

THE
MONTHLY REVIEW;
OR,
LITERARY JOURNAL,
ENLARGED:

From SEPTEMBER to DECEMBER, *inclusive*,

M, DCC, XCIV.

With an APPENDIX.

“ From the consideration of antient as well as modern time, it appears that
“ the *cause* of CRITICS is the same with that of wit, learning, and good
“ sense.”

SHAFTESBURY.

VOLUME XV.



LONDON:
Printed for R. GRIFFITHS;
AND SOLD BY T. BECKET, IN PALL MALL.
MDCCXCIV.

1794

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

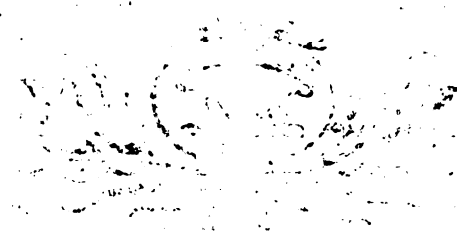
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T A B L E

OF THE

TITLES, AUTHORS' NAMES, &c. of the Publications reviewed in this Volume.

N. B. FOR REMARKABLE PASSAGES in the *Criticisms* and *Extracts*, see the INDEX, at the End of the Volume.

For the Names, also, of those learned Foreigners who are the Authors of new Dissertations, or other curious Papers, published in the MEMOIRS and TRANSACTIONS of the Scientific ACADEMIES on the Continent, and also for the Titles of those Dissertations, &c. which they include, and of which Accounts are given in the Review,—see the *Index*, printed at the End of this Volume.

A		B	
<p><i>ABERNETHY's</i> Surgical Essays, Part II. 299</p> <p><i>Abstract</i> of Insolvent Debtor's Act, 201</p> <p><i>Account</i> of the Campaign of 1792. Vol. II. 525</p> <p><i>Addenda</i> to Phillips's History of Canals, 109</p> <p><i>Aeneas's</i> Elements of Arithmetic, 519</p> <p><i>Age</i> of Infidelity, 342</p> <p><i>Age</i> du désordre pris pour celui de la raison, 463</p> <p><i>Air</i>. See <i>Priestley</i>.</p> <p><i>Albrecht</i> on Patriotism, 495</p> <p><i>Alderson</i> on the Rhys Toxicodendron, 460</p> <p><i>Alexander</i> on the Cynanche Trachealis, 461</p> <p><i>American</i> Budget, 203</p> <p> <i>Calendar</i>, 338</p> <p> Philosophical Society, their Transactions, Vol. III. 568</p> <p> <i>War</i>, History of, 55</p> <p><i>Assize</i> on the Laws of Falling Bodies, 465</p> <p><i>Asiopolenus</i>, 39</p> <p><i>Antiquities</i> of London, 114</p> <p><i>Argentum</i>, Adv. of a Shilling, 228</p> <p><i>Arithmetic</i>. See <i>Aeneas</i>.</p>	<p><i>Aley's</i> Description of the Theatre of War, 110</p> <p> —'s Duty of a Soldier, 111</p> <p><i>Aley's</i> Distiller's Vade Mecum, 117</p>		
B			
<p><i>Baptism</i>. See <i>Richards</i>. See <i>Miller</i>.</p> <p><i>Barbour</i>. See <i>Pinkerton</i>.</p> <p><i>Barry's</i> Familiar Letters, 233</p> <p><i>Barton's</i> Edition of Noy's Grounds of the Law, 471</p> <p><i>Bataavian</i> Philosopher, 493</p> <p><i>Beaumont's</i> Series of Gallicisms, 560</p> <p><i>Beaumont's</i> Translation of Dumouriez's Memoirs, 231</p> <p><i>Bedford</i>, Regent Duke of, Account of his Missal, 338</p> <p><i>Belsham's</i> Sermon, 476</p> <p><i>Bengal</i> Disorders. See <i>Wade</i>.</p> <p><i>Ben's</i> Meteorological Journey, 87</p> <p><i>Bernard</i> on the Christian Religion, 348</p> <p><i>Berthollet</i> on Dyeing, 397</p> <p><i>Better</i> late than never, 442</p> <p><i>Bibliotheca Classica</i>, 196</p> <p><i>Biddesford</i>. See <i>Watkins</i>.</p> <p><i>Birds</i>. See <i>Buffon</i>.</p> <p><i>Blair's</i> Sermons, Vol. IV. 52</p> <p><i>Blake's</i> Letter to the Scotch Clergy, 231</p> <p><i>Blund</i> on Parturition, 86</p>			

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 NS V. 15 A 2
 1794
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CONTENTS.

v

<i>Eyre</i> , Chief Justice, his Charge,	327	<i>Heatcote's</i> Observations on the Corporation and Test Acts,	336
— Strictures on ditto,	328	<i>Helvetia</i> Body. See <i>Weiss</i> .	
<i>Eyre's</i> Consequences, a Comedy,	468	<i>Henchman</i> . See <i>Woodfall</i> .	
F			
<i>Falling Bodies</i> . See <i>Asstice</i> .		<i>Herman</i> of Unna,	21
<i>Faro</i> , & Rouge & Noir,	115	<i>Hess's</i> German Vocabulary,	102
<i>Farewell Ode</i> on a distant Prospect of Cambridge,	270	<i>Hey's</i> Captive Monarch,	216
<i>Fast Sermons</i> ,	237. 475	<i>Hill's</i> Lectures and Reflections,	116
<i>Falber's</i> Advice to his Daughters,	358	<i>His Majesty's</i> Speech,	330
<i>Fawcett's</i> Edit. of Parker's Letters,	233	<i>History</i> of Spain,	190
<i>Finch's</i> Early Wisdom,	20.	— of May Flower,	354
<i>Fires</i> . See <i>Knox</i> .		— of the Rivess, Vol. I.,	361
<i>Fisher</i> on Copyhold Tenures,	110	— of the Campaign,	472
<i>Fitzherbert's</i> New Natura Brevolum,	200	— See <i>Stedman</i> , <i>Edwards</i> , <i>Phillips</i> , <i>Neal</i> , <i>Watkins</i> , <i>Mastic</i> .	
<i>Foublanque</i> on Equity, Vol. II.	469	<i>Hobart's</i> Life,	109
<i>Foot's</i> Life of Hunter,	177	<i>Holcroft's</i> Adventures of Hugh Trevor,	149
<i>Footman's</i> Pamphlet,	223	<i>Howard</i> on the Venereal Disease, Vol. III.	461
* * Foreign Literature,	196	<i>Howorth's</i> (Mrs.) Translation of Haller's Poems,	389
<i>Fox</i> , William, on Jacobinism,	88	<i>Hudibras</i> . See <i>Nash</i> .	
—'s Defence of the War,	89	<i>Hunter</i> , John, Life of,	177
— on Peace,	330	<i>Hurd's</i> Treatise of Affection,	311
<i>France</i> , State of, in May, 1794,	71.	<i>Hutton's</i> Amusees and Elmses,	353
— Sketches of the Revolution in,	412	<i>Hymen</i> , a Poem,	215
— other Tracts relative to, 22. 113. 136. 153. 198. 204—208. 283. 315. 493. 506. 525.	546	I	
<i>French</i> Constitution corrected,	481	<i>Jackson</i> . See <i>Woodfall</i> .	
— Revolution at Geneva,	578	— (Dr.) on Jamaica Fever,	439
G			
<i>Gallinism</i> . See <i>Beauclair</i> .		<i>Jacobinism</i> . See <i>Fox</i> , <i>Williams</i> .	
<i>Gardens</i> , Lord, Travelling Memorandums, Vol. II.	194	<i>Jamaica</i> Fever. See <i>Jackson</i> .	
<i>Gardner's</i> Sermon,	359	<i>Jansen's</i> Dutch Dictionary,	217
<i>Geneva</i> , French Revolution at,	578	<i>Jardine's</i> (Major) Letters, ed Edit.	111
<i>Gerald's</i> Defence,	113	—'s (Mr.) Three Discourses,	119
<i>Germany</i> . See <i>Gray</i> .		—'s Sermon,	160
<i>Giffard's</i> Pursuits of Literature,	211	<i>Jennings's</i> Times, a Rhapsody,	467
<i>Gilpin's</i> Visitation Sermon,	238	<i>Jenny's</i> Works,	425
<i>Godwin's</i> Things as they are,	145	<i>Jepoy's</i> Modern Pleader,	469
<i>Goffing's</i> Alldale Village,	109	<i>India</i> . See <i>Matthew</i> .	
<i>Gray's</i> Letters on a Tour through Germany,	121	<i>Influent</i> Debtors, Abstract of an Act for,	201
<i>Gregg's</i> Solitary Frenchman,	352	<i>Internal</i> Defence. See <i>Dalrymple</i> .	
<i>Greville's</i> British India analysed,	180	<i>Investigation</i> , a Poem,	467
<i>Griff's</i> Antiquities of Ireland,	391	<i>Job</i> . See <i>Schultens</i> .	
<i>Guide</i> to domestic Happiness,	356	<i>Jones's</i> State of the Country,	441
H			
<i>Hall's</i> Memoirs, Vol. XXX.	545	<i>Joyce's</i> Sermon,	477
<i>Habit</i> Copy Act. See <i>Serious</i> . See <i>Thomson</i> .		<i>Ireland</i> . See <i>Grise</i> .	
<i>Hall's</i> Error detected,	465	<i>Ivy</i> Castle,	353
<i>Haller's</i> Poems,	389	K	
<i>Hamilton's</i> American Budget,	203	<i>Kantelaar</i> on the Happiness of Women,	500
— (Dr.) Berthollet on Dyeing,	397	—'s Eulogy on Schultens,	502
<i>Harrison's</i> Letter to Dundee,	93	<i>Kenrick's</i> Sermon,	478
		<i>Keyfall's</i> Assize Sermons,	346
		<i>Kuwoles's</i> English Grammar,	350
		<i>Knox's</i> (Dr.) Antipolsemus,	39
		—'s (Mr.) Letter on extinguishing Fires,	111
		<i>Konynsburg</i> on the Prophecies,	526
		Kramer's	

<i>Kramer's Herman of Unna,</i>	21	<i>Mejer's Turkish Tales,</i>	228
L			
<i>Landscapes. See Craig.</i>		<i>Minnich on the State of Morats, &c.</i>	567
<i>Langford's Sermon,</i>	239	among the Romans,	567
<i>Laws respecting Landlords,</i>	201	<i>Muntingbe's edit. of Schultens on Job,</i>	521
— respecting Money-lending,	470	<i>Mysteries of Udolpho,</i>	278
<i>Lawson's Abstract of an Act for Insolvent Debtors,</i>	201	N	
<i>Letter to F. Plowden, Esq.</i>	82	<i>Nesb's (Dr.) edit. of Butler's Hudibras,</i>	170
— to Mr. Cadogan,	219	—'s (Mr.) Paine's Age of Reason examined,	342
— to Mr. Fox,	330	<i>Natural History. See Donovan.</i>	
<i>Letters, Nine, from India,</i>	202	<i>Necessity. See Crombie.</i>	
<i>Ledwich's edit. of Grise's Ireland,</i>	391	<i>Nenia Britannica,</i>	254
<i>Leyden Mathematical Society, their Transactions,</i>	563	<i>Netherlands. See Cbauffard.</i>	
<i>Liberine led to Reflection,</i>	464	<i>Newton's Letters to a Wife,</i>	236
<i>Liddon's Sermon,</i>	240	<i>Nitbol on the Christian Religion,</i>	343
<i>Life to come. See Essay.</i>		<i>Nisbet's Clinical Guide,</i>	237
<i>Lindsay's Military Miscellany,</i>	259	<i>Nova Scotia, Bishop of, his Sermon,</i>	359
<i>Locke, Notes on,</i>	218	<i>Novels, Essay on,</i>	209
<i>Logarithms. See Mashegne.</i>		<i>Oby's Grounds of the Law,</i>	471
<i>Lond. Militia Act considered,</i>	448	O	
<i>Locker-on,</i>	266	<i>Observations on the Act for Friendly Societies,</i>	116
<i>Lowell's Citizen of the World,</i>	231	— on the Law of Treason,	328
<i>Lowell's Two Sermons,</i>	221	<i>Old Testament, Essays on,</i>	35
<i>Lutai's Sermons,</i>	477	<i>Oram's Poems,</i>	104
<i>Lush's Laws on Riots, &c.</i>	329	P	
M			
<i>Marie's Chronological Table,</i>	473	<i>Paine's Age of Reason, Tracts relative to,</i>	339. 342. 345. 462. 463
<i>Mashegne's edit. of Taylor's Logarithms,</i>	271	<i>Paradise reviewed,</i>	357
<i>Matthew's Letters from India,</i>	202	<i>Parady's Oration on easy Death,</i>	568
<i>Maxims of Gallantry,</i>	115	<i>Parker. See Farwell.</i>	
<i>Measures of Ministry, &c.</i>	331	<i>Parker's Chancery Practice,</i>	470
<i>Medical Education. See Withers.</i>		<i>Parsons's (Mrs.) Lucy, a Novel,</i>	227
<i>Memoth's Vindication,</i>	252	<i>Parturition. See Bland.</i>	
<i>Memoires Historiques & Politiques, par Chauffard,</i>	506	<i>Patriotism. See Abrucht.</i>	
<i>Metreological Journal,</i>	87	<i>Patriot's Calendar,</i>	236. 473
<i>Miles's Letter to Earl Stanhope,</i>	95	<i>Payne's Abstract of the Insolvent Debtor's Act,</i>	201
<i>Military Miscellany,</i>	259	<i>Peace, concerning the Means of making,</i>	548
<i>Miller's Synopsis of Mineralogy,</i>	225	<i>Peacock's (Miss) Visit for a Week,</i>	356
<i>Miller on Catholic Baptism,</i>	346	<i>Pearson's Visitation Charge,</i>	222
<i>Mineralogy. See Miller.</i>		— (Mrs.) Medallion,	227
<i>Mingay, Mr. Sketches of his Character,</i>	329	<i>Pellenc—la Constitution Françoise Corrigée,</i>	481
<i>Missal, rich illuminated, Account of,</i>	333	<i>Petion—Pices Intereffantes, Tome IV.</i>	198
<i>Modern Sabbath,</i>	358	<i>Philadelphia Fever. See Rusb.</i>	
<i>Moses on the Blood,</i>	459	<i>Phillips's History of Canals, Addenda to,</i>	109
<i>Money's Hist. of the Campaign,</i>	315	<i>Philosophe Batave,</i>	493
<i>Montgailard's State of France,</i>	71	<i>Physician's Vade Mecum,</i>	86
— See <i>Rassurez vous.</i>		<i>Pinkerton's Barbour's History of Robert Bruce,</i>	431
— See <i>Withinson.</i>		<i>Picazzi's British Synonymy,</i>	241. 371
—'s Continuation of the State of France,	412	<i>Pitt, Mr. See Refutation.</i>	
<i>Moore. See Coke.</i>		<i>Plants and Shrubs, Nos. 3 and 4.</i>	514
<i>Moore's Sermon,</i>	478	<i>Pliny, Translator of vindicated,</i>	251
<i>Moral Annals of the Poor,</i>	232	10	Plowden,
<i>Morals. See Cray.</i>			
<i>Morell's Notes on Locke,</i>	218		

T H E
M O N T H L Y R E V I E W ,

For S E P T E M B E R , 1794.

ART. I. *Zoonomia; or the Laws of Organic Life.* Vol. I. By Erasmus Darwin, M. D. F. R. S. Author of the Botanic Garden. 4to. pp. 586. 1l. 5s. Boards. Johnson. 1794.

IN few things do men of reading and inquiry differ more than in the manner in which they are affected toward a *new system*. While some peruse with avidity every promising attempt to establish a general theory of a science in which they are interested, enter into it with ardour, and feel great pleasure in following all the mazes of plausible and ingenious speculation, even if, on the whole, they cannot admit its truth; others, on the contrary,—more impressed with the experience of former failures, than sanguine in their expectations of new success, aware of all the numerous inlets to mistake and delusion, and dreading the interference of fancy when truth alone is the object,—receive with coldness every effort which promises more than they expect to see realized, and are perfectly contented to postpone their examination till the public voice has given consequence and authority to the attempt.

It is probable that the reception of the work before us will greatly depend on the proportion of the above two classes among those who pay attention to its subject. Its author is well known as an ingenious philosopher, of extensive knowledge and large inquiry; he is also equally known as a poet, distinguished beyond most of his contemporaries by the boldness of his imagination; and his characters of poet and philosopher have been singularly blended in the same performance. It is easy, therefore, to judge what will be the various impressions on different minds on the appearance of a work under his name, which promises an endeavour of vast extent and moment, 'to reduce the facts relating to *animal life* into classes, orders, genera and species; and, by comparing them with each other, to unravel the theory of diseases.' With respect to ourselves, we would, as much as possible, keep down all prepossessions on the occa-

VOL. XV.

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tion;

which are to be put away in the age of maturity. It will indeed require time to emancipate the *stupid and unfeeling* slaves of custom, fashion, and *self interest* from their more than ÆGYPTIAN BONDAGE.'

From this censure, however, purely *defensive* wars must be exempted.

In the appendix are given translations of several letters of Erasmus, relative to the subject of the treatise; and a series of quotations, chiefly classical, expressing philanthropic sentiments.

ART. VIII. Mr. Sullivan's *View of Nature, in Letters to a Traveller among the Alps, &c.*

[Article concluded from the Review for July, p. 261.]

IN reviewing a work of such great extent and variety as that which is now before us, we find it no easy task to give our readers an adequate idea of its merit. A mere copy of its table of contents would be insupportably tedious. An abstract, however concise, of the substance of each letter would protract our account far beyond the limits to which we are necessarily confined; and, after all, would very imperfectly impress the reader with an idea of the author's turn of thinking, and still less with a perception of the spirit with which he feels, as well as conceives, every important subject that passes in review before him. Mr. S. has not read merely to obtain information, and to enable himself to speculate for his own instruction and that of others, but to qualify himself for rendering essential service to mankind, by placing important truths before their minds in an interesting point of view, and by stimulating them to an animated attention to their best interests. We must proceed, therefore, after having requested our readers to revert to the general account which we have given of the nature and design of this work in the first article of our Review for June last, to point out some of the principal subjects of discussion, and to exemplify the author's manner of treating them, by making a few extracts.

Life in its various forms, intellectual, animal, and vegetable, is the chief object of attention in the *third* volume of this work. The common principles of animal and vegetable life, and their specific differences, are investigated: the doctrine of the distinct existence and immateriality of the soul is maintained; different systems concerning matter and spirit are described: the doctrine of innate ideas and principles, in opposition to Mr. Locke, is defended: the social and not the savage state is asserted to be natural to man; and numerous proofs are adduced of the intellectual superiority of man to the brutes. Curious zoological and botanical discussions fill the remainder

remainder of this volume. On the similarity between the physiology of plants and animals, Mr. S. writes as follows :

‘ Of the essence and properties of life we are profoundly ignorant. What life really is, seems too subtle for our understandings to conceive, or our senses to discern. All animals are endowed with sensation, or at least with irritability, which last has been considered as a distinguishing character of animal existence. We acknowledge sensation in organized bodies, when we perceive they have organs similar to our own, or when they act, in certain circumstances, in the same manner as we act. If an organized being have eyes, ears, a mouth, we naturally conclude it enjoys the same sensations, as these organs convey to us. If we see another being, whose structure exhibits nothing analogous to our organs of sensation, yet contrasting with rapidity when touched, directing its body uniformly to the light, seizing small insects with tentacula, or a kind of arms, and conveying them to an aperture placed at its anterior end, we hesitate not to pronounce it to be animated. Cut off its arms, deprive it of the faculty of contracting and extending its body, the nature of this being will not be changed ; but we shall be unable to determine whether it possesses any portion of life. This is nearly the condition of the small sections of a polypus, before their heads begin to grow. The wheel-animal, the eels in blighted wheat, and the snails recorded in the Philosophical Transactions, afford instances of every appearance of sensation, and even of irritability, being suspended, not for months, but, for several years, while yet the life of these animals is not extinguished, for they uniformly revive upon a proper application of heat and of moisture. If, then, we have no other criteria to distinguish life, than motion, sensation, and irritability, the animals just mentioned, continuing in a state for years, which every man would pronounce to be perfectly dead, life may probably exist in many bodies which are commonly thought to be as inanimate as stones.

‘ Wherever there is a vascular system, containing a moving nutritive *succus*, there is life ; and wherever there is life, there may be, for aught we can prove to the contrary, a more or less acute perception. The same kind of comparative reasoning, that would exclude vegetables from the faculty of perception, might equally exclude from animality, those animals which are provided with the most obtuse senses, when compared with such as are furnished with the most numerous, and most acute. The perception of man seems to be indefinitely greater, when compared with that of coralines, sea pens, and oysters, than the perception of these, which are allowed to be animals. when compared with the signs of perception manifested by a variety of what are called vegetables. Should I not rather call one of the blooming, gentle, and affectionate daughters of humanity, the sister of the lily of the valley, or of the rose, than of the muscle or of the barnacle ? Sponges open and shut their mamillæ ; corals, and sea pens, protrude, or draw back their suckers ; shell fish open or keep close their shells in search of food, or avoidance of injury ; and it from these muscular motions, we judge the beings to which they belong to have perception, that is, to be animals.

‘ In

* In the vegetable kingdom, the *muscular motion* of many plants may be observed, to be to the full as definite and distinguishable, as those of the class of animals just mentioned. The plants called *heliotropæ*, turn daily round with the sun; by constantly presenting their surfaces to that luminary, they seem as desirous of absorbing a nutriment from its rays, as a bed of oysters does from the water, by opening their shells upon the afflux of the tide. The *flores solares*, are as uniform in their opening and shutting, as animals are in their times of feeding and digesting: some, in these motions, do not observe the seasons of the year, but expand and shut up their flowers, at the same hour in all seasons; others, like a variety of insects, which appear or not, according to the heat of the weather or climate, open later in the day, or do not open at all, when they are removed from a southern, to a more northern latitude. Trefoil, wood sorrel, mountain ebony, wild fenna, the African marigold, &c. are so regular in folding up their leaves before rainy weather, that they seem to have a kind of instinct or foresight, similar to that of ants. And what is still more extraordinary, vegetables appear to be a sort of *hygrometers*, for in several there is found a contortion of the fibres, which answers, in every respect, this purpose. The fibres of the plants, being affected by the quality of the air, the spiral part twists, or untwists, as the weather varies, and thus the degrees of dryness or moisture of the atmosphere are to be observed. Young trees in a thick forest are found to incline themselves towards that part through which the light penetrates, as plants are observed to do in a darkened chamber, towards a stream of light let in through an orifice, and as the ears of corn do towards the south.

† The roots of plants are also known to turn away with a kind of abhorrence, from whatever they meet with which is hurtful to them; and to desert their ordinary direction, and to tend with a kind of natural and irresistible impulse towards collections of waters placed within their reach. Many plants experience convulsions of their stamina, upon being slightly touched. Whatever can produce any effect upon an animal organ, as the impact of external bodies, heat and cold, the vapour of burning sulphur, of volatile alkali, want of air, &c. is found to act also upon the plants called sensitive. But, we will not insist upon any further instances of that class. We have already noticed many, which seem far superior in quickness to those of a variety of animals. Now, to refer the muscular motions of shell fish, and zoophytes, to an internal principle of volition; to make these indicative of the perceptivity of the being; and to attribute the more notable ones of vegetables to certain mechanical dilatations and contractions of parts, occasioned by external impulse, is to err against the rule of philosophising, which assigns the same causes for effects of the same kind. The motions, in both cases, are equally accommodated to the preservation of the being to which they belong; are equally distinct and uniform; and should be equally derived from mechanism, or equally admitted as criteria of perception. The generation, nutrition, organization, life, health, sickness, and death of plants, establish no discriminative characteristic between them and animals. A communication of sexes, in order to produce their like,

belongs

belongs to certain vegetables, as well as to certain animals. Expiration and inspiration, a kind of larynx and lungs, perspiration, imbibition, arteries, veins, lacteals, and probably a circulating fluid, appertain to vegetables, as well as to animals: Life belongs alike to both kingdoms, and seems to depend upon the same principle in both. Both are incapable of assimilating to their proper substance, all kinds of food; for fruits are found to taste of the soil, just as the milk, and flesh, and bones, and urine of animals, often give indications of the particular pabulum with which they have been fed. Both die of old age; from excess of hunger or thirst; from external injuries; from intemperance of weather; or from poisoned food.

The author proceeds, in the *fourth* volume, to farther metaphysical inquiries. He particularly discusses the great questions concerning the immortality of the soul and the existence of Deity. Subjects of such moment he cannot persuade himself to treat with the cool indifference of scepticism. While he reasons strongly in support of these fundamental truths of religion, he displays their importance with that kind of natural eloquence which is the offspring of sincere conviction. The observations on these subjects, and indeed the general spirit of the whole work, are well adapted to accomplish the author's laudable and benevolent design of checking the progress of those atheistical principles, which (to what extent we are not able to say,) have lately found advocates in France. Of the manner in which Mr. S. writes on this subject, we shall give a short specimen:

‘ Nothing is without an adequate cause why it is; and why it is so, rather than otherwise. Where there is no cause there can be no effect. We cannot comprehend, how one intelligent being could have brought about such an universal effect. Yet, what has been thought beyond the power of any being, has been ascribed to a cause void of all power, *dead matter, and blind necessity*. This is not as it should be. We must have an adequate cause to a positive effect. We are not to plant a motive power in dead matter, to make dead matter living matter. Virtue, power, and force, cannot be without a subject; nor can they be communicated from the terminating surface of one particle to that of another without a subject. Nothing can act, where it is not; nor can matter act beyond its terminating surface. Material action, at a distance, is repugnant to reason. Spinoza's assertion, that every thing in the world is God, or that nothing but God could exist, includes in it this plain contradiction, of making the effect the same thing with the cause, and confounding the most opposite natures; for it is absolutely impossible, the same being should be both material and immaterial; or void of all power, as matter is, and at once the origin of all power, as an immaterial being must be.

‘ It is singular that man, who cannot account for any thing without him, has yet the hardness to deny a God. Can we give even a conjectural account of any one phenomenon in nature, from the rotation of the great orbs of the universe, to the germination of a blade

blade of grass, without having recourse to him, as the primary incomprehensible cause? The study of nature ought to elevate the ideas of man, one should conceive, to his Creator; but, it only serves to increase his presumption. The philosopher, who flatters himself he has penetrated into the secrets of existence, is vain enough to compare his pretended wisdom to the infinite wisdom of his Maker. He approves, censures, corrects, and prescribes laws to Nature, and limits to Omnipotence; and thus, while with idle systems he is busily occupied in arranging this machine of the world, the poor husbandman, who sees the sun and the rain contribute in their turns to fertilize his fields, admires and blesses the hand, whose bounties he receives, without troubling himself about the manner in which they are bestowed. He does not seek to justify his ignorance, or his vices, by his infidelity. He does not arrogantly censure the works of his Creator, nor attack his Divine Master to shew his own self-sufficiency.

‘ But there is an arbitrary word, which men are extravagantly fond of, which yet is totally destitute of meaning. What is nature; that is, what is it in contradistinction to the Author of nature? Examine it narrowly; you will find it eludes every possible research. Who teaches the young of all animals, without exception, first, to make use of their limbs, and move their bodies? It is a secret, you will say, to all the philosophers on earth, how spontaneous motion is performed. And how can every brute, every creature, so readily perform an action, the nature and reason of which is such a mystery? Who guides them in their work? Spontaneous motion, in the first instance, is neither performed by reason, nor by habit? Is not the constant direction of the Deity therefore necessary? Is it not necessary also in the formation of animals, as well as vegetables? And farther, when the little living creatures have no faculties to contrive, nor knowledge to comprehend, the mysterious process they are employed in, is it not still equally necessary, and equally plain, they must be guided by the same wisdom, which constantly directs the formation of their bodies? Were it not for this providential direction, no species of animals, not even man, could overcome the first difficulties of life, but, must inevitably give up their new-gotten breath, under an inability and ignorance what to do to preserve it. Nature, therefore, may be stiled the divinity of the atheist, the knowledge of the ignorant, and the refuge of the slothful mind, in which all contradictions are consistent. Nature, as an universal unmeaning cause, supersedes every inquiry; and as a mere non-entity, requires neither fear nor reverence.’

Besides the metaphysical speculations contained in this volume, the reader will find much learned and ingenious investigation respecting the age of the world, and the changes which the surface of the globe has undergone. All historical records Mr. S. traces back to the Scythians, as the most antient civilized state. Those who interest themselves in inquiries of this kind will receive much information and amusement in perusing, in their entire connection, the result of the author's researches

on this subject, and, at the beginning of the *fifth* volume, his disquisitions concerning the antient state of Ireland.

From other antient nations, Mr. S. turns his attention to the Israelites. In discussing their history, and the authority of their sacred books, at the same time that he proves himself a true and zealous friend to revelation, and strenuously maintains the wisdom and purity of the Mosaic system, he perceives and acknowledges the difficulties which attend the literal interpretation of the account of the fall of man; and he is inclined to think, with several antient Christian writers, that it ought to be explained allegorically. Liberality and candour are strongly marked in the author's observations on the Jewish history, as well as in his subsequent reflections on the morality and mythology of the antient Greeks and Romans. After his most liberal concessions, however, in favour of paganism, he finds abundant reason to maintain the necessity of divine revelation; and he insists largely and forcibly on the folly and inhumanity of attempting to deprive men of the benefit of Christianity, for this reason, among others, that Christianity is the perfection of natural religion.

‘ With respect to Christianity, (vol. v. p. 403.) is it not, in fact, the religion of nature, so much contended for by philosophers? For the end of Christ's coming was, not to abolish the old and fundamental religion, but to perfect it: he came, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. Hence the Christian religion, in whatever light it be taken, is certainly nothing new, no novel system, no other than the perfection of that religion, originally imparted to mankind?

‘ It is well when any terms are held with Christianity. He who attacks revealed religion only, says Montesquieu, may be in some respects pardoned; but he who attacks natural religion, attacks all the religions in the world. Though men should be taught to disbelieve the obligations of revealed religion, they may still think themselves bound by the religion of nature; but, it is most pernicious to endeavour to persuade them, they are bound by no religion at all. It is not impossible to attack a revealed religion, seeing it depends on particular facts, and facts are, in their own nature, liable to be controverted; but this is not the case with natural religion; for it is drawn from the nature of man, which cannot be disputed; and from the internal sentiments of mankind, which are equally incontrovertible. A man, who is going to be burned, or afraid of being burned, because he does not believe certain articles, whether depending or not depending on revealed religion, hath very good reason to attack it, because he may thereby hope to provide for his own defence. But the case is very different, where the man who attacks revealed religion, does it without the least personal motive; and where, if he should succeed, nay should be in the right too, he would only deprive his country of numberless real benefits, for the sake of establishing a merely speculative truth.

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‘Lively free-thinkers have, at all times, a happy and a convenient knack of arranging their arguments in such a manner, that the truth may be carefully concealed; and then of dancing round their syllogisms as wild Indians dance round their circle. What religion, say they to the Chinese, next to your own, is the best? The religion of nature, says the Chinese. What religion, would you embrace, were you to abjure Mahomedanism? The religion of nature, says the Mussulman. Christians, which is the true religion, if Christianity be not? The religion of nature, which was the religion of the Jews. But, you Jews, what is the true religion, if Judaism be false? Why, certainly, the religion of nature. Thus, to that which is with unanimity allowed the second place, are we not, we are asked, in fairness to give the first?’

‘The religion of the gospel, taking the term nature in the sense most applicable to the subject, is, I acknowledge, the true original religion of nature. Our Saviour came into the world, as he himself declares, to supply the defects of reason, not to alter the pure sentiments, of which God had ordained his creatures should be possessed. Religion, in this view of it, is the same it was in the days of the old law; the same it was in the days before the law was given; and the same, both then and now, that it will be a thousand years hence, if the world last so long. Such natural religion can only differ from revealed religion, in the manner of its being communicated. The one is the internal, as the other is the external revelation of the same unchangeable will of a Being, who is alike, at all times, infinitely wise and good. There can then, in truth, be no disagreement between them. This many eminent divines have allowed. *O si sic omnia dixissent!*

‘But concerning this pure and natural religion it may be confidently asserted, that there never was an age, or nation, in the world, in which it was ever practised. Religion, before the introduction of Christianity, and even now in unenlightened countries, exhibits in the most unequivocal manner, the glaring weaknesses of the human understanding; even to the bigotted and horrible extreme of sacrificing the lives of men to the sanguinary honour of their divinities. Here I would wish I could stop; but I am compelled to the confession of even a more culpable atrocity, in one misguided branch of the very system for which I am contending. To burn bodies, and to sentence souls to everlasting perdition, have been fraudulently tortured out of the words of mercy, and of peace, and have been claimed as a right in sacerdotal prerogative. Say, ye solemn murderers of the holy office, is it not true, that ye dress your wretched victims in a *san benito*, or coat painted with flames and devils, that the deluded populace may conclude, that those whom you condemn, are immediately and justly precipitated to hell? And that on the scaffold, you ferociously take your leave of each agonizing sufferer, with this dreadful expression, *Jam animam tuam tradimus Diabolo?*’

The subject of the divine authority, and the moral excellence of the Christian religion, are pursued still farther in the sixth volume; several popular objections against it are refuted;

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its internal characters are exhibited as a strong confirmation of its divine original; and the history of its rise and progress is examined, to prove that the mischiefs which have arisen in the Christian world have been owing to the perversion and abuse, and not to the natural tendency, of Christianity.—In his review of the history of the Christian church, Mr. S. censures, with a truly Christian spirit, every appearance of intolerance; and, though he strongly recommends the study, profession, and practice of religion, he encourages no other method of supporting its credit and authority than the free communication of religious knowledge, and the universal exercise of religious freedom. We conclude our extracts with the following judicious and spirited remarks on the impolicy and injustice of intolerance:

“There are, and have been, and will be to eternity, various and opposite sentiments on a question, which, above all others, is most interesting to every man. And the partizans of either party will ever pretend to have the argument in their favour. Even among the most learned, and the most rigidly just and pure-hearted, we often see, that neither knowledge, nor virtue, is an absolute security against error. Religion, in reality, cannot be more national than the intellectual faculty and the energies of conscience. Some truths, it is certain, may be national; but others must be universal. For God never appointed true religion to lend forms and tints to any peculiar associations: he placed it in the centre of the universe, to be the luminary of union, by the exercise of general benevolence.

“The direful spirit of fanaticism is happily leaving the earth. Those begin to blush, who formerly had no zeal so strong as that of persecution. They now even begin to feel, that tolerance is not a deadly sin—a conspiracy against God and nature. St. Bernard's words come to be understood, “*Fides suadenda, non imperanda.*” But could you have supposed, that the losses occasioned to the human species, from the first sanguinary executions of the Hebrews, to the perfidious massacres of St. Bartholomew and Ireland, within the pales of Judaism and Christianity alone, there could from history be traced to have been at least thirty millions of men? Or, could you ever have conceived it possible, that, after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, a medal should have been struck with this inscription: “*Pietas armavit justitiam?*” That it should be recorded, that “*un arret du mois de Juillet 1562, permet de tuer les Huguenots partout ou on les trouvera; et ordonnoit, que cet arret seroit lu tous les Dimanches au prône de chaque paroisse?*” Or, what is still more abominable, that Pope Gregory the Thirteenth should, for the murder of from seventy to an hundred thousand of his fellow-creatures, on the day of St. Bartholomew, have made a solemn procession to St. Peter's, and placed a picture of the subject in the Vatican, with this inscription, “*Pontifex collegii necem probat?*”

“To admit general principles in theory, and to restrict them in practice, is, to a rational mind, the basest logic. Intolerance, that pretends to reason, is worse than enthusiasm, which persecutes from im-

puller. Peter, John, and Paul, are men; you and I are men; and so is the Jew, and so is the Mahommedan. As well, then, may you give reason to man, and brand him for a fool, because he reasons, as brand with infamy the man who judges for himself in religion. The absurdity is, in truth, too glaring; and yet almost all Christians are guilty of it. We all strive to fasten an opprobrium upon those who think differently from ourselves; and thus prejudice becomes an overmatch for principle.

In every quarter our ears are dinned with the cry of impiety. In Asia, the Christian is impious; in Europe, the Mussulman; in London, the Papist; in Rome, the Calvinist: nay, almost every street has its peculiar sanctity and pretension. How is this? Is the whole world impious? or is there any such thing as impiety? I am afraid this mutual reproach is little better than satire in self-applause: and though the paradox is not in all cases just, we may venture to believe, that those who have the best laws have often the most need of them.

The advocate for real Christianity has nothing to do with the peculiar tenets of Luther, Calvin, or Bellarmine, or with any other system which is likely to be tinctured with human infirmity: his business is, to vindicate the truth as it is in the gospel. Human knowledge, as human nature, he knows, is to be pruned according to method and rule. As the world advances, reason at all times gains ground upon imagination; the understanding becomes more exercised; fewer objects occur that are new and surprising; men apply to trace the causes of things; and they correct and refine one another. And thus, in the present age, thanks to the Author of all goodness, we are beginning to make amends for former negligence. The curiosity of the moralist is connected with taste and genius; and his researches tend to display the progress of human manners, and to illustrate the history of society.

The religious establishment, of any country, so far as it is settled by human laws, and with respect to external rites and worldly emolument, is liable to change, as much as any civil appointments whatever. So far was Locke from thinking the church interwoven with the state, that he held the former to be absolutely separate and distinct from the latter. "The boundaries, on both sides," says he, "are fixed and immoveable. And he jumbles heaven and earth together, things most remote and opposite, who mixes two societies which are, in their original, end, business, and every thing, perfectly distinct, and infinitely different from each other."

With respect to what are called denominations, therefore, of religion, if every one be left to judge of his own religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is wrong. But if men are to judge of each other's religion, there is no such thing as a religion that is right; and therefore all the world are right, or all the world are wrong. No man, or body of men, consequently, can, under any pretence whatsoever, assume the power of governing, or forcing the belief, the thoughts, the reason of others, without impiously and foolishly arrogating the power of God. Religion, as a rule of faith, by which we are to be saved or condemned in another life, must be the exclusive private concern of the individual, in which every man has an indis-

putable right to follow the light of his own reason, and to reject all authority founded on the reason of others. Those, accordingly, who denounce to us damnation, as the consequence of error in faith, and those who would force us to hazard our immortal souls, upon their judgments, who have no concern in the matter, contrary to our own reason, who have so deep an interest in it, are the most execrable of all tyrants.

Mankind have groaned, even in the church of Christ, for more than a thousand years, under a fatal confederation between civil and ecclesiastical power. By this contract for the bodies and souls of men, the mind is first to be enslaved, and then the body delivered over to the secular arm, with its active principle, the spring of all its virtues and faculties, bound up in chains. From this complicated tyranny, even death is no refuge. Its power, in papal kingdoms more especially, extends into the reign of darkness; the miserable mortal, who has not obeyed its ordinances here, who does not go to the grave clothed in the San Benito of their inquisition, and carry in his hand the passport of absolution, is handed over to the agents of the hierarchy in another world, to the discipline of eternal torments. But even our own present mixture of religion with politics; our religious tests, and parliamentary religions, would, I suspect, appear somewhat ludicrous to a person who could contemplate them unbiassed by habit and custom. Is it not a curious idea, for instance, that if a Solon, or a Socrates, were to rise up among us, the one could not sit for a Cornish borough, nor the other execute the office of justice of peace; that Epaminondas could not command a troop of horse, or Themistocles be made a post-captain, till they had made themselves masters of the thirty-nine articles previously to the taking the sacramental test?

After having so fully expressed our approbation of this work, and having furnished our readers so largely with an opportunity of judging of its merit, we have now only to express our earnest wish that it may be as useful in promoting the interests of religion, and in propagating the love of science, as the author's benevolence will lead him to desire, and as his ability and public spirit give him a right to expect.

A copious alphabetical index would have been an useful appendage to these volumes.

ART. IX. *Sermons*, by Hugh Blair, D. D. F. R. S. Ed. Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University of Edinburgh. Vol. IV. 8vo. pp. 445. 6s. Boards. Cadell. 1794.

IT is an inexpressible gratification and encouragement to us in our literary labours, when we find our judgment concerning the merit of important publications confirmed by the general suffrage of the world. The intervals, which have passed between the times of the publication of the several volumes of Dr. Blair's sermons, have afforded us full opportunity of informing ourselves of the reception which they have experienced; and we