

## II.

HOW GREAT IS THE NUMBER OF INFIDELS : FEARFUL EVILS UNDER WHICH THE IDOLATERS LABOUR.

One must come to the conclusion, that a great part of this universe, which God has created for his glory, is still subject to the tyranny of the demon, and that wherever Catholicism has not penetrated, these nations present a hideous spectacle of disorder and crime. scene, and remark into what an abyss all men have fallen who are not enlightened by the light of the gospel. In Hindostan, according to a barbarous custom consecrated by the atrocious religion of the country, a woman who survives her husband, burns herself alive on the same pile on which the body of her husband is thrown ; and in the course of one year there have

Let us take a glance at this universal been witnessed so many as seven hundred victims of this cruel superstition. The English, masters of the country, have indeed sought to arrest the course of such abominable sacrifices ; but they have not, as yet, succeeded in wholly preventing them. Nothing can equal the stupidity of the inhabitants of that country ; and it may be truly said, that to them every thing is God but God himself : they prostrate themselves before the most pernicious animals, suffer themselves to be devoured by them, and regard such a death as the surest road to heaven. For such cruel deities they have provided a worship equally barbarous. At some of their festivals it is required that a man should offer himself as a holocaust to them. He is beaten till his body is covered with wounds ; iron hocks are stuck in his sides ; he is then suspended to a beam,

round which he is made to turn, amidst the shouts and yells of the spectators. At other times, immense chariots, as high as towers, bear through the streets of a city the idols, their priests and women, without shame : as many as two thousand persons are harnessed to drag these enormous masses, which roll upon four or six prodigious wheels ; and it is not rare to see fanatics throwing themselves before these wheels to be destroyed in honour of these infamous divinities.

In China it is an established maxim that parents have the right of preserving or of killing their children at pleasure. Hence the barbarous custom of killing illegitimate children, which are extremely numerous in that vast empire, or of exposing them, or even of suffocating them in filth. It is true, that in the case of legitimate children, boys are not destroyed, except in extreme distress ; but in many provinces seldom more than two daughters are preserved. If, at the birth of a third, the father seem in bad humour, the sentence of death is instantly pronounced. The mother takes her child and strangles it with her own hands.

Among nearly all infidel nations, the weaker sex has been reduced to a state of inconceivable degradation. In India, from their infancy, women are taught to believe themselves of an inferior nature to men—that there is between the two sexes an immense distance, and they are so convinced of it themselves, that when they happen to commit any fault, their chief excuse is to say, “ You know that I am a woman.” To increase the sense of their humiliation, they are never taught to read or write, not even in the highest ranks. In fine, when a man marries, he does not *take*, but he *buys* a wife.