

Europe; but their mode of performing this, on account of the structure of their language, will ever be clumsy, and unsusceptible of the least improvement for the better. Having no written alphabet, every word has a different character, or a symbolical representation. They write with pencils from the right to the left; and in the same manner their printed books begin where ours end.

The Chinese are certainly an ingenious and diligent people; but they are much tinctured with duplicity and deceit, particularly where they have had much intercourse with Europeans. Instances, however, sometimes occur of incorruptible integrity. On our arrival in China, says our author, on offering a present to a commissioner of the customs, he resolutely refused it, notwithstanding our reiterated entreaties; saying, that he would never accept a present from any man while he was in office; but that, if one day he should happen to be in another station, he would thankfully receive from us some European curiosity.

With this anecdote, so honourable to the Chinese character, and which principle we wish they and every other nation might more frequently afford room for commending, we take our leave of our Jesuit guides, whose voluminous accounts of China are now superseded by more modern and less questionable authorities, which we shall in the sequel have occasion to follow.