

my into China is attributed. He is represented, in the Chou-king, as sending astronomers toward the four cardinal points of his empire, to examine what stars presided over the four seasons, and to regulate the operations to be carried on at each period of the year *, as if their dispersion was necessary for such an undertaking. About 200 years later, the Chou-king speaks of an eclipse of the sun, but accompanied with ridiculous circumstances, as in all the fables of this kind; for the whole Chinese army, headed by a general, is made to march against two astronomers, because they had not properly predicted it †; and it is well known that, more than 2000 years after, the Chinese astronomers possessed no means of accurately predicting the eclipses of the sun. In 1629 of our era, at the time of their dispute with the Jesuits, they did not even know how to calculate the shadows.

The real eclipses, recorded by Confucius in his Chronicle of the kingdom of Lou, commence only 1400 years after this, in the 776th before Christ, and scarcely half a century earlier than those of the Chaldeans related by Ptolemy. So true is it, that the nations which escaped at the same time

* Chou-king, p. 6 and 7.

† Idem, p. 66. *et seq.*