

Place with which we were well acquainted, and to which several times in the year some or other of our Nation usually resort; either for Gazel or Hog-hunting, according to their Season; nor had we hence above seven or eight hours to *Aleppo*.

*October* the 16th. Getting up pretty early in the morning, we resolv'd to Hunt the greatest part of our way home, as we did; and dining at the famous *Round-Hill*, whereon has been spent by the *English* more Money than would purchase a noble Estate round about it, in the afternoon we arriv'd safe at *Aleppo*.

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### III. Some Account of the Ancient State of the City of Palmyra, with short Remarks upon the Inscriptions found there. By E. Halley.

THE City of *Tadmor*, whose Remains in Ruines do with so much evidence demonstrate the once happy Condition thereof, seems very well to be proved to be the same City which *Solomon* the Great King of *Israël* is said to have founded under that Name in the *Desart*, both in *1 King.* 9. 18. and *2 Chron.* 8. 16. in the Translation of which, the *Vulgar Latin Version*, said to be that of *St. Jerom*, has it, *Condidit Palmyram in Deserto*. And *Josephus* (in *lib.* 8. *Antiq. Jud.* wherein he treats of *Solomon* and his Acts) tells us, that he built a City in the *Desart*, and call'd it *Ithadamura*; and the *Syrians* at this day (says he) call it by the same Name: but the *Greeks* name it *Palmyra*. The Name is therefore Greek, and consequently has no relation to the Latin *Palma*, and seems rather derived from *Παλμυρὸς* or *Πάλμυρς*,

Πάλμωσ, which *Hesychius* interprets βασιλεὺς πατρῆς : or perhaps from Παλμύτης, which (according to the same Author) was an *Egyptian* God. Neither is the word תרמר but תמר that in Hebrew signifies a *Palm-Tree*.

History is silent as to the Fate and Circumstances of this City, during the great Revolutions in the several Empires of the East ; but it may well be supposed, that so advanced a Garnison as this was, being above Three hundred Miles from *Jerusalem*, continued not long in the Possession of the *Jews*, who immediately after *Solomon*, fell into Civil Dissention, and divided their Force : so that it is not to be doubted, but that it submitted to the *Babylonian* and *Persian* Monarchies, and afterwards to the *Macedonians* under *Alexander* and the *Seleucidae*. But when the *Romans* got footing in these Parts, and the *Parthians* seemed to put a stop to their farther Conquests in the *East*, then was this City of *Palmyra*, by reason of its Situation, being a Frontier and in the midst of a vast Sandy *Desart*, where Armies could not well subsist to reduce it by force, courted and caressed by the contending Princes, and permitted to continue a Free State, a Mart or Staple for Trade, for the Convenience of both Empires, as is abundantly made out from the words of *Appian* and *Pliny*.

*Appian* (*lib. 5. de Bellis Civil.*) tells us, that *M. Antonius*, after his Victory at *Philippi*, about forty Years before *Christ*, sent his Horse to plunder the City of *Palmyra*, pretending only that they were not sufficiently in the Roman Interest. ὅτι Ρωμῶνων ἢ Παρδυάων ἄντες ἔφορον ἐς ἐκείτους ὀπιθεξίως εἶχον, and that being Merchants, they conveyed the *Indian* and *Arabian* Commodities by the way of *Persia* into the *Roman* Territories ; though the true reason were their Riches : But the *Palmyrenes* being informed of the Design, took care to prevent them, and so escaped Plunder : and this Attempt of *Antony's* occasioned a Rupture between the two Em-

pires. The words of *Pliny* (*lib. 5. Nat. Hist.*) above an hundred years after, do likewise testify that this City then continued in the same enjoyment of their Liberties. They being very much to the purpose, I thought fit to Copy them: *Palmyra Urbs nobilis situ, divitiis soli atque aquis amœnis, vasto undique ambitu arenis includit agros, ac velut terris exempta à rerum Natura; privata sorte inter duo imperia summa Romanorum Parthorumque, & prima in discordiâ semper utrinque cura.* Whereby it appears not only that it was a Commonwealth in the time of *Vespasian*; but the Situation thereof is truly described, as it were an *Island* of fertile Land, surrounded with a *Sea* of barren Sands. Such Spots *Strabo* tells us were frequent in *Lybia*, and by the *Egyptians* were called *Abases*; whence possibly the Name of the *Abassyne* Nation is derived.

With these Advantages of Freedom, Neutrality and Trade, for near two Centuries, 'tis not strange that it acquired the State and Wealth answerable to the Magnificence of these noble Structures. But when the *Romans* under *Trajan* had made it appear, that there was no comparison between the Puissance of the *Parthians* and them, (*Trajan* having taken *Babylon* and *Ctesiphon* the then Seat of the *Parthian* Empire,) the *Palmyreni* were at length determined to Declare for the *Romans*; which they did, by submitting themselves to the Emperor *Adrian*, about the Year of Christ 130, when *Adrian* made his Progress through *Syria* into *Egypt*. And that Magnificent Emperor being highly delighted with the native Strength and Situation of the Place, was pleased to adorn and rebuild it: When, as 'tis likely, he bestowed on it the Privileges of a Colony *Juris Italici*, which it enjoyed (as *Ulpian* assures us.) And the Inhabitants of the City, in Gratitude, were willing to call themselves *Hadrianopolitæ*, Ἐπιτιμιωδελῶν ἢ πόλεως ὑπὸ τοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος (says *Stephanus*.) Nor is it unlikely that  
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many of those Marble Pillars were the Gift of that Emperor, and particularly those of the Long *Porticus*; for that none of the Inscriptions are before that date. And it was usual for the *Cæsars* to present Cities that had obliged them, with Marble Pillars to adorn their publick Buildings. These here were not far to fetch, the neighbouring Mountains affording *Marble-Quarries*: But the Magnitude of the *Porphyry* Columns is indeed very remarkable, considering how far those vast Stones must have been brought by Land-carriage to this Place; it being not known that any other Quarries yield it, except those of *Egypt*, which lie about mid-way between *Cairo* and *Siena*, between the *Nile* and the *Red-Sea*: the Stone being very valuable for its Colour and Hardness, and for that it rises in blocks of any magnitude required; *Quantislibet molibus cædendis sufficiunt Lapidicinæ*, (*Plin. lib. 36.*) And it is a great mistake of those who suppose it factitious.

From the time of *Adrian* to that of *Aurelian*, for about an hundred and forty years, this City continued to flourish and encrease in Wealth and Power, to that degree, that when the Emperor *Valerian* was taken Prisoner by *Sapores* King of *Persia*, *Odenathus* one of the Lords of this Town (which Name occurs in several of these Inscriptions) was able (whilst *Gallienus* neglected his Duty both to his Father and Country) to bring a powerful Army into the Field, and to recover *Mesopotamia* from the *Persians*, and to penetrate as far as their Capital City *Ctesiphon*. Thereby rendering so considerable Service to the *Roman* State, that *Gallienus* thought himself obliged to give him a share in the Empire: Of which Action, *Trebellius Pollio* (in the Life of *Gallienus*) has these words, *Laudatur ejus (Gallieni) optimum factum, qui, Odenatum participato Imperio Augustum vocavit, ejusque monetam, qua Persas captos traheret, cudi jussit: quod & Senatus & Urbs & omnis ætas gratanter accepit.* The

same in many places speaks of this *Odenathus* with great Respect; and mentioning his Death, he says, *Iratum fuisse Deum Reip. credo, qui interfecto Valeriano noluit Odenatum reservare.* But by a strange reverse of Fortune, this Honour and Respect to *Odenathus* occasioned the sudden Ruine and Subversion of the City. For he and his Son *Herodes* being murder'd by *Mæonius* their Kinsman, and dying with the Title of *Augustus*, his Wife *Zenobia*, in Right of her Son *Waballathus* then a Minor, pretended to take upon her the Government of the *East*, and did administer it to admiration: And when soon after *Gallienus* was murder'd by his Soldiers, she grasped the Government of *Egypt*, and held it during the short Reign of the Emperor *Claudius Gothicus*. But *Aurelian* coming to the Imperial Dignity, would not suffer the Title of *Augustus* in this Family, tho' he was contented that they should hold under him as *Vice Cæsaris*; as plainly appears by the Latin Coins of *Aurelian* on the one side, and *Waballathus* (which Name is often found in these Inscriptions) on the other, with these Letters V. C. R. I. M. O. R., which *P. Harduin* has most judiciously interpreted *Vice Cæsaris Rector Imperii Orientis*, but without the Title of *Cæsar* or *Augustus*, and with a *Lawrel* instead of a *Diadem*. But both *Waballathus* and *Zenobia* are stiled *CEBACTOI* in the *Greek* Coins, made, 'tis probable, within their own Jurisdiction. Two of the *Latine* I have seen, and they are as described, excepting the Points.

But nothing less than a Participation of the Empire contenting *Zenobia*, and *Aurelian* persisting not to have it dismembred: he marched against her, and having in two Battels routed her Forces, he shut her up and besieged her in *Palmyra*: And the Besieged finding that the great resistance they made, availed not against that resolute Emperor, they yielded the Town; and *Zenobia* flying with her Son, was pursued and taken: With  
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which *Aurelian* being contented, spared the City, and leaving a small Garrison, marcht for *Rome* with this Captive Lady : but the Inhabitants believing he would not return, set up again for themselves, and (as *Vopiscus* has it) slew the Garrison he had left in the Place. Which *Aurelian* understanding, though by this time he was gotten into *Europe*, with his usual fierceness, speedily returned ; and collecting a sufficient Army by the way, he again took the City without any great Opposition, and put it to the Sword, with an uncommon Cruelty, (as he himself confesses in a Letter extant in *Vopiscus*.) and delivered them to the Pillage of his Soldiers. And it is observable, that none of the Greek Inscriptions are after the date of this Calamity, which befell the City in or about the Year of *Christ* 272, as far as may be collected, after it had been nine or ten years the Seat of the Empire of the East, not without Glory.

In this appears also the great utility of Coins to illustrate Matters of History ; for by them alone 'tis made out, that there was such a Prince as *Waballathus*, *Vopiscus* singly mentioning him by the Name of *Balbatius* : And from the same Coins it appears, that *Odænathus* had the Title of *Augustus* four Years, and *Waballathus* six at least ; and that the First Year of *Aurelian* was the Fourth of *Waballathus*. And by the Testimony of *Pollio*, *Odænathus* was declared Emperor of the East, *Gallieno* & *Saturnino Coss.* which was *Anno Christi* 263, and died before *Gallienus*, but in the same Year, viz. *Anno* 267, which, by the Coins, was the First of *Waballathus*. He therefore immediately succeeded *Odænathus*, and was without doubt his Eldest Son by *Zenobia*, and not his Grandson the Son of *Herodes*, as some learned Men have supposed : For if *Zenobia* could not endure that *Herodes* Son of *Odænathus* by a former Wife, should succeed his Father in prejudice to her Children, and for that reason was consenting to his Murther (as *Pollio* intimates

timates in *Herodes* and *Mæonius*,) much less would she endure the Title of *Augustus* in the Son of *Herodes*, especially when her own Sons were, as 'tis probable, elder than such Grandson. So that 'tis most likely that *Herennianus* and *Timolaus*, whom *Pollio* reckons among his XXX Tyrants, might be the younger Sons of *Zenobia*, on whom also, out of Motherly Affection, she might bestow the same Titles of Honour.

But it must be observed, that in the Greek Coins, this Prince's Name is usually written ΑΥΤ. ΕΡΜΙΑC ΟΥΑΒΑΛΛΑΑΘΟC. ΑΘΗΝΟΥ (as *Tristan* says he found it upon several Medals,) but *Patin* has the last word only ΑΘΗ. I should be glad to peruse some of these curious Coins, especially if found in or near *Palmyra*: but I am inclinable to believe that his true Name was *Æranes Waballathus* (as was one of his Progenitors, in *Inscription*. pag. 88.) though perhaps the remoter Cities of *Asia* and *Ionia* might by mistake write it *Hermias* And 'tis probable that ΑΘΗΝ might be for the first Letters of the Name of ΟΑΗΝΑΘΟC, which in Syriack begun with an *Aleph*; and the Δ was with those People used instead of Θ, as we see the Month *Xanthicus*, written Ξανθικός in many of these Inscriptions, which doubtless was pronounced like *D blæsum* or the Saxon Ð.

Though this City were at that time so roughly treated by *Aurelian*, yet it is certain that he did not burn it, or destroy the Buildings thereof: And though *Zosimus*, on this occasion, uses the words τὴν πόλιν κατασκευάσας, yet that seems only to relate to his demolishing the Walls and Defences of the Place; and that Emperors own Letter extant in *Vopiscus*, doth sufficiently shew that he spared the City it self, and that he took care to re-instate the beautiful Temple of the *Sun* that was there, which had been plundered by his Soldiers. However, the Damage then sustained was never retrieved by the Inhabitants, and I do not find that ever  
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this City made any figure in History after it : yet the *Latin Inscription*, (pag. 101.) seems to intimate, as if *Dioclesian* had restored their Walls within thirty years after. About the Year of *Christ* 400, it was the Head Quarters of the *Legio Prima Illyricorum* ; and though *Stephanus* gives it no better Title than *ἑπισκοπιον*, yet it appears to have been an Archbishop's See, under the Metropolitan of *Damascus*. To say in what Age or from what Hand it received its final Overthrow, which reduced it to the miserable Condition it now appears in, there is no light in any of our Historians ; but it is probable it perisht long since, in the obscure Ages of the World, during the Wars of the *Saracen* Empire ; and being burnt and desolated, it was never rebuilt ; which occasions the Ruins to lie so entire, in a manner as they were left, neither being used to other Structures on the place, nor worth carrying away, because of the great distance thereof from any other City.

As to the Geographical Site of *Palmyra*, *Ptolemy* places it in the Latitude of *Tripoly* on the Coast of *Syria*, and four Degrees more Easterly, viz.

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and he makes it the Capital of sixteen Cities in *Syria Palmyrena*, whereof *Alalis*, *Danaba* and *Evaria* were afterwards *Bishops Sees*. *Pliny* places it CCIII Miles from the nearest Coast of *Syria*, and CCCXXXVII from *Seleucia ad Tygrin* near *Bagdat*, (which Numbers are erroneously printed 252 and 537 in most Editions, contrary to the Authority of the MSS.) *Josephus* places it one day's Journey from *Euphrates*, and six from *Babylon* ; which must be understood of Horse-man's Journeys of about sixty Miles *per diem*, it being more than so much from this City to *Euphrates*. *Ptolemy* also mentions a River running by *Palmyra*, which did not appear to our Travellers, unless that Gutt or Chanel wherein



wherein they were overflowed by the Rain-Waters, were the Bed thereof; which may, possibly, run with a constant stream in the Winter or times of much Rain: But this (as the Rivers of *Aleppo* and *Damascus* at this day) is made by *Ptolomy* to have no *exit*; but to go off in *Vapour*, and to be imbibed by the thirsty Earth of these Desarts.

The *Æra* or Account of Years observed by the *Palmyreni* in these Inscriptions, is evidently that of *Seleucus*, call'd afterwards *Dhilocarnain* or *Bicornis* by the *Arabians*, and by them kept in use till above 900 Years of *Christ* (as appears by the Observations of *Albatani*, published in *Numb.* 204. of these *Transactions*;) and not that of the Death of *Alexander*. This may be demonstrated from the Inscription (*pag.* 97.) wherein *Alexander Severus* is stiled  $\Theta\Xi\Omega\text{C}$ ; that is, after the Death and Consecration of that Emperor, or after the Year of our Lord 234; and from the Name of *Julius*, who, when this Inscription was put up, was *Præfectus Prætorio*, (and could be no other than *Julius Philippus Arabs* who might be esteemed by the *Palmyreni* as their Countryman,) it follows, that it was in the last Year of *Gordian*, *Anno Christi* 242 or 243: And that Emperor being soon after murder'd by the Treachery of this *Philip*, who succeeded him: and his Treason coming afterwards to light, 'tis not strange that his Name was purposely effaced in this Inscription. The Date thereof, *Anno* 554, shews the beginning of this Account 311 or 312 Years before *Christ*, coincident with the *Æra* of *Seleucus*, which was likewise observed by several other Cities in the East.

I shall not undertake the part of a Critick on these Inscriptions, but chuse rather to leave them to the more professedly skilful in that part of Learning, and shall only make some few Remarks on them, such as occurred whilst they past through my hands.

1. That the more ancient of these Inscriptions dated before the Year 500, do no where make use of *Roman Prænomina*, which yet are very frequent in them that follow ; particularly *Julius, Aurelius* and *Septimius*, taken up by these People out of Respect to the Emperor that bore those Names ; and consequently that *Septimius Odænathus* (the Inscription of whose Tomb we have, pag. 88.) was most probably the same who was afterwards *Augustus*. That Name growing in use in the Reign of *Septimius Severus*, under whom or his Son *Cacalla* this *Odænathus* was certainly born. And this Monument being erected by him whilst he was yet a private Man ; and he afterwards attaining the Imperial Dignity, it was necessary the Inscription of his Tomb (which perhaps was that single one that was all of Marble) should be changed : upon which occasion this Stone might be brought back into the Town, and after its Destruction, be clapt up casually over the little Gateway where now it stands.

2. Pag. 95. ΚΑΤΕΛΘΟΝΤΕΣ ΕΙΣ ΟΛΟΓΕΣΙΑΔΑ ΕΝΤΙΟΡΟΙΑΝ ΕΣΤΗΓΑΝ : *Descendentes Vologesiada Commercium stabiliverunt, Anno 558, five Anno Christi 247.* Whereby it appears, that this People having had their Trade interrupted by the Wars between the *Romans* and the *Persians*, under *Gordian* ; did now send an Embassie to the Court of *Sapores* King of the *Persians*, to get it re-established ; which succeeded according to their Desires. *Vologesias* was a City built by *Vologeses* King of the *Parthians* in the time of *Nero*, on the *Euphrates* below *Babylon* : *Ptolemy* calls it *Ὀυολγησιὰς* ; *Stephanus*, *Βολογησιὰς* ; *Ammianus*, *Vologessia* ; and *Pliny*, lib. 6. *Vologesocirta*.

3. Pag. 97. ΚΑΙ ΟΥΚ ΟΙΚΕΙΩΝΑ ΦΕΙΔΗΚΑΝΤΑ ΧΡΗΜΑΤΩΝ. I submit it to the Judgment of the Critics, whether this faulty place may not be amended, by reading it ΟΥΚ ΟΙΚΕΙΩΝ ΑΦΕΙΔΗΚΑΝΤΑ, &c. as

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likewise whether ΔΙCΜΑΛΧΟΥ in the same Inſcription may not be inſtead of ΜΑΛΧΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΜΑΛΚΟΥ, which is the ingenious Conjecture of that excellent Grammarian Mr. *William Baxter*.

4. *Pag. 98. Septimium Vorodem Procuratorem Ducentarium Auguſti* & ΑΡΟΑΠΕΤΗΝ. This word, if *Greek*, is faultily tranſcribed; and in one Copy I have ſeen, the O is very ſmall, as I ſuppoſe it on the Stone; which might occaſion the tranſcribing thereof without it in the former *Voyage* (*pag. 137.*) So that 'tis moſt probable that 'tis the remains of ſome other letter almoſt worn out. I conjecture it to have been ΑΡΤΑΓΕΤΗΝ, Π being taken for F, and that this *Septimius* was *Præfectus Annonæ*, having the care to ſee that the City were ſufficiently provided with Bread; which was a moſt neceſſary Officer in a Place that muſt needs be furniſh'd with Corn from Abroad. And this ſame *Septimius*, (in the Inſcription, *pag. 99*) is ſtil'd . . . . ΕΟΔΟΤΗΝ ΤΗC ΜΗΤΡΟΚΟΛΩΝΕΙΑC. *lege* ΚΡΕΟΔΟΤΗΝ, which ſhould ſignifie that he was Diſtributor of the Emperor's Munificence in Fleſh to the People. Theſe Inſcriptions bear date in *April, Anno Dom. 267*, not long before the Death of *Odænathus*, who is herein ſtil'd CΕΒΑCΤΟC: and 'tis not improbable but he might inſtitute ſuch a Cuſtom, as at the Publick Charge, to give the People a Largeſs in Fleſh on particular Days, to reconcile them to the Dominion of their Fellow-Citizen. This is certain, that *Aurelian* firſt inſtituted ſuch a Cuſtom of giving Fleſh at Rome: The words of *Vopifcus* are, *Idem Aurelianus* & *porcinam carnem populo Romano diſtribuit, quæ hodieque dividitur*; which Cuſtom continued till the time of *Constantine*, when (according to *Zoſimus*) one *Lucian*, who had this Office of diſtributing Swines Fleſh at Rome, had Intereſt enough among the People to ſet up *Maxentius* for Emperor; and *Salmaſius* aſſures us, that it was not diſcontinued till the time of *Henaclius*.

It will not therefore seem strange, if I suppose *Aurelian* might find that Custom at *Palmyra*, and at his return from thence institute the like at *Rome*.

I am enclined to believe, that not only those two Inscriptions, pag. 98, and the last of pag. 99, but also that of pag. 100, were in Honour of the same *Septimius Vorodes*, who seems to have been a great Favourite of *Odaenathus*, and was without doubt respected by the *Romans* on that account, whom I conclude to have effaced all the Memorials of *Zenobia* and *Waballathus*, infomuch that no one appears, among those many taken, that was set up during the six years they reigned. The Name *Vorodes* seems the same with *Orodes*, which was the Name of the King of the *Parthians* that slew *Crassus*: and the *Persians* having, about forty years before, expelled the Race of the *Arfacidæ*, 'tis not improbable but the Remains of that Royal Family might fly for succour to *Palmyra*, and this *Vorodes* might be one of them.

5. In two other Copies of these Inscriptions; the first of pag. 99. is read, ΣΕΠΤΙΜΙΟΥ ΑΙΓΕΓΙΩ ΟΔΑΝΑΘΗΣ, and not ΟΔΑΝΑΘΗΣ as in the first Copy, and perhaps ought rather to be Οδαίνων, as being the Inscription under a Statue of the same *Odaenathus*, who is here, as well as on his Tomb, stiled *Illustriſſimus Patricius*, but without a Date.

6. ΥΠΟ ΙΑΡΙΒΩΛΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ( pag. 97. & 103. ) It cannot well be doubted, but that this *Deus Faribolus* is the same with what *Gruter* ( pag. 86. ) and *Spon* ( in the first of his Inscriptions ) reads ΑΓΑΙΒΩΛΩ. By the Figure of the Idol extant in *Spon*, it appears that this God was made with the Moon upon his Shoulders, and consequently was the *Deus Lunus* worshipped by the *Syrians*, whose Name, in the Language of that Country, could not be better expressed than by *Jarebbôl* ירה בועל *Dominus Lunus*. Whence I am induced to believe, that *Gruter* mistook it ΑΓΑΙΒΩΛΩ for ΑΓΑΙΒΩΛΩ, the I an

the beginning, and the lower part of the round stroke of the P, being effaced, so as to pass for Γ. I have taken care to have the Stone purposely viewed, as also to get from thence the exact Figure of the *Syrian* or *Palmyrene* Characters thereon, wherein there is an irreconcilable difference between *Spon* and *Gruter*. By the help of these, compared with two others taken at *Palmyra*, which I have by me, (they being all very near the same Date,) I hope we may be able, one day, to make out the *Palmyrene* Alphabet: but it were to be wisht our Travellers had transcribed them with more curiosity, and taken more of them.

By the way, it is remarkable, that the Person who dedicated this Monument, in *Gruter* and *Spon*, is stiled Δ. ΑΥΡ. ΗΛΙΟΔΩΡΟΣ: and the same Name occurs in a broken Inscription which Mr. *Halifax* omitted in his Letter to Dr. *Bernard*, as being too imperfect. It stood on the right-hand of the entrance to the little Temple described pag. 104. and was thus,

ΔΟΥΚΙΟΥ ΑΥΡΗ[ΑΙ]ΟΥ - - - - ΗΛΙΟΔΩΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ

And after a blank of three lines all worn out except one single O, there followed,

[ΤΕΙ]ΜΗ<sup>C</sup> ΧΑΡΙΝ ΕΤΟΥΣ - - - - ΜΗΝΟΣ [ΑΠ]ΕΛΛΑΙ[ΟΥ]

And that imperfect one in pag. 99. seems to have relation to the same Name.

7. Pag. 105. ΜΑΛΕΝΤΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΡΗΠΗΙΑΝ *lege* ΜΑΛΗΝ ΤΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΡΗΠΗΙΑΝ, it being written ΜΑΛΗΝΤΟΝ, with H in the two other Copies I have seen, whereby the sense is cleared.

8. Pag. 109. ΑΓΑΘΑΝΤΕΛΟΣ ΑΒΙΛΗΝΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΔΕΚΑΠΟΛΕΟΣ, *Agathangelus Abilenus Decapolitanus, Patronymicè*. There were in these Parts two Cities known by the Name of *Abila*; to distinguish which, the one was called *Abila Lyfania*, from the Name of the Tetrarch: St. *Luke*, ch. 3. 1. and is placed by *Ptolemy* (in his *Cælosyria*) about mid-way

way between *Damascus* and *Heliopolis* : The other in *Judæa*, called *Abila ad Jordanem*, described by *Josephus* in many places, to lie over-against *Jericho*, near the *Dead-Sea*. *Decapolis* was so called from its Ten Cities, enumerated by *Pliny* (*lib. 5. 18.*) And with them he reckons up, among others, the *Tetrarchy* of *Abila*, in the same *Decapolis* : which demonstrates the *Abila Decapolis* and *Abila Lysaniæ* to be the same Place. And tho' it cannot be denied, but that some of *Pliny's* Ten Cities are not far distant from that near *Jordan* ; yet it doth not appear that ever this other had the Title of a *Tetrarchy*. Here it is to be observed, that what *Pliny* calls *Decapolis*, *Ptolemy* makes his *Cæle Syria* ; and the *Cæle Syria* of *Pliny*, is that part of *Syria* about *Aleppo*, formerly call'd *Chalcidene*, *Cyrrhisticæ*, &c.

What this Town of *Teibe* was anciently call'd, is not so easily conjectured : but if the Numbers of *Ptolemy* may be confided in, it is very near the Situation of a City he calls *Oriza* ; and perhaps his *Adada* may be our *Soukney*, and his *Rhæsapha* what is now called *Arsoffa*.

It is taken for granted, that Old *Aleppo* was anciently the City of *Berrhæa*, and there wants not ancient Testimony to prove it ; which being granted, I think I may without scruple conclude, that *Andrene* (*pag. 131,* and *139.*) is the Ruines of the City of *Androna* ; and *Efree* (*pag. 141.*) that of *Seriane*, both mentioned in the Itinerary of *Antoninus*, in the Journey à *Dolicâ Seriane*. But this whole Country is laid about Half a Degree more Southerly than it ought, by *Ptolemy*, who places *Berrhæa* in Lat. 36 deg. For the Meridian Altitude of the Tropical Sun at *Aleppo* is found there but 77 deg. whence the Latitude 36 deg. 30 min. as it was observed, *Anno 1680*, by three several Quadrants, in the presence of a curious Gentleman, to whom I am obliged for this Communication.

By the same Observation a much greater Error is amended in the Latitude of *Aleppo*, in the *Rudolfine Tables of Kepler*; who supposes *Aleppo* to have been the Ancient *Antiochia ad Taurum*, and accordingly places it in Lat. 37 deg. 20 min. wherein he is followed by *Bulialdus* and others; and several *Maps* have copied the Mistake. But a much greater use of it is, that thereby we are assured, that the City of *Aracta*, wherein *Albatâni* made the Observations we have publish'd in *Numb. 204.* was, without doubt, the same which is now called *Racca* on the *Euphrates*; of which Town an Account may be seen in *Rauwolf's Voyages*, and which was not many Miles below the Place where our Travellers first came on the River: And if *Arecca*, in the Language of this Country, relates to *Victory* (as is said in *pag. 148.*) it was, doubtless, anciently the City *Nicephorion*, built by *Alexander the Great*; with which the Situation exactly agrees. The Latitude thereof was observed by that *Albatâni* with great accurateness, about eight hundred years since; and therefore I recommend it to all that are curious of such Matters, to endeavour to get some good Observation made at this Place, to determin the Height of the *Pole* there, thereby to decide the Controversie, whether there hath really been any Change in the *Axis* of the Earth, in so long an Interval; which some great Authors, of late, have been willing to suppose. And if any curious Traveller, or Merchant residing there, would please to observe, with due care, the *Phases* of the *Moons Eclipses* at *Bagdat*, *Aleppo* and *Alexandria*, thereby to determine their Longitudes, they could not do the Science of *Astronomy* a greater Service: For in and near these Places were made all the Observations whereby the Middle Motions of the *Sun* and *Moon* are limited: And I could then pronounce in what Proportion the *Moon's* Motion does Accelerate; which that it does, I think I can demonstrate, and shall  
( God

(God willing) one day, make it appear to the Publick.

The *Philosophical Reader* is desired to excuse our breaking-in upon the Subject of these *Traacts*, by inter-mixing *Historical* and *Philological* Matters, as also our exceeding the Bounds of an *Extract* : But we hope the Curiosity of the Subject, joyned to the Desires of the *Royal Society*, may make an easie Apology suffice. There may be many other Instructive Remarks made thereon, which still deserve the Consideration of the Learned, and from such the Publick may yet expect a further Account.

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### E R R A T A.

**N** Umb.217. page 112.line 28 & 29. for *AbkdA* read *AbkDA*. Numb.218. p. 137. l. 24. for p. 89 r. 98 ; p. 138. l. 24. for *open Place* r. *open Plain* ; p.139 l.35. for *Andecin* r. *Andreen* ; p.172. l.23 for [TEI]MHC r. [TEI]MHC.

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