

there are two monsoons; the first, during which the winds blow from west to east, begins in the month of August or September; and the second, during which the wind is in the east, begins in January. Thus we set sail from Africa for Malabar at the season of the year that Ptolemy's fleet used to put to sea thence; and we return too at the same time as they.

Alexander's fleet was seven months in sailing from Patala to Susa. It set out in the month of July, that is, at a season when no ship dare now put to sea to return from the Indies. Between these two monsoons there is an interval, during which the winds vary; when a north wind, meeting with the common winds, raises, especially near the coasts, the most terrible tempests. These continue during the months of June, July, and August. Alexander's fleet, therefore, setting sail from Patala in the month of July, must have been exposed to many storms, and the voyage must have been long, because they sailed against the monsoon.

Pliny says that they set out for the Indies at the end of summer; thus they spent the time proper for taking advantage of the monsoon in their passage from Alexandria to the Red Sea.

Observe here, I pray, how navigation has, little by little, arrived at perfection. Darius's fleet was two years and a half in falling down the Indus and going to the Red Sea.^b Afterwards the fleet of Alexander,^c descending the Indus, arrived at Susa in ten months, having sailed three months on the Indus, and seven on the Indian Ocean; at last the passage from the coast of Malabar to the Red Sea was made in forty days.^d

Strabo,^e who accounts for their ignorance of the countries between the Hypanis and the Ganges, says there were very few of those who sailed from Egypt to the Indies that ever proceeded so far as the Ganges. Their fleets, in fact, never went thither: they sailed with the western monsoons from the mouth of the Red Sea to the coast of Malabar. They cast anchor in the ports along that coast, and never attempted to get round the peninsula on this side the Ganges by Cape Comorin and the coast of Coromandel. The plan of navigation laid down by the kings of Egypt and the Romans was to set out and return the same year.^f

^b Herodotus, "Melpomene."
^c Pliny, lib. VI. cap. xxiii.
^d Ibid.

^e Lib. XV.
^f Pliny, lib. VI. cap. xxiii.

Thus it is demonstrable that the commerce of the Greeks and Romans to the Indies was much less extensive than ours. We know immense countries, which to them were entirely unknown; we traffic with all the Indian nations; we even manage their trade and carry on their commerce.

But this commerce of the ancients was carried on with far greater facility than ours. And if the moderns were to trade only with the coast of Guzerat and Malabar, and, without seeking for the southern isles, were satisfied with what these islanders brought them, they would certainly prefer the way of Egypt to that of the Cape of Good Hope. Strabo informs us^u that they traded thus with the people of Taprobane.

10.—Of the Circuit of Africa

We find from history that before the discovery of the mariner's compass four attempts were made to sail round the coast of Africa. The Phœnicians sent by Necho^v and Eudoxus,^w flying from the wrath of Ptolemy Lathyrus, set out from the Red Sea, and succeeded. Sataspes^x sent by Xerxes, and Hanno by the Carthaginians, set out from the Pillars of Hercules, and failed in the attempt.

The capital point in surrounding Africa was to discover and double the Cape of Good Hope. Those who set out from the Red Sea found this cape nearer by half, than it would have been in setting out from the Mediterranean. The shore from the Red Sea is not so shallow as that from the cape to Hercules' Pillars.^y The discovery of the cape by Hercules' Pillars was owing to the invention of the compass, which permitted them to leave the coast of Africa, and to launch out into the vast ocean, in order to sail towards the island of St. Helena, or towards the coast of Brazil.^z It was, therefore, possible for them to sail from the Red Sea into the Mediterranean, but not to set out from the Mediterranean to return by the Red Sea.

Thus, without making this grand circuit, after which they could hardly hope to return, it was most natural to trade to the

^u Lib. XV.
^v He was desirous of conquering it.—
Herodotus, lib. IV.
^w Pliny, lib. II. cap. lxxvii.; Pomponius
Mela, lib. III. cap. ix.
^x Herodotus, in "Melpomene."
^y Add to this what I shall say in chap.
11 of this book on the navigation of
Hanno.

^z In the months of October, November, December, and January the wind in the Atlantic Ocean is found to blow northeast; our ships therefore cross the line, and to avoid the wind, which is there generally east, they direct their course to the south; or else they enter into the torrid zone, in those places where the wind is west.

east of Africa by the Red Sea, and to the western coast by Hercules' Pillars.

The Grecian kings of Egypt discovered at first, in the Red Sea, that part of the coast of Africa which extends from the bottom of the gulf, where stands the town of Heroum, as far as Dira, that is, to the strait now known by the name of Babel-mandel. Thence to the promontory of Aromatia, situate at the entrance of the Red Sea,^a the coast had never been surveyed by navigators: and this is evident from what Artemidorus tells us,^b that they were acquainted with the places on that coast, but knew not their distances: the reason of which is, they successively gained a knowledge of those ports by land, without sailing from one to the other.

Beyond this promontory, at which the coast along the ocean commenced, they knew nothing, as we learn from Eratosthenes and Artemidorus.^c

Such was the knowledge they had of the coasts of Africa in Strabo's time, that is, in the reign of Augustus. But after the prince's decease, the Romans found out the two capes Raptum and Prassum, of which Strabo makes no mention, because they had not as yet been discovered. It is plain that both those names are of Roman origin.

Ptolemy, the geographer, flourished under Adrian and Antoninus Pius; and the author of the Periplus of the Red Sea, whoever he was, lived a little after. Yet the former limits known Africa to Cape Prassum,^d which is in about the 14th degree of south latitude; while the author of the Periplus^e confines it to Cape Raptum, which is nearly in the 10th degree of the same latitude. In all likelihood the latter took his limit from a place then frequented, and Ptolemy his from a place with which there was no longer any communication.

What confirms me in this notion is that the people about Cape Prassum were Anthropophagi.^f Ptolemy takes notice^g of a great number of places between the port or emporium Aromatum and Cape Raptum, but leaves an entire blank be-

^a The sea to which we give this name was called by the ancients the Gulf of Arabia; the name of Red Sea they gave to that part of the ocean which borders on this gulf.

^b Strabo, lib. XVI.

^c Ibid. Artemidorus settled the borders of the known coast at the place

called Austricornu; and Eratosthenes, Cinnamomiferam.

^d Lib. I. cap. vii.; lib. IV. cap. ix. table 4 of Africa.

^e This Periplus is attributed to Arrian.

^f Ptol. lib. IV. cap. ix.

^g Lib. IV. cap. vii. and viii.

tween Capes Raptum and Prassum. The great profits of the East India trade must have occasioned a neglect of that of Africa. In fine, the Romans never had any settled navigation; they had discovered these several ports by land expeditions, and by means of ships driven on that coast; and as at present we are well acquainted with the maritime parts of Africa, but know very little of the inland country, the ancients, on the contrary, had a very good knowledge of the inland parts, but were almost strangers to the coasts.^h

I said that the Phœnicians sent by Necho and Eudoxus under Ptolemy Lathyrus had made the circuit of Africa; but at the time of Ptolemy, the geographer, those two voyages must have been looked upon as fabulous, since he places after the Sinus Magnus, which I apprehend to be the Gulf of Siam, an unknown country, extending from Asia to Africa, and terminating at Cape Prassum, so that the Indian Ocean would have been no more than a lake. The ancients who discovered the Indies towards the north, advancing eastward, placed this unknown country to the south.

II.—Of Carthage and Marseilles

The law of nations which prevailed at Carthage was very extraordinary: all strangers who traded to Sardinia and towards Hercules' Pillars this haughty republic sentenced to be drowned. Her civil polity was equally surprising; she forbade the Sardinians to cultivate their lands, upon pain of death. She increased her power by her riches, and afterwards her riches by her power. Being mistress of the coasts of Africa, which are washed by the Mediterranean, she extended herself along the ocean. Hanno, by order of the Senate of Carthage, distributed thirty thousand Carthaginians from Hercules' Pillars as far as Cerne. This place, he says, is as distant from Hercules' Pillars as the latter from Carthage. This situation is extremely remarkable. It lets us see that Hanno limited his settlements to the 25th degree of north latitude; that is, to two or three degrees south of the Canaries.

^h See what exact descriptions Strabo and Ptolemy have given us of the different parts of Africa. Their knowledge was owing to the several wars which the two most powerful nations in the

world had waged with the people of Africa, to the alliances they had contracted, and to the trade they had carried on with those countries.

ⁱ Lib. VII. cap. iii.

Hanno being at Cerne undertook another voyage, with a view of making further discoveries towards the south. He took but little notice of the continent. He followed the coast for twenty-six days, when he was obliged to return for want of provisions. The Carthaginians, it seems, made no use of this second enterprise. Scylax says *j* that the sea is not navigable beyond Cerne, because it is shallow, full of mud and sea-weeds: *k* and, in fact, there are many of these in those latitudes. *l* The Carthaginian merchants mentioned by Scylax might find obstacles which Hanno, who had sixty vessels of fifty oars each, had surmounted. Difficulties are at most but relative; besides, we ought not to confound an enterprise in which bravery and resolution must be exerted with things that require no extraordinary conduct.

The relation of Hanno's voyage is a fine fragment of antiquity. It was written by the very man that performed it.

His recital is not mingled with ostentation. Great commanders write their actions with simplicity; because they receive more glory from facts than from words.

The style is agreeable to the subject; he deals not in the marvellous. All he says of the climate, of the soil, the behavior, the manners of the inhabitants, correspond with what is every day seen on this coast of Africa; one would imagine it the journal of a modern sailor.

He observed from his fleet that in the daytime there was a prodigious silence on the continent, that in the night he heard the sound of various musical instruments, and that fires might then be everywhere seen, some larger than others. *m* Our relations are conformable to this; it has been discovered that in the day the savages retire into the forests to avoid the heat of the sun, that they light up great fires in the night to disperse the beasts of prey, and that they are passionately fond of music and dancing.

The same writer describes a volcano with all the phenomena of Vesuvius; and relates that he captured two hairy women,

j See his "Periplus," under the article of Carthage.

k See Herodotus, in "Melpomene," on the obstacles which Sataspes encountered.

l See the charts and relations in the first volume of "Voyages that contributed to the establishment of an East India company," part I. p. 201. This

weed covers the surface of the water in such a manner as to be scarcely perceived, and ships can only pass through it with a stiff gale.

m Pliny tells us the same thing, speaking of Mount Atlas: "Noctibus micare crebris ignibus, tiliarum cantu tympanorumque sonitu strepere, neminem interdiu cerni."

who chose to die rather than follow the Carthaginians, and whose skins he carried to Carthage. This has been found not void of probability.

This narration is so much the more valuable as it is a monument of Punic antiquity; and hence alone it has been regarded as fabulous. For the Romans retained their hatred of the Carthaginians, even after they had destroyed them. But it was victory alone that decided whether we ought to say the Punic or the Roman faith.

Some moderns *n* have imbibed these prejudices. What has become, say they, of the cities described by Hanno, of which even in Pliny's time there remained no vestiges? But it would have been a wonder, indeed, if any such vestiges had remained. Was it a Corinth or Athens that Hanno built on those coasts? He left Carthaginian families in such places as were most commodious for trade, and secured them as well as his hurry would permit against savages and wild beasts. The calamities of the Carthaginians put a period to the navigation of Africa; these families must necessarily then either perish or become savages. Besides, were the ruins of these cities even still in being, who is it that would venture into the woods and marshes to make the discovery? We find, however, in Scylax and Polybius that the Carthaginians had considerable settlements on those coasts. These are the vestiges of the cities of Hanno; there are no others, from the same reason that there are no others of Carthage itself.

The Carthaginians were in the high road to wealth; and had they gone so far as four degrees of north latitude, and fifteen of longitude, they would have discovered the Gold Coast. They would then have had a trade of much greater importance than that which is carried on at present on that coast, at a time when America seems to have degraded the riches of all other countries. They would there have found treasures of which they could never have been deprived by the Romans.

Very surprising things have been said of the riches of Spain. If we may believe Aristotle, *o* the Phœnicians who arrived at Tartessus found so much silver there that their ships could not hold it all; and they made of this metal their meanest utensils.

n Mr. Dodwell. See his Dissertation on Hanno's "Periplus." *o* "Of Wonderful Things."

The Carthaginians,^p according to Diodorus,^q found so much gold and silver in the Pyrenean mountains, that they adorned the anchors of their ships with it. But no foundation can be built on such popular reports. Let us, therefore, examine the facts themselves.

We find in a fragment of Polybius, cited by Strabo,^r that the silver mines at the source of the river Bætis, in which forty thousand men were employed, produced to the Romans twenty-five thousand drachmas a day, that is, about five million livres a year, at fifty livres to the mark. The mountains that contained these mines were called the Silver Mountains: ^s which shows they were the Potosí of those times. At present, the mines of Hanover do not employ a fourth part of the workmen, and yet they yield more. But as the Romans had not many copper mines, and but few of silver; and as the Greeks knew none but the Attic mines, which were of little value, they might well be astonished at their abundance.

In the war that broke out for the succession of Spain, a man called the Marquis of Rhodes, of whom it was said that he was ruined in gold mines and enriched in hospitals,^t proposed to the Court of France to open the Pyrenean mines. He alleged the example of the Tyrians, the Carthaginians, and the Romans. He was permitted to search, but sought in vain; he still alleged, and found nothing.

The Carthaginians, being masters of the gold and silver trade, were willing to be so of the lead and pewter. These metals were carried by land from the ports of Gaul upon the ocean to those of the Mediterranean. The Carthaginians were desirous of receiving them at the first hand; they sent Himilco to make a settlement in the isles called Cassiterides,^u which are imagined to be those of Scilly.

These voyages from Bætica into England have made some persons imagine that the Carthaginians knew the compass: but it is very certain that they followed the coasts. There needs no other proof than Himilco's being four months in sailing from the mouth of the Bætis to England; besides, the famous piece of history of the Carthaginian ^v pilot who, being followed by a

^p Diodorus speaks of the Phœnicians in this relation, and not of the Carthaginians.—Ed.

^q Lib. III.

^r Lib. VI.

^s "Mons Argentarius."

^t He had some share in their management.

^u See Festus Avienus.

^v Strabo, lib. III., towards the end

Roman vessel, ran aground, that he might not show her the way to England,^w plainly intimates that those vessels were very near the shore when they fell in with each other.

The ancients might have performed voyages that would make one imagine they had the compass, though they had not. If a pilot was far from land, and during his voyage had such serene weather that in the night he could always see a polar star ^x and in the day the rising and setting of the sun, it is certain he might regulate his course as well as we do now by the compass: but this must be a fortuitous case, and not a regular method of navigation.

We see in the treaty which put an end to the first Punic war that Carthage was principally attentive to preserve the empire of the sea, and Rome that of the land. Hanno,^y in his negotiation with the Romans, declared that they should not be suffered even to wash their hands in the sea of Sicily; they were not permitted to sail beyond the *promontorium pulchrum*; they were forbidden to trade in Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa, except at Carthage: ^z an exception that proves there was no design to favor them in their trade with that city.

In early times there had been very great wars between Carthage and Marseilles ^a on the subject of fishing. After the peace they entered jointly into economical commerce. Marseilles at length grew jealous, especially as, being equal to her rival in industry, she had become inferior to her in power. This is the motive of her great fidelity to the Romans. The war between the latter and the Carthaginians in Spain was a source of riches to Marseilles, which had now become their magazine. The ruin of Carthage and Corinth still increased the glory of Marseilles, and had it not been for the civil wars, in which this republic ought on no account to have engaged, she would have been happy under the protection of the Romans, who were not the least jealous of her commerce.

^w He was rewarded by the senate of Carthage.

^x Montesquieu has been found fault with in this construction, as though he were giving the impression that there was more than one North Star.—Ed.

^y Frenshemius's Supplement to Livy, 2d Decad.

^z In the parts subject to the Carthaginians.

^a Justin, lib. XLIII. cap. v.

12.—*The Isle of Delos—Mithridates*

Upon the destruction of Corinth by the Romans, the merchants retired to Delos, an island which from religious considerations was looked upon as a place of safety: *b* besides, it was extremely well situated for the commerce of Italy and Asia, which, since the reduction of Africa and the weakening of Greece, had grown more important.

From the earliest times the Greeks, as we have already observed, sent colonies to Propontis and to the Euxine Sea—colonies which retained their laws and liberties under the Persians. Alexander, having undertaken his expedition against the barbarians only, did not molest these people. *c* Neither does it appear that the kings of Pontus, who were masters of many of those colonies, ever deprived them of their own civil government. *d*

The power of those kings increased as soon as they subdued those cities. *e* Mithridates found himself able to hire troops on every side; to repair his frequent losses; to have a multitude of workmen, ships, and military machines; to procure himself allies; to bribe those of the Romans, and even the Romans themselves; to keep the barbarians of Asia and Europe in his pay; *f* to continue the war for many years, and, of course, to discipline his troops, he found himself able to train them to arms, to instruct them in the military art of the Romans, *g* and to form considerable bodies out of their deserters; in a word, he found himself able to sustain great losses, and to be frequently defeated, without being ruined; *h* neither would he have been ruined if the voluptuous and barbarous king had not destroyed, in his prosperous days, what had been done by the great prince in times of adversity.

Thus it was that when the Romans had arrived at their highest pitch of grandeur, and seemed to have nothing to appre-

b See Strabo, lib. X.

c He confirmed the liberty of the city of Amisus, an Athenian colony which had enjoyed a popular government, even under the kings of Persia. Lucullus having taken Sinone and Amisus, restored them to their liberty, and recalled the inhabitants, who had fled on board their ships.

d See what Appian writes concerning the Phanagoreans, the Amisians, and the Synopians, in his treatise of the Mithridatic war.

e See Appian, in regard to the immense treasures which Mithridates employed in his wars, those which he had buried, those which he frequently lost by the treachery of his own people, and those which were found after his death.

f See Appian on the Mithridatic war.

g Ibid.

h He lost at one time 170,000 men, yet he soon recruited his armies.

hend but from the ambition of their own subjects, Mithridates once more ventured to contest the mighty point, which the overthrows of Philip, of Antiochus, and of Perseus had already decided. Never was there a more destructive war: the two contending parties, being possessed of great power, and receiving alternate advantages, the inhabitants of Greece and of Asia fell a sacrifice in the quarrel, either as foes, or as friends of Mithridates. Delos was involved in the general fatality, and commerce failed on every side: which was a necessary consequence, the people themselves being destroyed.

The Romans, in pursuance of a system of which I have spoken elsewhere, *i* acting as destroyers, that they might not appear as conquerors, demolished Carthage and Corinth; a practice by which they would have ruined themselves had they not subdued the world. When the kings of Pontus became masters of the Greek colonies on the Euxine Sea, they took care not to destroy what was to be the foundation of their own grandeur.

13.—*Of the Genius of the Romans as to Maritime Affairs*

The Romans laid no stress on anything but their land forces, who were disciplined to stand firm, to fight on one spot, and there bravely to die. They could not like the practice of seamen, who first offer to fight, then fly, then return, constantly avoid danger, often make use of stratagem, and seldom of force. This was not suitable to the genius of the Greeks, *j* much less to that of the Romans.

They destined, therefore, to the sea only those citizens who were not considerable enough to have a place in their legions. *k* Their marines were commonly freed-men.

At this time we have neither the same esteem for land forces nor the same contempt for those of the sea. In the former, art has decreased; *l* in the latter, it has augmented: *m* now things are generally esteemed in proportion to the degree of ability requisite to discharge them.

i In the "Considerations on the Causes of the Rise and Declension of the Roman Grandeur."

j As Plato has observed, lib. IV., of Laws.

k Polybius, lib. V.

l See the "Considerations on the Causes of the Rise and Declension of the Roman Grandeur."

m Ibid.

14.—*Of the Genius of the Romans with respect to Commerce*

The Romans were never distinguished by a jealousy for trade. They attacked Carthage as a rival, not as a commercial nation. They favored trading cities that were not subject to them. Thus they increased the power of Marseilles by the cession of a large territory. They were vastly afraid of barbarians, but had not the least apprehension from a trading people. Their genius, their glory, their military education, and the very form of their government estranged them from commerce.

In the city, they were employed only about war, elections, factions, and law-suits; in the country, about agriculture; and as for the provinces, a severe and tyrannical government was incompatible with commerce.

But their political constitution was not more opposed to trade than their law of nations. "The people," says Pomponius, the civilian,ⁿ "with whom we have neither friendship nor hospitality nor alliance, are not our enemies; however, if anything belonging to us falls into their hands, they are the proprietors of it; freemen become their slaves; and they are upon the same terms with respect to us."

Their civil law was not less oppressive. The law of Constantine,^o after having stigmatized as bastards the children of a mean rank who had been married to those of a superior station, confounds women who retail merchandise with slaves, with the mistresses of taverns, with actresses, with the daughters of those who keep public stews, or who had been condemned to fight in the amphitheatre: this had its origin in the ancient institutions of the Romans.

I am not ignorant that men prepossessed with these two ideas, that commerce is of the greatest service to a state, and that the Romans had the best regulated government in the world, have believed that these people greatly honored and encouraged commerce; but the truth is, they seldom troubled their heads about it.

ⁿ Leg. v. ff. "de Captivis."

^o Quæ mercimoniis publicè præfuit.—
Leg. v. cod. "de natural. liberis."

15.—*Of the Commerce of the Romans with the Barbarians*

The Romans having erected a vast empire in Europe, Asia, and Africa, the weakness of the people and the tyranny of their laws united all the parts of this immense body. The Roman policy was then to avoid all communication with those nations whom they had not subdued: the fear of carrying to them the art of conquering made them neglect the art of enriching themselves. They made laws to hinder all commerce with barbarians. "Let nobody," said Valens and Gratian,^p "send wine, oil, or other liquors to the barbarians, though it be only for them to taste." "Let no one carry gold to them," add Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius;^q "rather, if they have any, let our subjects deprive them of it by stratagem." The exportation of iron was prohibited on pain of death.

Domitian, a prince of great timidity, ordered the vines in Gaul to be pulled up,^r from fear, no doubt, lest their wines should draw thither the barbarians. Probus and Julian, who had no such fears, gave orders for their being planted again.

I am sensible that upon the declension of the Roman Empire the barbarians obliged the Romans to establish staple towns, and to trade with them.^s But even this is a proof that the minds of the Romans were averse to commerce.^t

16.—*Of the Commerce of the Romans with Arabia and the Indies*

The trade with Arabia Felix, and that with the Indies, were the two branches, and almost the only ones, of their foreign commerce. The Arabians were possessed of immense riches, which they found in their seas and forests; and as they sold much and purchased little, they drew to themselves the gold and silver of the Romans.^u Augustus,^v being well apprised of that opulence, resolved they should be either his friends or his enemies. With this view he sent Ælius Gallus from Egypt into Arabia. This commander found the people indolent, peaceable, and unskilled in war. He fought battles, laid sieges to towns, and lost but seven of his men by the sword; but the perfidy of

^p Leg. ad barbaricum cod. quæ res exportari non debeant.

^q Leg. 2 cod. de commerc. et mercator.

^r Leg. 2 quæ res exportari non debeant, and Procopius, "War of the Persians," book I.

^s See the Chronicles of Eusebius and Cedrenus.

^t See the "Considerations on the Causes of the Rise and Declension of the Roman Grandeur."

^u Pliny, lib. VI. cap. xxviii. and Strabo, lib. XVI.

^v Ibid.

his guides, long marches, the climate, want of provisions, distempers, and ill conduct, caused the ruin of his army.

He was, therefore, obliged to be content with trading to Arabia, in the same manner as other nations; that is, with giving them gold and silver in exchange for their commodities. The Europeans trade with them still in the same manner; the caravans of Aleppo and the royal vessel of Suez carry thither immense sums.^w

Nature had formed the Arabs for commerce, not for war; but when those quiet people came to be near neighbors to the Parthians and the Romans, they acted as auxiliaries to both nations. Ælius Gallus found them a trading people; Mahomet happened to find them trained to war; he inspired them with enthusiasm, which led them to glory and conquest.

The commerce of the Romans to the Indies was very considerable. Strabo ^x had been informed in Egypt that they employed in this navigation one hundred and twenty vessels; this commerce was carried on entirely with bullion. They sent thither annually fifty millions of sesterces. Pliny ^y says that the merchandise brought thence was sold at Rome at a centuple cent. profit. He speaks, I believe, too generally; if this trade had been so vastly profitable, everybody would have been willing to engage in it, and then it would have been at an end.

It will admit of a question, whether the trade to Arabia and the Indies was of any advantage to the Romans. They were obliged to export their bullion thither, though they had not, like us, the resource of America, which supplies what we send away. I am persuaded that one of the reasons of their increasing the value of their specie by establishing base coin was the scarcity of silver, owing to the continual exportation of it to the Indies: and though the commodities of this country were sold at Rome at a centuple rate, this profit of the Romans, being obtained from the Romans themselves, could not enrich the empire.

It may be alleged, on the other hand, that this commerce increased the Roman navigation, and, of course, their power; that new merchandise augmented their inland trade, gave en-

^w The caravans of Aleppo and Suez carry thither annually to the value of about two millions of livres, and as much more clandestinely; the royal ves-

sel of Suez carries thither also two millions.

^x Lib. II. p. 81.

^y Lib. VI. cap. xxiii.

couragement to the arts, and employment to the industrious; that the number of subjects multiplied in proportion to the new means of support; that this new commerce was productive of luxury, which I have proved to be as favorable to a monarchical government as fatal to a commonwealth; that this establishment was of the same date as the fall of their republic; that the luxury of Rome had become necessary; and that it was extremely proper that a city which had accumulated all the wealth of the universe should refund it by its luxury.

Strabo says ^a that the Romans carried on a far more extensive commerce with the Indies than the kings of Egypt; but it is very extraordinary that those people who were so little acquainted with commerce should have paid more attention to that of India than the Egyptian kings, whose dominions lay so conveniently for it. The reason of this must be explained.

After the death of Alexander, the kings of Egypt established a maritime commerce with the Indies; while the kings of Syria, who were possessed of the more eastern provinces, and consequently of the Indies, maintained that commerce of which we have taken notice in the sixth chapter, which was carried on partly by land, and partly by rivers, and had been further facilitated by means of the Macedonian colonies; insomuch that Europe had communication with the Indies both by Egypt and by Syria. The dismembering of the latter kingdom, whence was formed that of Bactriana, did not prove in any way prejudicial to this commerce. Marinus the Tyrian, quoted by Ptolemy, ^b mentions the discoveries made in India by means of some Macedonian merchants, who found out new roads, which had been unknown to kings in their military expeditions. We find in Ptolemy, ^c that they went from Peter's tower, ^d as far as Sera; and the discovery made by mercantile people of so distant a mart, situated in the northeast part of China, was a kind of prodigy. Hence, under the kings of Syria and Bactriana, merchandise was conveyed to the west from the southern parts of India, by the River Indus, the Oxus, and the Caspian Sea; while those of the more eastern and northern parts were transported from Sera, Peter's tower, and other staples,

^a He says, in his 12th book, that the Romans employed a hundred and twenty ships in that trade; and in the 17th book, that the Grecian kings scarcely employed twenty.

^b Lib. I. cap. ii.

^c Lib. I. cap. xiii.

^d Our best maps place Peter's tower in the hundredth degree of longitude, and about the fortieth of latitude.

as far as the Euphrates. Those merchants directed their route nearly by the fortieth degree of north latitude, through countries situated to the west of China, more civilized at that time than at present, because they had not as yet been infested by the Tartars.

Now while the Syrian Empire was extending its trade to such a distance by land, Egypt did not greatly enlarge its maritime commerce.

The Parthians soon after appeared, and founded their empire; and when Egypt fell under the power of the Romans, this empire was at its height, and had received its whole extension.

The Romans and Parthians were two rival nations, that fought not for dominion but for their very existence. Between the two empires deserts were formed and armies were always stationed on the frontiers; so that instead of there being any commerce, there was not so much as communication between them. Ambition, jealousy, religion, national antipathy, and difference of manners completed the separation. Thus the trade from east to west, which had formerly so many channels, was reduced to one; and Alexandria becoming the only staple, the trade to this city was immensely enlarged.

We shall say but one word of their inland trade. Its principal branch was the corn brought to Rome for the subsistence of the people; but this was rather a political affair than a point of commerce. On this account the sailors were favored with some privileges, because the safety of the empire depended on their vigilance.^e

17.—*Of Commerce after the Destruction of the Western Empire*

After the invasion of the Roman Empire one effect of the general calamity was the destruction of commerce. The barbarous nations at first regarded it only as an opportunity for robbery; and when they had subdued the Romans, they honored it no more than agriculture, and the other professions of a conquered people.

Soon was the commerce of Europe almost entirely lost. The nobility, who had everywhere the direction of affairs, were in no pain about it.

^e Suet. in "Claudio," leg. 8 cod. Theodos. "de Naviculariis."

The laws of the Visigoths ^f permitted private people to occupy half the beds of great rivers, provided the other half remained free for nets and boats. There must have been very little trade in countries conquered by these barbarians.

In those times were established the ridiculous rights of escheatage and shipwrecks. These men thought that, as strangers were not united to them by any civil law, they owed them on the one hand no kind of justice, and on the other no sort of pity.

In the narrow bounds which nature had originally prescribed to the people of the North, all were strangers to them: and in their poverty they regarded all only as contributing to their riches. Being established, before their conquest, on the coasts of a sea of very little breadth, and full of rocks, from these very rocks they drew their subsistence.

But the Romans, who made laws for all the world, had established the most humane ones with regard to shipwrecks.^g They suppressed the rapine of those who inhabited the coasts, and what was more still, the rapacity of their treasuries.^h

18.—*A particular Regulation*

The law of the Visigoths made, however, one regulation in favor of commerce.ⁱ It ordained that foreign merchants should be judged, in the differences that arose among themselves, by the laws and by judges of their own nation. This was founded on an established custom among all mixed people, that every man should live under his own law—a custom of which I shall speak more at large in another place.

19.—*Of Commerce after the Decay of the Roman Power in the East*

The Mahommedans appeared, conquered, extended, and dispersed themselves. Egypt had particular sovereigns; these carried on the commerce of India, and being possessed of the merchandise of this country, drew to themselves the riches of all other nations. The sultans of Egypt were the most powerful princes of those times. History informs us with what a con-

^f Lib. VIII. tit. 4. sec. 9.
^g Toto titulo ff. de incend. ruin. et naufrag. and cod. de naufragiis, and leg. 3 ff. ad leg. Cornel. de sicariis.

^h Leg. 1 cod. de naufragiis.
ⁱ Lib. II. tit. 3. sec. 2.

stant and well regulated force they stopped the ardor, the fire, and the impetuosity of the crusades.

20.—*How Commerce broke through the Barbarism of Europe*

Aristotle's philosophy being carried to the west, pleased the subtle geniuses who were the *virtuosi* of those times of ignorance. The schoolmen were infatuated with it, and borrowed from the philosopher *i* a great many notions on lending upon interest, whereas its source might have been easily traced in the gospel; in short, they condemned it absolutely and in all cases. Hence commerce, which was the profession only of mean persons, became that of knaves; for whenever a thing is forbidden, which nature permits or necessity requires, those who do it are looked upon as dishonest.

Commerce was transferred to a nation covered with infamy, and soon ranked with the most shameful usury, with monopolies, with the levying of subsidies, and with all the dishonest means of acquiring wealth.

The Jews, enriched by their exactions, were pillaged by the tyranny of princes; which pleased indeed, but did not ease, the people.^k

What passed in England may serve to give us an idea of what was done in other countries. King John ^l having imprisoned the Jews, in order to obtain their wealth, there were few who had not at least one of their eyes plucked out. Thus did that king administer justice. A certain Jew, who had a tooth pulled out every day for seven days successively, gave ten thousand marks of silver for the eighth. Henry III extorted from Aaron, a Jew at York, fourteen thousand marks of silver, and ten thousand for the queen. In those times they did by violence what is now done in Poland with some semblance of moderation. As princes could not dive into the purses of their subjects because of their privileges, they put the Jews to the torture, who were not considered as citizens.

At last a custom was introduced of confiscating the effects of those Jews who embraced Christianity. This ridiculous cus-

^j See Aristot. "Polit." lib. I. cap. ix. and x.

^k See in "Marca Hispanica," the constitutions of Aragon, in the years 1228 and 1231; and in Brussel, the agreement,

in the year 1206, between the King, the Countess of Champagne, and Guy of Dampierre.

^l Stowe's "Survey of London," book III. p. 54.

tom is known only by the law which suppressed it.^m The most vain and trifling reasons were given in justification of that proceeding; it was alleged that it was proper to try them, in order to be certain that they had entirely shaken off the slavery of the devil. But it is evident that this confiscation was a species of the right of amortization, to recompense the prince, or the lords, for the taxes levied on the Jews, which ceased on their embracing Christianity.ⁿ In those times, men, like lands, were regarded as property. I cannot help remarking, by the way, how this nation has been sported with from one age to another: at one time, their effects were confiscated when they were willing to become Christians; and at another, if they refused to turn Christians, they were ordered to be burned.

In the meantime, commerce was seen to arise from the bosom of vexation and despair. The Jews, proscribed by turns from every country, found out the way of saving their effects. Thus they rendered their retreats forever fixed; for though princes might have been willing to get rid of their persons, yet they did not choose to get rid of their money.

The Jews invented letters of exchange; ^o commerce, by this method, became capable of eluding violence, and of maintaining everywhere its ground; the richest merchant having none but invisible effects, which he could convey imperceptibly wherever he pleased.

The Theologians were obliged to limit their principles; and commerce, which they had before connected by main force with knavery, re-entered, if I may so express myself, the bosom of probity.

Thus we owe to the speculations of the schoolmen all the misfortunes which accompanied the destruction of commerce; ^p and to the avarice of princes, the establishment of a practice which puts it in some measure out of their power.

From this time it became necessary that princes should gov-

^m The edict passed at Baviile, 4th of April, 1392.

ⁿ In France the Jews were slaves in mortmain, and the lords their successors. Mr. Brussel mentions an agreement made in the year 1206, between the King and Thibaut, Count of Champagne, by which it was agreed that the Jews of the one should not lend in the lands of the other.

^o It is known that under Philip Augustus and Philip the Long, the Jews

who were chased from France took refuge in Lombardy, and that there they gave to foreign merchants and travellers secret letters, drawn upon those to whom they had intrusted their effects in France, which were accepted.

^p See the 83d novel of the Emperor Leo, which revokes the law of Basil his father. This law of Basil is in Hermenopolus, under the name of Leo, lib. III. tit. 7. sec. 27.