

*The Preface.*

being scarcely probable, that Merchants and Souldiers are indowed with the Spirit of Philosophy and Patience, which are necessary for the observing all the nice Particularities of so many different Animals, whose extraordinary Shape did at first satisfy all their Curoiosity, as being capable of sufficiently enriching their Relations; without judging it necessary to proceed to an exacter Scrutiny. But that which yet more lessens the Esteem for these sorts of *Memoires*, is the unfaithfulness which Travellers do generally use in their Relations; who almost always add to the things they have seen, those which they might have seen; And least the Narrative of their Travels should seem imperfect, do recite what they have read in Authors, by whom they are first deceived, just as they do afterwards deceive their Readers. This is the Reason why the Protestations which several of these Observers, as *Belonius*, *Piso*, *Margravius*, and some others do make, to say nothing but what they have seen, and the Assurances which they do give of having discovered a great many of the fallacies which have been writt before them, have scarce any other effect, than to render the sinceritie of all Travellers very suspect, because that these Censurers of the good Credit and exactness of others, do not give sufficient Cautions of their own.

That which is most considerable in our *Memoires*, is, that unblemishable evidence of a certain and acknowledged Verity. For they are not the Work of one private Person, who may suffer himself to be prevail'd upon by his own Opinion; who can hardly perceive what contradicts his first Conceptions, for which he has all the blindness and fondness, which every one has for his own Children; who is not contradicted in the freedom that he allows himselfe, of uttering what ever he thinks capable of adding luster to his Work; and indeed who less considers the Truth of the Facts, which are not his own Production than that order he gives it, and which he frames to himselfe, of some particularities which he supposes, or disguises, to indeavour to suite them to his own Design: So that he would be in some Measure concerned at the finding out of Truths, and making Experiments which would destroy his fine Speculations. But these Inconveniencies are not to be found in our *Memoires*, which do contain only Matters of Fact, that have been verified by a whole Society; composed of Men which have Eyes to see these sorts of things, otherwise than the greatest part of the World, even as they have Hands to seek them with more dexterity and success;