atmoſphere. In this way the vulgar aſcribe accidents to divine vengeance, and the heresies and infidelity of modern times are ſaid to be owing to learning. 5. *Fallacia accidentis,* in which the ſophiſt repreſents what is merely accidental as eſſential to the nature of the ſubject. This is nearly allied to the former, and is committed by the Mahometans and Roman Catholics. The Mahometans forbid wine, becauſe it is ſometimes the occaſion of drunkenneſs and quarrels ; and the Ro­man Catholics prohibit the reading of the Bible, be­cauſe it has ſometimes promoted hereſies. 6. By dedu­cing an univerſal assertion from what is true only in par­ticular circumſtances, and the reverſe ; thus ſome men argue, “ tranſcribers have committed many errors in copying the Scriptures, therefore they are not to be de­pended on.” 7. By aſſerting anything in a compound ſenſe which is only true in a divided ſenſe; ſo when the Scriptures assure us, that the worſt of ſinners may be ſaved, it does not mean that they ſhall be ſaved while they remain ſinners, but that if they repent they may be ſaved. 8. By an abuſe of the ambiguity of words. Thus Mr Hume reaſons in his Eſſay on Miracles : “ Experience is our only guide in reaſoning concerning matters of fact ; now we know from experience, that the laws of nature are fixed and invariable. On the other hand, teſtimony is variable and often falſe; there­fore ſince our evidence for the reality of miracles reſts ſolely on teſtimony which is variable, and our evidence for the uniformity of the laws of nature is invariable, miracles are not to be believed.” The ſophiſtry of this reaſoning depends on the ambiguity of the word *expe­rience,* which in the firſt propoſition ſignifies the ma­xims which we form from our own obſervation and re­flection ; in the ſecond it is confounded with teſtimo­ny ; for it is by the teſtimony of others, as well as our own obſervation, that we learn whether the laws of na­ture are variable or invariable. The Eſſay on Miracles may be recommended to thoſe who wiſh to ſee more examples of sophiſtry ; as we believe moſt of the eight ſpecies of ſophifms which we have mentioned are well illuſtrated by examples in that eſſay.

SOPHIST, an appellation aſſumed in the early pe­riods of Grecian hiſtory by thoſe who devoted their time to the ſtudy of ſcience. This appellation appear­ing too arrogant to Pythagoras, he declined it, and wiſhed to be called *a philosopher ;* declaring that, though he could not conſider himſelf as a wise man, he was indeed a lover of wiſdom. True wiſdom and modeſty are ge­nerally united. The example of Pythagoras was fol­lowed by every man of eminence ; while the name *Sophist* was retained only by thoſe who with a pomp of words made a magnificent diſplay of wiſdom upon a very slight foundation of knowledge. Thoſe men taught an arti­ficial ſtructure of language, and a falſe method of rea­ſoning, by which, in argument, the worſe might be made to appear the better reaſon (ſee Sophism). In Athens they were long held in high repute, and ſupported, not only by contributions from their pupils, but by a regular ſalary from the ſtate. They were among the bittereſt enemies of the illuſtrious Socrates, becauſe he em­braced every opportunity of exposing to contempt and ridicule their vain pretenſions to ſuperior knowledge, and the pernicious influence of their doctrines upon the taſte and morals of the Athenian youth.

SOPHISTICATION, the mixing of any thing

with what is not genuine ; a practice too common in the making up of medicines tor ſale ; as alſo among vintners, diſtillers, and others, who are accuſed of ſophiſticating their wines, ſpirits, oils, &c. by mixing with them cheaper and coarſer materials ; and in many caſes the cheat is carried on ſo artfully as to deceive the beſt judges.

SOPHOCLES, the celebrated Greek tragic poet, the ſon of Sophilus an Athenian, was born at Colonn, and educated with great attention. Superior vi­gour and addreſs in the exerciſes of the paleſtra, and ſkill in muſic, were the great accompliſhments of young men in the ſtates of Greece. In theſe, Sophocles ex­celled ; nor was he leſs diſtinguiſhed by the beauty of his perſon. He was alſo inſtructed in the nobleſt of all ſciences, civil, polity and religion ; from the firſt of theſe he derived an unſhaken love of his country, which he ſerved in ſome embaſſies, and in high military com­mand with Pericles ; from the latter he was impreſſed with a pious reverence for the gods, manifeſted by the inviolable integrity of his life. But his ſtudies were early devoted to the tragic muſe ; the ſpirit of Eſchylus lent a fire to his genius, and excited that noble emu­lation which led him to contend with, and ſometimes to bear away the prize from, his great maſter. He wrote 43 tragedies, of which 7 only have eſcaped the ravages of time : and having teſtified his love of his country by refuſing to leave it, though invited by many kings ; and having enjoyed the uninterrupted eſteem and affec­tion of his fellow-citizens, which neither the gallant ac­tions and ſublime genius of Eſchylus, nor the tender ſpirit and philoſophic virtue of Euripides, could ſecure to them, he died in the 91st year of his age, about 406 years before Christ. The burial-place of his anceſtors was at Decelia, which the Lacedemonians had at that time ſeized and fortified ; but Lyſander, the Spartan chief, permitted the Athenians to inter their deceaſed poet ; and they paid him all the honours due to his love ol his country, integrity of life, and high poetic excel­lence. Eſchylus had at once ſeized the higheſt poſt of honour in the field of poetry, the true ſublime ; to that eminence his claim could not be diſputed. Sophocles had a noble elevation of mind, but tempered with ſo fine a taſte, and ſo chaſtened a judgment, that he never paſſed the bounds of propriety. Under his conduct the tragic muſe appeared with the chaſte dignity of ſome noble matron at a religious ſolemnſty ; harmony is ira her voice, and grace in all her motions. From him the theatre received ſome additional embelliſhments ; and the drama the introduction of a third ſpeaker, which made it more active and more intereſting: but his diſtinguiſhed excellence is in the judicious dispoſition of the fable, and ſo nice a connection and dependence of the parts on each other, that they all agree to make the event not only probable, but even neceſſary. This is pe­culiarly admirable in his “ Œdipus King of Thebes ;” and in this important point he is far ſuperior to every other dramatic writer.

The ingratitude of the children of Sophocles is well known. They wiſhed to become immediate maſters of their father’s poſſeſſions; and. therefore tired of his long life, they accuſed him before the Areopagus of inſanity. The only defence the poet made was to read his tragedy of Œdipus at Colonos, which he had lately finiſhed ; and then he aſked his judges, whether the au-