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THE LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF  
TURGOT

COMPTROLLER-GENERAL OF FRANCE 1774-6

EDITED FOR ENGLISH READERS

BY

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## NOTES ON UNIVERSAL HISTORY (1750)

## INTRODUCTION

*Man's Place in Creation*

PLACED by his Creator in the midst of eternity and of immensity, and occupying in them but a point, man has necessary relations with a multitude of things and of beings. At the same time his ideas are concentrated in the individuality of his mind, and in the supremacy of the present moment. He knows himself only by sensations which are all connected with exterior objects, and the present moment is a centre at which a crowd of ideas, linked one with another, all issue. It is from this connection between his ideas, and from the order of the laws which all these ideas follow in their continual variations, that man acquires the consciousness of reality. By his connection with all the different sensations he learns the existence of exterior objects. A similar connection in the succession of his ideas shows him the past. The connections between different phenomena are not chance connections. All must act, the one on the other, according to the different laws, and according to their distances. We are ignorant of the limits of our world, and the comparatively little of it that we know depends more or less upon the perfection of our senses. We know a few links in the chain, but the extremities in the infinitely great and in the infinitely little equally escape us. The laws that govern bodies form physics; they are always constant, we simply describe them, we do not narrate them. The history of animals, and, above all, that

of Man, offers a spectacle quite different. Like the animals, man succeeds to other men to whom he owes existence, and he sees as they do his fellows spread over the surface of the globe he inhabits. But, endowed with more comprehensive reason and a more active liberty, his connections with his fellows are much more numerous and more varied. Possessor of a treasure of signs which he has the faculty of multiplying almost to infinity, he can insure himself the possession of all his acquired ideas, communicate them to other men, and transmit them to his successors as a heritage continually augmented. A constant combination of these progressions, with the passions and the events they have produced, forms the history of the human race.

*Object of History.*—Thus universal history embraces the consideration of the successive progressions of the human race and of the detail of the causes that have contributed to them—the beginnings of man, the formation, the mingling of nations; the origin, the revolutions of governments; the progress of languages, of physics, of morals, manners, of sciences and arts; the revolutions by which empires succeeded to empires, nations to nations, religions to religions; humanity being ever the same amidst all these confusions, and ever marching onwards to its perfection. To unveil the influence of general and necessary causes, along with that of particular causes, and that of the free action of great men, to discover the springs and mechanism of moral causes by their effects—this is History in the eyes of a philosopher. It rests upon geography and chronology, which measure the distance of times and places. In laying down, on the following plan, a view of the human race, and in following as nearly as possible the historical order of its progress, and in dwelling on its principal epochs, I wish merely to indicate, I do not attempt to elucidate causes. I give but a sketch of a great study and open up the view of a vast field unexplored, just as we see through our narrow window all the immensity around and above us.

PLAN OF THE FIRST DISCOURSE, BEING ON THE FORMATION OF GOVERNMENTS AND THE COMMINGLING OF NATIONS.<sup>1</sup>

*A Creator implied.*—The whole universe announces to us a Supreme Being. We see everywhere the print of the hand of God. But if we wish to know anything definitely, we are surrounded by clouds.

*Age of the World.*—We see every day arts invented; we see in some parts of the world peoples civilised and enlightened, in other parts peoples wandering in the heart of forests. In an eternity of duration this inequality of progress would have disappeared. The world, then, is not eternal, but we must at the same time conclude that it is of a vast age. To what extent we know not. Historic times cannot be traced further back than the invention of writing, and even when writing was invented we at first received from it but the narration of vague traditions or some leading facts, fixed by no date, and so mixed up with myths as to render discernment impossible. The pride of nations has induced them to throw back their origin far into the abyss of antiquity. But in respect to duration, men, before the invention of numbers, could scarcely have stretched their ideas beyond the few generations that they could know, that is, three or four. It is only to a century, or to a century and a half, that traditions, unaided by history, could indicate the epoch of a known fact. . . .

*Man's primitive Life; the Chase.*—Without provisions, in the midst of forests, he could be occupied only with his subsistence. The fruits of the earth produced without culture would not be much to him, it would be necessary for him to resort to the hunting of animals, and these being of limited number and, within a certain district, insufficient to furnish nourishment to many men, the dispersion of

<sup>1</sup> This discourse is given here necessarily in a greatly abridged form.



peoples and their rapid diffusion were thus accelerated. Families, or little nations, a long distance from each other, because it was necessary for each to have a vast space in order to sustain them—this was the necessary state of hunters. They had no fixed dwelling; they transported themselves with extreme facility from place to place. The difficulty of getting a living, a quarrel, the fear of an enemy, would suffice to separate families of hunters from the rest of their nation. Then they would follow wherever the chase might conduct them. . . . Thus peoples speaking the same language would find themselves at distances of more than 600 leagues, and surrounded by peoples who could not understand them. This is common among the savages of America, where we find, owing to the same cause, nations even of from fifteen to twenty men. . . .

*Pastoral Life.*—There are animals which suffer themselves to be subjected to man, as the ox, the sheep, the horse; and men find it more advantageous to gather these into herds than to run after wandering animals. The pastoral life has not failed to be introduced wherever these animals are met with; oxen and sheep in Europe, camels and goats in the East, horses in Tartary, reindeer in the North. . . . Pastoral peoples, by having their subsistence more abundant and better assured, have been the most numerous. They became richer, and were soon influenced by the idea of property. Ambition, or rather greed, which is the ambition of barbarians, inspired them with the inclination to plunder, and at the same time with the determination and the courage to hold their own. Flocks, to be properly tended, brought troubles from which hunters were free, but they sustained more men than were necessary to guard them.

Hence was brought about a disproportion in the promptness of movement of fighting men and that of nations. A nation would not shun the fight against a body of determined men, whether hunters, or members of other pastoral nations, who would remain masters of the flocks if they were con-

querors, or who, on the other hand, might be repelled by the cavalry of pastors, if the herds of these consisted of horses or camels. And as the conquered could not escape without the risk of death by starving, they shared the fate of the cattle and became the slaves of the conquerors, who employed them in tending their flocks. The masters, on their side, relieved from all cares, went on subjecting others in the same manner. Thus little nations were formed which in their turn formed larger nations, thus peoples spread themselves over a whole continent until they were stopped by barriers felt to be impenetrable.

*Migrations.*—The incursions of pastoral peoples left more traces than those of hunters. Susceptible, by the idleness they enjoyed, of many desires, they sought for booty and seized upon it. They remained wherever they found pasturage, and mixed with the inhabitants of the country. The examples of the first encouraged others. These streams widened in their course, peoples and languages ever mixing. The conquering invaders, however, soon dispersed. When there was nothing more to pillage, their different hordes had no longer interest in remaining together, and, besides, the multiplication of flocks compelled them to separate. Each horde had its chief; and some principal chief, or the one most warlike, would hold a certain superiority over the others throughout the nation, exacting from them some presents, as signs of homage. . . .

*Aggressions.*—At last false ideas of glory would come in; what had been undertaken at first in view of pillage was now done in order to dominate, to lift their own nation above others, and, when commerce had taught them the qualities of different countries, in order to exchange a poor country for one rich and promising. Every prince, a little ambitious, made raids on the lands of his neighbours and extended his power until he met with some one capable of resisting him; then they fought; the conqueror increased his power by

that of the conquered, and made use of that for new conquests. Hence all the inundations of barbarians which have ravaged the earth and those fluxes and refluxes which make up their whole history. . . . All conquests were not equally extensive: what would not have arrested a hundred thousand men would arrest ten thousand. . . . Rivers, and still more, chains of mountains and the sea, formed impassable barriers for these small would-be Attilas. . . . Beyond these first natural barriers conquests have been vaster, and the mingling of peoples and languages less frequent. Particular customs and dialects form different nations. Every obstacle that lessens communication, and consequently distance, which is one of these obstacles, strengthens the distinctions that separate nations; but in general the peoples of a continent are mixed together, at least indirectly, as the Gauls with the Germans, these with the Sarmatians, and so on, up to the extremities if the course be open. Hence those customs and those words common to peoples very distant and very different. Like a set of coloured bands, stretching across all the nations of a continent, we may see their languages, their manners, their faces even, forming a series of sensible degrees of distinction, each nation being the shade between the nations its neighbours. Sometimes all the nations mingle, sometimes one carries to another what it has itself received. But nearly all these revolutions are historically unknown, they have left no more traces than tempests on the sea. It is only when they have in their course embraced civilised peoples that their history has been preserved.

*Rise of Agriculture.*—Pastoral peoples who found themselves in fertile countries were undoubtedly the first to pass into the condition of labourers. . . . Labourers are not naturally a conquering class; the work of the soil occupies them too fully. But, richer than other peoples, they were obliged to defend themselves against violence. Besides, the earth was able to sustain many more men than were required to till it. Hence (in a greater degree than in the case of

pastoral peoples) men free for other work, hence towns, commerce, all the arts of utility and of a simple refinement, hence progressions more rapid and of every kind, for everything follows the general march of the mind; hence a greater ability in war than that of barbarians, the division of employments, the inequality of men, slavery rendered domestic. . . . At the same time arise preciser ideas of government.

*Introduction of Government.*—The inhabitants of towns, more energetic than those of the country, subjected these. Or, more likely, a village, which by its situation as a centre to which the neighbouring population gathered for the convenience of commerce, growing stronger in inhabitants, and richer, became dominant, and leaving in the surrounding country only those who were necessary to the cultivation of the land, drew to itself, either by means of slavery, or by the attraction of government and of commerce, a still further increase of inhabitants. The union of different functions of the government became more intimate and more stable. In the leisure of towns passions are developed as well as genius. Ambition gathers strength, policy lends to it designs, the progress of the mind extends them; hence a thousand forms of government. The first were necessarily the work of war, and assumed consequently the government of one leading man. It is not necessary to believe that men ever voluntarily gave themselves a *master*, but they have often agreed in recognising a *chief*; and the ambitious themselves, in forming great nations, have unconsciously contributed to the will of Providence, to the progress of enlightenment, and consequently to the increase of happiness of the human race. . . . Hence the passions of individuals have multiplied ideas, extended knowledge, advanced men's minds, in default of that Reason, whose day has not yet come, and which would have been less powerful had it reigned earlier.

*In the early Times War a Civiliser.*—Reason, which is Justice herself, would not have sanctioned the taking away



from anyone of what belonged to him, would have banished for ever war and usurpations, and would have left men divided into a multitude of nations, separated the one from the other, all speaking different languages. Limited thus in their ideas, incapable of that progress in every quality of mind, in science, arts, and government, which takes its rise from the collective genius of different provinces, the human race would have remained for ever in a state of mediocrity. Reason and justice, better listened to, would have fixed everything, as has almost been the case in China. But what is never perfect ought never to be entirely fixed. Tumultuous and dangerous passions become a principle of action, and consequently of progress; everything that draws men from their actual state, that brings under their eyes varied scenes, that extends their ideas, that enlightens them, that animates them, in the long run conducts them to the good and the true, to which they are attracted by their natural bent. . . . There are the soft passions which are always necessary, and which are developed in the degree to which humanity is perfected; there are the other passions, violent and terrible, such as hatred and vengeance, which are more developed in the times of barbarism; they are natural also, consequently also necessary. Their explosions call back the soft passions to mitigate them. . . . Men instructed by experience become more and more humane. But before laws had formed manners, these odious passions were necessary for the defence of individuals and of peoples. They were, if I may so, the leading-strings, with which Nature and its Author have conducted the infancy of the human race. It is by subversions and ravages that nations have been extended, that society and government have been perfected in the end; like in those forests of America, as ancient as the world, where from age to age oaks have succeeded to oaks, where from age to age, falling into the dust, they have enriched the soil with all those fruitful juices which the air and the rains have helped to furnish, where the *débris* of some, becoming a new principle of fecundity for the earth that had produced them, have served

to the production of new offspring, still stronger and more lasting. In the same manner, over all the surface of the world, governments have succeeded to governments, empires have been raised on the ruin of empires, their *débris*, dispersed, have been gathered together again ; the progress of reason, freed from the constraint of imperfect laws imposed by absolute power in the early governments, played a greater part in the constitution of governments succeeding. Repeated conquests extended states ; the weakness of a barbarous legislation and of a limited executive encouraged divisions to take place. Here, a people fatigued with anarchy threw themselves into the arms of despotism ; elsewhere tyranny carried to excess produced liberty. No mutation has been made which has not brought about some benefit, for none has been made without evolving experience, and without extending or improving, or at least preparing for man's education.

*Monarchy.*—In the first quarrels of nations a man superior in strength, in valour, or in prudence, induced, then compelled to obey him those whom he defended. That superiority alone sufficed, as we have said, to give a chief to men gathered together. It is not exactly true that ambition was the only motive to authority. Peoples are disposed to choose a chief, but they have always wished him to be one reasonable and just, not senseless nor arbitrary. With nations of a small size it is impossible for despotic authority to continue established. . . . All the state is under the eye of each individual. . . . There is no populace ; a sort of equality reigns. . . . The means and the art of enforcing by the smallest number of men the obedience of the largest number cannot exist. Five hundred thousand men can keep in subjection fifty millions ; two hundred men cannot subject twenty thousand, although the proportion is the same. . . . In states limited to a single town it is also impossible for royalty to be long maintained. Its least aggressions are and appear there the most tyrannical ; tyranny there has less

power, finds there more energetic resistance. . . . Royalty there more easily degenerates. The passions of the man are there confounded with those of the prince. . . . Hence republics arise, at first aristocratic and more tyrannical than monarchy, because nothing is so perilous as obedience paid to a party, which can always erect its passions into virtues. . . . The powerful and the feeble unite against a single tyrant ; but an aristocratic senate, especially if it be hereditary, has only the populace to combat. In spite of that, republics limited to the extent of a city tend naturally to democracy, which also has its serious drawbacks. . . .

*Despotism.*—Despotism is easy. To do whatever one wills, this is a code that a king learns very fast ; it requires art in order to persuade, none is needed in order to command. . . .<sup>1</sup> The larger a state is, the easier despotism is, and the greater difficulty exists in establishing a moderate government. For that there is necessary a connected order in all the parts of the state ; the demarcations must be fixed for each province, and for each town, with its municipal government left for itself to manage in full liberty. What a multitude of springs to combine to balance, and what a difficulty presented to him who does not believe in the necessity for it ! . . . The prince forgets the people. The best government was that which gave him the most money, and which could the more easily gain the habitual ministers and flatterers of the palace. The governors had their subalterns acting in the same spirit. Despotism rendered the governors dangerous ; the Court treated them with the utmost rigour, their existence hung on the most trifling caprice. Pretexts were sought to strip them of the treasures they had pillaged, but the people got no relief by this, for greed is the natural quality of barbarian kings. . . . Despotism, not having found laws, scarcely dreamt of making any. They were their own judges. When the power that makes the laws and the power that applies them are identical, laws are useless. . . .

<sup>1</sup> ' Anyone can govern in a state of siege.' (Cavour.)



But a despotic government which comes subsequent to the establishment of laws and manners does not involve all the same evils as in the early conquests made by barbarians. The Neros and the Caligulas, I dare say, had more wickedness in them than the evil they were able to commit. By the principles established for the state under the first Cæsars the people were not oppressed, the provinces enjoyed a sort of tranquillity, justice was, generally, equitably exercised. The governors dared not gratify their greed; they would have been punished by the emperors. . . .

The despotism of the Roman emperors led to less evil than that of the Turks. With them despotism enters into the very constitution of their government; it acts upon every spring. Each pasha exercises over the people submitted to him the same authority the grand seignior holds over himself. He is alone charged with, and is responsible for, all the tributes of his province. He has no revenue except what he can exact from the people beyond what he is obliged to furnish to the sultan, and he is compelled to increase his exactions in order to provide for the countless presents necessary to secure himself in his post. There is no law in the empire regulating the levy of taxes, no system in the administration of justice. Everything is transacted in military fashion. The people find no protectors at the Porte against the abuses of power by the great, for the Porte itself partakes their fruits. . . .

*European Freedom.*—Military discipline necessarily supposes despotism and rigour. But we must not confound nations administered by military government with the nations wholly composed of warriors, like the barbarians, ancient Germans, and others. Far from that, their government gave rise to liberty, war was not an exclusive profession which required to be specially studied, and which gave to those who exercised it a superiority over the rest of society. Such a nation could guard its right. A prince could subject his people by soldiers because the people were the feebler



party. But how could a people of soldiers be subjected? . . . The kingdoms of Europe conquered by the barbarians of the North were then preserved from despotism because these barbarians were free before the conquest, and it was made in the name of the people, and not in that of the king. The Roman customs which had been established, and the religion which the barbarians embraced, contributed to maintain the freedom existing.

*Asian Despotism.*—It was not the same in Asia, where the conquered peoples found themselves already accustomed to despotism, because the first conquests, at a time before manners could be formed, had been vast and rapid. Despotism gave birth to revolutions, but these were only a change of tyrant, because in the great despotic states the strength of the monarch is only established by means of his troops, his own safety by his guards. The people are neither strong enough nor united enough to arrest that military power which substitutes one monarch for another, and makes itself the same instrument of the tyranny of the new monarch as it was of the old. In these vast despotic states there was introduced also a despotism which extended itself over social manners, and, worst of all, enfeebled men's minds; which deprived society of the greatest part of its resources, of its gentle graces, of the co-operation of woman in the administration of the family; which, by interdicting the free communion of the two sexes, brings everything into monotony and throws the members of the state into a lethargic repose which is opposed to all change, consequently to all progress. By conducting everything by mere force (as is necessary to be done in a society where a crowd of slaves and of women is, in each wealthy house as in the state itself, immolated to one master) the flame of the intellect is extinguished. . . . Despotism perpetuates ignorance, and ignorance perpetuates despotism. What is more, this despotic authority becomes usage, and usage confirms the abuses.

*Slavery.*—In early times men were cruel in their wars, it was long before they learned moderation. Peoples living by the chase massacred the prisoners, or when they did not kill them they incorporated them with their own nation. A mother who had lost a son chose a prisoner who served her as a son; she loved him because he was useful to her. It was common for their old people to adopt children. There were few or no slaves, therefore, among the primitive or hunting tribes. Pastoral people began to know slavery. Those who captured flocks were obliged, as has been said, to keep those who guarded them before applying themselves to new expeditions. An agricultural people studied slavery still further. They had for the employment of slaves more varied services and more fatiguing works, and in the degree to which the manners of the masters grew more refined, slavery became harsher and more degraded, because the inequality was the greater. The rich ceased to work, slaves became a luxury and a merchandise, parents even sold their children. But the greatest number of slaves was always those captured in war or who were born of slave parents.

*Polygamy.*—Female slaves belonged to the pleasures of the master. We see that in the manners of the patriarchs (and it is still a point in ancient jurisprudence) the crime of adultery was not one reciprocal as with us. The husband only believed himself to be outraged. This was a sentiment of the inequality of the sexes belonging to barbarism. Women had no rights in the marriage relation in ancient times. It was only poverty that prevented polygamy from being everywhere established. . . . In the first empires the plurality of wives became a custom as general as the limits of private fortune permitted. Jealousy is a necessary consequence of love, it wisely inspires in man and wife a spirit of mutual property which insures the fate of the children. This passion, and still more the prejudice of dishonour, attached to the husband by the infidelity of any of his wives, increased along with polygamy. The impossibility to subject woman

to this one-sided law of fidelity, when neither her heart nor her senses could be satisfied, dictated the practice of immuring them. Princes, and afterwards all those who were rich enough, made for themselves seraglios. . . . Princes shut themselves up with their wives and their slaves; their subjects, whom they never saw, were scarcely regarded as men. Their political government was always that of barbarians. It was simply because they were ignorant and idle and cruel; because less time was needed to cut down a tree than to gather its fruits, and because the art to render men happy is of all the arts the most difficult, the one in which the most elements have to be combined. This same effeminacy spread itself over all the state, hence the sudden declension of the monarchies of the East. That of the Chaldeans, the Assyrians, the Medes and Persians, scarcely survived the first conquerors who had founded them. . . . If sometimes those monarchies, by the multitude of their soldiers, have crushed weaker nations, they were overthrown by any courageous resistance, and as soon as Greece was united she demolished almost without effort this immense colossus. There is but one resource against this general debasement of such nations, a body of troops kept up in warlike discipline, like the Turkish janissaries, or the mamelukes of Egypt, but such a body becomes often terrible to its masters. One thing I ought to remark is, that the evils of despotism and of the plurality of wives have never been carried so far as under Mahometanism. This religion, which does not permit other laws than those of the religion itself, opposes the wall of superstition to the natural march of improvement. . . . We do not find in the history of ancient monarchies, nor in the manners of China or Japan, the excesses of abasement seen among Mahometan peoples.

*Longevity of Despotism.*—Despotism, uniformity and consequently imperfection of manners, of laws and government, are preserved in Asia, and wherever the great empires were formed at an early stage in the world's history, and I doubt



not that the existence of the vast plains of Mesopotamia has contributed to this effect. When despotism was afterwards extended elsewhere, along with Mahometanism, it was in some degree only the transport of manners from one country to another.

*Peoples preserved from Despotism* are those who remained pastoral or followed the chase, those who formed small societies and republics. It is among such peoples that revolutions have been useful, and the nations participating in them have been advanced; among them tyranny has not been able to consolidate itself enough in order to enthrall the mind. The fall of an old, and the rise of a new sovereign authority which again and again subjected laws to criticism, have, in the long run, perfected legislation and government. Thus equality has been preserved, public spirit has taken more activity, and the human mind has made rapid progress. Thus manners and laws have at length learned to direct themselves towards the greatest happiness of the peoples.<sup>1</sup>

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PLAN OF THE SECOND DISCOURSE, BEING ON THE ADVANCE  
OF THE HUMAN MIND.<sup>2</sup>

*Men by Nature intellectually unequal.*—A fortunate arrangement of the fibres of the brain, a greater or less strength or refinement in the organs of sense and the memory, a certain degree of quickness in the blood, these are probably the only differences that Nature herself puts between one man and another; all the rest is the result of education. Their minds, or the power and character of their minds, have a real inequality, the causes of which will be always unknown by us.

*Genius dependent on Circumstances.*—Genius permeates the human race in some manner as gold exists in a mine.

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres de Turgot*, ii. 626-42.

<sup>2</sup> Of this we select only a few salient paragraphs.



The more you take of the mineral the more you gather of the precious metal. The more men you draw forth (educate) you will have the more great men, or men fit to become great. The chances of education and of events develope them, or leave them buried in obscurity, or sacrifice them before their age, like fruit struck down by the wind. We are obliged to admit that if Corneille, brought up in a village, had followed the plough all his life, that if Racine had been born in Canada among the Hurons or in Europe in the eleventh century, they would never have unfolded their genius. If Columbus and Newton had died at fifteen, America would possibly not have been discovered until two centuries later, and perhaps we should have been still ignorant of the true system of the world. And if Virgil had perished in infancy we should have had no Virgil, for we have had only one.

*Climate and Civilisation.*—A cause of the difference between nations has been sought in the difference of their climates, but the inductions made are at least precipitate and in many respects are contradicted by experience, since, under the same climates, peoples are different, and under climates unlike we often find the same character of people and the same turn of mind. . . . The metaphorical language of Eastern nations, which some have considered due to the proximity of the sun, was that of the ancient Gauls and Germans (according to the accounts of Tacitus and Diodorus Siculus), and is still that of the Iroquois in the icy regions of Canada. It is in fact the style of all peoples whose language is very limited, and who, wanting appropriate words, have to multiply comparisons, metaphors, allusions, in order to make themselves understood, and who succeed in that sometimes forcibly enough, but always with little exactitude and clearness.

*Music, the Dance, and Poetry* have their source in the nature of man. Designed to live in society, his joy makes

exterior signs, he leaps or he cries. . . . By degrees he accustomed himself to leap in a similar manner to represent a similar feeling ; the steps were marked by sounds, these were separated by regular intervals. The ear, by a short experience and by following Nature alone, learned to appreciate the leading connections of sounds. When one wished to communicate the motives of his joy by words, he regulated them on the measure of sounds ; thus the origin of the dance, of music, and of poetry, which is at first made in order to be sung.

*Ancient Poetry.*—Among uncultivated peoples, national vanity and the facility to retain verses induced them to record their most memorable actions in songs. Such are the songs of the savages of our own day, those of the ancient bards, the runic rhymes of the Scandinavians, some old songs inserted in the old historical books of the Hebrews, the chou-king of the Chinese, and the romances of modern peoples of Europe ; these were the only histories before the invention of writing, histories without chronology, and, as we might expect, often full of invented circumstances.

*Mythology.*—The myths of all peoples resemble each other, because the effects to be explained and the patterns of the causes which they imagined in order to explain them, were similar. . . . The mythological beings supposed as existing were attached to the history of facts, and hence became varied. The sex of divinities, which often depended on the gender of a word in a language, would also vary the myths with the different peoples. A thousand circumstances might belong to these myths without destroying their general connection. The commingling of nations and their commerce created, by ambiguities, new myths, and words ill understood augmented the number of the old ones. Regarding imaginary beings as real, sometimes the gods were held to be the same if their attributes were somewhat similar. Hence the confusion in the history of the gods.

Hence the multitude of their actions, especially when two or more peoples having a similar mythology happen to commingle, as in the case of India. A knowledge of physical causes occurred, but the myths had still their influence by the double love of antiquity and of the marvellous, and because recital transmitted them from century to century.

*Origin of the Fine Arts.*—The arts of design, sculpture and painting have many connections with poetry by the emotions felt by the artist, and by those he strives to communicate. They had a natural origin in the desire to preserve historical or mythological monuments; and genius was there exalted by the patriotic or religious zeal which demanded to express with feeling, with depth, and with force the ideas and the memories which these monuments were intended to recall.

*Rise of Science.*—Before arriving at the knowledge of the relations between physical effects, there was nothing more natural for man than to suppose that they were introduced by some intelligent beings, invisible, and similar to himself—for the gods were only men more powerful and more or less perfect according as they were the creation of an age more or less enlightened. When philosophers had recognised the absurdity of these myths, but were still without new light on natural history, they imagined they could explain the causes of phenomena by abstract expressions, such as *essences* or *powers* (which, however, explained nothing), on which they reasoned as if these terms were beings, new divinities substituted for the old ones. Analogies were followed out and *powers* multiplied in order to account for each effect. It was only after a long lapse of time, by observing the physical action of bodies in themselves and upon each other, that philosophers arrived at such hypotheses as mathematics could develope and experience verify. Physics did not rise from its degradation as a form of bad metaphysics until a long progress in the arts and in chemistry

had multiplied the combinations of bodies, and until, the communication between nations having become more intimate, and geographical knowledge more extended, the facts themselves became better ascertained. Printing, literary and scientific journals, and transactions of academies have increased certitude to such a point that now only the details are doubtful.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres de Turgot*, ii. 642-71.