

## BOOK II.

1. IN the former book, most honored Epaphroditus, I have demonstrated our antiquity, and confirmed the truth of what I have said, from the writings of the Phoenicians, and Chaldeans, and Egyptians. I have, moreover, produced many of the Grecian writers as witnesses thereto. I have also made a refutation of Manetho and Cheremon, and of certain others of our enemies. I shall now (1) therefore begin a confutation of the remaining authors who have written any thing against us; although I confess I have had a doubt upon me about Apion (2) the grammarian, whether I ought to take the trouble of confuting him or not; for some of his writings contain much the same accusations which the others have laid against us, some things that he hath added are very frigid and contemptible, and for the greatest part of what he says, it is very scurrilous, and, to speak no more than the plain truth, it shows him to be a very unlearned person, and what he lays together looks like the work of a man of very bad morals, and of one no better in his whole life than a mountebank. Yet, because there are a great many men so very foolish, that they are rather caught by such orations than by what is written with care, and take pleasure in reproaching other men, and cannot abide to hear them commended, I thought it to be necessary not to let this man go off without examination, who had written such an accusation against us, as if he would bring us to make an answer in open court. For I also have observed, that many men are very much delighted when they see a man who first began to reproach another, to be himself exposed to contempt on account of the vices he hath himself been guilty of. However, it is not a very easy thing to go over this man's discourse, nor to know plainly what he means; yet does he seem, amidst a great confusion and disorder in his falsehoods, to produce, in the first place, such things as resemble what we have examined already, and relate to the departure of our forefathers out of Egypt; and, in the second place, he accuses those Jews that are inhabitants of Alexandria; as, in the third place, he mixes with those things such accusations as concern the sacred purifications, with the other legal rites used in the temple.

2. Now although I cannot but think that I have already demonstrated, and that abundantly more than was necessary, that our fathers were not originally Egyptians, nor were thence expelled, either on account of bodily diseases, or any other calamities of that sort; yet will I briefly take notice of what Apion adds upon that subject; for in his third book, which relates to the affairs of Egypt, he speaks thus: "I have heard of the ancient men of Egypt, that Moses was of Heliopolis, and that he thought himself obliged to follow the customs of his forefathers, and offered his prayers in the open air, towards the city walls; but that he reduced them all to be directed towards sun-rising, which was agreeable to the situation of Heliopolis; that he also set up pillars instead of gnomons, (3) under which was represented a cavity like that of a boat, and the shadow that fell from their tops fell down upon that cavity, that it might go round about the like course as the sun itself goes round in the other." This is that wonderful relation which we have given us by this grammarian. But that it is a false one is so plain, that it stands in need of few words to

prove it, but is manifest from the works of Moses; for when he erected the first tabernacle to God, he did himself neither give order for any such kind of representation to be made at it, nor ordain that those that came after him should make such a one. Moreover, when in a future age Solomon built his temple in Jerusalem, he avoided all such needless decorations as Apion hath here devised. He says further, how he had "heard of the ancient men, that Moses was of Helopolis." To be sure that was, because being a younger man himself, he believed those that by their elder age were acquainted and conversed with him. Now this grammarian, as he was, could not certainly tell which was the poet Homer's country, no more than he could which was the country of Pythagoras, who lived comparatively but a little while ago; yet does he thus easily determine the age of Moses, who preceded them such a vast number of years, as depending on his ancient men's relation, which shows how notorious a liar he was. But then as to this chronological determination of the time when he says he brought the leprous people, the blind, and the lame out of Egypt, see how well this most accurate grammarian of ours agrees with those that have written before him! Manetho says that the Jews departed out of Egypt, in the reign of Tethmosis, three hundred ninety-three years before Danaus fled to Argos; Lysimaehus says it was under king Bocchoris, that is, one thousand seven hundred years ago; Molo and some others determined it as every one pleased: but this Apion of ours, as deserving to be believed before them, hath determined it exactly to have been in the seventh olympiad, and the first year of that olympiad; the very same year in which he says that Carthage was built by the Phoenicians. The reason why he added this building of Carthage was, to be sure, in order, as he thought, to strengthen his assertion by so evident a character of chronology. But he was not aware that this character confutes his assertion; for if we may give credit to the Phoenician records as to the time of the first coming of their colony to Carthage, they relate that Hirom their king was above a hundred and fifty years earlier than the building of Carthage; concerning whom I have formerly produced testimonials out of those Phoenician records, as also that this Hirom was a friend of Solomon when he was building the temple of Jerusalem, and gave him great assistance in his building that temple; while still Solomon himself built that temple six hundred and twelve years after the Jews came out of Egypt. As for the number of those that were expelled out of Egypt, he hath contrived to have the very same number with Lysimaehus, and says they were a hundred and ten thousand. He then assigns a certain wonderful and plausible occasion for the name of Sabbath; for he says that "when the Jews had traveled a six days' journey, they had buboes in their groins; and that on this account it was that they rested on the seventh day, as having got safely to that country which is now called Judea; that then they preserved the language of the Egyptians, and called that day the Sabbath, for that malady of buboes on their groin was named Sabbatosis by the Egyptians." And would not a man now laugh at this fellow's trifling, or rather hate his impudence in writing thus? We must, it seems, take it for granted that all these hundred and ten thousand men must have these buboes. But, for certain, if those men had been blind and lame, and had all sorts of distempers upon them, as Apion says they had, they could not have gone one single day's journey; but if they had been all able to travel over a large desert, and, besides that, to fight and conquer those that opposed them, they had not all of them had buboes on their groins after the sixth day was over; for no such distemper comes naturally and of necessity upon those that travel; but still, when

there are many ten thousands in a camp together, they constantly march a settled space [in a day]. Nor is it at all probable that such a thing should happen by chance; this would be prodigiously absurd to be supposed. However, our admirable author Apion hath before told us that "they came to Judea in six days' time;" and again, that "Moses went up to a mountain that lay between Egypt and Arabia, which was called Sinai, and was concealed there forty days, and that when he came down from thence he gave laws to the Jews." But, then, how was it possible for them to tarry forty days in a desert place where there was no water, and at the same time to pass all over the country between that and Judea in the six days? And as for this grammatical translation of the word Sabbath, it either contains an instance of his great impudence or gross ignorance; for the words *Sabbo* and *Sabbath* are widely different from one another; for the word Sabbath in the Jewish language denotes rest from all sorts of work; but the word Sabbo, as he affirms, denotes among the Egyptians the malady of a *bubo* in the groin.

3. This is that novel account which the Egyptian Apion gives us concerning the Jews' departure out of Egypt, and is no better than a contrivance of his own. But why should we wonder at the lies he tells about our forefathers, when he affirms them to be of Egyptian original, when he lies also about himself? for although he was born at Oasis in Egypt, he pretends to be, as a man may say, the top man of all the Egyptians; yet does he forswear his real country and progenitors, and by falsely pretending to be born at Alexandria, cannot deny the (4) pravity of his family; for you see how justly he calls those Egyptians whom he hates, and endeavors to reproach; for had he not deemed Egyptians to be a name of great reproach, he would not have avoided the name of an Egyptian himself; as we know that those who brag of their own countries value themselves upon the denomination they acquire thereby, and reprove such as unjustly lay claim thereto. As for the Egyptians' claim to be of our kindred, they do it on one of the following accounts; I mean, either as they value themselves upon it, and pretend to bear that relation to us; or else as they would draw us in to be partakers of their own infamy. But this fine fellow Apion seems to broach this reproachful appellation against us, [that we were originally Egyptians,] in order to bestow it on the Alexandrians, as a reward for the privilege they had given him of being a fellow citizen with them: he also is apprized of the ill-will the Alexandrians bear to those Jews who are their fellow citizens, and so proposes to himself to reproach them, although he must thereby include all the other Egyptians also; while in both cases he is no better than an impudent liar.

4. But let us now see what those heavy and wicked crimes are which Apion charges upon the Alexandrian Jews. "They came (says he) out of Syria, and inhabited near the tempestuous sea, and were in the neighborhood of the dashing of the waves." Now if the place of habitation includes any thing that is reproached, this man reproaches not his own real country, [Egypt,] but what he pretends to be his own country, Alexandria; for all are agreed in this, that the part of that city which is near the sea is the best part of all for habitation. Now if the Jews gained that part of the city by force, and have kept it hitherto without impeachment, this is a mark of their valor; but in reality it was Alexander himself that gave them that place for their habitation, when they obtained equal privileges there with the Macedonians. Nor call I devise what Apion would have said, had their habitation

been at Necropolis? and not been fixed hard by the royal palace [as it is]; nor had their nation had the denomination of Macedonians given them till this very day [as they have]. Had this man now read the epistles of king Alexander, or those of Ptolemy the son of Lagus, or met with the writings of the succeeding kings, or that pillar which is still standing at Alexandria, and contains the privileges which the great [Julius] Caesar bestowed upon the Jews; had this man, I say, known these records, and yet hath the impudence to write in contradiction to them, he hath shown himself to be a wicked man; but if he knew nothing of these records, he hath shown himself to be a man very ignorant: nay, when he appears to wonder how Jews could be called Alexandrians, this is another like instance of his ignorance; for all such as are called out to be colonies, although they be ever so far remote from one another in their original, receive their names from those that bring them to their new habitations. And what occasion is there to speak of others, when those of us Jews that dwell at Antioch are named Antiochians, because Seleucus the founder of that city gave them the privileges belonging thereto? After the like manner do those Jews that inhabit Ephesus, and the other cities of Ionia, enjoy the same name with those that were originally born there, by the grant of the succeeding princes; nay, the kindness and humanity of the Romans hath been so great, that it hath granted leave to almost all others to take the same name of Romans upon them; I mean not particular men only, but entire and large nations themselves also; for those anciently named Iberi, and Tyrrheni, and Sabini, are now called Romani. And if Apion reject this way of obtaining the privilege of a citizen of Alexandria, let him abstain from calling himself an Alexandrian hereafter; for otherwise, how can he who was born in the very heart of Egypt be an Alexandrian, if this way of accepting such a privilege, of which he would have us deprived, be once abrogated? although indeed these Romans, who are now the lords of the habitable earth, have forbidden the Egyptians to have the privileges of any city whatsoever; while this fine fellow, who is willing to partake of such a privilege himself as he is forbidden to make use of, endeavors by calumnies to deprive those of it that have justly received it; for Alexander did not therefore get some of our nation to Alexandria, because he wanted inhabitants for this his city, on whose building he had bestowed so much pains; but this was given to our people as a reward, because he had, upon a careful trial, found them all to have been men of virtue and fidelity to him; for, as Hecateus says concerning us, "Alexander honored our nation to such a degree, that, for the equity and the fidelity which the Jews exhibited to him, he permitted them to hold the country of Samaria free from tribute. Of the same mind also was Ptolemy the son of Lagus, as to those Jews who dwelt at Alexandria." For he intrusted the fortresses of Egypt into their hands, as believing they would keep them faithfully and valiantly for him; and when he was desirous to secure the government of Cyrene, and the other cities of Libya, to himself, he sent a party of Jews to inhabit in them. And for his successor Ptolemy, who was called Philadelphus, he did not only set all those of our nation free who were captives under him, but did frequently give money [for their ransom]; and, what was his greatest work of all, he had a great desire of knowing our laws, and of obtaining the books of our sacred Scriptures; accordingly, he desired that such men might be sent him as might interpret our law to him; and, in order to have them well compiled, he committed that care to no ordinary persons, but ordained that Demetrius Phalereus, and Andreas, and Aristaeus; the first, Demetrius, the most learned person of his age, and the

others, such as were intrusted with the guard of his body; should take care of this matter: nor would he certainly have been so desirous of learning our law, and the philosophy of our nation, had he despised the men that made use of it, or had he not indeed had them in great admiration.

5. Now this Apion was unacquainted with almost all the kings of those Macedonians whom he pretends to have been his progenitors, who were yet very well affected towards us; for the third of those Ptolemies, who was called Euergetes, when he had gotten possession of all Syria by force, did not offer his thank-offerings to the Egyptian gods for his victory, but came to Jerusalem, and according to our own laws offered many sacrifices to God, and dedicated to him such gifts as were suitable to such a victory: and as for Ptolemy Philometer and his wife Cleopatra, they committed their whole kingdom to the Jews, when Onias and Dositheus, both Jews, whose names are laughed at by Apion, were the generals of their whole army. But certainly, instead of reproaching them, he ought to admire their actions, and return them thanks for saving Alexandria, whose citizen he pretends to be; for when these Alexandrians were making war with Cleopatra the queen, and were in danger of being utterly ruined, these Jews brought them to terms of agreement, and freed them from the miseries of a civil war. "But then (says Apion) Onias brought a small army afterward upon the city at the time when Thorruns the Roman ambassador was there present." Yes, do I venture to say, and that he did rightly and very justly in so doing; for that Ptolemy who was called Physco, upon the death of his brother Philometer, came from Cyrene, and would have ejected Cleopatra as well as her sons out of their kingdom, that he might obtain it for himself unjustly. (5) For this cause then it was that Onias undertook a war against him on Cleopatra's account; nor would he desert that trust the royal family had reposed in him in their distress.

Accordingly, God gave a remarkable attestation to his righteous procedure; for when Ptolemy Physco (6) had the presumption to fight against Onias's army, and had caught all the Jews that were in the city [Alexandria], with their children and wives, and exposed them naked and in bonds to his elephants, that they might be trodden upon and destroyed, and when he had made those elephants drunk for that purpose, the event proved contrary to his preparations; for these elephants left the Jews who were exposed to them, and fell violently upon Physco's friends, and slew a great number of them; nay, after this Ptolemy saw a terrible ghost, which prohibited his hurting those men; his very concubine, whom he loved so well, (some call her Ithaca, and others Irene,) making supplication to him, that he would not perpetrate so great a wickedness. So he complied with her request, and repented of what he either had already done, or was about to do; whence it is well known that the Alexandrian Jews do with good reason celebrate this day, on the account that they had thereon been vouchsafed such an evident deliverance from God. However, Apion, the common calumniator of men, hath the presumption to accuse the Jews for making this war against Physco, when he ought to have commended them for the same. This man also makes mention of Cleopatra, the last queen of Alexandria, and abuses us, because she was ungrateful to us; whereas he ought to have reproved her, who indulged herself in all kinds of injustice and wicked practices, both with regard to her nearest relations and husbands who had loved her, and, indeed, in general with regard to all the Romans, and those emperors that were her benefactors; who also had her sister Arsinoe

slain in a temple, when she had done her no harm: moreover, she had her brother slain by private treachery, and she destroyed the gods of her country and the sepulchers of her progenitors; and while she had received her kingdom from the first Caesar, she had the impudence to rebel against his son: (7) and successor; nay, she corrupted Antony with her love-tricks, and rendered him an enemy to his country, and made him treacherous to his friends, and [by his means] despoiled some of their royal authority, and forced others in her madness to act wickedly. But what need I enlarge upon this head any further, when she left Antony in his fight at sea, though he were her husband, and the father of their common children, and compelled him to resign up his government, with the army, and to follow her [into Egypt]? nay, when last of all Caesar had taken Alexandria, she came to that pitch of cruelty, that she declared she had some hope of preserving her affairs still, in case she could kill the Jews, though it were with her own hand; to such a degree of barbarity and perfidiousness had she arrived. And doth any one think that we cannot boast ourselves of any thing, if, as Apion says, this queen did not at a time of famine distribute wheat among us? However, she at length met with the punishment she deserved. As for us Jews, we appeal to the great Caesar what assistance we brought him, and what fidelity we showed to him against the Egyptians; as also to the senate and its decrees, and the epistles of Augustus Caesar, whereby our merits [to the Romans] are justified. Apion ought to have looked upon those epistles, and in particular to have examined the testimonies given on our behalf, under Alexander and all the Ptolemies, and the decrees of the senate and of the greatest Roman emperors. And if Germanicus was not able to make a distribution of corn to all the inhabitants of Alexandria, that only shows what a barren time it was, and how great a want there was then of corn, but tends nothing to the accusation of the Jews; for what all the emperors have thought of the Alexandrian Jews is well known, for this distribution of wheat was no otherwise omitted with regard to the Jews, than it was with regard to the other inhabitants of Alexandria. But they still were desirous to preserve what the kings had formerly intrusted to their care, I mean the custody of the river; nor did those kings think them unworthy of having the entire custody thereof, upon all occasions.

6. But besides this, Apion objects to us thus: "If the Jews (says he) be citizens of Alexandria, why do they not worship the same gods with the Alexandrians?" To which I give this answer: Since you are yourselves Egyptians, why do you fight it out one against another, and have implacable wars about your religion? At this rate we must not call you all Egyptians, nor indeed in general men, because you breed up with great care beasts of a nature quite contrary to that of men, although the nature of all men seems to be one and the same. Now if there be such differences in opinion among you Egyptians, why are you surprised that those who came to Alexandria from another country, and had original laws of their own before, should persevere in the observance of those laws? But still he charges us with being the authors of sedition; which accusation, if it be a just one, why is it not laid against us all, since we are known to be all of one mind. Moreover, those that search into such matters will soon discover that the authors of sedition have been such citizens of Alexandria as Apion is; for while they were the Grecians and Macedonians who were ill possession of this city, there was no sedition raised against us, and we were permitted to observe our ancient solemnities; but when the number of the Egyptians

therein came to be considerable, the times grew confused, and then these seditions brake out still more and more, while our people continued uncorrupted. These Egyptians, therefore, were the authors of these troubles, who having not the constancy of Macedonians, nor the prudence of Grecians, indulged all of them the evil manners of the Egyptians, and continued their ancient hatred against us; for what is here so presumptuously charged upon us, is owing to the differences that are amongst themselves; while many of them have not obtained the privileges of citizens in proper times, but style those who are well known to have had that privilege extended to them all no other than foreigners: for it does not appear that any of the kings have ever formerly bestowed those privileges of citizens upon Egyptians, no more than have the emperors done it more lately; while it was Alexander who introduced us into this city at first, the kings augmented our privileges therein, and the Romans have been pleased to preserve them always inviolable. Moreover, Apion would lay a blot upon us, because we do not erect images for our emperors; as if those emperors did not know this before, or stood in need of Apion as their defender; whereas he ought rather to have admired the magnanimity and modesty of the Romans, whereby they do not compel those that are subject to them to transgress the laws of their countries, but are willing to receive the honors due to them after such a manner as those who are to pay them esteem consistent with piety and with their own laws; for they do not thank people for conferring honors upon them, When they are compelled by violence so to do. Accordingly, since the Grecians and some other nations think it a right thing to make images, nay, when they have painted the pictures of their parents, and wives, and children, they exult for joy; and some there are who take pictures for themselves of such persons as were no way related to them; nay, some take the pictures of such servants as they were fond of; what wonder is it then if such as these appear willing to pay the same respect to their princes and lords? But then our legislator hath forbidden us to make images, not by way of denunciation beforehand, that the Roman authority was not to be honored, but as despising a thing that was neither necessary nor useful for either God or man; and he forbade them, as we shall prove hereafter, to make these images for any part of the animal creation, and much less for God himself, who is no part of such animal creation. Yet hath our legislator no where forbidden us to pay honors to worthy men, provided they be of another kind, and inferior to those we pay to God; with which honors we willingly testify our respect to our emperors, and to the people of Rome; we also offer perpetual sacrifices for them; nor do we only offer them every day at the common expenses of all the Jews, but although we offer no other such sacrifices out of our common expenses, no, not for our own children, yet do we this as a peculiar honor to the emperors, and to them alone, while we do the same to no other person whomsoever. And let this suffice for an answer in general to Apion, as to what he says with relation to the Alexandrian Jews.

7. However, I cannot but admire those other authors who furnished this man with such his materials; I mean Possidonius and Apollonius [the son of] Molo, (8) who, while they accuse us for not worshipping the same gods whom others worship, they think themselves not guilty of impiety when they tell lies of us, and frame absurd and reproachful stories about our temple; whereas it is a most shameful thing for freemen to forge lies on any occasion, and much more so to forge them about our temple, which was

so famous over all the world, and was preserved so sacred by us; for Apion hath the impudence to pretend that "the Jews placed an ass's head in their holy place;" and he affirms that this was discovered when Antiochus Epiphanes spoiled our temple, and found that ass's head there made of gold, and worth a great deal of money. To this my first answer shall be this, that had there been any such thing among us, an Egyptian ought by no means to have thrown it in our teeth, since an ass is not a more contemptible animal than — (9) and goats, and other such creatures, which among them are gods. But besides this answer, I say further, how comes it about that Apion does not understand this to be no other than a palpable lie, and to be confuted by the thing itself as utterly incredible? For we Jews are always governed by the same laws, in which we constantly persevere; and although many misfortunes have befallen our city, as the like have befallen others, and although Theos [Epiphanes], and Pompey the Great, and Licinius Crassus, and last of all Titus Caesar, have conquered us in war, and gotten possession of our temple; yet have they none of them found any such thing there, nor indeed any thing but what was agreeable to the strictest piety; although what they found we are not at liberty to reveal to other nations. But for Antiochus [Epiphanes], he had no just cause for that ravage in our temple that he made; he only came to it when he wanted money, without declaring himself our enemy, and attacked us while we were his associates and his friends; nor did he find any thing there that was ridiculous. This is attested by many worthy writers; Polybius of Megalopolis, Strabo of Cappadocia, Nicolaus of Damascus, Timagenes, Castor the chronotoger, and Apollodorus; (10) who all say that it was out of Antiochus's want of money that he broke his league with the Jews, and despoiled their temple when it was full of gold and silver. Apion ought to have had a regard to these facts, unless he had himself had either an ass's heart or a dog's impudence; of such a dog I mean as they worship; for he had no other external reason for the lies he tells of us. As for us Jews, we ascribe no honor or power to asses, as do the Egyptians to crocodiles and asps, when they esteem such as are seized upon by the former, or bitten by the latter, to be happy persons, and persons worthy of God. Asses are the same with us which they are with other wise men, viz. creatures that bear the burdens that we lay upon them; but if they come to our thrashing-floors and eat our corn, or do not perform what we impose upon them, we beat them with a great many stripes, because it is their business to minister to us in our husbandry affairs. But this Apion of ours was either perfectly unskillful in the composition of such fallacious discourses, or however, when he begun [somewhat better], he was not able to persevere in what he had undertaken, since he hath no manner of success in those reproaches he casts upon us.

8. He adds another Grecian fable, in order to reproach us. In reply to which, it would be enough to say, that they who presume to speak about Divine worship ought not to be ignorant of this plain truth, that it is a degree of less impurity to pass through temples, than to forge wicked calumnies of its priests. Now such men as he are more zealous to justify a sacrilegious king, than to write what is just and what is true about us, and about our temple; for when they are desirous of gratifying Antiochus, and of concealing that perfidiousness and sacrilege which he was guilty of, with regard to our nation, when he wanted money, they endeavor to disgrace us, and tell lies even relating to futurities. Apion becomes other men's prophet upon this occasion, and says that "Antiochus found



in our temple a bed, and a man lying upon it, with a small table before him, full of dainties, from the [fishes of the] sea, and the fowls of the dry land; that this man was amazed at these dainties thus set before him; that he immediately adored the king, upon his coming in, as hoping that he would afford him all possible assistance; that he fell down upon his knees, and stretched out to him his right hand, and begged to be released; and that when the king bid him sit down, and tell him who he was, and why he dwelt there, and what was the meaning of those various sorts of food that were set before him the man made a lamentable complaint, and with sighs, and tears in his eyes, gave him this account of the distress he was in; and said that he was a Greek and that as he went over this province, in order to get his living, he was seized upon by foreigners, on a sudden, and brought to this temple, and shut up therein, and was seen by nobody, but was fattened by these curious provisions thus set before him; and that truly at the first such unexpected advantages seemed to him matter of great joy; that after a while, they brought a suspicion him, and at length astonishment, what their meaning should be; that at last he inquired of the servants that came to him and was by them informed that it was in order to the fulfilling a law of the Jews, which they must not tell him, that he was thus fed; and that they did the same at a set time every year: that they used to catch a Greek foreigner, and fat him thus up every year, and then lead him to a certain wood, and kill him, and sacrifice with their accustomed solemnities, and taste of his entrails, and take an oath upon this sacrificing a Greek, that they would ever be at enmity with the Greeks; and that then they threw the remaining parts of the miserable wretch into a certain pit." Apion adds further, that" the man said there were but a few days to come ere he was to be slain, and implored of Antiochus that, out of the reverence he bore to the Grecian gods, he would disappoint the snares the Jews laid for his blood, and would deliver him from the miseries with which he was encompassed." Now this is such a most tragical fable as is full of nothing but cruelty and impudence; yet does it not excuse Antiochus of his sacrilegious attempt, as those who write it in his vindication are willing to suppose; for he could not presume beforehand that he should meet with any such thing in coming to the temple, but must have found it unexpectedly. He was therefore still an impious person, that was given to unlawful pleasures, and had no regard to God in his actions. But [as for Apion], he hath done whatever his extravagant love of lying hath dictated to him, as it is most easy to discover by a consideration of his writings; for the difference of our laws is known not to regard the Grecians only, but they are principally opposite to the Egyptians, and to some other nations also for while it so falls out that men of all countries come sometimes and sojourn among us, how comes it about that we take an oath, and conspire only against the Grecians, and that by the effusion of their blood also? Or how is it possible that all the Jews should get together to these sacrifices, and the entrails of one man should be sufficient for so many thousands to taste of them, as Apion pretends? Or why did not the king carry this man, whosoever he was, and whatsoever was his name, (which is not set down in Apion's book,) with great pomp back into his own country? when he might thereby have been esteemed a religious person himself, and a mighty lover of the Greeks, and might thereby have procured himself great assistance from all men against that hatred the Jews bore to him. But I leave this matter; for the proper way of confuting fools is not to use bare words, but to appeal to the things themselves that make against them. Now, then, all such as ever saw the construction of our temple, of

what nature it was, know well enough how the purity of it was never to be profaned; for it had four several courts (12) encompassed with cloisters round about, every one of which had by our law a peculiar degree of separation from the rest. Into the first court every body was allowed to go, even foreigners, and none but women, during their courses, were prohibited to pass through it; all the Jews went into the second court, as well as their wives, when they were free from all uncleanness; into the third court went in the Jewish men, when they were clean and purified; into the fourth went the priests, having on their sacerdotal garments; but for the most sacred place, none went in but the high priests, clothed in their peculiar garments. Now there is so great caution used about these offices of religion, that the priests are appointed to go into the temple but at certain hours; for in the morning, at the opening of the inner temple, those that are to officiate receive the sacrifices, as they do again at noon, till the doors are shut. Lastly, it is not so much as lawful to carry any vessel into the holy house; nor is there any thing therein, but the altar [of incense], the table [of shew-bread], the censer, and the candlestick, which are all written in the law; for there is nothing further there, nor are there any mysteries performed that may not be spoken of; nor is there any feasting within the place. For what I have now said is publicly known, and supported by the testimony of the whole people, and their operations are very manifest; for although there be four courses of the priests, and every one of them have above five thousand men in them, yet do they officiate on certain days only; and when those days are over, other priests succeed in the performance of their sacrifices, and assemble together at mid-day, and receive the keys of the temple, and the vessels by tale, without any thing relating to food or drink being carried into the temple; nay, we are not allowed to offer such things at the altar, excepting what is prepared for the sacrifices.

9. What then can we say of Apion, but that he examined nothing that concerned these things, while still he uttered incredible words about them? but it is a great shame for a grammarian not to be able to write true history. Now if he knew the purity of our temple, he hath entirely omitted to take notice of it; but he forges a story about the seizing of a Grecian, about ineffable food, and the most delicious preparation of dainties; and pretends that strangers could go into a place whereinto the noblest men among the Jews are not allowed to enter, unless they be priests. This, therefore, is the utmost degree of impiety, and a voluntary lie, in order to the delusion of those who will not examine into the truth of matters; whereas such unspeakable mischiefs as are above related have been occasioned by such calumnies that are raised upon us.

10. Nay, this miracle or piety derides us further, and adds the following pretended facts to his former fable; for he says that this man related how, "while the Jews were once in a long war with the Idumeans, there came a man out of one of the cities of the Idumeans, who there had worshipped Apollo. This man, whose name is said to have been Zabidus, came to the Jews, and promised that he would deliver Apollo, the god of Dora, into their hands, and that he would come to our temple, if they would all come up with him, and bring the whole multitude of the Jews with them; that Zabidus made him a certain wooden instrument, and put it round about him, and set three rows of lamps therein, and walked after such a manner, that he appeared to those that stood a great way off him to be

a kind of star, walking upon the earth; that the Jews were terribly affrighted at so surprising an appearance, and stood very quiet at a distance; and that Zabidus, while they continued so very quiet, went into the holy house, and carried off that golden head of an ass, (for so facetiously does he write,) and then went his way back again to Dora in great haste." And say you so, sir! as I may reply; then does Apion load the ass, that is, himself, and lays on him a burden of fooleries and lies; for he writes of places that have no being, and not knowing the cities he speaks of, he changes their situation; for Idumea borders upon our country, and is near to Gaza, in which there is no such city as Dora; although there be, it is true, a city named Dora in Phoenicia, near Mount Carmel, but it is four days' journey from Idumea. (12) Now, then, why does this man accuse us, because we have not gods in common with other nations, if our fathers were so easily prevailed upon to have Apollo come to them, and thought they saw him walking upon the earth, and the stars with him? for certainly those who have so many festivals, wherein they light lamps, must yet, at this rate, have never seen a candlestick! But still it seems that while Zabidus took his journey over the country, where were so many ten thousands of people, nobody met him. He also, it seems, even in a time of war, found the walls of Jerusalem destitute of guards. I omit the rest. Now the doors of the holy house were seventy (13) cubits high, and twenty cubits broad; they were all plated over with gold, and almost of solid gold itself, and there were no fewer than twenty (14) men required to shut them every day; nor was it lawful ever to leave them open, though it seems this lamp-bearer of ours opened them easily, or thought he opened them, as he thought he had the ass's head in his hand. Whether, therefore, he returned it to us again, or whether Apion took it, and brought it into the temple again, that Antiochus might find it, and afford a handle for a second fable of Apion's, is uncertain.

11. Apion also tells a false story, when he mentions an oath of ours, as if we "swore by God, the Maker of the heaven, and earth, and sea, to bear no good will to any foreigner, and particularly to none of the Greeks." Now this liar ought to have said directly that "we would bear no good-will to any foreigner, and particularly to none of the Egyptians." For then his story about the oath would have squared with the rest of his original forgeries, in case our forefathers had been driven away by their kinsmen, the Egyptians, not on account of any wickedness they had been guilty of, but on account of the calamities they were under; for as to the Grecians, we were rather remote from them in place, than different from them in our institutions, insomuch that we have no enmity with them, nor any jealousy of them. On the contrary, it hath so happened that many of them have come over to our laws, and some of them have continued in their observation, although others of them had not courage enough to persevere, and so departed from them again; nor did any body ever hear this oath sworn by us: Apion, it seems, was the only person that heard it, for he indeed was the first composer of it.

12. However, Apion deserves to be admired for his great prudence, as to what I am going to say, which is this, "That there is a plain mark among us, that we neither have just laws, nor worship God as we ought to do, because we are not governors, but are rather in subjection to Gentiles, sometimes to one nation, and sometimes to another; and that our city hath been liable to several calamities, while their city [Alexandria] hath been of old

time an imperial city, and not used to be in subjection to the Romans." But now this man had better leave off this bragging, for every body but himself would think that Apion said what he hath said against himself; for there are very few nations that have had the good fortune to continue many generations in the principality, but still the mutations in human affairs have put them into subjection under others; and most nations have been often subdued, and brought into subjection by others. Now for the Egyptians, perhaps they are the only nation that have had this extraordinary privilege, to have never served any of those monarchs who subdued Asia and Europe, and this on account, as they pretend, that the gods fled into their country, and saved themselves by being changed into the shapes of wild beasts! Whereas these Egyptians (15) are the very people that appear to have never, in all the past ages, had one day of freedom, no, not so much as from their own lords. For I will not reproach them with relating the manner how the Persians used them, and this not once only, but many times, when they laid their cities waste, demolished their temples, and cut the throats of those animals whom they esteemed to be gods; for it is not reasonable to imitate the clownish ignorance of Apion, who hath no regard to the misfortunes of the Athenians, or of the Lacedemonians, the latter of whom were styled by all men the most courageous, and the former the most religious of the Grecians. I say nothing of such kings as have been famous for piety, particularly of one of them, whose name was Cresus, nor what calamities he met with in his life; I say nothing of the citadel of Athens, of the temple at Ephesus, of that at Delphi, nor of ten thousand others which have been burnt down, while nobody cast reproaches on those that were the sufferers, but on those that were the actors therein. But now we have met with Apion, an accuser of our nation, though one that still forgets the miseries of his own people, the Egyptians; but it is that Sesostris who was once so celebrated a king of Egypt that hath blinded him. Now we will not brag of our kings, David and Solomon, though they conquered many nations; accordingly we will let them alone. However, Apion is ignorant of what every body knows, that the Egyptians were servants to the Persians, and afterwards to the Macedonians, when they were lords of Asia, and were no better than slaves, while we have enjoyed liberty formerly; nay, more than that, have had the dominion of the cities that lie round about us, and this nearly for a hundred and twenty years together, until Pompeius Magnus. And when all the kings every where were conquered by the Romans, our ancestors were the only people who continued to be esteemed their confederates and friends, on account of their fidelity to them.(16)

13. "But," says Apion, "we Jews have not had any wonderful men amongst us, not any inventors of arts, nor any eminent for wisdom." He then enumerates Socrates, and Zeno, and Cleanthes, and some others of the same sort; and, after all, he adds himself to them, which is the most wonderful thing of all that he says, and pronounces Alexandria to be happy, because it hath such a citizen as he is in it; for he was the fittest man to be a witness to his own deserts, although he hath appeared to all others no better than a wicked mountebank, of a corrupt life and ill discourses; on which account one may justly pity Alexandria, if it should value itself upon such a citizen as he is. But as to our own men, we have had those who have been as deserving of commendation as any other whosoever, and such as have perused our Antiquities cannot be ignorant of them.

14. As to the other things which he sets down as blameworthy, it may perhaps be the best way to let them pass without apology, that he may be allowed to be his own accuser, and the accuser of the rest of the Egyptians. However, he accuses us for sacrificing animals, and for abstaining from swine's flesh, and laughs at us for the circumcision of our privy members. Now as for our slaughter of tame animals for sacrifices, it is common to us and to all other men; but this Apion, by making it a crime to sacrifice them, demonstrates himself to be an Egyptian; for had he been either a Grecian or a Macedonian, [as he pretends to be,] he had not shown any uneasiness at it; for those people glory in sacrificing whole hecatombs to the gods, and make use of those sacrifices for feasting; and yet is not the world thereby rendered destitute of cattle, as Apion was afraid would come to pass. Yet if all men had followed the manners of the Egyptians, the world had certainly been made desolate as to mankind, but had been filled full of the wildest sort of brute beasts, which, because they suppose them to be gods, they carefully nourish. However, if any one should ask Apion which of the Egyptians he thinks to be the most wise and most pious of them all, he would certainly acknowledge the priests to be so; for the histories say that two things were originally committed to their care by their kings' injunctions, the worship of the gods, and the support of wisdom and philosophy. Accordingly, these priests are all circumcised, and abstain from swine's flesh; nor does any one of the other Egyptians assist them in slaying those sacrifices they offer to the gods. Apion was therefore quite blinded in his mind, when, for the sake of the Egyptians, he contrived to reproach us, and to accuse such others as not only make use of that conduct of life which he so much abuses, but have also taught other men to be circumcised, as says Herodotus; which makes me think that Apion is hereby justly punished for his casting such reproaches on the laws of his own country; for he was circumcised himself of necessity, on account of an ulcer in his privy member; and when he received no benefit by such circumcision, but his member became putrid, he died in great torment. Now men of good tempers ought to observe their own laws concerning religion accurately, and to persevere therein, but not presently to abuse the laws of other nations, while this Apion deserted his own laws, and told lies about ours. And this was the end of Apion's life, and this shall be the conclusion of our discourse about him.

15. But now, since Apollonius Molo, and Lysimachus, and some others, write treatises about our lawgiver Moses, and about our laws, which are neither just nor true, and this partly out of ignorance, but chiefly out of ill-will to us, while they calumniate Moses as an impostor and deceiver, and pretend that our laws teach us wickedness, but nothing that is virtuous, I have a mind to discourse briefly, according to my ability, about our whole constitution of government, and about the particular branches of it. For I suppose it will thence become evident, that the laws we have given us are disposed after the best manner for the advancement of piety, for mutual communion with one another, for a general love of mankind, as also for justice, and for sustaining labors with fortitude, and for a contempt of death. And I beg of those that shall peruse this writing of mine, to read it without partiality; for it is not my purpose to write an encomium upon ourselves, but I shall esteem this as a most just apology for us, and taken from those our laws, according to which we lead our lives, against the many and the lying objections that have been made against us. Moreover, since this Apollonius does not do like Apion, and lay a

continued accusation against us, but does it only by starts, and up and clown his discourse, while he sometimes reproaches us as atheists, and man-haters, and sometimes hits us in the teeth with our want of courage, and yet sometimes, on the contrary, accuses us of too great boldness and madness in our conduct; nay, he says that we are the weakest of all the barbarians, and that this is the reason why we are the only people who have made no improvements in human life; now I think I shall have then sufficiently disproved all these his allegations, when it shall appear that our laws enjoin the very reverse of what he says, and that we very carefully observe those laws ourselves. And if I be compelled to make mention of the laws of other nations, that are contrary to ours, those ought deservedly to thank themselves for it, who have pretended to depreciate our laws in comparison of their own; nor will there, I think, be any room after that for them to pretend either that we have no such laws ourselves, an epitome of which I will present to the reader, or that we do not, above all men, continue in the observation of them.

16. To begin then a good way backward, I would advance this, in the first place, that those who have been admirers of good order, and of living under common laws, and who began to introduce them, may well have this testimony that they are better than other men, both for moderation and such virtue as is agreeable to nature. Indeed their endeavor was to have every thing they ordained believed to be very ancient, that they might not be thought to imitate others, but might appear to have delivered a regular way of living to others after them. Since then this is the case, the excellency of a legislator is seen in providing for the people's living after the best manner, and in prevailing with those that are to use the laws he ordains for them, to have a good opinion of them, and in obliging the multitude to persevere in them, and to make no changes in them, neither in prosperity nor adversity. Now I venture to say, that our legislator is the most ancient of all the legislators whom we have ally where heard of; for as for the Lycurguses, and Solons, and Zaleucus Locrensis, and all those legislators who are so admired by the Greeks, they seem to be of yesterday, if compared with our legislator, insomuch as the very name of a law was not so much as known in old times among the Grecians. Homer is a witness to the truth of this observation, who never uses that term in all his poems; for indeed there was then no such thing among them, but the multitude was governed by wise maxims, and by the injunctions of their king. It was also a long time that they continued in the use of these unwritten customs, although they were always changing them upon several occasions. But for our legislator, who was of so much greater antiquity than the rest, (as even those that speak against us upon all occasions do always confess,) he exhibited himself to the people as their best governor and counselor, and included in his legislation the entire conduct of their lives, and prevailed with them to receive it, and brought it so to pass, that those that were made acquainted with his laws did most carefully observe them.

17. But let us consider his first and greatest work; for when it was resolved on by our forefathers to leave Egypt, and return to their own country, this Moses took the many tell thousands that were of the people, and saved them out of many desperate distresses, and brought them home in safety. And certainly it was here necessary to travel over a country without water, and full of sand, to overcome their enemies, and, during these battles, to preserve their children, and their wives, and their prey; on all which occasions he became

an excellent general of an army, and a most prudent counselor, and one that took the truest care of them all; he also so brought it about, that the whole multitude depended upon him. And while he had them always obedient to what he enjoined, he made no manner of use of his authority for his own private advantage, which is the usual time when governors gain great powers to themselves, and pave the way for tyranny, and accustom the multitude to live very dissolutely; whereas, when our legislator was in so great authority, he, on the contrary, thought he ought to have regard to piety, and to show his great good-will to the people; and by this means he thought he might show the great degree of virtue that was in him, and might procure the most lasting security to those who had made him their governor. When he had therefore come to such a good resolution, and had performed such wonderful exploits, we had just reason to look upon ourselves as having him for a divine governor and counselor. And when he had first persuaded himself (17) that his actions and designs were agreeable to God's will, he thought it his duty to impress, above all things, that notion upon the multitude; for those who have once believed that God is the inspector of their lives, will not permit themselves in any sin. And this is the character of our legislator: he was no impostor, no deceiver, as his revilers say, though unjustly, but such a one as they brag Minos (18) to have been among the Greeks, and other legislators after him; for some of them suppose that they had their laws from Jupiter, while Minos said that the revelation of his laws was to be referred to Apollo, and his oracle at Delphi, whether they really thought they were so derived, or supposed, however, that they could persuade the people easily that so it was. But which of these it was who made the best laws, and which had the greatest reason to believe that God was their author, it will be easy, upon comparing those laws themselves together, to determine; for it is time that we come to that point. (19) Now there are innumerable differences in the particular customs and laws that are among all mankind, which a man may briefly reduce under the following heads: Some legislators have permitted their governments to be under monarchies, others put them under oligarchies, and others under a republican form; but our legislator had no regard to any of these forms, but he ordained our government to be what, by a strained expression, may be termed a Theocracy, (20) by ascribing the authority and the power to God, and by persuading all the people to have a regard to him, as the author of all the good things that were enjoyed either in common by all mankind, or by each one in particular, and of all that they themselves obtained by praying to him in their greatest difficulties. He informed them that it was impossible to escape God's observation, even in any of our outward actions, or in any of our inward thoughts. Moreover, he represented God as unbegotten, (21) and immutable, through all eternity, superior to all mortal conceptions in pulchritude; and, though known to us by his power, yet unknown to us as to his essence. I do not now explain how these notions of God are the sentiments of the wisest among the Grecians, and how they were taught them upon the principles that he afforded them. However, they testify, with great assurance, that these notions are just, and agreeable to the nature of God, and to his majesty; for Pythagoras, and Anaxagoras, and Plato, and the Stoic philosophers that succeeded them, and almost all the rest, are of the same sentiments, and had the same notions of the nature of God; yet durst not these men disclose those true notions to more than a few, because the body of the people were prejudiced with other opinions beforehand. But our legislator, who made his actions agree to his laws, did not only prevail with those that

were his contemporaries to agree with these his notions, but so firmly imprinted this faith in God upon all their posterity, that it never could be removed. The reason why the constitution of this legislation was ever better directed to the utility of all than other legislations were, is this, that Moses did not make religion a part of virtue, but he saw and he ordained other virtues to be parts of religion; I mean justice, and fortitude, and temperance, and a universal agreement of the members of the community with one another; for all our actions and studies, and all our words, [in Moses's settlement,] have a reference to piety towards God; for he hath left none of these in suspense, or undetermined. For there are two ways of coining at any sort of learning and a moral conduct of life; the one is by instruction in words, the other by practical exercises. Now other lawgivers have separated these two ways in their opinions, and choosing one of those ways of instruction, or that which best pleased every one of them, neglected the other. Thus did the Lacedaemonians and the Cretians teach by practical exercises, but not by words; while the Athenians, and almost all the other Grecians, made laws about what was to be done, or left undone, but had no regard to the exercising them thereto in practice.

18. But for our legislator, he very carefully joined these two methods of instruction together; for he neither left these practical exercises to go on without verbal instruction, nor did he permit the hearing of the law to proceed without the exercises for practice; but beginning immediately from the earliest infancy, and the appointment of every one's diet, he left nothing of the very smallest consequence to be done at the pleasure and disposal of the person himself. Accordingly, he made a fixed rule of law what sorts of food they should abstain from, and what sorts they should make use of; as also, what communion they should have with others what great diligence they should use in their occupations, and what times of rest should be interposed, that, by living under that law as under a father and a master, we might be guilty of no sin, neither voluntary nor out of ignorance; for he did not suffer the guilt of ignorance to go on without punishment, but demonstrated the law to be the best and the most necessary instruction of all others, permitting the people to leave off their other employments, and to assemble together for the hearing of the law, and learning it exactly, and this not once or twice, or oftener, but every week; which thing all the other legislators seem to have neglected.

19. And indeed the greatest part of mankind are so far from living according to their own laws, that they hardly know them; but when they have sinned, they learn from others that they have transgressed the law. Those also who are in the highest and principal posts of the government, confess they are not acquainted with those laws, and are obliged to take such persons for their assessors in public administrations as profess to have skill in those laws; but for our people, if any body do but ask any one of them about our laws, he will more readily tell them all than he will tell his own name, and this in consequence of our having learned them immediately as soon as ever we became sensible of any thing, and of our having them as it were engraven on our souls. Our transgressors of them are but few, and it is impossible, when any do offend, to escape punishment.

20. And this very thing it is that principally creates such a wonderful agreement of minds



amongst us all; for this entire agreement of ours in all our notions concerning God, and our having no difference in our course of life and manners, procures among us the most excellent concord of these our manners that is any where among mankind; for no other people but the Jews have avoided all discourses about God that any way contradict one another, which yet are frequent among other nations; and this is true not only among ordinary persons, according as every one is affected, but some of the philosophers have been insolent enough to indulge such contradictions, while some of them have undertaken to use such words as entirely take away the nature of God, as others of them have taken away his providence over mankind. Nor can any one perceive amongst us any difference in the conduct of our lives, but all our works are common to us all. We have one sort of discourse concerning God, which is conformable to our law, and affirms that he sees all things; as also we have but one way of speaking concerning the conduct of our lives, that all other things ought to have piety for their end; and this any body may hear from our women, and servants themselves.

21. And, indeed, hence hath arisen that accusation which some make against us, that we have not produced men that have been the inventors of new operations, or of new ways of speaking; for others think it a fine thing to persevere in nothing that has been delivered down from their forefathers, and these testify it to be an instance of the sharpest wisdom when these men venture to transgress those traditions; whereas we, on the contrary, suppose it to be our only wisdom and virtue to admit no actions nor supposals that are contrary to our original laws; which procedure of ours is a just and sure sign that our law is admirably constituted; for such laws as are not thus well made are convicted upon trial to want amendment.

22. But while we are ourselves persuaded that our law was made agreeably to the will of God, it would be impious for us not to observe the same; for what is there in it that any body would change? and what can be invented that is better? or what can we take out of other people's laws that will exceed it? Perhaps some would have the entire settlement of our government altered. And where shall we find a better or more righteous constitution than ours, while this makes us esteem God to be the Governor of the universe, and permits the priests in general to be the administrators of the principal affairs, and withal intrusts the government over the other priests to the chief high priest himself? which priests our legislator, at their first appointment, did not advance to that dignity for their riches, or any abundance of other possessions, or any plenty they had as the gifts of fortune; but he intrusted the principal management of Divine worship to those that exceeded others in an ability to persuade men, and in prudence of conduct. These men had the main care of the law and of the other parts of the people's conduct committed to them; for they were the priests who were ordained to be the inspectors of all, and the judges in doubtful cases, and the punishers of those that were condemned to suffer punishment.

23. What form of government then can be more holy than this? what more worthy kind of worship can be paid to God than we pay, where the entire body of the people are prepared for religion, where an extraordinary degree of care is required in the priests, and where

the whole polity is so ordered as if it were a certain religious solemnity? For what things foreigners, when they solemnize such festivals, are not able to observe for a few days' time, and call them Mysteries and Sacred Ceremonies, we observe with great pleasure and an unshaken resolution during our whole lives. What are the things then that we are commanded or forbidden? They are simple, and easily known. The first command is concerning God, and affirms that God contains all things, and is a Being every way perfect and happy, self-sufficient, and supplying all other beings; the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things. He is manifest in his works and benefits, and more conspicuous than any other being whatsoever; but as to his form and magnitude, he is most obscure. All materials, let them be ever so costly, are unworthy to compose an image for him, and all arts are unartful to express the notion we ought to have of him. We can neither see nor think of any thing like him, nor is it agreeable to piety to form a resemblance of him. We see his works, the light, the heaven, the earth, the sun and the moon, the waters, the generations of animals, the productions of fruits. These things hath God made, not with hands, nor with labor, nor as wanting the assistance of any to cooperate with him; but as his will resolved they should be made and be good also, they were made and became good immediately. All men ought to follow this Being, and to worship him in the exercise of virtue; for this way of worship of God is the most holy of all others.

24. There ought also to be but one temple for one God; for likeness is the constant foundation of agreement. This temple ought to be common to all men, because he is the common God of all men. High priests are to be continually about his worship, over whom he that is the first by his birth is to be their ruler perpetually. His business must be to offer sacrifices to God, together with those priests that are joined with him, to see that the laws be observed, to determine controversies, and to punish those that are convicted of injustice; while he that does not submit to him shall be subject to the same punishment, as if he had been guilty of impiety towards God himself. When we offer sacrifices to him, we do it not in order to surfeit ourselves, or to be drunken; for such excesses are against the will of God, and would be an occasion of injuries and of luxury; but by keeping ourselves sober, orderly, and ready for our other occupations, and being more temperate than others. And for our duty at the sacrifices (22) themselves, we ought, in the first place, to pray for the common welfare of all, and after that for our own; for we are made for fellowship one with another, and he who prefers the common good before what is peculiar to himself is above all acceptable to God. And let our prayers and supplications be made humbly to God, not [so much] that he would give us what is good, (for he hath already given that of his own accord, and hath proposed the same publicly to all,) as that we may duly receive it, and when we have received it, may preserve it. Now the law has appointed several purifications at our sacrifices, whereby we are cleansed after a funeral, after what sometimes happens to us in bed, and after accompanying with our wives, and upon many other occasions, which it would be too long now to set down. And this is our doctrine concerning God and his worship, and is the same that the law appoints for our practice.

25. But, then, what are our laws about marriage? That law owns no other mixture of

sexes but that which nature hath appointed, of a man with his wife, and that this be used only for the procreation of children. But it abhors the mixture of a male with a male; and if any one do that, death is its punishment. It commands us also, when we marry, not to have regard to portion, nor to take a woman by violence, nor to persuade her deceitfully and knavishly; but to demand her in marriage of him who hath power to dispose of her, and is fit to give her away by the nearness of his kindred; for, says the Scripture, "A woman is inferior to her husband in all things." (23) Let her, therefore, be obedient to him; not so that he should abuse her, but that she may acknowledge her duty to her husband; for God hath given the authority to the husband. A husband, therefore, is to lie only with his wife whom he hath married; but to have to do with another man's wife is a wicked thing, which, if any one ventures upon, death is inevitably his punishment: no more can he avoid the same who forces a virgin betrothed to another man, or entices another man's wife. The law, moreover, enjoins us to bring up all our offspring, and forbids women to cause abortion of what is begotten, or to destroy it afterward; and if any woman appears to have so done, she will be a murderer of her child, by destroying a living creature, and diminishing human kind; if any one, therefore, proceeds to such fornication or murder, he cannot be clean. Moreover, the law enjoins, that after the man and wife have lain together in a regular way, they shall bathe themselves; for there is a defilement contracted thereby, both in soul and body, as if they had gone into another country; for indeed the soul, by being united to the body, is subject to miseries, and is not freed therefrom again but by death; on which account the law requires this purification to be entirely performed.

26. Nay, indeed, the law does not permit us to make festivals at the births of our children, and thereby afford occasion of drinking to excess; but it ordains that the very beginning of our education should be immediately directed to sobriety. It also commands us to bring those children up in learning, and to exercise them in the laws, and make them acquainted with the acts of their predecessors, in order to their imitation of them, and that they might be nourished up in the laws from their infancy, and might neither transgress them, nor have any pretense for their ignorance of them.

27. Our law hath also taken care of the decent burial of the dead, but without any extravagant expenses for their funerals, and without the erection of any illustrious monuments for them; but hath ordered that their nearest relations should perform their obsequies; and hath showed it to be regular, that all who pass by when any one is buried should accompany the funeral, and join in the lamentation. It also ordains that the house and its inhabitants should be purified after the funeral is over, that every one may thence learn to keep at a great distance from the thoughts of being pure, if he hath been once guilty of murder.

28. The law ordains also, that parents should be honored immediately after God himself, and delivers that son who does not requite them for the benefits he hath received from them, but is deficient on any such occasion, to be stoned. It also says that the young men should pay due respect to every elder, since God is the eldest of all beings. It does not give leave to conceal any thing from our friends, because that is not true friendship which

will not commit all things to their fidelity: it also forbids the revelation of secrets, even though an enmity arise between them. If any judge takes bribes, his punishment is death: he that overlooks one that offers him a petition, and this when he is able to relieve him, he is a guilty person. What is not by any one intrusted to another ought not to be required back again. No one is to touch another's goods. He that lends money must not demand usury for its loan. These, and many more of the like sort, are the rules that unite us in the bands of society one with another.

29. It will be also worth our while to see what equity our legislator would have us exercise in our intercourse with strangers; for it will thence appear that he made the best provision he possibly could, both that we should not dissolve our own constitution, nor show any envious mind towards those that would cultivate a friendship with us. Accordingly, our legislator admits all those that have a mind to observe our laws so to do; and this after a friendly manner, as esteeming that a true union which not only extends to our own stock, but to those that would live after the same manner with us; yet does he not allow those that come to us by accident only to be admitted into communion with us.

30. However, there are other things which our legislator ordained for us beforehand, which of necessity we ought to do in common to all men; as to afford fire, and water, and food to such as want it; to show them the roads; not to let any one lie unburied. He also would have us treat those that are esteemed our enemies with moderation; for he doth not allow us to set their country on fire, nor permit us to cut down those trees that bear fruit; nay, further, he forbids us to spoil those that have been slain in war. He hath also provided for such as are taken captive, that they may not be injured, and especially that the women may not be abused. Indeed he hath taught us gentleness and humanity so effectually, that he hath not despised the care of brute beasts, by permitting no other than a regular use of them, and forbidding any other; and if any of them come to our houses, like supplicants, we are forbidden to slay them; nor may we kill the dams, together with their young ones; but we are obliged, even in an enemy's country, to spare and not kill those creatures that labor for mankind. Thus hath our lawgiver contrived to teach us an equitable conduct every way, by using us to such laws as instruct us therein; while at the same time he hath ordained that such as break these laws should be punished, without the allowance of any excuse whatsoever.

31. Now the greatest part of offenses with us are capital; as if any one be guilty of adultery; if any one force a virgin; if any one be so impudent as to attempt sodomy with a male; or if, upon another's making an attempt upon him, he submits to be so used. There is also a law for slaves of the like nature, that can never be avoided. Moreover, if any one cheats another in measures or weights, or makes a knavish bargain and sale, in order to cheat another; if any one steals what belongs to another, and takes what he never deposited; all these have punishments allotted them; not such as are met with among other nations, but more severe ones. And as for attempts of unjust behavior towards parents, or for impiety against God, though they be not actually accomplished, the offenders are destroyed immediately. However, the reward for such as live exactly according to the laws is not silver or gold; it is not a garland of olive branches or of small

age, nor any such public sign of commendation; but every good man hath his own conscience bearing witness to himself, and by virtue of our legislator's prophetic spirit, and of the firm security God himself affords such a one, he believes that God hath made this grant to those that observe these laws, even though they be obliged readily to die for them, that they shall come into being again, and at a certain revolution of things shall receive a better life than they had enjoyed before. Nor would I venture to write thus at this time, were it not well known to all by our actions that many of our people have many a time bravely resolved to endure any sufferings, rather than speak one word against our law.

32. Nay, indeed, in case it had so fallen out, that our nation had not been so thoroughly known among all men as they are, and our voluntary submission to our laws had not been so open and manifest as it is, but that somebody had pretended to have written these laws himself, and had read them to the Greeks, or had pretended that he had met with men out of the limits of the known world, that had such reverent notions of God, and had continued a long time in the firm observance of such laws as ours, I cannot but suppose that all men would admire them on a reflection upon the frequent changes they had therein been themselves subject to; and this while those that have attempted to write somewhat of the same kind for politic government, and for laws, are accused as composing monstrous things, and are said to have undertaken an impossible task upon them. And here I will say nothing of those other philosophers who have undertaken any thing of this nature in their writings. But even Plato himself, who is so admired by the Greeks on account of that gravity in his manners, and force in his words, and that ability he had to persuade men beyond all other philosophers, is little better than laughed at and exposed to ridicule on that account, by those that pretend to sagacity in political affairs; although he that shall diligently peruse his writings will find his precepts to be somewhat gentle, and pretty near to the customs of the generality of mankind. Nay, Plato himself confesseth that it is not safe to publish the true notion concerning God among the ignorant multitude. Yet do some men look upon Plato's discourses as no better than certain idle words set off with great artifice. However, they admire Lycurgus as the principal lawgiver, and all men celebrate Sparta for having continued in the firm observance of his laws for a very long time. So far then we have gained, that it is to be confessed a mark of virtue to submit to laws. (24) But then let such as admire this in the Lacedemonians compare that duration of theirs with more than two thousand years which our political government hath continued; and let them further consider, that though the Lacedemonians did seem to observe their laws exactly while they enjoyed their liberty, yet that when they underwent a change of their fortune, they forgot almost all those laws; while we, having been under ten thousand changes in our fortune by the changes that happened among the kings of Asia, have never betrayed our laws under the most pressing distresses we have been in; nor have we neglected them either out of sloth or for a livelihood. (25) if any one will consider it, the difficulties and labors laid upon us have been greater than what appears to have been borne by the Lacedemonian fortitude, while they neither ploughed their land, nor exercised any trades, but lived in their own city, free from all such pains-taking, in the enjoyment of plenty, and using such exercises as might improve their bodies, while they made use of other men as their servants for all the

necessaries of life, and had their food prepared for them by the others; and these good and humane actions they do for no other purpose but this, that by their actions and their sufferings they may be able to conquer all those against whom they make war. I need not add this, that they have not been fully able to observe their laws; for not only a few single persons, but multitudes of them, have in heaps neglected those laws, and have delivered themselves, together with their arms, into the hands of their enemies.

33. Now as for ourselves, I venture to say that no one can tell of so many; nay, not of more than one or two that have betrayed our laws, no, not out of fear of death itself; I do not mean such an easy death as happens in battles, but that which comes with bodily torments, and seems to be the severest kind of death of all others. Now I think those that have conquered us have put us to such deaths, not out of their hatred to us when they had subdued us, but rather out of their desire of seeing a surprising sight, which is this, whether there be such men in the world who believe that no evil is to them so great as to be compelled to do or to speak any thing contrary to their own laws. Nor ought men to wonder at us, if we are more courageous in dying for our laws than all other men are; for other men do not easily submit to the easier things in which we are instituted; I mean working with our hands, and eating but little, and being contented to eat and drink, not at random, or at every one's pleasure, or being under inviolable rules in lying with our wives, in magnificent furniture, and again in the observation of our times of rest; while those that can use their swords in war, and can put their enemies to flight when they attack them, cannot bear to submit to such laws about their way of living: whereas our being accustomed willingly to submit to laws in these instances, renders us fit to show our fortitude upon other occasions also.

34. Yet do the Lysimachi and the Molones, and some other writers, (unskillful sophists as they are, and the deceivers of young men,) reproach us as the vilest of all mankind. Now I have no mind to make an inquiry into the laws of other nations; for the custom of our country is to keep our own laws, but not to bring accusations against the laws of others. And indeed our legislator hath expressly forbidden us to laugh at and revile those that are esteemed gods by other people? on account of the very name of God ascribed to them. But since our antagonists think to run us down upon the comparison of their religion and ours, it is not possible to keep silence here, especially while what I shall say to confute these men will not be now first said, but hath been already said by many, and these of the highest reputation also; for who is there among those that have been admired among the Greeks for wisdom, who hath not greatly blamed both the most famous poets, and most celebrated legislators, for spreading such notions originally among the body of the people concerning the gods? such as these, that they may be allowed to be as numerous as they have a mind to have them; that they are begotten one by another, and that after all the kinds of generation you can imagine. They also distinguish them in their places and ways of living as they would distinguish several sorts of animals; as some to be under the earth; as some to be in the sea; and the ancientest of them all to be bound in hell; and for those to whom they have allotted heaven, they have set over them one, who in title is their father, but in his actions a tyrant and a lord; whence it came to pass that his wife, and brother, and daughter (which daughter he brought forth from his own head) made a

conspiracy against him to seize upon him and confine him, as he had himself seized upon and confined his own father before.

35. And justly have the wisest men thought these notions deserved severe rebukes; they also laugh at them for determining that we ought to believe some of the gods to be beardless and young, and others of them to be old, and to have beards accordingly; that some are set to trades; that one god is a smith, and another goddess is a weaver; that one god is a warrior, and fights with men; that some of them are harpers, or delight in archery; and besides, that mutual seditions arise among them, and that they quarrel about men, and this so far, that they not only lay hands upon one another, but that they are wounded by men, and lament, and take on for such their afflictions. But what is the grossest of all in point of lasciviousness, are those unbounded lusts ascribed to almost all of them, and their amours; which how can it be other than a most absurd supposal, especially when it reaches to the male gods, and to the female goddesses also? Moreover, the chief of all their gods, and their first father himself, overlooks those goddesses whom he hath deluded and begotten with child, and suffers them to be kept in prison, or drowned in the sea. He is also so bound up by fate, that he cannot save his own offspring, nor can he bear their deaths without shedding of tears. These are fine things indeed! as are the rest that follow. Adulteries truly are so impudently looked on in heaven by the gods, that some of them have confessed they envied those that were found in the very act. And why should they not do so, when the eldest of them, who is their king also, hath not been able to restrain himself in the violence of his lust, from lying with his wife, so long as they might get into their bedchamber? Now some of the gods are servants to men, and will sometimes be builders for a reward, and sometimes will be shepherds; while others of them, like malefactors, are bound in a prison of brass. And what sober person is there who would not be provoked at such stories, and rebuke those that forged them, and condemn the great silliness of those that admit them for true? Nay, others there are that have advanced a certain timorousness and fear, as also madness and fraud, and any other of the vilest passions, into the nature and form of gods, and have persuaded whole cities to offer sacrifices to the better sort of them; on which account they have been absolutely forced to esteem some gods as the givers of good things, and to call others of them averters of evil. They also endeavor to move them, as they would the vilest of men, by gifts and presents, as looking for nothing else than to receive some great mischief from them, unless they pay them such wages.

36. Wherefore it deserves our inquiry what should be the occasion of this unjust management, and of these scandals about the Deity. And truly I suppose it to be derived from the imperfect knowledge the heathen legislators had at first of the true nature of God; nor did they explain to the people even so far as they did comprehend of it: nor did they compose the other parts of their political settlements according to it, but omitted it as a thing of very little consequence, and gave leave both to the poets to introduce what gods they pleased, and those subject to all sorts of passions, and to the orators to procure political decrees from the people for the admission of such foreign gods as they thought proper. The painters also, and statuaries of Greece, had herein great power, as each of them could contrive a shape [proper for a god]; the one to be formed out of clay, and the

other by making a bare picture of such a one. But those workmen that were principally admired, had the use of ivory and of gold as the constant materials for their new statues [whereby it comes to pass that some temples are quite deserted, while others are in great esteem, and adorned with all the rites of all kinds of purification]. Besides this, the first gods, who have long flourished in the honors done them, are now grown old [while those that flourished after them are come in their room as a second rank, that I may speak the most honorably of them I can]: nay, certain other gods there are who are newly introduced, and newly worshipped [as we, by way of digression, have said already, and yet have left their places of worship desolate]; and for their temples, some of them are already left desolate, and others are built anew, according to the pleasure of men; whereas they ought to have their opinion about God, and that worship which is due to him, always and immutably the same.

37. But now, this Apollonius Molo was one of these foolish and proud men. However, nothing that I have said was unknown to those that were real philosophers among the Greeks, nor were they unacquainted with those frigid pretensions of allegories [which had been alleged for such things]; on which account they justly despised them, but have still agreed with us as to the true and becoming notions of God; whence it was that Plato would not have political settlements admit to of any one of the other poets, and dismisses even Homer himself, with a garland on his head, and with ointment poured upon him, and this because he should not destroy the right notions of God with his fables. Nay, Plato principally imitated our legislator in this point, that he enjoined his citizens to have he main regard to this precept, "That every one of them should learn their laws accurately." He also ordained, that they should not admit of foreigners intermixing with their own people at random; and provided that the commonwealth should keep itself pure, and consist of such only as persevered in their own laws. Apollonius Molo did no way consider this, when he made it one branch of his accusation against us, that we do not admit of such as have different notions about God, nor will we have fellowship with those that choose to observe a way of living different from ourselves, yet is not this method peculiar to us, but common to all other men; not among the ordinary Grecians only, but among such of those Grecians as are of the greatest reputation among them. Moreover, the Lacedemonians continued in their way of expelling foreigners, and would not indeed give leave to their own people to travel abroad, as suspecting that those two things would introduce a dissolution of their own laws: and perhaps there may be some reason to blame the rigid severity of the Lacedemonians, for they bestowed the privilege of their city on no foreigners, nor indeed would give leave to them to stay among them; whereas we, though we do not think fit to imitate other institutions, yet do we willingly admit of those that desire to partake of ours, which, I think, I may reckon to be a plain indication of our humanity, and at the same time of our magnanimity also.

38. But I shall say no more of the Lacedemonians. As for the Athenians, who glory in having made their city to be common to all men, what their behavior was Apollonius did not know, while they punished those that did but speak one word contrary to the laws about the gods, without any mercy; for on what other account was it that Socrates was put to death by them? For certainly he neither betrayed their city to its enemies, nor was he



guilty of any sacrilege with regard to any of their temples; but it was on this account, that he swore certain new oaths (26) and that he affirmed either in earnest, or, as some say, only in jest, that a certain demon used to make signs to him [what he should not do]. For these reasons he was condemned to drink poison, and kill himself. His accuser also complained that he corrupted the young men, by inducing them to despise the political settlement and laws of their city: and thus was Socrates, the citizen of Athens, punished. There was also Anaxagoras, who, although he was of Clazomene, was within a few suffrages of being condemned to die, because he said the sun, which the Athenians thought to be a god, was a ball of fire. They also made this public proclamation, " That they would give a talent to any one who would kill Diagoras of Melos," because it was reported of him that he laughed at their mysteries. Protagoras also, who was thought to have written somewhat that was not owned for truth by the Athenians about the gods, had been seized upon, and put to death, if he had not fled away immediately. Nor need we at all wonder that they thus treated such considerable men, when they did not spare even women also; for they very lately slew a certain priestess, because she was accused by somebody that she initiated people into the worship of strange gods, it having been forbidden so to do by one of their laws; and a capital punishment had been decreed to such as introduced a strange god; it being manifest, that they who make use of such a law do not believe those of other nations to be really gods, otherwise they had not envied themselves the advantage of more gods than they already had. And this was the happy administration of the affairs of the Athenians! Now as to the Scythians, they take a pleasure in killing men, and differ but little from brute beasts; yet do they think it reasonable to have their institutions observed. They also slew Anacharsis, a person greatly admired for his wisdom among the Greeks, when he returned to them, because he appeared to come fraught with Grecian customs. One may also find many to have been punished among the Persians, on the very same account. And to be sure Apollonius was greatly pleased with the laws of the Persians, and was an admirer of them, because the Greeks enjoyed the advantage of their courage, and had the very same opinion about the gods which they had. This last was exemplified in the temples which they burnt, and their courage in coming, and almost entirely enslaving the Grecians. However, Apollonius has imitated all the Persian institutions, and that by his offering violence to other men's wives, and gelding his own sons. Now, with us, it is a capital crime, if any one does thus abuse even a brute beast; and as for us, neither hath the fear of our governors, nor a desire of following what other nations have in so great esteem, been able to withdraw us from our own laws; nor have we exerted our courage in raising up wars to increase our wealth, but only for the observation of our laws; and when we with patience bear other losses, yet when any persons would compel us to break our laws, then it is that we choose to go to war, though it be beyond our ability to pursue it, and bear the greatest calamities to the last with much fortitude. And, indeed, what reason can there be why we should desire to imitate the laws of other nations, while we see they are not observed by their own legislators (27) And why do not the Lacedemonians think of abolishing that form of their government which suffers them not to associate with any others, as well as their contempt of matrimony? And why do not the Eleians and Thebans abolish that unnatural and impudent lust, which makes them lie with males? For they will not show a sufficient sign of their repentance of what they of old thought to be very excellent, and very

advantageous in their practices, unless they entirely avoid all such actions for the time to come: nay, such things are inserted into the body of their laws, and had once such a power among the Greeks, that they ascribed these sodomitical practices to the gods themselves, as a part of their good character; and indeed it was according to the same manner that the gods married their own sisters. This the Greeks contrived as an apology for their own absurd and unnatural pleasures.

39. I omit to speak concerning punishments, and how many ways of escaping them the greatest part of the legislators have afforded malefactors, by ordaining that, for adulteries, fines in money should be allowed, and for corrupting (28) [virgins] they need only marry them as also what excuses they may have in denying the facts, if any one attempts to inquire into them; for amongst most other nations it is a studied art how men may transgress their laws; but no such thing is permitted amongst us; for though we be deprived of our wealth, of our cities, or of the other advantages we have, our law continues immortal; nor can any Jew go so far from his own country, nor be so affrighted at the severest lord, as not to be more affrighted at the law than at him. If, therefore, this be the disposition we are under, with regard to the excellency of our laws, let our enemies make us this concession, that our laws are most excellent; and if still they imagine, that though we so firmly adhere to them, yet are they bad laws notwithstanding, what penalties then do they deserve to undergo who do not observe their own laws, which they esteem so far superior to them? Whereas, therefore, length of time is esteemed to be the truest touchstone in all cases, I would make that a testimonial of the excellency of our laws, and of that belief thereby delivered to us concerning God. For as there hath been a very long time for this comparison, if any one will but compare its duration with the duration of the laws made by other legislators, he will find our legislator to have been the ancientest of them all.

40. We have already demonstrated that our laws have been such as have always inspired admiration and imitation into all other men; nay, the earliest Grecian philosophers, though in appearance they observed the laws of their own countries, yet did they, in their actions, and their philosophic doctrines, follow our legislator, and instructed men to live sparingly, and to have friendly communication one with another. Nay, further, the multitude of mankind itself have had a great inclination of a long time to follow our religious observances; for there is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come, and by which our fasts and lighting up lamps, and many of our prohibitions as to our food, are not observed; they also endeavor to imitate our mutual concord with one another, and the charitable distribution of our goods, and our diligence in our trades, and our fortitude in undergoing the distresses we are in, on account of our laws; and, what is here matter of the greatest admiration, our law hath no bait of pleasure to allure men to it, but it prevails by its own force; and as God himself pervades all the world, so hath our law passed through all the world also. So that if any one will but reflect on his own country, and his own family, he will have reason to give credit to what I say. It is therefore but just, either to condemn all mankind of indulging a wicked disposition, when they have been so desirous of imitating laws that are to them foreign and evil in

themselves, rather than following laws of their own that are of a better character, or else our accusers must leave off their spite against us. Nor are we guilty of any envious behavior towards them, when we honor our own legislator, and believe what he, by his prophetic authority, hath taught us concerning God. For though we should not be able ourselves to understand the excellency of our own laws, yet would the great multitude of those that desire to imitate them, justify us, in greatly valuing ourselves upon them.

41. But as for the [distinct] political laws by which we are governed, I have delivered them accurately in my books of Antiquities; and have only mentioned them now, so far as was necessary to my present purpose, without proposing to myself either to blame the laws of other nations, or to make an encomium upon our own; but in order to convict those that have written about us unjustly, and in an impudent affectation of disguising the truth. And now I think I have sufficiently completed what I proposed in writing these books. For whereas our accusers have pretended that our nation are a people of very late original, I have demonstrated that they are exceeding ancient; for I have produced as witnesses thereto many ancient writers, who have made mention of us in their books, while they had said that no such writer had so done. Moreover, they had said that we were sprung from the Egyptians, while I have proved that we came from another country into Egypt: while they had told lies of us, as if we were expelled thence on account of diseases on our bodies, it has appeared, on the contrary, that we returned to our country by our own choice, and with sound and strong bodies. Those accusers reproached our legislator as a vile fellow; whereas God in old time bare witness to his virtuous conduct; and since that testimony of God, time itself hath been discovered to have borne witness to the same thing.

42. As to the laws themselves, more words are unnecessary, for they are visible in their own nature, and appear to teach not impiety, but the truest piety in the world. They do not make men hate one another, but encourage people to communicate what they have to one another freely; they are enemies to injustice, they take care of righteousness, they banish idleness and expensive living, and instruct men to be content with what they have, and to be laborious in their calling; they forbid men to make war from a desire of getting more, but make men courageous in defending the laws; they are inexorable in punishing malefactors; they admit no sophistry of words, but are always established by actions themselves, which actions we ever propose as surer demonstrations than what is contained in writing only: on which account I am so bold as to say that we are become the teachers of other men, in the greatest number of things, and those of the most excellent nature only; for what is more excellent than inviolable piety? what is more just than submission to laws? and what is more advantageous than mutual love and concord? and this so far that we are to be neither divided by calamities, nor to become injurious and seditious in prosperity; but to contemn death when we are in war, and in peace to apply ourselves to our mechanical occupations, or to our tillage of the ground; while we in all things and all ways are satisfied that God is the inspector and governor of our actions. If these precepts had either been written at first, or more exactly kept by any others before us, we should have owed them thanks as disciples owe to their masters; but if it be visible that we have made use of them more than any other men, and if we have

demonstrated that the original invention of them is our own, let the Apions, and the Molons, with all the rest of those that delight in lies and reproaches, stand confuted; but let this and the foregoing book be dedicated to thee, Epaphroditus, who art so great a lover of truth, and by thy means to those that have been in like manner desirous to be acquainted with the affairs of our nation.