſes and the ſacred writ.

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 atone for his paſt incredulity.

La Metrie. As to La Metrie the Doctor, if he appeared to rave, it was only from the ſincerity of his heart. 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.

Marmontel. Down to the firſt days of the revolution, the Sophiſters conſpiring againſt their God, thought they could glory in the talents and co-operation of 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 ha- "ving gained ſo many prizes, it is but juſt that he "ſhould beſtow them in his turn."*

La Harpe. 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 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,

* Voltaire to Marmontel, 21ſt Aug. 1767.

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 advantage could be reaped from this literary 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

* 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.

† 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 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.)

ſubjects they were to inveſtigate, 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.

Condorcet. 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 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

* Let. to D'Alembert, No. 101, anno 1773.

and his latter works, can only be explained after that manner. It is more remarkable in his posthumous work on the human mind, where 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 " revolutions 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 general* " *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,

* Epoch 10th, page 382.

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 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 ridiculous 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 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 ſufficient 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

* 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 brethren 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 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.

§ Ibid. part 2 and 3. ‖ Ibid, part 3, article 4.

had nothing to fear from the punishments of another world.* Notwithstanding all this doctrine, the conspirators looked upon him as a timed adept, because he owned a God in heaven, and a soul in man; and to punish him they styled him the *Capuchin Philosopher*. 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 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.

The history of mankind was transformed into the art of distorting facts, and of directing them against

* On Morals, part 2, sec. 2.

† See his Expostulations on the Book OF MORALS.

‡ Let. to the Count D'Argental, 26th Sept. 1761. To D'Alembert, 13th Jan. 1768. To Mr. Desbordes 4th April 1768.

Chriſtianity and Revelation; Phyſics or the hiſtory of Nature, 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.

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.

* See his artful edition of Paſcal, Advertiſement, page 5.

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. 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.

* Letter to D'Alembert, No. 65, anno 1760. To Thiriot, 26th Jan. 1762.

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 œconomy 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 the ſpace of thirty years ſhould ſuffice.† That Meſlier,

† 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, "Forgive 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

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 confederates, 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 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 So-

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.

* See the Encyclopedia, article GENEVA; and letter of Voltaire to Mr. Vernes.

phiſters 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 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 Boulogne, 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 Abbè 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 Abbè Guènèe 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 Abbè Gerard had found a method of sanctifying novels themselves. Under the most engaging forms, he reclaims

* See the acts of the clergy since the year 1750.
† His Deism refuted, and his Answer to Freret.
‡ Letters of some Portuguese Jews.

youth from vice and its tortuous ways, and reſtores hiſtory to its primitive truth. The Abbè 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 Abbè Feller, or Flexier 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 Abbè Hauteville 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 Trevoix, 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 ſought 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 graſ- " ped the hatchet and the hammer, they only wait the " favorable moment to overturn the altar and the throne. " —Yes, my God, thy temples will be plundered and " deſtroyed; 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 Pa-

" ganiſm, 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 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 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.

* Letter to D'Alembert, 13th Dec. 1763.

† See the analyſis of thoſe works, by Mr. Le Gros, Prevoſt of St. Louis du Louvre.

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 ſchools, and particularly throughout the country, where children could be brought up to different trades, and inſtructed in the principles of agriculture.

The conſpirators ſupport the plan.

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.

"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 defray 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 ſen"ſible that they wiſhed to have the direction 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 ſu"perintended them and their teachers, could not be "competent judges in ſubjects ſo little ſuited to cler"gymen. I apprehended that their object was not ſo "much to give leſſons on agriculture, to the children "of huſbandmen and trades-people, as to withdraw "them from their habitual inſtructions on their cate"chiſm, 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 " plowmen. The books and maſters, ſent by theſe " philoſophers, will rather infuſe ſyſtem than induſtry, " into the country people. I tremble leſt they render " them idle, vain, jealous, and ſhortly diſcontented, " ſeditious, and at length rebellious. I fear, leſt the " whole fruit of the expence, they ſeek to put your " Majeſty to, will be to gradually obliterate, in the hearts " of the 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 multiplying the catechiſts, and in " ſearching for good and patient men, whom his Ma- " jeſty, in concert with the biſhops, ſhould ſupport, in " order to teach the poor peaſantry the principles of " religion, and to teach it them by rote, as the rectors " 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 perſuade himſelf, that " his *thinker*, Duqueſnai, and the other Philoſophers, " were capable of ſuch deteſtable 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 em- " ployed in combating the falſe ideas he had imbibed, " on the Œconomiſts and their aſſociates.

" At length determined to give the king proof poſi- " tive that they impoſed upon him, I ſought to gain the " confidence of thoſe pedlars who travel through the " country, and expoſe their goods to ſale in the vil- " lages, and at the gates of country ſeats. I ſuſpect- " ed thoſe in particular who dealt in books, to be noth- " ing leſs than the agents of Philoſophiſm with the " good country folks. In my excurſions into the coun- " try, I above all fixed my attention on the latter.

He diſcovers the means of the conſpirators.

"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 villages? At theſe words I have ſeen many ſmile. "No, they anſwered, thoſe are not our works; we "make much more money of Voltaire, Diderot, 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 bargain. 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, ſimply 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. 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 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, 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 through-

out 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 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, 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.

* Letter 15th of Sept. 1762.

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, 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.

Diſcovery of the ſecret academy, and of its means.

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'Angevillier's, 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 abovementioned, 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 ſecre-

Avowal and ſorrow of its ſecretary.

" tary to the committee to which you are indebted for
" it, but I call heaven 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 ſubjects to
" this pitch, *and I ſhall die of grief and remorſe!*"

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 admitted into it perſons on whom we could
" perfectly rely. Our ſittings were regularly held at the
" Baron D'Holbach's. Leſt our object ſhould be ſur-
" miſed, we called ourſelves Œconomiſts. We created
" Voltaire, though abſent, our honorary and perpetual
" preſident. Our principal members were D'Alembert,
" Turgot, Condorcet, Diderot, La Harpe, and that La-
" moignon 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 occupations; the
Their object. " moſt of thoſe works which have appeared for this
" long time paſt againſt religion, morals and govern-
" ment, 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 curtailed
" 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
" poſthumous works, ſuch as *Chriſtianity Unmaſked*,
" and divers others, attributed to Freret and Boulan-
" ger, after their deaths, were iſſued from our ſociety.

" When we had approved of thoſe works, we be-
" gan by printing them on fine or ordinary paper, in
" ſufficient number to pay our expences, and then an
" immenſe number on the commoneſt 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 " preſent ſtate you ſee them in. I ſhall not ſee them " long, *for I ſhall die of grief and remorſe!*"

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 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 reaſon live in ſilence " and fear ? They are not ſufficiently 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 felicitate 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 Abbè Durand, (that is Voltiare 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 Roy 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.

* Letter to Helvetius, 25th Auguſt, 1763.

† See L'Antiquité devoilée, Amſterdam, anno 1766, and l'Examen des Apologiſtes du Chriſtianiſme, anno 1767.

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 fortune by being one of the clerks in the office for the tax called the Vingtiemes, and had a salary of about 180l. 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.* Damilaville.

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 in- "visible hands, who, from one end of 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 posthu- "mous work of Boulanger's) and of many other wri- "tings. *It was never known, and his friends kept his se- "cret 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

* Gen. Cor. let. to Damilaville, 2d Dec. 1757.
† 20th Dec. 1768.

works, left 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 enthuſiaſtic 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.

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.‡

Thiriot.

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

Saurin.

* 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.

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.*

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 Peterſburg to form adepts, then returning to Paris, he alſo joins in his abſurdities, 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. Grimm.

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. Baron D'Holbach.

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 whom we have mentioned, Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, Helvetius, Turgot, Condorcet, La Harpe, the keeper of the ſeals Lamoignon, Damilaville, Thiriot, Saurin, the Count D'Argental, Grimm, the Baron D'Holbach, and the unfortunate Le Roy, who died conſumed with grief and remorſe, for having been the ſecretary to ſo monſtrous an academy.

* Voltaire to Mr. Saurin, anno 1761; and to Damilaville, 28th December 1762.

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 "ACADEMY 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 Roy, 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 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 Lau- "ſanne 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.

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 pen- "etrate even into ſuperſtitious Bohemia, and into "Auſtria, the former abode of ſuperſtition."§ Their progreſs. In Switzerland. In Germany.

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 In Ruſſia.

* 25th Feb. 1758. † 8th Feb. 1766. ‡ 2d Feb. 1765.
§ Letter to Voltaire, 143, anno 1766.
‖ Letter to Diderot, 25th Dec. 1762.

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 had even been at the trouble of reviſing the tranſlation of this work, which in France had been cenſured by the Sorbonne.*

In Spain. 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. *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 England. 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 §

Finally, according to their calculations, Bavaria and Auſtria alone (this was during the life-time of the Empreſs Queen) continued to ſupport the divines and defenders of religion. The Empreſs of Ruſſia *was driving them on gloriouſly*, and they were at *their laſt gaſp in Poland*, thanks to the King Poniatowſki. They were *already overthrown 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

* Voltaire to D'Alembert, July 1767. † 3d May, 1773.
‡ Letter to Mr. Riche, 1ſt March 1768.
‖ Voltaire to D'Alembert, 16th June 1773.
§ Letter to the King of Pruſſia, 15th Nov. 1773.
¶ Voltaire to D'Alembert, 1ſt Sept. 1767.

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 inſtance, that there are not twenty "people in Geneva who would not abjure Calvin as "ſoon as they would the Pope, and that many philoſ-"ophers 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 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

* 20th Dec. 1768. † 25th Jan. 1776.
‡ See his Preface to his edition of Paſchal's Thoughts.

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 overlooked. It was agreed that the laws ſhould be ſilent with regard to him on his approach to Paris; the magiſtrates 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 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

His death.

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 tranquility, 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 blaſphemed. 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*, VOL-"TAIRE. 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 vomiting of "blood, at the age of eighty-four, and not having been "able to drag myſelf to the church, the Rev. the Rec-"tor of St. Sulpice, having been pleaſed to add to his "good works, that of ſending to me the Abbé Gaul-"tier, 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 di-"vine 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 the two witneſſes had ſigned this declaration, Voltaire added theſe words, copied from the ſame minutes : " The Abbé Gaultier, my confeſſor, having ap- " prized 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 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

* 27th April, 1767.

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 revelling 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, particularly Mr. Tronchin, calling in to adminiſter relief, thunder-ſtruck 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.

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 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. Leſt 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.

D'Alembert ſucceeds him.

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 D'Alembert and was relating the circumſtances, he did 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.

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. Terri-

* 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.

fied at the ſymptoms he perceived, the young man ran 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 anxious "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 ungrateful, I ſhould forever accuſe my- "ſelf of ingratitude, were I to hide the danger, which "your wounds declare you to be in. Mr. Diderot, "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 impoſ- "ſible for me to reflect on it, and not warn my bene- "factor 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 given the alarm to the Sophiſters, who would have thought themſelves diſhonored by the dereliction of ſo import-

ant 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 horrid 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 blaſpeming, 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 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 deſtroyed, 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 overthow 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 ANTIMONARCHIAL 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 Proteſtaniſm 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.

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!——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 con-

Deluſion on the word Philoſophy.

ſpire 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 ha"tred 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 "wickedneſs 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. 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 mon-

ſter. 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 inceſ-"ſantly; 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 Philoſophy 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,

* Plato in his ſecond Alcibiades. † Ibid.

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 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.

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

* Letter to the Marq. D'Argence, 2d March 1763.

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 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 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 phrenzy 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 Bellerophons 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 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 for- " tunate that none of the ſects who reſide 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 preju-* " *dices.* It is for this reaſon I have tolerated prieſts " and monks, IN SPITE *of Voltaire and D'Alembert,* " *who have* QUARRELLED WITH ME ON THIS HEAD. " I have the greateſt veneration for all our modern " Philoſophers, but indeed I am compelled to acknowl- " edge that a GENERAL TOLERATION is not the *pre-* " *dominant virtue in theſe gentlemen.*" From this the editors draw many excellent concluſions by objecting the wiſdom of Frederick's doctrine to the atrocious perſe- cutions and ferocious intoleration of the French Sophiſ- ters; 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 ad- mired by Voltaire as that of *a Great Captain* for the de- ſtruction 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 Revo- lution, 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 tole- ration 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*, we know not which we " ought principally to feel *our DISGUST or INDIGNA-* " *TION.*" 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 acade- mies, 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 ob- ject of their conſpiracy as accompliſhed. Religion was mourning over her altars overthrown, her temples pro- faned; when Condorcet exalting the triumph of Vol-

* Vide Supra, Chap. VI.

† 24th March 1767, 13th Auguſt 1775.

taire, exclaims: "Here at length it is permitted openly to proclaim 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 phrenzy of a supernatural faith, are vanished from society as they were from Philosophy."*

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.

* Sketch on the Progress of Mind, epoch 9.

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 phrenzy. 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 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.

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,) 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?

Dupes of ignorance.

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 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? 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

* Letter to Voltaire 25th of July and 4th of Auguſt 1770.
† Letter to the Prince Royal of Pruſſia, 28th Nov. 1770

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 fops, 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! 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 phrenzy 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, 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 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 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

* See the original texts quoted in the Helvian Letters, vol. 5.

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 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, vicious or voluptuous, than it did to be ſquinteyed, 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*.‡‡ 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 *re-*

† Vide ſupra, note to 9th chapter.
‡ Fragments on divers ſubjects, Art. VIRTUE.
§ Philoſophical Dictionary, Art. TOUT EST BIEN.
‖ Let. of Phraſybulus.
¶ Encyclopedia, Geneva edition, Art. VICE.
‡‡ Encyclopedia, Art. HAPPINESS, and Preface.
§§ D'Alembert on the Elements of Philoſophy, No. 5.
‖‖ Voltaire's Diſcourſe on Happineſs.

gards 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. 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 lifetime 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 the

¶ See their texts quoted in the Helvian Letters, vol. 3.

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 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 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, 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.