the characters who ſpeak are Idumaeans, or at leaſt Ara­bians of the adjacent country, all originally of the race of Abraham. The language is pure Hebrew, although the author appears to be an Idumaean; for it is not improbable that all the poſterity of Abraham, Iſraelites, Idumaeans, and Arabians, whether of the family of Keturah or Iſhmael, ſpoke for a conſiderable length of time one common language. That the Idumaeans, however, and the Temanites in particular, were eminent for the reputation of wiſdom, appears by the teſtimony of the prophets Jeremiah and Obadiah@@⁋: Baruch alſo parti­cularly mentions them among “the authors (or ex­pounders) of fables, and ſearchers out of underſtanding@@§”

The principal perſonage in this poem is Job; and in his character is meant to be exhibited (as far as is conſiſtent with human infirmity) an example of perfect virtue. This is intimated in the argument or introduction, but is ſtill more eminently diſplayed by his

own actions and ſentiments. He is holy, devout, and moſt piouſly and reverently impreſſed with the ſacred awe of his divine Creator; he is alſo upright, and con­ſcious of his own integrity; he is patient of evil, and yet very remote from that inſenſibility or rather ſtupidity to which the Stoic ſchool pretended. Oppreſſed therefore with unparalleled misfortunes, he laments his miſery, and even wiſhes a releaſe by death; in other words, he obeys, and gives place to the dictates of na­ture. Irritated, however, by the unjuſt inſinuations and the severe reproaches of his pretended friends, he is more vehemently exaſperated, and the too great confidence in his own righteouſneſs leads him to expoſtulate with God in terms ſcarcely conſiſtent with piety and ſtrict decorum.

It muſt be obſerved, that the firſt ſpeech of Job, though it burſts forth with all the vehemence of paſſion, consists wholly of complaint, “the words and ſenti­ments of a deſpairing perſon, empty as the wind@@\*;”

@@@[m]⁋ Jer. xlix. 7. Ob. 8.

@@@[m]§ Baruch iii. 22. 23.

@@@[m]\* Job vi. 26.

there were people beyond the boundaries of Egypt, and bordering on the ſouth of Judea, who were famous for wiſdom, namely, the Idumaeans (ſee Jer. xlix. 7. Ob, 8.), to whom we may well believe this paſſage might have ſome relation. Thus Jehovah addreſſes the Babylonians; “Ariſe, aſcend unto Kedar, and lay waſte the chil­dren of the Eaſt,” (Jer. xlix. 28). notwithſtanding theſe were really ſituated to the weſt of Babylon. Although Job, therefore, be accounted one of the orientals, it by no means follows that his reſidence muſt be in Arabia Deſerta.

*“Eliphaz* the *Temanite* was the ſon of Eſau, and Teman the ſon of Eliphaz, (Gen. xxxvi. 10, 11.), The Eliphaz of Job was without a doubt of this race. Teman is certainly a city of Idumaea, (Jer. xlix, 7, 20. Ezek. XXV. 13. Amos i. 11, 12. Ob. 8, 9.).

*“Bildad the Shuhite: Shuah* was one of the ſons of Abraham by Keturah, whoſe poſterity were numbered among the people of the Eaſt, and his ſituation was probably contiguous to that of his brother Midian, and of his ne­phews Shebah and Dedan, (ſee Gen. xxv. 2, and 3.) Dedan is a city of Idumaea (Jer. xlix. 8.), and ſeems to have been ſituated on the eaſtern side, as Teman was on the west, (Ezek. xxv. 13.). From Sheba originated the Sabaeans in the paſſage from Arabia Felix to the Red Sea: Sheba is united to Midian (Iſa. lx. 6.); **it** is in the ſame region however with Midian, and not far from Mount Horeb, (Exod. ii. 15. iii. 1.)

*“Zophar* the *Naamathite:* among the cities which by lot fell to the tribe of Judah, in the neighbourhood of Idumaea, Naama is enumerated, (Joſh. xv. 21, 41.) Nor does this name elſewhere occur; this probably was the country of Zophar.

*“Elihu* the Buz*ite:* Buz occurs but once as the name of a place or country (Jer. xxv. 23.), where it is men­tioned along with Dedan and Thema: Dedan, as was juſt now demonſtrated, is a city of Idumæa; Thema belonged to the children of Iſhmael, who are ſaid to have inhabited from Havilah, even to Shur, which is in the diſtrict of Egypt, (Gen. xxv. 15. 18.) Saul, however, is ſaid to have ſmitten the Amalekites from Havilah even to Shur, which is in the diſtrict of Egypt, (I Sam. xv. 7.) Havilah cannot, therefore, be very far from the boundaries of the Amalekites; but the Amalekites never exceeded the boundaries of Arabia Petraea. (See Reland Palaestin. lib. i. c. xiv.) Thema, therefore, lay ſomewhere between Havilah and the deſert of Shur, to the ſouthward of Judea. Thema is alſo mentioned in connection with Sheba, (Job vi. 19.)

“Upon a fair review of theſe facts, I think we may venture to conclude, ſtill with that modeſty which ſuch a queſtion demands, that Job was an inhabitant of Arabia Petraea, as well as his friends, or at leaſt of that neigh­bourhood. To this ſolution one objection may be raided: it may be aſked, How the Chaldeans, who lived on the borders of the Euphrates, could make depredations on the camels of Job, who lived in Idumaea at ſo great a diſtance? This too is thought a ſufficient cauſe for aſſigning Job a ſituation in Arabia Deſerta, and not far from the Euphrates. But what ſhould prevent the Chaldeans, as well as the Sabaeans, a people addicted to rapine, and roving about at immenſe diſtances for the ſake of plunder, from wandering through theſe defenceleſs regions, which were divided into tribes and families rather than into nations, and pervading from Euphrates even to Egypt? Further, I would aſk on the other hand, whether it be probable that all the friends of Job who lived in Idumaea and its neighbourhood, ſhould inſtantly be informed of all that could happen to Job in the deſert of Arabia and on the confines of Chaldea, and immediately repair thither ? Or whether it be reaſonable to think, that, ſome of them being inhabitants of Arabia Deſerta, it ſhould be concerted among them to meet at the reſidence of Job; ſince it is evident, that Eliphaz lived at Theman, in the extreme parts of Idumaea? With reſpect to the *Aisitas* of Ptolemy (for ſo it is written, and not *Ausitas)* it has no agreement, not ſo much as in a ſingle letter with the Hebrew Gnutz The LXX indeed call that country by the name *Ausitida,* but they deſcribe it as ſituated in Idumaea; and they account Job himſelf an Idumaean, and a deſcendant of Eſau.” See the Appendix of the LXX to the book of Job, and *Hyde Not.* in *Peritzol.* chap. xi. *Lowth on* *Hebrew Poetry.*