

as distinguished from other large fishes; but that it properly means a *large sea monster*; and that there are other fishes, (the shark amongst the rest,) that are very capable of swallowing a man whole, and have often done so. There is, amongst the rest, one very remarkable fish, described as being taken even upon our own coasts, which ought to be remembered on this occasion, and to be referred to; although this in itself was not probably of the full size, and therefore could not contain the body of a man; but others of its species very well might. A print of it, and a curious description, by that most ingenious and faithful philosopher, Mr. John Ferguson, may be seen in the *Phil. Trans.* vol. liii. p. 170, from whence even this *small* one appears to have been near five feet in length, and of great bulk, and to have been merely, as it were, one vast bag, or great hollow tube, capable of containing the body of any animal of size that was but, in some small degree, inferior to its own. And, unquestionably, such a kind of fish, and of still larger dimensions, may, consistently even with the most correct ideas of any natural historian, be supposed occasionally to have appeared in the Mediterranean, as well as on our coasts, where such an one was actually caught; it having come up so far into the Bristol channel, and King's road.

In the next place, that a man may continue in the water, in some instances, without being drowned, is manifested by what is related by the author of the *Phisico-Theology*, on the best authority. For he tells us, that he is inclined to conclude, some persons may have the *foramen ovale* of the heart remaining open all their lives, although, in the greater part of the human species, it is closed very soon after birth; and that such persons as have the *foramen ovale* so left open, could neither be hanged nor drowned; because when the lungs cease to play, the blood will nevertheless continue to circulate. And although Mr. Cheselden doubted of this fact, yet Mr. Cowper, the anatomist, says he often found the *foramen ovale* open in adults; and gives some curious instances of this kind. Dr. Derham, in one of his notes, mentions several persons who were many hours and days under water, and yet recovered; and one who even retained the sense of hearing in that state. And Dr. Plott (*History of Staffordshire*, p. 292) mentions a most curious instance of a person who survived, and lived, after having been hanged at Oxford for the space of twenty hours before she was cut down. The fact was notorious; and her pardon, reciting this circumstance, is extant on record. And further, it is well known, that what enables some animals to be amphibious, is this very circumstance of having the *foramen ovale* of the heart open. (See Ray on the Creation, p. 330.)

Now, then, where is the absurdity in conceiving that Jonas might have been a person of this kind, having the *foramen ovale* of his heart continuing open from his birth to the end of his days? In which case he could neither be drowned by being cast into the sea, nor suffocated by being swallowed by the fish. Neither could he well be injured by the digesting fluid in the fish's stomach; for it is a curious observation made by Mr. John Hunter, that no animal substance can be digested by the digesting fluid usually existing in animal stomachs whilst life remains in such animal substance. His words are, (*Philosophical Transactions*, vol. lxii. p. 449):—

"Animals, or parts of animals, possessed of the living principle when taken into the stomach, are not the least affected by the powers of that viscus, so long as the animal principle remains; thence it is that we find animals of various kinds living in the stomach, or even hatched and bred there: but the moment that any of these lose the living principle, they become subject to the digestive powers of the stomach. If it were possible for a man's hand, for example, to be introduced into the stomach of a living animal, and kept there for some considerable time, it would be found that the dissolvent powers of the stomach could have no effect upon it; but if the same hand were separated from the body, we should then find that the stomach would immediately act upon it.

"Indeed, if this were not the case, we should find that the stomach itself ought to have been made of indigestible materials; for if the living principle was not capable of preserving animal substances from undergoing that process, the stomach itself would be digested.

"But we find, on the contrary, that the stomach, which, at one instant, that is, while possessed of the living principle, was capable of resisting the digestive powers which it contained; the next moment, viz. when deprived of the living principle, is itself capable of being digested; either by the digestive powers of other stomachs, or by the remains of that power which it had of digesting other things."

Consistently with which observations of Mr. John Hunter, we find that small fishes have been taken alive out of the stomachs of fishes of prey, and (not having been killed by any bite, or otherwise,) have survived their being devoured, and have swam away, well recovered, and very little affected by the digesting fluid.

Putting, then, all these circumstances together, there appears, in the end, nothing unphilosophical or absurd, in supposing that Jonas, or indeed any other man, having the *foramen ovale* of the heart open, (or such a construction of his frame as those mentioned by Derham had,) might be cast into the sea, and be swallowed up whole by a great fish, and yet be neither drowned, nor bitten, nor corrupted, nor digested, nor killed. And it will easily follow, from the dictates of common sense, that in that case the fish itself must either die, or be prompted, by its feelings, to get rid of its load; and this it might do, perhaps, more readily near the shore, than in the midst of the waters; and, in that case, such person would certainly recover again by degrees, and escape.

I do not presume to say that this is, by any means, an exact solution of what happened to the prophet Jonas; because there must ever be acknowledged to have been a miraculous divine interposition, on the whole, in causing the circumstances—of the presence of the fish—of the formation of Jonas—and of the nearness to the shore, at the time of his being thrown up—to concur rightly to effect his deliverance; and how much farther the miraculous interposition might extend, we neither can nor ought to presume to ascertain.

But solely to show the fact to be philosophically possible, even according to the experience we are permitted to be acquainted with, is sufficient to remove, and fully to answer, the objections of scoffers; and is a sufficient ground for us to consider our Lord's allusion to this narration, as being an allusion to an event that really happened.—*King.*

Psalm xv. 4.

"He sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not."

"In illustration of the doctrine in this clause," says Dr. A. Clarke, "I will introduce one fact, which I had many years ago, from high authority;"—

"His late Majesty, George the Third, was very fond of children: often in his walks both about Windsor and St. James Park, he would stop when he saw an interesting child, and speak kindly and affectionately to it, give it some little toy, or sweetmeat, and often a piece of money. One day observing a little lad about four years old, who seemed to have strayed away from its fellows, he addressed it, and finding it intelligent for its age, he took it by the hand, and led it towards the palace, the child nothing loath. He brought the little fellow into the Queen's apartment, and presented it to her, with "Here, Queen, here is a very nice little boy, that I have picked up in my walk;"—and then addressing the lad, "That's the Queen, my dear, bow to her." A chair was immediately brought, the little fellow was seated on it, and in a trice, some sweetmeats and fruit were laid before him. Little master felt himself quite at home, ate freely, and endeavoured to answer every question that was put to him. And when he had well eaten, it was suggested, that the child might be missed, and cause anxiety in the family; it would be best to restore him to his play-ground. Before he was removed from his chair, the King took out a new guinea, and placed it before him, saying, "Here, my dear, is a pretty thing, which I will give you." The child looked at it for some time, and then with his finger pushed it away on the table, saying, "I don't know it—I won't have it;" and looked indifferently over the table. The King said, "Well, my dear, if you won't have this, what will you have?—come, tell me what you'll have, and I will give it to you." There were several papers of a very important nature then lying on the table, which had lately been brought into the royal apartment;

the child looking earnestly at one, said, "I'll have that pretty picture," and put his hand towards it. The King looked confounded, and hesitated; the Queen, for a time, was equally surprised, but she first broke silence, (the child having then his pretty picture in his hand, which was no other than a new bank note for a very large amount!) and said, "He must have it—your Majesty's word is passed: your royal promise cannot be recalled." The King, with great good humour, assented with, "Yes, yes, he shall have it." A faithful domestic was called, the child delivered to him, with the injunction to take him back to the park, find out his play-mates, or nurse, and follow their directions, till he should find the dwelling and parents of the child—nothing of either being known to his Majesty or his domestic. The servant was successful, delivered the child and his pretty picture, to the astonished father and mother; returned, and gave such an account to the royal pair, as satisfied them, that while his Majesty had sworn to his own hurt, and would not change, a wise Providence had directed the whole transaction. The story was well known in the royal family, but there is reason to think, the family of the child was never mentioned; for I could learn no more of this singular history, than the facts, the substance of which is before the reader. I well know, that George the Third feared God, and held his own word sacred: nothing could induce him to change his purpose, when he believed he was right."

Job vii. 19.

"Let me alone 'till I swallow down my spittle."

This is a proverb among the Arabians to the present day,—by which they understand, give me leave to rest after my fatigue. This is the favour which Job complains is not granted him. There are two instances, quoted by Schultens, which illustrate the passage. One is of a person, who, when eagerly pressed to give an account of his travels, answered with impatience, "Let me swallow down my spittle; for my journey hath fatigued me." The other instance is of a quick return made to one who used that proverb: "Suffer me," said the person importuned, "to swallow down my spittle;"—to which his friend replied, "You may, if you please, swallow down even Tigris and Euphrates;"—that is, take what time you please.—*Lib. Recherches.*

DIVINATION.—Four kinds of divination are particularly mentioned in sacred history, viz: by the cup, Gen. xlv. 5,—by arrows, Ezekiel xxi. 21,—by inspecting the livers of slaughtered animals, Ezekiel xxi. 21,—and by the staff, Hosea iv. 12.

Divination by the cup appears to have been the most ancient; it certainly prevailed in Egypt in the time of Joseph, (Gen. xlv. 5.) and it has from time immemorial been prevalent among the Asiatics, who have a tradition (the origin of which is lost in the lapse of ages,) that there was a cup which had passed successively into the hands of different potentates, and which possessed the strange property of representing in it the whole world, and all the things which were then doing in it. The Persians, to this day, call it the *Cup of Jemsheed*, from a very ancient king of Persia of that name, whom late historians and poets have confounded with Bacchus, Solomon, Alexander the Great, &c. This cup, filled with the elixir of immortality, they say, was discovered when digging the foundations of Persepolis. To this cup the Persian poets have numerous allusions; and to the intelligence supposed to have been received from it, they ascribe the great prosperity of their ancient monarchs, as by it they understood all events, past, present, and the future. Many of the Mohammedan princes and governors affect still to have information of futurity by means of a cup. Thus, when Mr. Norden was at Dehr or Derri in the farthest part of Egypt, in a very dangerous situation, from which he and his company endeavoured to extricate themselves by exerting great spirit, a spiteful and powerful Arab in a threatening way told one of their people, whom they had sent to him, that he knew what sort of people they were, that he had consulted his cup, and had found by it that they were those of whom one of their prophets had said, that Franks would come in disguise, and passing every where, examine the state of the country, and afterwards bring over a