

firm: he reprobated the disgraceful resolution, and urged the revival of hostilities with so much warmth, that all ideas of peace were laid aside <sup>100</sup>.

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V.

AWAKENED to a sense of national honour by the poetical effusions of the Athenian bard, whose sacred character attracted veneration, the Lacedæmonians were fired anew with the spirit of conquest. Ashamed of having listened for a moment to the suggestions of timid councils, they speedily recruited their broken forces, and again entered the territory of Messenia. Though assisted only by a small body of Arcadians, under Aristocrates prince of Orchomenus, who was secretly in the Spartan interest, Aristomenes bravely advanced to meet the formidable enemy.

THE Spartan troops did not seem to decline the combat. But instead of that gay courage with which they were wont to be animated on the approach of battle, the memory of their recent defeats filled them with melancholy reflections. They lamented the number of men that must fall; and whose bodies, lying in mangled heaps on the field, would be dragged to one common funeral pile, without being recognised by their relations, or honoured with solemn rites.

Now was the time for Tyrtæus to exert his poetical talents: and they did not fail him on the occasion. He sung, at the head of the Spartan army, the exploits of ancient warriors, the renown awaiting on valour, the joy and the rewards of victory; and, as a farther encouragement to desponding spirits, he directed each man to tie round his right arm some token, by which his body, however disfigured by wounds, might be known to his kindred or friends <sup>101</sup>. These heroic

<sup>100</sup>. Id. *ibid*.

<sup>101</sup>. Pausan, *ubi sup*. Justin. lib. iii. Strabo, lib. viii.

## PART I.

songs, and this animating device, had the desired effect. The Lacedæmonians laying aside all gloomy apprehensions, eagerly longed for an opportunity of retrieving the glory of their country; and when that opportunity was offered them, they advanced to the charge with the firm aspect of men resolved to conquer or perish.

THE Messenian general, who had drawn up his forces at a place called the *Great Ditch*, was prepared to meet the most vigorous efforts of the enemy. But all his measures were disconcerted by the perfidy of the Arcadian prince. When the two armies were ready to join battle, Aristocrates led off his division; and, in order to make his defection more evident, he crossed the front of the Messenian line. Aristomenes attempted, but in vain, to keep his troops in their ranks. Astonished at a treachery so flagrant, the Messenians quitted their ground, and endeavoured to bring back their allies. The Lacedæmonians took advantage of their confusion. They were totally routed, furrounded, and almost all cut in pieces<sup>102</sup>.

ARISTOMENES, whose presence of mind never forsook him, and whose patriotic courage only shone more conspicuously through the cloud of misfortune that involved his country, finding he could no longer keep the field against the enemy, pursued the same policy formerly adopted by Euphaes, in similar circumstances. Still accompanied by the chosen band of warriors, who fought near his person; who were foremost in every station of danger, and who had hitherto remained unbroken, he collected the scattered remains of his ruined army. With these tried soldiers, and such of the defenceless inhabitants of the open towns, as were fit to bear arms, he occupied the fortified post of Eira; strongly situated among mountains on the southern shore of Messenia, and accessible only toward the friendly har-

102. Id. *ibid.*

hours of Pylus and Methone, whence it could receive a ready supply of provisions<sup>103</sup>.

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V.

IN this fortification, which soon became a large town, and in the two neighbouring sea-ports, that maintained a constant communication with Eira, the Messenians preserved their liberty and independence for eleven years, in spite of all the exertions of Sparta to bring them again under her dominion. During that period, the valour and conduct of Aristomenes were displayed in many wonderful exploits. Not satisfied with repelling the assaults of the enemy, or with cutting off their foraging parties within the Messenian territory, he frequently passed the Spartan frontier, and came home loaded with plunder, after having laid waste the country.

EMBOLDENED by these successful expeditions, Aristomenes ventured to penetrate into the heart of Laconia. While the Lacedæmonians were fully employed in the siege of Eira, he surprised, by a rapid nocturnal march, the populous town of Amycle, situated on the banks of the Eurotas, and only a few miles distant from Sparta; seized a large booty before any force could be assembled to oppose him, and returned unmolested to his strong hold<sup>104</sup>.

BUT this splendid enterprise, added to a series of fortunate adventures, had almost proved fatal to the Messenian hero. It rendered him negligent, through excess of confidence, while it excited the vigilance of his enemies. In making a new irruption into the Spartan dominions, he was attacked by a large body of troops, commanded by the two kings of Lacedæmon. Finding his retreat intercepted, he made a vigorous defence, surrounded by a band of gallant companions.

103. Pausan. et Strabo, ubi sup.

104. Id. ibid.

But

**PART I.** But his little party being overpowered by numbers, he was at last made prisoner, and carried in chains to Sparta with fifty of his brave associates. There considered as audacious rebels, who had not only dared to throw off the yoke, but to lift the sword against their conquerors, they were all condemned to be thrown into a horrid cavern, called the *Ceada*; the common dungeon in that capital, for the most atrocious criminals.

IN suffering this ignominy, all the associates of Aristomenes are said to have been killed or disabled by the shock. He alone survived unhurt, in consequence of having been indulged the privilege of retaining his shield; a weapon of defence held in peculiar honour by all ancient warriors, and which, by striking against the sides of the cavern, had broken the force of his fall. Two days did he remain in this frightful charnel expecting death, his face covered with his cloak. On the third morning, about dawn, he heard a noise; when uncovering his eyes, and looking around him, he saw a fox feeding upon the bodies of his companions. Fortunately conjecturing that this animal must have entered by some secret passage, he allowed it to approach him; caught hold of it: and, while it struggled to get loose, followed it, until it made its way through a crevice in the rock. Here, favoured with a glimpse of side-light, he gradually worked his way; and, at length, accomplished his escape<sup>105</sup>.

THE unexpected appearance of Aristomenes at Eira filled his countrymen with joyful astonishment. They considered him as a deliverer, miraculously restored to them by Heaven. And his first exploit had a tendency to infuse the same idea into the minds of his enemies; who had pushed the siege with great vigour during his

105, Pausan. lib. iv. Polyæn. *Strateg.* lib. ii.



confinement, and hoped soon to get possession of the place. Informed that a body of Corinthian troops was marching to join the besiegers, he secretly went out, and lay in ambush for them; attacked their camp under cover of night; routed them with great slaughter; and returning loaded with plunder, offered to Messenian Jove, for the third time, the *Hecatombonia*<sup>106</sup>; or tremendous sacrifice of an hundred victims, which he alone was entitled to perform, who had, with his own hand, slain an hundred of his enemies in battle.

THIS severe blow, connected with the wonderful escape of Aristomenes, of which it was the immediate consequence, and the obstinate defence to be expected from his future exertions, made the Lacedæmonians almost despair of being able to make themselves masters of Eira. The Delphic oracle was again consulted, and a favorable response obtained: the fall of Eira was solemnly denounced. But the prediction of Apollo, though finally fulfilled, was not accomplished merely by Spartan valour and perseverance. The devoted city, when thought to be least in danger, was betrayed to the besiegers by a Spartan deserter.

THAT traitor had formed an intrigue with a Messenian married woman, whose house was under the walls of Eira, and whom he was accustomed to visit, while her husband was upon duty in the citadel. One evening, however, the amorous couple met with an unreasonable interruption in their pleasures. Just as they had got into bed, the centinel returned, and loudly knocked at the door. After having provided for the safety of her gallant, the wife admitted her husband, and insidiously welcomed him with the warmest expressions of joy; inquiring, with seeming anxiety, by

106. Id. *ibid.*

**PART I.** what happy turn of fortune she was so unexpectedly favored with his company. He innocently told her, That Aristomenes being wounded, the soldiers on guard, at the out-posts, knowing he could not walk the rounds, as usual, and fearing nothing from the enemy, had agreed to retire to their several habitations, in order to avoid the inclemency of the weather, as the night was excessively wet and stormy.

**THE** trembling deserter, having listened to this conversation, stole from his lurking-place, and carried the important intelligence to Empiramus, the Spartan general, whose attendant he had formerly been, and to whose generosity he trusted for pardon and reward. The hostile army was accordingly put in motion by Empiramus, both the kings being absent; and, by planting ladders against the defenceless posts, the Lacedæmonians entered Eira without resistance, in the eleventh year of the siege <sup>107</sup>.

Ant. Chr.  
671.  
Olymp.  
xxvii. 2.

**THE** fate of that last resort of Messenian liberty, however, was not yet decided. The alarm being instantly spread, Aristomenes, seconded by the bravest and most active of his fellow-citizens, endeavoured to dislodge the enemy. But it was impossible for the Messenians, during a night of darkness, thunder, and tempest, to act with vigour or concert. Their boldest efforts, therefore, failed to produce the desired effect; and, when morning appeared, they found the Lacedæmonians so strongly posted, that all hope of expelling them vanished. Consequently the only alternative which remained to the gallant garrison of Eira, was to attempt to break the Spartan battalions, or submit to the law of the conqueror. The former choice was universally adopted; every one resolving to perish with

the freedom of his country, rather than live under the degrading tyranny of Sparta. The women joined the men in this heroic resolution, and both sexes seemed inspired with more than mortal prowess. Maidens, widows, wives, and mothers, fought by the side of their sons, husbands, lovers, and brothers, for every thing that is dear to humanity.

THREE days and nights was the furious conflict maintained with unabated courage. At length, on the fourth morning, victory began to declare for the Lacedæmonians; who, having sent back to their camp a division of the army, which had wanted room to act, were constantly supplied with fresh troops. But the Messenians, even in the ruin of their country, enjoyed a kind of triumph. Aristomenes, finding it was now become necessary to abandon Eira, collected into one body as many of his troops as were still able to sustain the combat. In the centre of that body he placed the old men, women, and children: his son Gorgus commanded in the rear, he himself conducted the van; and advancing against the enemy with his spear poised, at the head of his tried companions, shewed he was determined to perish or penetrate through the hostile ranks. The Spartan general saw his purpose; and afraid to encounter his despair, opened him a passage, and allowed him to lead off the remains of his brave countrymen unmolested<sup>108</sup>.

ARISTOMENES, after bursting from Eira, directed his march toward Arcadia. And there was exhibited a striking instance of the hospitality and generosity of ancient times. The Arcadians, loaded with cloaths and provisions, met their unfortunate allies at mount Lyœa, on the frontiers of the two states; and not

**PART I.** only afforded them present shelter, but offered to divide with them their lands, and to give them their daughters in marriage <sup>109</sup>.

THIS kind reception encouraged Aristomenes to form one of the boldest, and best conceived enterprises, recorded in the annals of Greece. Finding he had still five hundred Messenians fit for the most arduous service, he resolved with these fearless and hardy troops to surprise the city of Sparta; while its bravest defenders were employed in pillaging Eira, or in reducing Pylus and Methone. Three hundred Arcadian volunteers instantly joined themselves to that gallant body; and before the Messenian leader could have reached the heart of Laconia, his little army would have been augmented with many Argian adventurers, ambitious of sharing in his danger, and of humbling their haughty neighbours. The enterprise must have been crowned with the most glorious success, and future heroes and patriots would have envied the fortune of Aristomenes.

BUT the best laid schemes are often rendered abortive, by accidents which human wisdom could not foresee; or defeated by such acts of perfidy and baseness, as noble minds are incapable of imputing to human beings. Aristocrates, the Arcadian prince, who had formerly deserted Aristomenes in the field of battle, but who had afterward been trusted by that generous hero, on pleading a momentary panic, retarded, under various pretences, the projected expedition against Sparta; and, in the meantime, communicated to the enemy the design of surprising their capital. The treachery was discovered by an intercepted letter from Anaxander, one of the Spartan kings, whom I

have already had occasion to mention; acknowledging the favour of the past, and present services of Aristocrates. And this betrayer of the liberties of a free people, of his engagements as an ally, and his trust as a sovereign, was deservedly stoned to death by his own subjects <sup>110</sup>. A column was erected on the spot to perpetuate his infamy, with an inscription denoting his crime and its punishment <sup>111</sup>.

THE failure of this favourite enterprise seems to have broken the unconquerable spirit of Aristomenes. We do not find him afterward taking any arduous share in the future fortunes of his countrymen; nor have we any satisfactory account of the subsequent part of his life. We are indeed told, that his implacable hatred against Sparta remained, and that he travelled into Lydia, and even into Media, in order to raise up enemies against that warlike state <sup>112</sup>. But the Medes were then utterly unknown to the Greeks, and the Spartan power was yet too inconsiderable to be supposed capable of alarming the jealousy of the Lydian monarchy. It appears, however, by the general concurrence of historians, that the Messenian hero, soon after the conquest of his country, retired to the island of Rhodes, and there probably ended his days in honourable ease; having married his youngest daughter to Damagetes, king of the town and territory of Ialysus, in that island <sup>113</sup>.

BUT to return to the order of historical events. Immediately after that fatal treachery, which so deeply affected Aristomenes, and which was followed by the death of Aristocrates, he conducted to Cyllene, a seaport of Elis, the most active and enterprising Messeni-

<sup>110</sup>. Pausan. lib. iv. Polyb. ubi sup.

<sup>111</sup>. Id. ibid.

<sup>112</sup>. Pausan. lib. iv. Plin. lib. xi.

<sup>113</sup>. Pausan. et Plin. ubi sup. Val. Maxim. lib. i.

## PART I.

ans who had taken refuge with him in Arcadia; leaving the aged and infirm to the protection of their generous allies. On his arrival at this port he found, according to previous agreement, his fugitive countrymen, from the maritime towns of Pylos and Methone, ready to receive him, and furnished with every thing necessary for establishing a settlement on a foreign shore; they having taken shelter on board their ships, as soon as they heard of the reduction of Eira, with all their most valuable goods and furniture. Aristomenes approved of their resolution of planting a colony in some distant region, but declined the honour of leading it forth. That arduous service he relinquished to his son Gorgus, assisted by Manticles; a young man of great merit, and the son of a distinguished patriot, who had fallen in the cause of his country <sup>114</sup>.

WHILE the Messenians were deliberating on this subject, and before they had fixed upon any particular place for the establishment of their projected colony, they received from Anaxilas, prince of Rhegium, descended from their ancient kings, an invitation to come and settle in his dominions; that city having been partly founded, as we have seen, by Messenian refugees, on the termination of the former war. In consequence of this invitation, the Messenian adventurers embarked for Rhegium. But when they arrived there, they found the friendship of Anaxilas to be less generous than they had believed. He was engaged in hostilities with the Zancleans; an Æolian colony that practised piracy, and possessed a delightful territory on the opposite coast of Sicily. Against this enemy, likely to prove too strong for him, he craved their aid. The Messenians, who were prepared for any desperate enterprise, readily embraced

Ant. Ch.  
670.  
Olymp.  
xxviii. 3.

<sup>114</sup>. Pausan. lib. iv.

the proposal. The Zancleans were speedily vanquished. The Messenians took possession of the conquered country, and became one people with the Æolian colonists; whom their humanity had saved from the sword, and their generosity preserved from servitude<sup>115</sup>. And Zancle, the former capital, changed its name to that of Messène, which it still with little variation retains.

IN consequence of this large emigration, and the retreat of Aristomenes to Rhodes, the Lacedæmonians found themselves absolute and undisputed masters of the territory of Messenia. Such of the native inhabitants, as chose to remain in that territory, were reduced to the condition of Helots, and compelled to cultivate, for their conquerors, those lands which had formerly belonged to themselves or their ancestors<sup>116</sup>. From a condition so degrading, it might be supposed they could never emerge; and that their sufferings would have extinguished in their minds all hope of recovering their ancient freedom or independency. But slavery could not break the firm spirit of the Messenians. They still considered themselves as a Græcian people; and, after two hundred years of servitude, we shall see them again throw off the Spartan yoke.

MEANTIME the power of Sparta was great in Peloponnesus, and formidable even to the states beyond the Corinthian isthmus. That Græcian peninsula, formerly comprehending seven, now contained only six independent states. And the Lacedæmonians, after the conquest of Messenia, occupied one third of Peloponnesus. The remaining two thirds were possessed, in unequal divisions, by the Corinthians, Eleans, Achæans, Arcadians, and Argives<sup>117</sup>. The Corinthians, beside the terror of their naval force, and

<sup>115</sup>. Pausan. ubi sup. Strabo, lib. vi.

<sup>116</sup>. Pausan. lib. iv.

<sup>117</sup>. Strabo, Geog. lib. viii.

## PART I.

the resources which their extensive commerce yielded, were protected against the Spartan power by their impregnable situation, as the Eleans were by their sacred character. The Achæans had early associated themselves under a democratical form of government, in twelve independent cities, which had one common interest and bond of union; and in which they long enjoyed their independency. The Arcadians, secure in a mountainous district, where they led the life of herdsmen or shepherds, were farther defended by their hardy valour, and ancient renown<sup>118</sup>. The Argives, no less brave, and more warlike, were engaged in perpetual hostilities with Sparta. And their intimate alliance with Arcadia, founded on the sense of a common danger, only could have preserved them from sinking under the arms of the ambitious disciples of Lycurgus.

THE politic Lacedæmonians, however, sometimes found means to engage the Arcadians to remain neuter; and then the most vigorous exertions of martial prowess generally proved too feeble, to enable the Argives to repress the encroachments of their usurping neighbours. One of those separate wars was distinguished by events sufficiently memorable to merit particular notice; though we know not, with certainty, the æra when they happened.

SPARTA, in the course of her usurpations, had asserted a claim to the city of Thyrea and its territory, which lay on the frontiers of Argolis and Laconia; and had violently taken possession of it<sup>119</sup>. The Argives collected the largest army they had ever sent into the field, in order to support their right, and recover the contested district; while the Lacedæmonians advanced

118. *Id. ibid.*

119. Herodot. lib. i.



with an equal or superior force, to maintain their conquest <sup>120</sup>. But when the armies of the two states were preparing to engage, it was agreed, in a conference between the hostile leaders, that the dispute should be decided by three hundred men selected from each army: and that, during the awful combat, the main body of both armies should withdraw, lest the troops of either party should be prompted to interpose in behalf of their countrymen <sup>121</sup>.

LETTER  
V.

Ant. Ch.  
548.  
Olymp.  
lviii. 1.

IN consequence of this agreement, the six hundred champions joined battle, and fought with such intrepid courage, and so equal a degree of strength and skill, that when night came down, and arrested the sword of death, only three combatants were left alive; two Argives, named Chromius and Alcinor, and one Lacedæmonian, the renowned Orthryades <sup>122</sup>. The Argive champions, thinking themselves undisputed masters of the field, or desirous of escaping from such a scene of carnage, hastened to the camp of their countrymen, with the news of their hard-earned victory. Meantime Orthryades, though wounded, collected into one heap the spoils of his slaughtered enemies, and rested upon the spot <sup>123</sup>.

NEXT morning, when the commanders of the two armies, at the head of their forces, went to view the

120. Pausanias (lib. x.) places this war in the latter part of the reign of Theopompus, king of Lacedæmon; and, consequently, between the first and second Messenian wars. But Herodotus, who lived much nearer to the time of the hostile competition, represents it as happening one hundred years later, and only just brought to an issue when Cyrus the Great invested the Lydian capital, and Croesus sent ambassadors to crave assistance from Sparta; (Herodot. lib. i.) in the year five hundred and forty-eight before the Christian æra, agreeably to the date in the margin.

121. Id. *ibid.*

122. Herodot. lib. i. Pausan. lib. x.

123. Id. *ibid.*

## PART I.

Ant. Chr.

543-

Olymp.

1911. I.

slain, and determine the dispute, the Argives saw, to their astonishment, this solitary warrior enjoying his melancholy triumph; having written with his own blood, in the last runnings of ebbing life, his name upon the trophy which he had raised<sup>124</sup>. The Lacedæmonians accordingly claimed the victory. The Argives denied their pretensions, and both armies joined battle. The conflict was fierce, obstinate and bloody. At last the superior discipline, and strength of Sparta prevailed. The Argives were totally routed, and Thyrea remained with the conquerors<sup>125</sup>.

BUT the Lacedæmonians, although thus victorious over their most warlike and powerful neighbours, were long restrained, by various circumstances, from attaining that weight of dominion, or high arbitration, at which they so eagerly aspired. Fortunately for the liberties of Greece, a rival power was now rising up, ambitious to dispute with Sparta the preheminance in arms and political importance.

124 Pausan. ubi sup.

125. Herodot. lib. i. The Argives were so much mortified at this defeat, that the men cut off their hair; the women divested themselves of their jewels; and a solemn decree was passed, and an awful vow taken by both sexes, "That no man should suffer his hair to grow, nor any woman wear ornaments of gold, until Thyrea should be recovered." Herodot. ubi sup.

## LETTER VI.

*History of ATHENS and the NORTHERN STATES of GREECE, from the Death of CODRUS, the last King of ATTICA, to the Expulsion of the PISISTRATIDÆ; including an Account of the Rise of the GRÆCIAN ORACLES; of the Extension of the influence of the AMPHICTYONIC COUNCIL; of the Issue of the First Sacred War, with the Institution of the PYTHIAN GAMES; and a View of the Establishment of the Legislation of Solon.*

WHILE Peloponnesus was shaken by those long and barbarous wars, which terminated in the subversion of the liberties of Messenia, the Græcian states beyond the Corinthian isthmus, either enjoyed the blessings of peace, or felt but lightly the inconveniences of hostile discord. The bickerings between the petty northern republics, though frequent, were attended with little bloodshed, and followed by no important consequences. The Thebans having lost all vigour and concert with the abolition of royalty, Bœotia being broken into twelve rival townships, were in no condition to act offensively. And the Athenians, after adopting a republican form of government, (on the death of Codrus, as formerly related<sup>1</sup>) lived in such harmony under their perpetual archons, for almost four centuries, that their affairs furnished few materials for history. The subsequent period was less tranquil.

LETTER  
VI.Ant. Ch.  
1069.

1. Lett. IV.

## PART I.

Ant. Ch.

754.  
Olymp.  
vi. 4.

Ant. Ch.

684.  
Olymp.  
xxiv. 1.

BECOME impatient of the very shadow of royalty, the citizens of Athens, on the death of the hereditary archon Alcmaeon, raised Charops to the archonship, on condition of holding it for ten years only. Six decennial archons followed Charops. After the expiration of those sixty years, a farther and greater change was made in the Athenian government. It was resolved that the office of archon should be annual, and that nine persons, instead of one, should be appointed to execute its duties <sup>2</sup>.

THESE magistrates, however, were not vested with equal authority, nor were the same functions common to each. The most exalted in dignity, called *Archon Eponymus*, or simply ARCHON, by way of eminence, represented the majesty of the republic; the second in rank, who had the title of *Basileus* or King, was head of the Athenian religion; and the Polemarch, who was third in rank, had the chief direction of military affairs. The remaining six archons, who bore the general appellation of *Thesmothetæ*, or "guardians of the laws," presided as judges in the ordinary courts of justice, as the former three did in the superior tribunals; and the whole nine, when convened, formed the council of state <sup>3</sup>. The archons were usually chosen by lot, from the highest class of citizens; but sometimes the assembly of the people, with which resided the right of legislation, assumed the power of naming them <sup>4</sup>.

AN authority so temporary and limited, as that possessed by the annual archons, was not sufficient to restrain the restless spirit of the Athenians, agitated by factions, and jealous to excess of their political free-

2. Pausan. lib. vii.

3. Arist. *Polit.* lib. iv. vi. et *Frag. de Civit. Ath.* See also Potter, *Archæolog. Græc.* book 1. chap. xii.4. Plut. *Vit. Aristides.*

dom. Athens accordingly became a scene of anarchy, violence, and injustice. At length, made severely sensible of the inconveniences of such an unstable government, and of an unsettled jurisprudence, (the Athenians having yet no regular code of laws) all parties saw the necessity of reforming the state; and especially of regulating the administration of justice. For the execution of this great work, they cast their eyes upon the archon Draco; a man of rigid morals, and incorruptible integrity, but unfortunately of a mind not equal to the important and arduous undertaking.

LETTER.

VI.

Ant. Chr.

624.

Olymp.

xxxix. I.

As if conscious of his political inability, Draco seems to have left the Athenian constitution nearly in the same state that he found it. He confined his innovations chiefly to juridical matters. And, even in these, he shewed himself little capable of accommodating his ideas to the circumstances of the times; to the character of the people, who had intrusted him with the high office of legislator, or to the general temper of mankind. He made capital almost all crimes, which came under the cognizance of his laws<sup>5</sup>.

THE very severity of such a jurisprudence defeated its own end, the *reformation of manners*. When conviction must necessarily have proved fatal to the culprit, few witnesses would appear against persons accused of inferior crimes; and as the humanity of the judge was interested in saving, where the evidence against such offenders was complete, it followed of course, that all crimes passed unpunished except those of the most atrocious nature<sup>6</sup>. The laws of Draco, therefore, instead of remedying the evils of which his countrymen complained, may be said to have increased them. But they served to compose the minds of the Atheni-

5. Plut. Vit. Solon. Arist. Polit. lib. ii.

6. Id. ibid.

## PART I.

ans for a time, and happily paved the way for the reception of laws and institutions of a very different description; for those of Solon, which were as mild as his predecessor's, were severe<sup>7</sup>. And all their assuasive lenity was necessary, to insure their operation.

THE condition of no people perhaps ever exhibited a deeper scene of trouble and disorder, than that of the inhabitants of Attica, when the virtues and abilities of this extraordinary man were called to their relief. The magistrates plundered the public treasury; and often betrayed, for bribes, the cause of justice. The rich oppressed the poor: and the wretched populace, practiced in robbing, and driven to despair, were ripe for rebellion<sup>8</sup>. Descended of an ancient and honourable family, Solon had, in early life, been distinguished at Athens for his love of learning and his talent for poetry<sup>9</sup>. And the misfortunes of his country soon brought forward to notice those political powers, which afterward enabled him to reform the constitution of the state.

PERCEIVING the weakness of the Athenian government, the people of Salamis, (an island in the Saronic Gulf) had revolted, and leagued themselves with those of Megara. The Athenians made several attempts to recover that island; but, in all, they failed of success. And so great had been their loss, on those mortifying occasions, that the assembly of the people passed a law, making it a capital offence in any person, whatever might be his rank, his office, or his character, to propose a renewal of the unfortunate enterprise<sup>10</sup>. But

7. As an apology for this severity, Draco cynically replied, "Small crimes deserve death, and I can find no greater punishment for the most heinous." Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

8. *Fragm. Solon. ap. Demosth.*

9. Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

10. *Id. ibid.*

although

although no one durst openly require the repeal of this rash law, it became the cause of shame and dissatisfaction among the younger and braver Athenian citizens.

LETTER  
VI.

Of the latter number was Solon. He, therefore, be-  
thought himself of an artifice for evading the penalty,  
yet inducing the people to annul their own act. Hav-  
ing circulated a report, that he was subject to tempo-  
rary fits of madness, he accordingly composed an in-  
flammatory poem, entitled *Salamis*; and rushing out  
into the market-place, mounted the heralds-stone, and  
recited his performance to the crowd. The people  
were filled with sorrow and indignation at the pusilla-  
nimity of their desponding law, for relinquishing that  
island. The obnoxious statute was repealed; and it  
was instantly resolved, That a new armament should  
be sent against Salamis. The command of the ex-  
pedition was committed to the party that Solon had  
embraced. It was conducted with ability, and crown-  
ed with success. Salamis was recovered without much  
bloodshed<sup>11</sup>.

Ant. Chr.  
87.  
Olymp.  
xliv. 4.

THE fortunate issue of this enterprize acquired Solon  
considerable influence at Athens; and other events  
conspired to spread the fame of his sagacity and promp-  
titude over all Greece. Those events I must relate,  
and point out his connexion with them, before I speak  
of him in his legislative capacity.

I HAVE already had occasion to mention the esta-  
blishment of the council of Amphictyons, and its su-  
perintendence over the oracle of Apollo at Delphos.  
But I have hitherto found no opportunity of relating  
the rise of that oracle, or of noticing the extension of

11. Plut. ubi sup.

## PART I.

Ant. Chr.  
600.  
Olymp.  
xiv. 1.

the Amphictyonic council, in consequence of the conquest of Peloponnesus by the Heraclidæ. I shall now, therefore, offer these subjects to your Lordship's attention, by way of introduction to the history of the first *Sacred War*, which furnished Solon with new occasions of discovering the strength of his genius.

"ALL mankind," says Homer, in the person of Nestor, "have need of the GODS<sup>12</sup>!" A *sense* of this need, which seems intuitive in the human mind, or a consciousness of our own weakness, that leads us to look up for protection to Superior Powers, may be considered as the NATURAL CAUSE of all RELIGION. And a desire of penetrating the will of those Gods, the supposed dispensers of good and evil, has among various nations given birth to Divination, Soothsaying, and Oracular Responses. The Græcian oracles are said to have derived their origin from Ægypt and Crete, the two great nurseries of Heathen superstition: and thence the Greeks had also received their popular creed.

THE most ancient of the Græcian oracles was that sacred to Jupiter at Dodona<sup>13</sup>, the rise of which is thus accounted for by Herodotus. A Phœnician ship-master, in a voyage to Ægypt, having carried off with him from the city of Thebes on the Nile, one of the priestesses, or female attendants, belonging to the temple of Jupiter there, sold her as a slave in Thespro-

12. *Odys.* lib. iii. ver. 48.  
cap. lii. Strabo, lib. vii. p. 327, edit. Lutet. Paris. 1620. M. Hardion (*Prim. Dissertat. sur l'Oracle de Delph.*) endeavours to prove, That the Oracle of Delphos was more ancient than that at Dodona; because the Pelasgi were in Thesprotia, when the Dodonian oracle was established. (Ibid.) But the Pelasgi were spread over Greece and the contiguous countries in the most early times: (Herodot. lib. i. cap. lvi. lvii. et seq. Strabo, lib. vii. p. 327—329, edit sup. cit.) and they had their name not from Pelasgus, as M. Hardion supposes, but from their wandering character. Strabo, lib. viii. p. 397.



ria; a mountainous district, on the south-west coast of Epirus. Though here reduced to a state of servitude, and ignorant of the language of the country, this woman soon attracted the veneration of the rude natives. Her sagacity, acquired by living among a more cultivated people; her foreign aspect, and mysterious carriage, suited to the habits of Ægyptian superstition, made them all conclude she must hold private converse with some Divinity. She encouraged their easy credulity: and, well instructed in the means of taking advantage of it, occasionally chose her station under the dark shade of an aged oak, near the village of Dodona; whence she gave answers, in a broken dialect, to every one who came to consult her<sup>14</sup>. These answers she delivered in the name of the God Jupiter, with whose secret councils she pretended to be intrusted. Her prophetic reputation daily increased. She at length spoke in the Greek tongue; or with a *human voice*, to use the words of the admiring Thesprotians<sup>15</sup>. Her success gained her associates, who became her successors. And a temple, famous for its oracular responses, rose to Dodonean Jupiter in the centre of the grove, where the Ægyptian captive had first taken her stand.


SIMILAR institutions were attempted, and established in different parts of Greece. But the oracle of Apollo at Delphos early acquired, and long maintained a reputation superior to all other oracles in the Heathen world. This celebrity it owed to the following circumstances.

ON the southern side of the winding ridge of mount Parnassus, which divides the districts of Phocis and Locris, and at no great distance from the sea-ports of

<sup>14</sup> Herodot. lib. ii.

<sup>15</sup> Id. *ibid*.

## PART I.

 Cirrha and Crissa, was formed by nature a kind of amphitheatre, encompassed with stupendous rocks. In the midst of that almost inaccessible spot, was hollowed a deep cavern, the crevices of which emitted a vapour that strongly affected the brain<sup>16</sup>; and as phrenzy of every kind, among the Greeks, was supposed the effect of divine inspiration, the incoherent speeches of the herdsmen, who had approached that cavern, were regarded as prophetic, and ascribed to the immediate impulse of some God residing in the place<sup>17</sup>.

In consequence of this notion, an assembly of the neighbouring inhabitants was convened at Delphos, or the *solitude*, as the word imports, in order to deliberate on the means of best receiving the inspiration, and uttering the responses of the Divinity. For these purposes, it was resolved by that assembly to appoint one person, a virgin prophetess, whose safety should be provided for by a frame placed over the principal chasm, whence the maddening vapour issued; as several of the superstitious multitude, who had resorted to Delphos for information concerning futurity, had fallen into the cavern, while intoxicated with its effluvia, and there perished<sup>18</sup>. The frame was made to rest on three feet, and thence called a *Tripod*. On that frame the prophetess, who obtained, in very early times, (from Python, one of the titles of Apollo) the name of Pythia or Pythoness, was seated when she had occasion to exercise her sacred function<sup>19</sup>.

THE interposition of public authority gave new importance to Delphos, and made way for a farther establishment. A rude temple was built over the hollowed cavern; priests were instituted to determine,

16. Strabo, lib. ix. Diod. Sicul. lib. xvi.

17. Id. ibid.

18. Diod. Sicul. ubi sup.

19. Sicul. lib. xvi. Strabo, lib. ix.

19. Pausan. lib. x. Diod.

on what occasions the Pythia should mount the sacred tripod, in order to imbibe the prophetic steam; as well as to collect and digest her phrantic ravings, confusedly poured forth, while under the supposed influence of the inspiring God. And ceremonies were prescribed, and sacrifices performed, to the presiding Divinity, under various names<sup>20</sup>. At length some pious adventurers from Gnosius in Crete, landed at the port of Crissa, and proceeding up the bold declivity of mount Parnassus, placed the temple at Delphos immediately under the auspices of Apollo<sup>21</sup>; by whose command they declared they had acted, and whose priests they there became<sup>22</sup>.

UNDER this new and permanent Deity, through the skill of his Cretan ministers, the reputation of the oracle rapidly increased; and Delphos, which had the singular advantage of being nearly in the centre of Greece, was represented as the centre of the world, and the appellation of *Navel of the Earth* was bestowed upon it<sup>23</sup>. The size of the holy city became early considerable, and the riches and splendour of the temple of Apollo proverbially great.

THE institution of the Amphictyonic council, which was particularly intrusted by its founder (as I have formerly had occasion to observe<sup>24</sup>) with the protection of the territory of the soothsaying God, added much to the wealth and magnificence of Delphos, by spreading the fame of the oracle. No business of any consequence was undertaken in Greece, either by states or individuals, without consulting the Pythia. On such occasions a present was always necessary; and the opulent endeavoured to conciliate the favour of Apollo,

20. Id. *ibid*.

21. Homer, *Hymn. ad. Apol.*

22. Id. *ibid*. Apollo was then a deity of high reputation in the Grecian islands, and in Asia Minor, but yet of small fame on the continent of Greece.

23. Strabo, lib. ix.

24. Lett. II.

## PART I.

by offerings of high value<sup>25</sup>. Vanity was called in to the aid of superstition. The names of such as sent or brought valuable presents were carefully registered; and when statues, tripods, vases, or other ornaments, of precious metal or curious workmanship, were offered at the shrine of the God, they were publicly exhibited in honour of the community, prince or private person, by whom they had been bestowed. An emulation in donations took place, and the treasury of the oracle became immensely rich and great<sup>26</sup>.

As Delphos had acquired an increase of wealth and fame from the early guardianship of the council of Amphiçtyons, that council, and consequently the oracle, obtained more extensive influence from the conquests of the Dorians under the Heraclidæ. Formerly constituent members of the Amphiçtyonic assembly, the Dorians continued to send deputies to its meetings after they had established themselves in Peloponnesus; and the people of all the provinces which the Heraclidæ had conquered, within the Corinthian isthmus, gradually assumed the same privilege<sup>27</sup>. Thus the Amphiçtyons became a representative body of the whole Græcian people; consisting not only of the three principal tribes, Ionians, Dorians, and Æolians, but of the several subdivisions of those tribes, and of the various communities formed from their promiscuous cohabitation, and their combination with other ancient tribes, as well as with foreign invaders<sup>28</sup>. The most distinguished of these mixed communities were the Athenians, of Ionian extraction partly; the Lacedæmonians, of Dorian descent; and the Bœotians, of Æolian origin.

25. Vid. *Dissert. sur l'Oracle de Delph.* par. M. Hardion, et auq. cit.

26. Id. *ibid.*

27. See Dr. Leland's *Preliminary Discourse to the Hist. of Philip of Macedon*, and Mitford's *Hist. of Greece*, chap. iv. sec. iii. and the authors there cited.

28. Id. *ibid.*

EACH independent Græcian state, with some few exceptions, had thenceforth a right to send two deputies or representatives to the Amphictyonic council. One of these deputies, whose office was to attend to the civil affairs of his constituents, under the title of *Pylagoras*, was elected by the suffrages of the people; the other, called *Hieromnemon*, from his exclusive privilege of superintending the business of religion, was appointed by lot<sup>29</sup>. The central city of Delphos, so famous for its oracle, which had been politically placed under the protection of the Amphictyons, as we have seen, was now chosen as the place for holding their vernal meeting. The autumnal council continued to assemble at Thermopylæ<sup>30</sup>.

BUT neither the augmented consequence, and immediate superintendence of the Amphictyonic council, nor the sacred respect inspired by the extended and growing influence of the Delphic oracle, could restrain lawless rapacity from concerting a project for plundering the shrine of Apollo. That impious project was formed and executed by the Crissæans; whose territory lying to the south of Delphos, and comprehended in an extent of about twenty-four miles in length, and fifteen in breadth, contained three large and flourishing cities; Crissa, Cirrha, and Anticirrha<sup>31</sup>.

A SOIL comparatively fertile, an advantageous foreign commerce, and a lucrative inland trade, instead of satisfying the desires, served only to increase the avidity of this highly favoured people. They first exacted heavy contributions from all merchants who went to expose their goods to sale, and afterward from persons of every description, who resorted to the Holy

29. Leland, ubi sup.

30. Id. ibid.

31. Strabo, lib. ix. Pausan. lib. x.

## PART I.

Ant. Chr.  
600.  
Olymp.  
xiv. 1.

City<sup>32</sup>. Their vicinity to that city rendered familiar to them the woods, the grottos, the ministers, and the worship of the prophetic God. Reverence was thus diminished, and avarice excited. The temple of Delphos was robbed, in a moment, of all the accumulated treasure, and rich votive offerings, lavished by the profuse bounty of superstition for ages<sup>33</sup>. As the minds of men were not prepared for such a horrid sacrilege, no measures had been taken to prevent it. Nor were any immediately adopted, for punishing the offenders: so that the Criseans were permitted not only to seize, but to secure their booty; to add murder to robbery; and to defile the sacred groves with the most abominable lusts<sup>34</sup>.

It belonged to the council of Amphiſtyons to punish the perpetrators of these atrocious enormities, which its vigilance had failed to prevent. But the deliberations of that assembly were formal and indecisive. And it was not without difficulty that Solon, one of the Athenian delegates, could induce the majority of his associates to adopt the obvious and necessary resolution, under such circumstances, of taking vengeance on the aggregated crimes of the Criseans; and, by so doing, to vindicate the offended majesty of religion, and resent the affront offered to the august Amphiſtyonic body<sup>35</sup>.

NOR were the measures taken in consequence of this resolution, which gave a beginning to the Sacred War, either prompt or vigorous. The forces first brought into the field by the Amphiſtyons were not equal to the enterprize for which they had been levied. They therefore attempted in vain, during nine years, though furnished with various reinforcements, to make

32. Pausan. ubi sup. *Æschin. in Ctesiphont.*

33. *Id. ibid.*

34. Pausan. lib. x.

35. Pausan. ubi sup. *Plut. Vit. Solon.*

them-

themselves masters of any of the devoted towns<sup>36</sup>. In the tenth summer of the war, Crissa was carried by assault. Its fortifications were demolished, in obedience to the command of the oracle; the houses were consumed with fire; and the inhabitants were treated with a severity proportioned to the degree of their guilt, and to the hostile rage of the victorious besiegers, boiling with holy indignation. They were all either put to the sword or committed to the flames<sup>37</sup>.

LETTER  
VI.

Ant. Chr.  
597.  
Olymp.  
xlvii. 2.

THE object of the Sacred War, however, was not yet fully accomplished; nor was the vengeance of Apollo completely executed, in the destruction of the Crissean capital. A remnant of that impious community still subsisted in the strong maritime town of Cirrha. And as it was found that the reduction of this place would be attended with many difficulties, recourse was had to the advice of the oracle. "You shall not overturn," said the Pythia, the instrument of the ministers of the Delphic God, "the lofty towers of Cirrha, until the foaming billows of blue-eyed Amphitrité beat against the resounding shores of the Holy Land<sup>38</sup>."

THIS answer appeared absolutely inexplicable, as the success which it promised was made to depend upon a seemingly impossible circumstance; for, how could the sea be conveyed, for several leagues, over rocks and mountains, so that its waves might dash against the craggy precipices, which bounded the territory of Delphos?—That difficulty no one was able, for a time, to obviate. The inhabitants of Cirrha, therefore, flattered themselves with the hope of perpetual security; and the majority of the members of the

36. Id. *ibid.* Strabo, lib. ix.  
Thessal. *Orat.* ad *Athen.*

37. *Æschin.* in *Ctesiphont.*

38. Pausan. lib. x.

**PART I.** Amphictyonic council thought there was reason for relinquishing an enterprise, which seemed so unpropitious to the God by whose order the war had been undertaken, and whose insulted divinity it was meant to avenge.

WHILE these desponding sentiments prevailed in the camp of the besiegers, Solon, the Athenian delegate, who had first roused the Amphictyons to arms, ventured to offer more spirited counsel. His superior sagacity enabled him to penetrate the mysterious meaning, or at least to give a favourable turn to the response of the oracle. To bring the sea to the boundary of the Holy Land, he admitted to be impossible for man; but the Holy Land, he ingeniously observed, might be made to communicate with the sea, by extending that boundary. In order to accomplish this junction, it was only necessary to consecrate the intermediate space, with the same ceremonies which had formerly been observed in dedicating to Apollo the Delphian territory<sup>39</sup>.

Ant. Chr.  
590.  
Olymp.  
xlvii. 3.

SOLON's happy explication of the answer of the oracle was honoured with the unanimous approbation of his associates, and preparations were instantly made for carrying the suggested expedient into execution. The property of the Cirrhean plain was accordingly surrendered to the incensed God, with the most pompous formality, by the Amphictyons; and the soldiers, animated with new courage by that pious ceremony, assailed the walls of Cirrha with resistless fury. The place was taken, and the dependent town of Anticirrha submitted at the same time. The sacrilegious citizens were either put to the sword, or carried into slavish captivity<sup>40</sup>. Such was the issue of the *First Sacred War*.

39. Id. ibid.

40. Pausan. *Æschin.* et *Thesial.* ubi sup.



THE community of Crissa, formerly so rich and powerful, was for ever extirpated. Its lands were laid waste, its cities were demolished. The harbour of Cirrha alone was allowed to remain entire, as a convenient port for Delphos<sup>41</sup>. Condemned to perpetual sterility by the oracle, the Crissean territory long lay in an uncultivated state; for the Delphians, abundantly furnished by superstition with the conveniences, and even with the luxuries of life, were under no necessity of ploughing or sowing the ground for subsistence<sup>42</sup>.

THE fortunate termination of this war, which strengthened the authority of the Amphictyonic council, and procured new respect to the Delphic oracle, at the same time that it exalted the character of Solon, was distinguished by the re-establishment of the Pythian Games, or festival in honour of Apollo. These games, which had been interrupted by a long train of hostilities and calamities, were now celebrated with a pomp worthy of the occasion. The Amphictyons bestowed on the victors, instead of the scanty rewards usually offered to gymnastic combatants at such public solemnities, the most precious spoils of the Crissean cities<sup>43</sup>.

NOR was this the only innovation made by the Amphictyons, on the restoration of the Pythian festivals. They proposed prizes for competitors in instrumental music, unaccompanied with poetry: and thus separated the *sister-arts*, which had hitherto been united in all musical competitions at the Græcian festivals; the laurel crown being always adjudged to the poetic

41. Id. *ibid*.42. Lucian. in *Phalar*.43. The victors in the Olympic Games received only an Olive chaplet or crown, and a branch of Palm. See West's *Dissert. on the Olymp. Games*, Sect. xvi. et auct. cit.

**PART I.** musician, who animated the effusions of his genius with the sound of his voice and lyre <sup>44</sup>.

How far that separation was beneficial or hurtful to the advancement of those arts, I shall afterward have occasion to consider, in tracing the progress of Græcian Poetry and Music. At present, my Lord, we must investigate a more important subject.

Ant. Chr.  
594.  
Olymp.  
xvi. 3.

**BEFORE** the conclusion of the Sacred war, Solon had been chosen archon, and entrusted, by his countrymen, with the reformation of the laws and constitution of the Athenian state. Aware of the difficulties he had to encounter, Solon began his archonship with composing the minds of the people, and predisposing them for the changes necessary to be made in the government. With a view to the first of these objects, he endeavoured to quiet the rival factions of Cylon and Megacles, by which Athens was then distracted, and which had their origin in a very extraordinary proceeding.

**DURING** the first year of the Sacred War, Cylon, a powerful citizen, and son-in-law to Theagenes, tyrant of Megara, was encouraged by his flatterers, and an equivocal response of the Delphic oracle, to usurp the supreme power. In prosecution of this ambitious project, being furnished with a body of troops by Theagenes, he seized the Acropolis or citadel of Athens. The people, among whom he seems to have formed no party, instantly flew to arms. They were joined by the inhabitants of the country; and Cylon, seeing no prospect of relief, privately made his escape <sup>45</sup>. His adherents, thus deserted, and pressed by famine, sat

44. See Blackwell's *Inquiry into the Life of Homer*, and Gillies's *Hist. of Greece*, chap. v. et auct. cit.

45. Thucyd. lib. i.

down as *suppliants* by the altar of Minerva in the citadel <sup>46</sup>. Persuaded by Megacles, then archon, to quit their sanctuary, under a promise of personal safety, they were notwithstanding put to death by order of that magistrate and his colleague <sup>47</sup>: and some of them were slain, even at the shrine of the Goddesses <sup>48</sup>.

IN consequence of this sacrilegious breach of faith, these magistrates were called *the accursed of the Goddesses* <sup>49</sup>, and became the objects of public hatred <sup>50</sup>. Meantime the secret adherents of Cylon, united with such of his avowed partizans as had escaped the general slaughter <sup>51</sup>, gathered new strength and confidence, and loudly demanded justice on the associates of Megacles; he himself, it should appear, being removed from that inquest by death. The influence of the family of Megacles was great in Athens. But there was no withstanding, among a superstitious people, the cry against the crime of *unexpiated sacrilege*; to which the friends of Cylon artfully imputed all the misfortunes that afflicted, or those that threatened the state. Solon was, therefore, able to persuade such of the accused magistrates as remained alive to stand trial. They were found guilty, by a grand jury of three hundred citizens of the highest class, and driven into exile <sup>52</sup>. Nor was this punishment thought sufficient to satisfy the vengeance of the offended Deity. The bodies of the dead were dug out of the grave, and conveyed beyond the limits of Attica <sup>53</sup>.

WHILE Athens was agitated with the violent disputes which preceded the trial of those obnoxious

46. Id. *ibid.*47. Plut. *Vit. Solon.*48. Id. *ibid.* Thucyd. *ubi sup.*

49. Thucyd. lib. i.

50. Plut. *Vit. Solon.*51. Those who applied to the wives of the magistrates, Plutarch tells us, were spared. *Vit. Solon.*53. Plut. *ubi sup.*54. Id. *ibid.* et Thucyd. *ubi sup.*

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magistrates, and which enfeebled the councils of the state, the people of Megara retook Salamis. This loss augmented the superstitious fears of the Athenians; and Epimenides, a pious sage, deeply skilled in religious mysteries, was sent for from Crete. On his arrival, he contracted an intimate friendship with Solon, and smoothed the way for the reception of the institutions of that legislator<sup>55</sup>. By expiations and lustrations, he hallowed and purified the city of Athens, and made the people more observant of justice, and more inclined to union<sup>56</sup>.

SOLON, however, conducted himself with great caution, in the exercise of that high authority with which he was vested. He resolved to make no innovations but such as appeared absolutely necessary, and which he had reason to think would be approved by the majority of his fellow-citizens. Hence his liberal answer to those who questioned him in regard to his legislation, That if he had not given the Athenians the best possible laws, he had given them the best they were capable of receiving<sup>57</sup>. Conformable to this mild and moderate principle, wisely tempering coercion with lenity, he began the exercise of his legislative function with repealing all the bloody laws of Draco, except those concerning murder. He next struck at the root of the reigning evil; the *unequal division of property*; which enabled the rich to tyrannize over the

55. Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

56. Id. *ibid*. When Epimenides was ready to take his departure, the Athenians offered to load him with honours and rewards; but he would only accept of a branch of the sacred Olive that grew near the temple of Minerva in the Acropolis, and which was said to have sprung out of the earth at her command. (Plut. et Diog. Laert. *Vit. Solon*.) This was a present worthy of disinterested wisdom and superior sanctity, and which could not fail to spread the reputation of both, with the influence of Epimenides, over the minds of men.

57. Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

poor, incited the poor to alarm the rich for their safety, and both to embroil the state<sup>58</sup>.

To relieve the former party, without offending the latter, was a delicate business; and it was skilfully managed. Solon got both parties to join in a common sacrifice, called *Seisach theia*, or "the feast of Deliverance from Burdens"<sup>59</sup>; a pious prelude to a general *insolvent act*, or full release of persons and things, which enabled him to accomplish his purpose, and in a manner that gave satisfaction to the more liberal minded Athenians of all ranks, as well as to the multitude<sup>60</sup>. He maintained the former division of property, but abolished debts, and reduced the legal interest of money, while he made effectual provision, That an insolvent debtor should not, in future, become the slave of his creditor; be compelled to deliver up his children to servitude, or to sell them for the discharge of any debt<sup>61</sup>.

HAVING surmounted this grand difficulty, and established such preliminary ordinances as seemed im-

58. Id. *ibid*.

59. Diog. Laert. *Vit. Solon*.

60. For, as Aristotle sagely observes, "Solon innovated no farther on ancient establishments, than seemed necessary to promote and secure the enfranchisement of the people." (*Polit. lib. ii.*) Some of the poor, indeed, thought he did too little for them, and many of the rich, that he did too much; but his justice and moderation were admired by the great body of his fellow-citizens. Plut. et Diog. Laert. *Vit. Solon*.

61. Aristot. Plut. et Diog. Laert. *ubi sup.* But the Athenian slaves, after all the citizens were enfranchised, greatly exceeded the number of free men. Toward these degraded fellow-creatures, the disgrace of Greek and Roman policy, Solon could only extend his humanity, by framing regulations for their better treatment. Their servitude was accordingly henceforth more gentle, and their condition in all respects more eligible in Athens, than in any other Grecian state. (Demosth. *Philipp.* iii.) They were placed under the protection of the laws, and might prosecute their masters for ill usage. Athenæus, lib. vii.

## PART I

mediately necessary for public peace, the Athenian legislator proceeded to balance the constitution of the state. With this view, he divided the citizens, or free inhabitants of Attica of native origin, together with such foreigners as had been naturalized, into four classes, regulated solely by a census of the annual produce of their lands<sup>62</sup>; so that an open course was left for hope and emulation, as a citizen of any of the inferior classes might, by frugality and honest industry, obtain a place in the highest, and consequently a title to all the honours and offices connected with it<sup>63</sup>.

THE first class consisted of such citizens as had an annual income of at least five hundred *medimni*, or measures of liquid, as well as of dry commodities; namely, corn, wine, and oil; equivalent to between five and six hundred pounds sterling, according to the present value of money. The second class was composed of such as had an income of three hundred measures; the third class, of such as had an income of two hundred measures; and the fourth, and by far the most numerous class, of such as either possessed no property in land, or the annual produce of whose estates was below two hundred measures<sup>64</sup>.

To Athenians of the first class Solon confined the archonship, with other offices of expence and dignity;

62. Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

63. Aristotle, in forming his idea of a citizen, seems to have had his eye on the Athenian constitution, as reformed by Solon. "Generally speaking, says he, "a CITIZEN is one partaking equally of subordination and power." The definition may be extended to different states, but in one the best constituted, a citizen is a subject competent to, and occasionally candidate for every office, in proportion to his estimation and good life." *Polit. lib. iii.*

64. Plut. *Vit. Solon*. The Attic *medimnum*, the measure here computed by, was equivalent, according to the computation of Dr. Arbuthnot, to four pecks and six pints, or somewhat better than an English bushel.

to those of the second and third classes, he appropriated the inferior magistracies, with the municipal and military offices; reserving only to those of the fourth class an equal voice in the assembly of the people, with all the other common privileges of citizens<sup>65</sup>. And that voice, and these privileges, were sufficient to give this class, by reason of its numbers, an ascendancy over the other three, notwithstanding their official superiority. To the collective body of the Athenian citizens, legally convened, belonged not only the right of electing and judging magistrates and ministers, entrusted, for a limited time, with public authority, but also the power of deciding ultimately in all cases, legislative, executive, and juridical<sup>66</sup>. They only could contract or dissolve alliances, and with them remained the alternative of peace and war<sup>67</sup>.

AWARE of the danger of thus devolving sovereignty into the hands of the people, though on the generous principle, That *the few ought not to command, and the many obey*, Solon instituted, for the support of his political system, a new council or senate; consisting of four hundred members, annually chosen from the four tribes into which the Athenians were then divided, one hundred out of each tribe, and from the three higher classes of citizens<sup>68</sup>. Such an assembly, he con-

65. Plut. ubi sup. Aristot. *Fragm. de Civit. Athen.* et *Polit. lib. ii.*

66. Solon directed, that in the Athenian courts of justice, both civil and criminal causes should be decided by a set of men taken, in the manner of an English jury, from the body of the people, the archons only presiding as judges. Id. *ibid.*

67. Aristot. ubi sup. et Xenoph. *Polit. Athen.*

68. Xenoph. ubi sup. et Plut. *Vit. Solon.* The Athenians were afterward divided into ten tribes, and then fifty senators being chosen out of each tribe, the whole number became five hundred; whence the Senate was commonly called the *Council of Five Hundred*, or simply *The Five Hundred*.

cluded,

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cluded, would hold a sway, which the college of archons had not been able to maintain. He, therefore, committed to the senate many of the executive powers that had formerly belonged to those magistrates, as a council of state; and, among others, the sole right of equipping fleets and armies, beside such high privileges as were peculiar to its constitution; the prerogative of convoking the popular assembly, of examining and approving all matters of debate before they could be proposed in that assembly, and of enacting laws which had force during a year, without requiring the consent of the people<sup>69</sup>.

THE weight of this senate, which assembled every day, except on festivals, infused a considerable mixture of aristocracy into the Athenian constitution. And Solon endeavoured to raise an additional and powerful counterpoise, in order to preserve yet more steadily the balance of state, against the hazards attending the uncertainty and turbulence of democratic rule<sup>70</sup>. That he in some measure effected, by restoring and augmenting the consequence of the court of Areopagus, which the institutions of Draco had almost annihilated. By those of Solon it was invested, beside its criminal jurisdiction, with a general inspection over the laws and religion, as well as over the manners of the citizens<sup>71</sup>. Composed solely of those magistrates, who had

69. *Id. ibid.* Before the expiration of that term, the good or evil tendency of any law would become obvious to the multitude, and might be more safely annulled or confirmed. Nor would the multitude be often wrong, when unprejudiced. For, as Aristotle justly remarks, "although the constituent members of a popular assembly, each and "by himself, shall judge worse than a well-educated man, yet the "whole and together shall decide better, or certainly not worse, than "a council of statesmen." *Polit. lib. iii.*

70. *Plut. et Aristot. ubi sup.*

71. *Id. ibid.* "Rather adapting his laws to the state of his country," says



had passed through the office of archon with credit, and stood the scrutiny of the people, the Areopagus was entitled to assume not only a censorial, but in critical times, even a sort of dictatorial power <sup>72</sup>. It was the only Athenian tribunal in which the judges held their seats for life, and from whose decrees there lay no legal appeal to the popular assembly <sup>73</sup>.

HAVING thus secured the government of the republic by the senate and Areopagus, as by two firm anchors, Solon fondly hoped, that it would not thenceforth become the sport of the waves of popular fury. He found himself, however, mistaken. The giddy Athenians set no bounds to their desire of innovation. They were perpetually soliciting the legislator for some new regulation or amendment <sup>74</sup>. In order to avoid their eager importunities, he resolved to travel. But

says Plutarch, "*than his country to his laws, and perceiving that the territory of Attica, which but poorly rewarded the labours of the husbandman, was far from being sufficient to support a lazy multitude, Solon ordered that TRADES should be accounted HONOURABLE; and that the council of Areopagus should examine into every man's means of subsistence, and chastise the idle.*" Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

72. Isocrat. *Orat. Areopag.*

73. Id. *ibid.* See also Potter's *Archæolog. Græc.* book i. chap. xix. et *aucl. cit.* Such was the political system established at Athens by Solon. To enter into a detail of his civil regulations, would be deviating from the object of this work; especially as most of his laws are now become familiar, by being adopted into the Roman code, and thence conveyed into the jurisprudence of most nations in Modern Europe. Some of them, however, are sufficiently memorable to merit particular notice. "Let no man," says he, "stand neuter, in times of sedition, under penalty of banishment and confiscation; let no son be obliged to maintain a father, who has not taught him some trade; let not a guardian live in the same house with the mother of his ward. If an archon is found in public intoxicated with liquor, let him be put to death. If a man detects his wife in adultery, and lives with her afterward, let him be accounted infamous." Plut. et Diog. Laert. *Vit. Solon*. Demosth. et Aul. Gell. *passim*.

74. Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

before

**PART I.** before his departure, he procured a promise from the whole body of citizens, solemnly confirmed by oath, That they would abolish none of his institutions for ten years<sup>75</sup>. After such a term of experience, he wisely conjectured, that whatever alterations should seem necessary, might be made with greater certainty of contributing to public happiness<sup>76</sup>.

BUT the Athenians, though not utterly regardless of their oath, paid little respect to the institutions of

75. Herodot. lib. i. Proclus, in *Timæo*.

76. "Governments ever should be constituted," says Aristotle, "with a view to the happiness of the constituents." (*Polit.* lib. vii.) This axiom I have endeavoured to confirm in treating of the Spartan government; the deficiency of which, with respect to internal felicity, cannot be more strongly marked than in the words of Alcibiades. "There is nothing singular," he was wont to say, "that the Lacedæmonians should die fearlessly in battle; for considering the miseries they suffer under their rigid institutions at home, they may well choose a glorious death in the field, in exchange for such a life." (*Ælian, Var. Hist.* lib. xiii. chap. xxviii.) The spirit of the institutions of Solon was, in almost all respects, the reverse of that of Lycurgus; and an equal contrast of character, of austerity and mildness, was observable between the people of Athens and those of Sparta, as we shall have occasion to see in tracing the history of the two states. Moral and intellectual improvement, justice, humanity, and mutual sympathy, were the leading principles of Solon. He did not attempt to force, but to cultivate the nature of man. And the great object of his policy was, the UNION of *self-love* and *social*, by directing equally the hopes and fears of the Athenians, the reason and passions of ALL to the security of ALL. Hence his celebrated answer to the question, "How may injury and injustice be excluded from human society?"—"By teaching all," replied he, "to feel the injuries done to each." (*Diog. Laert. Vit. Solon.*) "He imagined and reduced to system," to use the words of a respectable modern Author, "a commonwealth wherein virtue, wherein property, and every substantial discrimination from character or profession was acknowledged and preserved; and wherein the best principles of aristocratic and popular government were combined, by institutions equally favourable to subordination and to liberty; to civil gradations, and to the rights of mankind." Young, *Hist. Alb.* book i.

Solon,

Solon, during his absence<sup>77</sup>. Soon after his departure, the three factions or parties, into which the people of Attica had been formerly divided, made again their appearance; namely, those of the Lowlands, the Highlands, and the Coast; or, in other words, the Aristocratical, Democratical, and Moderate parties<sup>78</sup>. The latter party received strong support from Megacles, representative of the opulent and powerful family of the Alcmaeonids. At the head of the Aristocratical party stood Lycurgus, the son of Aristolaides, also a man of ancient family, and of great wealth and consequence. The Democratical party was governed by Pisistratus; a distinguished young man, who traced his high descent from the patriotic Codrus: and who added to superior talents and accomplishments—to the most persuasive eloquence and the deepest political discernment, a daring spirit, and engaging manners<sup>79</sup>. He had been successful in several naval and military enterprises, in which his valour and conduct were equally conspicuous; and seemed naturally formed for sway<sup>80</sup>. Meanwhile he affected the greatest moderation, and captivated the hearts of the populace by his affability and liberality<sup>81</sup>.

THESE three parties, and their leaders, divided and distracted the Athenians of all conditions, when Solon returned to his native city; after he had spent the number of years, mentioned at his departure, in visiting

77. Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

78. *Id. ibid.*

79. Plut. *ubi sup.* Herodot. lib. i. v. vi.

80. Herodot. et Plut. *ubi sup.*

81. *Id. ibid.* He was always attended by two or three slaves, carrying bags of money, in order to enable him to relieve the necessities of the poor. At the same time, he reproved idleness, and encouraged industry. (*Meurs. in Pisistrat.*) And he carried his seeming love of equality so far, as to order the gates of his gardens and orchards to be left open, that the fruit might be common to all. *Id. ibid.*

**PART I.** various countries, and had resided some time in *Ægypt*, in *Cyprus*, and in *Lydia*<sup>82</sup>. The venerable legislator was received, on his return, with the most profound respect by his countrymen. Yet, violent as the storm was, which agitated the state, it does not appear that his experienced wisdom was solicited by the majority of any party, to guide the helm of government. He endeavoured, however, though ineffectually, by his personal influence, to reconcile the heads of the different factions, and to appease the animosity of their adherents<sup>83</sup>. But their prejudices were become rooted; and their opposition having assumed the semblance of principle, pride and shame equally conspired to prevent a coalition. Solon, therefore, could only watch, with parental care, over the safety of that constitution which he had framed, without attempting to administer a remedy for its disorders.

82. *Plut. Vit. Solon.* During the residence of Solon in *Lydia*, is supposed to have happened that famous conversation with *Croesus*, which has been retailed by so many historians, and which had for its object the instability of human greatness, admirably illustrated by *Herodotus* in the history of the *Lydian* monarch. (*Historiar. lib. i.*) *Plutarch*, fond of story-telling, has repeated it in his *Life of Solon*, because of its celebrity, as he says, notwithstanding the disagreement of the pretended interview between Solon and *Croesus* with certain chronological tables, from which some writers had attempted to prove it to be fictitious, but which he represents as not to be depended upon. (*Plut. Vit. Solon.*) And this artful apology for blending truth and falsehood, has been considered by a multitude of modern authors as a proof of the uncertainty of all ancient chronology, as *Plutarch* could not rely on it. To me, however, it appears only a proof, that the conversation alluded to was considered as fabulous by the more judicious ancient historians, and that the old man was disposed to relate it, for the purpose of embellishing his narrative. I cannot therefore help expressing my surprise, that so judicious a writer as *Dr. Gillies*, who places the usurpation of *Pisistratus* (universally allowed to have happened after the return of Solon to Athens) in the year 578 before the Christian æra, and the accession of *Croesus* to the *Lydian* throne sixteen years later, in the year 562 before the same æra, (*Hist. Græcæ*, chap. vii. and chap. viii. xiii.) should ingraft this conversation into the page of history.

83. *Plut. Vit. Solon.*

PISISTRATUS, who was related to Solon by the mother's side, and whose mind had been early formed by the instructions of that legislator, strove to blind his vigilance by the most sedate deportment, and the warmest declarations of his love of liberty and equal freedom. The keen eyes of Solon, however, penetrated the fine disguise, and read the real designs of his too aspiring pupil<sup>84</sup>. But before he could concert any measures for defeating them, Pisistratus, by a bold artifice, or brave and fortunate escape from a conspiracy against his life, became master of the republic. Having wounded himself, and the mules that drew his chariot, says Herodotus; but more probably being actually wounded by assassins, as he declared, in his way to his country seat, he returned to the city, and drove violently into the *Agora* or Market-place<sup>85</sup>.

Ant. Chr.  
578.  
Olympi.  
1. 3.

FILLED with compassion for the lacerated condition of their engaging demagogue, the people crowded about him; while he, in a pathetic speech, ascribed the impotent vengeance of his envious and cruel enemies—the ills he had suffered, and those he had to fear, solely to his disinterested patriotism and friendship for the poor. Deeply affected, alike by what they heard and saw, the enraged multitude were ready to fly to arms. In order to quiet them, a general assembly was summoned; and that assembly, at the motion of a popular leader, in spite of all the arguments of Solon, and the opposition of the two rival factions, appointed Pisistratus a guard of fifty men<sup>86</sup>. This guard he took the liberty to augment, under various pretences, without exciting the jealousy of the people<sup>87</sup>. At length, finding himself sufficiently strong for accomplishing his purpose, he threw off the mask; took

84. Plut. ubi sup.

86. Id. ibid.

85. Herodot. lib. i. Plut. *Vit. Solon.*

87. Plut. *Vit. Solon.*

**PART I.** possession of the Acropolis, and usurped the government of the state<sup>88</sup>.

DURING the commotion raised by that revolution, Megacles and his principal adherents fought safety in flight. Nor does it appear that Lycurgus and his partizans took any measures for restoring the liberties of Athens. But Solon, although old and unsupported by any faction, was true to his principles. He one while upbraided the Athenians with cowardice; and, at another, exhorted them to attempt the recovery of their freedom. "It would have been easier," said he, "to have repressed the growth of tyranny; but now when it has attained some height, it will be more glorious to cut it down<sup>89</sup>." Finding, however, that none of the people had courage to take arms, he returned to his own house; and having laid aside all thoughts of making any other public effort, placed his weapons at the street-door, exclaiming with conscious pride, in the hearing of his fellow-citizens, "I have done all in my power to defend, from despotism, my country and its laws<sup>90</sup>!"

BUT

<sup>88</sup> Herodot. et Plut. ubi sup.

<sup>89</sup> Plut. *Vit. Solon*.

<sup>90</sup> Id. *ibid*. Thus consoled, the Athenian legislator passed his few remaining years as a wise man ought, he the accidents in life what they may: in social converse with his friends, and in the exercise of his intellectual powers; but especially of his poetical talent, which he seems at all times to have cultivated, and employed as a resource amid the rubs of fortune. Hence the following manly sentiment:

"For Vice, though plenty fills her horn,

"And Virtue sinks in want forlorn;

"Yet ne'er shall Solon meanly change

"His *Truth* for *Wealth's* most easy range!

"Since Virtue lives, and Truth shall stand,

"While Wealth eludes the grasping hand.

The same talent served to dissipate the languor of old age.

"I grow

BUT Pisistratus, in assuming regal dignity, and investing himself with supreme power, made no change in the forms of the Athenian constitution, as established by Solon. He allowed all its assemblies, its magistracies, its offices civil and military, to remain: and he enforced the due execution of law and justice, not only by his authority but his example; readily obeying a citation to appear in the court of Areopagus, on a charge of murder, for which he was acquitted<sup>91</sup>. Hence the frequent saying of Solon: "Lop off only his ambition, cure him of the lust of sway; and there is not a man more disposed to every virtue, or a better citizen than Pisistratus"<sup>92</sup>.

ALL the virtues of this accomplished prince, however, added to his high renown in arms, could not reconcile the Athenians to kingly power. Twice was Pisistratus obliged to seek refuge in exile, and as often did he recover the sovereignty of Attica, by his superior talents; his courage, his conduct, and captivating manners<sup>93</sup>. The causes of these revolutions, and the circumstances with which they were attended, were thought sufficiently important by Herodotus to be particularly enumerated in his narration: and he was a good judge of such matters. But to the ancient Greeks, many things relative to their own affairs appeared important, which would seem altogether frivolous to an inhabitant of Modern Europe. I shall therefore, my Lord, only offer to your consideration a few leading facts, intimately connected with the character of Pisistratus, and the state of the people of Attica during his domination.

"I grow in learning as I grow in years,"

Says he; and afterward adds, with much good humour:

"Wine, Wit, and Beauty, still their charms bestow;

"Light all the shades of life, and cheer us as we go."

Excerpt. in Plut. *Vit. Solon.*

91. Plut. *Vit. Solon.*

92. Plut. et Diog. Laert. ubi sup.

93. Herodot. lib. i.

## PART I.

THE only crime imputed to this famous usurper, or Athenian *tyrant*, as he is commonly called, was an excess of political caution. He confined the honours and offices of the state almost exclusively to his own partizans<sup>94</sup>. Enraged at finding themselves and their adherents deprived of all power and consequence, Megacles and Lycurgus, the leaders of the two depressed parties, united their strength against their exulting rival, and expelled him the republic<sup>95</sup>. Megacles, however, dissatisfied with the anarchy that ensued, sent proposals of support to the banished chief. His alliance was accepted, and Pisistratus again took possession of the government<sup>96</sup>. But Megacles, on a fresh disgust, turned against him the whole weight of the Alcmaeonids; and they being joined by the partizans of Lycurgus, with whom a reconciliation had taken place, obliged the tyrant once more to divest himself of his authority, and quit his native country<sup>97</sup>.

PISISTRATUS retired to Eretria, in the island of Euboea. There, though in banishment, he possessed so much personal interest, and was held in such high consideration by the neighbouring states, that he was able, in the eleventh year of his exile, to enter the territory of Attica at the head of an armed force, and make himself master of Marathon<sup>98</sup>. Here he erected his standard. Partizans flocked to him from all quarters; and he soon found himself strong enough to venture to march toward Athens<sup>99</sup>. The Alcmaeonids

94. Meurs. in *Pisistrat.* Thucyd. lib. vi.

95. Herodot. lib. i.

96. Id. *ibid.*

97. Herodot. *ubi sup.* The word *tyrannos* or *tyrant*, among the Greeks, had no relation to the abuse of power, the meaning now commonly affixed to it. It was employed solely to denote a citizen who had usurped the government of a free state, whatever use he might make of his authority. But that such authority was generally abused, must also be admitted. And hence the modern acceptation of the word.

98. Herodot. lib. i.

99. Id. *ibid.*



met him with a formidable army, before he reached the metropolis. But they allowed themselves to be surprised, and their forces were instantly routed<sup>100</sup>.

Now was the season for Pisistratus to display his clemency: and his presence of mind, setting aside his humanity, was too great to let slip the opportunity. He ordered his two sons, Hippias and Hipparchus, to ride after the fugitives, and tell them, in his name, that they had nothing to fear, if they would go quietly to their several homes<sup>101</sup>. That message had the desired effect. The Athenian militia, relying on the unimpeached faith of their virtuous but too ambitious fellow-citizen, utterly dispersed themselves, and never more assumed the form of an army; so that Pisistratus entered Athens without resistance, and took a third time possession of the government<sup>102</sup>.

THE slaughter, however, was considerable, notwithstanding the politic interposition of the generous victor. And, in order more effectually to secure his sway, as well as to provide against the future effusion of blood, the mild usurper judged an act of severity necessary. He demanded, as hostages, the sons of all those citizens who had been most active in arms against him, and who had not fled their country; and sent them to the island of Naxos, which he had formerly conquered. He also retained, for the support of his authority, part of his foreign troops<sup>103</sup>. By these wise precautions, and an equitable administration, Pisistratus remained undisturbed master of Attica, till his death; and transmitted the tyranny, or supreme power, to his two sons, Hippias and Hipparchus<sup>104</sup>.

HIP-

<sup>100</sup>. Herodot. ubi sup.<sup>101</sup>. Herodot. lib. I.<sup>102</sup>. Id. ibid.<sup>103</sup>. Herodot. lib. i.<sup>104</sup>. Id. ibid. I have not concealed the great or the good qualities of Pisistratus; yet can I not ascribe all his beneficent actions to liberal

## PART I.

**HIPPARCHUS**, although represented by the accurate Thucydides as the younger brother<sup>105</sup>, appears to have succeeded his father in the government of the Athenian state<sup>106</sup>. He was a munificent patron of learning and the liberal arts, and drew around him men of genius from all parts of Greece. In imitation of his illustrious sire and predecessor, he adorned the city of Athens with many splendid buildings, while he cultivated the morals and polished the manners of its inhabitants; encouraged industry, and rewarded

motives. A man whose popularity, acquired by many blandishments, enabled him, and whose ambition prompted him, to assume the mastery over his fellow-citizens; and who found it necessary to maintain his power, not only by a military force, but by a perpetual attention to the favour of that populace by which he had acquired it, would often be obliged to *dissemble* his *sentiments*, and even to *affect* those which he did not *feel*. He must frequently have had recourse to both *simulation* and *dissimulation*; not only in *words* and *exterior behaviour*, but in *actions* or *public conduct*, whatever might be the natural probity of his disposition, or the sincerity of his private friendships.

I cannot therefore believe, because Pisistratus furnished the Athenians with the first complete collection of Homer's poems, that "he was anxious to diffuse among them the liberal and manly sentiment of that divine poet." (See Dr. Gillies's *Hist. of Greece*, chap. xiii.) I rather think he was *desirous*, like every politic usurper, of *furnishing* them with *amusement*. That they might not *perceive* he had left them only the *shadow* of liberty, in the *forms* of their *free constitution*, and attempt to *recover* the *substance*; that they might have less *leisure* or *inclination* to *plot* against his *arbitrary government*.

With the same view, he greatly encouraged industry and agriculture, in preference to commerce, or such mechanic arts as might augment the population of the factious city of Athens. (Meurs. in *Pisistrat.* *Ælian*, *Var. Hist.* lib. ix. cap. xxv.) In a word, Pisistratus was a most seductive orator, a consummate politician, and an accomplished prince; and, as such, I have represented him. No absolute sovereign, in ancient or modern times, appears to have been a more perfect master of the art of reigning, though he never assumed the title of King.

105. Thucid. lib. vi.

106. Plato in *Hipparch.* *Ælian*, *Var. Hist.* lib. viii. cap. ii. Meurs. in *Pisistrat.*

merit<sup>107</sup>. He was slain by Harmodius and Aristogiton, in resentment of a private injury<sup>108</sup>. And notwithstanding his public virtues, and an administration which, in the language of panegyric, is said to have revived the memory of the *Golden Age*, so strong was the detestation of the Athenians against regal power, after they had recovered their freedom, that his murderers were long celebrated as the deliverers of their country from tyranny<sup>109</sup>: and many statues were erected to perpetuate the memory of the perpetrators of the crime<sup>110</sup>!

THE tyranny at Athens, however, did not, properly speaking, commence till after the death of Hipparchus. Hippias, highly incensed at the assassination of his brother, and alarmed for his own safety, put to death many of his fellow-citizens, beside Harmo-

107. *Id. ibid.*

108. Thucyd. lib. vi. Harmodius being in the *bloom* of youth and *beauty*, (says the Greek historian) Aristogiton, an Athenian citizen, of a more advanced age, *doated upon him*, (according to the abominable LOVE OF THE GREEKS) and *had him in his possession*, to use the plain language of Thucydides (lib. vi.) Hipparchus, who was addicted, it seems, to the same unnatural lust, eagerly solicited the favours of Harmodius. But although unsuccessful, he did not *chuse to make use of force*. (*Id. ibid.*) Meanwhile Aristogiton was *inflamed with jealousy*, and *filled with terror*, at the *advances* of so *powerful a rival*; and the LOVER and the BELOVED, roused to resentment by an aggravating circumstance, not connected with this infamous amour—an attempt to disgrace the sister of Harmodius, concerted and accomplished the murder of the Athenian prince. Thucyd. *ubi sup.*

I shall leave others (See Young's *Hist. of Athens*, book i. chap. viii. and Gillies's *Hist. of Greece*, chap. xviii.) to maintain the *purity* of such *connexions*; for to me they have always appeared suspicious. Plutarch has endeavoured to shade them under the veil of virtuous friendship; but, in relating facts, he forgets his general reasonings.

109. Thucyd. lib. vi. Demost. *Orat. in Leptin.* Plin. *Hist. Nat.* lib. xxxiv. cap. viii.

110. A crime, which Thucydides affirms, arose from “a competition in love;” and in that love which nature abhors. Thucyd. lib. vi. cap. liv.

## PART I.

dius and Aristogiton<sup>111</sup>. All whom he hated or feared fell victims to his severity<sup>112</sup>. Yet farther to secure his power, and even to provide a retreat, in case of necessity, he looked around him for foreign aid; and having married his daughter Archedice to Æantides son of Hippoclus, tyrant of Lampfacus, with whose family he entered into a close political alliance<sup>113</sup>, he thenceforth governed the Athenians with all the rigour of despotism<sup>114</sup>.

THE exiled Alcæonids and their adherents, ever watchful of an opportunity to recover possession of their family-estates, and to re-establish the liberties of their native country, beheld with satisfaction the discontents occasioned by the tyranny of Hippias. During their banishment, they had engaged in their interest the oracle of Apollo at Delphos; by rebuilding, in a magnificent manner, the temple of the prophetic God, which had been consumed by fire<sup>115</sup>. And they were now able, with the assistance of a body of Lacedæmonian forces, procured them by the favourable responses of the oracle, to accomplish their design.

Ant. Chr. 510. Victorious over the army of Hippias in the field, the confederates entered Athens, and besieged the tyrant in the Acropolis. That citadel was of sufficient strength to have long baffled all the efforts  
Olymp. lxxvii. 3.

111. Herodot. lib. v. Thucyd. lib. vi. Plato in *Hippiarch.* Ælian. *Var. Hist.* lib. xi. cap. viii.

112. *Id.* *ibid.*

113. An epitaph found at Lampfacus, on the lady, who formed the basis of this league, is recorded by Thucydides, and worthy of being preserved to the latest posterity.

"From Hippias sprung, with regal power array'd,

"Within this tomb Archedice is laid;

"By father, husband, brothers, sons, ally'd

"To bloody grants, yet unsain'd with pride.

Thucyd. lib. vi.

114. Herodot. et Thucyd. *ubi sup.*

115. Herodot. lib. v.

of the besiegers; especially as the Lacedæmonians were under the necessity of soon returning home. But accident and natural affection accomplished what force and military skill seemed unable to effect. Anxious for the safety of their offspring, whom they had conveyed out of the fortress, and who had fallen into the hands of the Alcæonids, Hippias and his partizans, on condition of having their children restored, agreed to surrender the Acropolis, and to quit the territory of Attica within five days<sup>116</sup>.

LETTER

Vh

Ant. Chr.

510.

Olymp.

lxviii. 3.

IN consequence of this revolution, the Athenians recovered their political freedom, after they had been governed by the ambitious family of Pisistratus for sixty-eight years. And notwithstanding the many struggles they were obliged to maintain, in order to preserve their liberty and independency, against the attacks of ambitious neighbours, and the conspiracies of usurping citizens, they acquired a degree of importance in Greece, amid the turbulence of democracy, which they had never reached, nor ever could have attained, in the repose of monarchy. For, as Herodotus judiciously remarks, so great is the spring communicated to the faculties of men by the equal distribution of power, that their most vigorous efforts under a master are feeble and languid, compared with their strong exertions in a state of perfect freedom; where every one, in acting for the good of the community, may be said to act for himself, and considers his own interest, and even his own honour, to be at stake<sup>117</sup>.

THESE reflections, suggested by the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ, and the prosperity of the Athenians under a republican government, your Lordship will find more fully confirmed and exemplified in the history

116. Id. *ibid*.

117. Herodotus, lib. v.

**PART I.** of another great people; in the banishment of the Tarquins from Rome, and the rapid rise of the Romans to grandeur, after the establishment of their commonwealth. I shall therefore turn your eye toward Italy, before we trace farther the advances of liberty in Greece. But we must, in the mean time, take a view of the Progress of Society in this celebrated country.

## LETTER VII.

*The Progress of Arts, Manners, Religion, and Literature in GREECE, from the HEROIC AGE to the full Establishment of the ATHENIAN REPUBLIC.*

IN enquiring into the origin of the Græcian states, and deducing their progress in policy and arms, I have had occasion to notice the introduction of the more useful and necessary arts among the people of the growing communities<sup>1</sup>. The Arts of elegance and design, with the abstract sciences, properly belong to the subsequent period. But the formation of the Manners, the Religion, and the popular Literature of the Greeks, appertains to the present.

THE arts introduced into Greece from Ægypt, Phœnicia, and Asia Minor<sup>2</sup>, though they induced the roving and barbarous natives to live in fixed habitations, had made small progress before the Trojan war. And the disorders in the Græcian states, occasioned by that war, prevented the surviving adventurers, on their return to their several homes, from successfully cultivating the conveniencies of life<sup>3</sup>; whatever new ideas they might have acquired, during the prosecution of their foreign enterprise, by viewing the improvements of a more polished people<sup>4</sup>.

THE subsequent invasion and conquest of Peloponnesus by the Heraclidæ, threw all things again into confusion<sup>5</sup>; while the fermentation produced by the rising passion for liberty, before the general abolition

1. See Lett. II.

2. Ibid. et auct. cit.

3. See Lett. III.

4. Ibid.

5. See Lett. IV.

**PART I.** of monarchy in Greece, yet farther retarded the advances of the arts of peace<sup>6</sup>. But after these events had taken place, and the Græcian states had discharged, with their surplus of population, their restless spirits in colonies; planted on the coast of Asia Minor, in Italy, Sicily, and in the islands of the Ægean and Ionian seas; society made rapid progress in Greece<sup>7</sup>, and in all the communities speaking the Greek tongue.

THIS progress was accelerated by the periodical celebration of the Isthmian, Nemean, Pythian, and Olympic games<sup>8</sup>; but more especially the latter. At those games, denominated *sacred*, the Greeks assembled from all their various states, and from all the continents and islands in which they had planted colonies. There, appearing as the people of one great nation, they entered upon a generous competition of mental talents, as well as of personal abilities and accomplishments. Poets, orators, historians, and philosophers, appeared among the candidates for fame<sup>9</sup>.

NEVER had emulation a more glorious field, or social intercourse a wider theatre, than at the sacred games of Greece. Mind caught fire from mind, and a general rivalry took place; not only between indi-

6. *Ibid.* et *ant.* cit.

7. See Lett. IV. V. et *ant.* cit.

8. Of the institution and celebration of the Olympic and Pythian games an account has already been given. (Lett. V. VI.) The Isthmian games were celebrated, once in five years, at the isthmus of Corinth; and the Nemean, once in three years, at Nemea in Argolis. These games were all of a similar nature, and the same kind of gymnastic and equestrian exercises were performed in all, though not in the same order; namely, running, leaping, wrestling, throwing the disk, boxing, driving the chariot, and riding the single horse. *West's Dissert. on the Olympic Games*, sect. vii.—xvii. and the authors cited. See also, on the same subject, *Mém. Dissertat. et Recherches*, par M. Burette et M. l'Abbé Godeyn, dans *Choix des Mém. de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, tom. I.

9. Lucian in *Herodot.*



viduals but communities<sup>10</sup>. The effects were answerable, and such as have astonished all succeeding ages. There the Græcian manners were polished, while Græcian policy was perfected<sup>11</sup>. A laudable desire of elegance, in dress and accommodation, was diffused; and, in consequence of that taste, better houses were built by the rich; stately temples were reared to the Gods; religious ceremonies were multiplied, and theatrical exhibitions invented.

BUT the advances of refinement were very unequal in the different states of Greece. Sparta, hedged round by the austere institutions of Lycurgus, and in a manner excluded from all intercourse with foreigners, was backward in admitting the approaches of elegance, and late in adopting the improvements most intimately connected with the happiness of human life. The axe and the saw were long the only tools employed by the Lacedæmonians in finishing the timber-work of their houses<sup>12</sup>. Their architecture and furniture were proportionably rude<sup>13</sup>. Gymnastic exercises were their chief amusements; and the maxims of policy and war, which formed their literary code, were at Sparta the sole objects of a liberal education<sup>14</sup>.

10. West, ubi sup.

11. Id. ibid. The amusements which the Greeks shared in common at Olympia, or Pisa, and other places where those games were celebrated, naturally disposed their minds to gaiety and good humour. They had daily occasion to mingle freely, to see and converse with each other. They seemed to be in a manner inhabitants of the same city: they offered, as one people, sacrifices to the same God, and participated the same pleasures. (Strabo, lib. ix.) By these means popular prejudices were rubbed off; animosities were softened; the causes of umbrages were explained and removed; and the people of the different Græcian states having thus an opportunity of learning each others strength and disposition, as well as the force and preparations of their common enemies, were enabled to provide for their security, and to encourage each other to guard and maintain their common liberties.

12. Plut. *Vit. Lycurg.*

13. Id. *Ibid.*

14. Xenoph. *Rep. Laced.*

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THE aspect of things was very different at Corinth. Early enriched by commerce, and habituated to an extensive intercourse with foreign nations, the Corinthians indulged themselves in all the delicacies of Asiatic luxury, and even imitated the pomp of oriental opulence<sup>15</sup>. Their city was accordingly filled with temples, palaces, theatres, porticoes, and private houses, equally admirable for their costly materials, and for the elegance of their structure<sup>16</sup>. They gave birth, during the period under consideration, to the order named *Corinthian*, the most superb in architecture, and adorned their public buildings with columns and statues of the most exquisite workmanship<sup>17</sup>.

THE Athenians, though yet less wealthy than the Corinthians, discovered an equal, if not superior taste,

15. Thucyd. lib. i. Strabo, lib. viii. xvii. Plin. lib. xxv. 16. Id. ibid.

17. Plin. et Strabo, ubi sup. Contrary to the opinion of Winkelmann, (*Hist. de l'Art de l'Antiquité*, liv. vi. chap. i.) I am disposed to believe, that the early progress of architecture and sculpture at Corinth was partly occasioned by the longer continuance, or revival of regal government, in that city and its territory. Absolute princes have ever been fond of magnificent buildings, the most munificent patrons of statuary and painters, and the greatest encouragers of all the arts that can contribute to the splendour of a palace; but unfriendly to the higher strains of poetry, and the bolder effusions of eloquence, which require the utmost freedom of thought and sentiment; and still more so to history, which delivers, or ought to deliver, without a veil, truths they are afraid to hear. The courts of such princes are also favourable to polished manners; as the delicate disguises of the passions become necessary, to save their pride from mortification; and the play of wit and conversation, to contribute to their amusement, and to flatter their vanity. In order to establish this position, I have no occasion to advert to modern times, or to anticipate the events in ancient history. As the Corinthians owed their first advances in elegance and refinement chiefly to their famous tyrant Periander, who lived in the sixth century before the Christian æra, (Diogen. Laert. *Vit. Periand.*) the people of Samos were, in like manner, indebted for their early progress in civility to Polycrates, as we shall have occasion to observe; the Lesbians to Pittacus, and the Athenians to Pisistratus; all nearly contemporaries.

for elegance and refinement. That taste was encouraged and improved by the ambitions, liberal, and accomplished Pisistratus, and his two aspiring sons and successors. They first decorated the Athenian capital with splendid buildings, and polished the manners of its inhabitants<sup>18</sup>. Under the government of Pisistratus was laid the foundation of the magnificent temple of Jupiter at Athens<sup>19</sup>; and Thespis, under his patronage, gave a beginning to the theatrical entertainments of the Greeks<sup>20</sup>.

THE Elians, happy in a fertile soil, which they cultivated with much care; and enriched as well as polished by the periodical celebration of the Olympic games and festival, made early advances in civility, and in all the arts connected with religious pomp<sup>21</sup>. A striking proof of that early proficiency appeared in the superb temple of Jupiter at Olympia, erected about six hundred years before the Christian æra, by Libon, a native of Elis<sup>22</sup>. This famous temple, of the Doric order in architecture, was wholly built of a beautiful marble, resembling that of Paros, found in the neighbouring

18. See Lett. VI. and the authors cited.

19. This temple was afterward enlarged by the Athenians during the administration of Pericles, and finished by the bounty of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who charged himself with the expence of the nave, and the columns of the portico. It was of the Corinthian order, and considered as a model of perfection in that style of architecture. Vitruv. lib. vii.

20. Plut. et Diogen. Laert. *Vit. Solon*. Perceiving the abuse that might be made of theatrical exhibitions, Solon called Thespis to him, after being present at the performance of one of his compositions, and asked him, if he was not ashamed of telling so many lies before so great an assembly. Thespis excused himself by saying, that there could be no harm in so doing, as his fictions were not intended to be considered as truths. Solon, striking the ground with his staff, sternly replied, "If we encourage such fictions, we shall find them influence our most serious transactions." (Plut. *Vit. Solon*.) Of this truth, the Athenians had fatal experience.

21. Strabo, lib. viii. Pausan. lib. v.

22. Pausan. lib. v.

country,

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country, and furrounded with a colonnade of the same materials. Its height, from the area to the dome, or vaulted roof, was sixty-eight feet; its breadth ninety-five, and its length two hundred and thirty. It was covered with marble, brought from mount Pentelicon in Attica, and cut into the form of tiles<sup>23</sup>. Its decorations I shall afterward have occasion to describe, in tracing the progress of the Greeks in sculpture and painting.

THUS have I endeavoured to assign the causes, and to point out the gradual advances of improvement in Greece. But it was in the islands of the Ægean sea, and among the Græcian colonies in Asia Minor, that the liberal arts first began to disclose themselves to advantage. And there architecture first displayed those just proportions, and that unity of design, which have continued to command the approbation, and attract the admiration of enlightened mankind, in all succeeding ages<sup>24</sup>. The Dorians and Ionians, on the Asiatic coast,

23. *Id. ibid.*

24. This more early proficiency of the Asiatic Greeks in the liberal arts, and in all the works depending upon imagination and sentiment, may be ascribed partly to moral, and partly to physical causes; to the long period of peace and prosperity which they had enjoyed, first in a state of independency, and afterward under the protection of the Lydian monarchs; and to a country and climate calculated to awaken, and to foster all the powers of genius. "The Ionian cities," where the elegant arts were most successfully cultivated, "are more commodiously and happily situated," says the venerable Father of History, "than any other we know among men; for they are neither chilled with cold, rendered damp by rain, nor exposed to the excesses of heat and drought." (*Herodot. lib. i.*) In this fine climate, and in a country beautifully diversified with hills and vallies, intersected by rivers, broken by bays, and constantly refreshed with gales from the numerous isles that crown the Ægean sea, the Asiatic Greeks were favoured with the gayest and the grandest views of nature; with every circumstance that can excite or cherish the human faculties. Genius, however, is said to be the produce of every clime; and, in some degree, it

coast, invented those elegant orders that still bear their names; and during the latter part of the present period was laid the foundation of the magnificent temple of Diana at Ephesus<sup>25</sup>. This temple, which was of the Ionic order, became the boast of Græcian architecture, and the wonder of the ancient world; though less on account of its size, than because of the majestic beauty of its structure, the choice materials of which it was composed, and the richness of its ornaments. It was about two hundred feet wide, and four hundred feet long; and it contained, when completely finished, one hundred and twenty-seven columns of the finest marble, sixty feet high, and ingeniously sculptured<sup>26</sup>.

MANNERS kept pace, as they always will, with the progress of the human mind, and the conveniencies and elegancies of life. The manners of the Greeks, during the heroic age, so finely portrayed (as we have seen) in the poems of Homer, and so frequently offered to unreserved admiration, by modern writers, were accordingly deeply shaded with barbarism.

THIS, my Lord, is an unpleasant truth. But, in historical matters, the least engaging facts are of infinitely more value, than the most captivating illusions of fiction. We must therefore beware, while we take for our guide Homer, the most ancient painter of manners, we must beware of being deceived by the magic of his poetic fancy. Objects seen through the medium of imagination are always magnified to the eye of the observer; and when admiration is the predomi-

is. "But the richest growths, and fairest shoots of Genius," to use the words of a learned and ingenious author, *spring, like other plants, from the happiest exposition, and most friendly soil.*" Blackwell's *Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer*, &c. &c. i.

25. Pausan. lib. v.

26. Vitruv. lib. iii. vii. Plin. lib. xxxvi.

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nant mode of the mind, they will be viewed, invested, and consequently delineated, with many adventitious beauties and extrinsic good qualities. Such we find to be the case, even when truth is the end proposed; how much greater then must have been the heightenings in the writings of Homer? who wished to hold up to the imitation of his countrymen the reputed wisdom, the virtues, and valiant exploits of a band of heroes, already almost deified in the ardent imaginations of the superstitious Greeks.

MARRIAGE, as I have had occasion to observe, is a law of nature, and its rites are recognised and understood even among savages<sup>27</sup>. The people of Greece, in the heroic age, had made several removes from the savage state; and they had been favoured with instructors from Ægypt, where the union of one man with one woman was strictly enjoined by law, and adultery severely punished<sup>28</sup>. The marriage tie was accordingly held sacred among the Greeks, during those gallant times; nor was a *plurality* of wives indulged<sup>29</sup>. The latter circumstance is rather remarkable, as they may be said to have purchased their brides<sup>30</sup>, and were little delicate in regard to what prior connexions they might have formed<sup>31</sup>. The fact, however, is incontro-

27. See Lett. I. and the authors there cited.

28. Id. *ibid*.

29. Pausan. lib. ii.

30. This matter I know has been disputed; (Gillies, *Hist. Greek*, chap. ii.) but there is no overturning established facts. Agamemnon tells Achilles, as an inducement to an alliance, that he will give him one of his daughters in marriage, *without requiring any price*. (Hom. *Iliad*. lib. ix.) And Danaus finding no body disposed to marry his daughters, on account of the atrocity of their character, made a public declaration, that he would not demand any presents from the bridegrooms. (Pausan. lib. iii.) The dower given with the bride, in return for such presents, seems not to have been common till latter ages.

31. The proofs of this *indelicacy*, or *indulgence to female weakness*, are

trovertible; and so indissoluble were the bands of wedlock supposed to be, on the side of the wife, that it was long considered as disgraceful, and even unlawful, for a widow to marry a second husband <sup>32</sup>.

LETTER  
VII.

As in every country where the sanctity of the marriage bed is preserved inviolate, the affection between husband and wife, and of parents to their children, was warm during the uncorrupted times of Ancient Greece. The respect of children to their parents, an effect proceeding from the same cause, love between the sons and daughters of one family, and all the ties of blood, were also strong in the heroic age <sup>33</sup>. Agreeable to natural justice, an equal division of property took place among the brothers, on the death of their father, or common head <sup>34</sup>. But a portion of respect descended to the eldest son, as his birth-right, with a degree of submission to his authority <sup>35</sup>.

THIS submission, however, seems to have ceased, when the younger brothers became themselves heads of families. To them their sons resorted for commands, and new subdivisions were formed <sup>36</sup>. Yet the heads of all the younger branches of every illustrious family, appear long to have looked up with veneration, though without any sense of inferiority, to the head of the eldest branch of that family, as their chief or centre of consanguinity; as they originally had to his predecessors, as the centre of their political union. <sup>37</sup>. For

numberless in ancient Græcian writers. A modern historian has given that weakness a very gentle name: "The crime of having too tender a heart!" Gillies, *Hist. Greece*, chap. ii.

32. Pausan. lib. ii. Tradition has even preserved the name of *Gorgopkoud*, the first widow that ventured to violate the rule. Id. *ibid*.

33. Homer, *passim*. 34. *Arist. Polit.* lib. vi. Homer, *Odys.* lib. xiv.

35. Hom. *Iliad.* lib. xv.

36. Shuckford's *Connec.* book vi. and the authors cited.

37. Id. *ibid*. See also Mitford's *Hist. of Greece*, chap. III. sect iv.

**PART I.** blood procured authority before wisdom or valour<sup>38</sup>, and in conjunction with those still best maintains it.

IN the heroic age, wisdom and valour were become essential to the acquisition, as well as to the support of kingship or chief magistracy; and even to entitle a son to succeed his father in that high office, whatever might be the claims of blood to pre-eminence. It was necessary that worth should recommend his hereditary title to the approbation of the elders, or heads of reputable families, and that it should be confirmed by the body of the people<sup>39</sup>.

HAVING thus discovered the claims and the qualities requisite for the attainment and support of royalty in Greece, during the heroic times, let us next consider the nature and privileges of the office itself. The king, as head of the community, enjoyed the important functions of high priest, supreme judge, and commander in chief; as he was supposed to be the most pious, wise, and valiant member of the state<sup>40</sup>. But religious supremacy appears to have been his only exclusive privilege<sup>41</sup>. The elders or senators shared with him the command of the army: they also participated with him in the administration of justice; while the voice of the people confirmed, or reversed, both his and their decisions<sup>42</sup>.

NOR was the acknowledged majesty of the people less conspicuous in political affairs. They claimed a

38. See Lett. I. of this work. 39. Hom. *Odyss.* lib. i. v. vii. xi.

40. Hom. *Iliad.* lib. ii. Aristot. *Ethic.* lib. iii. cap. v. Strabo, lib. i.

41. So intimately connected, in the minds of the Greeks and Romans, was the idea of King or head of the state, with that of chief sacrificer or head of the established religion, that they both gave the name to their high priest, after the abolition of royalty. Demosth. in *Neer.* Cicero, de *Diotina*, lib. i. Dion. Halicarnass. lib. v.

42. Hom. *Iliad.* lib. xvi. xviii. Aristot. *Polit.* lib. iii. cap. xiv. xv.



right to be consulted, in regard to all matters of importance; and as the majority of the senate, or council of state, controuled the will of the king, the resolutions of that venerable body were governed by the popular assembly<sup>43</sup>, in the early kingdoms of Greece, as fully as in the most democratical of the subsequent republics<sup>44</sup>.

THE same distribution of power, that happy mixture of monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical rule, which characterised the civil government of the early Græcian kingdoms or states, and which almost every where prevails among nations in a similar stage of their social progress, was also found in each particular town<sup>45</sup>, and in the greatest military confederacies. Agamemnon, though appointed, during the Trojan war, commander in chief of the combined forces of Greece, by the voice of its united princes, was not invested with absolute authority. On the day of battle, when the whole army was in some measure under his immediate command, he had the power of life and death<sup>46</sup>; but, on all other occasions, his power was very limited. He could adopt no measure without assembling a council; and in every such coun-

43. Hom. *Iliad*. lib. ii. *Odysse*. lib. iii. viii. Aristot. *Ethic*. lib. iiii. cap. v. Dion. Halicarnass. lib. ii.

44. It would be an insult, however, upon the wisdom of Lycurgus, to say nothing of that of Solon, to suppose "his famous laws" were almost exact copies of the customs and institutions that universally "prevailed in Greece during the heroic ages." (Gillies, *Hist. Greece*, chap. ii.) Lycurgus, indeed, lived too near to the ages of barbarism, to have a distinct idea of the perfection of the human character. He accordingly paid too much attention, as I have had occasion to observe, (Lett. V.) to the physical, and too little to the moral qualities of man. But pedants secluded from the world, or men who have viewed it with an undiscerning eye, and never tasted the pleasures of polished life, only will give the state of society, in the heroic times, a preference over that of the present enlightened and civilized age, in modern Europe.

45. Plut. *Vit. These*.

46. Hom. *Iliad*. lib. ii.

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cil, whether general or select, the utmost freedom of speech was allowed, and all resolutions were ultimately determined by the plurality of voices<sup>47</sup>.

THE same bold freedom that distinguished the public deliberations of the Greeks, during the heroic age, also characterised their manners in private life<sup>48</sup>. Among such a people, little politeness or mutual deference could be expected;—and it was not found; nor much delicacy in the intercourse of the sexes<sup>49</sup>. Humanity was then even little regarded. Most of the early Græcian heroes had been guilty of murder<sup>50</sup>; and many of them had fled their country, without satisfying the demands of justice<sup>51</sup>. Yet the satisfaction required was only a pecuniary mulct<sup>52</sup>. In vain, therefore, should we attempt to apologise for such outrages, by ascribing them to the want of legal redress<sup>53</sup>; and still less should we impute them merely

47. Ibid. lib. i. ii. ix.  
lib. i. ii. iii.

48. Hom. *Odys.* passim, et Apollod.

49. Hom. *Iliad.* et *Odys.* passim. "No language," says Mr. Miffler, "can give a more elegant, or a more highly-coloured picture of conjugal affection, than is displayed in the conversation between Hector and Andromache in the sixth book of the *Iliad*." (*Hist. of Greece*, chap. iii. sect. iv.) Yet Hector had the indelicacy to tell her, after enumerating the future woes of Troy, of Hecuba, of royal Priam, and of his brothers many and brave, that not all so much affected his soul as the griefs which she had to bear; "when some rude Greek, in his pride, should come and lead her away, a mournful captive of freedom bereft; when far from her native land, she should weave the web for some haughty dame, or bear water from the spring. (Hom. *Iliad.* lib. vi.) Unwilling," adds he, "thou the burden bearest; but hard necessity commands." (Id. *ibid.*) A man who should so talk, in modern times, would be accounted a brute.

50. Hom. *Iliad.* passim, et Apollod. lib. i. ii. iii.

51. Id. *ibid.*

52. Hom. *Iliad.* lib. ix. The venerable bard is very precise on this subject. "A brother," says he, in the person of Ajax, "receives the price of a brother's blood: fathers for their slain sons are appeased. The murderer pays the high fine of his crime, and in his city unmolested remains." Id. *ibid.*

53. To this cause those violences have been ascribed by some late writers. See Miffler's *Hist. of Greece*, chap. iii. sect. iv.

to the want of that refinement, which has been thought subversive of the nobler virtues<sup>54</sup>. They were the natural consequences of that ferocity of disposition, which too frequently tyrannises over men not sufficiently subdued to the restraints of law, or acquainted with the advantages of social union; and which ought to teach us to value the milder virtues, connected with the culture of the heart; without which the prohibitions of the legislature, and the vigilance of the magistrate, will ever be found ineffectual to civilize mankind, or to form them to the habits of polished society.

BUT if the resentments of the Greeks, in those rude times, were keen, their friendships were proportionably warm. Men, who had shared mutual dangers and toils, were knit in the closest bands of friendship and hospitality<sup>55</sup>. From friendship the transition was easy to love.

54. Dr. Gillies is not singular, in entertaining this opinion: (*Hist. of Greece*, chap. ii.) but it requires very little knowledge of human nature to discover, That the crimes resulting from barbarism are more pernicious to society, than the vices allied to refinement.

55. The *hospitality of the early Greeks* has been a subject of speculation, for both ancient and modern authors. It has been ascribed to the *circumstances of the times*, and to the *want of inn*: (see Mitford's *Hist. of Greece*, chap. ii. and chap. iii. sect. iv.) but I should ascribe it to the *friendly disposition of the people*. For all people, in such circumstances, are not equally disposed to hospitality. Homer has shewed us, (*Odyss. passim.*) and Thucydides has observed, (*Hist. lib. i. cap. v.*) that no inquiry was made concerning the character of the persons, who came to claim the sacred rights of hospitality, until they had *shared the repast*. (Hom. *ubi sup.*) This *indulgence* may justly be ascribed to the *circumstances of the times*; for, in that rude age, if particular inquiry had been made concerning the character and condition of all persons who claimed hospitality, many worthy men, whose pride would not submit to such explanation, or whose modesty could not furnish it, must have been denied hospitable reception. Hence the extension of the virtue of hospitality to men of doubtful character.

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As rapes, and the capture of women, were commonly practised among the early Greeks, by adventurers of brutal dispositions, or of ungovernable passions, warriors of a more generous nature became the champions of the softer sex<sup>56</sup>; and were deservedly repaid with their favour<sup>57</sup>. Yet must it be admitted, That although the Greeks were enthusiastic admirers of female beauty, and freely hazarded their lives in its defence, or for its possession, the latter was ever their chief object<sup>58</sup>. Nor do they seem to have discovered, in any stage of their social progress, that respectful attachment to women that distinguished the ancient Germans<sup>59</sup>, and which was carried to a romantic height by the heroes of modern chivalry; that attachment, which finds its gratification in honouring the beloved fair one with esteem and confidence, and which considers the return of affection as essential to conjugal happiness<sup>60</sup>.

FROM a view of the arts, government, and manners of the early Greeks, we are naturally led to consider their religion; which being, in some measure, formed by the genius of the people, had a reciprocal influence upon their national character, and gave its complexion to their literature. As the Greeks were indebted for their science and civility to the Ægyptians and Phœnicians, they also received the rudiments of their religion from the same nations<sup>61</sup>; but chiefly from the Ægyptians<sup>62</sup>.

IN what manner that refined species of superstition, which, under the name of *Zabiiism*, had become general over the East in the patriarchal ages, passed from Syria and Ægypt into Greece, whence it spread itself

56. Hom. *Iliad.* et Apollod. lib. i. ii. iii. passim.57. Id. *ibid.*58. Hom. *Iliad.* et Apollod. ubi sup.59. Tacit. *de Morib.**German.*60. See *Hist. Mod. Europe*, Part I. Lett. LV.

61. Herodotus, lib. ii. passim.

62. Id. *ibid.*

among the Western nations, I have formerly had occasion to notice, in tracing the *Progress of Idolatry* <sup>63</sup>. I have also had occasion to observe, That the religion of the Zabians, in making these removes, was grossly corrupted by ignorance and priestcraft. The sensuality of the Syrian worship I have endeavoured to display; and I have remarked, That the gloomy minds of the superstitious and speculative Ægyptians, by blending the worship of the Heavenly Bodies with dark and mystical allegories, and veiling their religion in symbols expressive of the attributes of the Deity, and of the qualities of the elementary principles, deified in appearance every thing around them <sup>64</sup>. In Greece superstition assumed a new form.

INSTEAD of pure spiritual intelligences, by whom the Zabians believed the planets to be wheeled, and the universe governed, in subordination to the Most High, the adventurous and barbarous, but grateful Greeks, peopled Heaven with Gods and Goddesses partaking of the human nature and form, and subject to all the excesses of human passions <sup>65</sup>.

THE Græcian Gods, in a word, differed in nothing from corrupted human beings, but in the possession of superior power, wisdom, and immortality. They had all been guilty of violence, cruelty, fraud, or debauchery. Even the chaste of the Goddesses was supposed to have had her amours <sup>66</sup>. The *worship* of such Divinities could not be favourable to morals. That it had a contrary effect, we have the assurances of two of the most respectable Græcian historians <sup>67</sup>; who impute the corruptions of the Greeks to the im-

63. Lett. I. of this work.

64. Id. *ibid.*65. Hom. *Iliad.* *passim.*66. Banier's *Mythol.* *passim.*

67. Polyb. lib. vi. cap. liv. Dion. Halicarnass. lib. ii. cap. xx.

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purity of their rheological system, which might be said to teach, or tolerate every vice. And the philosophic, and politic Plato, enacts it as a law, for the regulation of his *Commonwealth*, "That the current traditions concerning the Gods should neither be talked of in private, nor mentioned in public<sup>68</sup>."

BUT if the religion of Greece was hurtful to morals<sup>69</sup>, it was by no means so to the human faculties. There was nothing abject in Græcian superstition.

68. *Repub.* lib. iii. From this law it appears That the allegories concerning the wars, rebellion, and adulteries of the Gods, were believed literally by the vulgar; who were accordingly infected by divine example. (*Dion. Halicarnass.* lib. ii. cap. xx.) That these allegories had all a physical or moral meaning, is admitted; (*Id. ibid.*) but that meaning was beyond vulgar ken. (*Dion. Halicarnass.* ubi sup.) "The ancients," says Aristotle, "have made the *Principles of Being* Gods. (*Aristot. Metaphys.* lib. ii.) And, after a sublime description of God, the living, everlasting, best of Beings; and of the motion of the heavens, and the disposition of the orbits of the planets, he concludes the Universe to be ONE, as its Eternal Mover is but ONE. But," adds he, "there has been handed down to posterity, from the first ages, a doctrine in the form of a fable, that these Cælestial Bodies are Gods." *Metaphys.* lib. xi.

69. It contained no tenet that could counteract the dangerous example of the Gods, but the doctrine of a future state of Rewards and Punishments. That this doctrine was universal in the Heathen world, I have endeavoured to shew. (*Lett. I.*) And Dr. Warburton has incontestably proved not only its universality, but that Civil Government could not have been maintained without it. (*Divine Legation*, book i. ii. iii. passim.) Its influence, however, was much weakened among the early Greeks, by the facility with which absolution, from the greatest crimes, might be obtained. (*Hom. Iliad. et Odys.* passim.) In speaking of a future state of Rewards and Punishments, I have formerly had occasion to observe, That this belief, unknown to savages, was every where received among mankind, as soon as the forms of civil justice were established. Consequently, it took its rise from Human Institutions. But we ought to remember, That the HUMAN INTELLECT, if not a portion of the Divine, was infused by the FIRST MIND; and, therefore, all its acts may be said to flow from the Deity. Hence we are logically led to conclude, That the establishment of Rewards and Punishments among men, is only a TYPE of that more perfect retribution, which will take place in a future state; and which, although last, in the Mind of Man, was first in that of God.

Believing the Gods to partake of the nature of men, the Greeks approached their altars with a noble boldness; addressed them in an erect posture, and almost with the same freedom that they approached their civil superiors<sup>70</sup>. Nor need this excite our wonder. It was the natural consequence of the popular *Creed* of Greece; according to which Jupiter was invested with sovereign authority, but not despotic rule. His conduct was freely arraigned by the inferior Divinities; his measures were disputed in the assembly of the Gods; and he was perpetually under the controul of *fate*, or the political necessity of Heaven<sup>71</sup>.

SUCH a Religion was highly favourable to the *active* and also to the *intellectual* or cogitative powers of man. Jupiter was ever ready to support supreme sway lawfully acquired, and justly administered; Minerva was the constant guardian of valour directed by prudence, and aided by skill; Mars gave victory to daring courage; Ceres assisted, and rewarded the labours of the husbandman; Mercury presided over eloquence, mercantile transactions, and all the ingenious arts; while Apollo and the Muses inspired the song of the poet, and raised his imagination to the height of divine enthusiasm<sup>72</sup>.

## OTHER

70. Hom. *Iliad*. passim.  
*Theog.* and Plato's *Timæus*.

71. *Id. ibid.* See also Hesiod's

72. The rewards held up to merit, in the Græcian Elysium, served also to stimulate valour and genius, and to animate virtue. "There, in the number of the blest enrolled," says Pindar, "live Cadmus, Pelæus," &c. (*Olymp.* ii.) And Homer makes Proteus say to Menelaus, "Elysium shall be thine!" (*Odyss.* lib. iv.) Yet these are not among the number of deified heroes. This observation leads me to remark, That heroes were not deified in Greece at the time of the Trojan war. Homer's Gods, as I have had occasion to notice, (*Lett.* III.) were merely allegorical personages; the *parts* and *powers* of the *Universe* mythically shadowed forth; or, to use the words of Aristotle,

"the

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OTHER circumstances, connected with the Religion of the Hellenians, conspired to embellish Græcian poetry, and awaken genius. Beside Neptune, the God of the watery element, to whom the mariner offered his vows, the sea was peopled with Tritons and Nereids. Every river had its God, every fountain its Nymph, or Naiad; and every mountain and wood, their Oreades and Dryades. Venus and the graces attended upon female beauty; Juno was the patroness of Marriage; Diana the guardian of virgin innocence; Hebe gave fresh bloom to the cheek of youth; and Cupid, ever frolicking in the path of youths and maids, inspired the amorous passion <sup>72</sup>.

FUR-

"the primary substances of things." (*Metaphys.* lib. ii.) They were said to be of *human shape*, in order to procure popular belief. (*Id.* *ibid.*) I shall, therefore, conclude with expressing a hope that, in future, no Christian divine will waste his learning in attempting to prove, That the GREATER GODS of Gentle antiquity were deified Mortals.

The *Charnal-House* served the purpose of the early teachers of Christianity: but the *supposed Tombs of the Gods* were only the abandoned altars or temples of Heathen Deities, who successively gave place to one another, as policy or priestcraft directed, in order to enchain the multitude to the shrine of superstition. (See Bryant's *Mythol.* vol. i. ii. *passim*.) And as the knowledge of *one God*, the Creator and Governor of the Universe, is now manifested to the *whole Christian world*, the acrimony against Paganism may cease, without injury to the Religion of Jesus.

73. "Love," says the moral and chaste Euripides, "is the greatest school of wisdom and virtue. And of all the Powers that preside over human affairs, Cupid's sway is the sweetest to mortals; for, pouring joy unmixed into enamoured hearts, he fills them with mutual hope. Even his toils are pleasures, and his wounds relieving. May never friend of mine be exempt from the soothing smart! nor I be condemned to live among men devoid of love.—Attend, ye young! and listen, ye fair! fly not from the proffered bliss; but welcome the propitious God, and wisely use his heart-easing bounty." (Euripid. *apud* Stobæum.) The practice of this lesson is happily exemplified by Chaeremon, in a comparison of the influence of love to the effects of wine. "The juice of the grape," says he, "when mixed with water, produceth health and mirth; but wine, when drank pure to excess, occasions madness and mischief.



FURNISHED with such a profusion of imagery, the Græcian poets had little occasion for invention: they had only to make use of the popular creed and the popular legends, in order to form the finest system of fable, and the most beautiful assemblage of metaphor and allegory, that ever adorned the literature of any people.

THE Rise and Progress of Poetry in Greece, forms one of the most curious subjects of speculation that can possibly occupy the human mind, and is highly worthy of your Lordship's attention.

THE most early Græcian poets, whose names or compositions have reached our times, were enlightened sages; who delivered their doctrines in mythological language, in order to inspire their auditors with veneration, and to instruct them by means of allegorical imagery; scientific reasoning, or philosophic truth, being as little suited to their rude apprehensions, and untutored minds, as mild virtue was to their barbarous manners. Such were Orpheus, Linus, and others; who taught, in verse, the most sublime tenets, which they had acquired in Ægypt or Phœnicia, concerning the nature of the Deity, the Creation of the World, and that Providence by which it is governed<sup>74</sup>.

THE

mischief. In the same manner *love*, when moderate and gentle, is the source of pleasure and soft delight; but, when intensely hot, proves the most horrid and ungovernable passion in the human breast. CUPID, therefore, is armed with *two* Bows: one he bends, with the aid of the GRACES, for an happy smiling lot; and the other, with his *bandage on his eyes*, to the confusion and misery of the amorous pair." Chæmon, ap. Theophrast.

74. I have formerly (Lett. I.) had occasion to quote the beginning of the Orphic Hymn to PAN; and shall here add another passage, no less worthy of being addressed to the Creator and Governor of the Universe:

"By Thee Earth's endless plain was *firmly fix'd*;

"To Thee the Sea's deep-heaving surge gives way,

"And

## PART I

THE compositions of these poetical sages, which perhaps were not committed to writing, as letters were then little known in Greece, are now lost<sup>75</sup>. But a Phœnician fragment, preserved by Eusebius, seems to contain the Orphic account of the Creation of the World.

"THE beginning of all things was a dark breathing Air, or gale of darksome Breath, and turbid Chæos, obscure as Night: These were infinite, and without end of duration. But when this SPIRIT or Breath fell in love with its own Principles, and a mixture ensued, that mixture was called DESIRE; the source of all Creation. It did not know its own Creation; but from its conjunction with that SPIRIT sprang MOOT, slime; and from MOOT sprang the seed of Creation, and the Generation of the Universe. It was framed in the form of an EGG; and Matter issued forth, and the SUN, and the MOON, and the STARS, both small and great. Of the AIR, illumined by the Fiery Gleams from EARTH and SEA, were generated WINDS and CLOUDS; whence issued vast effusions of WATER from above. These, when separated, and drawn from their place by the sun's heat,

"And ancient Ocean's waves obey Thy voice;

"Ocean, who in his bosom laps the Globe.

"Nor less the fleeting Air, the vital draught

"That fans the food of every living thing;

"Or e'en the high-enthron'd all-sparkling eye

"Of ever-mounting Fire. These all divinē;

"Though various, run the course which thou ordain'it;

"And by thy wonderful Providence exchange

"Their several jarring natures, to provide

"Food for mankind o'er all the boundless Earth."

Ορφ. Υμν. πρὸ ΠΑΝΑ.

75. I say *lost*; for the Hymns that bear the name of Orpheus, and which are allowed to contain his doctrines, though very ancient, are not believed to be the genuine productions of that *savage-taming poet*. And his Theogonia is certainly lost.

met with in the Air *mutual shock*, and *begot* LIGHT-  
NING and THUNDER <sup>76</sup>."

LETTER  
VII.

To the *Mythical Poets* succeeded the *Military Bards*, who attended the Græcian chieftains during the Theban and Trojan wars, and in other hostile expeditions; who sung their exploits in their halls, after their return; and travelling over Greece, and the islands of the Ægean sea, widely spread their renown. From the songs of those Bards, as I have formerly had occasion to observe, Homer collected the materials of his incomparable *Iliad* <sup>77</sup>; which, as it was not the work of fancy, but a collection of historical facts, heightened by the charms of poetry, and blended with allegorical imagery suited to popular belief, contains a greater variety of characters, nicely discriminated, and pourtrayed with the pencil of truth, than any other ancient or modern composition.

As the object of the *Iliad* was to teach the necessity of union among military commanders, in displaying the distresses occasioned by the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon at the siege of Troy; the *Odyssey* had for its moral, the encouragement of wisdom and virtue under misfortunes, in the happy termination of the travels and sufferings of Ulysses. And in these two poems Homer has comprehended the *popular Creed*, and the *legendary History* of Greece to the Trojan war.

HESIOD, the cotemporary of Homer, being a man of a sedate and contemplative turn of mind, has furnished us, in his poem of *Works and Days*, with the first didactic composition. It has for its object AGRICUL-

76. Sanchuniathon, ap. Euseb. *Preparat. Evangel.*

77. See on this subject Warburton's *Divine Legation*, book iv. sect. v.

**PART I.** **TURE**; with references to the *Times* and *Seasons* best fitted for the labours of husbandry, according to the various soils and cultures, and adapted to the superstitious notions of the early Greeks. He has also followed the Mythical Poets; in giving an account of the *Creation of the world*, or the *Rise of the Universe*, under the name of a *Theogonia*, or *Generation of the Gods*<sup>78</sup>; all the *Parts* and *Powers of Nature*, as I have frequently had occasion to remark, being deified by Heathen superstition.

“To Homer and Hesiod succeeded the Elegiac and Lyric poets. The first Elegiac poets bewailed the miseries of the sorrowful times that followed the Trojan war; and sought consolation in shortening, by sensuality, the period of human life<sup>79</sup>. As these, if their compositions had been preserved, could present only pictures of local distress or dissolute manners, I

78. Hesiod's account of the Rise of the Universe is nearly the same with that of Sanchuniathon, but less philosophical. He gives the whole a *legendary air*; calculated to impose on vulgar credulity, and foster superstition. “First of all,” he makes the Muses say, “existed CHAOS: next in order the broad-bosomed EARTH,” or *Matter condensed*; “and then appeared LOVE,” or *Attraction*, “the most beautiful” of the Immortals. From CHAOS sprung EREBUS and dusky NIGHT; “and, from Night and Erebus, sprung ETHER and smiling DAY. “But first the Earth produced the STARY HEAVEN, commensurate to herself; and the barren SEA, without mutual love; then, conjoined “with COELUS,” the *Heaven*, “she bore the tremendous TITANS,” jarring principles of *Matter*. “The CYCLOPS were afterward engendered; BRONTES,” *Thunder*, “STEROPEs,” *Lightning*, “and ARGES,” the *flaming Bolt*. “Beside these, three other rueful sons were born to “Heaven and Earth, COTUS, BRIARIUS, and GYGES;” *Eruption, Hurricane, and Earthquake*”. Hesiod, *Theog. init.*

79. See *Discour. sur l'Elegie* et *Discour. sur les Poets Elegiaques*, par M. l'Abbe Souchay, et auct. cit. The elegant Minermus cannot be excepted from this general charge. He was the author of the LOVE ELEGY; (id. *ibid.*) consisting of alternate *Hexameter* and *Pentameter* verses, afterward used by all Greek and Latin Elegiac Poets; and the flow of which has been happily imitated in English Elegy, by the *quarten of ten syllables in alternate rhyme*.

I shall not offer them to your Lordship's attention. The Lyric poets are more worthy of regard, for many reasons. They present us with effusions of the human mind, under the influence of various passions; and naturally lead us to enquire after the *origin* of POETRY and MUSIC.

SOME critics have ascribed the origin of poetry to *Love*, some to *Religion*, and some to *War*; but men were surely Lovers, before they were Warriors or Devotees. I shall, therefore, assign it to *Love*. The intercourse of the sexes, gradually ripening sensibility, calls forth the first strong emotions of the youthful breast. Fancy, in that season of life, is warm; and bestows on the beloved object a thousand adventitious charms. As the tongue wants power to express the feelings of the enamoured heart, common language wants force to declare its raptures or paint its agitations. Fancy catches fire from the torch of admiration; and breathes, in disjointed phrases, the lover's flame. Hence *Love Songs*, as they are the first emanations of an ardent mind, have been the first poetical productions in most countries.

BUT Love, though the most early, is not the only strong passion in the human breast. After the formation of political society, other passions take the lead. As soon as Religion was called in to the aid of Legislation, that devotion which, in simple times, had been paid to Woman, was transferred to the Gods, and poured out in Hymns or *Sacred Songs*. Nor did priestcraft, in seeking to inspire veneration for pious ceremonies, alone take advantage of Poetry: the early legislators also called it in to their aid, and promulgated their institutions in verse<sup>so</sup>; for better securing the operation

<sup>so</sup> Aristot. *Problem*, sect. xix, prob. xxviii. *Ælian*, *Fav. Hist.* lib. ii, cap. xxix.

## PART I.

of their laws, through the influence of the *Muses*, the daughters of *MEMORY*<sup>81</sup>. And the *Muses* were ever ready to *sound the Charge to Battle*, to sing the *Triumphal Song*<sup>82</sup>, or record the *Actions of Heroes*.

MUSIC had the same origin with poetry<sup>83</sup>. The shepherd or herdsman sung the praise of his mistress; celebrated their happy loves, or bewailed his unreciprocated passion, in melody suited to the sentiment which his verses conveyed. To the voice succeeded the pipe or reed, through which the lover breathed his tender emotions; not expressed in language, but by the mute eloquence of the eye, unless when the beloved fair accompanied the sound of the reed with her voice; and either declared their mutual bliss, or lamented their unhappy lot<sup>84</sup>.

## MUSICAL

81. Hesiod. *Theog.*

82. The most ancient Triumphal Song is that of Moses, after the miraculous passage of the Arabian Gulf. "Thus sang Moses, and the children of Israel, this song unto the Lord:—" For he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he has become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them, they sank to the bottom as a stone. Thy right-hand, O Lord! is become glorious in power; thy right-hand, O Lord! hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against Thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of thy nostrils, the waters were gathered together: the floods stood upright, as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue; I will overtake, I will divide the spoil: my lust shall be satisfied upon them. I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto Thee, O Lord! amongst the Gods?" *Exodus*, chap. xv. ver. 1—11.

83. See *Premier Mém. sur les Chansons de l'Ancienne Grèce*, par M. de la Naeze.

84. Here we find, by a natural progression, the separation and re-union of

MUSICAL instruments, but especially *wind instruments*, were soon employed in the service of religion. And the harp or lyre, a *stringed instrument*, was very early in use among the Græcian chieftains and military bards<sup>85</sup>. The compositions of those bards, rapid, sublime, and wild, were naturally adapted to the lyre<sup>86</sup>; though they had not the perfect form of the higher ode, the merit of constructing which is due to the genius of Pindar<sup>87</sup>.

BUT before Pindar, who does not fall within the period under review, the Greeks had many celebrated lyric poets. Among those Archilochus, Terpander, Stesichorus, and Alcæus, are eminently distinguished by ancient critics: but as their writings, except a few fragments, are now lost, I shall not enter into a dissertation on their reputed merit<sup>88</sup>. Two Odes

of poetry and music. The enamoured swain first sung his own verses; to unburden his mind, or to please his mistress. He next breathed through his reed the air to which they were attuned; and when his mistress sung his verses, while he played the tune, poetry and music were reunited, though not in the person of the composer. The same thing happened in a more advanced stage of poetry and music. The Military Bards originally sung their verses, and afterward accompanied the song with the sound of the lyre. (Blackwell's *Life of Homer*, passim.) But as it was found that a good poet might have a bad voice, and be little skilled in touching the lyre or harp, the professions of poetry and music were separated, as we have seen, (Lett. VI.) on the re-establishment of the Pythian Games. But although the congenial professions were separated, for the pleasure of the admirers of the *sister-arts*, Poetry and Music were generally associated at all the Græcian festivals. The Ode was sung, and accompanied with instrumental music; though that music was not always composed by the poet, or executed either by his voice or instrument.

85. Hom. *Iliad*, et *Odys.* passim.

86. Blackwell, *Life of Homer*.

87. See *Discours. sur Pindare, et sur la Poësie Lyrique*, par M. de Charbonon, et auct. cit.

88. Several of those poets excelled no less in elegiac, than in lyric

## PART I

Odes of Sappho, the Lesbian poetess, and seventy of Anacreon, the Teian bard, furnish better room for critical examination.

SAPPHO appears to have possessed a soul highly susceptible of love, and her verses convey the soft sentiment in voluptuous excess<sup>89</sup>. But Sappho's love took an unaccountable direction: it turned upon her own sex. And the ardour of this *Sapphic* passion, is strikingly described in the celebrated little ode, pre-

composition. But as all their Elegies, as well as their Odes, have perished in the flux of time, or sunk a prey to barbarism, I shall transcribe an Elegy of a more early age; by David, king of Israel, the immortal Hebrew lyric poet. "And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son. "The beauty of "Israelis slain upon thy *High Places*: how are the mighty fallen!—" "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the "daughters of the Philistines rejoice; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, "neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there "the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as "though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the "slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not "back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they "were not divided. They were swifter than eagles, they were "stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul who "cloathed you in scarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments "of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst "of the battle!—O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine *High Places*. "I am distressed for thee, my brother! *very pleasant hast thou been unto* "me. Thy love for me was wonderful, *passing the love of women*. How "are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"—2 Sam. chap. i ver. 17—27.

89. A fragment of one of her pieces, seemingly written in early life, exhibits strong marks of her amorous character.

—"Cease, dear mother! cease to chide,

"I can no more the golden shuttle guide;

"While Venus thus, through every glowing vein,

"Asserts the charming youth's resistless reign."

Frag. Sappho.

served



served and applauded by Longinus. It may thus be paraphrased, for it cannot admit of translation:

LETTER  
VII.

“ Bled as the Gods the favour’d swain,  
“ Who sitting by thee tells his pain;  
“ Who hears thee speak, who sees thee smile,  
“ And sips thy ruby lip the while.  
“ When I behold thy blooming charms,  
“ My bosom beats with soft alarms;  
“ From vein to vein, a subtle flame,  
“ I feel, run thrilling through my frame;  
“ My soul is in love’s transports toss’d,  
“ My speech is gone, my voice is lost.  
“ Moist languors all my body seize,  
“ And all my blood cold tremors freeze;  
“ A dim suffusion veils my eyes,  
“ Unwonted sounds my ears surprise;  
“ My thobbing heart beats thick and high;  
“ I faint, I sink, and seem to die.”

BUT Sappho’s talent for lyric poetry is best displayed in her Ode to Venus; one of the most beautiful poems that antiquity has left us, and which has been translated into English verse with all the fire, spirit, and flow of the original<sup>90</sup>.

“ O Venus! beauty of the skies,  
“ To whom a thousand temples rise;  
“ Gaily false in gentle smiles,  
“ Full of love-perplexing wiles;  
“ O Goddess! from my heart remove,  
“ The wasting cares and pains of Love,

“ If ever Thou hast kindly heard  
“ A song in soft distress preferr’d,

90. This translation bears the name of Ambrose Phillips, but is supposed to have been executed by Joseph Addison. See Warton’s *Essay on the Genius of Pope*, vol. .

## PART I.

" Propitious to my tuneful vow;  
 " O gentle Goddess! hear me now:  
 " Descend, thou bright immortal guest!  
 " In all thy radiant charms confess.

" Thou once did'st leave Almighty Jove,  
 " And all the golden roofs above:  
 " The car thy wanton sparrows drew;  
 " Hovering in air, they lightly flew,  
 " As to my bower they wing'd their way,  
 " I saw their quivering pinions play.

" The birds dismiss'd, while you remain,  
 " Bore back their empty car again;  
 " Then you with looks divinely mild,  
 " In every heavenly feature smiled,  
 " And ask'd what new complaints I made,  
 " And why I call'd you to my aid?

" What frenzy in my bosom raged,  
 " And by what cure to be assuaged?  
 " What gentle youth I would allure,  
 " Whom in my arrful toils secure?—  
 " Who does thy tender heart subdue?  
 " Tell me, my Sappho! tell me who?

" Though now he shuns thy longing arms,  
 " He soon shall court thy slighted charms;  
 " Though now thy offerings he despise,  
 " He soon to thee shall sacrifice;  
 " Though now he freeze, he soon shall burn,  
 " And be thy victim in his turn.

" Coelestial Visitant! once more  
 " Thy needful presence I implore:  
 " In pity come and ease my grief,  
 " Bring my distemper'd soul relief;  
 " Favour thy suppliant's *hidden fires*,  
 " And give me all my soul desires."

ANACREON, though not devoid of feeling, diverted the anxieties of love by mirth and wine. And he has given us more perfect examples of gaily amorous and jovial songs, than any author in ancient or modern times. His allegorical imagery is altogether magical. Venus and Cupid, the Graces and the Muses, are perpetually at his command. And he has employed them in a manner that must for ever excite admiration, and communicate pleasure. He was the poet of taste and of conviviality; and although he lived in an age, when politeness was little understood in Greece, no poet ever had the talent of turning a compliment with more elegance, or of more powerfully awakening social joy. His jovial songs, however, it must be owned, have often a tendency to immerse the soul in sensuality. But those of the complimentary cast are generally free from such blame. I shall, therefore, attempt to imitate his Ode to WOMAN, as a specimen of his manner of writing:

“To all Creatures of the Earth  
 “Bounteous Nature, at their birth,  
 “Gave the aids, or gave the arms;  
 “To secure their lives from harms,  
 “To the Bull the front of steel,  
 “To the Horse the horned heel;  
 “Swiftness to the timorous Hare,  
 “Fur and fury to the Bear;  
 “To the Pard the deathful paw,  
 “The Lion the devouring jaw;  
 “MAN the unconquerable mind:  
 “What for WOMAN was behind?  
 “*Lowly Woman!* Yet in store  
 “Nature had one present more;  
 “Thee she gave the power to charm;  
 “Beauty all things can disarm.”

I SHALL afterward have occasion to trace the farther progress of Lyric Poetry, and to estimate the merit of

## PART I.

Pindar. In the mean time I shall transcribe one of his Olympic odes, as translated by Gilbert West, for the value of the sentiments it conveys.

## STROPHE.

“ To wind-bound mariners, most welcome blow  
 “ The breezy Zephyrs through the whistling shrouds ;  
 “ Most welcome to the thirsty mountains flow  
 “ Soft showers, the pearly Daughters of the Clouds ;  
 “ And when on virtuous toils the Gods bestow  
 “ Success, most welcome sound mellifluous Odes ;  
 “ Whose numbers ratify the voice of Fame,  
 “ And to illustrious worth insure a lasting name.

## ANTISTROPHE.

“ Such fame, superior to the hostile dart  
 “ Of canker'd envy, Pisa's chief attends :  
 “ Fain would my muse th' immortal boon impart,  
 “ Th' immortal boon which from high Heaven descends,  
 “ And now, inspir'd by Heaven, thy valiant heart,  
 “ Agefidamus ! she to fame commends ;  
 “ Now adds the ornament of tuneful praise,  
 “ And decks thy *Olive Crown* with sweetly sounding lays,

## EPODE.

“ But while thy bold achievements I rehearse,  
 “ Thy youthful victory in Pisa's sand,  
 “ With thee partaking in thy friendly verse,  
 “ Not unregarded shall thy Locris stand.  
 “ Then haste, ye Muses ! join the choral band  
 “ Of festive youths upon the Locrian plain :  
 “ To an unciviliz'd, and savage land,  
 “ Think not I now invite your virgin train ;  
 “ Where barbarous ignorance and foul disdain  
 “ Of social Virtue's hospitable lore,  
 “ Prompts the unmannered and inhuman strain  
 “ To drive the stranger from his churlish door ?”

91. I have already had occasion to remark, in opposition to Mr Mitford, and his coadjutor Mr. Wood, that although the early Greeks while barbarous, were hospitable, *all barbarians are not so kindly disposed* And I have the satisfaction to find Pindar, an enlightened Greek, of the same opinion.

“ A nation