

VI. Account of a B O O K.

*The Antiquities of Palmyra alias Tadmor ;
Built by King Solomon in the Desert of
Arabia : Containing the History of that City
and its Emperors, From its Foundation to
this present time. By Ab. Seller. 8°.*

THE *Royal Society*, having Publish'd Two Journals of the *English Merchants to Tadmur*, in the Desert, the Author of the *Palmyrene Antiquities* undertook to give the History of that City, from its Foundation to this present Age.

The Preface Accounts for the Rites and Customs of the East, which are still continued by the *Arabs*, who are very tenacious of Antient Usages, of which the Author gives several Instances ; particularly of the Mourning for *Thammur* or *Adonis*.

The History proves, that the City was Founded (or as others, Rebuilt) by *Solomon* a Frontier to his large Territories ; that it was probably taken by the Kings of *Syria* from the *Jews*, when their Kingdom was divided and impaired, till the Kings of *Babylon* seized it ; (the Historian of *Antioch* averring, that the victorious Monarch *Nebuchadnezzar* Conquered it, before he formed the Siege of *Jerusalem*) that upon the Ruine of the *Persian* Empire, it submitted to the irresistible *Alexander* ; that it was (probably) Repaired and Beautified by *Seleucus*, one of his Successors, in gratitude to whom, they used the common Computation of most of the Eastern Cities, the *Æra Seleucidarum* that *Pompey*, when he made *Syria* a Province, reduc'd *Tadmur*, Constituting it

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an Appendage to that Province (tho' *Malela* says expressly, that *Aurelian* first made it a Roman Province) that *M. Antony* designed to Pillage the City, to gratify his discontented Army, after his ill Success in *Persia*, but was disappointed; from which time, to the Reign of *Trajan*, History is Silent concerning the City, and so are all the Inscriptions found there, none of which is older than that Emperor (Two of the Sepulchral Inscriptions being Erected in his time) *Adrian* Visited, Rebuilt, and Called it by his own Name. *Antoninus Caracallus* made it a Colony *Juris Italici*, and it continued firm to the Roman Interests under the Succeeding Emperors, assisting *Alexander Severus*, and the youngest *Gordian*, in their Expedition against the *Persians*, with their Forces; and when the Emperor *Valerian* was Conquered and made a Prisoner, *Odenathus* the Governor of *Palmyra* asserted the Rights of injured Majesty, baffled the *Persians*, and was declared by *Gallienus* his Co-partner in the Empire, which Authority continued in his Family for ten years or more, under *Aurelian* the City was Ruined, after which it made a poor Figure in Story, till *Justinian* Repaired and Fortified it, in which Condition it continued, till the *Mahometans* made themselves Masters of that Country (*Al Iham*, the last King of *Gessan*, being at that time Lord of *Tadmur*) and suffered the Fortifications to moulder into Dust, since which time it hath been a Nest of *Arabian Banditi*.

That the City was well Situated for Trade, the *Caravans* of the Eastern Merchants passing through it, the nearness of the *Euphrates*, on which Navigable River the *Palmyrenians* were in Possession of Three Cities, giving it great Advantages of Riches, besides their own Native Commodities.

That it was probably Converted soon after Christianity was Planted, that it was Erected into a Bishops See
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before the Council of *Nice*, and continued so in the time of the *Chalcedon* Council, under the Arch-Bishop of *Damascus*; but soon after, when *Libanefia* was made a distinct Province, and *Emesa* Constituted the Metropolis of it, it became a Suffragan to that Metropolitan (not the Arch-Bishop of *Edeffa*, as the Notitia set out by *Goar* wrongly calls the City) as was also *Damascus*.

In the Appendix the Author proves, that the Names of the Inhabitants were purely *Syrian*, with a *Prenomem* often prefixt, for the most part *Roman*; that their Officers were such, as the other Cities of the East lived under, and that the oldest Superstition was that of the Worship of the Host of Heaven; to which is subjoined the Lite of *Nabal-Lachus*, the Grandson of *Odenathus*, and of the Excellent Critick *Longinus*, together with a Commentary on the Inscriptions, wherein some parts of the *Roman* History, before unknown, are Discovered, and some Rites of the Oriental Idolatry accounted for, particularly that of consulting the Fountain of *Aphaca* in great Repute, in those early times, for its Oracles.

E R R A T A.

TRansact. Numb. 222. Page 300. Line 2. after the word *Current*, insert these words, [going there constantly East, and] which words, by mistake, were put into the Fourth Line, after the word *Bahama*, where they ought to be left out. p. 304, & 305. for *Pollipus* r. *Polypus*.

L O N D O N :

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