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REFLEXIONS

On the CAUSES of

The RISE and FALL

OF THE

ROMAN EMPIRE.

Translated from the FRENCH of

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BARON DE MONTESQUIEU.

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PRINTER to the READER.

THE learned author of this work having fallen into two or three mistakes in relation to the Roman money, I shall take the liberty of pointing them out to the reader, to prevent his being misled by so great authority. That we may be the better understood, it will be necessary to open the subject a little from the beginning.

Pliny [a], who is the most particular on this head, tells us, that, from the time of Servius Tullius, till the year 485, brass was the only coin among the Romans; viz. the *as* of a pound weight, with some other pieces, which were subdivisions of it; as the *triens*, of four ounces; and *quadrans*, of three [b].

[a] Nat. Hist. l. xxxiii. c. 3.

[b] Pliny saies, on one side of the *as* was the head of Janus; and on the other, the beak of a ship, *Rostrum navis*; in *triente vero, et quadrante RATES*. And yet we find on the *asses*, which are now remaining, much the same form of the fore part of a ship, as on the *trientes*, and *quadrantes*. How then was *rates* the distinguishing mark of the two latter? The late worthy President of two literary Societies, and an ornament of every other, observed to me, that he was inclined to think Pliny for *rates* used the word *rationis*, or somewhat like it, to denote the *rate* or value, which was at first stamp'd *only* on those two coins, before any lower divisions of the *as* were coined. For thus we find four round balls express'd on the *triens*, signifying four ounces; and three on the *quadrans*, signifying three. The words of Pliny will thus be very clear: *Nota avis fuit ex altera parte Janus geminus, ex altera rostrum navis; in triente tres et*

iv *The* PRINTER *to the* READER.

When silver was coined, A. U. 485, *viz.* five years before the first Punic war, the *denarius* was so called from its being worth ten *asses*, or pounds of brass; *quinarius* worth five; and *sestertius*, worth two and an half.

About A. U. 490, in the first Punic war, the *as*, from a pound, or xii ounces, was lessened to two ounces; and the *denarius* was still worth only x *asses*; the *quinarius*, v, &c. as before.

A. U. 537, forty-seven years afterwards, the *as* was diminished to one ounce, and the subdivisions of it in proportion; and sixteen of them were now made equal to a *denarius*, as they continued ever afterwards.

A. U. 576 [c], when Papirius Turdus was tribune, the *as* was reduced to half an ounce.

From this general view of the alterations of the brass and silver coin of the Romans, the reader will naturally ask, What can the Baron mean, when, from the authority of a passage in the *Mostellaria* of Plautus, he would prove,

quadrante rationes, i. e. All the brass coin had on one side the head of Janus, on the other the beak of a ship; but on the *triens* and *quadrans* [the only subdivisions at first stamp] the value moreover of each was expressed. Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 229. confirms this sense, where, speaking of this very circumstance, he uses *cur navis forma*, and *causa ratis*, as terms promiscuous. He knew no difference between *navis* and *ratis*, on the coin, which was thought to discriminate them in the age of Festus.

[c] The editions of Ainsworth place it 586, when Papirius Carbo was prætor.

that

that in the first Punic war a soldier's pay was *six ounces* of brass a day, which he calls in the note *three asses of ten ounces* [c]. And yet it is certain, as we have now seen, that no *asses* of ten ounces were ever coined. We must suppose then he intended to say, what some others have advanced from the same authority of Plautus, that the pay was at that time *three asses of two ounces, ten of which asses were equal to a denarius.*

Ubi sunt isti plagipatidæ, ferritribacæ viri?

Illi, qui TRIUM NUMMORUM causa subeunt sub falas?

“Where are those fellows, who submit to be “shot at for *three PICES* a day?” But here, if with Lipsius [d] and the Baron we suppose by *nummi* to be meant *asses* of *two* ounces each, it is inconsistent with the age of the poet, who wrote under the second Punic war, when the *asses* were reduced to *one* ounce. If with Puteanus [e], that *asses* of *one* ounce are meant, it is inconsistent with Polybius, who tells us (as we shall see presently) that the pay was at this time *five asses* of *one* ounce: and it is not likely he should speak of *asses* which prevailed in his own age, and of a pay which was in use before. Against both it is contended, that Plautus always uses *nummus* for the *stater* or two drachms [f]; but undoubtedly never for

[c] Ch. xvi. p. 221.

[d] Elect. i. 2.

[e] De stipend. mil. c. 3.

[f] See particularly Plaut. De Pseudol. iii. 2. 19. and

the *as*. In short, the passage in Plautus has nothing to do with the soldiers pay: it is manifestly corrupted, and should probably be read thus, as a very ingenious friend has observed to me:

Ubi sunt isti plagipatidæ, ferritribaces viri?

VEL isti, qui trium nummorum causa subeunt falas?

Ubi illi, qui quindenis hastis corpus transfigi solent?

That is, "Where are the slaves, the GLADIATORS, the soldiers?" The last verse may be a compliment to the bravery of the Roman legions, which was then greatly distinguished. But whether it is so or not, the second line has not the least reference to their pay. Whatever is here meant by *nummi*, it is a sum far above the soldiers pay at that or any other time. If we take it for a *drachma* (as Plautus, we presume to say, always uses it; unless *aureus*, or *Philippus*, is mentioned, and then it is the half *aureus*) instead of *five asses*, it is forty-eight a day. Or, if for a *didrachma*, as Gronovius imagined, then twice as much. The Baron was misled by Lipsius, or rather by the Delphin editor of Plautus, who very roundly applies this passage to the soldiers. It is strange that Gronovius, in his edition, should let Lipsius's note pass without any notice of the mistake in it, since, as we have seen, he ex-

Salm. De modo usur. c. ii. Rab. Schelius, De stipendio milit. c. iii. Gronov. De pecun. vet. p. 123.

pressly

presly says elsewhere, that *nummi* always signifies *didrachmæ*.

Having then set aside the authority which misled the Baron, let us see what clearer light history affords us, towards forming a judgment of their pay, under different periods of the republic.

The Roman foot first received pay at the siege of the Veii [g], U. C. Var. 347, and (as Livy has been understood) the horse three years afterwards [b]. But he tells us, Servius Tullius [i] had designed for the horse a yearly pay before. How shall we reconcile this? The easiest answer is, That at the siege of Veii, the horsemen or equites provided their own horses [k], as the Epitome of Livy expresses it, and as it probably should be read in the history itself. Before, a horse was supplied by the government at 10,000 *asses* for ten years (that being the time prescribed for serving in the army before they could enjoy any office [l] at home) and the horsemen's pay was 2000 *asses* yearly; but afterwards 3000 *asses* were paid to the soldier, and he procured a horse at his

[g] Liv. iv. 59. v. 4. [b] Liv. v. 7.

[i] Ad equos emendos dena millia æris ex publico data, et quibus equos alerent, viduæ attributæ, quæ bina millia æris in annos singulos penderent. Liv. i. 43.

[k] Tum primum equis [suis] merere equites cæperunt. Liv. v. 7. the very words used in the Epitome.

[l] Polyb. vi. 17.

own expence. The full pay of the cavalry is called *triplex stipendium* [*m*], it being three times as much as was paid to the foot. Gronovius [*n*] therefore concludes the pay of the latter was originally a *M asses*, when they were at xii ounces each (which is two *asses* and $\frac{3}{4}$ of an *as* per day, reckoning, according to the custom of the ancients, 360 days to the year) and that this continued the pay till the second Punic war.

And yet it is not without probability that Schelius collects the yearly pay was originally, or at least before the second Punic war, *MC asses* in the year, somewhat more than three *asses* per day. In proof of this, it is observed, that at the end of that war, during which the horse, from a sense of the distress of the State, rejected [*o*] all pay for some time, Porcius Cato advised the senate to restore it to its ancient standard, and to give them 2200 [*p*] *æra* or *asses*. He takes no notice of the other third part of the pay, which perhaps had been continued without any interruption. Gronovius,

[*m*] Liv. v. Polyb. l. vi. 33.

[*n*] De pec. vet. l. iii. 2.

[*o*] Manavit ea privatorum benignitas ex urbe etiam in castra: ut non eques, non centurio stipendium acciperent; mercenariumque increpantes vocarent, qui accepisset. Liv. xxiv. 18.

[*p*] Nunc ego arbitror restitui oportere ne quo minus duobus milibus ducentis sit ærum equestrium. Catonis *crat. ap. Præciantum*, l. ii. Read *quo ne minus*, as Liv. xxiv. 6.

with

with somewhat of diffidence, thinks *æra equeſtria* cannot ſignify 2000 *aſſes to be paid to the horſe*, but 2000 *horſe*, i. e. *loca*, or *ſtipendiarum*, as *miles xx ærum*, a ſoldier who has received twenty years pay. In which ſenſe Cato's motion was, that they ſhould put 2200 horſe on the eſta bliſhment. But ſince *æs* is ſometimes uſed for the *as* (viz. *mille æris legiſſe*, Varro, L. L. viii. *Modius datur ære quarto*, Mart. xii. 62.) circumſtances particularly lead us to think it uſed ſo here. The number of cavalry varied according to the number of legions raiſed, 300 to a legion: ſince thoſe depended on theſe, it was needleſs for Cato to propoſe multiplying them. There was no ſettled ſtandard, except of pay, to which he could want them to be *reſtored*. The very neceſſity which induced the forces to relinquish pay, obliged the State to keep up the number of them; and we find the war carried on during the three laſt years of it, with xx, xvi, and xiv legions [p]. When times were mended, the propoſal was natural for reſtoring the pay to its former rate, not for augmenting the troops.

Here, if I may be allowed ſo ſmall a digreſſion, Gronovius, in reply to Salmalius, ſaies there were more *equites*, or knights, under king Servius, than under the ſecond Punic war. He ſaies ſo on a preſumption, that many were *knights*

[p] Liv. xxx. 2. 27. 40.

by *estate*, who had not pay, nor a *public horse* assigned them. And to the same purpose, the last learned writer on the Roman Senate, that many received *pay*, who were not knights. “The
 “title of *equites* was not given indiscriminately
 “to all those who served in the *Roman cavalry*,
 “*ry*, but to those only, who, by their estates,
 “were placed in the equestrian class [q].” *Cavalry*, and not *equites*! what name then shall we find for them? He means, though they were *cavalry* or *equites*, they were not all of the *equestrian* order. But we will presume, against Dr. Chapman, Gronovius, Sigonius, and other great names, in the first place, that though many might have the qualification for knights, the *census equestris*, yet none were so, till they were placed on the establishment by the censors, and had a horse assigned them at the public expence. *2dly*, That the *Roman* or *Legionary* horse, till the time of the Social war, consisted of none but such knights so established; a standing militia, who seem to have been admitted by the censors to a third part of pay, an allowance for a public horse; till they were drawn out as occasion required, and put on whole pay, *æra equestris*, by the consuls. This we have formerly observed on another occasion: but for further proof of it must now

[q] Dr. Chapman, p. 16.

refer

refer to Schelius, in his Comment on Hyginus in Grævius's Thesaurus, vol. ix. and to Grævius's Preface in vol. i. To return to our subject :

Under the second Punic war, the pay was, as Polybius tells us [r], two *oboli* a day. The *obolus* was the sixth part of a *drachm* or *denarius*, now raised to xvi *asses*; consequently two *oboli* were something above five *asses*, i. e. $\frac{4}{5}$. But this was as near as Polybius could express it in his language, and perhaps he did not intend any greater precision. So that, instead of three *asses*, or six *æ.* of brass in the first Punic war, the pay was five *asses*, or five *æ.* in the second, as the Baron describes it; in weight of brass diminished a sixth, in number of *asses* raised above a third; instead of a IIS. and half an *as*, it was now a IIS. and an *as*; instead of 110 $\frac{2}{3}$ *den.* in the year, now 112 $\frac{2}{3}$ *den.* Pliny [s] saies the *denarius*, when raised to xvi *asses*, in the soldiers pay was still valued at x only, i. e. in regard to their former pay of 1000 *asses*, upon every ten they received six additional *asses*; in the year 660 *asses*, and an advance of 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ *den.* or 40 *asses* more; making in all 1800 *asses*. Or take it in their daily pay, when the *denarius* went for ten *asses*, the soldier had three *asses* per day; when for sixteen, he had five, i. e. he was paid just in the same

[r] Lib. vi. 37. [s] Nat. Hist. xxxiii. 13. ed. Hard.

manner,

manner, as he was before the *asses* were reduced. Polybius and Pliny say the same thing only in different words. If, lastly, we should say, that the pay was originally 1125 *asses*, and that 675 were added to the new pay, to make up the value of the old, *viz.* 112 $\frac{1}{2}$ *den.* it would be more exactly conformable to Pliny. So that without any variation in silver, instead of an old *den.* of x *asses*, the soldier received a new *den.* of xvi. And what hinders this from being the case? The passage in Livy, concerning the pay of king Servius's horse, admits of various interpretations, and might be no precedent for the foot 150 years afterwards. Cato, as is usual in round numbers, might designedly omit mentioning the odd parts above the hundred: in this very speech it follows, *De duobus millibus actum est*; when his words before were, *quo ne minus duobus millibus DUCENTIS.* 'Tis certain Livy [t] alludes to the pay of 112 $\frac{1}{2}$ *den.* even before silver was coined. He saies, the Campanian knights, who refused to join their countrymen in their revolt against the Romans, U. C. Var. 414, had each a yearly pension assigned them of 450 *denarii*; which is exactly four times 112 $\frac{1}{2}$; the pay of the foot, as we have

[t] Liv. viii. 11. Denarios nummos quadringenos quinquagenos, i. e. of English money, 15*l.* sterling reckoning the denarius at 8*d.*

seen, under the second Punic war; and we now add, perhaps under the first. Scaliger throws out *denarios*, and understands *asses*. Mr. Hook, following him [u], saies the pension was near thirty Skillings;—a poor reward for so signal fidelity. No, the Romans assigned them for life a quarter more than usual pay, and made the revolters raise it. See the procedure against the Latin colonies, Liv. xxix. 15. If we leave out *denarios*, it will be hard, I believe, to find *nummos* used for *asses*.

This continued to be the pay in silver thro' the remainder almost of the republic; though the *as*, U. C. Var. 576, being sunk to half an ounce, the pay (in number of *asses* still the same) in weight was only $2\frac{1}{4}$ *oz.* Julius Cæsar [w] doubled it. Accordingly the soldiers in a mutiny under Tiberius complain that they hazarded their lives for ten [x] *asses* a day, or v *oz.* which is 3600 *asses*, or 225 *denarii* in the year. Harduin, strangely mistaking the passage in Pliny, makes the pay advanced to a *denarius* a day under the second Punic war: which leaves no room for Julius Cæsar's doubling it, and so contradicts the testimony of

[u] Rom. H. st. vol. i. p. 393.

[w] *Le ionibus stipendium in perpetuum duplicavit.*
Suet. Cæs. xxvi.

[x] Tacit. Annal. i. 17.

Suetonius as well as of Polybius. Say, Julius Cæsar raised it to a *denarius*. Then, instead of *doubling* it, he made it above *triple* to what it was. Unless we suppose, that, when the *as* was reduced to half an ounce, the pay was eight *asses*, or iv ounces per day; in the year, 2880 *asses*, or 180 *denarii*; and that Julius Cæsar made it 360 *denarii*.

But this ill agrees with what Suetonius [y] and Zonaras [z] relate, who, compared together, prove three payments in the year of lxxv *denarii* every *four* months, ccxxv in the whole; and that a fourth payment was added by Domitian of lxxv *den.* in all ccc *den.* or 4800 *asses*, paid at four equal payments, every *three* months, which is, as the Baron observes, $13\frac{2}{3}$ *asses* per day, *i. e.* twelve *aurei* per annum, as before there were only *nine*.—Here then we may reason backwards, since 225 *den.* was the pay before Domitian, it must have been only 112 $\frac{1}{2}$ before Julius Cæsar doubled it. It is further observable, that though we consider the pay of the ancients, as we do that of the moderns, at so much per day, yet it was paid by even portions, every three months, four months,

[y] Addidit et quartum stipendium militi, aureos ternos. Suet. in Domit. vii.

[z] Πεντε γὰρ κ' ἐβδομήκοσι δραχμαὶ ἐκάστῃ λαμβάνοντος ἑκχτὸν ἐκέλευσε δίδεσθαι. Zonar. l. xi. c. 19. p. 580. ed. Par.

or twelve months. The several regulations then will stand thus :

	oz.	asses per day	per ann.	den.
From Servius Tullius	12	2½	1000	
First Punic war	6	6½	1100	110
Second Punic war	5	} 5	1800	112½
U. C. 576	2½			
Julius Cæsar	5	10	3600	225
Domitian	6³	13½	4800	300

I have added the estimates of the *as* and *denarius*, because I do not see how a judgment can be formed of the value of the soldiers pay under the different periods in brass only, without taking into consideration the proportion it bore to silver. And I have pursued this subject the rather, because Mr. Kennet, who is often commended to save the trouble of examination, treats it with great inaccuracy: telling us, That after Julius Cæsar doubled the pay, Augustus raised it to *ten asses* a day; and Domitian to *xxv*: he would say, Augustus to *xxv den.* per *month.* and Domitian to *xl asses* per *day*, designing to follow Lipsius, who puts the *den.* at *x asses* under Polybius, and at *xii* under Augustus; but to all the errors in him, he adds confusion of his own.

Having entered thus far on the Roman money, shall I presume to submit one or two passages on this head in the Baron's larger work, to his second consideration? If they are small mistakes,

mistakes, I am sure no writer has more excellencies to counterbalance them.

He thinks [a], against the opinion of several authors, that the law obtained by L. Valerius Flaccus under Sylla, and mentioned by Paterculus [b], related to the lessening of interest, not to the dissolving part of the principal. The Romans called twelve per cent. *asses usuræ*; therefore *quadrans*, he thinks, signified a fourth part of that interest, or three per cent. He saies, “*Quadrans cannot signify a fourth part of the principal according to the language of the Latin writers; in that sense they said, tertia et quarta pars, not quadrans.*” Under favour, I would ask (1) what shall we think of this passage, *Fecit palam te ex libella, me ex teruncio* [c]. Whatever sum was here bequeathed (for which the reader may consult Gronovius) it is plain a principal sum is specified, not an interest. So in Martial, l. xi. 51.

Mittebas libram : QUADRANTEM, Garrice, mittis :
Saltem SEMISSEM, Garrice, mitte mihi.

Again, l. viii. 9.

Solvere DODRANTEM nuper tibi, Quincte, volebat
Lippus Hylas : nunc vult solvere dimidium.

[a] L'Esprit des Loix, l. xxii. c. 22.

[b] In hujus locum susceptus Valerius Flaccus, turpissimæ legis auctor, qua creditoribus quadrantem solvi jufferat : cuius facti merita eum pœna inter biennium consecuta est. Patere. l. ii. c. 23.

[c] Cic. ad Attic. vii. 2.

The commentators may interpret the last two passages of interest, but he that considers them impartially will make a different judgment. For (2) so far is *quadrans*, &c. from being the language of the Latin writers for *interests*, that it is rarely or never so used in the singular number, if we may believe two great masters [d] in this and every other branch of literature; and one of them assigns a very good reason for it. The Romans computed their interest by the month, whence Horace [d], *tristes mihi pro venere kalendæ*. It was often paid, however, only half yearly, so that one payment contained the interests of several months. Thus *asses usuræ* was one per cent. per month. Consequently, *quadrantes usuræ* (not *quadrans*) was the fourth part of that interest, or three per cent. per annum. (3.) The conditions of this Valerian law are described in Sallust [f] thus: *Ac novissime memoria nostra propter magnitudinem æris alieni, volentibus omnibus bonis, ARGENTUM ÆRE solutum est*. It is plain that *solvere quadrantem* in Paterculus, is the same with *solvere argentum ære* in Sallust. Now if *asses*, a brass coin, were paid for *sesterces*, a silver coin, at that time worth iv asses, a fourth part of the

[d] Salm. De modo usur. c. vii. Gronov. De pec. vet. l. ii. c. 13. p. 225.

[e] Salm. l. 1. § 17.

[f] Bell. Cat. § 34.

b principal

principal was paid for the whole. But suppose *quadrans* to signify three per cent. or a fourth part of *asses usuræ*, it will be impossible to reconcile it with ARGENTUM *cere solutum*. The Romans denominated all their rates of interest by *asses*, and the subdivisions of the *as*; is it possible they should describe the lowering such *brass* interest (if I may use the term) by saying they paid brass for SILVER? A late learned Editor indeed of Cicero's *Familiar Epistles* [g] maintains, that Sestertius is not, as is commonly understood, the name of any particular coin. He is not the only person who has been of this opinion: Sperlingius [h] went before him in it. It is however undoubtedly a false one; the passages we have been examining are alone a clear confutation of it: the representations of this piece of money in books with the mark *II S*, and the cabinets of the curious, will further give him ocular conviction; in particular, I believe, that repository of learned curiosities, which is open to all the lovers of them, and which supplied him with the MS. of these Epistles. But what I would most recommend to the Reader's admiration on this occasion is, the happiness of our numerous translators of Sallust in the passage before us. The best of them dif-

[g] Vol. i. p. 452.

[h] De nummis non cufis, p. 229, 230.

cretely slides over the difficulty:— *in consideration*, saies he, *of the universal pressure of debts, public authority intervened; and with the unanimous voice of every good citizen, the creditors were obliged to take a composition.* He leaves out, what his original tells us,— *of five skillings in the pound.* The author of a *free translation* saies, *brass was made to pass in payment for silver,* WEIGHT FOR WEIGHT. He had better have gone no further than *word for word.* The *as* was at this time half an ounce, the *denarius* the seventh of an ounce, and worth *xvi asses*: so that brass was to silver as 1 to 56. consequently the composition of the debtors would, at this rate, amount to not above $4 \frac{1}{4} d.$ in the pound: and if the money pound was, as is usually reckoned in round sums, 100 *denarii*, it would not come to so much. A composition, which the legislature would hardly have been at the trouble of saving; but would with a better grace have cancelled the debt.

In the former law we have brass offered us for silver, a similar fraud has deceived the Baron, with many others, in the interpretation of the Voconian Law. Few monuments, he observes, have reached us of it [i], and as it has hitherto been spoken of in a most confused manner, he

[i] L'Esprit des Loix, l. xxxiii. c. 1.

will endeavour to clear it up. "The Voconian
 " law, he says, was made to hinder the women
 " from growing too wealthy; for this end it
 " was necessary to deprive them of large inhe-
 " ritances, and not of such as could not give
 " rise to luxury. Thus we find in Cicero
 " (Orat. against Verres, l. i. 41.) that women
 " *were rendered incapable of succeeding to*
 " *those only who were rated high in the censor's*
 " *books. Qui census esset, which Dio explains*
 " *of him who had a hundred thousand, i. e.*
 " *of him who had the first census, as we may*
 " *see in Livy, l. i. and Dion. Halicarn."* Now,
 with submission, here seems something of that
 uncertainty and confusion, which most other
 writers have fallen into, who have treated of
 this law. 1. Cicero is supposed to say, that
 women are prohibited from succeeding to those
 only who were *rated high in the censor's books*,
 without specifying what that high rate was,
 which laid them under this incapacity. 2.
 Dio is said to explain this high rate at *a hundred*
thousand, and yet to leave his reader in the dark
 whether it was so many pounds or pence. And
 3. it is interpreted by the Baron (not by Dio)
 to be one who had the *first census* according to
 Servius Tullius's institution. Now that was a
 thousand *asses æris gravis*. But Dio's words,
 in the age he wrote, were clear and determinate
 for

for a different *sum* and a different *sense*; who says the law forbade women ὑπὲρ δύο ἡμισυ μυριάδας κληρονομεῖν [*k*], to inherit above two myriads and a half of DRACHMS, for that was the coin the Greek [*l*] writers always understood, as the Latin writers did sesterces. The Romans therefore would call this sum c thousand *nummi* or sesterces, which, at 2 *d.* each, amount to 833 *l.* 6 *s.* 8 *d.* of English money. How the learned Baron could extract from Dio c thousand any things, without understanding sesterces, as he ought, is not very conceivable. It must be observed then, 4. that the law in Dio does not limit the sum which the *testator* was to be worth, but that only which the *heirefs* was to inherit; which was absolutely (without regard to the testator's high or low rate in the cenfor's books) c thousand HS.

But it was Afconius, who, on the passage cited from Cicero [*m*], imposed on the Baron. Cicero, entering upon some arbitrary proceed-

[*k*] Dio, l. lvi. p. 578.

[*l*] If the reader doubts of this, besides the passages cited by Perizonius on this subject, Diss. ii. p. 144. 169. 171. he may consult the learned comment on the Marmor Sandvicense, p. 29, 30. But Plutarch in Antonius is express: μυριάδας ἐκέλευσε πέντε ἢ εἴκοσι δούηναι τῆτο Ρωμαῖσι δεκίης καλῶσι, twenty-five myriads [of drachms] the Romans called decies, or a million HS.

[*m*] Cic. in Verrem, l. i. Act. ii. c. 41.

ings of Verres in his prætorship, says [n], “ P. Annius Mellus dying when C. Annius Sacerdos was prætor, and not being registered in the censor’s books, made, as nature directed, and the law allowed, his only daughter his heiress.” Of the words *neque census esset* Asconius offers two interpretations; one that which I have now given; the other (*inconsistent* as well as *false*) that which the Baron, after many other learned men, has unwarily adopted [o]. This interpretation of Asconius is *inconsistent* with itself, because it supposes those to be meant in the Voconian law who were worth c *thousand sesterces*, and yet to be the same who under Servius Tullius had the first census, and were rated at c *thousand asses*, a sum, which, when the Voconian law passed U. C. Var. 585. would amount only to xl *thousand sesterces*. It is *false* on many accounts: 1. It is contrary to Dio’s clear and determinate sense of the law. 2. It supposes c *thousand HS.* to be sufficient to raise a man to the first class, at a time when

[n] P. Annius Mellus mortuus est, C. Annio Sacerdote prætore. Is cum haberet unicam filiam, *neque census esset*, quod cum natura hortabatur, lex nulla prohibebat, fecit ut illam bene suis heredem institueret.

[o] *Neque centum millia sestertertium possideret: nunc more veterum censi dicebantur, qui centum milia possessione detulissent: hujusmodi adeo facultates c. ass. vocabantur.*

it would scarce be sufficient to place him in the lowest. The very year in which this law was passed, it was ordered, that those citizens, who were not possessed of land in the country worth xxx thousand *sesterces*, besides money and estates in town, should be passed over unregarded in the census [p]. The next year L. Paullus, the father of Scipio Æmilianus, is said to have died not rich, though he left [q] above lx talents, or, as Plutarch, xxxvii *myriads* [of drachms.] Much less could c thousand *sesterces* be deemed a fortune in Cicero's time. Augustus, it is observed, hearing that some who were banished, lived too high, debarred them from possessing more than cxxv thousand *sesterces* [r], indulging them even under a restraint of indigence a greater sum than Asconius makes a mark of opulence. But what effectually overthrows this interpretation, P. Annius Afellus, who is here said *non census*, was, as appears from this very oration, a senator. Now the lowest qualification in Cicero's time was (if we may conclude from what it was under Augustus [s],

[p] Liv. xlv. 15.
8°. Plut. in vit.

[q] Polyb. p. 1427. 1454.

[r] Μᾶτ' ἔτιον [ὅπερ δώδεκα ἢ ἡμισίαν] μυριάδας ἔχον, ne plus quingentis millibus numinum possideret. Dio, anno 764. Sylburgius's edition has by an unlucky mistake kit out the words included crochet.

[s] Suet. in Aug. c. 41.

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DCCC thousand HS. Servius's distribution of the people into classes, upon which Asconius's interpretation is founded, had long since received great alterations [t]. Another distinction prevailed of three *orders*, Senators, Knights, and People, arising likewise from different estimates of wealth. Whence Livy [u], under the second Punic war, joins *census* and *ordines* as terms in some respect equivalent.

After all, the reader will ask, why did Cicero insert so useless a circumstance concerning Annius Afellus, that he was not enrolled, *neque census esset*? When the Voconian law passed, each citizen was obliged to be enrolled as often as a lustrum was held by the censors, that so he might be entitled to pay his just proportion of taxes. By laying then a restraint upon all who were enrolled at the last lustrum, and should be so for the future [w], it laid a restraint on every citizen. But it was soon evaded two ways, either by a man's making over his estate to be held in trust for an heiress, as in Cic. De finib. ii. 17. or by neglecting to be

[t] See Livy, i. 43. and this author, c. viii.

[u] Edixerunt comites, ut privati ex CENSU ORDINIBUSQUE remiges darent.—Hunc consensum fenatús equester cetero est secutus, equitibus ordinis plebs. Liv. xxvi. 35, 36.

[w] Sanxit in posterum, qui post A. Posthumium, Q. Fulvium censes centus esset, ne heredem virginem, neve mulierem faceret. Cic. in Verr. l. i. 42.

enrolled,

enrolled, as it is here alledged of Afellus. The inconveniencies which attended this expedient at the making of the law, the degeneracy of the times soon removed. After the Macedonian war was ended, when taxes ceased, and the censor's office was remisly executed [*x*]; when Marius enlisted into the legions, citizens of the lowest class, estimated only *per capita*; when the very office of censor was intermitted for sixteen years, as it was in the time of Cicero [*y*]; when enrollment became no longer a proof a man's being even a citizen [*z*], the law of course grew quite obsolete [*a*]; and the *Perpetual Edict* of the Prætor (which was made so U. C. Var. 686.) totally abolished it, allowing to women the right of succession without reserve [*b*]. Augustus, with a different spirit from that which occasioned the Law, revived in some measure the restraint in it. The late civil wars having exhausted the state of its subjects, that emperor passed the Julian Papian Law, by which those women only were en-

[*x*] See L'Esprit des Loix, l. xxiii. c. 21.

[*y*] See Afcon. in Cæcil. Divinat. c. 3. This intermission may be traced in the Fasti Capitolini, U. C. 667—683.

[*z*] Cic. pro Archia poet, c. 5.

[*a*] Obliteratam et opertam civitatis opulentia. Noct. Att. xx. 1.

[*b*] So Tribonianus tells us § 3. Instit. de leg. agn. Succ.

titled to legacies, who by being mothers had contributed to repair their country's loss. So that this was not (as the Baron after Dio thinks) *a dispensation of the prohibition of the Voconian law* [c] then subsisting, but a branch of that obsolete law revived and new modified.

I have advanced little more than what Perizonius has observed in his *Dissertation* on this law [d], which Grævius has abridged in the orat. against Verres before cited. Since their day many learned men have treated of this subject, and yet have neglected to enjoy the light afforded them. Is it not strange to see Mr. Hearne, at the end of his Livy, sweat through three or four pages under difficulties, which had been cleared up to his hands in the Dissertation which he had elsewhere made use of in his Notes on that historian? The prime mistake has got possession of our dictionaries, and, with many others, will probably long continue there. We are told from Asconius that *centi* signifies men possessed of c thousand *sesterces*, which, as we have seen, he saies indeed, and unsaies, and is not true whether we understand HS. or *asses*; but only signifies *estimated* in the censor's book, without regard to any certain *rate*.

[c] L'Esprit des Loix, l. xxxvii. c. 1.

[d] Daventræ 1679.

I would

I would here dismiss this subject; but it must not be dissembled that I see one particular will be objected to by Dr. Chapman, before cited, who maintains “that *no estate* was prescribed as a necessary qualification for a member of the senate before the time of Augustus[e].”—He allows however, that, “as the questorship was in the *latter* ages of the commonwealth a kind of necessary step to the dignity of senator; and as few persons could obtain even that, without the assistance of that power and influence, which is the natural consequence of a great fortune, it is certainly true in fact that the house was filled with men of the largest property [e].” A concession sufficient for our present argument against Asconius: but still, as this is a matter of new enquiry, I would beg leave to submit to that learned author one or two considerations.

1. He supposes the original qualification of the equites, *viz.* c thousand *asses*, to have continued till the time of Roscius Otho. Servius Tullius, dividing the people into six classes, placed the equites at the head of the highest, which was rated at one hundred thousand *asses*. Therefore, it is concluded, they were all along

[e] Gruchius imagines it introduced by Julius Cæsar. De comitiis, i. c. 4.

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possessed of an estate of that value [*f*]. But what sort of qualification shall we think so small a sum was, at a time when (as we have seen before) xxx thousand *sesterces*, or cxx thousand *asses*, would entitle a citizen to be only of the lowest class; at the time this Voconian law was made, when many a common citizen was under the temptation of leaving a daughter or niece four times as much, besides a provision for his son? If the old qualification prescribed by Servius Tullius was what the censors were to attend to, it would of course have been obliterated before Roscius, just as the Voconian law was, by the growing opulence of the city. There was then, *in effect*, either no qualification required during great part of the republic, or a higher. U. C. 539, in the fifth year of the second Punic war, the consuls by an edict required all those, who at the foregoing census possessed, or had since acquired from 50,000 *asses* to 100,000, to provide one sailor for six months; all from 100,000 to 300,000, to provide three for a year; from 300,000 to a million, five; all above, seven; and the sena-

[*f*] Dr. Chapman on the Roman senate, p. 17. It is certain U. C. Var. 351, some qualification was prescribed to the equites. *Quibus census equestris erat.* Liv. i. 7. One would be tempted to think the knights had even now a higher census than the first class; it is not said, *primæ classis census*, but *census equestris*.

tors

tors eight. We see from these five *classes* (the sixth being only *capite censi*, and contributing nothing to the charges of the state) that Servius's *classes* were quite changed; and that, placing the equites next to the senators, instead of c thousand *asses*, they were worth a million, which, when the census was taken, was 400,000 HS. the very rate appointed for them *afterwards* by Roscius Otho. How then did that knight merit so well of his order, when he fixt the census of it at 400,000 HS. It must be observed, U. C. 537, before this contribution, exigencies were such, that the *asses* were reduced xvi to a denarius, and the census probably (still rated by the same number of *asses*) sunk above a third; till Otho raised it to its former standard by estimating it in silver, *i. e.* reckoning ten *asses* to the denarius, as Pliny saies was *always* done in the pay of the soldiers. This possibly is the key to the passage before us, which the two polite writers on the Roman Senate, have turned contrary ways, that they might unlock the difficulty. Dr. Middleton' saies, from hence
“ it is CERTAIN the Senators generally, in these
“ early times, possessed a much larger propor-
“ tion of wealth than even DCCC thousand SES-
“ TERCES.” It is *certain* he has falsly taken HS. for *asses*, and raised every sum above twice as high
as

as he ought [g]. Dr. Chapman fetches out the estimates of the senators *to amount at a MEDIUM to 1,040,000 asses, or 416,000 HS.* “Now “the first senatorian census (says he) under “Augustus was, on the authority of Dio, but “400,000 IIS. whence the reader may judge “of the *improbability* of its being greater by “16,000 IIS. at a time when the Roman “riches were so comparatively inconsiderable, “as *under* the second Punic war.” If he means, at the time when the contribution was made, his number of *asses* amounts only to 260,000 IIS. He should have said, just *before* the commencement of the second Punic war. For it appears that the estimates here mentioned were taken U. C. Var. 534, when that war was scarce begun, and after the republic had been superior to its most formidable rival in a former. Now under Augustus, Dio saies, p. 540. the *senatorian census* was *fixt*, i. e. sunk to 400,000 HS. *in consideration of the calamities of the civil wars*, which as they pull a nation back for many years, might well induce that emperor to lower the Senatorian census to what the Equestrian was before. But low as these Senators

[g] — qui supra trecenta millia usque ad decies *ÆRIS*, quinque nautas; qui supra decies, septem; senatores, octo. Liv. xxiv. 11. *that these who were rated from 2400 l. to 8000 l. should furnish five sailors, &c.* Middleton. Rom. Senate, p. 102. He should have said *from 1000 l. to 3333 l. 16 s. 8 d. &c.*

estates

estates can possibly be brought, it is a far more reasonable sum than that to which the stories told by Valerius Maximus will depress them; who represents the Senate in great munificence advancing out of the treasury xi thousand asses [*b*] (or 22 *l.* 18 *s.* 4 *d.*) to the proconsul Cn. Scipio's daughter for her fortune. Believe it who can. When I see Alconius and Dr. Middleton confounding HS. with *asses*, I can easily imagine some such error has misled this writer of *Memorables*: we learn from unquestionable authority, that ladies in those days had much higher fortunes; that within a few years afterward, P. Scipio Africanus the elder, first cousin of the forementioned lady, promised to give, first and last, with each of his two daughters; xxv talents [*i*], which is two millions four hundred thousand *asses*, in our money 5000 *l.*

2. It is observable, that when the Roman Senators obtained the privilege of sitting by themselves at the shews in the theatre, U. C. Var. 560, the people complained of the fastidiousness of the *wealthy* [*k*]; notwithstanding

[*b*] Val. Max. iv. 4. Dr. Chapman saies 35 *l.* 10 *s.* 5 *d.* He is too indulgent in pursuance of his preceding mistake: the *denarius* was worth xvi *asses* then current; not only x, as he computes.

[*i*] Polyb. Excerpt. p. 1460. Ed. 8vo.

[*k*] Horum ædilitium ludos Romanos primum senatus a populo secretus spectavit—ad DLVIII in promiscuo spectatum esse? Cur DIVES pauperem confessorum fastidiret? Liv. xxxiv. 44.

they

they had then the *equites* among them to keep them in countenance. About the same time T. Quinctius, in reforming the cities of Thesfaly [1], in general nominated Senators and Judges according to the value of their estates. Whence shall we think he drew this plan, but from the example of his parent city, Rome? If the conformity was kept exactly, the passage may seem to imply that the censors sometimes put men of distinguished abilities on the roll without having a Senatorian estate: but it shews, that in general there was a certain census for that superior order. Thus again, among the regulations prescribed to the Halesni by C. Claudius the Prætor, and to the people of Agrigentum by Scipio, one was that the Senators should be possessed of an estate to a certain value [m]. I use here the authority, as well as argument, of Dr. Middleton, who cites this passage of Cicero to prove the Senatorian age among the Romans from what they directed to other nations. If it is good for a certain age, it is equally so for a certain estate.

3. Though we allow Asconius mistaken when he treats, as he pretends, *de more veterum*, yet his authority is good when he speaks

[1] A censu MAXIME senatum et iudices legit. Liv. xxxiv. 15.

[m] Cic. in Verrem, ii. 49, 50.

almost of his own times. If so, his testimony is decisive for a Senatorian census prevailing at least in the latter end of the republic. *A Roman citizen, saies he, was specified in the censor's books, either by his prænomen, his family name, or surname; from his tribe or curia in which he was enrolled; or from his effects, as being a Senator or Knight [n].* Again; 'Tis certain, during the time of the republic, a *census* was prescribed for the judges by the Aurelian, Pompeian, and the Julian laws [o]. Now our Afconius tells us [p], that by the Pompeian law, *the judges were to be, differently than heretofore, nominated out of the three orders of Senators, Knights, and Centurions; all of them to be of the highest census.* Sigonius [q] thinks this *judicial census* was not only distinct from that of

[n] *Moris autem fuit, saies he, ut, cum aliquis civis Romanus ostendendus esset, significaretur aut a prænomine suo, aut a nomine, aut a cognomine; aut a tribu in quo censeretur; aut a curia; aut a censu, ut si erat senator, equeſtve Romanus.* Afcon. ad Cic. in Verrem, i. 8.

[o] Cic. Philipp. i. 8.

[p] *Ut amplissimo ex censu, ex centuriis, aliter quam ante, lecti judices, æque tamen ex illis tribus ordinibus, res judicarent.* Afcon. in *orat. contra L. Pison.* c. 39.

[q] Significat senatores legi potuisse, qui octingenta milia possiderent; equites, qui quadringenta; at judices e senatorio ordine, aut equestri, nisi qui *amplissimo censu* essent; id est, qui supra senatorium, aut equestrem censum possiderent, constitui non licuisse. Sigon. *De antiquo jure civium Rom.* l. ii. c. xviii.

knights and senators, but higher than the lowest limits of each, i. e. that the *judicial knights* were to be possessed of more than what was prescribed to the knights in general, and the *judicial senators* of a larger census than that prescribed to the senators. This seems to me, with submission, a forced interpretation. Many had been the contests between the knights and senators for the judicial power. Pompey's law compromised the difference; it laid open the distinction of order, but with this restriction, that though the judges were not to be all senators, they should all be possessed of a senator's estate, *ex amplissimo censu lecti*: which I should interpret *ex censu ordinis amplissimi*.—But whatever was this *judicial* census, Pliny ascribes it [r], jointly with the *senatorian*, to the effects of luxury; and he would hardly so ill distinguish times as to jumble two institutions, which began, one, as we have seen, under the republic; the other, as Dr. Chapman imagines, under the emperors. We will apply, with this accurate writer [s], the particulars enumerated by Pliny to the times of affluence and of *agonizing liberty*. But we need not wait for those

[r] *Posteris laxitas mundi et rerum amplitudo damno fuit, postquam senator censu legi ceceptus, judex fieri censu.* Plin. N. H. xiv. proem.

[s] Rom. Senate, p. 120, 121.

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days till the reign of Augustus. Though it is allowed, by the conquest of Egypt [t], a new fund of riches flowed into his capital, yet more great fortunes seem to have been raised before the civil war broke out, when whole armies were supported by single persons, than were ever afterwards. The donations made by that emperor prove at once the immense wealth he was possessed of, and the want of it in others. He supplied not only the legal qualifications to knights and senators, but even the deficiencies of the treasury. We learn from the inscription at Ancyra, that, at four donations [u] only, he distributed to 250,000 men iv hundred HS. i. e. about 3 *l.* 6 *s.* 8 *d.* a man; in all, near 210,000 *l.* each time. In short, he is recorded there to have given away above xvii

[t] See hereafter, p. 235.

[u] The learned Mr. Chishul, under the fourth donation is fallen into a mistake, Tab. iii. l. 14. p. 174. “*Quæ meæ congiaria pervenerunt ad [sesterti] VM millia nunquam minus quinquaginta et ducenta.*” p. 191. That is, as he understands it, each donation amounted to 50,200,000 HS. and thence concludes, that since each man received cccc HS. 125,000 always partook of the donation. But *millia quinquaginta et ducenta* can signify no more than 250,000. And do not here *express* HS. but the number of receivers whom he searches for by *implication*, and should be read undoubtedly, “*pervenerunt ad civi VM MILLIA,*” &c. as l. 15. “*trecentis et viginti millibus PLEBEM.*” and l. 19. “*acceperunt id HOMINVM circiter centum et viginti.*” and again, l. 21. “*ea millia HOMINVM paulo plura quam ducenta fuerunt.*”

millions of pounds sterling, besides one donation which time has effaced.

4. Suetonius and Dio compared together, lead us to think a qualification was required before the time of Augustus. Suetonius [*w*] says, “ Augustus ENLARGED the senatorian census, and from eight hundred thousand HS. RAISED it to one million two hundred thousand HS.” Dio [*x*], that Augustus “ fixed it first at four hundred thousand HS. “ in consideration of the misfortunes which “ many families had felt by the civil wars ; “ and afterwards raised it to a million.” Now, according to Dr. Chapman’s hypothesis, the result of what is here delivered is, that the senatorian census was fixed by Augustus first at four hundred thousand HS. then at eight hundred thousand HS. then a million, lastly at one million two hundred thousand. A strange mark of inconstancy in the emperor, and more strange inaccuracy in the historians ; the former passing over in silence the first rate ; the latter, the second. But we see prudence in the emperor, and method in the historians, if we sup-

[*w*] Senatorum censum ampliavit, et pro octingentorum millium summa duodecies HS. taxavit ; supplevitque non habentibus. Suet. in *Aug.* c. 41.

[*x*] Τούτων γὰρ [δέκα μυριάδων] τὸ βασιλικὸν τίμημα τὴν πρώτην εἶναι ἔταξεν, ἑπίτα κῆ εἰς πέντε κῆ εἰκοσι μυριάδας αὐτὸ προήγαγε. Dio, l. iv. p. 532. vid. & p. 540.

pose that Suetonius describes the senatorian census as Augustus *found* it, and as he *left* it at his death; and that Dio mentions the rate to which Augustus *first sunk* it, and *afterwards raised* it. 'Tis true indeed Dio says nothing here of Suetonius's one million two hundred thousand HS. But he mentions the occasion of that report elsewhere, telling us, "That
" Augustus supplied several senators and knights
" with the money which was wanting to
" their qualification, and to fourscore of them
" gave *thirty myriads of drachms* [γ]," the very sum which in the Roman style is *duodecies*, or one million two hundred thousand HS. This munificent act of Augustus probably misled Suetonius to think that emperor ultimately raised the census to so high a rate:

I shall forbear all further enquiries except one: whence is it, that I should thus presume to differ from my betters? But as errors in money accounts are daily adjusted without offence; it would be strange, if any should be taken where we are less interested, where the sums are Roman. If I have not transgressed the decent bounds of liberty, which is as ne-

[γ] Τοῖς μὲν πλείοσι τὸ τετραγμῆνον τίμημα ἀνεπλήρωσεν, ὀγδοήκοντα δὲ τισὶ καὶ ἐς τριάκοντα μυριάδας τῶτο ἐπήυξησε. Dio, lib. iv. p. 557.

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cessary to the welfare of the literary, as of the political republic, I will trust to the Baron's natural, I may add national, humanity to pardon me. I claim no merit to myself, nor will I decide on the different titles of others to it :

Perierunt iudice formæ

Pergama.

I have only produced Gronovius, Perizonius, &c. who have varied from the Baron in computing fractions, while he has been holding the balance of kingdoms, and, no less a philosopher than statesman, accounting for the several operations of the commercial, political, and social world, on as regular principles as our Newton has fixed those of the natural : nay, what is more, has reconciled the discordancy, I had almost said madness of Religion, to the uniformity and rectitude of Reason.

N. B. I have supposed the denarius to weigh 62 grains troy, under the republic and the first emperors, as Mr. Greaves has proved it ought to weigh, and experience that it did weigh. He reduces it, and Dr. Arbuthnot after him, &c. to $7\frac{3}{4}$ d. English, taking our ounce at a round sum to be 5 s. But silver being in reality at 5 s. 3 d. per ounce, the denarius amounts to 8 d. which is thus more easily computed without any fraction, and is more exactly the truth.

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C O N T E N T S.

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REFLECTIONS
ON THE
Causes of the Rise and Fall
OF THE
ROMAN EMPIRE.

CHAP. I.

The infancy of Rome. The wars it sustained.

WE must not form to ourselves an idea of the city of Rome, in its infancy, from the cities which exist at this time, unless we have in view those of the Crim Tartars, built for the stowing and securing of plunder, cattle, fruits, and other produce of the country. The antient names of the chief places in Rome, are all relative to this use*.

The city was even without streets, unless we will give this name to the continuation of roads which center in it. The houses were

[* Does the author mean Forum boarium, olitorium, &c.]

straggling, built after an irregular manner, and very small; for the inhabitants being always either at their work, or in the public square, were very seldom at home.

But the greatness of Rome soon appeared in its public edifices. Works which * have raised, and still raise the greatest idea of its power, were formed under its kings. They began already to lay the foundation of that city which was to be eternal.

ROMULUS, and his successors, were engaged in almost perpetual wars with their neighbours, to increase the number of their citizens, their women, and their territories. They used to return to the city, loaded with the spoils of conquered nations; and these spoils, which consisted of wheat sheaves and flocks, used to fill them with the greatest joy. Such is the origin of triumphs, to which that city, afterwards, chiefly owed its grandeur.

The strength of the Romans was greatly increased by their union with the Sabines, a stubborn, warlike people, resembling the Lacedæmonians, from whom they sprung. Romulus † copied the form of their shields, which were large, and used them ever afterwards instead of the small buckler of Argos: And it is to be observed, that the circum-

* See the astonishment of Dionysius Halicarnassus on the aquæducts built by Tarquin, Ant. Rom. lib. iii. They are still subsisting.

† Plutarch's life of Romulus.

stance which chiefly raised the Romans to the sovereignty of the world, was, their laying aside their own customs as soon as they met with better among the people they conquered; and it is well known that they fought successively against all nations.

It was a maxim then among the republics of Italy, that treaties made with one king were not obligatory towards his successor. This was a sort of law of nations * among them. Thus every thing which had been submitted to by one king of Rome, they thought themselves disengaged from under another, and wars continually begot wars.

The reign of NUMA, being long and pacific, was very well adapted to leave the Romans in their humble condition; and had their territory in that age been less confined, and their power greater, it is probable their fortune would have been fixed for ever.

One cause of the prosperity of Rome was, that all her kings were great men. No other history presents us with an uninterrupted succession of such statesmen and such captains.

In the infancy of societies, the leading men in the republic form the constitution; afterwards, the constitution forms the leading men in the republic.

* This appears throughout the history of the kings of Rome.

TARQUIN took upon him the government, without being elected by the senate, * or the people. His power became hereditary: he rendered it absolute. These two revolutions were soon followed by a third.

SEXTUS, the son of TARQUIN, by violating the chastity of LUCRETIA, took such a step as has seldom failed to drive tyrants from the cities over which they presided; for when once a people are made strongly sensible, by the commission of so enormous a crime, of the slavery to which they are reduced, they immediately form a desperate resolution.

A people may suffer, without murmuring, the imposing of new tributes, since they are not certain but that some advantage may accrue to themselves from the disposal of the monies so levied; but when an insult is put upon them, they are affected with their misfortune only; and this they aggravate, by fixing to it the idea of all the calamities which can possibly happen.

It must however be confessed, that the death of Lucretia, did no more than occasion, accidentally, the revolution which happened; for a haughty, enterprising, bold people, confined within walls, must necessarily either shake off the yoke, or soften the asperity of their manners.

* The senate named a magistrate in the interregnum, who was to make choice of a king. This election was to be confirmed by the people. Dion. Halicarn. lib.ii. iii. iv.

From the situation of things at that time, this was the result, either that Rome should change the form of its government, or continue for ever a small, poor monarchy.

Modern history furnishes us with a very remarkable example of what happened at that time in Rome; for as men have been sensible of the same passions in all ages, the occasions which give rise to great revolutions, are various, but the causes are for ever the same.

As HENRY VII. of England increased the power of the commons, merely to humble the nobility; so SERVIUS TULLIUS enlarged the privileges of the people, in order to depress the senate; but the people growing afterwards bolder, ruined each of the monarchies under which they lived.

No flattering colours have been employed in the picture which is left us of TARQUIN; his name has not escaped any of the orators who declaimed against tyranny; but his conduct before his calamities, which it is evident he foresaw, his gentleness and humanity towards the conquered, his beneficence to the soldiers, the arts by which he engaged such numbers to endeavour at his preservation, the edifices he raised for the public use, his courage in the field, the constancy and patience with which he bore his misfortunes, a twenty years war he either carried on, or caused to be carried on against the Romans, though deprived of his kingdom, and very poor; these things,

and the resources perpetually found, prove manifestly, that he was no contemptible person.

The rank or place which posterity bestows, is subject, as all others are, to the whim and caprice of fortune: Woe to the reputation of that monarch who is oppressed by a party which after becomes the prevailing one; or who has endeavoured to destroy a prepossession that survives him.

The Romans, after having banished their kings, appointed consuls annually, a circumstance which contributed to raise them to so exalted a pitch. In the lives of all princes there are certain periods of ambition, and these are afterwards succeeded by other passions, and even by indolence; but the commonwealth being governed by magistrates who were changed every year, and who endeavoured to signalize themselves in their employment, in the view of obtaining new ones, ambition had not a moment to lose. Hence it was that these magistrates were ever persuading the senate to stir up the people to war, and pointed out to them new enemies every day.

This body (the senate) was inclined enough to do this of their own accord; for, being quite tired of the complaints and demands of the people, they endeavoured to remove the occasion of their disquiet, and to employ them in foreign wars.

Now

Now the common people were generally pleased with war, because a method had been found to make it beneficial to them, by the judicious distribution that was made of the spoils.

Rome being a city in which neither trade nor arts flourished, the several individuals had no other way of enriching themselves but by rapine.

An order and discipline was therefore established in the way and manner of pillaging *, and this was pretty near the same with that now practised among the inhabitants of Lesser Tartary.

The plunder was laid together, and afterwards distributed among the soldiers; not even the minutest article was lost, because every man, before he set out, swore not to embezzle any thing; besides that the Romans were, of all nations, the most religious observers of oaths, these being considered as the sinews of their military discipline.

In fine, those citizens who staid at home, shared also in the fruits of the victory; for part of the conquered lands was confiscated, and this was subdivided into two portions, one of which was sold for the benefit of the public, and the other divided by the commonwealth, among such citizens as were but in poor circumstances, upon condition of their paying a small acknowledgment.

* See Polybius, lib. x.

As the consuls had no other way of obtaining the honour of a triumph, than by a conquest or a victory, this made them rush into the field with unparalleled impetuosity; they marched directly to the enemy, when force immediately decided the contest.

Rome was therefore engaged in an eternal, and ever obstinate war: Now, a nation that is always * at war, and that too from the very frame and essence of its government, must necessarily be destroyed, or subdue all other nations; for, these being sometimes at war, and at other times in peace, could never be so able to invade others, nor so well prepared to defend themselves.

By this means the Romans attained a perfect knowledge in the military arts: In transient wars most of the examples are lost; peace suggests different ideas, and we forget not only our faults, but even our virtues.

Another consequence of the maxim of waging perpetual war, was, that the Romans never concluded a peace but when they were victorious; and indeed, to what purpose would it be to make an ignominious peace with one nation, and afterwards go and invade another?

In this view, their pretensions rose always in proportion to their defeat; by this they

* The Romans considered foreigners as enemies: *Hofis*, according to Varro, *De lingua Lat. lib. iv.* signified at first a foreigner who lived according to his own laws.

surprized the conqueror, and laid themselves under a greater necessity of conquering:

Being for ever obnoxious to the most severe vengeance; perseverance and valour became necessary virtues: And these could not be distinguished, among them, from self-love, from the love of one's family, of one's country, and whatever is dearest among men.

The same had happened to Italy, which besel America in late ages; the natives of the former, quite helpless and dispersed up and down, having resigned their habitations to new comers, it was afterwards peopled by three different nations, the Tuscans *, the Gauls, and the Greeks. The Gauls had no manner of relation or affinity either with the Greeks or Tuscans; the latter formed a society which had its peculiar language, customs, and morals; and the Grecian colonies, who descended from different nations that were often at variance, had pretty separate interests.

The world in that age was not like the world in ours: Voyages, conquest, traffick, the establishment of mighty states, the invention of post-offices, of the sea-compass, and of printing; these, with a certain general polity, have made correspondence much easier, and given rise, among us, to an art, called by the name of Politics: Every man sees at one

* It is not known whether they were originally of that country, or only a colony; but Dion. Halicarnassensius is of the former opinion, lib. i.

glance whatever is transacted in the whole universe; and if a people discover but ever so little ambition, all the nations round them are immediately terrified.

The people of Italy had * none of those engines which were employed in sieges: And further, as the soldiers were not allowed any stipend, there was no possibility of keeping them long before a town or fortress: Hence it was, that few of their wars were decisive: These fought from no other motive, but merely to plunder the enemy's camp or his lands; after which, both the conqueror and the conquered marched back to their respective cities. This circumstance gave rise to the strong resistance which the people of Italy made, and at the same time to the inflexible resolution the Romans formed to subdue them; this favoured the latter with victories, which no way depraved their morals, and left them in their original poverty.

Had the Romans made a rapid conquest of the neighbouring cities, they would have been in a declining condition at the arrival of Pyrrhus, of the Gauls, and of Hannibal; and, by a fate common to most governments in the world,

* D. Halicarnass. declares so expressly, lib. ix. and this appears by history: They used to attempt the scalade of cities with ladders. Ephorus relates that Artemon the engineer invented large machines to batter the strongest wall. Pericles was the first who made use of them at the siege of Samos, as Plutarch tells us in the life of that general.

they

they would have made too quick a transition from poverty to riches, and from riches to depravity.

But Rome, for ever struggling, and ever meeting with obstacles, made other nations tremble at its power, and at the same time was unable to extend it; and exercised in a very narrow compass of ground, a train of virtues that were to prove of the most fatal consequence to the universe.

All the people of Italy were not equally warlike: Those who inhabited the eastern part, as the Tarentines and the Capuans, all the cities of Campania, and of Græcia Major, were quite immersed in indolence and in pleasures; but the Latins, the Hernici, the Sabines, the Æqui, and the Volscians were passionately fond of war: These Nations lay round Rome; the resistance they made to that city was incredible, and they surpassed them in stubbornness and inflexibility.

The Latin cities sprung from Alban colonies, which were founded * by LATINUS SYLVIUS: Besides their common extraction with the Romans, there were several rites and ceremonies common to both; and SERVIUS TULLIUS had † engaged them to build a temple in Rome, to serve as the center of union of the two nations. Losing a battle near the lake

* As appears from the treatise entitled *Origo Gentis Romanæ*, ascribed to Aurelius Victor.

† D. Halicarnass,

Regillus, they were subjected to an alliance, and forced to associate in the * wars which the Romans waged.

It was manifestly seen, during the short time that the tyranny of the decemvirs lasted, how much the aggrandizing of Rome depended on its liberty. The government seemed to have lost the † soul which animated even to the minutest part of it.

There remained at that time but two sorts of people in the city, those who submitted to slavery, and those who, for their own private interest, endeavoured to enslave the rest. The senators withdrew from Rome as from a foreign city; and the neighbouring nations did not meet with the least resistance from any quarter.

The senate having found means to give the soldiers a regular stipend, the siege of Veii was undertaken, which lasted ten years. But now a new art, and a new system of war, were seen to arise among the Romans; their successes were more signal and conspicuous; they made a better advantage of their victories; their conquests were greater, they sent out more colonies; in fine, the taking of Veii proved a kind of revolution.

* See in D. Halicarnass. lib. vi. one of the treaties concluded with this people.

† These Decemviri, upon pretence of giving written laws to the people, seized upon the government. See D. Halicarnass. lib. xi.

But

But all this did not lessen their toils: If, on one side, they attacked with greater vigour the Tuscans, the Æqui, and the Volscians; for this very reason they were abandoned by the Latins and the Hernici their allies, who were armed after the same manner, and observed the same discipline with themselves; this engaged the Tuscans to form new alliances; and prompted the Samnites, the most martial people of all Italy, to involve them in a furious war.

After the soldiers received pay, the senate no longer distributed to them the lands of the conquered people, upon whom other conditions were now imposed; they were obliged, for instance, to pay the army a certain quota for a time, and to send supplies of cloaths and corn.

The taking of Rome by the Gauls did no way lessen its strength; almost the whole army, which was dispersed rather than overcome, withdrew to Veii; the people sheltered themselves in the adjacent cities; and the burning of Rome was no more than the setting fire to a few cottages of shepherds.

C H A P. II.

Of the science of war, as practised by the Romans.

AS the Romans devoted themselves entirely to war, and considered it as the only science, they therefore bent all their thoughts,

thoughts, and the genius with which they were informed, to the improvement of it: Doubtless a god, says * Vegetius, inspired them with the idea of the legion.

They judged that it would be necessary to arm the foldiers who composed the legion with weapons, whether offensive or defensive, of a stronger and † heavier kind than those of any other nation.

But as some things must be done in war, which a heavy body is not able to execute, the Romans would have the legion include within itself a band of light forces, which might issue from it in order to provoke the enemy to battle, or draw back into it in case of necessity; they also would have this legion strengthened with cavalry, with archers, and flingers, to pursue those who fled, and compleat the victory; that it should be defended by military engines of every kind, which it drew after it; that every evening this body should entrench itself, and be, as Vegetius ‡ observes, a kind of strong-hold.

* Lib. ii. cap. 1.

† See in Polybius, and in Josephus, *De bello Judaico*, lib. ii. a description of the arms of the Roman foldiers. There is but little difference, says the latter, between a Roman foldier and a loaded horse. “ They carried (says Cicero) provision for fifteen days, necessaries of all sorts, and whatever they should have occasion for in throwing up trenches. As to their arms, they were no more incumbered with them than with their hands.”

‡ Lib. ii. cap. 25.

But

But that the Roman foldiers might be able to carry heavier arms than other men, it was neceffary they fhould become more than men; and this they became by perpetual labour which increafed their vigour, and by exercifes that gave them an activity, which is no more than a juft diftribution of the ftrength we are invigorated with.

It is obferved in this age, that the * immoderate labour which foldiers are obliged to undergo, deftroys our armies; and yet it was by incredible labour that the Romans preferved themfelves. The reafon I take to be this; their toils were continual and uninterrupted, whereas our foldiers are ever fhifting from the extremes of labour to the extremes of idlenefs, than which nothing can poffibly be more deftructive.

I muft here take notice of what authors † relate concerning the training up of the Roman foldiery. They were inured to the military pace, that is, to walk twenty miles, and fometimes four and twenty, in five hours. During thefe

* Particularly the throwing up of the ground.

† See in Vegetius lib. i. and in Livy, lib. xxvi. the exercifes which Scipio Africanus made the foldiers perform after the taking of Carthago Nova. Marius ufed to go every day to the Campus Martius, even in his extreme old age. It was customary for Pompey, when fifty-eight years of age, to arm himfelf cap-a-pee, and engage in fingle combate with the Roman youths. He ufed to exercife himfelf in riding, when he would run with the fwifteft career, and hurl the javelin. Plutarch in the lives of Marius and Pompey.

marches,

marches, they carried burthens of three score pounds weight; they habituated themselves to running and leaping, armed cap-a-pee; in their * exercises they made use of swords, javelins, and arrows, double the weight of common weapons; and these exercises were carried on without intermission.

The camp was not the only military school; there being, in Rome, a place in which the citizens used to perform exercises (it was the Campus Martius): After their fatigues † they plunged into the Tyber, to accustom themselves to swimming, and cleanse away the dust and sweat.

We have no every just idea of bodily exercise: The Man who assiduously applies himself to it, appears to us rather in a contemptible light, inasmuch as the far greater part of his exercises have for their object nothing more than self-gratification: Whereas, among the ancients, every exercise, even down to that of dancing, made a part of the art military.

With us moderns a deep knowledge in the use of warlike weapons is become ridiculous; for since the custom of single combats was introduced, fencing has been regarded as the sciences of quarrellome fellows or cowards.

Those who criticize Homer for inspiring his heroes with strength, dexterity, and agility of body, should hold Sallust ridiculous, who

* Vegetius lib. i.

† Idem ibid.

celebrates Pompey * for running, leaping, or carrying a burthen as well as any Man of his time.

Whenever the Romans thought themselves exposed to any danger, or were desirous of repairing some loss, it was a constant practice among them to invigorate and give new life to their military discipline. Are they engaged in a war with the Latins, a people no less martial than themselves? MANLIUS reflects upon the best methods of strengthening the command in the field, and puts to death his own son, for conquering without his orders. Are they defeated before Numantia? SCIPIO ÆMILIANUS immediately removes the several blandishments, which had enervated them. Have the Roman legions past under the yoke at Numidia? METELLUS wipes away their ignominy, the instant he has obliged them to resume their ancient institutions. MARIUS, that he may be enabled to vanquish the Cimbri and the Teutones, begins by diverting the course of † rivers; and SYLLA employs in such hard labour his soldiers, who were terrified at the war which was carrying on against Mithridates, that they sue for battle, to put an end to their hardships.

PUBLIUS NASICA made the Romans build a fleet of ships, at a time when they had no

* *Cum alacribus saltu, cum velocibus cursu, cum validis, recte certabat.* Fragm. of Sallust by Vegetius. B. i. cap. 9.

† Frontin. Stratagem. lib. i. cap. 11.

occasion for such a force: These people dreaded idleness more than an enemy.

Aulus Gellius † gives no very good reasons for the custom among the Romans of letting soldiers bleed who had committed a fault; the true reason is, that strength being the chief qualification of a soldier, this was the means of adding not to his weakness, but to his disgrace.

These men thus inured were generally healthy and vigorous: We do not find by historians, that the Roman armies, which waged war in so great a variety of climates, fell often a prey to diseases; whereas in the present age we daily see armies, without once engaging, perish and melt away, if I may use the expression, in a single campaign.

Desertions are very frequent among us for this reason, because the soldiers are the dregs of every nation, and not one of them possesses, or thinks himself possessed of, a certain advantage which gives him a superiority over his comrades. But among the Romans they were less frequent; it being scarce possible that soldiers, raised from among a people naturally so haughty and imperious, and so sure of commanding over others, should demean themselves to such a degree, as to cease to be Romans.

† Lib. x. cap. 8.

As their armies were not great, they were easily subsisted: The commander had a better opportunity of knowing the several individuals; and could more easily perceive the various faults and misdemeanours committed by the soldiery.

The violence of their exercises, and the wonderful roads they built, enabled them to make long and speedy marches. Their sudden presence damped the spirits of their opposers: they shewed themselves, especially after some unfortunate event, at a time when their enemies were in that state of negligence which is generally consequent on victory.

In the battles fought in our age, every single soldier has very little security and confidence, except in the multitude; but among the Romans, every individual, more robust and of greater experience in war, as well as more inured to the fatigues of it, than his enemy, relied upon himself only. He was naturally endued with courage, or in other words, with that virtue which a sensibility of our own strength inspires.

As no troops in the world were, in any age, so well disciplined, it was hardly possible that in a battle, how unfortunate soever, but some Romans must rally in one part or other of it; or, on the other side, but that the enemy must be defeated in some part of the field: And, indeed, we find every where in history, that whenever the Romans happened to be over-

powered at the beginning, either by numbers, or the fierceness of the onset, they at last wrested the laurel out of the enemy's hand.

Their chief care was to examine, in what particular their enemies had an advantage over them, and when this was found, they immediately rectified it. They accustomed themselves to behold the blood and the wounds of the Gladiators. The cutting swords * of the Gauls, and the elephants of Pyrrhus intimidated them but once. They strengthened their cavalry † first, by taking the bridles from the horses, that their impetuosity might be boundless; and afterwards by intermixing them with Velites ‡: When they understood the excellence of the Spanish || sword, they quitted their own for it. They baffled all the art of

* The Romans used to present their javelins, when the Gauls struck at them with their swords, and by that means blunted them.

† At the time that they warred against the lesser nations of Italy, their horse was superior to that of their enemies, and for this reason, the cavalry were composed of none but the ablest bodied men, and the most considerable among the citizens, each of whom had a horse maintained at the public expence. When they alighted, no infantry was more formidable, and they very often turned the scale of victory.

‡ These were young men lightly armed, and the most nimble of all the legion. At the least signal that was given, they would either leap behind a horseman, or fight on foot. Valerius Maximus, lib. ii. Livy, lib. xxvi.

|| Fragm. of Polybius cited by Suidas in the word μάχαιρα.

the most experienced pilots, by the invention of an engine which is described by Polybius. In fine, as Josephus observes *, war was a subject of meditation to the Romans, and peace an exercise.

If any nation boasted, either from nature or its institution, any peculiar advantage, the Romans immediately made use of it: They employed their utmost endeavours to procure horses from Numidia, bowmen from Crete, slingers from the Balears. and ships from the Rhodians.

To conclude, no nation in the world ever prepared for war with so much wisdom, and carried it on with so much intrepidity.

C H A P. III.

The Methods by which the Romans raised themselves to Empire.

AS the people of Europe, in this age, have very near the same arts, the same arms, the same discipline, and the same manner of making war; the prodigious fortune to which the Romans attained, seems incredible to us. Besides, power is at this time divided so disproportionably, that it is not possible for a petty state to raise itself, merely by its own

* De bello Judaico, lib. ii.

strength, from the low condition in which providence has placed it.

This merits some reflexions, otherwise we might behold several events without being able to account for them ; and for want of having a perfect idea of the different situation of things, we should believe, in perusing ancient history, that we view a set of men different from ourselves.

Experience has shewn perpetually, that an European prince who has a million of subjects, cannot, without destroying himself, keep up and maintain above ten thousand soldiers ; consequently, great nations only are possessed of armies.

But the case was different anciently with regard to commonwealths : For this proportion between the soldiers and the rest of the people, which is now as one to an hundred, might, in those times, be, pretty near, as one is to eight.

The founders of ancient commonwealths had made an equal distribution of the lands ; This circumstance alone raised a nation to power ; that is to say, made it a well regulated society : This also gave strength to its armies ; it being equally the interest (and this too was very great) of every individual, to exert himself in defence of his country.

When laws were not executed in their full rigour, affairs returned back to the same point in which we now see them : The avarice of
some

some particular persons, and the lavish profuseness of others, occasioned the lands to become the property of a few ; immediately arts were introduced to supply the reciprocal wants of the rich and poor ; by which means there were but very few soldiers or citizens seen ; for the revenues of the lands that had before been employed to support the latter, were now bestowed wholly on slaves and artificers, who administered to the luxury of the new proprietors ; for otherwise the government, which, how licentious soever it be, must exist, would have been destroyed : Before the corruption of the state, the original revenues of it were divided among the soldiers, that is, the labourers : after it was corrupted, they went first to the rich, who let them out to slaves and artificers, from whom they received by way of tribute a part for the maintenance of the soldiers. And it was impossible that people of this cast should be good soldiers, they being cowardly and abject ; already corrupted by the luxury of cities, and often by the very art they professed ; not to mention, that as they could not properly call any country their own, and reaped the fruits of their industry in every clime, they had very little either to lose or keep.

In the survey * of the people of Rome, some time after the expulsion of the kings, and in

* This is the survey mentioned by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, lib. ix. art. 25. and which seems to me to be the same he speaks of at the end of his sixth book, made six years after the expulsion of the kings.

that taken by Demetrius Phalereus * at Athens, the number of inhabitants was found nearly equal; Rome had four hundred forty thousand, Athens four hundred thirty-one thousand. But the survey at Rome was made at the time when its establishment was come to maturity, and that of Athens when it was quite corrupt. We find that the number of citizens grown up to manhood, made at Rome a fourth part of its inhabitants, and at Athens a little less than the twentieth: the strength of Rome therefore, to that of Athens, was at these different times almost as four to twenty, that is, it was five times larger.

Agis and Cleomenes † observing, that instead of thirty thousand citizens, (for so many were at Sparta in Lycurgus's time) there were but seven hundred, scarce a hundred of whom were possessed of lands; and that all the rest were no more than a cowardly populace: they undertook to revive the laws enacted on this occasion; and from that period Lacedæmonia recovered its former power, and again became formidable to all the Greeks.

It was the equal distribution of lands that at first enabled Rome to soar above its humble condition; and this the Romans were strongly sensible of in their corrupted state.

This commonwealth was confined to narrow bounds, when the Latins, having refused to

* Ctesicles in Athenæus, lib. vi.

† See Plutarch's life of Cleomenes.

succour them with the troops which had been* stipulated, ten legions were presently raised in the city only: Scarce at this time, says Livy, Rome, whom the whole universe is not able to contain, could levy such a force, were an enemy to appear suddenly under its wall: a sure indication that we have not risen in power, and have only increased the luxury and wealth which incommode us.

Tell me, would TIBERIUS GRACCHUS say † to the nobles, Which is the most valuable character, that of a citizen or of a perpetual slave? Who is most useful, a soldier, or a man entirely unfit for war? Will you, merely for the sake of enjoying a few more acres of land than the rest of the citizens, quite lay aside the hopes of conquering the rest of the world, or be exposed to see yourselves dispossessed by the enemy, of those very lands which you refuse us?

C H A P. IV.

Of the Gauls. Of Pyrrhus. Parallel between Carthage and Rome. The War of Hannibal.

THE Romans were engaged in several wars against the Gauls: A thirst of glory, a contempt of death, and an inflexible resolution

* Livy, 1 Decad. lib. vii. This was some time after the taking of Rome, under the consulship of L. Furius Camillus, and App. Claudius Crassus.

† Appian.

of conquering, were equal in both nations, but the weapons they used were different; the bucklers of the latter were small, and their swords unfit for execution; and, indeed, the Gauls were cut to pieces by the Romans, much after the same manner as the Mexicans, in these latter ages, by the Spaniards; and, a surprising circumstance is, that though these people were combating perpetually with the Romans, they yet suffered themselves to be destroyed one after another, without their ever being sensible of, enquiring after, or obviating the cause of their calamities.

PYRRHUS invaded the Romans at a time when they were strong enough to oppose the power of his arms, and to be taught by the victories he obtained over them: From him they learned to entrench themselves, as also the choice and proper disposition of a camp: He accustomed them to elephants, and prepared them for mightier wars.

The grandeur of PYRRHUS was confined merely to his personal qualities. Plutarch * informs us, that he was obliged to begin the war of Macedonia, from his inability to maintain any longer the six thousand foot, and five hundred horse in his service. This prince, sovereign of a small country, which has never made the least figure since his time, was a military rambler, who was continually forming

* In his life of Pyrrhus.

new enterprizes, because he could not subsist but by enterprizing.

Tarentum, his ally, had much degenerated from the institution of the Lacedæmonians, her ancestors *. He might have done great things with the assistance of the Samnites; but they were almost quite destroyed by the Romans.

As the CARTHAGINIANS grew wealthy sooner than the Romans, so they were sooner corrupted: Thus whilst at Rome, public employments were made the reward of virtue only, and no other emolument accrued from them than honour, and a preference in toils; at Carthage, the several advantages which the public can bestow on particular persons were venal, and every service done by such persons was there paid by the public.

A monarchy is not dragged nearer to the brink of ruin by the tyranny of a prince, than a commonwealth by a lukewarmness and indifference for the general good. The advantage of a free state is, that the revenues are employed in it to the best purposes; but where does not the reverse of this happen! The advantage of a free state is, that it admits of no favourites; but when the contrary is seen, and instead of the friends and relations of a prince, great fortunes are amassed for the friends and relations of all persons who have any share in the government; in this case an universal ruin must ensue;

* Justin. lib. xx.

the laws are then eluded more dangerously, than they are infringed by a sovereign prince, who being always the greatest citizen in the state, is most concerned to labour at its preservation.

By the constant practice of ancient customs and manners, and a peculiar use that was made of poverty, the fortunes of all the people in Rome were very near upon a level; but in Carthage, some particular persons boasted the wealth of kings.

The two prevailing factions in Carthage were so divided, that the one was always for peace, and the other always for war; by which means it was impossible for that city, either to enjoy the one, or engage in the other to advantage.

In Rome, * war immediately united the several interests; but in Carthage it divided them still more.

* Hannibal's presence put an end to all the feuds and divisions which till then prevailed among the Romans; but the presence of Scipio irritated those which already subsisted among the Carthaginians, and shackled, as it were, the strength of the city; for the common people now grew diffident of the generals, the senate, and the great men; and this made the people more furious. Appian has given us the history of this war, carried on by the first Scipio.

[Polybius tells us, that there was this inconveniency at Carthage in the second Punic war, that the senate had lost almost all their authority. We are informed by Livy, that when Hannibal returned to Carthage, he found that the magistrates and the principal citizens had abused their

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In a monarchy, feuds and divisions are easily quieted, because the prince is invested with a coercive power to curb both parties; but they are more lasting in a commonwealth, because the evil generally seizes the very power which only could have wrought a cure.

In Rome, which was governed by laws, the people entrusted the senate with the management of affairs; but in Carthage, which was governed by fraud and dissoluteness, the people would themselves transact all things.

Carthage, in warring with all its riches against the poverty of Rome, had a disadvantage in this very circumstance; for gold and silver may be exhausted, but virtue, perseverance, strength, and poverty are inexhaustible,

The Romans were ambitious through pride, and the Carthaginians through avarice; the former would command, the latter amass; and these, whose minds were wholly turned to traffick, perpetually casting up their income and expences, never engaged in any war from inclination.

The loss of battles, the decrease of a people, the decay of trade, the consumption of the public treasure, the insurrection of neighbouring nations, might force the Carthaginians to

power, and converted the public revenues to their own emolument. The virtue therefore of the magistrates, and the authority of the senate, both fell at the same time; and all was owing to the same causes, the dissolution of principles. *L'Esprit des Loix*, lib. viii. chap. 14.]

submit

submit to the severest terms of peace: But Rome was not swayed by the consideration of blessings or calamities, being determined by no other motive but its glory; and as the Romans were persuaded they could not exist without commanding over others, neither hopes nor fears of any kind could prevail with them to conclude a peace, the conditions of which were not prescribed by themselves.

Nothing is so powerful as a commonwealth, in which the laws are exactly observed; and this not from fear nor from reason, but from a passionate impulse, as in Rome and Lacedæmon; for then the wisdom of a good legislature is united to all the strength a faction could possibly boast.

16317.

The Carthaginians made use of foreign forces, and the Romans employed none but their own. As the latter had never considered the vanquished but merely as so many instruments for future triumphs, they made soldiers of the several people they conquered; and the greater opposition those made, the more worthy they judged them of being incorporated into their republic. Thus we find the Samnites, who were not subdued till after four and twenty triumphs *, became auxiliaries to the Romans; and some time before the second Punic war, they raised from among that nation and their allies †, that

* Flor. lib. i.

† See Polybius. According to the epitome of Florus they raised three hundred thousand men out of the city and among the Latins.

is, from a country of little more extent than the territories of the pope and Naples, seven hundred thousand foot, and seventy thousand horse, to oppose the Gauls.

In the height of the second Punic war, Rome had always a standing army of twenty-two or twenty-four legions; and yet it appears by Livy, that at this time the census, or general survey, amounted to but about 137000 citizens.

The Carthaginians employed a greater number of troops in invading others, and the Romans in defending themselves; the latter armed, as we have just now seen, a prodigious multitude of men to oppose the Gauls and Hannibal who invaded them; and they sent out no more than two legions against the most powerful kings; by which means their forces were inexhaustible.

Carthage was not so strong from its situation, as Rome from the spot on which it stood: The latter had thirty colonies * round it, all which were as so many bulwarks. The Romans were never abandoned by one of their allies till the battle of Cannæ; the reason is, the Samnites and other nations of Italy were used to their sovereignty.

These As most of the cities of Africa were poorly fortified, they presently surrendered to the first enemy that appeared under their walls; so that Agathocles, Regulus, Scipio, in a word, all

* See Livy, lib. xxvii.

who made a descent on those places, immediately spread despair through all Carthage.

We can ascribe to nothing but to an evil administration, the several calamities which the Carthaginians suffered during the whole war that Scipio carried on against them; their city*, and even their armies were famished, at the same time that the Romans enjoyed a profusion of all things.

Among the Carthaginians, the armies which had been defeated grew more insolent upon it, insomuch that they sometimes used to crucify their generals, punishing them in this manner for their own cowardice. Among the Romans, the consul, after punishing such soldiers as had fled from their colours, by a † decimation, marched the surviving forces against the enemy.

The government of the Carthaginians was vastly oppressive ‡: They had trampled so much upon the Spaniards, that, when the Romans arrived among them, they were considered as their deliverers; and if we reflect

* See Appian, lib. Libycus.

† This punishment, which was inflicted on those who had run from their colours, on mutineers, &c. was thus: The names of all the criminals being put together in a vessel or shield, were afterwards drawn out, every tenth man being to die without reprieve. By this means, though all were not put to death, yet all were terrified into obedience. *Note by the translator.*

‡ See what is related by Polybius concerning their exactions.

upon

upon the immense sums it cost the Carthaginians to maintain; in that country, a war which proved fatal to them, it will appear that injustice is very improvident, and is not mistress of all the promises.

The founding of Alexandria had very much lessened the trade of Carthage. In the first ages, superstition used to banish, in some measure, all foreigners from Egypt; and after the Persians had conquered this kingdom, they had bent their whole thoughts to the weakening of their new subjects; but under the Grecian monarchs, Egypt possessed almost the whole commerce of the universe *, and that of Carthage began to decay.

Such powers as are established by commerce, may subsist for a long series of years in their humble condition, but their grandeur is of short duration; they rise by little and little, and in an imperceptible manner, for they do not perform any particular exploit which may make a noise, and signalize their power: But when they have once raised themselves to so exalted a pitch, that it is impossible but all must see them, every one endeavours to deprive this nation of an advantage which it had snatched, as it were, from the rest of the world.

The Carthaginian cavalry was preferable to that of the Romans, for these two reasons; first, because the horses of Numidia and Spain

* [See more of this hereafter in chap. vi.]

were better than those of Italy; secondly, because the Roman cavalry was but indifferently provided with arms; for the Romans, as * Polybius informs us, did not introduce any change on this occasion, till such time as they fought in Greece.

In the first Punic war, Regulus was defeated as soon as the Carthaginians made choice of plains for their cavalry to engage in; and in the second, † Hannibal owed his most glorious victories to the Numidians.

Scipio, by the conquest of Spain and the alliance he made with Masinissa, deprived the Carthaginians of this superiority: The Numidian cavalry won the battle of Zama, and put an end to the war.

The Carthaginians had greater experience at sea, and were better skilled in the working of ships than the Romans: But this advantage seems to have been less in those ages than it would be in the present.

As the ancients had not the use of the sea-compass, they were confined almost to coasting; and indeed they had nothing but gallees, which were small and flat-bottomed; most roads were to them as so many harbours; the knowledge of their pilots was very narrow and contracted,

* Book vi.

† The circumstance which gave the Romans an opportunity of taking a little breath in the second Punic war, was this, whole bodies of Numidian cavalry went over into Sicily and Italy, and there joined them.

and

and their tackle extremely simple. Their art itself was so imperfect, that as much is now done with an hundred oars, as in those ages with a thousand.

Their larger vessels had a disadvantage in this, that being moved with difficulty by the crew of galley-slaves, it was impossible for them to make the necessary evolutions. Mark Antony experienced this, in the most fatal manner, at Actium; for his ships were not able to move about, when attacked on all sides by the lighter vessels of Augustus.

As the ancients used nothing but galleons, the lighter vessels easily broke the oars of the greater ones, which were then but as so many unwieldy, immoveable machines, like modern ships when they have lost their masts.

Since the invention of the sea-compass, different methods have been employed; oars * have been laid aside; the main ocean has been visited, great ships have been built; the machine is become more complicated, and the practices have been multiplied.

The discovery of gun powder has occasioned a circumstance one would no ways have suspected, which is, that the strength of fleets depends more than ever upon art; for in order to resist the fury of the cannon, and prevent the being

* Hence we may judge of the imperfection of the ancient navies, since we have laid aside a practice in which we had so much superiority over them.

exposed to a superior fire, it was necessary to build great ships; but the power of the art must be proportioned to the bulk of the machine.

The small vessels of the ancients used often to grapple suddenly with one another, on which occasion the soldiers engaged on both sides: A whole land-army was shipped on board a fleet. In the sea-fight won by Regulus and his colleague, an hundred and thirty thousand Romans fought against an hundred and fifty thousand Carthaginians: At that time soldiers were looked upon as considerable, and artists the very reverse; but in these ages, the soldiers are considered as a little or nothing, and artists the very contrary*.

A strong proof of the difference is, the victory won by Duillius the consul: The Romans were totally ignorant of navigation; when a Carthaginian galley happening to be stranded on their coast, served them as a model for the building of others: In three months time their sailors were trained, their fleet was completely fitted out; the Romans put to sea, came up with the Carthaginians, and defeated them.

In this age, the whole life of a prince is scarce sufficient for the raising and equipping a navy, capable to make head against a power already possessed of the empire of the sea: This perhaps may be the only thing which money

* [See *L'Esprit des Loix*, l. xxi. c. 9.]

cannot of itself effect; and though a great * monarch in our days succeeded immediately in an attempt of this kind, experience has proved to others †, that such an example is to be admired rather than imitated.

The second Punic war made so much noise in the world, that it is known to every one: When we survey attentively the croud of obstacles which started up before HANNIBAL, and reflect, that this extraordinary man surmounted them all, we view the most august spectacle that antiquity can possibly exhibit.

Rome was a miracle in constancy and resolution after the battles of Ticinus, of Trebia, and Trasymenus; after the defeat at Cannæ, which was still more fatal to them, though they saw themselves abandoned by mo.* of the nations in Italy, yet they would not sue for peace; and for this reason, the senate never once receded from their ancient maxims; They conducted themselves towards Hannibal, in the same manner as they had before behaved with regard to Pyrrhus, to whom they refused all terms of accommodation, till such time as he should leave Italy; and Dionysius Halicarnassus † informs us, that, when Coriolanus was treating with the Romans, the senate declared they would never infringe their ancient customs; that their people could not conclude a

* Lewis XIV.

† Spain and Muscovy.

‡ Antiq. Rom. lib. viii.

peace so long as the enemy should continue in their territories; but that in case the Volscians would think fit to retire, they then should agree to any terms that were just and reasonable.

Rome was saved by the strength and vigour of its institution; after the battle of Cannæ, their very women were not allowed to shed tears; the senate refused to ransom the prisoners, and sent the miserable remains of the army to carry on the war in Sicily, unrecompensed, and deprived of every military honour, till such time as Hannibal was driven out of Italy.

On the other side, Terentius Varro the consul had fled ignominiously as far as Venusia: This Man, whose extraction was very mean, had been raised to the consulship merely to mortify the nobles. However the senate would not enjoy the unhappy triumph: They saw how necessary it was for them to gain the confidence of the people on this occasion; they therefore went out to meet Varro, and returned him thanks for not despairing of the safety of the commonwealth.

It is commonly not the real loss sustained in a battle (that of the slaughter of some thousand men), which proves fatal to a state, but the imaginary loss, the general damp, which deprives it even of that strength and vigour which fortune had left it.

Some things are asserted by all men, because they have been asserted once: It is thought
Hannibal

Hannibal committed an egregious error, in not laying siege to Rome after the battle of Cannæ : It must be confessed, that the inhabitants of the former were at first seized with a panic ; but then the surprize and dread of a martial people, which always turns to bravery, is not like that of a despicable populace, who are sensible to nothing but their weakness : A proof Hannibal would not have succeeded, is, that the Romans were still powerful enough to send succours where any were wanted.

It is also said, that Hannibal was greatly overseen, in marching his army to Capua, where his soldiers enervated themselves ; but people who make these assertions should consider, that they do not go back to the true cause of it ; Would not every place have proved a Capua to a body of men, who had enriched themselves with the spoils of so many victories ? Alexander, whose army consisted of his own subjects, made use, on the like occasion, of an expedient which Hannibal, whose army was composed wholly of mercenaries, could not employ ; and this was, the setting fire to the baggage of his soldiers, and burning all their wealth and his own. We are told that Kouli Khan, after his conquest of the Indies, left to the share of each soldier no more than one hundred and fifty silver roupees.

The very conquests of Hannibal began to change the fortune of the war : He did not receive any succours from Carthage, either by

the jealousy of one party *, or the too great confidence of the other : So long as he kept his whole army together, he always defeated the Romans ; but when he was obliged to put garrisons into cities, to defend his allies, to besiege strong-holds or prevent their being besieged, he then found himself too weak, and lost a great part of his army by piece-meal. Conquests are easily made, because we atchieve them with our whole force ; they are retained with difficulty, because we defend them with only a part of our forces.

C H A P. V.

The State of Greece, of Macedonia, of Syria, and of Egypt, after the Depression of Carthage.

I Imagine Hannibal did not abound in witticisms, especially in favour of Fabius and Marcellus against himself. I am sorry to see Livy strew his flowers on these enormous colossuses of antiquity : I wish he had done like Homer, who neglects embellishing them, and knew so well how to put them in motion.

Besides, what Hannibal is made to speak, ought to have common sense : but if, on hear-

* [How was it possible for Carthage to maintain her ground ? When Hannibal upon his being prætor, attempted to hinder the magistrates from plundering the republic, did they not complain of him to the Romans ? Wretches, that wanted to be citizens without a city, and to be beholden for their riches, to their very destroyers ! *L'Esprit des Loix*, l. iii. c. 3. See likewise l. x. c. 6.]

ing

ing the defeat of his brother, he said publicly, that it was the prelude of the ruin of Carthage; could any thing have a greater tendency to drive to despair a people, who had placed their confidence in him, and to discourage an army which expected such high recompences after the war?

As the Carthaginians lost every battle they fought, either in Spain, in Sicily, or in Sardinia; Hannibal, whose enemies were fortifying themselves incessantly, whilst very inconsiderable reinforcements were sent him, was reduced to the necessity of engaging in a defensive war: This suggested to the Romans the design of making Africa the seat of war: Accordingly Scipio went into that part of the world, and so great was his success, that the Carthaginians were forced to recal from Italy Hannibal, who wept for grief at his surrendering to the Romans those very plains, in which he had so often triumphed over them.

Whatever is in the power of a great general and a great soldier to perform, all this Hannibal did to save his country: Having fruitlessly endeavoured to bring Scipio to pacific terms, he fought a battle, in which fortune seemed to delight in confounding his ability, his experience, and good sense.

Carthage received the conditions of peace, not from an enemy, but from a sovereign; the citizens of it obliged themselves to pay ten thousand talents in fifty years, to give hostages,
to

to deliver up their ships and elephants, and not to engage in any war without the consent of the Romans; and in order that this republic might always continue in a dejected state, the victors heightened the power of Masinissa, its irreconcilable enemy.

After the depression of Carthage, the Romans were scarce engaged but in petty wars, and obtained mighty victories; whereas before, they had obtained but petty victories and been engaged in mighty wars.

There were in those times two worlds, as it were, separate from each other; in one, the Carthaginians and Romans fought, and the other was shaken by the feuds and divisions which had subsisted ever since the death of Alexander: In the latter, no regard was had * to the transactions of the western world: For though Philip king of Macedon had concluded a treaty with Hannibal, yet very little resulted from it; and this monarch, who gave the Carthaginians but very inconsiderable succours, just shewed the Romans that he bore them a fruitless ill will.

When two mighty people are seen to wage a long and obstinate war, it is often ill policy to imagine that it is safe for the rest of the world

* It is surprizing, as Josephus observes in his treatise against Appion, that neither Herodotus nor Thucydides make the least mention of the Romans, though they had been engaged in such mighty wars.

to continue as so many idle spectators, for which soever of the two people triumphs over the other, engages immediately in new wars; and a nation of soldiers marches and invades nations who are but so many citizens.

This was very manifest in those ages; for scarce had the Romans subjected the Carthaginians, but they immediately invaded other nations, and appeared in all parts of the earth, carrying on an universal invasion.

There were at that time in the east but four powers capable of making head against the Romans; Greece, the kingdoms of Macedonia, Syria, and Egypt; We must take a view of the condition, at that time, of the two first of those powers; because the Romans began by subjecting them.

There were three considerable people in Greece, the Ætoliars, the Achaians, and the Bœotians; these were so many associations formed by free cities, which had their general assemblies and magistrates in common. The Ætoliars were martial, bold, rash; greedy of gain, very lavish of their promises and oaths; in fine, a people who warred on land in the same manner as pirates do at sea. The Achaians were incommoded perpetually by troublesome neighbours or defenders. The Bœotians, who were the most heavy people of all Greece, but at the same time the wisest, lived generally in peace; guided entirely by a sensation of happiness and misery, they had not genius
enough

enough to be either roused or misguided by orators. What is most extraordinary, their republic subsisted even in the midst of anarchy *.

Lacedæmon had preserved its power, by which I mean that warlike spirit which the institutions of Lycurgus inspired. The Thessalians were, in some measure, enslaved by the Macedonians. The Illyrian kings had already been very much depressed by the Romans. The Acarnanians and Athamanes had been cruelly infested by the troops of Macedon and Ætolia successively. The Athenians †, weak in themselves and unsupported by ‡ allies, no longer astonished the world, except by the flatteries they lavished on kings; and the orators no more ascended the rostra where Demosthenes had harangued, unless to propose the basest and most scandalous decrees.

* The magistrates, to please the multitude, did not open the courts of justice: and the dying bequeathed their effects to their friends, to be laid out in feasts. See a fragment of the xxth book of Polybius, in the *Extract of Virtues and Vices*.

† [Justin lib. vi. attributes the extinction of Athenian virtue to the death of Epaminondas. Having no further emulation, they spent their revenues in feasts, *frequentius cœnam quam castra visentes*. Then it was that the Macedonians emerged out of obscurity. *L'esprit des Loix*, l. viii. c. 6.]

‡ They were not engaged in any alliance with the other nations of Greece. Polyb. lib. viii.

Besides, Greece was formidable from its situation, its strength, the multitude of its cities, the great number of its soldiers, its polity, manners, and laws; the Greeks delighted in war; they knew the whole art of it; and, had they united, would have been invincible.

They indeed had been terrified by the first Philip, by Alexander, and by Antipater, but not subdued; and the kings of Macedon, who could not prevail with themselves to lay aside their pretensions and their hopes, made the most obstinate attempts to enslave them.

The greatest part of Macedonia was surrounded with inaccessible mountains; the inhabitants of it were formed by nature for war; courageous, obedient, industrious, and indefatigable; and these qualities must necessarily have been owing to the climate, since the natives of it are, to this day, the best soldiers in the Turkish empire.

Greece maintained itself by a kind of balance: The Lacedæmonians were generally in alliance with the Ætolians, and the Macedonians with the Achæians; but the arrival of the Romans quite destroyed the equilibrium.

As the the kings of Macedonia were not able to maintain a large body of troops, the least loss was of consequence to them; besides, it was difficult for these monarchs to aggrandize themselves; because, as their ambitious views were not unknown, other nations kept a watchful eye over every step they took; and the successes they

they obtained in the wars undertaken for the sake of their allies, was an evil which these very allies endeavoured immediately to remedy.

But the kings of Macedonia generally possessed great talents; their monarchy was not like those which proceed for ever in the same steps that were taken at the foundation of them; instructed perpetually by dangers and experience, involved in all the disputes of Greece, it was necessary for them either to bribe the principal magistrates of cities, to raise a mist before the eyes of nations, or to divide or unite their interests; in a word, they were obliged to expose, every moment, their persons to the greatest dangers.

Philip, who in the beginning of his reign had won the love and confidence of the Greeks by his moderation, changed on a sudden; he became * a cruel tyrant, at a time when he ought to have behaved with justice, both from policy and ambition: He saw, though at a distance, the Romans possessed of numberless forces; he had concluded the war to the advantage of his allies, and was reconciled to the Ætoliens: It was natural he should now endeavour to unite all the Greeks with himself, in order to prevent the Romans from settling in their country; but so far from this, he exasperated them by petty usurpations; and trifled away his time in examining affairs of little or no consequence, at a

* See Polyb. who relates the unjust and cruel actions by which Philip lost the favour of the people.

time when his very existence was endangered ; by the commission of three or four evil actions, he made himself odious and detestable to all Greece.

The Ætoliars were most exasperated, and the Romans snatching the opportunity of their resentment, or rather of their folly, made an alliance with them, entred Greece, and armed it against Philip. This prince was defeated at the battle of Cyncephalæ, and the victory was partly gained by the valour of the Ætoliars : So much was he intimidated upon this, that he concluded a treaty, which was not so properly a peace, as the renouncing his own strength ; for he evacuated his garrisons in all Greece, delivered up his ships, and bound himself under an obligation of paying a thousand talents in ten years.

Polybius compares, with his usual good sense, the disposition of the Roman armies with that of the Macedonians, which was observed by all the kings who succeeded Alexander : he points out the conveniences, as well as inconveniences, of the phalanx and of the legion : He prefers the disposition used by the Romans, in which he very probably was right, since all the battles fought at that time shew it to have been preferable.

A circumstance which had contributed very much to the danger to which the Romans were exposed in the second Punic war, was, Hannibal's presently arming his soldiers after the Roman manner ; but the Greeks did not change
either

either their arms or their way of fighting; and could not prevail with themselves to lay aside customs, by the observance of which they had performed such mighty things.

The success which the Romans obtained over Philip, was the greatest step they ever took towards a general conquest: To make sure of Greece, they employed all methods possible to depress the Ætoliens, by whose assistance they had been victorious: They ordained, moreover; that every city of Greece which had been subject to Philip, or any other sovereign prince, should from that time be governed by its own laws.

It is very evident, that these petty commonwealths must necessarily be dependent: The Greeks abandoned themselves to a stupid joy, and fondly imagined they were really free, because the Romans had declared them to be so.

The Ætoliens, who had imagined they should bear sway in Greece, finding they had only brought themselves under subjection, were seized with the deepest grief; and as they had always formed desperate resolutions, they invited, in order to correct one extravagance by another, ANTIOCHUS king of Syria into Greece, in the same manner as they had before invited the Romans.

The kings of Syria were the most powerful of all Alexander's successors, they being possessed of almost all the dominions of Darius, Egypt excepted; but by the concurrence of several circumstances, their power had been much weakened.

Seleucus,

Seleucus, who founded the Syrian empire, had destroyed, towards the latter end of his life, the kingdom of Lyfmachus. During the feuds and distractions, several provinces took up arms; the kingdoms of Pergamus, of Cappadocia, and of Bithynia started up; but these petty, fearful states, always considered the depression of their former masters as the making of their own fortune.

As the kings of Syria always beheld, with a most invidious eye, the felicity of the kingdom of Egypt, they bent their whole thoughts to the conquest of that country; by this means, neglecting the east, they were dispossessed of several provinces there, and but indifferently obeyed in the rest.

In fine, the kings of Syria possessed upper and lower Asia; but experience has shewn, that in this case, when the capital city and the chief forces are in the lower provinces of Asia, there is no possibility of maintaining the upper ones; and on the contrary, when the seat of the empire is in the upper provinces, the monarch weakens himself by maintaining the lower ones. Neither the Persian nor Syrian empires were ever so powerful as that of the Parthians, though these reigned over but part of the provinces which formed the dominions of those two powers. Had Cyrus not conquered the kingdom of Lydia, had Seleucus continued in Babylon, and let the successors of Antigonus possess the maritime

provinces, the Greeks would never have conquered the Persian empire, nor the Romans that of Seleucus. Nature has prescribed certain limits to states, purposely to mortify the ambition of mortals: When the Romans stepped beyond those limits, the greatest part of them were destroyed by the Parthians*; when the Parthians presumed to pass them, they were forced immediately to retire back: And in our days, such Turks as advanced beyond those boundaries, were obliged to return whence they came.

The kings of Syria and Egypt had, in their respective dominions, two kinds of subjects, victorious nations, and nations vanquished; the former, still puffed up with the idea of their origin, were ruled with very great difficulty: They were not fired with that spirit of independence, which animates us to shake off the yoke, but with that impatience which makes us wish to change our sovereign.

But the chief weakness of the kingdom of Syria sprung from that of the court, where such monarchs presided as were successors to Darius, not to Alexander. Luxury, vanity, and effeminacy, which have prevailed through all ages in the Asiatic courts, triumphed more particularly in that of Syria: The evil infected the common people and the soldiers, and

* I have given the reason of this in the xv. chapter, borrowed partly from the geographical disposition of the two empires.

caught

caught the very Romans themselves; since the war in which they engaged against Antiochus, is the true æra of their corruption.

Such was the condition of the kingdom of Syria, when Antiochus, who had performed such mighty things, declared war against the Romans; but he did not conduct himself in it with the wisdom which is even employed in common affairs: Hannibal requested, either to have the war revived in Italy, and Philip bribed; or else, that he might be prevailed upon to stand neuter. Antiochus did not follow any part of this advice: He appeared in Greece with only a small part of his forces: And as though he were come merely to see the war, not to carry it on, he followed nothing but his pleasures, by which means he was defeated, and fled out of Asia, terrified rather than conquered.

PHILIP, who was dragged to this war by the Romans, as though a flood had swept him along, employed his whole power in their service, and became the instrument of their victories: The pleasure of taking vengeance of, and laying waste Ætolia; the promise made him of lessening the tribute he paid, and of leaving him the possession of certain cities; some personal jealousy of Antiochus; in a word, a few inconsiderable motives swayed his resolutions; and not daring so much as to think of shaking off the yoke, he only considered how he might best lighten it.

Antiochus formed so wrong a judgment of things, as to fancy that the Romans would not molest him in Asia; however, they followed him thither; he was again overcome, and, in his consternation, consented to the most infamous treaty that ever was concluded by so mighty a prince.

I cannot recollect any thing so magnanimous, as a resolution taken by a monarch in our days *, to bury himself under the ruins of the throne, rather than accept of terms unworthy of a king: So haughty was his soul, that he could not stoop lower than his misfortunes had thrown him; and he was very sensible, that courage may, but infamy never can, give fresh strength to the regal diadem.

We often meet with princes who have skill enough to fight a battle, but with very few that have the talents requisite for carrying on a war; who are equally capable of making a proper use of fortune, and of waiting for her; and who join to a frame of mind, which raises suspicions before it executes, such a disposition as makes them fearless after they have once executed.

After the depression of Antiochus, only some inconsiderable powers remained, if we except Egypt, which, from the advantage of its situation, its fertility, its commerce, the great number of its inhabitants, its naval and land

* Lewis XIV.

forces,

forces, might have been formidable ; but the cruelty of its kings, their cowardice, their avarice, their imbecillity, and their enormous sensualities, made them so odious to their subjects, that they supported themselves, for the most part, by the protection of the Romans.

It was a kind of fundamental law, with regard to the crown of Egypt, that the sisters should succeed with the brothers ; and in order to preserve unity in the government, the brother was married to the sister. Now, it is scarce possible to figure any thing more pernicious in politics than such an order of succession ; for as all the little domestic feuds rose so high as to disorder the state, whichever of the two parties had the least discontent, immediately excited against the other the inhabitants of Alexandria, a numberless multitude, always prepared to join with the first of their kings who should rouse them ; so that there were for ever princes who actually reigned, and pretenders to the crown. And as the kingdoms of Cyrene and Cyprus were generally possessed by other princes of that house, who laid their respective claims to the whole ; by that means, the throne of these princes was ever tottering ; and being indifferently settled at home, they had no power abroad.

The forces of the kings of Egypt, like those of the Asiatic monarchs, were composed of auxiliary Greeks. Besides the spirit of liberty,

of honour, and of glory, which animated the latter people, they were incessantly employed in bodily exercises of every kind. In all their chief cities games were instituted, wherein the victors were crowned in the presence of all Greece, which raised a general emulation: Now, in an age when combatants fought with arms, the success of which depended upon their strength and dexterity, it is natural to suppose that men thus exercised, must have had a great advantage over a croud of barbarians, who were enlisted at random, and dragged indiscriminately into the field, as was evident from the armies of Darius.

The Romans, in order to deprive the kings of such a body of soldiery, and to bereave them, but in an easy, silent manner, of their principal forces, observed two things: First, they established, by insensible degrees, as a maxim, with respect to all the cities of Greece, that they should not conclude any alliance, give any succour, or make war against any nation whatsoever, without their consent: Secondly, in their treaties with kings *, they forbade them to levy any forces from among the allies of the Romans, by which means, those monarchs were reduced to employ their national troops only.

* They had before observed this political conduct with regard to the Carthaginians, whom they obliged, by the treaty concluded with them, to employ no longer auxiliary troops, as appears from a fragment of Dion.

That

That the reader may the better judge what little effect trade had in gaining Rome a superiority over other nations, the following entertaining discourse on that subject is inserted from our author's *Spirit of Laws*.

The principal Difference between the Commerce of the Ancients and Moderns.

THE world from time to time takes such different turns as totally change the face of commerce. The trade of Europe is at present carried on principally from the north to the south; and the difference of the climates is the cause that the several nations have great occasion for the merchandises of each other. For example, the liquors of the south, which are carried to the north, form a commerce little known to the ancients. Thus the burden of vessels, which was formerly computed by measures of corn, is at present determined by tons of liquor.

The ancient commerce, as far as it is known to us, being carried on from one port in the Mediterranean to another, was almost wholly confined to the south. Now the people of the same climate, having nearly the same things of their own, have not the same need of trading amongst themselves as with those of a different climate. The commerce of Europe was therefore formerly less extended than at present.

Commerce, sometimes destroyed by conquerors, sometimes cramped by monarchs, traverses the earth, flying from the place where it is oppressed, and taking up its rest where it is permitted to breathe freely : It reigns at present where nothing was formerly to be seen but desarts, seas, and rocks ; and where it once reigned, now there are only desarts.

To see Colchis in its present situation, which is no more than a vast forest, where the people are every day decreasing, and only defend their liberty to sell themselves by piece-meal to the Turks and Persians ; we could not imagine, that this country, in the time of the Romans, had been full of cities, to which commerce summoned all the nations of the earth. We find no monument of these facts in the country itself ; there are no traces of them, except in Pliny* and Strabo †.

The history of commerce is a history of the intercourse of people. Their numerous defeats, and the certain flux and reflux of desolations and devastations, form in it the most extraordinary events.

The immense treasures of Semiramis ‡, which could not have been the acquisition of a day, give us reason to believe, that the Assyrians themselves had pillaged other rich nations, as other nations afterwards pillaged them.

* Lib. vi.

† Lib. ii.

‡ Diodorus, lib. ii.

The effect of commerce is riches ; the consequence of riches, luxury ; and that of luxury, the perfection of arts. The height to which arts were carried in the time of Semiramis * is a sufficient indication, that a considerable commerce was then established.

There was a great commerce of luxury in the empires of Asia. The history of luxury would make a fine part of that of commerce. The luxury of the Persians was that of the Medes, as the luxury of the Medes was that of the Assyrians.

Great revolutions have happened in Asia. The north-east part of Persia, Hyrcania, Margiana, Bactria, &c. were formerly full of flourishing cities †, which are now no more ; and the north of this empire ‡, that is, the isthmus which separates the Caspian and Euxine seas, was full of cities and nations, which are now destroyed.

Eratosthenes || and Aristobulus learnt from Patroclus, that the merchandises of India passed by the Oxus into the sea of Pontus. Marcus Varro § tells us, that, at the time when Pompey commanded against Mithridates, they were

* Diodorus, lib. ii.

† Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 16. & Strabo, lib. xi.

‡ Strabo, lib. xi.

|| Ibid.

§ In Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 17. See also Strabo, lib. xi. upon the passage by which the merchandises were conveyed from the Phasis to the Cyrus.

informed,

informed, that they went in seven days from India to the country of the Bactrians, and to the river Icarus, which falls into the Oxus; that, by this means, they were able to bring the merchandises of India across the Caspian sea, and to enter the mouth of the Cyrus; from whence it was only a five days passage to the Phasis, a river which discharges itself into the Euxine sea. There is no doubt but it was by the nations inhabiting these several countries, that the great empires of the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians, had a communication with the most distant parts of the east and west.

An entire stop is now put to this communication. All these countries have been laid waste by the Tartars *, and are still infested by that destructive nation. The Oxus no longer runs into the Caspian sea; the Tartars, for some private reasons †, have changed its course, and it now loses itself in the barren sands.

* This is the reason why those who have described this country, since it was in the possession of the Tartars, have entirely misrepresented it. The chart of the Caspian sea, made by order of the late czar Peter I. has discovered the egregious errors of our modern charts, in relation to the figure of that sea, which is found to be conformable to the representation of the ancients. See Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 12.

† See an account of this in Jenkinson's *Collection of Voyages to the North*, vol. iv.

The Iaxartes, which was formerly a barrier between the polite and barbarous nations, has had its course turned in the same manner by the Tartars, and it no longer empties itself into the sea.

Seleucus Nicator formed * the project of joining the Euxine to the Caspian sea. This project, which would have greatly facilitated the commerce of those days, vanished at his death †. We are not certain it could have been executed in the isthmus which separates the two seas. This country is at present very little known; it is depopulated, and full of forests; however, water is not wanting, for an infinite number of rivers roll into it from mount Caucasus: But as this mountain forms the north of the isthmus, and extends like two arms ‡ towards the south, it would have been a grand obstacle to such an enterprize, especially in those times when they had not the art of making sluices.

It may be imagined, that Seleucus would have joined the two seas in the very place where Peter I. has since joined them; that is, in that neck of land where the Tanais approaches the Volga; but the north of the Caspian sea was not then discovered.

While the empires of Asia enjoyed a commerce of luxury, the Tyrians carried on a com-

* Claudius Cæsar, in Plin. lib. vi. cap. 11.

† He was slain by Ptolemy Ceraunus.

‡ See Strabo, lib. xi.

merce of œconomy, which they extended through the world. Bochart has employed the first book of his *Canaan* in enumerating the colonies which they sent into all the countries bordering upon the sea: They passed the Pillars of Hercules, and made settlements* on the coasts of the ocean.

The little knowlege the greatest part of the world had of those who were far distant from them, favoured the nations engaged in the œconomical commerce. They carried on their trade with as much obscurity as they pleased, having all the advantages which the most intelligent nations enjoy over the most ignorant.

The Egyptians, a people separated by their religion and their manners from all communication with strangers, had at that time scarce any foreign trade. They enjoyed a fruitful soil, and great plenty. Their country was the Japan of those times; it possessed every thing within itself.

So little jealous were these people of commerce, that they left that of the Red-sea to all the petty nations which had any harbours upon it. Here they suffered the Idumæans, the Assyrians, and the Jews to have fleets. Solomon † employed in this navigation the Assyrians, who knew these seas.

* They founded Tartessus, and made a settlement at Cadiz.

† 1 Kings, ix. 2 Chron. viii.

Josephus * says, that this nation, being entirely employed in agriculture, knew little of navigation: The Jews therefore traded only occasionally in the Red-sea. They took from the Idumæans Elath and Afiongeber, from whom they received this commerce; they lost these two cities, and with them lost this commerce.

It was not so with the Phœnicians; theirs was not a commerce of luxury; nor was their trade owing to conquest: Their frugality, their abilities, their industry, their perils, and the hardships they suffered, rendered them necessary to all the nations of the world.

Before Alexander, the people bordering on the Red-sea traded only in this sea, and in that of Africa. Of this, the astonishment of the universe at the discovery of the Indian sea under that conqueror, is a sufficient proof. I have observed, that bullion was always carried the Indies, and never any brought from thence; the Jewish fleets, which brought gold and silver by the way of the Red-sea, returned from Africa, and not from the Indies. I add, this navigation was made on the eastern coast of Africa; for the state of navigation at that time is a convincing proof, that they did not fail to a very distant shore.

I am not ignorant, that the fleets of Solomon and Jehosaphat returned only every three

* Against Appion.

years ; but I do not see that the time taken up in the voyage is any proof of the greatness of the distance.

Pliny and Strabo inform us, that the junks of India and the Red-sea were twenty days in performing a voyage, which a Grecian or Roman vessel would accomplish in seven *. In this proportion, a voyage of one year made by the fleets of Greece or Rome, would take very near three, when performed by those of Solomon.

We find from history, that, before the discovery of the mariners compass, four attempts were made to sail round the coast of Africa. The Phœnicians sent by Necho †, and Eudoxus ‡, flying from the wrath of Ptolemy Laturus, set out from the Red-sea, and succeeded. Satarpes || sent by Xerxes, and Hanno by the Carthaginians, set out from the Pillars of Hercules, and failed of success.

The capital point in surrounding Africa was to discover and double the cape of Good-hope. Those who set out from the Red-sea found this cape nearer by half, than it would have been in setting out from the Mediterranean. The shore from the Red-sea is not so shallow,

* See Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 22. and Strabo, lib. xv.

† He was desirous of conquering it. Herodotus, lib. iv.

‡ Pliny, lib. ii. cap. 67. Pomponius Mela, lib. iii. cap. 9.

|| Herodotus in Melpomene.

as that from the cape * to Hercules's Pillars. The discovery of the cape by Hercules's Pillars was owing to the invention of the compass, which permitted them to leave the coast of Africa, and to launch out † into the great ocean, in order to sail towards the island of St. Helena, or towards the coast of Brasil. It was therefore very possible for them to sail from the Red-sea into the Mediterranean, but not to set out from the Mediterranean to return by the Red-sea.

Thus, without making this grand circuit, after which they could hardly ever hope to return, it was most natural to trade to the east of Africa by the Red-sea, and to the western coast by Hercules's Pillars.

The first Greeks were all pirates. Minos, who enjoyed the empire of the sea, was only more successful, perhaps, than others in piracy; for his maritime dominion extended no further than round his own isle. But when the Greeks became a great people, the Athenians obtained the real dominion of the sea; because this trading and victorious nation gave

* Add to this what I shall say hereafter, on the navigation of Hanno.

† In the months of October, November, December, and January, the wind in the Atlantic ocean is found to blow north-east; our ships therefore either cross the line, and to avoid the wind, which is there generally at east, they direct their course to the south; or else they enter into the torrid zone, in those places where the wind is at west.

laws to the most potent monarch * of that time; and humbled the maritime powers of Syria, of the isle of Cyprus, and Phœnicia.

But this Athenian lordship of the seas deserves to be more particularly mentioned. “ *Athens, says Xenophon †, rules the sea; but as the country of Attica is joined to the continent, it is ravaged by enemies, while the Athenians are engaged in distant expeditions. Their leaders suffer their lands to be destroyed; and secure their wealth, by sending it to some island. The populace, who are not possessed of lands, have no uneasiness. But if the Athenians inhabited an island, and, besides this, enjoyed the empire of the sea, they would, as long as they were possessed of these advantages, be able to annoy others, and at the same time be out of all danger of being annoyed.*” One would imagine Xenophon was speaking of England.

The Athenians, a people whose heads were filled with the most glorious projects; the Athenians, who excited jealousy, instead of extending their influence, who were more attentive to enlarge their maritime empire than to enjoy it, whose political government was such that the common people distributed the public revenues amongst themselves, while the rich were in a state of oppression; the Athe-

* The king of Persia.

† On the Athenian Republic.

nians; I say, did not carry on so extensive a commerce as might be expected from the produce of their mines, from the multitude of their slaves, from the number of their seamen, from their influence over the cities of Greece, and, above all, from the excellent institutions of Solon. Their trade was almost wholly confined to Greece, and to the Euxine sea; from whence they drew their subsistence.

Corinth separated two seas, it was the key which opened and shut the Peloponnesus and all Greece; it was a city of the greatest importance, at a time when the people of Greece were a world, and the cities of Greece nations. Its trade was very extensive, having a port to receive the merchandises of Asia; and another, those of Italy: For the great difficulties which attended the doubling cape Malea, where the meeting* of opposite winds occasions shipwrecks, induced every one to go to Corinth, and they could even convey their vessels over land from one sea to the other. Never was there a city, in which the works of art were carried to so high a degree of perfection. But here religion finished the corruption, which their opulence began. They erected a temple to Venus, in which more than a thousand courtesans were consecrated to that deity; from this seminary came the greatest part of those ce-

* See Strabo, lib. viii.

lebrated beauties, whose history Athenæus has presumed to commit to writing.

Four great events happened in the reign of Alexander, which entirely changed the face of commerce; the taking of Tyre, the conquest of Egypt, that likewise of the Indies, and the discovery of the sea which lies south of those countries. The Greeks of Egypt found themselves in a situation to carry on a prodigious commerce; they were masters of the ports of the Red-sea; Tyre, the rival of all the trading nations, was no more; they were not constrained by the ancient superstitions* of the country; Egypt was become the centre of the universe.

The empire of Persia extended to the Indus †. Darius, long before Alexander, had sent some vessels ‡ which sailed down this river, and passed even into the Red-sea. How then were the Greeks the first who traded to the Indies by the south? Had not the Persians done this before? Did they make no advantage of seas which were so near them; of the very seas that washed their coasts? Alexander, it is true, conquered the Indies; but was it necessary for him to conquer a country, in order to trade with it? This is what I shall now examine.

* Which inspired an aversion for strangers.

† Strabo, lib. xv.

‡ Herodotus in Melpomene.

Ariana *, which extended from the Persian Gulf as far as the Indus, and from the South-sea to the mountains of Paropamisus, depending indeed in some measure on the empire of Persia: But in the southern part it was barren, scorched, rude, and uncultivated. Tradition † relates, that the armies of Semiramis and Cyrus perished in these desarts; and Alexander, who caused his fleet to follow him, could not avoid losing in this place a great part of his army. The Persians left the whole coast to the Ichthyophagi ‡, the Oritæ, and other barbarous nations. Besides, the Persians were no great sailors ||, and their very religion debarred them from all notions of maritime commerce. The voyage undertaken by Darius's direction upon the Indus and the Indian sea, was rather the caprice of a prince ambitious of shewing his power, than any regular project of a monarch intent upon exercising it. It was attended with no consequence, either to the advantage of commerce, or navigation. They emerged from their ignorance, only to plunge into it again.

* Strabo, lib. xv.

† Ibid.

‡ Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 23. Strabo, lib. xv.

|| They sailed not upon the rivers, lest they should defile the elements. Hyde's *Religion of the Persians*. Even to this day they have no maritime commerce. Those who take to the sea, are treated by them as atheists.

Besides, it was a received opinion * before the expedition of Alexander, that the southern parts of India were uninhabitable †. This proceeded from a tradition ‡ that Semiramis had brought back from thence only twenty men, and Cyrus but seven.

Alexander entered by the north. His design was to march towards the east: But having found a part to the south full of great nations, cities, and rivers, he attempted the conquest of it, and effected it.

He then formed the design of uniting the Indies to the western nations by a maritime commerce, as he had already united them by the colonies he had established by land.

He caused a fleet to be built on the Hydaspes, fell down that river, entered the Indus, and sailed even to its mouth. The fleet followed the coast from the Indus along the banks of the country of the Oritæ, and the Icthyophagi, of Carmania and Persia. He built cities, and forbade the Icthyophagi || from living on fish, being determined to have the borders of this sea inhabited by civilized nations. Onesecritus and Nearchus kept § a journal of this voyage, which took up ten months. They

* Strabo, lib. xv.

† Herodotus (in Melpomene) says, that Darius conquered the Indies; he must be understood to mean only Ariana; and even this was only an ideal conquest.

‡ Ibid.

|| Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 20.

§ Ibid.

arrived at Sufa, where they found Alexander, who gave an entertainment to his whole army. He had left the fleet at Patala *, to go thither by land.

This conqueror had founded Alexandria, with a view of securing his conquests of Egypt; this was a key to open it in the very place where the kings his predecessors † had a key to shut it; and he had not the least thought of a commerce, which the discovery of the Indian sea could alone suggest to him.

The kings of Syria left the commerce of the south to those of Egypt, and attached themselves only to the northern trade, which was carried on by means of the Oxus and the Caspian sea. At that time they imagined this sea was a part of the northern ocean ‡. Seleucus and Antiochus applied themselves to make discoveries in it, with a particular attention; and with this view they scoured it with their fleets ||. That part which Seleucus surveyed, was called the Seleucidian sea; that which Antiochus discovered, received the name

* A city in the island of Patalena, at the mouth of the Indus.

† Alexandria was founded on a flat shore, called Racotis, where the former kings had kept a garrison to prevent all strangers, and more particularly the Greeks, from entering the country. Pliny, lib. v. cap. 10. Strabo, lib. xvii.

‡ Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 12. and Strabo, lib. xi. p. 507.

|| Pliny, lib. ii. cap. 67.

of the Sea of Antiochus. Attentive to the projects they might have of attacking from thence the back of Europe by Gaul and Germany, they neglected the seas on the south; whether it was that the Ptolemies, by means of their fleets on the Red-sea, were already become the masters of it; or that they had discovered such an invincible aversion in the Persians to maritime affairs; or, in fine, that the general submission of all the people in the south left no room for them to flatter themselves with the hopes of further conquests.

I must own, the obstinacy of the ancients appears to me unaccountable, in believing that the Caspian sea was a part of the ocean. The expedition of Alexander, of the kings of Syria, of the Parthians, and the Romans, could not make them change their sentiments; and yet they described the Caspian sea with a wonderful exactness: But we seldom quit our errors till we are forced to it. At first they knew only the south of this sea, and took it for the ocean; in proportion as they advanced along the banks of the northern coast, instead of imagining it a great lake, they still believed it to be the ocean, which here made a sort of bay; when they had almost finished its circuit, and had quite surveyed the northern coast, though their eyes were then opened, yet they shut them once more; and took the mouth of the Volga for a strait, or a prolongation of the ocean.

The

The land army of Alexander had been only on the east as far as the Hypanis, which is the last of those rivers that fall into the Indus: Thus the first trade which the Greeks carried on to the Indies was confined to a very small part of the country. Seleucus Nicator penetrated as far as the Ganges *, and by that means discovered the sea into which this river falls, that is to say, the bay of Bengal. The moderns discover countries by voyages at sea; the ancients discovered seas by conquests at land.

Strabo †, notwithstanding the testimony of Apollodorus, seems to doubt whether the Grecian ‡ kings of Bactriana proceeded further than Seleucus and Alexander. I am apt to think they went no further to the east, and that they did not pass the Ganges: But they went further towards the south: They discovered || Siger, and the ports in Guzarat and Malabar, which gave rise to the navigation I am going to mention.

Pliny § informs us, that in sailing to the Indies they took successively three different courses. At first, they sailed from cape Syagros to the island of Patalene, which is at the mouth of the Indus. This we find was the course

* Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 17. † Lib. xv.

‡ Apollonius Adramyttenus in Strabo, lib. xi.

|| The Macedonians of Bactriana, India, and Ariana, having separated themselves from Syria, formed a great state.

§ Lib. vi. cap. 23.

that Alexander's fleet steered to the Indies. They found afterwards * a shorter and more certain passage, by sailing from the same cape to Siger: This can be no other than the kingdom of Siger, mentioned by Strabo †, and discovered by the Grecian kings of Bactriana. Pliny, by saying that this way was shorter than the other, can mean only that the voyage was made in less time: For as the Siger was discovered by the kings of Bactriana, it must have been further than the Indus: By this passage they must therefore have avoided the winding of certain coasts, and taken advantage of particular winds. The merchants at last took a third way; they sailed to Cane, or Ocellis, ports situated at the entrance of the Red-sea; from whence, by a west wind, they arrived at Muziris, the first staple town of the Indies, and from thence to the other ports.

Here we see, that instead of sailing to the mouth of the Red-sea as far as Syagros, by coasting Arabia-Felix to the north-east, they steered directly from west to east, from one side to the other, by means of the trade-winds, whose regular course they discovered by sailing in these latitudes. The ancients never lost sight of the coasts, but when they took advantage of these winds, which were to them a kind of compass.

* Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 23.

† Lib. xi. Sigertidis regnum.

Pliny * says, that they set sail for the Indies in the middle of summer, and returned towards the end of December, or in the beginning of January. This is intirely conformable to our naval journals. In that part of the Indian sea which is between the peninsula of Africa, and that on the other side the Ganges, there are two monsoons; the first, during which the winds blow from west to east, begins in the month of August or September; and the second, during which the wind is in the east, begins in January. Thus we set sail from Africa for Malabar, at the season of the year that Ptolemy's fleet used to set out from thence; and we return too at the same time as they.

Alexander's fleet was seven months in sailing from Patala to Susa. It set sail in the month of July, that is, at a season when no ship dare now to put to sea to return from the Indies. Between these two monsoons there is an interval of time, during which the winds vary; when a north-wind, meeting with the common winds, raises, especially near the coasts, terrible tempests. These continue during the months of June, July, and August. Alexander's fleet, therefore, setting sail from Patala in the month of July, must have been exposed to many storms, and the voyage must have been long, because they sailed against the trade-wind.

Pliny says, that they set out for the Indies at the end of summer; thus they spent the

* Lib. vi. cap. 23.

time, which ought to have been employed in taking advantage of the trade-wind, in working a passage from Alexandria to the Red-sea.

Observe here, I pray, how navigation has by little and little arrived to perfection. Darius's fleet was two years and a half * in falling down the Indus, and going to the Red-sea. Afterwards the fleet of Alexander †, sailing through the Indus, arrived at Susa in ten months, having spent three months on the Indus, and seven on the Indian sea: At last, the passage from the coast of Malabar to the Red-sea was made in forty days ‡.

Strabo ||, who accounts for their ignorance of the countries between the Hypanis and the Ganges, says, that there were very few of those who sailed from Egypt to the Indies, that ever proceeded so far as the Ganges. Their fleets, in fact, never went thither: They sailed with the western trade-winds from the mouth of the Red-sea to the coast of Malabar. They cast anchor in the ports along that coast, and never attempted to get round the peninsula on this side the Ganges by cape Comorin and the coast of Coromandel. The plan of navigation laid down by the kings of Egypt and the Romans was, to set out and return the same year §.

* Herodotus in Melpomene.

† Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 23.

‡ Ibid. || Lib. xv.

§ Pliny, lib. vi. cap. 23.

Thus

Thus it is demonstrable, that the Greeks and Romans carried on a much less extensive commerce to the Indies than we do; we, who know immense countries, which to them were entirely unknown; who traffic with all the Indian nations; who even manage their trade, and in our bottoms carry on their commerce.

But this commerce of the ancients was carried on with far greater facility than ours. And if the moderns were to trade only to the coast of Guzarat and Malabar, and, without seeking for the southern isles, were satisfied with what these islanders brought them, they would certainly prefer the way of Egypt to that of the cape of Good-hope. Strabo * informs us, that they traded thus with the people of Taprobane.

Ptolemy the † geographer extends the eastern part of known Africa to cape Prasum, and Arrian ‡ bounds it by cape Raptum. Our best maps place cape Prasum at Mosambique, in fourteen degrees and a half south latitude, and cape Raptum, at about ten degrees of the same latitude. But as the country extending from the kingdom of Ajan (a kingdom which indeed produces no merchandise) becomes richer in proportion as it approaches to the south, as far as the country of Sofala, where

* Lib. xv. † Lib. iv. cap. 7. & lib. viii.

‡ See the Periple of the Erythrean sea.

lies the source of riches ; it appears at first view astonishing, that they should have thus retrograded towards the north, instead of advancing to the south.

In proportion as their knowledge increased, navigation and trade extended themselves on the coast of India, and deserted that of Africa. A rich and easy commerce made them neglect one less lucrative, and more full of difficulties. The eastern coast of Africa was less known than in the time of Solomon ; and though Ptolemy speaks of cape Prasum, it was rather a place which had been formerly known, than know at that time. Arrian * bounds the known country at cape Raptum, because at that time they went no further. And though † Marcian of Heraclea extends it to cape Prasum, his authority is of no weight : For he himself confesses ‡, that he copies from Artemidorus, and Artemidorus from Ptolemy.

Carthage increased her power by her riches, and afterwards her riches by her power. Being mistress of the coasts of Africa, which are washed by the Mediterranean, she extended herself along the ocean. Hanno, by order of the senate of Carthage, distributed thirty thousand Carthaginians from Hercules's Pillars as

* Ptolemy and Arrian were nearly cotemporaries.

† His work is to be found in a collection of the small pieces of the Grecian geographers, printed at Oxford in 1698. Vol. I. pag. 10.

‡ Ibid. pag. 1, 2.

far as Cerne. This place, he says, is as far from Hercules's Pillars, as the latter from Carthage. This situation is extremely remarkable. It lets us see, that Hanno limited his settlements to the 25th degree of north latitude, that is, to two or three degrees south of the Canaries.

Hanno being at Cerne, undertook another voyage, with a view of making further discoveries towards the south. He took but little notice of the continent. He followed the coast for twenty-six days, when he was obliged to return for want of provisions. The Carthaginians, it seems, made no use of this second enterprize. Scylax * says, that the sea is not † navigable beyond Cerne, because it is shallow, full of mud and sea-weeds: And, in fact, there are many of these in those ‡ latitudes. The Carthaginian merchants, mentioned by Scylax, might find obstacles, which Hanno, who had sixty vessels of fifty oars each, had surmounted. Difficulties are at most but relative; besides, we ought not to confound an enterprize, in

* See his Periplus, under the article of Carthage.

† See Herodotus in Melpomene, on the obstacles which Satape encountered.

‡ See the charts and narrations in the first volume of *Voyages that contributed to the establishment of an East-India company*, part I, pag. 201. This weed covers the surface of the sea in such a manner that it can scarcely be perceived, and vessels can only pass through it with a stiff gale.

which

which bravery and resolution must be exerted, with things that require no extraordinary conduct.

The relation of Hanno's voyage is a fine fragment of antiquity. It was written by the very man that performed it. His recital is not mingled with ostentation. Great commanders write their actions with simplicity; because they receive more glory from facts, than from words. The style is agreeable to the subject: He deals not in the marvellous. All he says of the climate, of the soil, the behaviour, the manners of the inhabitants, correspond with what is every day seen on this coast of Africa; one would imagine it the journal of a modern sailor.

He observed from his fleet, that in the day-time there was a prodigious silence on the continent, that in the night he heard the sound of various musical instruments, and that fires might then be every-where seen, some larger than others. Our relations are conformable to this; it has been discovered, that in the day the savages retire into the forests to avoid the heat of the sun, that they light up great fires in the night to disperse the beasts of prey, and that they are passionately fond of music and dancing.

The same writer describes a volcano with all the phenomena of Vesuvius; and relates, that he took two hairy women, who chose to die rather than follow the Carthaginians, and whose skins he carried to Carthage. This has been found not void of probability.

This

This narration is so much the more valuable, as it is a monument of Punic antiquity; and from hence alone it has been regarded as fabulous: For the Romans retained their hatred to the Carthaginians, even after they had destroyed them. But it was victory alone that decided whether we ought to say *the Punic*, or *the Roman faith*.

The moderns * have imbibed these prejudices. What is become, say they, of the cities described by Hanno, of which even in Pliny's time there remained no vestiges? Wonderful would it have been indeed, had they continued. Was it a Corinth or Athens that Hanno built on these coasts? He left Carthaginian families in such places as were most commodious for trade, and secured them, as well as his hurry could permit, against savages and wild beasts. The calamities of the Carthaginians put a period to the navigation of Africa; these families must necessarily then either perish or become savages. Besides, were the ruins of these cities even still in being, who is it that would venture into the woods and marshes to make the discovery? We find however, in Scylax and Polybius, that the Carthaginians had considerable settlements on these coasts. These are the vestiges of the cities of Hanno; there are no other, for the same reason that there are no other of Carthage itself.

* Mr. Dodwell. See his *Dissertation on the Periplus of Hanno*.

The Carthaginians were in the high road to wealth; and had they gone so far as four degrees of north latitude, and fifteen of longitude, they would have discovered the gold coast. They would then have had a trade of much greater importance than that which is carried on at present on that coast; at a time when America seems to have degraded the riches of all other countries. They would there have found treasures, of which they could never have been deprived by the Romans.

Very surprising things have been said of the riches of Spain. If we may believe Aristotle *, the Phœnicians who arrived at Tartessus, found so much silver there, that their ships could not hold it all, and they made of this metal their meanest utensils. The Carthaginians, according to Diodorus †, found so much gold and silver in the Pyrenean mountains, that they adorned the anchors of their ships with it. But no foundation can be built on such popular reports. Let us therefore examine into the facts themselves.

We find in a fragment of Polybius cited by Strabo ‡, that the silver mines at the source of the river Bætis, in which forty thousand men were employed, produced to the Romans twenty-five thousand drachmas a day, that is, about five millions of livres a year ||, at fifty

* Of wonderful things. † Lib. vi. ‡ Lib. iii.
[|| Or 304,166*l.* 1*ʒs.* 4*d.* *English*, at 8*d.* per drachma.]

livres to the mark. The mountains that contained these mines were called the * *Silver Mountains*: Which shews they were the Potosi of those times. At present the mines of Hanover do not employ a fourth part of the workmen, and yet they yield more. But as the Romans had not many copper-mines, and but few of silver; and as the Greeks knew none but the Attic mines, which were of little value, they might well be astonished at their abundance.

In the war that broke out for the succession of Spain, a man called the marquis of Rhodes, of whom it was said, that he was ruined in golden mines and enriched by hospitals †, proposed to the court of France to open the Pyrenean mines. He alleged the example of the Tyrians, the Carthaginians, and the Romans. He was permitted to search, but sought in vain; he still alleged his examples, and found nothing.

The Carthaginians being masters of the gold and silver trade, were willing to be so of the lead and pewter. These metals were carried by land from the ports of Gaul upon the ocean to those of the Mediterranean. The Carthaginians were desirous of receiving them at first hand; they sent Himilco ‡ to make settle-

* *Mons Argentarius.*

† He had some share in their management.

‡ It appears from Pliny, that this Himilco was sent at the same time with Hanno; and as in the time of Agathocles there were a Hanno and an Himilco, both chiefs

settlements * in the isles called Cassiterides, which are imagined to be those of Scilly.

These voyages from Bætica into England have made some persons imagine, that the Carthaginians knew the compass: But it is certain, they followed the coasts. There needs no other proof than Himilco's being four months in sailing from the mouth of the Bætis to England: Besides, the famous piece of history of the Carthaginian † pilot, who, being followed by a Roman vessel, ran a-ground, that he might not shew her the way to England ‡, plainly intimates that these vessels were very near the shore, when they fell in with each other.

The ancients might have performed voyages, which would make one imagine they had the compass, though they had not. If a pilot was far from land, and during his voyage had such serene weather, that in the night he could always see a polar star, and in the day the rising and setting of the sun, it is certain he might regulate his course as well as we do now by the compass: But this must be a fortuitous case, and not a regular method of navigation.

We see in the treaty which put an end to the first Punic war, that Carthage was principally

of the Carthaginians, Mr. Dodwell conjectures these were the same; more especially, as the republic was then in its flourishing state. See his *Dissertation on the Periplus of Hanno*.

* See Festus Avienus.

† Strabo, lib. iii. towards the end.

‡ He was rewarded by the senate of Carthage.

attentive to preserve the empire of the sea, and Rome that of the land. Hanno *, in his negotiation with the Romans, declared that they would not suffer them even to wash their hands in the sea of Sicily; they were not permitted to sail beyond the *Promontorium pulchrum*; they were forbid to trade in Sicily †, Sardinia and Africa, except at Carthage: An exception that lets us see there was no design to favour them in their trade with that city.

In early times there had been very great wars between Carthage and Marseilles ‡ on the subject of fishing. After the peace they entered jointly into the œconomical commerce. Marseilles at length grew jealous, especially as being equal to her rival in industry, she was become inferior to her in power. This is the motive of her great fidelity to the Romans. The war between the latter and the Carthaginians in Spain, was a source of riches to Marseilles, which was now become their magazine. The ruin of Carthage and Corinth still increased the glory of Marseilles, and had it not been for the civil wars, in which this republic ought on no account to have engaged, she would have been happy under the protection of the Romans, who had not the least jealousy of her commerce.

* Freinshemius's Supplement to Livy, 2d Decad. lib. vi.

† In the parts subject to the Carthaginians.

‡ *Carthaginensium quoque exercitus, cum bellum captis piscatorum navibus ortum esset, sæpe fuderunt, pacemque vicis dederunt.* Justin. lib. xliii. cap. 5.

The Romans were never distinguished by a jealousy for trade. They attacked Carthage as a rival, not a trading nation. They favoured trading cities that were not subject to them. Thus they increased the power of Marseilles by the cession of a large territory. They feared every thing from barbarians; but had not the least apprehension from a trading people. Their genius, their glory, their military education, and the very form of their government, estranged them from commerce.

In the city they were employed only about war, elections, factions, and law-suits; in the country, about agriculture; and as for the provinces, a severe and tyrannical government, which there prevailed, was incompatible with commerce.

But their political constitution was not more opposite to trade, than their law of nations. "*The people, says * Pomponius the civilian, with whom we have neither friendship, nor hospitality, nor alliance, are not our enemies; however, if any thing belonging to us falls into their hands, they are the proprietors of it: Freemen become their slaves, and they are upon the same terms with respect to us.*"

Their civil law was not less oppressive. The law of Constantine, after having stigmatised as bastards the children of persons of a mean rank, that had been married to those of a superior

* Leg. v. ff. de Captivis.

station, confounds women who keep a * shop for vending merchandises, with slaves, with women who keep taverns, with players, with the daughters of those who keep public stews, or who had been condemned to fight in the amphitheatre: This had its original in the ancient institutions of the Romans.

I am not ignorant that men prepossessed with these two ideas, that commerce is of the greatest service to a state, and that the Romans had the best policied government in the world, have believed that they greatly honoured and encouraged commerce; but the truth is, they seldom troubled their heads about it.

C H A P. VI.

The Conduct which the Romans observed, in order to subdue all Nations.

DURING the course of so mighty a prosperity, in which it is usual for mankind to forget themselves, the senate continued to act with the same depth of judgment; and whilst their armies were spreading an universal terror, they would not suffer those to rise who were once depressed.

A tribunal arose which judged all nations: At the close of every war they determined the

* *Quæ mercimoniis publicè præfuit. Leg. 5. cod. natural. liberis.*

rewards or punishments which every one had merited: They took away from the vanquished people, part of their lands, and gave them to their allies, in which they did two things; *they engaged, in the interests of Rome, princes from whom they had little to fear, and much to hope; and they weakned others from whom they had nothing to hope, and every thing to fear.*

In warring with an enemy they made use of their allies, but immediately extirpated the destroyers. Philip was overcome by the assistance of the Ætolians, who were destroyed presently after, for having joined themselves to Antiochus. This king was overcome by the assistance of the Rhodians; but after the most conspicuous rewards had been bestowed upon them, they were depressed for ever, upon pretence that they had demanded to have a peace concluded with Perseus.

When the Romans were opposed by several enemies at the same time, they granted a truce to the weakest, who thought themselves happy in obtaining it; considering it as a great advantage, that their ruin had been suspended.

When they were engaged in a mighty war, the senate winked at wrongs of every kind, and silently waited the season proper for chastisement: If at any time a people sent them the offenders, they refused to punish them, chusing rather to consider the whole nation as guilty, and reserve to themselves a useful vengeance.

As

Ch. VI. of the ROMAN EMPIRE. 87

As they made their enemies suffer inexplicable evils, very few leagues were formed against them; for he who was at the greatest distance from the danger, did not care to come near it.

For this reason war was seldom denounced against them, but themselves always made it at a season, in the manner, and with a people, as best suited their interest; and, among the great number of nations they invaded, there were very few but would have submitted to injuries of every kind, provided they could but be suffered to live in peace.

As it was usual for them to deliver themselves always in a magisterial way, such ambassadors as they sent to nations who had not yet felt the weight of their power, were sure to meet with ill treatment, which furnished them with a sure * pretence to engage in a new war.

As they never concluded a peace with sincerity and integrity, and intended a general invasion, their treaties were properly only so many suspensions from war; they inserted such conditions in them, as always paved the way to the ruin of those states which accepted them: They used to send the garrisons out of the strong holds; they regulated the number of the land forces, or had the horses and

* See an example of this, in their war with the Dalmatians. See Polybius.

elephants delivered up to them; and, in case this people were powerful at sea, they obliged them to burn their ships, and sometimes to remove higher up in the country.

After having destroyed the armies of a prince, they drained his treasury, by imposing a heavy tribute, or taxing him immoderately, under colour of making him defray the expence of the war: A new species of tyranny, which obliged him to oppress his subjects, and thereby lose their affection.

Whenever they granted a peace to some prince, they used to take one of his brothers or children by way of hostage, which gave them an opportunity of raising, at pleasure, commotions in his kingdom: When they had the next heir among them, it was their custom to intimidate the possessor: Had they only a prince of a remote degree, they made use of him to foment the insurrections of the populace.

Whenever any prince or people withdrew their allegiance from their sovereign, they immediately indulged them the title of * ally to the Romans; by which means they became sacred and inviolable; so that there was no monarch, how formidable soever, who could rely one moment upon his subjects, or even upon his own family.

* See particularly their treaty with the Jews in the 11th book of the Maccabees, ch. viii.

Although

Although the title of their ally was a kind of servitude *, yet was it very much sought after; for these who enjoyed it were sure to receive no injuries but from them, and had reason to flatter themselves such would be less grievous. Hence nations and kings were ready to undertake any kind of services, and submitted to the meanest and most abject acts, merely for the sake of obtaining it.

They had various kinds of allies; some were united to them by privileges and a participation in their grandeur, as the Latins and the Hernici; others by their very settlements, as their colonies; some by good offices, as Masinissa, Eumenes, and Attalus, who were obliged to them for their kingdoms or their exaltation; others by free and unconstrained treaties, and these, by the long continuation of the alliance, became subjects, as the kings of Egypt, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and most of the Grecian cities; in fine, many by forced and involuntary treaties, and by the law of their subjection, as Philip and Antiochus; for every peace the Romans granted an enemy, included also an alliance with him; or, in other words, they made every nation subdued by them contribute to the depression of others.

When they permitted any cities the enjoyment of their liberties, they immediately raised

* Ariarathes offered a sacrifice to the gods, says Polybius, by way of thanks for having obtained their alliance.

two * factions in them, one of which defended the laws and liberties of the country, whilst the other asserted, that the will of the Romans was the only law; and as the latter faction was always the most powerful, it is plain such a liberty could be but a mere name.

They sometimes possessed themselves of a country upon pretence of being heirs to it: They entered Asia, Bithynia, and Libya by the last wills of Attalus, of Nicomedes †, and of Appion; and Egypt was enslaved by that of the king of Cyrene.

To keep great princes for ever in a weak condition, they would not suffer them to conclude an alliance with those nations to whom they had granted theirs ‡; and as they did not refuse it to any people who bordered upon a powerful prince, this condition inserted in a treaty of peace, deprived him of all his allies.

Besides, when they had overcome any considerable prince, one of the articles of the treaty was, that he should not make war, upon account of any feuds of his own, with the allies of the Romans (that is to say, generally with all his neighbours;) but should submit them to arbitration; which deprived him of a military power for time to come.

* See Polybius on the cities of Greece.

† The son of Philopator.

‡ This was Antiochus's case.

And in order to keep the sole possession of it in their own hands, they bereaved their very allies of this force; the instant these had the least contest, they sent ambassadors, who obliged them to conclude a peace: We need but consider the manner in which they terminated the wars of Attalus and Prusias.

When any prince had gained such a conquest as often had exhausted him, immediately a Roman ambassador came and wrested it out of his hands: Among a multitude of examples, we may remember how they, with a single word, drove Antiochus out of Egypt.

Fully sensible how well the European nations were turned for war, they established as a law, that no * Asiatic monarch should be suffered to come into Europe, and there invade any people whatsoever. The chief motive of their declaring war against Mithridates † was, for his having subdued some barbarians contrary to this prohibition.

When they saw two nations engaged in war, although they were not in alliance, nor had any contest with either of them, they nevertheless appeared upon the stage of action, and, like our knight-errants, always sided with the

* The order sent to Antiochus, even before the war, for him not to cross into Europe, was made general with regard to all other kings.

† Appian, *de Bello Mithridat.*

weakest: It was an * ancient custom, says Dionysius Halicarnassus, for the Romans to grant succour to all who came to implore it.

These customs of the Romans were not certain particular incidents, which happened by chance, but were so many invariable principles; and this is easy to perceive, for the maxims they put in practice against the greatest monarchs were exactly the same with those they had employed, in their infant state, against the little cities which stood round them.

They made Eumenes and Masinissa contribute to the subjection of Philip and Antiochus, as they had before employed the Latins and the Hernici to subdue the Volscians and the Tuscans: They obliged the Carthaginians and the kings of Asia to surrender their fleets to them, in like manner as they had forced the citizens of Antium to give up their little vessels.

When any state composed too formidable a body from its situation or union, they never failed to divide it. The republic of Achaia was formed by an association of free cities; the senate declared, that every city should from that time be governed by its own laws, independent on the general authority.

* A fragment of Dionysius, copied from the extract of embassies, made by Constantine Porphyrogeneta.

The commonwealth of Bœotia rose likewise from a league made between several cities: but, as in the war of Perseus, one city declared for that prince, and others for the Romans, the latter received them into favour, when the common alliance was dissolved.

Macedonia was surrounded by inaccessible mountains: The senate divided it into four parts; declared those free; prohibited them every kind of alliance among themselves by marriage; carried off all the nobles into Italy, and by that means reduced this power to nothing.

Had a great monarch, who reigned in our time, followed these maxims, when he saw a neighbouring prince dethroned, he would have employed a stronger force in his support, and have confined him to the island which continued faithful to him. By dividing the only power that could have opposed his designs, he would have drawn infinite advantages even from the misfortunes of his ally.

Whenever there happened any feud in a state, they immediately made themselves judges of it; and thereby were sure of having that party only, whom they condemned, for their enemy. If princes of the same blood were at variance for the crown, they sometimes declared them both kings, and by this means crushed the power of both: If one of them

was

was a * minor, they declared in his favour, and made themselves his guardians in quality of protectors of the world; for they had carried matters to so high a pitch, that nations and kings were their subjects, without knowing directly upon what right or title; it being a maxim, that the bare hearing of their names, was sufficient for a people to acknowledge them their sovereigns.

The Romans never engaged in far-distant wars, till they had first made an alliance with some power contiguous to the enemy they invaded, who might unite his troops to the army they sent; and as this was never considerable with regard to numbers, they always had † another in that province which lay nearest the enemy, and a third in Rome, ever ready to march at a moment's warning. In this manner they never hazarded but a small part of their forces, whilst their enemy ventured all his.

They sometimes insidiously perverted the subtilty of the terms of their language: They destroyed Carthage, upon pretence that they had promised to preserve the *Civitas* not the

* To enable themselves to ruin Syria, in quality of guardians, they declared in favour of the son of Antiochus, who was but a child, in opposition to Demetrius, who was their hostage, and conjured them to do him justice, crying, That Rome was his mother, and the senators his fathers.

† This was their constant practice, as appears from history.

Urbs *. It is well known in what manner the Ætolians, who had abandoned themselves to their faith, were imposed upon; the Romans pretended, that the signification of these words, *abandon one's self to the faith of an enemy*, implied, the loss of all things, of persons, lands, cities, temples, and even of burial places.

The Romans would even go so far, as to give arbitrary explanations to treaties: Thus, when they were resolved to depress the Rhodians, they declared, that they had formerly given them Lycia, not by way of present, but as a friend and ally.

When one of their generals concluded a peace, merely to preserve his army, which was just upon the point of being cut to pieces, the senate, who did not ratify it, took advantage of this peace and continued the war. Thus when JUGURTHA had surrounded an army of Romans, and permitted them to march away unmolested, upon the faith of a treaty, these very troops he had saved were employed against him: And when the Numantians had reduced twenty thousand Romans, just perishing with hunger, to the necessity of suing for peace; this peace, which had saved the lives of so many thousand citizens, was broke at Rome, and the public faith was eluded by † sending back the consul who had signed it.

They

[* That is, to save the corporation, but not the city.]

† After Claudius Glycias had granted the Corsicans a peace, the senate gave orders for renewing the war against them,

They sometimes would conclude a peace with a monarch upon reasonable conditions, and the instant he had signed them, they added others of so injurious a nature, that he was forced to renew the war. Thus, when they had forced Jugurtha to * deliver up his elephants, his horses, his treasures, and his deserters, they required him to surrender up his person, which being the greatest calamity that can befall a prince, cannot for that reason be ever made an article of peace.

In fine, they set up a tribunal over kings, whom they judged for their particular vices and crimes: They heard the complaints of all persons who had any dispute with PHILIP: They sent deputies with them by way of safeguard, and obliged Perseus to appear before these, to answer for certain murders and certain quarrels he had with some inhabitants of the confederate cities.

As men judged of the glory of a general by the quantity of the gold and silver carried in his triumph, the Romans stripped the vanquished enemy of all things. Rome was for ever enriching itself; and every war they en-

them, and delivered up Glycias to the inhabitants of the island, who would not receive him. Every one knows what happened at the Furcæ Caudinæ.

* They acted the same part with regard to Viriatus: After having obliged him to give up the deserters, he was ordered to surrender up his arms, to which neither himself nor his army could consent. Fragment of Dion.

gaged

gaged in, enabled them to undertake a new one.

All the nations who were either friends or confederates, quite * ruined themselves by the immensely rich presents they made, in order to procure the continuance of the favours already bestowed upon them, or to obtain greater; and half the monies which used to be sent upon these occasions to the Romans, would have sufficed to conquer them.

Being masters of the universe, they arrogated to themselves all the treasures of it; and were less unjust robbers, considered as conquerors, than considered as legislators. Hearing that PTOLEMY king of Cyprus was possessed of immense wealth, they † enacted a law, proposed by a tribune, by which they gave to themselves the inheritance of a man still living, and confiscated to their own use the estates of a confederate prince.

In a little time, the greediness of particular persons quite devoured whatever had escaped the public avarice; magistrates and governors used to sell their injustice to kings: Two competitors would ruin one another, for the sake of purchasing an ever-dubious protection against a

* The presents which the senate used to send kings were mere trifles, as an ivory chair and staff, or a robe like that worn by their own magistrates.

† *Divitiarum tanta fama erat, says Florus, ut vicior gentium populus, & donare regna consuetus, socii virique regis confiscationem mandaverit.* lib. iii. c. 9.

rival who was not quite undone ; for the Romans had not even the justice of robbers, who preserve a certain probity in the exercise of guilt. In fine, as rights, whether lawful or usurped, were maintained by money only ; princes, to obtain it, despoiled temples, and confiscated the possessions of the wealthiest citizens ; a thousand crimes were committed, purely for the sake of giving to the Romans all the money in the universe.

But nothing was of greater advantage to this people than the awe with which they struck the whole earth : In an instant, kings were put to silence, and seemed as though they were stupid ; no regard was had to their eminence, but their very persons were attacked ; to hazard a war, was to expose themselves to captivity, to death, to the infamy of a triumph. Thus kings, who lived in the midst of pomps and pleasures, did not dare to fix their eyes stedfastly on the Roman people ; and their courage failing them, they hoped to suspend a little the miseries with which they were threatened, by their patience and submissive actions.

Observe, I intreat you, the conduct of the Romans. After the defeat of ANTIUCHUS they were possessed of Africa, Asia, and Greece, without having scarce a single city in these countries that were immediately their own. They seemed to conquer with no other view but to bestow ; but then they obtained so complete a sovereignty, that whenever they engaged
in

in war with any prince, they oppressed him, as it were, with the weight of the whole universe.

The time proper for seizing upon the conquered countries was not yet come: Had the Romans kept the cities they took from Philip, the Greeks would have seen at once into their designs: Had they, after the second Punic war, or that with Antiochus, possessed themselves of lands in * Africa and in Asia, they could never have preserved conquests so slightly established.

It was the interest of the Romans to wait till all nations were accustomed to obey, as free and as confederate, before they should attempt to command over them as subjects; and to let them blend and lose themselves, as it were, by little and little, in the Roman commonwealth.

See the treaty which they made with the Latins after the victory at the Lake of Regillus †. This was one of the principal foundations of their power, yet not a single word occurs in it, which can give the least suspicion that they aimed at empire.

This was a slow way of conquering: After overcoming a nation, they contented themselves

* They did not dare to venture their colonies in those countries; but chose rather to raise an eternal jealousy between the Carthaginians and Masinissa, and to make both these powers assist them in the conquest of Macedonia and Greece.

† See Dionys. Halicarn. lib. vi. cap. 95. Edit. Oxon.

with weakening it; they imposed such conditions as consumed it insensibly: If it recovered, they depressed it still more, and it became subject, without a possibility of dating the first æra of its subjection.

Thus Rome was not properly either a monarchy or a commonwealth, but the head of a body composed of all the nations in the universe.

Had the Spaniards, after the conquest of Mexico and Peru, followed this plan, they would not have been obliged to destroy all, for the sake of preserving all.

It is a folly in conquerors to force their own laws and customs on all nations; such a conduct is of very ill consequence, for men are capable of obeying under all kinds of government.

But as Rome not did impose any general laws, the nations did not form any dangerous associations; they formed one body no otherwise than by a common obedience; and were all Romans without being countrymen.

It perhaps will be objected, that no empires founded on the laws of fiefs were ever durable or powerful. But nothing could be so contradictory as the plan of the Romans and that of the Goths: And just to mention these plans, the former was a work of strength, the latter of weakness: In the one, subjection was extreme; in the other, independence: In the Gothic states, power was lodged in the vassals, and the right of judging only in the prince; whereas

whereas it was the reverse in the Roman government.

C H A P. VII.

*How it was possible for Mithridates to resist
the Romans.*

AMONG the several kings whom the Romans invaded, MITHRIDATES was the only one who made a courageous defence, and exposed them to danger.

His dominions were situated to wonderful advantage for carrying on a war with them: They bordered on the inaccessible countries of mount Caucasus, peopled with savage nations, whom that prince could call to his assistance; they thence extended along the sea of Pontus, which Mithridates covered with his ships, and he was incessantly purchasing new armies of Scythians: Asia was open to his invasions; and he was rich, because his cities, situated on the Pontus Euxinus, carried on an advantageous traffic with nations less industrious than themselves.

Proscriptions, the custom of which began at this time, had forced several Romans to leave their country. These were received by Mithridates with open arms, and he formed legions *,

H 3 into

* Frontin. Stratagem. lib. ii. tells us, that Archelaus, lieutenant of Mithridates, engaging against Sylla, posted, in

into which he incorporated those exiles, who proved the best soldiers in his army.

On the other side, the Romans, disordered by intestine divisions, and threatned with more imminent dangers, neglected the affairs of Asia, and suffered Mithridates to pursue his victories, or take breath after his defeats.

Nothing had contributed more to the ruin of most kings, than the manifest desire they shewed for peace: By this, they had prevented all other nations from dividing with them a danger, from which they were so anxious to extricate themselves: But Mithridates immediately made the whole world sensible, that he was an enemy to the Romans, and would be so eternally.

In fine the cities of Greece and Asia, finding the Roman yoke grow more intolerable every day, reposed their whole confidence in this barbarous king, who invited them to liberty.

This disposition of things gave rise to three mighty wars, which form one of the noblest parts of the Roman history, and for this reason: We do not, on this occasion, read of princes already overcome by luxury and pride, as Antiochus and Tigranes; nor by fear, as Philip, Perseus, and Jugurtha; but a magnanimous

in the first rank, his chariots armed with scythes, in the second his phalanx, in the third his auxiliaries armed after the Roman way; *mixtis fugitivis Italiae, quorum pervicaciae multum scribebat.* Mithridates even made an alliance with Sertorius. See also Plutarch, life of Lucullus.

king,

king, who, in adversity, like a lion that gazes upon his wounds, was fired with the greater indignation upon that account.

This part of the Roman history is singular; because it abounds with perpetual and ever-unexpected revolutions: For as on one side, Mithridates could easily recruit his armies, so it appeared, that in those reverses of fortune, in which kings stand in greatest need of obedience and a strict discipline, his barbarian forces forsook him: As he had the art of enticing nations, and stirring up cities to rebellion, so was he likewise betrayed by his captains, his children and his wives; in fine, as he was sometimes opposed by unexperienced Roman generals, so there was sent against him, at other times, SYLLA, LUCULLUS, and POMPEY.

This prince, after having defeated the Roman generals, and conquered Asia, Macedonia, and Greece; having been vanquished, in his turn, by Sylla; confined by a treaty to his former limits, and harrassed by the Roman generals; having been once more superior to them, and conqueror of Asia; driven away by Lucullus; pursued into his own country; obliged to fly for shelter to Tigranes, and defeated with him: Finding this monarch irrecoverably lost, and depending merely upon himself for succour, he took sanctuary in his own dominions, and re-ascended the throne.

Lucullus was succeeded by Pompey, who quite overpowered Mithridates. He then flies

out of his dominions, and crossing the Araxes, marches from danger to danger through the country of the Lazi; and assembling in his way all the barbarians he met with, appeared in the Bosphorus against his son * MACCHARES, who had reconciled himself to the Romans.

Although plunged in so deep an abyss, he yet † formed a design of making Italy the seat of the war, and of marching to Rome at the head of those nations who enslaved it some years after, and by the same way these now took.

Betrayed by Pharnaces, another of his sons, and by an army terrified at the greatness of his enterprizes and the perils he was going in search of, he died in a manner worthy a king.

It was then that Pompey, in the rapidity of his victories, completed the pompous work of the Roman grandeur: He united to the body of its empire, countries of a boundless extent, which, however, heightened the Roman magnificence rather than increased its power; and though it appeared by the titles carried in his triumph, that he had increased the revenue of the public treasury ‡ above a third, there

* Mithridates had made him king of the Bosphorus, News being brought of his father's arrival, he dispatched himself.

† See Appian, *de Bello Mithridatico*.

‡ See Plutarch in the life of Pompey; and Zonaras, lib. ii.

yet was no augmentation in power, and the public liberty was thereby only exposed to the greater danger.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Divisions which always subsisted in the City.

WHILST Rome was conquering the world, a hidden war was carrying on within its walls: These fires were like those of volcanos, which break out the instant they are fed by some combustible substance.

After the expulsion of the kings, the government became aristocratical: The patrician families only, obtained all the employments and dignities in the * state, and consequently all † honours civil and military.

The patricians being determined to prevent, if possible, the return of the kings, endeavoured to foment the restless principle which now prevailed in the minds of the people; but they did more than they would willingly have done: By attempting to inspire them with a hatred for kings, they fired them with an inordinate

* The patricians were invested, in some measure, with a sacred character, and they only were allowed to take the auspices. See in Livy, book vi. the speech of Appius Claudius.

† As for instance, they alone were permitted to triumph, since they alone could be consuls and generals.

thirst for liberty. As the royal authority had devolved entirely upon the consuls, the people found they were far from possessing that liberty they were taught to idolize: They therefore sought for methods by which they might depress the consulate; procure plebeian magistrates; and share the curule, or greater employments, with the nobles. The patricians were forced to comply with all the demands of the people; for in a city where poverty was the public virtue, where wealth, that clandestine path to power, was despised, neither birth nor dignities could bestow any great advantages: It was therefore necessary for power to fall into the hands of the greater number, and for aristocracy to change by insensible degrees into a popular state.

Those who are subordinate to a king, are less tortured with envy and jealousy, than such as live under an hereditary aristocracy: The prince is at so great a distance from his subjects, that he is scarce seen by them; and is raised so far above them, that they cannot conceive any relation capable of giving them disgust. But when the nobles preside in a state, they are exposed to the eyes of all men, and are not seated so high as to prevent odious comparisons from being made perpetually; and, indeed, the people have detested senators, in this and in all ages. Such commonwealths in which birth does not bestow any share in the legislature, are the happiest in this respect; for it is natural that
the

the people should not bear so much envy to an authority, which they bestow on whom they think proper, and resume at will.

The people being disgusted at the patricians, withdrew to the sacred hill (Mons sacer) whither deputies being sent, they were appeased: And as they all made a promise to assist one another, in case the patricians should not perform their * engagement, which would have created seditions every moment, and disturbed all the magistrates in the exercise of their functions; it was judged better to create an officer †, who might protect the people against any injustice that should be done them: But by a malady for ever incident to man, the plebeians, who had obtained tribunes merely for their own defence, employed those very magistrates to annoy others; so that they stript, by insensible degrees, the patricians of all their privileges. This gave rise to everlasting contests: The people were supported, or rather animated, by their tribunes; and the patricians were defended by the senate, the greatest part of which consisted of patricians, who were more inclined to favour the ancient maxims, and afraid that the populace would raise some tribune to arbitrary power.

The people employed, in the defence of this magistrate, their own strength, and the

* Zonaras, lib. ii.

† Origin of the tribunes of the people.

superiority they had in the suffrages, their refusal to march into the field, their threats to go quite away, the partiality of the laws, in fine, their judiciary sentences against those who had opposed them too vigorously: The senate defended themselves by their wisdom, their justice, and the love they inspired into all for their country; by their beneficence, and the prudent distribution of the commonwealth; by the veneration which the people had for the glory of the principal * families, and the virtue of illustrious personages; by religion itself, the ancient institutions, and the prohibition of days of public meeting, upon pretence that the auspices had not been favourable; by their clients; by the opposition of one tribune to another; by the creation of a † dictator, the occupations of a new war,
or

* The people had so great a veneration for the chief families, that although they had obtained the privilege of creating plebeian military tribunes, who were invested with the same power as the consuls, they nevertheless always made choice of patricians for this employment. They were obliged to put a constraint upon themselves, and to enact, that one consul always should be a plebeian; and when some plebeian families were raised to offices, the way was afterwards open to them without intermission. It was with difficulty that the people, notwithstanding the perpetual desire they had to depress the nobility, depressed them in reality; and when they raised to honours some person of mean extraction, as Varro and Marius, it cost them very great struggles.

† The patricians, to defend themselves, used to create a dictator, which proved of the greatest advantage
to

or the misfortunes and calamities which united all parties; in a word, by a paternal condescension, in granting the people part of their demands, purposely to make them relinquish the rest; and by that stedfast maxim, of preferring the safety of the republic to the prerogatives of any order or public employment whatsoever.

In process of time, when the plebeians had depressed the patricians to such a degree, that this * distinction of families was empty and fruitless, and that both were indiscriminately raised to honours, new contests arose between the populace, whom their tribunes spirited up, and the chief families, whether patricians or such plebeians as were styled noble, and were favoured by the senate that was composed of them: But, as the ancient manners subsisted no more; as particular persons were possessed of immense wealth, and that it is impossible but wealth must give power; these nobles made a stronger resistance than the patricians had done, which occasioned the

to them; but the plebeians having obtained the privilege of being elected consuls, could also be elected dictators, which quite disconcerted the patricians. See in Livy, lib. viii. in what manner Publius Philo depressed them in his dictatorship. He enacted three laws, by which they received the highest prejudice.

* The patricians reserved to themselves only a few offices belonging to the priesthood, and the privilege of creating a magistrate called interrex.

death

death of the Gracchi, and of * several persons who followed their plan †.

I must take notice of an office which contributed greatly to the happy polity of Rome; it was that of the censors. These numbered or surveyed the ‡ people; farther, as the strength of the commonwealth consisted in the strictness of discipline, in the severity of manners, and the uninterrupted observation of certain customs; they corrected such errors and abuses as the legislative power had not foreseen, or the ordinary magistrate || could not punish.

Some

* As Saturninus and Glaucias.

[† When the people of Rome had obtained the privilege of sharing the patrician magistracies, it was natural to think that the flatterers of them would immediately become arbiters of the government. But no such thing.—It is observable, that the very people who had rendered the plebeians capable of public offices, fixed, notwithstanding, their choice constantly on the patricians. Because they were virtuous, they were magnanimous: and because they were free, they had a contempt of power. But when their morals were corrupted, the more power they were possessed of, the less prudent was their conduct; till at length upon becoming their own tyrants and slaves, they lost the strength of liberty to fall into the weakness and impotency of licentiousness. *L'Esprit des Loix*, lib. viii. c. 12.]

‡ The census or survey of the citizens was a very prudent institution in itself: It was a survey of the state of their affairs, and an enquiry into their power. It was founded by Servius Tullius; before whom, according to Eutropius, book i. the census was unknown.

|| The reader may see in what manner those were degraded who, after the battle of Cannæ, were for leaving Italy; those who had surrendered to Hannibal; those who

Ch. VIII. *of the* ROMAN EMPIRE. III

Some bad examples are worse than crimes, and a violation of manners has destroyed more states, than the infraction of laws: In Rome, whatever might tend to introduce dangerous novelties, to create a change in the minds or affections of the citizens, and prevent, if I may use the expression, the perpetuity of it; all disorders and tumults, whether public or private, were reformed by the censors; these had authority to expel whomsoever they pleased; the senate could take from a knight the horse maintained for him at the public expence; or degrade a citizen to the rank of such as contributed to the maintenance of the magistrates of the city, without enjoying the privileges of it; in a word, the censors took a view of the actual situation of the republic, and distributed the people * among their various tribes

who by an insidious and false interpretation, had forfeited their word.

* The plebeians obtained, in opposition to the patricians, that the laws and elections of magistrates should be made by the people assembled by tribes and not by centuries. There were thirty-five tribes, each of whom gave its vote; Four belonging to the city, and thirty-one to the country. As there were but two professions among the Romans that were honourable, war and husbandry, the country tribes were had in greatest consideration; and the four remaining ones admitted into their body that contemptible part of the citizens, who having no lands to cultivate, were, if we may so say, but citizens by halves; the greatest part of them did not even go to war, for in the enlisting of soldiers the divisions of centuries was observed; and those who were members of the four city tribes, were very near the

tribes in such a manner, as to prevent the tribunes and persons of an aspiring temper from engrossing the suffrages, or the people from abusing their power.

M. LIVIUS * degraded the people themselves, and reduced thirty-four tribes out of the thirty-five, to the rank of those who had no share in the privileges of the city: for, said this Roman, you first condemned me, and afterwards raised me to the consulate and the censorship; you therefore must either have prevaricated once in punishing me, or twice in creating me consul and afterwards censor.

M. DURONIUS †, tribune of the people, was expelled the senate by the censors, for having

the same with those who in the division by centuries were of the sixth class, in which no person was enrolled. Thus, it was scarce possible for the suffrages to be in the hands of the populace, who were confined to their four tribes; but as every one committed a thousand frauds, for the sake of getting out of them, the censors had an opportunity of reforming this abuse every five years; and they incorporated into any tribe they pleased, not only a citizen, but also bodies and whole orders. See the first remark of chapter xi. See also Livy, lib. i. Decad. I. in which the different divisions of the people, made by Servius Tullius, are very well explained: It was the same body of the people, but divided in various respects. [—In such a manner, that property rather than numbers determined elections. *L'Esprit des Loix*, lib. ii. c. 2.]

* Livy, lib. xxix.

† Valer. Max. lib. ii.

annulled,

annulled, when in office, the law which limits the expences of feasts.

The following institution was a very wise one; no magistrate * could be turned out of his employment, because that would have disturbed the exercise of the public power; but they divested such a man of his order and rank, and deprived, as it were, a citizen of his particular nobility.

Servius Tullius had made the famous division by centuries, which Livy † and Dionysius Halicarnassæus ‡ have so well explained. He had divided one hundred and ninety-three centuries into six classes, and in the last century, which of itself formed the sixth class, he placed all the commonalty. This disposition evidently excluded the commonalty from voting; not of right, but in fact. Afterwards it was determined, that, some particular cases excepted, the division of tribes should be followed in voting. There were thirty-five of these tribes, each having their respective vote, four belonging to the city, and thirty-one to the country. The principal citizens, who were all farmers, naturally belonged to the country-tribes, and those of the city admitted

* The dignity of senator was not a public office or employment.

† Tit. Liv. lib. i.

‡ Lib. iv. act 15. &c.

the commonalty *, though these had very little influence in affairs : this was considered as the safety of the republic. And when Fabius replaced in the four city-tribes, the commonalty, whom Appius Claudius had dispersed through them all, he acquired by that action the title of Maximus †. The censors every five years surveyed the state of the republic, and distributed the people in their several tribes in such a manner, that the tribunes and ambitious might not engross the votes, nor the people abuse their power.

The government of Rome was wonderful in this respect ; ever since the foundation of that city, its constitution was such, either from the genius of the people, the strength of the senate, or the authority of certain magistrates, that every abuse of power might always be reformed in it.

Carthage was destroyed, because, when abuses were to be retrenched, the citizens could not bear the hand even of their Hannibal. Athens fell, because the errors of the people appeared so lovely in their own eyes, that they would not be cured of them : And among us, those Italian republics which boast the perpetuity of their government, ought to boast of nothing but the perpetuity of their

* Called *turba forensis*.

† Tit. Liv. lib. ix.

abuses; nor indeed, do they enjoy greater liberty * than Rome did under the Decemviri.

The British government is one of the wisest in Europe, because there is a body which examines it perpetually, and is perpetually examining itself; and its errors are of such a nature, as never to be lasting, and are frequently useful by rousing the attention of the nation.

In a word, a free government, that is to say, one for ever in motion, cannot support itself, unless its own laws are capable of correcting the disorders of it.

It may be proper here to give a more minute detail of the steps by which the Roman constitution was perfected; how its strength increased with its liberties; and how both were impaired together. To this purpose we shall add a few pages from this excellent writer's *Spirit of Laws*.

Of the division of the three powers under the different government of Rome.

THE government of the kings of Rome, in some measure, resembled that of the kings of the heroic times of Greece. It sunk, like that, by its general corruption, though in

* Nor even greater power.

itself, and in its own particular nature, it was exceeding good.

To give my reader a clear notion of this government, I shall consider distinctly that of the five first kings, that of Servius Tullius, and that of Tarquin.

The crown was elective, and under the five first kings the senate had the greatest share in the election.

Upon the king's decease, the senate took into consideration, whether they should continue the established form of government. If they thought proper to continue it, they named a magistrate *, taken from their own body, who chose a king: it was the business of the senate to approve of the election, of the people to confirm it, and of the augurs to ratify it. If one of these three conditions was wanting, they were obliged to proceed to another election.

The constitution was a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy; and such was the harmony of these powers, that in the first reigns there was no instance of jealousy or dispute. The king commanded the armies, and had the direction of the sacrifices; he had the power of determining civil † and crimi-

* Dionys. Halicarn. lib. ii. p. 120. & lib. iv. p. 242, 243.

† See Tanaquil's discourse in Livy, lib. i. c. 41. and the regulation of Servius Tullius, in Dionys. Halicarn. lib. iv. p. 229.

nal * causes ; he convened the senate, assembled the people, laid some affairs before the latter, and regulated the rest with the senate †.

The authority of the senate was great. The kings often took some of the senators to pass judgments jointly with himself; and they never laid any affair before the people, which had not been previously debated in the senate ‡.

The people had the right of chusing magistrates ||, of consenting to new laws, and, with the king's permission, of declaring war, and making peace: But they had not the power of judging. When Tullus Hostilius referred the trial of Horatius to the people, he had some particular reasons, which may be seen in Dionysius Halicarnassæus |||.

The constitution was altered under Servius Tullius §. The senate had no share in his election ; he caused himself to be proclaimed

* See Dionys. Halicarn. lib. ii. p. 118. and lib. iii. p. 171.

† It was by virtue of a *senatus consultum* that Tullus Hostilius ordered Alba to be destroyed. Dionys. Halicarn. lib. iii. p. 167. and 172.

‡ Ibid. lib. iv. p. 276.

|| Ibid. lib. ii. And yet they could not have the nomination of all offices ; since Valerius Publicola made that famous law which prohibited every citizen from exercising any, unless he had obtained it by the suffrage of the people.

||| Lib. iii. p. 159.

§ Dionys. Halicarn. lib. iv.

by the people; he resigned the power of judging civil causes *, and reserved to himself only the criminal; he laid all affairs directly before the people; he eased them of taxes, and laid the whole burthen of them upon the patricians. Hence in proportion as he weakened the regal dignity and the authority of the senate, he augmented the power of the people †.

Tarquin would not be chosen either by the senate, or by the people; he considered Servius Tullius as an usurper, and took the crown as an hereditary right. He turned out most of the senators; those who remained he no longer consulted; nor did he even summon them to assist in judgments ‡. Thus his power increased: and the odium of that power received a new addition, by usurping also the authority of the people, without whom, and even against whom he enacted several laws. He would have reunited the three powers in his own person; but the people recollected for a moment that they were legislators: and Tarquin was no more.

To proceed then: For we never know how to quit the history of the Romans, just as, to

* He divested himself of half the regal power, says Dionys. Halicarn. lib. iv. p. 229.

† It was thought, if he had not been prevented by Tarquin, he would have established a popular government. Dionys. Halicarn. lib. iv. p. 243.

‡ Dionys. Halicarn. lib. iv.

this day, we neglect the modern palaces in their capital to go in search of ruins; or as the eye, after resting itself on the enamelled meadows, loves to visit rocks and mountains.

The patrician families were at all times possessed of great prerogatives. These distinctions, which were considerable under the kings, became much more important after their expulsion. Hence arose the jealousy of the plebeians, who wanted to reduce them. The contests struck upon the constitution without weakening the government: for there was no great difference whatever family the magistrates were of, provided the magistracy preserved its authority.

An elective monarchy, like that of Rome, necessarily supposeth a powerful aristocratical body to support it; without which it changes immediately into tyranny or into a popular state. But a popular state has no need of this distinction of families to maintain itself. This was the reason why the patricians, who were a necessary part of the constitution under the regal government, became a superfluous branch under the consuls: the people could depress them without hurting themselves, and change the constitution without corrupting it.

After Servius Tullius had reduced the patricians, it was natural for Rome to fall from the regal hands into those of the people. But the people, by reducing the patricians, had

no reason to be afraid of falling again under a regal power.

A state may alter two different ways, either by the amendment, or by the corruption of the constitution. If it has preserved its principles, and the constitution is changed, it is owing to its amendment; if upon changing the constitution, its principles are lost, it is because it has been corrupted.

Rome, after the expulsion of the kings, should naturally have been a democracy. The people had already the legislative power in their hands; their unanimous suffrage had expelled the kings; and if they had not continued steady in that resolution, the Tarquins might easily have been restored. To pretend that their design in expelling them was to render themselves slaves to a few families, was unreasonable. The situation, therefore, of things required that Rome should be a democracy; and yet it was not. There was a necessity of tempering the power of the principal families, and of giving the laws a bias to democracy.

States often flourish more under the insensible transition from one constitution to another, than under the establishment of either. Then it is that all the springs of government are stretched, that every citizen puts in his pretensions, that they oppose and carefs one another, and that there is a noble emulation
between

between those who defend the declining, and those who are strenuous in promoting the new constitution.

There were four things which greatly oppressed the liberty of Rome. The patricians had engrossed to themselves all sacred, political, civil, and military employments; an exorbitant power was annexed to the consulate; the people were often insulted; and, in fine, they had scarce any influence at all in the public suffrages. These four abuses were redressed by the people.

1. It was stipulated, that there should be some magistracies open to the plebeians; who, by degrees, obtained that they should be made capable of all, except that of *Interrex*.

2. The consulate was dissolved into several other magistracies*; prætors were created, on whom the power was conferred of determining private causes; quæstors † were nominated for judging public crimes; ædiles were established for the civil administration; treasurers ‡ appointed, who had the management of the public money; and, in fine, by the creation of censors the consuls were divested of that part of the legislative power, which regulates the morals of the citizens, and the

* Livy, lib. vi.

† *Quæstores parricidii*. Pomponius, leg. 2. ff. de Orig. Juris.

‡ Plutarch, Life of Publicola.

momentary polity of the different bodies of the state. The chief prerogatives left them were to preside in the great assemblies * of the people, to convene the senate, and to command the armies.

3. By the sacred laws, tribunes were established, who had a power on all occasions of checking the incroachments of the patricians, and prevented not only particular, but likewise general injuries.

In fine, the plebeians increased their influence in public decisions. The people of Rome were divided in three different manners, by centuries, by curiæ, and by tribes; and whenever they gave their votes, they were assembled and formed one of those three ways.

In the first, the patricians, the leading men, the rich, the senate, which was very near the same thing, had almost the whole authority; in the second they had less; and less still in the third.

The division into centuries was a division rather of estates and fortunes, than of persons. The whole body of the people was divided into a hundred and ninety-three centuries †, which had each a single vote. The patricians and leading men composed the first ninety-eight centuries; and the other ninety-five con-

* *Comitiis centuriatis.*

† See Livy, lib. i. 43. & Dionys. Halicarn. lib. iv. & vii.

sisted of the remainder of the citizens. In this division, therefore, the patricians were masters of the suffrages.

In the divisions into *curiæ* *, the patricians had not the same advantages: some however they had, for it was necessary to consult the auspices, which were under the power of the patricians; and no proposal could be made to the people in those assemblies, unless it had been previously laid before the senate, and confirmed by a *senatus consultum*. But in the division into tribes neither the auspices, nor the decrees of the senate interfered; and the patricians were excluded.

Now the people endeavoured constantly to have those meetings by *curias* which had been customary by centuries; and by tribes those they used to have before by *curias*; by which means the direction of public affairs soon devolved from the patricians to the plebeians.

Thus when the plebeians obtained the power of judging the patricians, a power which commenced in the affair of Coriolanus †, the plebeians insisted upon judging them by assemblies in tribes ‡, and not in centuries: and when the new magistracies of tribunes || and

* Dionys. Halicarn. lib. ix. p. 598.

† Ibid. lib. vii. p. 463, 464. edit. Sylb.

‡ Contrary to the ancient custom, as may be seen in Dionys. Halicarn. lib. v. p. 320.

|| Ibid. lib. vi. p. 410, 411.

ædiles were established in favour of the people, the latter obtained that they should meet by curias to nominate them; and when the people's power was fully confirmed, they gained a further privilege * of proceeding to this nomination by tribes.

In the heat of the contests between the patricians and the plebeians, the latter insisted upon having fixt laws, that the public judgments might no longer be the effect of a capricious will, or of an arbitrary power. The senate, after much opposition, consented to it; and to compose these laws, decemvirs were nominated. It was thought proper to grant them an extraordinary power, because they were to give laws to almost incompatible parties. The nomination of all magistrates was suspended, and they were chosen in the comitia sole administrators of the republic. Thus they found themselves invested with the consular and tribunician power. By one they had the privilege of assembling the senate, by the other that of assembling the people. But they assembled neither senate nor people. Ten men in the republic had alone the whole legislative, the whole executive, and the whole judiciary power. Rome saw herself enslaved by as cruel a tyranny as that of Tarquin. When Tarquin exercised his oppressions, Rome

* See Dionys. Halicarn. lib. ix. p. 605.

was enraged at the power he had usurped; when the decemvirs exercised theirs, she was astonished at the power she had given.

What a strange system of tyranny was this, formed by men who had obtained the political and military power merely because of their knowledge in civil affairs; and who, in the circumstances of that very time, stood in need of the cowardice of the citizens at home, to venture upon the government of them, and of their courage abroad to have the security of their protection?

Virginia's death, who fell a victim by her father's hand to chastity and liberty, was a spectacle which put an end to the power of the decemvirs. Every man became free, because every man had been injured; each shewed himself a citizen, because each felt the bowels of a parent. The senate and people returned to that liberty which had been entrusted to ridiculous tyrants.

No people were so easily moved with spectacles as the Romans. That of the bleeding corpse of Lucretia, put an end to the regal government. The debtor * who appeared in the forum with his body covered with stripes, caused an alteration in the form of the republic. The exposing Virginia's body occasioned the expulsion of the decemvirs. To

Liv. lib. i. 23.

condemn Manlius, it was necessary to keep the people from seeing the capitol. Cæsar's bloody garment threw Rome again into slavery.

Under the decemvirs there were no rights to contest, but upon the restoration of liberty, jealousies revived; and as long as the patricians had any privileges left, they were stripped of them by the plebeians.

The mischief would not have been so great, had the plebeians been content to have deprived the patricians of their prerogatives, without injuring their rights as citizens. When the people assembled by curias or centuries, they were composed of senators, patricians, and plebeians. In their disputes the plebeians gained this point *, that they alone, without patricians or senate, might enact laws called plebiscita; and the comitia, in which they were made, were called comitia by tribes. Thus there were cases in which the patricians had no share † in the legislative power, and in which they were subject ‡ to the legislative

* Dionys. Halicarn. lib. xi. p. 725.

† By the sacred laws the plebeians had a power of making the plebiscita by themselves, without admitting the patricians into their assembly. Dionys. Halicarn. lib. vii. p. 410. and lib. vi. p. 430.

‡ By the law made after the expulsion of the decemvirs, the patricians were made subject to the plebiscita, though they had not a right of voting there. Livy, lib. iii. and Dionys. Halicarn. lib. xi. p. 725. This law was confirmed by that of Publius Philo the dictator, in the year of Rome 416. Livy, lib. viii.

power of another body of the state: This was the highest extravagance of liberty. The people, to establish a democracy, acted against the very principles of this government. One would have imagined, that so exorbitant a power must have destroyed the authority of the senate: But Rome had admirable institutions. Two of these were especially remarkable; by one of which the legislative power of the people was regulated, by the other it was limited.

The censors, and before them the consuls*, formed and created, as it were, every five years the body of the people; they exercised the legislation on the very body that was possessed of the legislative power. “*Tiberius Gracchus*, says Cicero, *caused the freedmen to be admitted into the city tribes, not by the force of his eloquence, but by a word and a gesture; and had he not done so, the republic, which we are now scarce able to support, would not even have existed.*”

On the other hand, the senate had the power of rescuing, as it were, the republic out of the hands of the people, by creating a dictator, before whom the sovereign power bowed its head, and the most popular laws were silent †.

* In the year 312, of Rome, the consuls still went through the office of registering the people and their estates, as appears by Dionys. Halicarn. lib. xi.

† Such as those by which it was allowed to appeal from the decisions of all the magistrates to the people.

If the people were jealous of their legislative power, they were less so of their executive. This they left almost intirely to the senate and to the consuls ; and scarce reserved any thing more to themselves, than the right of chusing the magistrates, and of confirming the acts of the senate and of the generals.

Rome, whose passion was to command, whose ambition to make every thing submit to her, who rose by usurpation, and still supported herself by it, had constantly affairs of moment upon her hands ; her enemies were always conspiring against her, or she against her enemies.

As she was obliged to behave on the one hand with heroic courage, and on the other with consummate prudence ; the situation of things required of course, that the senate should have the management of them. Thus the people disputed every branch of the legislative power with the senate, because they were jealous of their liberty ; but they had no disputes about the executive, because they were jealous of their glory.

So great was the share the senate took in the executive power, that, as Polybius * informs us, foreign nations imagined that Rome was an aristocracy. The senate disposed of the public money and farmed out the revenue ; they were arbiters of the affairs of the allies ;

* Lib. vi.

they

they determined war or peace, and directed in this respect the consuls; they fixed the number of the Roman and of the allied troops, assigned the provinces and armies to the consuls or prætors, and, upon the expiration of the year of command, had the power of appointing their successors; they decreed triumphs, received and sent embassies; they nominated, rewarded, punished, and were judges of kings; gave them, or declared they had forfeited, the title of allies of the Roman people.

The consuls levied the troops which they were to carry into the field; they had the command of the sea and of the land armies; disposed of the allies; were invested with the whole power of the republic in the provinces; gave peace to the vanquished nations, imposed conditions on them, or referred them to the senate.

In the earliest times, when the people had some share in the affairs relating to war and peace, they exercised rather their legislative than their executive power. They scarce did any thing else but confirm the acts of the kings, and after their expulsion, of the consuls or senate. So far was war from being at the will of the people, that we see, notwithstanding the opposition of their tribunes, the senate or consuls often declared it.

But in the drunkenness of their prosperity, they increased their executive power. Thus

they * created the military tribunes, the nomination of whom till then had belonged to the generals; and some time before the first Punic war, they decreed that themselves only should have the right † of declaring war.

The judiciary power was given to the people, to the senate, to the magistrates, and to particular judges. We must see in what manner it was distributed, beginning with their civil affairs.

The consuls had ‡ the power of judging after the expulsion of the kings, as the prætors were judges after the consuls. Servius Tullius divested himself of the judgment of civil causes, and the consuls had cognisance of them only in || some very rare cases, which for that reason were called *extraordinary* §. They were satisfied with naming the judges, and with forming the several tribunals. By a discourse of Appius

* In the year of Rome 444. Livy lib. ix. As the war against Perseus appeared somewhat dangerous, it was ordained by a *senatus consultum*, that this law should be suspended, and the people agreed to it. Livy, Dec. v. lib. ii.

† They extorted it from the senate, says Freinshemius, Dec. iii. lib. vi.

‡ There is no doubt but the consuls had the power of judging civil affairs before the creation of the prætors. See Livy, Dec. i. lib. ii. p. 19. Dionys. Halicarn. lib. x. p. 627. and the same Book, p. 645.

|| The tribunes frequently judged by themselves only, than which nothing rendered them more odious. Dionys. Halicarn. lib. xi. p. 709.

§ *Judicia extraordinaria*. See the Institutes, book iv.

Claudius,

Claudius, in Dionysius * Halicarnasseus, it appears, that from the 259th year of Rome, this was looked upon as an established custom among the Romans, and we should not carry it far back, if we refer it to Servius Tullius.

Every year the prætor made a list † of such as he chose to discharge the office of judges during the year of his magistracy. From thence a proper number was selected for each cause; a custom almost the same with what is now practised in England. And what was very favourable to liberty ‡, the prætor appointed the judges with || consent of the parties. The great number of exceptions which they have to this day the power of making in England, agrees pretty near with this very circumstance.

The judges decided only questions § of fact, whether a sum of money, for instance, had been paid or not, whether an action had been committed or not. But questions of ** right, as they required some sort of capacity, were

* Book vi. p. 360. † Album Judicum.

‡ “ Our ancestors, says Cicero pro Cluentio, would not suffer any man, whom the parties had not agreed to, to be judge of the least pecuniary affair, much less of a citizen’s reputation.”

|| See in the fragments of the Servilian, Cornelian, and other laws, in what manner these laws appointed judges for the crimes they proposed to punish. They were often by choice, sometimes by lot, or in fine by lot mixt together with choice.

§ Seneca de Benefic. lib. iii. cap. 7. in fine.

** See Quintilian lib. iv. p. 54. in fol. edit. of Paris, 1541.

always carried to the tribunal of the centumvirs *.

The kings reserved to themselves the judgment of criminal affairs, and in this they were succeeded by the consuls. It was in consequence of this authority that the consul Brutus put his children, and all those who were in conspiracy with the Tarquins, to death. This was an exorbitant power. The consuls being already possessed of the military command, extended the exercise of it even to civil affairs; and their procedures being divested of all forms of justice, were rather acts of violence than judgments.

This gave rise to the Valerian law, which gave the liberty of an appeal to the people from every ordinance of the consuls which endangered the life of a citizen. The consuls after this had no longer a power of pronouncing sentence of death upon a Roman citizen without the consent of the people †.

We see in the first conspiracy for the restoration of the Tarquins, that the criminals were tried by Brutus the consul; in the second, the senate and comitia were assembled to try them ‡.

* Leg. 2. ff. de Orig. Jur. Magistrates, who were called decemvirs, presided in court, the whole under a prætor's direction.

† *Quoniam de capite civis Romani, injussu populi Romani, non erat permissum consulibus jus dicere.* See Pomponius Leg. 2. ff. de Orig. Jur.

‡ Dionys. Halicarn. lib. v. p. 322.

The laws distinguished by the name of Sacred, allowed the plebeians the privilege of chusing tribunes, which formed a body, whose pretensions at first were immense. It is hard to determine which was greater, the insolence of the plebeians in demanding, or the condescension and facility of the senate in granting. The Valerian law allowed of appeals to the people, that is, to the people composed of senators, patricians, and plebeians. The plebeians obtained, that the appeals should be brought before them. A question was soon after started, whether the plebeians had a right of judging a patrician; this was the subject of a dispute, which the affair of Coriolanus gave rise to, and which ended with that affair. When Coriolanus was accused by the tribunes before the people, he insisted, contrary to the spirit of the Valerian law, that, as he was a patrician, none but the consuls had a power to judge him; the plebeians, contrary to the spirit of the same law, pretended that he ought to be judged by themselves only, and they judged him accordingly.

This was moderated by a law of the twelve tables, which ordained that causes which concerned the life of a citizen, should be decided * only in the great assemblies of the people. Hence the body of the plebeians, or, which

* The comitia by centuries. Thus Manlius Capitolinus was judged in these comitia. Livy, Dec. i. book vi. p. 60.

amounts to the very same, the comitia by tribes, now judged only of such crimes as were punished with a pecuniary mulct. To inflict a capital punishment a law was requisite ; but to condemn to a pecuniary fine, there was occasion only for a plebiscitum.

This regulation of the law of the twelve tables was very prudent. It produced an admirable reconciliation between the body of the plebeians and the senate. For as the full judiciary power of both depended on the greatness of the punishment and the nature of the crime, it was necessary they should both agree.

The Valerian law abolished all the remains of the Roman government, which had any resemblance with that of the kings of Greece in the heroic times. The consuls found themselves divested of the power to punish crimes. Though all causes are public, yet we must distinguish between those which more nearly concern the mutual intercourse of citizens, and those which more nearly affect the state in the relation it has to its subjects. The first are called private ; the second public. The latter were judged by the people ; and in regard to the former, they named by particular commission a quæstor for the prosecution of each crime. The person chosen by the people was frequently one of the magistrates, and sometimes a private man. He was called the quæstor

quæstor of parricide, and is often mentioned in the law of the twelve tables *.

The quæstor nominated him whom they called judge of the question, who drew the judges by lot, formed the tribunal, and presided next under the quæstor †.

Here it is proper to observe what share the senate had in the nomination of the quæstor, that we may see how far the two powers were balanced in this respect. Sometimes the senate caused a dictator to be chosen in order to exercise the office of quæstor ‡; sometimes they ordained that the people should be convened by a tribune in order to proceed to the nomination of a quæstor §: and in fine, the people sometimes appointed a magistrate to make his report to the senate concerning a particular crime, and to desire them to name a quæstor, as may be seen in the judgment of Lucius Scipio §, in Livy **.

* Pomponius on the second law in the Digest. de Orig. Jur.

† See a fragment of Ulpian, who gives another of the Cornelian law; it is to be met with in the Comparison of the Mosaic and Roman laws, tit. 1. de ficiariis and homicidiis.

‡ This took place especially in regard to crimes committed in Italy, which were subject chiefly to the inspection of the senate. See Livy, Dec. i. lib. ix. concerning the conspiracies of Capua.

§ This was the case in the prosecution for the murder of Posthumus, in the year of Rome 340. See Livy.

§ This judgment was given in the year of Rome 567.

* Book viii.

In the year of Rome 604, some of these commissions were rendered permanent *. By degrees all criminal causes were divided into different parts, which they called standing questions. Different prætors were created, to each of whom some of those questions were assigned: and a power was conferred on them for one year, of judging such crimes as depended on those questions, after which they went to the government of their respective provinces.

At Carthage the senate of the hundred was composed of judges who enjoyed that dignity for life †. But at Rome the prætors were annual, and the judges were not even for so long a term, since they were nominated for each cause.

The judges were chosen from the order of senators, till the time of the Gracchi Tiberius Gracchus caused a law to pass, that they should be taken from the equestrian order; a change so very considerable, that the tribunes boasted of having cut, by one rogation only, the sinews of the senatorian dignity.

It is necessary to observe that the three powers may be very well distributed in regard to the liberty of the constitution, though not so well in respect to the liberty of the

* Cicero in Bruto.

† This is proved from Livy, lib. iv. who says that Hannibal rendered their magistracy annual.

subject.

subject. At Rome the people had the greatest share of the legislative, a part of the executive, and part of the judiciary power; by which means they had so great a weight in the government, as required some other power to balance it. The senate indeed had part of the executive power, and some share of the legislative *; but this was not sufficient to counterbalance the weight of the people. It was necessary that they should have a share in the judiciary power; and accordingly they had a share when the judges were chosen from among the senators. But when the Gracchi deprived the senators of the power of judging †, the senate were no longer able to withstand the people. To favour therefore the liberty of the subject they struck at the liberty of the constitution, but the former perished with the latter.

Infinite were the mischiefs which arose from thence. The constitution was changed at a time when the flame of civil discord had scarce left any constitution. The knights were no longer that middle order which united the people to the senate; the chain of the constitution was broke.

There were even particular reasons against transferring the judiciary power to the eque-

* The *senatus consulta* were of force for the space of a year, though not confirmed by the people. Dionys. Halicarn. book ix. p. 595. and book xi. p. 735.

† In the year 630.

tian order. The constitution of Rome was founded on this principle, that none should be enlisted as soldiers but such as were men of sufficient property to answer for their conduct to the republic. The knights as persons of the greatest property formed the cavalry of the legions. But when their dignity increased, they refused to serve any longer in that capacity; and another kind of cavalry was obliged to be raised: thus Marius enlisted all sorts of people into his army, and soon after the republic was lost*.

Besides, the knights were the farmers of the public revenues; who, as they were avaricious, multiplied misfortunes, and always increased the necessities of the state. Instead of giving to such people as those the power of judging, they ought to have been constantly under the inspection of judges. This we must say in commendation of the ancient French laws; they have stipulated with the officers of the revenues, with as great a diffidence as would be observed between enemies. When the judiciary power at Rome was transferred to the farmers of the revenues, virtue, government, laws, magistracy, and magistrates were no more.

We have a very lively representation of this in some fragments of Diodorus Siculus and Dio. “*Mutius Scævola*, says Diodo-

* *Capite censos plerosque.* Sallust. de bello Jugurth.

“ rus *, wanted to revive the ancient morals,
 “ and the laudable custom of sober and frugal
 “ living. For his predecessors having entred
 “ into a contract with the farmers of the
 “ revenue, who at that time had the judiciary
 “ power at Rome, had filled the province with
 “ all manner of crimes. But Scævola made an
 “ example of the publicans, and imprisoned those
 “ who had sent others to prison.”

Dio informs us †, that Publius Rutilius, his lieutenant, who was not less obnoxious to the equestrian order, was accused upon his return, of having received some presents, and was condemned to a fine. Upon which he instantly resigned his effects. His innocence appeared in this, that he was found to be worth a much less sum than he was charged with having extorted, and that he shewed a just title to all he was possessed of, but he would not live any longer in the same city with such profligate wretches.

‡ The Italians, says Diodorus again, bought up whole droves of slaves in Sicily, to till their lands and to take care of their cattle; but refused them a necessary subsistence. These wretches were then forced to go and rob on

* Fragment of this author, book 36. in the collection of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Of virtues and vices.

† Fragment of his history, taken from the extract Of virtues and vices.

‡ Fragment of the xxxivth book, in the extract Of virtues and vices.

the highways, armed with lances and clubs, covered with beasts skins, and followed by large mastiff dogs. Thus the whole province was laid waste, and the inhabitants could not call any thing their own, but what was secured within the walls of towns. There was neither proconsul nor prætor, that could or would oppose this disorder, or that presumed to punish these slaves, because they belonged to the knights, who at Rome were possessed of the judiciary power *. And yet this was one of the causes of the war of the slaves. I shall add only one word more. A profession that neither has nor can have any other view than lucre; a profession that was always asking, without being ever asked, a deaf and inexorable profession that impoverished the rich, and increased even the misery of the poor; such a profession, I say, should never have been entrusted with the judiciary power at Rome.

Such was the distribution of the three powers in Rome. But they were far from being thus distributed in the provinces: Liberty was in the center, and tyranny in the extreme parts.

While Rome extended her dominions no further than Italy, the people were governed as confederates; and the laws of each republic

* *Penes quos Romæ tum judicia erant, atque ex equestri ordine solerent sortito judices eligi in causa prætorum & proconsulum, quibus post administratam provinciam dies acta erant.*

were

were preserved. But as soon as she enlarged her conquests, and the senate had no longer an immediate inspection over the provinces, and the magistrates residing at Rome were not capable of governing the empire, they were obliged to send prætors and proconsuls. From that time the harmony of the three powers was lost. Those who were sent with such commissions, were intrusted with a power which comprehended that of all the Roman magistracies; nay even that of the people*. They were despotic magistrates, extremely proper for the distance of the places to which they were sent. They exercised the three powers; being, if I may presume to use the expression, the bashaws of the republic.

We have elsewhere observed, that in a commonwealth the same magistrate ought to be possessed of the executive power, as well civil as military. To this it is owing that a conquering republic can hardly communicate her government, and rule the conquered state according to the form of her own constitution. In fact, as the magistrate she sends to govern, is invested with the executive, as well civil as military power, he must also have the power of legislation: for who is it that could make laws without him? He must likewise have the judiciary power: for who could pretend to judge

* They made their edicts upon coming into the provinces.

independently of him? It is necessary therefore that the governor he sends should be intrusted with the three powers, as was practised in the Roman provinces.

A monarchy can communicate its government with greater ease, because the officers it sends, have, some the civil executive, and others the military executive power; which does not necessarily imply a despotic authority.

It was a privilege of the utmost consequence to a Roman citizen, to have none but the people for his judges. Were it not for this, he would have been subject in the provinces to the arbitrary power of a proconsul or of a proprætor. The city never felt the tyranny, which was exercised on conquered nations only.

Thus in the Roman world, as at Sparta, those who were free, enjoyed freedom in the greatest extent; while those who were slaves, laboured under the extremity of slavery.

While the citizens paid taxes, they were raised with great justice and equality. The regulation of Servius Tullius was observed, who had distributed the people into six classes according to their difference of property, and fixed the several shares of the public taxes in proportion to that which each person had in the government. Hence they bore with the greatness of the tax on account of the proportionable greatness of credit, and consoled themselves for the smallness of their credit with the considerations of the smallness of the tax.

There

There was also another thing worthy of admiration, which is, that as Servius Tullius's division into classes was in some measure the fundamental principle of the constitution, it thence resulted that an equal levying of the taxes was so connected with that fundamental principle, that one could not be abolished without the other.

But while the city paid the taxes as she pleased, or payed none at all *, the provinces were plundered by the knights, who were the farmers of the public revenues. We have already mentioned their oppressive extortions; and all history is full of them.

“ *All Asia*, said Mithridates †, *expects me as its deliverer; so great is the hatred which the rapaciousness of the proconsuls ‡, the executions of the officers of the revenue, and the calumnies of judicial proceedings ||, have excited against the Romans.* ”

Hence it was that the strength of the provinces made no addition to, but rather weakened the strength of the republic. Hence it was that the provinces looked upon the loss of the liberty of Rome as the epocha of their own freedom.

* After the conquest of Macedonia taxes ceased at Rome.

† Speech taken from Trogus Pompeius, and related by Justin, book xxxviii.

‡ See the orations against Verres.

|| It is well known what sort of a tribunal was that of Varus, which provoked the Germans to revolt.

C H A P. IX.

Two causes which destroyed Rome.

WHILST the sovereignty of Rome was confined to Italy, it was easy for the commonwealth to subsist: Every soldier was at the same time a citizen; every consul raised an army, and other citizens marched into the field under his successor: As their forces were not very numerous, such * persons only were received among the troops, as had possessions considerable enough to make them interested in the preservation of the city; the senate kept a watchful eye over the conduct of the generals, and did not give them an opportunity of machinating any thing to the prejudice of their country.

But after the legions had passed the Alps and crossed the sea, the soldiers, whom the Romans had been obliged to leave during several campaigns in the countries they were subduing, lost insensibly that genius and turn of mind

* The freedmen, and such as were called *capite censiti* (because, being possessed of little or nothing, they were subject to the poll tax only) were not at first enrolled among the land-forces, except in cases of urgent necessity: Servius Tullius had ranked them in the sixth class, and soldiers were levied out of the five first only. But when Marius set out against Jugurtha, he enlisted all without distinction. *Milites scribere*, says Sallust, *non modo majorum neque ex classibus, sed, uti cujusque libido erat, capite censos plerisque.*— De Bello Jugurthin.

which

which characterized a Roman citizen; and the generals, having armies and kingdoms at their disposal, were sensible of their own strength, and could no longer obey.

The soldiers therefore began to acknowledge no superior but their general; to found their hopes on him only, and to view the city as from a great distance: They were no longer the soldiers of the republic, but of Sylla, of Marius, of Pompey, and of Cæsar. The Romans could no longer tell, whether the person who headed an army in a province was their general or their enemy.

So long as the people of Rome were corrupted by their tribunes only, on whom they could bestow nothing but their power, the senate could easily defend themselves, because they acted consistently and with one regular tenor; whereas the common people were continually shifting from the extremes of fury to the extremes of cowardice; but when they were enabled to invest their favourites with a formidable exterior authority, the whole wisdom of the senate was baffled, and the commonwealth was undone.

The reason why free states are not so permanent as other forms of government, is, because the misfortunes and successes which happen to them, generally occasion the loss of liberty; whereas the successes and misfortunes of an arbitrary government, contribute

L

equally

equally to the enslaving of the people. A wise republic ought not to run any hazard which may expose it to good or ill fortune; the only happiness the several individuals of it should aspire after, is, to give perpetuity to their state.

If the unbounded extent of the Roman empire proved the ruin of the republic, the vast compass of the city was no less fatal to it.

The Romans had subdued the whole universe by the assistance of the nations of Italy, on whom they had bestowed various privileges at different times; most of those nations did not, at first, set any great value on the freedom of the city of Rome, and some * chose rather to preserve their ancient usages; but when this privilege became that of universal sovereignty; when a man, who was not a Roman citizen, was considered as nothing, and, with this title, was all things, the people of Italy resolved either to be Romans, or die: Not being able to obtain this by cabals and intreaties they had recourse to arms; and †

* The Æqui said in their assemblies, Those in whose power it was to chuse, have preferred their own laws to the freedom of the city of Rome, which was a necessary penalty upon such as could not refuse it. Liv. lib. ix.

† The Asculani, the Marfi, the Vestini, the Marrucini, the Frentani, the Hirpini, the Pompeians, the Venuſini, the Iapyges, the Lucani, the Samnites, and other nations. Appian, de Bello civil. lib. i.

rising in all that part of Italy opposite to the Ionian sea, the rest of the allies were going to follow their example: Rome being now forced to combat against those who were, if I may be allowed the figure, the hands with which they shackled the universe, was upon the brink of ruin: The Romans were going to be confined merely to their walls; they therefore granted this so much wished-for * privilege, to allies, who had not yet been wanting in fidelity; and they indulged it, by insensible degrees, to all other nations.

But now Rome was no longer that city, the inhabitants of which had breathed one and the same spirit, the same love for liberty, the same hatred of tyranny; a city in which a jealousy of the power of the senate and of the prerogatives of the great (ever accompanied with respect) was only a love of equality. The nations of Italy † being made citizens of Rome, every city brought thither its genius, its particular interests, and its dependance on some mighty protector: Rome being now rent and divided, no longer formed one entire body, and men were no longer citizens of it, but in

* The Tuscans, the Umbri, the Latins. This prompted some nations to submit themselves; and as these were also made citizens, others likewise laid down their arms, so that at last there remained only the Sannites, who were extirpated.

† Let the reader figure to himself this monstrous head, formed of all the nations of Italy, which by the suffrage of every individual, governed the rest of the world.

a kind of fictitious way; as there were no longer the same magistrates, the same walls, the same gods, the same temples, the same burying places; Rome was no longer beheld with the same eyes; the citizens were no longer fired with the same love for their country, and the Roman sentiments were obliterated.

Cities and nations were now invited to Rome by the ambitious, to disconcert the suffrages, or influence them in their own favour; the public assemblies were so many conspiracies against the state, and a tumultuous crowd of seditious wretches were dignified with the title of Comitia *. The authority of the people

[* It is an essential point to fix the number of citizens that are to form the public assemblies; otherwise it might be uncertain whether the whole body or only a part of the people have voted. At Sparta, the number was fixed to ten thousand. But at Rome, a city designed by providence to rise from the weakest beginning to the highest pitch of grandeur; Rome, a city fated to experience all vicissitudes of fortune; Rome, that had sometimes all its inhabitants without its walls, and sometimes all Italy, and a great part of the world within them; at Rome, I say, this number was never fixed, which was one of the principal causes of its ruin. *L'Esprit des Loix*, book ii. ch. 2. The same author observes from Cicero, *de Leg.* lib. i. and iii. that another cause of its ruin was, in making, towards the close of the republic, the suffrages secret. The people's in a democracy ought always to be public, who are to be directed by those of higher rank. But when the body of the nobles are to vote in an aristocracy, or in a democracy the senate, as the business is then only to prevent intrigues, the suffrages cannot be too secret. *L'Esprit des Loix*, *ibid.*]

and

and their laws, nay that people themselves, were no more than so many chimæras, and so universal was the anarchy of those times, that it was not possible to determine whether the people had made a law or not.

Authors enlarge very copiously on the divisions which proved the destruction of Rome; but their readers seldom discover those divisions to have been always necessary and inevitable. The grandeur of the republic was the only source of that calamity, and exasperated popular tumults into civil wars. Dissensions were not to be prevented, and those martial spirits, which were so fierce and formidable abroad, could not be habituated to any considerable moderation at home. Those who expect in a free state, to see the people undaunted in war and pusillanimous in peace, are certainly desirous of impossibilities; and it may be advanced as a general rule, that whenever a perfect calm is visible, in a state that calls itself a republic, the spirit of liberty no longer subsists.

Union, in a body politic, is a very equivocal term: True union is such a harmony as makes all the particular parts, as opposite as they may seem to us, concur to the general welfare of the society, in the same manner as discords in music contribute to the general melody of sound. Union may prevail in a state full of seeming commotions; or, in other words, there may be an harmony from whence results prosperity, which alone is true peace, and may be con-

sidered in the same view, as the various parts of this universe, which are eternally connected by the action of some and the reaction of others.

In a despotic state indeed, which is every government where the power is immoderately exerted, a real division is perpetually kindled. The peasant, the soldier, the merchant, the magistrate, and the grandee have no other conjunction than what arises from the ability of the one to oppress the other, without resistance; and if at any time a union happens to be introduced, citizens are not then united, but dead bodies are laid in the grave contiguous to each other.

It must be acknowledged that the Roman laws were too weak to govern the republic: But experience has proved it to be an invariable fact, that good laws, which raise the reputation and power of a small republic, become incommodious to it, when once its grandeur is established, because it was their natural effect to make a great people, but not to govern them.

The difference is very considerable between good laws, and those which may be called convenient; between such laws as give a people dominion over others, and such as continue them in the possession of power, when they have once acquired it.

There

There is at this time a republic * in the world, of which few persons have any knowledge, and which, by plans accomplished in silence and secrecy, is daily enlarging its power. And certain it is, that if it ever rises to that height of grandeur for which it seems pre-ordained by its wisdom, it must inevitably change its laws, and the necessary innovations will not be effected by any legislator, but must spring from corruption itself.

Rome was founded for grandeur, and its laws † had an admirable tendency to bestow it; for which reason, in all the variations of her government, whether monarchy, aristocracy, or popular, she constantly engaged in enterprizes which required conduct to accomplish them, and always succeeded. The experience of a day did not furnish her with more wisdom than all other nations, but she obtained it by a long succession of events. She sustained a small, a moderate, and an immense fortune with the same superiority, derived true welfare from the whole train of her prosperities,

* The canton of Bern.

† The Roman government has been thought defective by some, because it was an intermixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and popular authority. But the perfection of a government does not consist in its conformity to any particular plan to be found in the writings of politicians; but in its correspondence to the views every legislator ought to entertain for the grandeur and felicity of a people. Was not the government of Sparta composed of three branches?

and refined every instance of calamity into beneficial instructions.

She lost her liberty, because she completed her work too soon.

C H A P. X.

Of the Corruption of the Romans.

I AM of opinion that the sect of Epicurus, which began to be propagated at Rome, towards the close of the republic, was very prejudicial to the minds and genius of the people*. The Greeks had been infatuated with its doctrines long before, and consequently, were corrupted much earlier than the Romans. We are assured by Polybius†, that oaths, in his time, could not induce any person to place confidence in a Greek, whereas they were con-

* Cyneas having discoursed of the doctrines of this sect, at the table of Pyrrhus, Fabricius said, He wished the enemies of Rome would all embrace such kind of principles. *Life of Pyrrhus.*

† If you lend a talent to a Greek, and bind him to the repayment, by ten engagements, with as many securities, and witnesses to the loan, it is impossible to make them regard their word; whereas, among the Romans, whether it be owing to their obligation of accounting for the public and private money, they are always punctual to the oaths they have taken. For which reason, the apprehensions of infernal torments were wisely established, and it is altogether irrational that they now oppose them. *Polyb. lib. vi.*

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sidered by a Roman as inviolable obligations upon his conscience.

There is a passage in one of Cicero's letters to * Atticus, which manifestly discovers how much the Romans had degenerated in this particular, since the time of Polybius.

“ Memmius, ” says he, “ imparted to the
“ senate the agreement he and his fellow can-
“ didate had made with the consuls, by which
“ the latter stipulated to favour them in their
“ solicitations for the consulship the ensuing
“ year; and they obliged themselves to pay
“ four hundred thousand sesterces to the con-
“ suls, if they did not furnish them with three
“ augurs, who should declare they themselves
“ were present when the people made the Cu-
“ riatian law †, though in reality it had not
“ been enacted; and two former consuls, who
“ should affirm they had assisted at signing the
“ edict of the senate which regulated the state
“ of the provinces assigned to the present con-
“ suls, notwithstanding no such edict was in
“ being.” What an admirable set of people
we discover in a single contract!

As religion always furnishes the best security for the rectitude of human actions, so there

* Polyb. lib. iv. let. 18.

† The Curiatian law disposed of the military power, and the edict of the senate regulated the troops, the money, and officers, that were to be allotted to the governors: Now the consuls, in order to accomplish these particulars, to their own satisfaction, contrived a false law and a false edict of the senate.

was this peculiarity among the Romans, that the love they expressed for their country, was blended with some particular sentiment of devotion. That mighty city, founded in the most auspicious period; the great Romulus, at once their monarch and their God; the Capitol, esteemed as eternal as the city; and the city, reputed as eternal as its founder, had^t anciently struck such impressions on the minds of the Romans, as might well be wished to have been constantly retained.

The grandeur of the state, in general, constituted the greatness of its particular members; but as affluence consists in conduct, and not in riches; that wealth of the Romans, which had certain limitations, introduced a luxury and profusion which had no bounds. Those who had been at first corrupted by their opulence, received the same taint in their poverty, by aspiring after acquisitions, that no way comported with private life; it was difficult to be a good citizen, under the influence of strong desires and the regret of a large fortune that had been lost: People, in this situation, were prepared for any desperate attempt; and, as Sallust * says, there was, at that time, a generation of men, who, as they had no patrimony

* *Ut merito dicatur genitos esse, qui nec ipsi habere possent vos familiares, nec alios pati.* Fragment of Sallust cited by Augustin, in his book *Of the city of God*, lib. ii. c. 18.

of their own, could not endure to see others less necessitous than themselves.

But as great soever as the corruption of Rome might then be, all its calamitous effects were not introduced among the people, for the efficacy of those institutions, by which they were originally established, was so extraordinary, that they always preserved an heroic fortitude, and devoted themselves, with the greatest application, to war, amidst all the softening of luxury and pleasure; which seems to me, to be a circumstance, in which they were never imitated by any nation in the world.

The Romans were not solicitous to improve commerce, or cultivate the sciences, but ranked them among the attentions proper for slaves*; we may except, indeed, some particular persons, who had received their freedom, and persisted in their former industry. But their knowledge, in general, was confined to the art of war, which was the only track † by which they could arrive at promotions in the magistracy, and other stations of honour; for

* Cic. Office. lib. i. c. 42. *Illiberales & sordidi quæstus mercenariorum omnium, quorum operæ, non quorum artes emuntur: est enim illis ipsa merces auctoramentum servitutis.* The merchants, adds that author, raise no profit, unless they falsify their word. Agriculture is the noblest of all arts, and most worthy of a man in a state of freedom.

† They were obliged to serve ten years, between the age of sixteen years and forty-seven. Polyb. lib. vi.

which

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which reason, their military virtues subsisted
after all the rest were extinguished.

C H A P. XI.

Of Sylla, Pompey, and Cæsar.

I Intreat the reader's permission to turn my eyes from the horrors of the wars between Marius and Sylla; Appian has collected all the dreadful particulars into his history: Besides the jealousy, ambition, and barbarity of the two chiefs, each particular Roman was infatuated with fury; the new citizens *, and the ancient, no longer considered each other as members of the same republic, but gave a loose to a series of hostilities, so peculiar in their nature, as to comprehend all the miseries of a civil and foreign war.

Sylla made several good laws, and reduced the power of the tribunes; to which we may add, that the moderation or caprice which induced him to resign the dictatorship, re-established the senate, for some time; but, in

* Marius, in order to obtain a commission for carrying on the war against Mithridates, in prejudice of Sylla's pretensions, had, by the concurrence of Sulpicius the tribune, incorporated the eight new tribes of the people of Italy, into the ancient, which rendered the Italians masters of the suffrages; and the generality of that people espoused the party of Marius, whilst the senate and the ancient citizens engaged in the interest of Sylla.

the

the fury of his success, he suffered himself to be hurried into actions, which, in their consequences, made it impossible for Rome to preserve her liberty.

In his Asian expedition, he wholly destroyed the military discipline: he accustomed his army to rapine*, and taught them wants to which before they were absolute strangers: He first corrupted the soldiers, who afterwards corrupted their leaders.

He entered Rome with an armed force, and taught the Roman generals to violate the asylum of liberty. †

He distributed ‡ the lands of the citizens among his soldiers, and, by that proceeding, corrupted them for ever; because, from that moment, there was not one of the military profession who did not wait for an opportunity of seizing the effects of his fellow-citizens.

He was likewise the inventor of proscriptions, and set a price on the head of every man who had not embraced his party. From that time, it became impossible for any one to be devoted to the republic; for whilst two ambitious men

* See in Catiline's conspiracy, the description Sallust has given us of that army.

† *Fugatis Marii copiis, primus urbem Romam cum armis ingressus est.* A fragment of John of Artioch, in his extract of the virtues and vices.

‡ At the beginning of the wars, the lands of the vanquished enemies were parcelled among the army; but Sylla made the same division of those which belonged to the citizens.

were contending for superiority, those who observed a neutrality, or were attached to the cause of liberty, were sure to be proscribed by either of the competitors who should prove victorious; it therefore became prudent to engage in one of the two parties.

He was succeeded, says Cicero *, by a man, who in an impious cause, and a victory still more infamous, not only confiscated the effects of individuals, but involved entire provinces in the same calamity.

Sylla, when he abdicated the dictatorship, pretended, that he was unwilling to live in any other manner than under the protection of his own laws: But that action, which indicated so much moderation, was itself a consequence of his violences. He had given lands to forty-seven legions, in different parts of Italy. These forces, says Appian, regarding their fortune as attached to his life, gave the greatest attention to his safety, and were always ready either to succour or avenge him †.

As the republic was fated to destruction, the only material question was, who should have the credit of overwhelming it?

Two men equally ambitious, with this exception, that the one knew how to proceed directly to his purpose better than the other, eclipsed, by their reputation, their exploits,

* Offices, lib. ii. c. 8.

† Agreeably to what happened after the death of Cæsar.

and their virtues, all the rest of the citizens. Pompey made the first appearance in the scene of action, and Cæsar immediately followed him.

POMPEY, to render himself popular, had disannulled the law of Sylla, which limited the power of the people, and when he had sacrificed the most salutary laws of his country to his particular ambition, he obtained all he desired, and the rash indiscretion of the populace was altogether unbounded in his favour.

The Roman laws had wisely parcelled out the public power into several magistracies, which mutually supported as well as restrained and tempered each other; and as the power of all, who enjoyed those promotions, was confined to a proper extent, every citizen was qualified for a station of that nature; and the people, seeing numbers of such persons passing away in succession, were not habituated to any particular magistrate among them. But, in the times we are now describing, the plan of government was changed; the most potent competitors obtained extraordinary commissions from the people, which annihilated the authority of the magistrates, and drew all the great affairs into the hands of one man, or a few.

Was war to be proclaimed against Sertorius? Pompey was nominated to command the army. Were the Romans to march against Mithridates? every voice called aloud for Pompey.

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Did it become necessary to transmit corn to Rome? the people would have given it over for lost, had not Pompey been entrusted with the importation. Were the pirates to be destroyed? who so proper for that expedition as Pompey? And when Cæsar himself threatened Rome with an invasion, the senators cried out, in their turn, and placed all their confidence in Pompey.

I am willing to believe (said Marcus * to the people) that this Pompey, who is so much carested by the nobility, is more inclinable to secure your liberty, than he is to countenance their authority over you: But there was a time, when each individual among you was protected by several, and not the whole body of the people by one person; and when it was never known, that a single man either gave or took away things of so much consequence.

As Rome was formed for grandeur, it became necessary to unite the honours and power in the same persons, which in unquiet times would fix the admiration of the people on one particular citizen.

When honours are granted, the givers know exactly what they bestow; but when power is added to the donation, they can never be certain how far it will be extended.

Immoderate preferences given to a citizen, in a republic, are always productive of neces-

* Fragment of Sallust.

fary effects; they either raise envy in the people, or make their affection overflow all bounds.

When Pompey returned twice to Rome, in a condition to enslave the republic, he had the moderation to disband his armies, before he entered the city; and then he made his appearance with the air of a common citizen: These instances of a disinterested behaviour, which completed all his glory, did not fail, in their consequences, to make the senate always declare in his favour, when ever he attempted any thing prejudicial to the laws.

The ambition of Pompey was more unactive and gentle than that of Cæsar. This warrior resolved, like Sylla, to open himself a passage to sovereign power by arms, but Pompey grew displeas'd at such a method of oppression; he aspired, indeed, to the dictatorship, but was willing to owe it to the suffrages of the people; he could not resolve to usurp power, but would have been glad to have had it tendered to him as a gift.

As the favour of the people is always in a fluctuating state, there were some seasons, wherein Pompey beheld his reputation in a declining condition*; and it affected him in the most tender part, to see the very persons he despis'd, make advances in popularity, and then employ it against him.

* See Plutarch.

This led him into three actions equally fatal; he corrupted the people with money, and fixed a price, in the elections, on the suffrage of each citizen.

He employed the vilest of the populace to incommode the magistrates in the exercise of their functions, in hopes, that wise people, growing weary of living in a state of anarchy, would be urged by despair to create him dictator.

In a word, he united his interests, with those of Cæsar and Crassus: Cato said, their union and not their enmity destroyed the republic; and in reality, it was then reduced to such an unhappy state, that it received less injury from civil wars than by a peace, which, as it united the views and interests of the leading men, so it naturally introduced tyranny in the government.

Pompey did not properly lend his reputation to Cæsar; but sacrificed it to his cause, without knowing what he did; and Cæsar, in return, employed all the power he had received from Pompey to the prejudice of the donor, and even played off his own artifices against him: He raised troubles in the city by his emissaries; he made himself master of all elections; and consuls, prætors, and tribunes purchased their promotions, at their own price.

The senate, who easily penetrated into Cæsar's designs, had recourse to Pompey, and intreated him to undertake the defence of the
 republic,

republic, if that name might properly be given to a government which implored protection of one of its citizens.

I am of opinion, that what contributed most to Pompey's destruction, was the shame that affected him, when he grew sensible, that by raising Cæsar as he had done, he had committed a fatal oversight; but he suffered this consideration to prevail as late as possible, and did not prepare for his defence, lest he should be obliged to acknowledge himself in danger. He asserted before the senate that Cæsar durst not engage in a war; and because he had made such a declaration several times, he always persisted in repeating it.

One circumstance seems to have capacitated Cæsar for any undertaking, and that was the unhappy conformity of names; the senate had added to his government of the Cisalpine Gaul, all that part of Gaul which was distinguished by the name of Transalpine.

As the politics of those times did not permit armies to be stationed near Rome, so neither would they suffer Italy to be entirely destitute of troops; for which reason, considerable forces were quartered in Cisalpine Gaul, a country which extends from the Rubicon, a little river in Romania, to the Alps: But, in order to secure the city of Rome against those troops, the senate passed that famous edict, which is still to be seen engraven in the road near Rimini, by which they solemnly devoted to the infernal

gods, and branded with sacrilege and parricide, any person whatever, who should presume to pass the Rubicon, with an army, a legion, or a single cohort.

To a government of that importance as to keep the city in awe, another was added which proved still more considerable, and that was all the Transalpine Gaul, which comprehended the southern parts of France, where Cæsar had for several years an opportunity of prosecuting war against as many nations as he pleased; by which means his soldiers advanced in years as well as himself, and were conquered by him, in their turn, as well as the Barbarians. Had Cæsar not been entrusted with the government of Transalpine Gaul, he could not have corrupted his troops, nor rendered his name venerable to them by so many victories; and had he not enjoyed Cisalpine Gaul, Pompey might have stopped him at the pass of the Alps, whereas he was compelled to retire from Italy, when the war began, which made him lose among his own party that reputation which, in civil wars, is the very soul of power.

The same consternation, which Hannibal diffused through Rome, after the battle of Cannæ, was spread by Cæsar over all that city, when he had passed the Rubicon. Pompey was so confounded, that he became incapable, even in the first moments of the war, of forming any design but such as is usually suggested in the most desperate conjunctures. He could only

only retire, and trust to flight. Accordingly he left Rome and the public treasure; and as he was in no condition to retard the conqueror, he forsook part of his troops, abandoned all Italy, and crossed the sea.

Cæsar's fortune has been greatly celebrated; but this extraordinary man enjoyed so many great qualities, without the intermixture of a defect, though he had several vicious inclinations, that he would have been victorious at the head of any army he had commanded, and would have governed in any republic that had given him birth.

When he had defeated Pompey's lieutenants in Spain, he passed into Greece to seek Pompey himself; and this general, who had possessed himself of the sea-coasts, and was master of a superior force, was on the point of beholding Cæsar's army destroyed by misery and famine. But as the desire of approbation was his predominant frailty, he could not forbear giving attention to some vain speeches * of those about him, who were perpetually blaming his conduct, and mortifying him with their jests. This general, says one, would perpetuate his command, and be a new king of kings, like Agamemnon: I assure you, replies another, we shall not eat any Tusculum figs this year. A few encounters in which he had succeeded, quite intoxicated the heads of this senatorial

* See Plutarch's life of Pompey.

host; and Pompey, to avoid censure, gave into an indiscretion which posterity will ever blame; he resolved to sacrifice all the advantages he had then obtained, and marched at the head of undisciplined troops to engage an army that had been so frequently victorious.

When the shattered remains of Pharsalia were withdrawn into Africa, Scipio, who then commanded them, refused to follow Cato's advice for protracting the war. He grew elated with a few instances of success; he risked all, and immediately lost all he had risked; and when Brutus and Cassius re-established that party, the same precipitation destroyed the republic a third time*.

It is observable, that in the long course of these civil wars, the power of Rome was continually extending in foreign parts, under Marius, Sylla, Pompey, Cæsar, Antony, and Augustus; and that mighty city, growing daily more formidable, completed the destruction of all the kings who presumed to resist her.

No state threatens its neighbours with conquest so much as that which is involved in the horrors of civil war: In such a season, the nobility, the citizens, the artificers, the peasants, and, in short, the whole body of the people become soldiers; and when peace has united

* This is well cleared up in Appian's history of the civil war, lib. iv. The army of Octavius and Antony would have perished by famine, if their enemies had not given them battle.

all the contending parties, this state enjoys great advantages over others, whose subjects are generally citizens. Besides, civil wars always produce great men, because, in the universal confusion which then reigns, those who are distinguished by any particular merit, have a favourable opportunity of making themselves conspicuous: Each of these persons ranges himself in a suitable situation; whereas, in times of peace, they are stationed by others, and generally very injudiciously. We shall pass from the Romans, and inquire for instances of this truth, in nations that are more modern; and among these, France was never so formidable abroad, as after the contentions between the houses of Burgundy and Orleans, after the troubles of the league, after the civil wars in the minority of Lewis the thirteenth, and after the national dissensions in the nonage of Lewis the fourteenth. England was never so much respected as in the time of Cromwell, after the wars of the long parliament. The Germans did not gain their superiority over the Turks, till after the civil wars of the empire. The Spaniards, under Philip the fifth, and immediately after the civil wars that were kindled by the succession, invaded Sicily with such a force as astonished all Europe; and we now see the Persians rising from the ashes of a civil war, and humbling the Ottoman power.

In a word, the republic was at last enslaved, and we are not to charge that calamity on

the ambition of particular persons, but should rather impute it to the disposition of man in general, whose cravings after power are always most insatiable, when he enjoys the greatest share, and who only desires the whole, because he possesses a large part.

If the sentiments of Cæsar and Pompey had resembled those of Cato, others would have had the same ambitious thoughts as Pompey and Cæsar discovered; and since the republic was fated to fall, it would have been dragged to the precipice by some other hand.

Cæsar pardoned ever mortal; but the moderation people discover when they have usurped all, seems to be no extraordinary accomplishment.

Though he has been much commended for being indefatigable, after the battle of Pharsalia, yet Cicero, very justly, accuses him of remissness. He tells Cassius * they never could have imagined Pompey's party would have revived so considerably in Spain and Africa; and that if they could have foreseen that Cæsar would have amused himself in his Alexandrian war, they would not have made their peace with him as they did, but would have followed Scipio and Cato into Africa. And thus a weak passion for a woman made him engage in four wars, and by not foreseeing the two last, he hazarded all he had gained at Pharsalia.

* Familiar letters, lib. xv.

Cæſar governed at firſt under the uſual titles of magiſtracy, for nothing affects mankind more than names; and as the Asiatics abhorred thoſe of conſul and proconſul, the Europeans deteſted that of king; ſo that thoſe titles conſtituted at that time, the happineſs or deſpair of all the earth. He made ſome overtures to have the diadem placed on his head; but when he grew ſenſible that the people diſcontinued their acclamations, he thought fit to reject it. He likewiſe made other attempts *, and it is not to be comprehended, how he could believe that the Romans, in order to ſuffer him to be a tyrant, ſhould for that reaſon be in love with tyranny, or could even give credit to what they themſelves had done.

One day, when the ſenate tendered him ſome particular honours, he neglected to riſe from his ſeat, and from that moment, the graveſt members of that body loſt all patience.

Mankind are always moſt offended at any treſpaſs on the ceremonials and punctilios they expect. If you endeavour to oppreſs them, it ſometimes paſſes for a proof of the eſteem you entertain for them, but a violation of their decorums is always an inſtance of contempt.

Cæſar, who was a conſtant enemy to the ſenate, could not conceal the mean opinion he entertained of that body, who had almoſt rendered themſelves ridiculous, when they were

* He aboliſhed the office of tribunes of the people.

no longer in possession of power: For which reason even his clemency was an insult, and it became evident that he only pardoned because he scorned to punish.

Cæsar formed the edicts of the senate himself, and subscribed them with the names of the first senators he happened to think on. Cicero, in the ninth book of his Familiar Letters, writes to this effect: “ I have been sometimes informed, that an edict of the senate passed by my consent, has been transmitted to Syria and Armenia, before I had any knowlege that it was made; and several princes have sent me letters of acknowledgement for my consent, to allow them the title of kings, when, at the same time, I was so far from knowing them to be kings till that moment, that I even had not heard there were any such persons in the world.”

We may see, in the letters * of some great men of that time, though they passed under Cicero's name, because most of them were written by himself, into what dejection and despair persons of the first rank in the republic were sunk by this sudden revolution, which divested them of their honours, and even their employments; when the senate, having no longer any functions to perform, that reputation they had acquired through all the world, was now to be dispensed from the cabinet of

* See the letters of Cicero and Servius Sulpicius.

one man. This state of affairs appears in a much better light in those letters, than in any relations of historians; and they are the most masterly representation of the ingenuous turn of mind of a set of people united by a common affliction, and give us a complete portrait of an age wherein a false politeness had not infected all society with insincerity and untruth. In a word, they are not written, like our modern letters, with a view to deceive, but are the faithful intercourse of friends, who communicated all they knew.

It was hardly possible for Cæsar, in his situation, to preserve his life: The generality of the conspirators against him, were of his party *, or had received many great obligations from him, and the reason of their intention to assassinate him, is very natural; they had gained signal advantages by his conquest, but the more their fortune improved, the greater was their share of the common calamity, and to those who have not any thing they can properly call their own, it seems, in some particulars, to be of little consequence under what government they live.

Besides, there was a certain law of nations, or a settled opinion which prevailed in all the republics of Greece and Italy, and ascribed the

* Decimus Brutus, Caius Cæsa, Trebonius, Tullius Cimber, Minutius, Bassillus, were Cæsar's friends. Appian. *De bello civili*, lib. ii.

character of a virtuous man to the person who should assassinate any one who had usurped the sovereign power. Rome had been extremely fond of this notion, ever since the expulsion of her kings; the law was very express; the examples had a general approbation; the republic put a sword into the hand of every citizen, constituted him their magistrate for a few moments, and acknowledged him for their defender.

Brutus * was bold enough to tell his friends, that, should his own father return from the grave, he would sacrifice him to the public good, with as little remorse as he stabbed Cæsar; and though, by the continuance of tyranny, this surprizing spirit of liberty had gradually lost its vigor, yet the conspiracies, at the beginning of Augustus's reign, were perpetually reviving.

The ancient Romans were animated by a predominant love for their country, which, acting by a variation from the common ideas of crimes and virtues, was only attentive to its own dictates, and in the fervors of its operation entirely disregarded friends and citizens, fathers and benefactors. Virtue seemed to have forgotten her own precepts with a resolution to surpass herself, and when an action seemed too severe to be immediately considered with approbation, she soon caused it to be admired as divine.

* See the letter of Brutus, in the collection of Cicero's letters.

In a word, did not the guilt of Cæsar, who lived in a free government, consist in placing himself out of the reach of all punishments but an assassination? And when we ask why he was not opposed by open force, or the power of the laws, do we not at the same time demand satisfaction for his crimes?

C H A P. XII.

*Observations on the State of Rome after the
Death of Cæsar.*

SO impossible was it for the republic to accomplish its re-establishment, that a conjuncture then happened which was never known before; there was no longer any tyrant, and yet liberty was extinguished; for the causes which had contributed to its destruction, still subsisted to prevent its revival.

The assassins had only formed the plan of a conspiracy, but had not taken any measures to render it effectual in the event.

When they had struck the blow, they all retired to the Capitol; the senate forbore to assemble, and the next day Lepidus, who was fond of commotions, took possession of the Forum, with a band of soldiers at his devotion.

The veteran troops, who were apprehensive that the immense donations they had received, would be no longer repeated, had marched into Rome: This proceeding compelled the senate

to approve all the acts of Cæsar, and then, by a faculty of reconciling extremes, they granted a general amnesty to the conspirators, which produced a false appearance of peace.

Cæsar, a little before his death, whilst he was preparing for his expedition against the Parthians, had appointed magistrates for several years, that he might secure himself a set of men who, in his absence, would maintain the tranquillity of his government; so that, after his death, the party who had espoused his interest, were in a condition to support themselves for a considerable time.

As the senate had ratified all the acts of Cæsar without any restriction, and as the consuls were intrusted with the execution of them, Antony, who was then one of those magistrates, got possession of Cæsar's book of accounts, gained upon his secretary, and made him insert, in that book, all the articles he thought proper, by which means the dictator reigned more imperiously than when he was living; for what he could never have accomplished, Antony had the dexterity to effect; great sums of money, which Cæsar would never have bestowed, were distributed among the people by Antony, and every man who had any seditious designs against the government, were sure to find a sudden gratuity in Cæsar's books.

It unfortunately happened that Cæsar, to make his expedition effectual, had amassed prodigious sums, and deposited them in the temple
of

of Ops ; Antony disposed of these as he thought fit, by the expedient of his book.

The conspirators had, at first, determined to cast the body of Cæsar into the Tyber *, and might have executed that design without any interruption ; for in those seasons of astonishment which succeed unexpected events, every intention becomes practicable : This however did not take effect, and we shall now relate what happened on that occasion.

The senate thought themselves under a necessity of permitting Cæsar's funeral obsequies to be performed ; and indeed they could not decently forbid them, as they had never declared him a tyrant. Now the Romans, in conformity to a custom established among them, and much boasted of by Polybius, always carried, in their funeral processions, the images which represented the ancestors of the deceased, and made an oration over the body. Antony, who charged himself with this last province, unfolded the bloody robe of Cæsar to the view of all the people, read to them the particulars of his will, in which he had left them extraordinary legacies, and then wrought them into such violent emotions, that they immediately fired the houses of the conspirators.

* That action would not have been unprecedented ; for when Tiberius Gracchus was slain, Lucretius the edile, who was afterwards called Vespillo, threw his body into the Tyber. Aurel. Victor. de viris illust.

Cicero, who governed the senate in this whole affair *, makes no scruple to acknowledge that it would have been much better to have proceeded with vigour, and even to have exposed themselves to destruction, though indeed it was not probable that such a fate would have attended them; but he alleges for his excuse, that as the senate was then assembled, they had no opportunity in their favour; and he adds, that those who are sensible of the importance even of a moment, in affairs wherein the people have so considerable a part, will not be surprized at his conduct in that transaction.

Another accident happened at this time: when the people were celebrating funeral games in honour of Cæsar, a comet, with long flaming hair, appeared for the space of seven days, which made them believe the soul of Cæsar was received into heaven.

It was very customary for the people of Greece and Asia, to erect temples † to the kings, and even the proconsuls who had governed them; and they were indulged in this practice, because it was the greatest evidence they could possibly give of their abject servitude. Nay the Romans themselves might, in their private temples, were their Lares were deposited, render divine honours to their ancestors; but I cannot remember, that from the time of Ro-

* Letters to Atticus, lib. xiv. c. 6.

† See more on this subject, in the letters of Cicero to Atticus, lib. v. and the remark of the abbe de Mongaut.

mulus to Julius Cæsar, any Roman * was ever ranked among the gods of the republic.

The government of Macedonia was assigned to Antony, but he was desirous of changing it for that of Gaul, and the motives which so induced him are very evident: Decimus Brutus, who governed Cisalpine Gaul, having refused to resign that province to Antony, he was resolved to deprive him of it by force. This produced a civil war, in which the senate declared Antony an enemy to his country.

Cicero, to accomplish the destruction of Antony his mortal enemy, was so injudicious as to employ all his interest for the promotion of Octavius, and instead of defacing the idea of one Cæsar in the minds of the people, he placed two before their eyes.

Octavius, in his conduct to Cicero, acted like a man who knew the world; he flattered, he praised, he consulted him, and employed every engaging artifice, which vanity never distrusts.

Great affairs are frequently disconcerted, because those who undertake them seldom confine their expectations to the principal event, but look after some little particular success which soothes the indulgent opinion they entertain of themselves.

* Dion. relates that the Triumviri, who all expected the same deification, took all imaginable care to enlarge the honours paid to Cæsar.

I am inclined to think, that, if Cato had reserved himself for the republic, he would have given a very different turn to affairs. Cicero had extraordinary abilities for the second class, but was incapable of the first. His genius was fine, but his soul seldom soared above the vulgar. His characteristic was virtue; that of Cato glory *. Cicero always beheld himself in the first rank; Cato never allowed his merit a place in his remembrance. This man would have preserved the republic for his own sake; the other, that he might have boasted of the action.

I might carry on the parallel by adding, that when Cato foresaw, Cicero was intimidated; and when the former hoped, the latter was confident: Cato beheld things through a serene medium; Cicero viewed them through a glare of little passions.

Antony was defeated at Modena, where the two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, lost their lives: The senate, who thought themselves superior to their tumultuous affairs, began to think of humbling Octavius, who now ceased his hostilities against Antony, marched his army to Rome, and caused himself to be declared consul.

In this manner did Cicero, who boasted that his robe had crushed the arms of Antony, introduce an enemy into the republic, the more

* *Essè quam videri bonus malebat: itaque quo minus gloriam petebat, eo magis illum assequabatur.* Sallust. bell. Catil.

formidable,

formidable, because his name was much dearer to the people, and his pretensions, to all appearance, better founded *.

Antony, after his overthrow, retired into Transalpine Gaul, where he was received by Lepidus. These two men entered into an association with Octavius, and gave up to each other the lives of their friends and their enemies †. Lepidus continued at Rome, whilst the other two went in quest of Brutus and Cassius, and found them in those parts where the empire of the world was thrice contended for in battle.

Brutus and Cassius killed themselves with a precipitation not to be vindicated; and it is impossible to read this period of their lives, without pitying the republic which was so abandoned: Cato closed the tragedy with his own murder; and these, in some measure, opened it with theirs.

Several reasons may be assigned for this custom of self-destruction, which so generally prevailed among the Romans; the progress of Stoicism which encouraged it; the establishment of triumphs and slavery, which induced several great men to believe they ought not to survive a defeat; the advantages accruing to the accused, who put an end to life rather

* He was Cæsar's heir, and his son by adoption.

† So inveterate was their cruelty, that they commanded every individual among the people to rejoice at the proscriptions on pain of death. Dion.

than submit to a tribunal, which condemned their memory to infamy *, and their goods to confiscation; a point of honour, more rational perhaps, than that which now prompts us to stab our friend for a gesture or an expression; in a word, the convenience † of heroism, which gave every one the liberty of finishing his part on the stage of the world, in what scene he pleased.

We might add, the great facility of putting such a principle in execution: The soul all attentive to the action she is preparing to commit, to the motives which determines her resolution, to the dangers she avoids by it, does not properly behold death, because passion makes itself felt, but always blinds the eyes.

Self-love, and a fondness for our preservation, changes itself into so many shapes, and acts by such contrary principles, that it leads us to sacrifice our existence for the very sake of existence; and such is the estimate we make of ourselves, that we consent to die by a natural and obscure sort of instinct, which makes us love ourselves even more than our lives.

It is certain that we are become less free, less couragious, and less capable of grand en-

* *Eorum qui de se statuebant, humabantur corpora, manebant testamenta; pretium sequinandi.* Tac. An. vi.

† If Charles I. and James II. had been educated in a religion which would have permitted them to destroy themselves, the one would not have submitted to such a death, nor the other to such a life.

terprizes than they were formerly, by this love of ourselves.

C H A P. XIII.

A U G U S T U S.

SEXTUS POMPEIUS possessed Sicily and Sardinia, was master at sea, and saw himself at the head of a great multitude of fugitives, and persons devoted to death by proscriptions, whose last hopes depended on their valour. Octavius contended with him, in two very laborious wars; and, after a variety of ill success, vanquished him by the abilities of Agrippa.

Most of the conspirators ended their lives in a miserable manner; and it was natural that persons who headed a party, so frequently harassed by wars, in which no quarter was afforded, should die a violent death. That event was however interpreted into a consequence of divine vengeance, which punished the murderers of Cæsar, and in its turn proscribed their cause.

Octavius gained over the soldiers of Lepidus to his own interest, and divested him of his power in the triumvirate; he even envied him the consolation of passing the remainder of his days in obscurity, and compelled him to appear as a private man in the assemblies of the people.

It is impossible for any one to be displeas'd at the humiliation of this Lepidus; he was the most deprav'd citizen in all the republic, a constant promoter of disturbances, and one who perpetually formed fatal schemes, wherein he was oblig'd to associate with people of more ability than himself. A modern author * has thought fit to be large in his commendation, and cites Antony, who, in one of his letters, represents him as an honest man. But he, who had that character from Antony, could not have much title to it from other persons.

I believe Octavius is the only man of all the Roman generals, who ever gain'd the affections of the soldiers by giving them perpetual instances of a natural timidity of spirit. The soldiers, at that time, were more affected with the liberality of their commanders than their valour; perhaps it was even fortunate for him that he was not master of any qualities which could procure him the empire, and that his very incapacity should be the cause of his promotion to it, since it made him the less dreaded. It is not impossible that the defects which threw the greatest dishonour on his character, were the most propitious to his fortune. If he had discovered, at first, any traces of an exalted soul, all mankind would have been jealous of his abilities; and if he had been

* The abbe de St. Feal.

spirited by any true bravery, he would not ! . . . given Antony time to launch into all extravagancies which proved his ruin.

When Antony was preparing to march against Octavius, he assured his soldiers, by a solemn oath, that he would restore the republic; which makes it evident, that even They were jealous of the liberty of their country, though they were the perpetual instruments of its destruction; for an army is the blindest and most inconsiderate set of people in the world.

The battle of Actium was fought, Cleopatra fled, and drew Antony after her. It evidently appeared by the circumstances of her future conduct, that she afterwards betrayed him *; perhaps that incomprehensible spirit of coquetry so predominant in her sex, tempted her to practice all her arts to lay a third sovereign of the world at her feet.

A woman, to whom Antony had sacrificed the whole world, betrayed him; many captains and kings, whom he had raised or made, failed him; and, as if generosity were connected with servitude, a company of gladiators remained heroically faithful to him. Load a man with benefits, the first idea you inspire him with, is to find ways to preserve them; they are new interests which you give him to defend.

* Dion. lib. i.

The most surprizing circumstance in those wars is, that one battle should generally decide the difference, and that one defeat should be irreparable.

The Roman soldiers were not, properly, under the prevalence of any party spirit; they did not fight for any particular acquisition, but for some particular person; they only knew their commander, who engaged their service by prodigious hopes; but when he was once defeated, and consequently no longer in a condition to accomplish his promises, they immediately revolted to the other side. The provinces did not embark in the quarrel with any greater sincerity, for it was of little consequence to them, whether the senate or the people prevailed; and therefore, when one of the generals lost the day, they declared for the other; for every city was obliged to justify itself before the conqueror, who having engaged himself to the soldiery by immense promises, was constrained to sacrifice to their avidity those countries which were most obnoxious.

We have been afflicted, in France, with two sorts of civil war; one had religion for its pretext, and was of long duration, because the motive which first inflamed it continued to subsist after victory; the other could not properly be said to have any motive, but was rather kindled by the caprice or ambition of some great men, and was soon extinguished.

Augustus

Augustus (for that was the name offered by flattery to Octavius) was careful to establish order, or rather a durable servitude; for when once the sovereignty has been usurped in a free state, every transaction, on which an unlimited authority can be founded, is called a regulation; and all instances of disorder, commotion, and bad government, are represented as the only expedients to preserve the just liberty of the subject.

All the Roman citizens who were ever actuated by ambitious views, have attempted to introduce a kind of anarchy in the republic; and Pompey, Crassus, and Cæsar succeeded to a miracle; they authorized an impunity for all public crimes, and abolished every institution calculated to prevent the corruption of manners, and every regulation accommodated to the best politics; and as good legislators endeavour to improve their fellow citizens, these, on the contrary, were indefatigable to lead them into a degeneracy from every virtue. With this view they gave a sanction to the pernicious custom of corrupting the people by money, and when any persons were accused of undue practices for obtaining places of trust, the delinquents corrupted the judges who were to decide the cause. They interrupted the elections by every violent proceeding, and even intimidated the tribunal itself. The authority of the people was reduced to annihilation, witness
Gabinius,

Gabinus *, who, after he had reinstated Ptolemy, by force of arms, on his throne, contrary to the inclinations of the people, very coldly demanded a triumph.

These leading men in the republic endeavoured to make the people disgusted at their own power, and to become necessary themselves, by rendering the inconveniencies of a republican government as disagreeable as possible. But when Augustus had established himself in the supremacy, his politics were employed to restore order, that the people might be sensible of the happiness of being ruled by one man.

When Augustus was at the head of an armed power, he dreaded the revolt of his soldiers, and not the conspiracies of the citizens; for which reason he lavished all his caresses on the former, and was altogether inhuman to the latter: But when his arms had accomplished a peace, he was apprehensive of conspiracies, and the idea of Cæsar's untimely death being always present to his remembrance, he resolved to vary from his conduct that he might avoid his fate. We shall now give the reader a complete key to the whole life of Augustus: He wore a coat of mail, under his robe, in the senate house;

* Cæsar made war with the Gauls, and Crassus with the Parthians, without any previous deliberation of the senate, or any decree of the people. Dion.

he refused the title of dictator: and whereas Cæsar insolently affirmed the republic to be nothing, and that his word alone were the laws, Augustus was perpetually expatiating on the dignity of the senate and his veneration for the republic. He was solicitous therefore to establish such a form of government as should be most satisfactory, without incommoding his particular interest, and changing it into an aristocracy with relation to the civil, and into a monarchy with respect to the military administration; rendering it by these means an ambiguous system of government, which, being unsupported by its own power, could subsist no longer than the sovereign pleased; and consequently was a monarchy in all its circumstances.

A question has been started, whether Augustus had a real inclination to divest himself of the empire. But is it not apparent, that, had he been in earnest, he might easily have effected his design? But his whole proceeding, in that affair, was a mere artifice; because, though he expressed a desire every ten years, to be eased of the mighty load that encumbered him, yet he always thought fit bear in. These were little refinements of low cunning, calculated to induce the people to give him what, in his opinion, he had not sufficiently acquired. I form my thoughts in this particular, by the whole life of Augustus; and though mankind are frequently fanciful and inconsistent, they
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are seldom known to renounce, in one moment, any enjoyment that has engaged the attention of all their life. Every action of Augustus, and each of his various regulations, visibly tended to the establishment of monarchy. Sylla resigned the dictatorship, but, amidst all his violent proceedings, a republican spirit is apparent in every part of his conduct; all his regulations, though executed with a tyrannical air, had an aspect to some certain form of a commonwealth. Sylla, who was a man of an impetuous temper, precipitated the Romans into liberty. Augustus, who was a smooth and subtle tyrant *, led them gently into slavery. When the republic regained its power, under Sylla, all the people exclaimed against tyranny; and whilst this became fortified, under Augustus, liberty was the general boast.

The custom of triumphs, which had so much contributed to the greatness of Rome, was abolished by Augustus, or, more properly, this honour became the prerogative of sovereignty †. The greatest part of those cus-

* I use this word in the sense of the Greeks and Romans, who gave this name to all those who had subverted a democracy, for in all other particulars Augustus was a lawful prince, after the law enacted by the people: *Lege regia, quæ de ejus imperio lata est, Populus ei & in eum omne imperium transtulit.* Instit. lib. i.

† Triumphal ornaments were all the honours now granted to any particular general. Dion. in Aug.

toms which prevailed under the emperors, derived their origin from the republic *; and it will be proper to bring them together, that the similitude may be more apparent. That person alone under whose auspices a war had been conducted, was intitled to demand a triumph †: Now wars were always carried on under the auspices of the generalissimo, and consequently of the emperor, who was the generalissimo of all the forces.

As constant war was the reigning principle of the republic, the maxim under the emperors was altogether pacific. Victories were considered as so many opportunities of introducing disorder by armies, who might fix too great a valuation on their services.

Those who were advanced to any command were apprehensive of engaging in enterprises of too great importance; they found it necessary to aim at glory with moderation, and were to engage the emperor's notice, and not raise his

* The Romans having changed their government, without sustaining any invasion from an enemy, the same customs continued as were practised before the alteration of the government, the form of which still remained though the essentials were destroyed.

† Dion. in Aug. lib. liv. acquaints us that Agrippa neglected, out of modesty, to give the senate an account of his expedition against the people of the Bosphorus, and even refused a triumph; since which time it was not granted to any person of his class; but it was a favour Augustus intended to afford Agrippa, though Antony would not allow it to Ventidius, the first time he conquered the Parthians.

jealousy; in a word, they were not to appear before him with a lustre which his eyes could not bear.

Augustus was very cautious * of investing any one with the rights of a Roman citizen; he made laws † to prevent the enfranchisement of too many slaves ‡, and by his will recommended the observation of these two maxims, with a dissuasive against extending the empire by new wars.

These three particulars were very well connected; for when all war was discontinued, there was no need either of new citizens or enfranchisements.

When Rome was in a constant state of war, she was under a perpetual necessity of recruiting her inhabitants. At the beginning, part of the people were transplanted thither from the conquered cities, and in process of time several citizens of the neighbouring towns came to Rome to obtain a share in the rights of suffrage, and established themselves there in such numbers, that, upon the complaints of the allies, the Romans were obliged to remand them back. Multitudes at last arrived from the provinces; the laws favoured marriages, and even rendered them necessary. Rome, in all her wars, gained a prodigious number of slaves, and when the riches of the citizens became

* Sueton. in August.

† Justin. Institut. lib. i. & Suet. in Aug.

‡ Dion. in Aug.

immense

immense, they bought these unhappy people from all parts, and, from a principle of generosity, avarice, or ambition, enfranchised them without number *. Some intended by this proceeding to reward the fidelity of their slaves; others had a view by it to receive, in their name, the corn which the republic distributed among the poor citizens. In a word, others desired to have their funeral solemnity graced with a long train of attendance crowned with flowers. The people were generally composed of persons † who had received their freedom, so that the lords of the universe, not only in their original, but through the greatest part of succeeding times, were of servile extraction.

The number of the populace being chiefly collected out of slaves who had been enfranchised, or the sons of such, became very incommodious, and were therefore transplanted in colonies; by which means the state effectually secured the obedience of the provinces. There was a general circulation of mankind through the world. Rome received them in the state of slaves, and sent them away Romans.

Augustus, under the pretence of some tumults in the elections, placed a garrison and a governor in the city, made the legions perpetual, stationed them upon the frontiers, and established particular funds for their pay. To which we

* Dionys. Halicarnass. lib. iv.

† See Tacit. Annal. lib. xiii.

may add, that he gave orders for the veterans to receive their donations in money*, and not in lands.

Many unhappy consequences resulted from the distribution of land after the time of Sylla. The citizens property in their estates grew precarious, and if all the soldiers of one cohort were not settled in the same place, they became dissatisfied with their allotments, neglected the cultivation of their lands, and degenerated into dangerous citizens*. But if they were distributed in entire legions, the ambitious could raise armies against the republic in a moment.

Augustus likewise established fixed provisions for the naval power, which was never done before his time; for as the Romans were masters of the Mediterranean, and as all navigation was then confined to that sea, they had not any enemy to fear.

Dion observes, very judiciously, that after the emperors had assumed the sovereign power, it became very difficult to write the history of those times. All transactions were industriously concealed, the dispatches from the provinces were transmitted to the cabinets of the emperors, and we know little more than what either the folly or rashness of tyrants divulged, or such events as fall within the conjectures of historians.

* He ordered that the prætorian soldiers should have five thousand drachmas a piece after sixteen years service, and the others three thousand drachmas after twenty years.
Dion. in Aug.

† See Tacit. *Annal.* lib. xiv.

C H A P. XIV.
T I B E R I U S.

AS a river, sometimes, with a slow and silent progress, undermines the banks that have been thrown up to restrain its current, and at last overwhelms them in a moment, and sheds an inundation over the fields they formerly preserved; in the same manner, the supreme authority, which gained an insensible growth under Augustus, bore down all before it in the succeeding reign of Tiberius.

A law at that time subsisted, which made it treason to form any injurious attempt against the majesty of the people: Tiberius assumed to himself the interpretation and enforcement of this law, and extended it not only to the cases for which it was originally calculated, but to every conjuncture that could possibly be favourable to his hatred or suspicions. And now, not only actions, but words and signs, and even thoughts were adjudged by this standard; for those expressions which drop from the overflowing of the heart, in the conversation of intimate friends, are always supposed to be their real sentiments. All freedom was therefore banished from their seats, diffidence reigned among relations, there was no fidelity among the slaves: the gloomy disposition and insincerity of the prince were diffused through all ranks of men; friendship had the disrepute of a dangerous
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quick-

quicksand ; a fine genius passed for a shining indiscretion, and virtue itself was only considered as an affectation, which officiously reminded the people of their lost happiness.

No tyranny can have a severer effect than that which is exercised under the appearance of laws, and with the plausible colours of justice ; when the executors of cruel power would, if we may use the expression, drown the unhappy wretches on the very plank that before saved them amidst the troubled waves.

As a tyrant is never destitute of instruments to accomplish his designs, so Tiberius always found the senate tractable enough to condemn * as many persons as he could possibly suspect ; and this venerable body sunk at last into a degeneracy too low to be described. The senators even courted servitude, to gain the favour of Sejanus ; and the most illustrious among them abandoned themselves to the dishonourable profession of informers.

It seems easy to discover several causes of that slavish disposition, which then prevailed in the senate. When Cæsar had entirely crushed the party who declared for the republic, all the friends, as well as enemies he then had in the senate, concurred with equal unanimity, to remove the bounds with which the laws had limited his power, and at the same time they

* Before the time of the emperors, the senate confined their attention to public affairs, and never decided the causes of private persons in a full body.

agreed to render him unparalleled honours; some came into these compliances with a view to please him, others intended by such means to make him odious. Dion informs us, that some even proposed that he might have the liberty to enjoy as many women as he should desire. This obsequious conduct freed him from all suspicions of the senate, and consequently was the cause of his assassination; but then it prevented in the succeeding reigns, all flattery from rising to such wild and unexampled heights as might have created disaffection in the minds of the people.

Before Rome submitted to the dominion of one man, the riches of the nobility, in what manner soever acquired, were certainly immense, but those grandes were divested of the greatest part of their treasures by the emperors*. The senators were no longer resorted to by those great and wealthy clients, who were the sources of their patrons affluence. The provinces produced nothing considerable, except for Cæsar; and especially when they were under the government of his præfects, whose office had some resemblance to that of the intendants in France. However, though the fountain from whence all this opulence flowed was at last exhausted, the expences were continued in their former profusion, and the track being once marked out,

* The great men were impoverished even in the time of Augustus, and no longer solicited for the office of ædile, or tribune of the people; and many of them had not any inclination to have a seat among the senators.

the men of rank could only pursue it now, by the emperor's favour.

Augustus had deprived the people of their legislative capacity, and abolished all their jurisdiction with respect to public offences; but he still left them the power of electing magistrates. **TIBERIUS**, who dreaded the assemblies of a people so numerous, divested them even of this privilege, and transferred it to the senate*, or rather to himself. Now it is impossible to conceive the abject lowness to which the declension of the people's power sunk the spirits of the grandees: when dignities were in the disposal of the populace, the magistrates, who solicited their interest, practised a number of mean condescensions; but these were intermixed with a certain magnificence that in some measure concealed them: for instance, they exhibited pompous games and recreations, they distributed sums of money, and quantities of corn among the people, and sometimes regaled them with splendid feasts. But though the motive was low, the manner seemed august, because it always comports with a great man to obtain the favour of the people by liberality; but when that people had nothing to bestow, and the prince, in the name of the senate, disposed of all employments, they were desired as well as obtained in a dishonourable manner, and could only be compassed by adulation, infamy, and a hateful train

* Tacit. *Annal.* lib. i. *Dion.* lib. liv. They were afterwards re-established, and then disannulled by Caligula.

of crimes, that were made necessary arts by the iniquity of the age.

It does not indeed appear that Tiberius had any intention to make the senate contemptible; and he complained of nothing so much, as the propensity of that body to slavery. His life was filled with dissatisfactions on that account, but he resembled the generality of mankind, and was fond of contradictory enjoyments. His general politics were inconsistent with his particular passions; he would willingly have seen a free senate, who, by their conduct, might have created a veneration for his government; but then he was also desirous of a senate who would every moment be tractable to his fears, his jealousies, and his aversions. In a word, the politician was perpetually subordinate to the man.

We have already intimated, that the people had formerly obtained from the patricians the privilege of electing, from their own body, a set of magistrates, who were to protect them from the insults and injustice that might be intended against them; and, in order to capacitate those magistrates for the exercise of such a power, their persons were declared sacred and inviolable, and whoever should presume to treat a tribune injuriously, either by actions or language, was condemned by the law to suffer death on the spot. Now when the emperors were invested with the tribunitial power, they obtained the same prerogatives, and it was upon this principle that a considerable number of people were deprived of

their lives : from this source flowed the impunity with which informers flourished in their profession *; and hence it was, that the accusation of treason, that crime, says Pliny, which was charged on those to whom no real offence could be imputed, was at last extended to any one whom the wantonness of tyranny pointed out.

I am inclinable however to believe, that some of those titles of accusation were not so ridiculous as they appear at present ; and can never be persuaded that Tiberius would have caused a man to be accused for selling to one who bought his house, a statue of the emperor ; that Domitian should condemn a woman to die for undressing herself before his image ; or that he should proceed with the same severity against a citizen of Rome, for causing a description of all the earth to be delineated on the walls of his apartment ; if such actions as these had not called up an idea in the minds of the Romans very different from that they now excite in us. For my part I am of opinion, that as Rome had changed the form of its government, those actions which now appear inconsiderable to us, might, when they were committed, have a very different aspect ; and I judge in this manner, from my reflection on what is now customary in a nation which can-

[* Under the reign of Tiberius, statues were erected to, and triumphant ornaments conferred on informers, which debased these honours to such a degree, that those who had merited them, disdained to accept of them. *Fragm. of Dio, lib. lviii. L'Esprit des Loix, lib. viii. c. 7.*]

not with any justice be suspected of tyranny, and yet it is a capital crime there to drink to the health of a certain person.

I cannot omit any circumstance which tends to give a clear representation of the Roman genius. That people were so habituated to obedience, and so constantly placed their happiness in homaging their masters, that, after the death of Germanicus, they were affected with such inconsolable sorrow and despair, as never appears in our contemporaries. The descriptions given by historians * of a desolation, so public, so universal and immoderate, deserve a reader's curiosity; and it is certain, that this scene of grief was not affected, since a whole people are never known to practise so much flattery and dissimulation.

The Romans, who had now no longer any share in the government, and were chiefly composed of persons who had received their freedom, or such indolent and unindustrious people who lived at the expence of the public treasure, were now sensible of nothing but their imbecillity, and afflicted themselves like children or women, who from a principle of weakness abandon themselves to sorrow. These people were politically indisposed, they placed all their fears and hopes in the person of Germanicus, and when he was snatched from them by an untimely death, they sunk into despair.

* See Tacitus.

No people are so apprehensive of calamity as those whom the misery of their condition should rather discharge from all fear, and who ought to say with Andromache, *Would to heaven I had any enjoyment I could dread to lose!* There are at this day, in Naples, fifty thousand men, who have no food but herbs, and whose whole cloathing consists of a few miserable rags; and yet these people, who are the most wretched creatures upon earth, discover a dreadful consternation at the least irruption of Vesuvius, and are so insatuated as to fear they shall be miserable.

C H A P. XV.

Remarks on the Emperors from Caius Caligula to Antoninus.

CALIGULA succeeded Tiberius, and it was said of him, that there never was a better slave, nor a worse master: and indeed these two circumstances are very consistent; for the same turn of mind which inclines a person to be strongly affected at unlimited power in his sovereign, makes him to be no less in love with it, when he rises to empire himself.

Caligula restored the assemblies of the people, which Tiberius had prohibited; and abolished the arbitrary law and constructions of treason established by that emperor: from which proceeding we may observe, that the beginnings of a bad reign sometimes resemble the conclusion of a good one; for a wicked prince may,

may, from a principle of contradiction to the motives of his predecessor's conduct, be spirited to actions which the other performed from a virtuous inducement; and we owe to this very principle a number of good as well as bad regulations.

But what did the Romans gain by these plausible beginnings? Caligula disannulled the law which constituted the circumstantials of treason; but then he destroyed those who displeased him, by a military severity; and his vengeance, instead of pointing at some particular senators, hung over all their heads, like a sword that threatened them with extermination at one blow.

This formidable tyranny of the emperors arose from the disposition of the Romans in general; who, as they were suddenly enslaved to an arbitrary government, and were hardly sensible of any interval between dominion and subjection, were not prepared for such a transition by any gentle softening. The fierce and untractable disposition still remained, and the citizens were used in the same manner they themselves had treated their conquered enemies, and were governed altogether upon the same plan. When Sylla made his public entrance into Rome, he was still the Sylla who had done the same in Athens, and he governed with an uniform imperiousness. As to us who are natives of France, and have sunk into subjection,
by

by insensible degrees, if we are destitute of laws, we are at least governed by engaging manners.

The constant view of the combats of gladiators inspired the Romans with extraordinary fierceness; and it was observable, that Claudius became more disposed to shed blood, by being habituated to those spectacles. The example of this emperor, who was naturally of a gentle disposition, and yet degenerated into so much cruelty at last, makes it evident, that the education in those times, was very different from our own.

The Romans, being accustomed to tyrannize over human nature, * in the persons of their children and slaves, had a very imperfect idea of that virtue we distinguish by the name of humanity. Whence proceeds the savage cast of mind so remarkable in the inhabitants of our colonies, but from their constant severity to an unfortunate class of mankind? When barbarity prevails in civil government, what natural justice or harmony of manners can be expected from the individuals?

We are fatigued and fatiated with seeing in the history of the emperors such an infinite number of people whom they destroyed for no other end than to confiscate their goods: our modern accounts furnish us with no such instances of inhumanity. This difference, as we have already intimated, is to be ascribed to the

* See the institutes of Justinian, where they treat of the power of parents and masters.

milder cast of our manners, and the civilizing restraints of a more amiable religion. We may likewise add, that we have no opportunity of pillaging the families of senators who have ravaged the world, and we derive this advantage from the mediocrity of our fortunes, which are consequently in a safer situation. In a word, we are not considerable enough to be plundered*.

That class of the Roman people who were called Plebeians had no aversion to the worst of their emperors; for since they had no longer any share of empire themselves, nor were any more employed in wars, they became the most contemptible and degenerate people in the world; they looked upon commerce and the sciences as only proper for slaves, and the distributions of corn which they received, made them neglect the cultivation of their lands: they had been familiarized to public games and splendid spectacles, and since they had no longer any tribunes to obey, or magistrates to elect, those gratifications which they were only permitted to enjoy, became necessary to them, and their indolence and inactivity stimulated their relish of those indulgencies.

Caligula, Nero, Commodus, Caracalla, were lamented by the people for their very folly, for

* The duke of Braganza had an immense estate in Portugal; and when he first revolted, the king of Spain was congratulated by his nobility, for the rich confiscation he was to derive from that event.

what-

whatever these loved, the others were as madly fond of, in their turn, and not only contributed their whole power, but even devoted their own persons to those pleasures; they lavished all the riches of the empire with the greatest prodigality; and when these were exhausted, the people without the least emotion, beheld all the great families pillaged. They enjoyed the fruits of tyranny, without the least intermixture of uneasiness, because their low obscurity was their protection. Such princes have a natural antipathy to people of merit and virtue, because they are sensible their actions are disapproved by such persons. The contradiction * and even the silence of an austere citizen were insupportable to them; and as they grew intoxicated with popular applause, they at last imagined their government constituted the public felicity, and consequently that it could be censured by none but disaffected and ill-disposed persons.

* The Greeks had games in which it was decent to fight, and glorious to conquer: the Romans had little more than spectacles; and the infamous gladiators were peculiar to them. But for a great person to descend into the Arena or mount the stage, was what the Roman gravity did not admit of. How should a senator submit to it; he, who by the laws could not contract any alliance with men who had been disgraced by the disgusts or even the applauses of the people? Some emperors, however, appeared in these places; and this folly, which indicated an extreme irregularity of the heart, a contempt for all that is great, decent, and good, historians ever brand with the mark of tyranny.

Caligula,

Caligula, was a true sophist in cruelty, for as he equally descended from Antony and Augustus, he declared he would punish the consuls if they celebrated the day appointed to commemorate the victory at Actium, and that they should likewise feel his severity if they neglected to honour that event; and Drusilla, to whom he accorded divine honours, being dead, it was a crime to bewail her because she was a goddess, and as great an offence to forbear that sorrow because she was his sister.

We have now ascended an eminence from whence we may take a view of human affairs: when we trace, in the Roman history, such a variety of wars, and their prodigal effusion of human blood; when we view so many once flourishing nations depopulated, and see such a diversity of shining actions and triumphant processions; when we trace the masterly strokes of politics, sagacity, and fortitude, so conspicuous in that people, and reflect on their advances to universal monarchy by schemes so judiciously concerted, so successfully supported, and so happily accomplished; to what view are all these mighty preparations directed? Why truly to satiate the ambition of five or six monsters! Is it possible then, that the senate could divest so many kings of their power, only to plunge themselves into the most abject slavery to one of their unworthy citizens, and to exterminate itself by its own edicts? Did it rise to such a height of grandeur, to drop more splendidly into ruin,
and

and do the sons of men only labour to augment their power, that they may fall, by their own combinations, into better hands?

When Caligula was assassinated, the senate assembled to form a new model of government; and, whilst they were engaged in such deliberations, a party of soldiers rushed in to plunder the palace, and found, in some obscure place, a man trembling with fear; this man was Claudius, and they immediately saluted him emperor.

Claudius completed the subversion of the ancient form of government, by intrusting the dispensation of justice to his officers: The principal motive to the wars of Marius and Sylla, was to determine the competition of the senators and the equestrian * order for this prerogative; and it was now wrested from both parties by the arbitrary fancy of a weak man. Surprising event indeed, of a dispute which had set the world in flames!

When the reign of a prince succeeds the dissolution of a republic, no authority can be more absolute than his own, for he then possesses all that power which before was distributed among the people, who exercised it without any limitations; and for this reason the kings of Denmark are the most despotic sovereigns in Europe.

The people were altogether as abject and unmanly as the senate, though they once were animated with such a martial spirit, that, when armies were levied in the city, before the time of

* See Tacitus.

the emperors, they gained the military discipline upon the spot, and immediately marched to the enemy. In the civil wars of Vitellius and Vespasian, Rome became a prey to the ambitious, and was full of timorous citizens, who were struck with consternation by any party of soldiers, who could first approach them.

The emperors themselves were in no better a situation; for as the right of electing a sovereign was not appropriated to any single army, it generally happened, that, when an emperor was chosen by one body of soldiers, that circumstance alone was sufficient to discredit him with the others, who immediately set up a competitor to oppose him.

As the grandeur therefore of the republic proved fatal to that form of government, so the mighty extent of the empire was altogether as pernicious to the monarchs. If the territories they were to defend had been confined to moderate limits, those sovereigns might have been effectually served by one principal army; and the soldiers, when they had once elected their emperor, would have been dutiful enough to acquiesce in their choice.

The soldiers were attached to the family of Cæsar, under which they enjoyed every advantage that a revolution would have procured them. The time came, that the great families of Rome were all exterminated by that of Cæsar, which itself became extinct in the person of Nero. The civil power, which had been continually

tinually depressed, was unable to balance the military; each army wanted to make an emperor.

Let us here compare the times: when Tiberius began his reign, wherein did he not employ the senate *? He was informed that the armies of Illyrium and Germany had mutinied: he granted some of their demands, and maintained, that it belonged to the † senate to judge of the rest. He sent to them deputies of that body. Those who have ceased to fear the power, may still respect the authority. When it had been represented to the soldiers, that in a Roman army the children of the emperors, and the deputies of the senate, ran the risk of ‡ their lives, they might relent; and even proceed so far as to punish || themselves: but when the senate was entirely depressed, its example moved no one. In vain did § Otho harangue his soldiers, to talk to them of the dignity of the senate: in vain did ** Vitellius send the principal senators to make his peace with Vespasian: they did not, for one moment, pay to the orders of the state that respect which they had so long lost. The armies looked on these deputies as the most ab-

* Tacitus Annal. lib. i.

† *Cetera senatui servanda*, ibid.

‡ See the oration of Germanicus, ibid.

|| *Gaudebat cordibus miles, quasi semet abolveret*: Tacitus, ibid. The privileges which had been extorted, were afterwards revoked. Tacitus, ibid.

§ Tacitus, lib. i.

** Idem, lib. iii.

ject slaves of a master whom they had already rejected.

It was an ancient custom at Rome, for those who obtained a triumph, to distribute some money to each soldier: it was not much*. In the time of the civil wars these gratuities were augmented †. Formerly they were made with the money taken from the enemy; in these unhappy times, they gave that of the citizens, and the soldiers would have a share where there was no booty: these distributions had taken place only after a war; Nero made them in a time of peace: the soldiers were used to them, and they raged against Galba, who boldly told them, that that he knew to choose, but not to buy them.

Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, ‡ made a very transient appearance in the imperial scene. Vespasian, who, like them, was elected by the army, devoted all his reign to the re-establishment of the empire, which had been successively possessed by six tyrants, all equally cruel, and most of them exceedingly furious and un-

* See in Livy the sums distributed in the several triumphs. It was the humour of the generals to carry a great deal of money into the public treasury, and give but little to the soldiers.

† Paulus Æmilius, at a time when the greatness of the conquests had occasioned these liberalities to be augmented, gave only one hundred denarii to each private man; but Cæsar gave two thousand, and his example was followed by Antony and Octavius, by Brutus and Cassius. See Dio and Appian.

‡ *Suscipere duo manipulares imperium populi Romani transferendum, et transfulerunt.* Tacit. lib. i.

tractable; generally very weak, and, to complete the public calamity, profuse even to infatuation.

Titus, who succeeded his father, was the darling of the people; but Domitian presented to their view an uncommon monster more inhuman in his disposition, or at least more implacable, than any of his predecessors, because he was more timorous.

His favourite freemen, and, according to some historians, the empress herself, finding his friendship as dangerous as his aversion, and that he allowed no bounds to his suspicions and accusations, turned their thoughts to a successor, and chose the venerable Nerva.

Nerva adopted Trajan, who proved the most accomplished prince in all history; it was a happiness to be born under his reign, which blessed the empire with more prosperity and true glory than it had ever enjoyed before. He was an admirable statesman, and a most accomplished general; the native sweetness of his disposition inclined him to universal humanity; and his unclouded penetration guided him through the best and purest tracts of government; he was actuated by a noble soul, to whose embellishment every virtue had contributed; his conduct was free from all extremes, and his amiable qualities were tempered with that exact proportion that the brightness of one was never lost in the lustre of another. To sum up all, he was the best qualified of mankind, to do honour to human nature, and to represent the divinity on earth.

He accomplished Cæsar's project of invading the Parthians, and was very successful in his wars with that mighty people; any monarch but himself would have sunk under the weight of such an enterprize, where danger was always present, and from whence the source of his necessary supplies was at a vast distance; in a word, where he could not be sure victory itself would save him from destruction.

The difficulty consisted in the situation of the two empires, and the military discipline of both nations. If he directed his march through Armenia towards the sources of Tygris and Euphrates, he was sure to be incommoded with a mountainous and impracticable country, through which no convoy of provision could pass, so that the army would be half destroyed before they could penetrate into Media*. On the other hand, if he should strike out a lower track towards the south, through Nisibis, he would find himself bewildered in a ghastly desert that separated the two empires; and if he intended to proceed still lower, and march through Mesopotamia, he was then to cross a large country that was either uncultivated or laid under water; and as the Tygris and Euphrates flowed from north to south, he could not gain a passage into the country without quitting those

* The country did not produce any trees large enough to be wrought into engines proper for the siege of towns. Plut. life of Antoninus.

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rivers, which, if he did, he must inevitably
perish.

As to the manner practised by the two nations
in making war, the strength of the Romans
consisted in their infantry, which was the most
firm and best disciplined body of soldiers in the
world.

The Parthians on the contrary, had no in-
fantry, but then their horse were admirable,
and always combated at such a distance as
placed them out of the reach of the Roman
army, and the javelin was seldom launched far
enough to wound them. Their own weapons
consisted of a bow, and many formidable shafts,
and they rather besieged an army than gave it
battle; they were pursued to no purpose in their
flight, for that was the same with them as an
engagement. They carried off all the inha-
bitants of the country, and only left garrisons in
their fortified places; and when these were
taken, the conquerors were obliged to destroy
them. The Parthians likewise set fire to all the
country that lay round the Roman army, and
did not leave them the least blade of herbage.
In a word, they managed their wars in a man-
ner very like that which is now practised on the
same frontiers.

We may add to these disadvantages, that the
Illyrian and German legions which were drawn
out for this war, were no way capable to sustain
it, * because the soldiers, who were accustomed

* See Herodian's life of Alexander.

to plentiful food in their own country, perished in these regions for want of many necessaries.

The Parthians by these means had accomplished that, for the preservation of their liberty, which had hitherto been impracticable to all other nations, against the victorious power of the Romans: but they owed this advantage not to any resistless valour, but to their inaccessible situation.

ADRIAN gave up the conquest of TRAJAN, and made Euphrates the boundary of his empire; and indeed it was surprizing that the Romans, after such a series of war, should lose nothing but what they were desirous to quit; and thus they resembled the ocean, whose expansion is never lessened but when it retires of itself.

This conduct of ADRIAN occasioned great dissatisfactions among the people. It was recorded in the sacred book of that nation * that when Tarquin intended to build the capitol, he found the place most commodious for his purpose filled with the statues of other deities, upon which he employed his skill in augury to discover if they were inclinable to resign their places to Jupiter, and they all consented, except Mars, Hebe, and Terminus. This proceeding gave birth to three religious opinions, namely, that Mars would never resign his place to any other being; that the Roman youth would be always invincible; and that their god Terminus

* Augustin. *De civit. Dei*, lib. iv. c. 23 & 29.

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would never recede from his station; the contrary of which was however verified in the reign of Adrian.

C H A P. XVI.

*Considerations on the State of the Empire from
ANTONINUS to PROBUS.*

IN this period the Stoics propagated their doctrines in the empire with great popularity; and it seems as if nature herself had been industrious to produce this admirable sect which resembled those plants the earth causes to spring up in places never visited by the sun-beams.

This sect furnished the Romans with their best emperors; none but Marcus Aurelius could extinguish the remembrance of the first Antonine who adopted him; and we find ourselves affected with a secret pleasure when we speak of this emperor. We cannot read his life without some impressions of tenderness, and grow inclinable to think better of ourselves, because the history of that prince makes us entertain a more favourable opinion of mankind.

The wisdom of NERVA, the glory of TRAJAN, the valour of ADRIAN, and the virtue of the two ANTONINES, gained them the veneration of the soldiers; but when a set of new monsters became their successors, the abuse of military government appeared in its full enormity; and the soldiers, who had exposed the
empire

empire to sale, assassinated the emperors for the sake of new gratuities.

It has been a conceived opinion that there is a certain prince in the world, who, for the space of fifteen years, has been endeavouring to abolish the civil government in his dominions, and to substitute the military in its room. I have no intention to make odious reflections on such a design, and shall only observe, that from the nature of things in general, two hundred guards may be a better security to a prince than four thousand; and besides, an armed people are of all others the most dangerous to be opposed.

COMMODOUS succeeded his father Marcus Aurelius, and was a monster who gave a loose to all his own passions, and those of his courtiers. The persons who delivered the world from such a barbarian, transferred the imperial dignity to the venerable Pertinax, who was soon assassinated by the pretorian bands.

The empire was then exposed to auction, and Didius Julian carried it by a number of magnificent promises. This proceeding exasperated the whole body of the people; for though the empire had been frequently bought, it had never been sold upon credit before. Pescennius Niger, Severus, and Albinus, were saluted emperors; and Julian, not being in a condition to pay the immense sums he had promised, was abandoned by the soldiers.

Severus defeated Niger and Albinus; He was master of extraordinary qualities, but wanted

that sweetness of disposition, which in princes is the most amiable quality they can possess.

The power of the emperors might easily appear more tyrannical than that of modern princes; for as their dignity was a conjunction of the various authorities in the Roman magistracy, such as dictators, for instance, tribunes of the people, proconsuls, censors, supreme pontiffs, and sometimes consuls, they frequently assumed the dispensation of distributive justice, and it was easy for them to create suspicions that they had oppressed those whom they condemned; for the people usually judge of the abuse of power, by the greatness of its extent; whereas the kings of Europe, being legislators and not executors of the law, sovereign princes but not judges, are consequently discharged from the exercise of an authority that might prove odious; and have consigned the infliction of punishments to magistrates, whilst they reserved to themselves the distribution of pardons and other popular acts of mercy.

Few emperors have ever been more jealous of their authority than Tiberius and Severus, and yet they suffered themselves to be governed in a most dishonourable manner, the one by Sejanus, and the other by Plautian.

The unhappy custom of proscribing, introduced by Sylla, was still practised under the emperors; and the prince must have been distinguished by some virtue, if he discountenanced that severe proceeding; for as the ministers and
favourites

favourites turned their thoughts to confiscations at the beginning of a reign, they were always representing to their sovereign the necessity of punishments, and the dangerous effects of clemency.

When Severus gave full play to his proscriptions, a great body of Niger's^{l*} army retired for safety to the Parthians † and perfected them in every part of military discipline wherein they were any way defective; they habituated them to the Roman weapons, and even taught their workmen how to make their martial equipage; in consequence of which, that people, who still then had usually limited their exploits to defensive wars ‡, were generally aggressors for the future.

It is very remarkable, that in the long series of those civil wars that were continually raging, the chiefs, who were supported by the legions of Europe, generally defeated the leaders of the Asiatic legions ||; and we read, in the history of

* Herodian's life of Severus.

† This fatality continued in the reign of Alexander. Artaxerxes, who re-established the Persian empire, made it formidable to the Romans, because their soldiers, either through caprice or a libertine disposition, deserted in great multitudes to the king of Persia.

‡ Namely the Persians, who followed their example.

|| Severus defeated the Asiatic legions of Niger, Constantine those of Licinius: Vespasian, though proclaimed by the armies of Syria, made war against Vitellius only with the legions of Mœsia, Pannonia, and Dalmatia. Cicero, when he was at his province, wrote to the senate, that they should not reckon on the levies raised in this
Severus,

Severus, that he could not take the city of Atrah in Arabia, because the European legions having mutinied, he was obliged to employ those of Syria.

This difference became evident, when the levies were first made * in the provinces, and it appeared as considerable in the legions, as it did in the nations out of which they were raised, and who, by nature or education, were more or less formed for war.

Another unhappy consequence likewise ensued from these provincial levies; for the emperors, who were generally elected out of the soldiery, were for the most part strangers, and sometimes the worst of Barbarians. Rome was now no longer mistress of the world, but received laws from the whole universe.

Each emperor brought with him some peculiarity from his own country, relating to fashions, manners, politics, or religion; and Heliogabalus had even formed a resolution to destroy every object of religious veneration in Rome, and to banish all the gods from their temples, that he might place his own in their room.

This circumstance, even considered as independent on the secret operations of the deity,

country. Constantine defeated Maxentius, says Zozimen, by his cavalry only. See hereafter chap. xxii.

* Augustus fixed the legions to particular stations in the provinces. The levies were originally raised at Rome, after that among the Latins, in Italy next, and last of all in the provinces.

which

which are obvious to his omniscience alone, greatly contributed to the establishment of Christianity; for nothing was now strange in the empire, and the people were prepared to relish every new custom which the emperors were inclinable to introduce.

It is well known, that the Romans received the gods of other nations into their city; but then they received them with the air of conquerors, and carried them in their triumphal processions: but when strangers attempted to establish them by their own authority, they were immediately rejected. It is likewise notorious, that the Romans gave foreign deities the names of such of their own gods as were most conformable to the others, in their attributes: But when the priests of other countries would introduce the adoration of their divinities, under their proper names, among the Romans, they were not permitted to accomplish that design; and this was the greatest obstacle to the progress of Christianity.

CARACALLA, who succeeded Severus, may be called not only a tyrant, but the destroyer of mankind: Caligula, Nero and Domitian limited their barbarities to Rome; but this monster endeavoured to extend his fury thro' the world like a pestilence.

Severus amassed prodigious treasures by the exactions of a long reign, and his proscriptions of those who declared for his competitors in the empire,

Caracalla

Caracalla having commenced his reign with murdering his brother Geta with his own hands, purchased, with those riches, a connivance at his crime, from the soldiers who had an extraordinary regard for Geta; but the liberalities of Caracalla had such an effect upon them, that they declared they had taken oaths to both the children of Severus, and not to one alone.

The immoderate treasures which have been gathered by princes have commonly produced fatal effects: they generally corrupt the successor, who grows dazzled with the lustre they diffuse; and if they happen not to prevent his heart, they misguide his mind, and cause him to form plans of mighty enterprizes, by the ministration of a power that is only accidental, always transitory and unnatural, and an empty inflation instead of a real grandeur.

Caracalla augmented the soldiers pay; Macrinus wrote to the Senate, that this augmentation amounted to * seventy millions of drachms †. This prince seems to have magnified things; and if we compare our soldiers pay now-a-days with the rest of our public expences, and suppose that they kept the same proportion among the Romans, we shall see that this sum was excessive.

* Seven thousand myriads. Dion. in *Macrinus*.

† The Attic drachm was the same with the Roman denarius, the eighth part of an ounce, and the sixty-fourth part of our marc.

Here

Here we should enquire, what was a Roman foldier's pay? We learn from Orofius, that Domitian raifed * it a fourth from what it was before. And it appears from a foldier's fpeech in Tacitus, that † at the death of Auguftus it was ten ounces of brafs per day. We find in Suetonius ‡, that Julius Cæfar doubted the pay of his time. In Pliny §, at the fecond Punic war, it was diminifhed one fifth. It was then in the firft Punic war § about fix ounces of copper; in the fecond **, about five ounces; at ten, under Julius Cæfar; and thirteen and a third, under Domitian ††. I fhall make here fome reflexions.

The pay which the republic might eafily advance, when it was only a fmall ftate, when it

* He raifed it in proportion as feventy-five is to an hundred.

† Annal. lib. i.

‡ Life of Jul. Cæf.

§ Hift. Nat. xxxiii. 13. Inftead of giving ten ounces of copper for twenty, they paid fixteen. [The author fhould have faid, inftead of ten *affes* of brafs of two ounces each, they paid only xvi *affes* of one ounce each.]

§ A foldier in the *Moffellaria* of Plautus, fays it was three *affes*; which can be underftood only of *affes* of ten ounces. But if the pay was exactly fix *affes* in the firft Punic war, it was not diminifhed in the fecond a fifth, but a fixth, and the fraction was omitted.

** Polybius, who reduces the pay to Greek money, differs only by a fraction.

†† See Orofius and Suetonius in *Domitian*. They fay the fame thing under different words. I have reduced the terms to ounces of brafs, that I might be underftood without having recourfe to the feveral fpecies of the Roman money.

engaged

engaged in a new war every year, and received the spoils of it as often; it was not able to raise, without running in debt, under the first Punic war, when it carried its arms beyond Italy, when it maintained a long war, and supported great armies.

In the second Punic war the pay was reduced to five ounces of brass; and this diminution might be made without danger at a time when most of the citizens were ashamed to receive pay, and were willing to serve at their own charge.

The treasures of Persia *, and of so many other kings, which flowed into Rome, put an end to taxes there. In such public and private opulence, they had the prudence not to enlarge the former payment of five ounces of brass.

Though even from this pay they made a deduction for corn, cloaths, and arms; still it was sufficient, because they enrolled only those citizens, who had patrimonies of their own.

Marius having enrolled people of no substance, and his example being afterwards followed, Julius Cæsar was obliged to augment the pay.

This augmentation having been continued after the Death of Cæsar, they were obliged, under the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa, to re-establish taxes.

The weakness of Domitian adding one fourth to this pay, was a great blow to the State, the

* Cic. Offic. lib. ii.

unhappiness of which was not that it brought in luxury in general, but infused it among people of that condition who ought to be supplied with no more than the bare necessities which nature requires. Lastly, by Carracalla's final augmentation, the empire was thrown into such a condition, that, not being able to subsist without soldiers, it could not subsist with them.

Caracalla, to soften the horror of his fratricide, instituted divine honours to his brother Geta; and, what was very peculiar, he himself received the same deification from MACRINUS, who after he had caused him to be stabbed, and was desirous of appeasing the praetorian bands, who regretted the death of a prince whose liberalities they had so often enjoyed, erected a temple, and established a priesthood of Flamins in his honour.

This preserved his memory from all degrading imputations, * and the senate not daring to censure him, he was not ranked among the tyrants, like Commodus, who had not done more to deserve that title than himself.

As to the two great emperors Adrian and Severus †, one established and the other relaxed the military discipline, and the events exactly corresponded with their causes: the reigns which succeeded that of Adrian were a series of happiness and tranquillity; but after the death of

* *Ælius Lampridius in Vita Alexandri Severi.*

† See the abridgment of Xiphil. in the life of Adrian, and Herodian in the life of Severus.

Severus, nothing was seen but a succession of calamities and horror.

Caracalla had confined himself to no limitations in his prodigality to the Soldiers; and in that particular he acted conformably to the sentiments of his father, who, on his death-bed, advised him to enrich the army and disregard all the rest of mankind.

But these politics could be only accommodated to one reign; for the successor, being no longer able to continue those expences, was soon assassinated by the army: so that the emperors who were eminent for wisdom, were always murdered by the soldiers; and those, whose lives were infamous, were destroyed either by the conspiracies or edicts of the senate.

When a tyrant suffered himself to be entirely influenced by the army, and left the citizens exposed to their licentious depredations, such injurious proceedings could not be extended beyond the period of one reign; because the soldiers, in consequence of their devastations, impoverished the people, and defeated themselves of their pay by that event. It therefore became necessary to reform the military discipline, which was a project always fatal to the persons who presumed to attempt it.

When Caracalla lost his life by the treachery of Macrinus, the soldiers, in despair at the death of a prince whose liberality had been dispensed to them with an unlimited flow, elected HELIO-
GABALUS,

GABALUS*; and when he, by his prostitution to infamous pleasures, and the lawless extravagances he suffered the army to commit, grew contemptible even in their eyes, they dispatched him by an assassination. The same fate attended ALEXANDER, who was preparing to restore the true military discipline, and threatened to punish the soldiers for their misconduct †.

In this manner a tyrant, who, instead of being solicitous for his safety, affected an ability to be criminal, perished with the fatal advantage of being murdered a few days before another who would willingly have been a better man.

After the death of Alexander, the imperial dignity was transferred to MAXIMIN, who was the first emperor of Barbarian extraction, and had been distinguished by his strength and gigantic stature.

This prince and his son were likewise slain by the soldiers. The two first GORDIANS perished in Africa: MAXIMUS, BALBINUS, and the third GORDIAN were massacred: PHILIP, who had caused the young Gordian to be destroyed, was himself slain with his son; and DECIUS, who was chosen to succeed him, was murdered in his turn by the treason of GAL-LUS ‡.

The Roman empire was improperly so denominated at that time, and might rather be called

* At this time every one thought himself good enough to rise to empire. See Dial. lxxix.

† See Lampridius.

‡ Casaubon observes, on the *Historia Augusta*, that during

an irregular commonwealth, nearly resembling the Aristocracy of Algiers, where the militia, who are invested with the sovereign power, elect and depose the magistrate they call the Dey; and it may perhaps be taken for a general rule, that a military government is, in some respects, a republic rather than a monarchy.

But lest any one should imagine the soldiers had no other share in the government than what they extorted by their disobedience and insurrections, let it be asked whether the orations in which the emperors addressed themselves to the army, were not at last very correspondent to those which the consuls and tribunes formerly made to the people? And though the soldiers had no particular place to assemble in, nor were under the regulation of any certain forms; though the temper of their minds was not usually serene, their proceedings consisting of action rather than deliberation, did they not however dispose of the public fortune with a sovereign authority? What was an emperor but the minister of a violent and tumultuous government,

the period of 160 years which it comprehends, there were seventy persons, who justly or otherwise, had the title of Cæsar. *Aleo erant in illo Principatu, quem tamen omnes mirantur, comitia Imperii semper incerta.* So uncertain, to the astonishment of all, were the elections in that empire. Which circumstance sufficiently manifests the difference between the Roman government and that of France, where, for the long space of twelve hundred years, no more than sixty-three kings have reigned.

and

and did not the soldiers elect him for their own particular convenience?

When the army associated into the empire*, Philip, the prætorian præfect of the third Gordian, claimed the exercise of an undivided command, but did not succeed in his pretensions; he then requested the army to divide the power equally between them, but to as little effect; he next intreated them to leave him the title of Cæsar, and was still refused; he afterwards solicited them to create him præfect of the prætorian bands, and met with the usual repulse; till at last he was reduced to plead for his life. The army, in the instance before us, exercised the supreme magistracy in their several decisions.

The Barbarians were at first unknown to the Romans, and for some time afterwards only incommodious; but at last they became formidable to them, by an event altogether unparalleled at that time, and which perhaps may never be equalled hereafter. Rome had so effectually extinguished all nations, that when she at last was vanquished in her turn, the earth seemed to produce a new race of mankind, to accomplish her destruction.

Those princes who have large dominions seldom find them bordered by any territories considerable enough to be the objects of their ambition; and should there be any such, they would naturally be swallowed up in a series of

* See Julius Capitolinus.

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conquest. We will say they are bounded then by seas and mountains, and vast deserts, whose sterility rendered them contemptible. The Romans for this reason suffered the Germans to range in their forests and gloomy wilds, and let the northern nations shiver amidst the polar snow; and yet those inhospitable regions produced a people, who at last enslaved the conquerors of the world.

In the reign of Gallus a mighty collection of nations, who afterwards became more celebrated, spread their ravages through all Europe; and the Persians having invaded Syria, abandoned their conquests only to preserve their booty.

We no longer see any of those swarms of Barbarians which the North formerly sent out. The violences of the Romans had made the people of the South retire into the North: while the force which confined them, subsisted, they remained there: when it was weakened, they dispersed themselves into all parts*. The same thing happened some ages after. The conquests and tyrannies of Charlemagne had again forced the nations of the South into the North: as soon as this empire was weakened, they poured a second time from the North into the South. And if at present a prince made the same ravages in Europe, the nations driven into the North, with their backs to the limits of the universe, would maintain their ground, till the moment

* This may serve for an answer to the famous question, Why the North is no longer so populous as formerly?

they

they should over-run and conquer Europe a third time.

The miserable disorders which had so long been springing up in the several successions of the emperors, were now come to their fatal maturity, and that period which was concurrent with the close of VALERIAN'S reign, and the duration of that of his son GALLIENUS, produced thirty pretenders to the empire, the greatest part of whom being swept away by their mutual contentions, their devastations were limited to a short reign; and they gained nothing durable but the appellation of the Thirty tyrants.

Valerian having been taken prisoner by the Persians, and his son Gallienus neglecting the public affairs, the Barbarians penetrated into all parts, and the empire was now in the same condition it was afterwards reduced to in the West*, at the close of another century, and it would then have felt its last convulsions, had not a happy conjunction of events interposed for its preservation.

The terrible confusion in succeeding to the empire being come to its height, we find at the end of the reign of Valerianus, and during that of Gallienus his son, no less than thirty pretenders to the throne, most of whom having got possession of it, and reigned for a very short time, were called the TYRANTS.

* An hundred and fifty years after this event, the Barbarians invaded the empire in the reign of Honorius.

Odenatus, prince of Palmyra, and one of the Roman allies, dislodged the Persians, who had invaded the greatest part of Asia: Rome furnished an army of its own citizens, and they effectually delivered it from the Barbarians who came to pillage their city: an innumerable army of Scythians, who put to sea in a fleet of five thousand ships, entirely perished by storms, fatigue, and famine, and even by their formidable grandeur; and Gallienus being at last slain, Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, and Probus, who happily succeeded him, and were four extraordinary princes, snatched the empire from the verge of ruin.

C H A P. XVII.

Changes in the STATE.

THE emperors, to prevent the continual treasons of the army, associated into the government proper persons in whom they might confide; and *DIOCLESIAN*, under pretext of the weight and multiplicity of the public affairs, established a law, that there should always be two emperors and as many Cæsars. He judged, that, by this proceeding, the four principal armies being possessed by the partners in the empire, would naturally intimidate one another, and that the inferior armies being too weak to have any thoughts of raising their chiefs to the imperial dignity, their custom of election would be gradually discontinued, and entirely abolished

at last. Besides, the dignity of the Cæsars being always subordinate, that power, which, for the security of the government, was in the participation of four, would be exercised in its full extent by no more than two.

The soldiers were likewise restrained from their exorbitances by considering, that as the riches of particular persons as well as the public treasure were considerably diminished, the emperors were in no condition to offer them such large donations as formerly, and consequently the gratuities would be no longer proportionable to the danger of a new election.

We may add to this, that the prefects of the prætorian bands, whose power and employments rendered them the grand visiers of those times, and frequently tempted them to murder their emperors, in order to raise themselves to the throne, were greatly reduced by Constantine, who divested them of all but their civil functions, and augmented their number to four instead of two.

The lives of the emperors began now to be in greater security, and they might reasonably expect to die peaceably in their beds. This circumstance seems in some measure to have softened their dispositions, and they no longer shed human blood with the barbarous prodigality of their predecessors. But as the immense power they still possessed must needs have some particular tendency, it began to manifest itself in a species of tyranny less glaring than the former.

The subjects were no longer affrighted with inhuman massacres, but then they were harassed by unjust sentences and forms of judicature, which seemed to defer death only to render life itself uncomfortable. The court governed, and was likewise swayed in its turn, by a greater variety of artifices and a more exquisite train of political refinements, which were conducted with greater silence than usual. In a word, instead of an unterrified disposition to form a bad action, and a cruel precipitation to commit it, those gigantic iniquities shrunk into the vices of weak minds, and could only be called languid crimes.

A new train of corruption was now introduced, the first emperors pursued pleasures, but these sunk into softness. They shewed themselves with less frequency to the soldiers, were more indolent and fonder of their domestics, more devoted to the palace, and more abstracted from the empire.

The poison of the court grew more malignant in proportion to the disguise it assumed. All direct terms were disguised in discourse, and distant insinuations became the dialect of the palace. Every shining reputation were sullied, and the ministers as well as the officers of the army were perpetually left to the discretion of that sort of people, who, as they cannot be useful to the state themselves, suffer none to serve it with reputation and glory.

In a word, that affability of the first emperors, which alone qualified them for an insight into their affairs, was now entirely discarded. The prince had no informations, but what were conveyed to him by the canal of a few favourites, who being always in concert together, and even when they seemed to disagree in their opinions, were only in the province of a single person to their sovereign.

The residence of several emperors in Asia, and their perpetual competition with the kings of Persia, made them form a resolution to be adored like those monarchs; and Dioclesian, though others say Galerius, published an edict to that effect.

This pompous imitation of the Asiatic pride being once established, the people were soon habituated to such a spectacle, and when Julian would have regulated his conduct by a modest simplicity of manners, that proceeding which was no more than a renovation of the ancient behaviour, was imputed to him as a reproachful inattention to his dignity.

Though several emperors had reigned after Marcus Aurelius, yet the empire was undivided; and as the authority of those princes was acknowledged in all the provinces, it was but one power though exercised by many persons.

But GALERIUS * and CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS, being at variance with each other, divided the empire in reality; and this example,

* See Orosius, lib. vii. and Aurelius Victor.

which

which was afterwards followed by CONSTANTINE, who pursued the plan of Galerius and not that of Dioclesian, introduced a custom which might be called a revolution rather than a change.

We may likewise add, that the strong desire of Constantine to be the founder of a new city, and an impulse of vanity to distinguish it by his own name, determined him to transfer the seat of empire to the east. Though Rome was far from being so spacious within the walls as it is at present, yet the suburbs were prodigiously extensive*: Italy was filled with seats of pleasure, and might properly be called the garden of Rome. The husbandmen were in Sicily, Africa, and Egypt †; but the gardeners lived altogether in Italy. The lands were generally cultivated by the slaves of the Roman citizens, but when the seat of empire was established in the east, all Rome was in a manner transplanted to that situation. Thither did the grandees send their slaves, or, in other words, the greatest part of the people, and Italy was almost exhausted of its inhabitants.

It was Constantine's intention that the new city should not be inferior in any particular to

* *Expatriantia teſta multos addidere urbes*, ſays Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. iii.

† Corn, ſays Tacitus, was formerly exported from Italy to the diſtant provinces, and it is not a barren land now; but we cultivate Africa and Egypt, and chooſe to expoſe the lives of the Roman people to danger.

the old one; and therefore he took care to have it sufficiently supplied with corn, commanding all the harvest of Egypt to be sent to Constantinople, and consigning that of Africa to Rome, which does not seem to have been a very judicious proceeding.

Whilst the republic subsisted, the people of Rome, who were then the sovereigns of all other nations, became naturally intitled to a proportion of the tribute: this circumstance induced the senate to sell them corn, at first, for a low price, and afterwards to make a gratuitous distribution of it among them; and when monarchy itself was introduced, this latter custom was still continued, though entirely opposite to the principles of that form of government. 'Tis true, the abuse remained unrectified through an apprehension of the inconveniencies that would have risen from its discontinuance; but when Constantine founded a new city, he established the same custom without the least appearance of reason.

When Augustus had conquered Egypt, he conveyed the treasure of the Ptolemies to Rome; and this proceeding occasioned much the same revolution, which the discovery of the Indies afterwards effected in Europe, and which some ridiculous schemes have since accomplished in our time. The revenue was doubled at Rome*,

* Sueton. in August. Oros. lib. vi. Rome often met with these revolutions. I have before observed, that the

and

and as that city continued to absorb all the riches of Alexandria, which was itself the repository of the treasures of Africa and the East; gold and silver by these means became very common in Europe, and the people were able to pay very considerable taxations even in money.

But when the empire was afterwards divided, all these riches flowed in a full tide to Constantinople; and we may add to this unhappy circumstance, that the mines in Germany* had not then been opened: that those of Italy † and Gaul were very few and inconsiderable; and that the mines of Spain ‡ had not been worked since the Carthaginians lost that country, or at least they were not so productive as formerly; Italy itself was now a continued waste of forsaken gardens, and consequently could not be in any condition to draw money from the East, whilst the West at the same time was drained of all its wealth, by the oriental merchants who supplied the inhabitants with their necessary

treasures brought thither from Macedonia superseded all farther tribute. Cicero in his *Offices*, lib. ii.

* Tacitus, *De moribus Germanorum*, declares this in express terms. Besides, we know pretty near the time in which most of the mines of Germany were opened. See Thomas Sefreiberus of the origin of the mines of the Harts. Those of Saxony are thought to be less ancient.

† See Pliny Nat. Hist. xxxvii. 77.

‡ The Carthaginians, says Diodorus, understood very well the art of making an advantage of them; and the Romans that of hindering others from making such advantage.

commo-

commodities. Gold and silver, by these means, became extremely scarce in Europe; and yet the emperors extorted the same pecuniary tributes as formerly, which completed the general destruction.

When a government has been established in one certain form, and its political circumstances are adjusted to a particular situation, it is generally prudent to leave them in that condition; for the same causes which have enabled such a state to subsist, though they may frequently be complicated and unknown, will still continue to support it; but when the whole system is changed, remedies can only be accommodated to the inconveniences visible in the theory, whilst others, which nothing but experience can point out, are lurking without opposition, in the new plan.

For these reasons, though the empire grew already too great, yet it was effectually ruined by the divisions into which it was parcelled, because all the parts of this vast body, had, for a long series of time, been arranged so as to become settled and steady, and were compacted by a mutual dependency through the whole.

Constantine*, after he had weakened the capital, proceeded to impair the frontiers by

* This account of Constantine's proceedings no way contradicts the ecclesiastical writers, who declare they confine themselves to those actions of this prince which had any relation to religion, without concerning themselves with the political transactions in that reign. Euseb. *Life of Constantine*, lib. i. c. 9. Socrates, lib. i. c. 1.

drawing

drawing off those legions who were stationed on the banks of great rivers, and distributing them into the provinces. This innovation was extremely prejudicial in more instances than one; for as the barrier which comprehended so many nations was now removed; so the soldiers* passed all their time, and grew effeminate in the Circus and the theatres †.

When Julian was sent by Constantius into Gaul, he found that fifty towns on the Rhine ‡ had been taken by the Barbarians, that the provinces were all plundered, and that there was now no more than the shadow of a Roman army, which fled at the very mention of the enemies name.

This prince by his wisdom ||, and perseverance, joined with œconomy, conduct, and valour, and prospered by a noble series of heroic actions, chased the Barbarians out of their new

* Zozimus, lib. ii.

† After the establishment of Christianity, the combats of gladiators were very seldom exhibited, and Constantine prohibited them by his authority; but this barbarous custom was not entirely abolished till the time of Honorius. The Romans retained nothing of their ancient shews, but what tended to emasculate their minds, and allure them to pleasure. In former times, the soldiers, before they took the field, were entertained with a combat of gladiators, to familiarise them to the sight of blood and weapons of war, and to inspire them with intrepidity when they engaged the enemy. Jul. Capit. Life of Maximus and Balbinus.

‡ Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xvi, xvii, and xviii.

|| Ammian. Marcellin. ibid.

settlements, and his name became a terror as long as he lived*.

The shortness of the reigns, the various political parties, the different religions, and the particular sects of these religions, have greatly disfigured the characters of the emperors; I shall give only two examples: that Alexander, who is a coward in Herodian, is a hero in Lampridius; that Gratian, so highly celebrated by the Orthodox, is compared to Nero by Philostorgius.

No prince saw the necessity of restoring the ancient plan, more than Valentinian. His whole life was employed in fortifying the banks of the Rhine, making levies, raising castles, placing troops in proper stations, and furnishing them with subsistence on those frontiers; but an event that afterwards happened, determined his brother Valens to open the Danube, and that proceeding was attended with very dreadful consequences.

That tract of land which lies between the Palus Mæotis, the mountains of Caucasus and the Caspian sea, was inhabited by a numerous people who composed great part of the nation of the Huns, or that of the Alans. The soil was exceeding fertile; the inhabitants were fond of wars and robberies; and were always either on horseback or in their chariots, and wandered about the country wherein they were inclosed: they sometimes made depredations on the fron-

* See the noble panegyrick made by Ammianus Marcellinus on this prince, lib. xxv.

tiers of Persia and Armenia ; but the ports of the Caspian sea were easily guarded, and it was difficult for them to penetrate into Persia, by any other avenues ; and as they imagined it impracticable to cross the Palus Mæotis, they were altogether unacquainted with the Romans ; so that whilst other Nations of Barbarians ravaged the empire, these confined them within the limits which their ignorance had drawn around them.

It has been the opinion of some, * that the slime which was rolled down by the current of the Tanais, had by degrees formed a kind of incrustation on the surface of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, over which these people are supposed to have passed. Others † inform us, that two young Scythians being in full pursuit of a hind, the terrified creature swam over that arm of the sea, upon which the youths immediately following her in the same track, were exceedingly astonished to find themselves in a new world ; and, at the return to the old one, they gave their countrymen ‡ a particular account of the strange lands, and, if I may be indulged in the expression, the inviting Indies they had lately discovered.

Upon this information, an innumerable body of Huns immediately passed those streights ;

* Zozimus, lib. iv.

† *Jornandes de rebus Geticis.* The Miscellaneous Hist. of Procopius.

‡ Vide Sozomen. lib. vi.

and,

and, meeting first with the Goths, made that people fly before them. It should seem as if these mighty countries poured their nations out precipitately upon one another, and that Asia had acquired a new weight to make it ponderate equal to the European power.

The Goths in consternation presented themselves on the banks of the Danube, and with a suppliant air intreated the Romans to allow them a place of refuge. The flatterers* of Valens improved this conjuncture, and represented it as a fortunate conquest of a new people, who, by the accession of their numbers, would defend and enrich the empire.

Valens ordered † them to be admitted into his territories, upon delivering up their arms, but his officers suffered them to repurchase with their money as many as they pleased; they were afterwards distributed into several allotments of land; but the Goths, ‡ contrary to the custom of the Huns, did not cultivate the portions of

* Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xxix.

† Several of those who had received these orders abandoned themselves to a brutal passion for some of the male refugees; others were ensnared by the beauty of the young Barbarians of the other sex, and became the captives of their female slaves; a third sort were corrupted by presents in money, linen habits, and fringed mantles; and all their thoughts only tended to enrich their houses with slaves, and to stock their farms with cattle. Hist. of Dexippus.

‡ See the Gothic history by Priscus, who has set this difference of customs in a clear light. It may be asked perhaps, how it was possible for nations who never cultivated their lands, to be so powerful, when those of America are

ground assigned them. They were even left destitute of the promised supplies of corn, and were ready to perish amidst a land of plenty; they were armed for war, and yet unjustly insulted. In consequence of these provocations they ravaged all the country from the Danube to the Bosphorus; they destroyed Valens and all his army, and repassed the Danube only to quit the hideous solitude they had effected by their devastations*.

C H A P. XVIII.

An Account of some new Maxims received by the Romans.

Sometimes, the pusillanimous spirit of the Emperors †, and frequently the defenceless state of the empire, made the people employ

so very weak: it is because people who follow a pastoral life are furnished with a better subsistence, than those who live by the chase.

It appears by the account given by Ammianus Marcellinus, that the Huns in their first settlements did not manure their lands, and only subsisted on their flocks and herds in a country that abounded with rich pastures, and was watered with many rivers; such is the practice of the inhabitants of little Tartary, which is part of the same country. And it is probable, that the nations we have been speaking of, having, after their migrations from their native land, settled in countries that afforded little or no pasturage for their cattle, applied themselves to the cultivation of the soil.

* See Zozimus, lib. iv. See also Dexippus's Extract of the Embassies of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

† At first they gave all to the soldiers; afterwards all to the enemy.

their

their money to appease the nations who threatened to invade them ; but the desired peace could never be effectually purchased, because those who sold it could, whenever they pleased, oblige the Romans to buy it again.

It is much better to hazard an unsuccessful war, than to part with great sums for a precarious peace ; for a prince is always respected, when it is known he will make a long resistance before he can be vanquished.

Besides, such gratifications as these were changed into tribute at last, and though they were free at the beginning, they became necessary in the event, and passed for an acquired property : for which reason, when an emperor refused them to some particular people, or was not disposed to give them so much as they demanded, they immediately declared themselves his mortal enemies. To produce an instance or two, from a thousand : the army which Julian led against the Persians, * was pursued in its retreat from the East, by the Arabians, to whom the customary tribute had been refused : and in a short time afterwards, in the reign of Valentinian, the Germans †, who had been offered more inconsiderable presents than usual, grew exasperated at that disobliging frugality, and these northern people being already influenced by a point of honour, avenged themselves, of this pretended insult, by a cruel war.

* Ammian. Marcellin, lib. xxiv. † Idem, lib. xxvi.

All those nations who surrounded the empire in Europe and Asia, exhausted it by degrees of its riches: and as the Romans derived their grandeur and power from the gold and silver, which flowed into the empire from the coffers of so many kings; they now grew weak and despicable, * because the same gold and silver was drained from them by other nations.

The misconduct of politicians is not always voluntary, but happens frequently to be the unavoidable consequence of their particular situation; and therefore one inconvenience is generally the offspring of another.

The army as we have already declared, became very expensive to the state, and the soldiers had three sorts of advantages; their ordinary pay, donations of recompence after their services, and accidental liberalities, which were often claimed as stated properties by a body of men

* You would willingly be rich, said Julian to his mutinous army, there's Persia for your purpose, let us march thither; for, believe me, all the riches of the Roman republic are now no more, our poverty is owing to those who persuaded our princes to purchase peace from the Barbarians. Our treasury is exhausted, our cities are in ruins, and our provinces look dreadful with desolation. An emperor, who knows no riches but those of the mind, is not ashamed to acknowledge a virtuous and irreproachable poverty. You may revolt if you are so disposed; for my part, either death shall relieve me, for I scorn a life of which the least fever can deprive me, as effectually as my sword; or I will retire from the world, for I have not passed my days in such a manner as to be incapable of a private life. Amm. Marcell. lib. xxiv.

who

who had both princes and people in their power.

The inability of the people to furnish these expences, obliged them to employ a less chargeable foldiery, and treaties were struck up with barbarous nations, who had neither the luxury of the Roman army, nor the same spirit and pretensions.

There was another advantage, besides this; for as the Barbarians poured their troops into a country with the greatest precipitation, the Romans being unprovided for their reception, and finding it sometimes difficult to raise levies in the provinces, were obliged to hire another party of Barbarians, who were always mercenary, and eager for battle and plunder. This expedient had its use in the present emergency; but when that was over, the Romans found it as difficult to rid themselves of their new allies, as of their enemies themselves.

The ancient Romans never suffered the auxiliary troops to outnumber their own, in their armies*; and though their allies might properly be reputed their subjects, yet they had no inclination to let those subjects be better warriors than themselves.

But in the latter times, this proportion of the auxiliaries was not only disregarded, but even

* This observation is made by Vegetius, and it appears from Livy, that if the auxiliaries sometimes exceeded the Romans in number, the superiority was very inconsiderable.

the national troops were composed of Barbarian soldiers.

Thus were customs established, quite opposite to those which had rendered the Romans masters of the world; and as the genius of their former politics always prompted them to reserve the military art to themselves, and exclude their neighbours from any participation of its principles, they now extinguished it in their own people, and established it among foreigners.

Take this compendium of the Roman history: They subdued all nations, by their maxims, but when they had so far succeeded, their republic could not subsist any longer; the plan of their government must be changed, and maxims contrary to the first, being then introduced, they were divested of all their grandeur.

Fortune never interposes in the government of this world, and we may be convinced of this truth by the Romans, who enjoyed a continual series of prosperity when they regulated their conduct by one invariable plan; but they suffered an uninterrupted train of calamities, when they acted upon different principles. There are a set of general causes, either moral or physical, which operate in every monarchy, and either raise and maintain it, or else involve it in ruin. All accidental conjunctures are subordinate to these causes; and if the hazard of a battle, which in other words is no more than a particular cause, has been destructive to a state, some general cause presided and made a single battle

be the inevitable ruin of that state. In a word, the tendency of the main principle draws after it all the particular incidents.

We are sensible, that for two centuries past, the Danish troops have been generally defeated by the Swedes; we may therefore conclude, that, independent of the bravery of the two nations, and the chance of war, either their civil or military government is disconcerted by some secret flaw which produces this effect, and I am of opinion it may easily be discovered.

In a word, the Romans lost their military discipline, and even neglected it in their very arms. Vegetius * acquaints us, that the soldiers finding them too ponderous, obtained the emperor Gratian's permission to quit their coats of mail, and soon after their helmets; and when their bodies were thus defenceless, they grew attentive to nothing but flight.

The same author adds, they had lost the art of fortifying their camp, and that by this negligence they were easily overwhelmed by the Barbarian horde.

The cavalry of the first Romans was not numerous, it was but the eleventh part of a legion, and often less, and what is extraordinary, was made less use of by them than by us, who are obliged to carry on so many sieges, where cavalry is of little service. When the Roman empire was in its decay, their forces consisted of little else but cavalry. I imagine, as a nation

* *De re Militari*, lib. i. c. 20.

improves in the knowledge of the military art, it trusts the more to its infantry; and as that science decreases, it increases its cavalry in proportion: the reason is, because the infantry, whether light or heavy, is nothing without discipline, whereas, the cavalry is always of use even in its disorder *. The action of the latter consists chiefly in its impetuosity and sudden shock; that of the former in its resistance and impenetrable firmness, which is not so much action as re action. Lastly, the force of the cavalry is momentaneous; that of the infantry of longer duration; now there is need of discipline to continue it in a persevering state.

The Romans arrived at universal monarchy not only by the arts of war, but likewise by their wisdom, their perseverance, their passion for glory, and their heroic love for their country: and when even these virtues disappeared under the emperors, and they had only the art military among them, yet this alone, notwithstanding the weakness and tyranny of their princes, enabled them to preserve their former acquisitions. But when corruption had at last insinuated itself among the soldiery, they became the prey of every nation.

An empire founded by arms, must likewise have arms for its support. But as a people, when

* The cavalry of the Tartars, without observing any of our military maxims, has at all times performed great things. See the histories, and particularly those of the conquest of China.

their state is in confusion, are at a loss how to rectify their civil disorders; in the same manner, when they enjoy a profound peace, and are respected for their power, they never imagine this calm scene may change, and consequently neglect their military force, from whence, as they have nothing more to hope, so they fancy they have all things to fear, and sometimes proceed so far as to weaken that basis of their welfare.

It was an inviolable law among the Romans, that whoever abandoned his post or quitted his arms in the combat, should be punished with death. Julian and Valentinian, had reinforced the ancient penalties in this particular; but the Barbarians who were taken into the Roman pay *, and were accustomed to make war in the manner now practised by the Tartars, who flie in order to rally, and are more sollicitous for plunder than martial reputation, were incapable of conforming to such severe regulations.

The discipline of the ancient Romans was so strict, that they have had generals who sentenced their own children to die, for gaining a battle without their orders: but when they were intermixed with the Barbarians, they contracted, from that association, the same spirit of independency which marks out the character of those

* They would not submit to the Roman discipline. See Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xviii. who relates it as an extraordinary circumstance, that they condescended in one instance to please Julian, who intended to fortify several places belonging to the state.

nations; and such who read the wars of Belisarius with the Goths, will see a general very frequently disobeyed by his officers.

Sylla and Sertorius amidst the fury of civil wars would rather die than connive at any thing from whence Mithridates might derive the least advantage; but in the succeeding times, when a minister * or any grandee imagined it would be favourable to his avarice, his revenge, or ambition to admit the Barbarians into the empire, he immediately permitted them to give a loose to their depredations.

No states are more necessitated for tributes than those which are weak, because this circumstance obliges them to augment their charges in proportion to the people's inability to defray them; and therefore the tributes in the Roman provinces became insupportable.

It would not be improper to read Salvian's † account of the horrible exactions that were made upon the people. The citizens were so harassed by the farmers of the revenue, that they were obliged either to seek refuge among the

* This was not to be wondered at in that mixture of nations, who had been used to a wandering life, and had no knowledge of any country of their own, since entire bodies of them would frequently side with the enemy who had conquered them, even against their own nation. See Procopius's account of the Goths under Vitiges.

† See his whole fifth book, *De Gubernatione Dei*. See also in the account of the Embassy written by Priscus, the speech of a Roman who had settled among the Huns, on his happiness in that country.

Barbarians,

Ch. XIX. *of the* ROMAN EMPIRE. 251

Barbarians, or surrender their liberty to the first of their insatiable countrymen who would accept of such a present.

This may account for the relations we find in our French history, of the patience with which the Gauls supported a revolution calculated to establish that shocking distinction between a gallant nation, and a community of servile wretches; I say, between a nation who retained their liberty and military privileges, and an ignoble body of people. The Barbarians, in making so many citizens slaves to till the earth, that is, the country to which they were attached, introduced no services which were not more cruelly exacted before*.

C H A P. XIX.

Some Particulars of the Grandeur of Attila. The establishment of the Barbarians accounted for. Reasons why the western Empire was overturned, before that in the East.

AS christianity was established when the empire was in a declining condition, the professors of this religion reproached the Pagans for that decay, and these retorted the charge on the religious doctrines of their antagonists. The christians replied, that Dioclesian † ruined the empire, by associating his three colleagues; because each emperor would be altogether as ex-

* See Salvian, lib. v. and the laws of the Code, and the Digest on them.

† Lactantius, *De morte persecutor.*

penfive, and maintained as great armies as could have subsisted had there been but one sovereign; in consequence of which, those who furnished the contributions being unequally proportioned to the number of the receivers, the charge became so excessive, that the lands were forsaken by the husbandmen, and for want of cultivation lay waste, and were covered with wild and barren forests.

The Pagans, on the other hand, were perpetually exclaiming against the strange innovations in religion, introduced by their adversaries and never heard of till those days. And as the overflowings of the Tyber, and other prejudicial effects of nature, were, in the flourishing state of Rome, ascribed to the displeasure of the Gods; so the calamities of declining Rome were imputed to a religious novelty, and the subversion of the ancient altars.

Symmachus the prefect, in a letter * to the emperors, relating to the altar of Victory, attacked the christian religion with arguments extremely popular, and consequently very seducing, and had art enough to set them off with all the plausibility invention could furnish.

“ What circumstance, says he, can lead us more effectually to the knowledge of the Gods, than the experience of our former prosperity? We ought to be faithful to such a series of ages, and pursue the same track in which our fathers so happily followed their ancestors. Imagine

* Letter of Symmach. lib. x. 4.

Rome herself speaks to you in this manner: O imperial princes! Compassionate fathers of your country! Look with eyes of veneration on those years of mine, wherein I always conformed to the ceremonies of my predecessors. Those sacred institutions have made the universe obedient to my laws. These were the allies that chased Hannibal from my walls, and drove the Gauls in confusion from the capitol. We fervently ask peace for the Gods of our country, nay, we solicit it in the anguish of our souls, for our compatriot Deities! We have no inclination to engage in disputes which are only proper for idle persons, and we would express ourselves in the language of supplication, and not of war."

Symmachus was answered by three celebrated authors. Orosius composed his history to prove there had always been calamities in the world, as great as those complained of by the Pagans. Salvian likewise writ his book *, wherein he maintains, that the ravages of the Barbarians were to be imputed to the degenerate behaviour of the christians: and St. Austin † demonstrates, that the city of heaven is very different from that city on earth, in which the ancient Romans received, for a few human virtues, a recompence as vain as the virtues themselves.

We have already observed, that part of the politics of the ancient Romans consisted in dividing all the powers that gave them any umbrage; but that scheme was defeated in af-

* Of God's government.

† Of the city of God.

ter times, and Rome could not prevent Attila from conquering all the northern nations: he extended his victories from the Danube to the Rhine, demolished all the forts and military works on the banks of those rivers, and made both the empires tributary.

Theodosius, says he *, with an insolent air, is descended from a father as noble as mine; but the moment I compelled him to pay tribute to me, he fell from the grandeur of his extraction, and became my vassal; and therefore 'tis unjust in him to act like a base slave, and endeavour to prejudice his master by treachery.

“ An emperor, said he, upon another occasion, ought not to be a liar; he promised one of my subjects to give him the daughter of Saturninus in marriage; and I will immediately declare war against him, if he presumes to depart from his word; but if the disobedience of those about him put it out of his power to be punctual, I will march to his assistance.”

It is not to be imagined that Attila was induced by any moderation and lenity of temper, to let the Romans subsist; he only conformed himself to the genius of his nation, which prompted them to awe, and not to conquer foreign states. This prince retiring from the splendor of majesty to his mansion built of wood, according to the representation of Priscus †,

* History of the Goths, and relation of the embassy written by Priscus. This emperor was Theodosius the younger.

† History of the Goths, *Hæ sedes regis barbariem totam* though

though at the same time he was lord of all the barbarous nations, and in some degree master of the chief part of those who were civilized *, was one of the greatest monarchs recorded in history.

Ambassadors were dispatched to his court, both from the eastern and western empires of the Romans, to receive his laws and implore his favour. Sometimes he commanded them to deliver up the Huns who had deserted from his armies, or the Roman slaves who had escaped from the vigilance of his officers. At times he would not be satisfied till some ministers of the emperor was surrendered into his power. He charged the empire of the east with a tribute of two hundred thousand pounds of gold; he received the yearly sum allowed to a Roman general, and sent those he intended to reward to Constantinople, that they might be gratified to their utmost wish, making by this means a constant traffic of the apprehensions of the Romans.

He was feared by his subjects †, but we have no reason to believe they entertained any aversion to his person: he was surprizingly fierce

tenentis; hæc captis civitatibus habitacula præponebat. This was the mansion in which the monarch of all the Barbarian nations resided; this the habitation which he preferred to the stately cities he had conquered. Jornandes, *De rebus Geticis.*

* It appears by the account given by Priscus, that the court of Attila had some thoughts of subjecting even the Persians.

† Jornandes and Priscus have drawn the character of this prince, and described the manners of his court.

and

and impetuous, and at the same time exceeding politic and artful. He appeared violent in his rage, but had a sufficient presence of mind to know when to pardon an offence, or defer a punishment, as the circumstances were more or less agreeable to his interest. War was never his choice, when he could derive sufficient advantages from peace. He was faithfully served even by the kings who were subordinate to his power; and had collected into his own conduct all the ancient simplicity of the northern manners. In a word, we can never sufficiently admire this gallant sovereign of a people, whose very children were warmed with enthusiastic rage, at the relation of their father's bravery; whilst those fathers shed manly tears, because they were incapacitated by age to imitate their martial children.

All the Barbarian nations, after his death, were divided into several independent bodies; but the Romans were then so weak, that the most inconsiderable people were in a condition to molest them.

The empire was not ruined by any particular invasion, but sunk gradually under the weight of the several attacks made upon it, after that general assault it sustained in the time of Gallus. It seemed indeed, to be re-established, because none of its territories were dismembre'd from the main body; but it was stooping to its fall by several degrees of declension, till it was at once laid low in the reigns of Arcadius and Honorius. In

In vain did the Romans chase the Barbarians from their settlements in the empire; that people, without any compulsion, would have retired, to deposit their spoils in their own country. With as little success did Rome endeavour to exterminate that nation, since her cities were still sacked *, her villages consumed with flames, and her families either slaughtered or dispersed.

When one province had been wasted, the Barbarians, who succeeded the first ravagers, meeting nothing for their purpose, proceeded to another. Their devastations at first were limited to Thrace, Mysia, and Pannonia; and when these countries were ruined, they destroyed Macedonia, Thessaly, and Greece; from thence they expatiated to Noricum. The empire, that is to say, those tracts of land which were not depopulated, was continually shrinking, and Italy at last became the frontiers.

The reason why the Barbarians established themselves in no fixed settlements in the reigns of Gallus and Gallienus, was, because the countries about them had something left that was worth plundering.

Thus the Normans, who in some measure resembled the conquerors of the empire, ravaged France for several centuries, and when at last they could find no more booty, they thought

* The Goths were a very destructive nation, they destroyed all the husbandmen in Thrace, and cut off the hands of every charioteer. Byzantine history of Malchus, in the extract of the embassies.

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fit to accept of a depopulated province, and parcelled it into * several properties.

Scythia, in those times, lying waste and uncultivated †, the inhabitants were frequently subject to famine, and subsisted in a great measure by their commerce with the Romans ‡, who furnished them with provisions from the provinces bordering on the Danube. The Barbarians in return gave them the booty and prisoners they had taken, and the gold and silver which the Romans paid them for their friendship. But when the empire could no longer afford them a sufficient tribute for their subsistence ||, they were obliged to fix themselves in some settlement.

* See in the chronicles, collected by Andrew du Chesne, the condition of this province, towards the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century. Script. Norman. Hist. Veteres.

† The Goths, as we have intimated, did not cultivate their lands.

The Vandals called them Trulli, which was the name of a small measure, because they once sold them such a measure of corn very dear, in a famine. Olimpiodor. in Biblioth. Phot. lib. xxx.

‡ Priscus relates in his history, that markets were established by treaties on the banks of the Danube.

|| When the Goths sent to desire Zeno to receive Theuderic the son of Triarius into his alliance, on the terms accorded by him to Theuderic the son of Balamer, the senate being consulted on this occasion, said, the revenues of the empire were not sufficient to support two Gothic nations, and that the alliance of only one of them was to be consented to. Malchus's history, in the extract of the embassies.

The

The western empire was destroyed before that in the east, for these reasons.

When the Barbarians passed the Danube, they found themselves blocked up on the left-hand by the Bosphorus of Thrace, the city of Constantinople, and all the forces of the eastern empire. This made it necessary for them to bend their march to the right towards Illyria, and so proceed westward. That part of the country was crowded with a vast conflux of several nations; and, as the passages into Asia were the best guarded, the whole body of the people bore with a full tide into Europe, whereas the forces of the Barbarians were separated in their first invasion.

The empire being parcelled out into two great portions *, the eastern emperors who were then in alliance with the Barbarians †, would not break it to assist the princes of the west: this division of the administration, says Priscus ‡, was very prejudicial to the affairs of the West. Thus the Romans of the east, refused those of the west, a naval armament ||, because they had entered into alliance with the Vandals. The Visigoths, in conjunction with Arcadius, made an irruption into the west, and Honorius § was

* This partition of the empire was very prejudicial to the affairs of the western Romans. Priscus, lib. ii.

† Honorius was informed, that the Visigoths had made a descent into the western empire, after an alliance with Arcadius. Procop. Of the Vandal war.

‡ Lib. ii. || Priscus, *ibid.*

§ Procopius, in his war with the Vandal,

obliged to fly to Ravenna: lastly, Zeno, to get rid of Theodoric, persuaded him to fall upon Italy, which had been already laid waste by Alaric.

There was a very strict alliance * between Attila, and Genseric, king of the Vandals. The last stood in fear of the Goths †; he had married his son to a daughter of their king; and afterwards slitting her nose, had sent her back to her father. For which reason he united with Attila. The two empires enslaved by these two potentates, had no power to shake off their chains. The situation of that of the west was more particularly deplorable: it had no forces at sea ‡, they being all dispersed in Egypt, Cyprus, Phœnicia, Ionia, and Greece, the only countries where at that time commerce subsisted. The Vandals and other nations attacked the west from all sides: an embassy came from Italy to Constantinople, says Priscus ||, representing that it was impossible they should keep their ground, unless peace was made with the Vandals.

Those that presided in the west were not mistaken in their politics. They judged it necessary to save Italy, which was in some respects the head, and in others the heart of the empire. They removed the Barbarians to the extremities,

* Priscus, lib. ii.

† See Jornandes, *De rebus Geticis*, c. xxxvi.

‡ This appeared more especially in the war between Constantinus and Licinius.

|| Priscus, lib. ii.

and settled them there. The sign was well laid, and as well executed. These nations asked for nothing but subsistence: they gave them the plains, and reserving to themselves the mountainous parts of the country, the defiles, the passes over rivers, and the strong forts upon them, they kept in their own hands the sovereignty. It is probable these people would have been forced to have become Romans; and the facility with which these ravagers were themselves destroyed by the Franks, by the Greeks, and the Moors, is a proof of this conjecture. This whole system was overthrown by one revolution more fatal than all the rest: the army of Italy, composed of strangers, demanded that which had been granted to nations still greater strangers: it formed, under Odoacer, an aristocracy, which claimed the thirds of the lands in Italy; and this was the most fatal blow to the empire.

Amongst so many misfortunes it is natural to enquire, with a melancholy curiosity, after the fate of Rome: it was, we may say, without defence, and could easily be starved by an enemy. The extent of its walls made it almost impracticable for the inhabitants to defend them; and, as it was situated in a plain, it might be stormed without much difficulty. Besides this, no recruits were to be expected; for the number of people was so extremely diminished, that the emperors were obliged to retire to Ravenna, a city once fortify'd by the sea, as Venice is at this time.

The Romans being generally abandoned by their princes, began to take the sovereign power into their own hands, and stipulated for their safety by treaties *, which is the most likely method of acquiring the supreme authority †.

Armorica and Brittany, seeing themselves forsaken, began to regulate themselves by their own laws.

This was the fatal period of the western empire. Rome ascended to such a height of grandeur, because the scenes of her former wars opened successively, and by an incredible felicity of affairs she was never attacked by one nation till another had been first destroyed ; but Rome itself was overpowered at last, because she was invaded at once by all the nations around her.

C H A P. XX.

The Conquests of Justinian. Some Account of his Government.

AS this vast body of people broke all at once like a flood into the empire, they mutually incommoded one another, and all the politics of those times consisted in setting them at variance together : This was a circumstance easy to accomplish, their avarice and fierce dis-

* In the time of Honorius, Alaric, who besieged Rome, obliged that city to enter into an alliance with him, even against the emperor, who was in no condition to oppose it, Procop. War of the Goths, lib. i. Zozim. lib. vi.

† Zozim. lib. vi.

position greatly contributing to make it practicable. The largest part of them was therefore destroyed before they could fix themselves in any settlement; and this was the reason why the empire of the east still subsisted for some time.

The northern regions were likewise exhausted at last, and no longer poured out those innumerable armies they originally produced; for after the first invasion by the Goths and Huns, and especially since the death of Atila, these people and their successors appeared in the field with force much inferior to the former in number.

When the nations, who assembled together in the form of an army, were distributed into peaceful partitions of lands, much of their martial vivacity was abated; and as they were scattered through the countries they had conquered, they were exposed themselves to the same invasions.

In this situation of affairs, Justinian undertook the recovery of Africa and Italy, and accomplished the same designs which the French so happily executed against the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Lombards and the Saracens.

When Christianity was first planted among the Barbarians, the Arian sect was predominant in the empire, and Valens sent priests to them, who were their first apostles. Now, in the interval, from their conversion to their establishment, this sect fell into disreputation among the Romans; for which reasons, when the Bar-

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barians of this persuasion found all the country
orthodox, and could never insinuate themselves
into the affections of the people, it was easy for
the emperors to incommode them.

We may likewise add, that the Barbarians be-
ing unqualified for the siege of towns, and much
more so for their defence, suffered the walls to
drop into ruins. Procopius informs us, that Bel-
isarius found all the Italian cities in this con-
dition; and those of Africa had already been
dismantled by Genferic *, with a Gothic view of
fortifying the inhabitants.

The generality of these northern people, af-
ter they had established themselves in the pro-
vinces of the south, soon degenerated into the
unmanly softness of those regions, and became
incapable of the fatigues of war †. The Van-
dals were emasculated with pleasures; a luxuri-
ant table, an effeminate habit, the delicacy of
baths, the enervating lull of music, gay dances,
florid gardens, and splendid theatres were now
become their necessary gratifications.

They no longer disquieted the Romans ‡, says
Malchus ||, when they discontinued those armies
which Genferic perpetually kept prepared for
any expedition, and with which he prevented
the vigilance of his enemies, and astonished all
the world with the rapidity of his enterprizes.

* Procop. war of the Vandals, lib. i.

† Procop. war of the Vandals, lib. ii.

‡ In the time of Honorius.

|| Byzantine history, in the extract of the embassies.

The cavalry of the Romans, and that of the Huns their auxiliaries, were very expert at drawing the bow; but that of the Goths* and Vandals fought only with the sword and lance, and were unpractised in the distant combat; for which reason Belisarius ascribes part of his success to this difference †.

Justinian received signal services from the Huns, a people from whom the Parthians sprung, and these descendants combated like their ancestors. When the Huns lost all their power by the divisions which the great number of Attila's children occasioned, they served the Romans in the quality of auxiliaries, and formed their best cavalry.

Each of these barbarous nations † was distinguished by their particular manner of combating as well as by their arms. The Goths and Vandals were formidable at the drawn sword; the Huns were admirable bowmen; the Suevi were serviceable infantry; the Alans were heavily armed; and the Heruli were a flying troop. The Romans selected from all these people, the

* See Procopius's hist. of the wars of the Vandals, lib. i. and his war of the Goths, lib. i. The Gothic bowmen fought on foot, and were but indifferently disciplined.

† The Romans, having suffered their infantry to be weakened, placed all their force in the horse, and the more so because they were obliged to spring suddenly to every part to check the incursions of the Barbarians.

‡ A remarkable passage of Jornandes tells us all these discriminating circumstances, having occasion to mention the battle between the Gepidæ and the sons of Attila.

different bodies of troops which were servicable to their designs, and fought against one nation with the joint advantage of all the rest.

It is remarkable, that the weakest nations have been those that made the greatest establishments; we should be much deceived, if we judged of their force by their conquests. In this long train of irruptions, the Barbarians, or rather the swarms which issued from them, were vanquishers or vanquished; every thing depended on circumstances: and while one great nation was defeated or engaged, a body of new adventurers finding a country open, carried desolation into it. The Goths, who by reason of the disadvantage of their arms, were obliged to fly before so many nations settled in Italy, Gaul, and Spain: the Vandals, too weak to keep their possession in Spain, passed into Africa, where they founded a great empire.

Justinian could not fit out more than fifty ships against the Vandals; and when Belisarius embarked, he had but five thousand soldiers. This was undoubtedly a bold expedition; and Leo, who before that time had sent against the same people a fleet of all the ships in the east, and manned with a hundred thousand soldiers, could not conquer Africa, and was even in danger of losing the whole empire.

These great fleets have been as little successful as very numerous land armies; for as they impoverish and unpeuple a state, so, should the expedition be of a considerable length, or any
misfortune

misfortune befall them, they can neither be succoured nor recruited; and if one part be lost, the other becomes insignificant; because ships of war, as well as transports, cavalry, infantry, ammunition, in a word all the particulars, have a necessary dependance on the whole. The tardiness of an enterprize makes those who engage in it always find the enemy prepared to receive them: besides, such an expedition is seldom made in a proper season, and generally overtaken by the stormy months, because such a vast number of preparations are hardly ever compleated till the season is too far advanced.

Belisarius invaded Africa, and very advantageously supplied himself with provisions from Sicily, in consequence of a treaty made with Amalafonta queen of the Goths. When he was sent to attack Italy, he took notice that the Goths received their subsistence from Sicily, and therefore began his expedition with the conquest of that island; by which proceeding he at the same time starved his enemies, and plentifully supplied his own army with all accommodations.

Belisarius took Carthage, Rome, and Ravenna, and sent the kings of the Goths and Vandals captives to Constantinople, where the ancient triumphs were renewed after a long interval of Years*.

The extraordinary qualities of this great man †, naturally account for his success. A

* Justinian only granted him a triumph for Africa.

† See Suidas under the article Belisarius.

general,

general, who was master of all the maxims of the first Romans, was then at the head of such an army as that brave people anciently composed.

Virtues that are very shining are generally concealed or lost in servitude; but the tyrannical government of Justinian could not oppress the grandeur of that soul, nor the noble superiority of such a genius.

Narces the eunuch was thrown into this reign to make it still more illustrious: as he had received his education in the palace, he was honoured with a greater share of the emperor's confidence; for princes always esteem their courtiers the most faithful of their subjects.

On the other hand, the irregular conduct of Justinian, his profusions, tyranny, and rapine, his intoxicated fondness for building, changing, and reforming, his inconstancy in his designs, a severe and weak reign, made still more incommodious by a lingering old age, were a train of real calamities, intermixed with unprofitable success, and a false glitter of unsubstantial glory.

These victories were not the effect of any solid power subsisting in the empire, but resulted from the lucky conjunction of some particular circumstances, and were soon rendered ineffectual; for whilst the army was pursuing its fortunate beginnings, a new swarm of barbarous nations passed the Danube, and spread desolation through Illyria, Macedonia, and Greece, and the Persians,
in

in four invasions, weakened the empire with incurable wounds *

The more rapid these conquests appeared, the less durable was their foundation; and Italy and Africa were hardly wrested from the enemy, before it became necessary to recover them a second time by new victories.

Justinian had taken from the theatre a † woman who had long prostituted herself to immodest pleasures, and she governed him with an authority that has no parallel in history, perpetually intermixing his affairs with the passions and fanciful inconsistencies of her sex; in consequence of which, she defeated the victorious progress of his arms, and disconcerted the most favourable events.

The eastern people were always accustomed to a plurality of wives, in order to deprive the sex of that strange ascendant they maintain over man in our climates; but at Constantinople the prohibition of Polygamy made the empire subject to the will of a female, or, in other words, threw a natural weakness into the government.

The people of Constantinople had for many years been divided into two factions, denominated the Blue and the Green: they derived their original from the approbation usually given in the theatres to some particular actors; and when races were exhibited in the circus, the

* The two empires ravaged each other the more, because they had no hopes of securing their conquests.

† The empress Theodora.

charioteers,

charioteers, who were dressed in green, disputed the prize with those who were habited in blue; and each of these spectators became interested even to madness, in the competition of those colours.

These two factions being diffused through all the cities of the empire proportioned their animosities to the rank and grandeur of those cities, or, as we may justly say, to the indolence and idle lives of the generality of the people.

But though such divisions are always necessary in a republic, and may be considered as essential to its support, they are infallibly destructive to an arbitrary government, because they can only change the person of the sovereign, but never contribute to the establishment of the laws, or the discontinuance of abuses.

Justinian, who favoured the faction of the Blue *, and denied all justice to the Green, increased the mutual inveteracy of both parties, and consequently strengthened them in the state.

These contending parties proceeding so far as even to disannul the authority of the magistrates: the blues were in no apprehension of the laws, because the emperor protected them against their severity; and the Greens † began to dis-

* This political distemper was of ancient date, for Suetonius tells us, that Caligula, because he was attached to the Green faction, hated the people who applauded the other.

† The reader may form a good idea of the spirit of those regard

regard them, because they could not defend them from insults.

All the bands of friendship, affinity, and gratitude were cut asunder, and whole families destroyed each other: every villain, who intended to be remarkably wicked, belonging to the faction of the Blue, and every man, who was either robbed or assassinated, was a partisan for the Green.

We may add, that the government was, if possible, more cruel than senseless, and the emperor, not satisfied with the general injustice of loading his subjects with excessive impositions, resolved to ruin them in their private affairs by all imaginable tyrannies.

I am far from entertaining an implicit belief of all the particulars related by Procopius in his secret history, because the pompous commendations he, in his other works, bestows on this prince, may make his veracity a little questionable in this, where he paints him out as the most stupid and inhuman tyrant that ever lived.

On the other hand, there are two circumstances which incline me to pay some regard to this secret history; for in the first place, the particulars seem better connected with the astonishing weakness which discovered itself at the latter end of this reign, and in those of the succeeding emperors.

times, by consulting Theophanes, who relates a long conversation in the theatre between the emperor and the Greens.

The

The other circumstance is that monument, which still exists among us, and is a collection of the laws of this emperor, which, in the course of a few years, present us with greater variations than are to be found in our laws for the three last centuries of our monarchy.

These variations * generally relate to matters of so little importance, that we can see no reasons to induce a legislator to make them, unless we refer to the Secret history for a solution, and acknowledge that this prince exposed his judgments and his laws equally to sale.

But the political state of the government received the greatest injury from his project of establishing a general uniformity of opinion in matters of religion, and in circumstances that rendered his zeal as indiscreet as possible.

The ancient Romans fortified their empire by indulging all sorts of religious worship; but their posterity destroyed it by rooting out the various sects, whose doctrines were not predominant.

These sects were composed of entire nations, some of which, as the the Jews and Samaritans, had retained their ancient religion after they were conquered by the Romans; others were dispersed through the country, as the followers of Montanus, in Phrygia, the Manichees, the Sabbatarians, the Arians, in the other provinces; besides which, the generality of the people in the country continued in idolatry, and were in-

* See the Institutes of Justinian.

fatuated with a religion as gross as their understandings.

These sects Justinian caused to be extirpated, by the military as well as the civil power; and the persecuted people, revolting in their own defence, he thought himself obliged to exterminate them from the empire; in consequence of which, he depopulated several provinces, and whilst he imagined himself increasing the number of the faithful, he was only diminishing the race of mankind.

Procopius assures us, that Palestine, by the destruction of the Samaritans, was changed into a desert; and this proceeding was the more singular, because, the very zeal which weakened the empire, in order to establish religion, sprung out of the same quarter from whence the Arabians afterwards sallied with an intention to subvert it.

But nothing could be more aggravating, than that the emperor, whilst he was so averse to all toleration himself, should yet disagree with the empress in the most essential points; he followed the council of Chalcedon, and she favoured its opposers; whether, as Evagrius says*, they were sincere in this proceeding or not, is uncertain.

When we read Procopius's description of Justinian's buildings, and the forts and other places of defence he erected in all parts, it naturally raises in our minds the idea of a flourishing state; but that idea happens to be very delusive.

* Lib. iv. c. 10.

The ancient Romans had none of these fortifications, but placed all their security in their armies, which they distributed along the banks of rivers, and raised towers at proper distances for the lodgment of the soldiers.

Afterwards indeed, when they had but very indifferent armies, and frequently none at all, the frontiers * could not defend the countries they limited, and therefore it became necessary to strengthen them; the consequence of which was, they had more fortifications, and less force; many places for retreat, and very few for security; the country was only habitable about the fortifications, and these were built in all parts. The condition of the empire resembled that of France, in the time of the † Normans, which was never so defenceless as when all its villages were girt round with walls.

We may venture to affirm therefore, that the whole catalogue of Justinian's forts, which fills several pages in Procopius, only exhibits to us

* Augustus established nine such frontiers, the number of which encreased in the following reigns, when the Barbarians began to appear in several parts; and Dion. lib. lv. says, that, in his time, when Alexander was emperor, there were thirty, as appears by the *Notitia Imperii*, written since the reigns of Arcadius and Honorius: there were fifteen even in the eastern empire, and the number was perpetually increasing. Pamphylia, Lycaonia, and Pardia were made frontiers, and the whole empire was covered with fortifications, till at last Aurelian was obliged to fortify Rome itself.

† And the English.

Ch. XXI. *of the ROMAN EMPIRE.* 275
so many monuments of the weakness of the
empire.

C H A P. XXI.

Disorders in the Eastern Empire.

THE Persians, during this period, were in a much happier situation than the Romans; they had little reason to be apprehensive of the northern people*, because that part of mount Taurus which extends between the Caspian and Euxine seas separated them from those nations, and they effectually shut up a very narrow pass †, which was the only practicable avenue for the cavalry; in every other part the Barbarians were obliged to descend from frightful precipices ‡ and to quit their horses in which all their military strength consisted; and besides these impediments they were blocked in by the Araxes, a river of great depth, and which flows from west to east, all the passages of which were easy to be defended.

With all these advantages the Persians were in perfect tranquillity with respect to the eastern nations; on the south they were bounded by the sea; and the Arabian princes, who were partly their allies, and partly in confederacy with the Romans, were totally engaged in pillaging one another. The Persians therefore had none whom they could properly call their enemies but

* The Huns.

† Called the Caspian Straight.

‡ Procopius of the Persian war, lib. i.

the Romans. We are sensible, said an ambassador of Hormisdas *, that the Romans are engaged in several wars, and are at variance with almost all nations, whilst we, as they well know, have no hostilities with any people but themselves.

The Persians had cultivated the military art to as great a degree as it was neglected by the Romans. Belizarius said to his soldiers, 'The Persians are not your superiors in courage, and only surpass you in the discipline of war.'

They had likewise the same superiority in the cabinet as they preserved in the field, and demanded tribute of the Romans, under a pretence that they maintained garrisons in the Caspian streights, as if each nation had not a right to guard its frontiers. They obliged them to pay for peace, and every cessation of arms; and did not scruple to make them purchase the very time employed either in negociations, or war.

The Avari having crossed the Danube, the Romans, who had seldom any troops to oppose them, being engaged against the Persians when they should have given battle to the Avari, and having full employment from these when they ought to have faced the Persians, were still obliged to submit to a tribute; and thus the majesty of the empire bowed down before all nations.

JUSTIN, TIBERIUS, and MAURICE were very sedulous to defend the empire; the last of these princes had some virtues, but they were all in-

* Menander's ambassies.

lied by an avarice almost incredible in a great monarch.

The king of the Avari offered to restore all his Roman prisoners to Maurice, if he would ransom them at an inconsiderable price for each man; and this proposal being rejected, he caused them all to be inhumanly murdered. The Roman army was greatly exasperated at this proceeding, and the faction of the Greens making an insurrection at the same time, a centurion nam'd PHOCAS was raised to the imperial dignity, and he ordered Maurice and his children to be put to death.

The history of the Grecian empire, for so we shall denominate the monarchy of the Romans for the future, is little more than a series of revolts, seditions, and perfidy. The subjects had no idea of the loyalty due to princes, and there were so many interruptions in the succession of the emperors, that the title of Porphyrogenitus, which signifies one born in the apartment where the empress reposed, was an appellation which few princes of the several imperial families could with any propriety assume.

All the paths that could be struck out to empire were unexceptionable; and the candidates were conducted to the diadem by the clergy, the senate, the peasants, the inhabitants of Constantinople, and the people of the provincial cities.

Christianity being now the prevailing religion of the empire, was intermixed with several suc-

cessive heresies, which called aloud for condemnation. Arius having denied the divinity of the WORD; the Macedonians that of the HOLY SPIRIT; Nestorius the unity of the person of Jesus Christ; the Eutychians his two natures; the Monothelites his two wills; it became necessary to convene councils against them: but their decisions not being universally received, several emperors, who had been seduced into these heretical opinions, relapsed into the same persuasions after they had been condemned; and as no nation was ever so implacable against heresies as the Greeks, who even imagined themselves polluted when they conversed with any of that class, or had any cohabitation with them, several emperors, in consequence of that popular aversion, lost the affections of their subjects, and the people became persuaded that princes who were so frequently rebellious against God, could never be chosen by providence to be their sovereigns.

A new opinion, formed by an idea that it was unlawful to shed christian blood, and which daily grew more popular when the Mohammedans appeared upon the stage of military action, was the cause that offences, in which religion was not directly interested, were punished with great moderation. Those who had spirited up an insurrection, or framed any attempt against the person of the prince, were only sentenced to lose their eyes, to have their hair or noses cut off, or to suffer some other mutilation. As these offences

offences might be committed with very little hazard, they might likewise be attempted without much courage*.

A certain veneration for the regalia of imperial majesty drew the eyes of all the people on those who presumed to wear them, and it was criminal to be either habited in purple, or to keep it in a ward-robe; but when a man had once the resolution to appear in that dress, the multitude immediately flocked after him, because their respect was more attached to the apparel than the person.

Ambition received greater provocatives still, from the surprizing insatiation of those times; and there was hardly a man of any considerable consequence who could not accommodate to himself some prediction that promised him the empire.

As the indispositions of the mind are generally incurable †, judicial astrology, and the art of pointing out futurity by objects, seen in a basin of water, succeeded among the christians, to the solemn imposture of divination by the entrails of victims, or the flight of birds, which had been abolished with paganism its parent; and vain promises became the motives to most of the

* Zeno greatly contributed to this mean relaxation of justice. See the Byzantine history of Malchus, cited in the extracts of the embassies.

† See the life of Andronicus Comnenus, compiled by Nicetas.

rash actions of particular persons, and constituted the wisdom of princes councils.

The calamities of the empire daily increasing, it was natural to impute ill success in war, and dishonourable treaties in peace, to the injudicious conduct of those at the helm.

One revolution was now pregnant with another, and the effect itself became a cause : and as the Greeks had seen such a succession of different families on the throne, they were not devoted to any ; and since fortune had created so many emperors out of all classes of people, no birth was so obscure, and no merit so inconsiderable as to be destitute of hope.

Several examples which had been familiar to the nation, modelled the genius of the people in general, and formed a system of manners which reigned as imperiously as the laws.

It should seem that great enterprizes, among us, are more impracticable than they were to the ancients ; it is very difficult to conceal them, because intelligence is now become so manageable, that every prince has ministers in each court, and traitors may possibly be lurking in all the cabinets of majesty.

The invention of posts has given wings to information, and can immediately waft it to all parts.

As great undertakings are not to be accomplished without money, and as merchants are masters of it since the invention of bills of exchange ; their affairs are always connected with
the

the secrets of state, and they neglect nothing to penetrate into those depths.

The fluctuations in exchange, without any visible cause, entice numbers of people to search after it, and some of them find it at last to their cost.

The invention of printing, which has put books into the hands of all the world; the improvements in engraving, which have made geographic charts so common; in a word, the establishment of political papers, give every individual a knowledge of the general interests, sufficient enough to instruct him in all the private transactions.

Conspiracies in a state are now become very difficult, because, since the establishment of posts, all the secrets of particular persons are in the power of the public.

Princes may act with promptitude, because all the power of the state is in their possession. Conspirators must proceed with caution, because they are destitute of expedients; and since at present all transactions are more easily discovered, those who form designs against a government are generally detected before they can adjust their schemes.

C H A P. XXII.

The Weakness of the Eastern Empire.

PHOCAS amidst the general confusion of affairs, being unsettled in his new dignity, HERACLIUS came from Africa, and caused him
to

to be murdered ; at the same time he found the provinces invaded and the legions destroyed.

As soon as this prince had, in some measure, remedied these disasters, the Arabians quitted their own country, to extend the empire and religion which MOHAMMED had founded by their co-operation.

No people ever made so rapid a progress ; for they immediately conquered Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Africa, and then turned their hostilities against the Persians.

God permitted his religion to be laid low, in so many places where it once had been predominant ; not that it now ceased to be the object of his providential care, but because it always either in its state of glory or depression produces its natural effect, which is the sanctification of the soul.

The welfare of religion has no similitude to the prosperity of empires, and we are told by a celebrated author, that it may well be distempered, since malady itself is the true state of a christian ; to which we may add, that the humiliations and dispersion of the church, the destructions of her temples, and the persecutions of her martyrs, are eminent seasons of her glory ; but when she appears triumphant to the eyes of the world, she is generally sinking in adversity.

We are not to have recourse to enthusiasm alone to clear up this memorable event of the Arabian conquests, which spread through so many countries : the Saracens had been long distinguished

distinguished among the auxiliaries of Rome, and Persia; and they, as well as the Osroonians, were the expertest archers in the world. Alexander Severus and Maximin had engaged them as much as possible in their service, and they were extremely useful in the wars with the Germans, to whom their arrows were fatal at a great distance. The Goths themselves *, in the reign of Valens, were incapable of resisting them: in a word, they at that time were the best cavalry in the world.

We have already observed, that the legions raised in Europe were much preferable to those of Asia, but it was directly contrary with respect to the cavalry; I mean that of the Parthians, the Osroonians, and the Saracens. This was the power that stopped the full career of the Roman conquests, because, after the death of Antiochus, a new nation of Tartars, who had the best cavalry of any people, made themselves masters of the Upper Asia.

This cavalry was heavy †, and that of Europe light, quite contrary to the present nature of their military equipage. Holland and Friseland were not as yet won from the waters; and ‡ Germany was full of woods, lakes, and

* Zozim. lib. iv.

† See the account given by Zosimus of the cavalry of Aurelian, and that of Palmyra. See likewise what Ammian Marcellinus relates of the Persian cavalry.

‡ The greatest part of that country was then covered with water, but the art of man has since made it habitable and commodious.

marshes,

marshes, where the cavalry were of little importance.

When a free passage was opened to the great rivers, the stagnant waters shrunk from those marshes, and Germany assumed a new surface. Many changes were effected by the works of Valentinian * on the Necker, and those of the Romans on the Rhine; and commerce being once established, those countries which did not originally produce horses †, began to propagate the breed, and the inhabitants made great use of those animals.

Constantine ‡, the son of Heraclius, having been poisoned, and his son Constance slain in Sicily, CONSTANTINE the bearded, his eldest son, succeeded to the empire; but the grandees of the eastern provinces being assembled on this occasion, were determined to crown the other brothers of this prince jointly with himself; alledging, that as it was indispensably necessary for them to believe in the Trinity, so it was reasonable they should be governed by three emperors.

The Grecian history is crowded with proceedings as extraordinary as this, and a low turn of mind being then characteristic of that nation, their former wisdom was no longer conspicuous in their actions, and the empire became a scene

* See Ammian. Marcellin. lib. xxvii.

† Cæsar represents the German horses as too small, and good for little.

‡ Zonaras's life of Constantine the Bearded.

of troubles and revolutions, to which it was impossible to assign any preparatory motives.

An universal bigotry had stupified and emasculated the whole empire. Constantinople was the only place in the east where christianity was predominant, and likewise, where the pusillanimous indolence, and degrading softness of the Asiatic nations, were blended with devotion itself. Of a thousand instances that might be alledged, I shall only mention the conduct of Philippicus the general of Maurice's army, who being on the point of charging the enemy in the field, burst into tears * when he suddenly considered what numbers of mankind were then to be destroyed.

The tears of the Arabians † flowed from a very different source, when they wept with regret that their general had agreed to a truce which frustrated their intended effusion of christian blood.

There is a total difference between an army of fanatics, and another of bigots; and it evidently appeared in a late memorable revolution, in which Cromwell's army resembled the Arabians, whilst the Irish and Scottish forces were like the Greeks.

A gross superstition which debases the mind as effectually as true religion exalts it, had re-

* History of the emperor Maurice by Theophylact, lib. ii. c. iii.

† Ockley's history of the conquest of Syria, Persia, and Egypt, by the Saracens.

duced all virtue, and devout confidence in the Deity, to a stupid veneration for images; and history presents us with generals who would raise a siege, * or surrender a city for † the gallant acquisition of a relick.

Christianity degenerated under the Grecian empire into as many corruptions as were intermixed with it in our time by the Muscovites, till the Czar, Peter the first, new modelled that nation, and introduced more changes into the dominions he governed than are usually established in those which conquerors usurp.

We may easily believe the Greeks were infected with idolatry. There can be no suspicion that the Italians and Germans were but coldly devoted to external worship; and yet when the Greek Historians take notice of the contempt express'd by the Italians for images and relics, one would be apt to compare them with the modern zealots against Calvin. Nicetas informs us, that the Germans, in their march to the Holy Land, were received by the Armenians as friends, because they did not offer any adoration to images. Now, if the Italians and Germans did not sufficiently reverence images, in the apprehension of the Greeks, what an enormous veneration must then be paid to them by this people?

The east was on the point of being made the scene of such a revolution, as happened about

* Life of Iacopena by Zonaras.

† Life of John Comnenus by Nicetas.

two centuries ago in the west, when, upon the revival of learning, the abuses and corruptions in religion became evident to all, and as every person was inquisitive after a proper remedy, so there were some so bold and untractable as to rend the church by divisions, instead of restoring it to its original purity by a due reformation.

LEO ISAAURUS, CONSTANTINE COPRONYMUS, and LEO his son were implacable against images, and when the worship of them had been re-established by the empress Irene, LEO the Armenian, MICHAEL the stammerer, and THEOPHILUS, abolished them again. These princes imagined they could not moderate that worship unless they destroyed it effectually; they likewise turned their hostilities against the Monks *, who incommoded the state, and as their proceedings were always carried into extremes, they endeavoured to exterminate that fraternity instead of regulating them in a proper manner.

The monks † being accused of idolatry by those who favoured the new opinions, retorted, in their turn, upon their adversaries, and accused

* Valens, many years before this event, made a law to compel the monks to serve the government in the army in times of war, and caused all who disobeyed that injunction, to be slain.

† These circumstances relating to the monks, cannot fix any criminal imputation on their order in general; for it would be unjust to represent an institution as pernicious, because it may happen to be abused in some particular countries and at certain periods of time.

them of magical practices, * and then calling upon the people to behold the churches, that were divested of images, and the other furniture, which, till that time had been the objects of adoration, they created a belief in their flock, that these holy places, must certainly be profaned by daily sacrifices to Dæmons.

The controversy relating to images, was connected with very delicate circumstances, which kindled it into a raging flame, and in the event made persons of solid judgment incapable of proposing a moderate worship. The dispute included the tender article of power, and the monks having seized it, in consequence of their spiritual usurpations, they could neither enlarge nor maintain it but by making daily additions to the acts of external adoration, wherein they were so considerably interested. For this reason all oppositions to the establishment of images were considered as so many hostilities against themselves, and when they had succeeded in their pretensions their power was no longer limitable.

This period was remarkable for such a conjuncture as happened some centuries afterwards in the warm disagreement between Barlaam and the Monks of that time, which brought the empire to the verge of destruction. The subject of the dispute was whether the light which encircled Jesus Christ on mount Tabor was

* Leo the grammarian's lives of Leo the Arminian, and Theophilus. Suidas, under the article of Constantine the son of Leo.

created or not. The Monks indeed were indifferent as to either part of the question in debate, but as Barlaam made a direct attack upon that fraternity, they found it consistent with their interest to assert that light to be uncreated.

The war which those emperors who were called Iconoclasts, declared against the Monks, revived some particular principles of government. And offered a plausible pretence for employing the public revenue, for the public advantage, and for disengaging the state from every inconvenience that encumbered it.

When I consider the profound ignorance into which the Grecian priests had plunged the laity, it seems natural to compare the former to those Scythians mentioned by Herodotus, * who caused the eyes of their slaves to be plucked out, that their attention might not be diverted, when they were churning milk for their masters.

When the empress Theodora had re-established the use of images, the Monks immediately began to corrupt the public devotion, and proceeded even to oppress the secular clergy: they thrust themselves into every beneficial see, † and gradually excluded all ecclesiastics from episcopal promotion. By this proceeding they became unsupportable; and if we draw a parallel between them and the latin clergy, and compare the conduct of our Popes with that of the patriarchs of Constantinople, we shall see in our

* Lib. iv.

† Vide Pachymer. lib. viii.

pontifs and clergy, a set of men altogether as judicious as the others were irrational.

We are presented with a surprizing contradiction in human nature, when we consider that the ministers of religion among the ancient Romans, when they were not made incapable of public employments and civil society, were but little solicitous about either; and that after the establishment of christianity the ecclesiastics, who were most secluded from temporal affairs, engaged in them with the greatest moderation; but when the Monks, in the declension of the empire, became the sole clergy, these people who were forbidden by a more particular profession, to intermeddle with the transactions of state, embraced all opportunities that could possibly introduce them into the government, and never ceased to fill every place with confusion, and to discompose the world which they pretended to renounce.

There was not any affair of the empire, any particular peace or war, any truce or negotiation, or any private treaty of marriage capable of completion without the ministrations of these Monks; they crowded into the cabinets of princes, and composed the greatest part of the national assemblies.

The calamities which resulted from this irreligious officiousness are inconceivable: these ecclesiastic statesmen infused an indolent insignificance into the minds of princes, and communicated a taint of imprudence to their best actions.

actions. Whilst Basilus employed his naval forces in erecting a church to the honour of St. Michael *, he abandoned Sicily to the depredations of the Saracens, and suffered them to take Syracuse; but lest he should be singular in that proceeding, Leo, his successor, consigned his fleet to the same employment, and permitted the Barbarians to possess themselves of Tauromenia and the island of Lemnos.

Andronicus Palæologus † entirely neglected his maritime power, because he had been assured God was so well satisfied with his zeal for the church's peace, that his enemies would never presume to invade his dominions by sea. He was even apprehensive that the Deity would call him to a strict account for the time he devoted to the necessary affairs of state, and deducted from spiritual attentions.

The Greeks being very loquacious, great disputants, and naturally inclinable to sophistry, were perpetually incumbering religion with controversial points; and as the Monks were in great reputation in a court which was always weak in proportion to its corruption, that court, and those Monks mutually communicated infection to each other; in consequence of which, the emperors devoted all their thoughts, sometimes to calm, and frequently to inflame theological disputes, which were always observed to be

* See the lives of Basilus and Leo by Zonaras and Nicphorus.

† Pachymer. lib. vii.

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most frivolous when they were debated with the
greatest warmth.

Michael Palæologus *, whose reign was so
infested by controversies in religion, growing
tensible of the melancholy devastations commit-
ted by the Turks in Asia, said with a sigh, that
the rash zeal of some persons, who, by exclaim-
ing against his conduct had exasperated his sub-
jects against him, made it necessary for him to
employ all his cares to accomplish his own pre-
servation, and compelled him to be a tame
spectator of the ruin of several provinces. I
contented myself, said he, with providing for
the security of those distant parts, by the mi-
nistration of governors, who being either cor-
rupted by the enemy, or apprehensive of pu-
nishment, never acquainted me with the un-
happy situation of the people with whose wel-
fare they were intrusted.

The patriarchs of Constantinople had assumed
an unlimited power; and as the emperors and
their grandees generally retired to the churches,
when the people were spirited up to insurrections,
the Patriarchs had consequently an opportunity
of delivering them up to the popular fury, and
never failed to exercise this power as they were
directed by any particular fancy, by which means
they always became the arbiters of public affairs,
though in a very indirect manner.

* Pachymer. lib. vii. c. xxix. We have had recourse
to the translation of the president Cousin.

When

When the elder Andronicus* caused the Patriarch to be admonished not to intermeddle with the transactions of state, but to confine his attention to spiritual affairs, such a request, replied that imperious priest, is as if the body should say to the soul, I do not claim any community with you, and have no occasion for your assistance in the exercise of my functions.

Such monstrous pretensions became insupportable to princes, and the Patriarchs were frequently divested of their sees. But such a proceeding, in a superstitious nation, who detested all the ecclesiastical functions of the Patriarch whom they considered as an intruder, produced continual schisms, each particular Patriarch, the old, the new, and the last elected, being supported by his own set of partisans.

Such contentions as these were much more pernicious than any disagreements on points of doctrine, because they resembled an hydra to whom every defeat was a renovation.

The rage of disputation became so natural to the Greeks, that Cantacuzenus †, when he took Constantinople, found the emperor John and his empress engaged in a council which had been summoned against some adversaries of the Monks: and when Mohammed the second besieged that city ‡, the emperor could not sup-

* Palæologus. See the history of the two emperors of this name written by Cantacuzenus, lib. i. c. 50.

† Cantacuzen. lib. iii. c. 99.

‡ Hist. of the last Palæologus by Ducas.

preis the theological animosities, and the council of Florence* engaged the general attention much more than the Turkish army.

As every person, in common disputes, is sensible he may be deceived, a tenacious and untractable spirit seldom prevails to any extreme, but in those controversies where religion is the subject, for there, as every person from the nature of the point in debate becomes persuaded that his own opinion is true, he grows exasperated against those, who, instead of concurring with his sentiments, endeavour to make him a convert to their own.

Those who may happen to read the history written by Pachymerus, will be effectually convinced of the unalterable inability of divines to accommodate their own disagreements, and will see an emperor † who spent his days in assembling people of that class listening to their disputations and reproaching them for the inflexibility of their opinions: they will likewise behold another engaged with a hydra of controversies that were perpetually rising to new life, and will be sensible that the same pacific methods and persevering patience, the same inclination to finish their contentions; in a word, the

* The question in debate was, whether a congregation, who heard mass from a priest who had consented to pacific measures, ought not to have fled from him as if he had been a destructive flame: the great church was accounted a profane temple, and the monk Gennadius hurled his anathema's against all who were desirous of peace.

† Andronicus Palæologus.

same artless pliancy to their intrigues joined with the same deference to their averfions will never reconcile thefe implacable ecclefiastics while the world endures.

We fhall present the reader with a remarkable instance of the difpofition we have been defcribing: the Partifans of the patriarch Arfenus*, were prevailed upon, by the follicitations of the emperor, to come into a treaty with thofe who were in the intereft of the patriarch Jofeph. This treaty fpecified that both parties fhould write down their feveral pretenfions, and then throw the two papers which contained them into a pan of live coals, and if one of them fhould remain unconfumed, they were then to acquiefce with that determination from heaven; but if both fhould happen to be burnt, the parties were no longer to perfift in their demands. The fire deftroyed the two papers, the factions were reconciled, and the peace continued for a day. The next morning they pretended that the renunciation of their claims ought to flow from an internal perfuafion, and not from chance, and from that moment the contention was renewed with greater animofity than ever.

The difputes of divines fhould always be confidered with great attention; but at the fame time this ought to be concealed as much as poffible, becaufe, any vifible follicitude to calm the contending parties never fails to credit their fingularities, and confequently tempts them to

* Pachymer. lib. vii.

believe their sentiments are of that importance as to comprehend the welfare of the state and the security of the sovereign.

It is altogether as impracticable to decide the disagreements of clergymen by attending to their affected subtilties, as it would be to abolish duels by erecting a court, with a delegation to trace a point of honour through all its refinements.

Such was the imprudence of the Greek emperors, that when a religious controversy had been lulled asleep by time, they again awakened it in all its rage. Justinian, Heraclius, and Manuel Comnenus proposed articles of faith to their ecclesiastics and laity who would certainly have been deceived in the truth though it had flowed from the lips of those princes in all its purity. And as they were always defective in forms, and generally in essentials, and grew desirous of displaying their penetration, which they might have manifested to more advantage in other affairs confided to their judgment; they engaged in vain disputes on the nature of God, who, as he withdraws himself from the proud curiosity of the learned, so he veils the majesty of his existence as effectually from the great men of the earth.

'Tis an error to believe any human power can be absolute and infallible in these respects, for such there never was, nor ever will be imparted to any mortal. The largest extent of temporal authority is confined to certain limitations,

tions, and when the grand feignior ordains a new taxation at Constantinople, the universal murmurs of his subjects make him sensible of those restrictions of his power which till then were concealed from his observation. A Persian monarch may indeed compel a son to murder his father, or oblige a parent to plunge his dagger into the heart of his child, but he can never force his subjects to drink wine. There is a general principle in every nation which is the invariable basis of power, and when once this principle is too much loaded, it infallibly shrinks into smaller dimensions.

An unacquaintedness with the true nature and limits of ecclesiastical and secular power, was the most pernicious source of all the calamities that befel the Greeks, and involved both priests and people in perpetual errors.

This great distinction, which constitutes all the tranquillity of a nation, is founded not only on religion, but on reason and nature, which never confound things really distinct in themselves, and which can only subsist in consequence of that very distinction.

Though the priesthood among the ancient Romans did not form a separate body, yet the distinction we have been representing, was as well known to them, as it can be to us. Clodius had consecrated the house of Cicero to the goddess of Liberty, but when that great orator returned from his exile, he did not fail to demand it as his lawful property: the Pontiffs were of
opinion,

opinion, that, if it had been so consecrated without an express order obtained from the people, it might be restored to him without any violation of religion. They have declared says Cicero *, that they only examined the validity of the consecration and not the law enacted by the people, and that they had decided the first article as pontiffs, and the second, in the quality of senators.

C H A P. XXIII.

The Duration of the Eastern Empire accounted for. Its Destruction.

AFTER this account of the Grecian empire, it seems natural to enquire how it could possibly subsist so long, and I believe sufficient reasons may be assigned for that duration.

The Arabians having invaded the empire and conquered several provinces, their chiefs became competitors for the Khalifat, and the flame of their first zeal only burst out in civil dissensions.

The same people having conquered Persia and afterwards divided and weakened themselves in that country, the Greeks were no longer obliged to keep the principal forces of the empire stationed on the banks of Euphrates.

Callinicus an architect, who came from Syria to Constantinople, invented an artificial flame, which was easily ventilated into a point by

* Epist. ad Attic. lib. iv.

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means of a tube, and was of such a peculiar nature, that water and every other substance which extinguish common fire did but increase the violence of this. The Greeks were in possession of it for several years, and managed it in such a manner as made it capable of firing their enemies ships, particularly the Arabian fleet which sailed from Africa or the Syrian coasts to invade them even in Constantinople.

This flame was ranked among the secrets of state, and Constantinople Porphyrogenitus in his treatise on the Administration of the empire, and which he dedicated to his son Romanus, advises him to tell the Barbarians, when they should desire him to give them any of the Grecian fire, that he was not permitted to part with it, because an angel, who presented it the emperor Constantine, commanding him to refuse it to all other nations, and that those who had disobeyed that injunction were consumed by a fire from heaven the moment they entered into the church.

Constantinople was the greatest, and almost the only city of commerce in the world; for the Goths on the one side, and the Arabians on the other, had ruined all manner of traffic and industry in every other part. The silken manufactures were brought thither from Persia, and were even neglected in that country since the Arabian invasion. We may add to this that the Greeks were masters at sea, which opened an immense flow of riches into the state, and
proced

proved an inexhaustible source of relief in all its emergencies; and if at any time there seemed to be any declension of the public affluence, it was immediately recruited by a new accession.

We shall justify this observation by a remarkable instance: the elder Andronicus Comnenus, tho' he was the Nero of the Greeks, yet amidst all his vices he was indefatigable in the suppression of injustice and vexations in the grandees, and it is a known fact, that during the three years of his reign he restored several provinces to their ancient splendor.

In fine, the Barbarians having once fixed their settlement on the banks of the Danube, were no longer so formidable to the empire as before, but rather became useful to it as a barrier against other barbarous nations. And thus whilst the empire was harassed by any bad government, some particular incidents were always in reserve for its relief. Thus we see Spain and Portugal in a condition, amidst all their weakness, to support themselves with the treasures of the Indies: the temporal dominions of the Pope owe their safety to the respect paid to their sovereign, and the rovers of Barbary derive their security from the obstructions they fasten upon the commerce of lesser * nations, and the very piracies of these people on inferior states, make them servicable in their turn to the greater.

* They infest the navigation of the Italians in the Mediterranean.

The Turkish empire is at present in the same state of declension to which that of the Greeks was formerly * sunk, but in all probability it will still subsist a long time; for should any prince endanger it by pursuing his conquests to an immoderate extent, it will always be defended by the three trading powers of Europe, who are too sensible of their own interests ever to be unconcerned spectators of its fall.

It is happy for these trading powers, that God has permitted Turks and Spaniards to be in the world, for of all nations they are the most proper to enjoy a great empire with insignificance.

In the time of Basilus Porphyrogenitus, the Arabian power came to its period in Persia. Mohammed the son of Sambreal, who was then sovereign of that empire, invited four thousand Turks from the north, in the quality of auxiliaries; but, upon a sudden dissatisfaction conceived by this prince, he sent an army against them, which was soon put to flight by the Turks. Mohammed, in the height of his indignation against his pusillanimous soldiers, gave orders that they should pass before him habited like

* All projects of this nature against the Turks, and particularly such as have any similitude to that which was formed in the papacy of Leo the tenth, by which it was concerted, that the emperor should march to Constantinople through Bosnia; the king of France through Albania and Greece, whilst the maritime powers were to embark at their several ports; I say, such projects were never seriously intended, or were framed at least by those who were altogether unacquainted with the true constitution of Europe.

women; but they disappointed his anger and joined the Turks: upon which the united army immediately dislodged a garrison which was stationed to guard a bridge over the Araxes, and opened a free passage to a vast body of their countrymen.

When they have extended their conquests through Persia, they spread themselves from east to west over the territories of the empire, and Romanus Diogenes, who endeavoured to oppose their progress, became their prisoner; after which they subdued all the Asiatic dominions of the Greeks down to the Bosphorus.

Some time after this event the Latins invaded the western regions, in the reign of Alexis Comnenus. An unhappy schism had for a long time infused an implacable hatred between the nations of two different communions, and would have produced fatal effects much sooner, had not the Italians been more attentive to check the German emperors whom they feared, than they were to distress the Greek emperors whom they only hated.

Affairs were in this situation, when all Europe imbibed a religious belief, that the place where Jesus Christ was born, as well as that where he accomplished his passion, being profaned by the infidels, the surest atonement they could make for their own sins, would be to dispossess those Barbarians of their acquisitions by force of arms. Europe at that time swarmed with people who were fond of war, and had many crimes to expiate,

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expiate, and as it was proposed to them to obtain their remission by indulging their prevailing passion, every man armed himself for the crusade.

When this consecrated army arrived in the east, they besieged and made themselves masters of Nice, which they restored to the Greeks; and whilst the infidels were seized with a general consternation, Alexis and John Comnenus chased the Turks to the banks of Euphrates.

But as advantagious as these crusades might be to the Greeks, the emperors trembled to see such a succession of fierce heroes and formidable armies marching thro' the heart of their dominions.

This induced them to leave nothing unattempted that might create a dissatisfaction in Europe at these expeditions; and the votaries to the cross were continually ensnared by every instance of treachery that could possibly be expected from a timorous enemy.

It must be acknowledged that the French, who promoted these expeditions, had not practised any conduct that could render their presence very supportable; and we may judge by the invectives of Anna Comnena against our nation, that we act without much precaution in foreign countries, and were at that time chargeable with the same exceptionable freedoms we are reproached for at this day.

A French nobleman was going to seat himself upon the emperor's throne, but earl Baldwin

win

win caught him by the arm; you ought to know, said he, that when we are in any country whatever, 'tis proper to comply with the customs that prevail there. What a clown is He, replied the other, to sit whilst so many captains are standing?

The Germans, who came after the French, and were the most civil and undesigning people in the world *, suffered very severely for our follies, and were continually embarrassed with a set of dispositions that had been sufficiently irritated by our countrymen against all foreigners.

In fine, the aversion of those eastern people was worked up to the highest extreme; and this with some incivilities offered to the Venetian merchants, operating upon the ambition, avarice, and false zeal of that nation as well as the French, determined them to form a crusade against the Greeks.

The united army of these two European nations found their enemies altogether as pusillanimous and unwarlike as the Chinese appeared to the Tartars in our time. The Frenchmen ridiculed their effeminate habit †, and walked through the streets of Constantinople dressed in flowered mantles, and carrying pens and paper in their hands, in derision to that nation, who had degenerated from all military discipline;

* History of Manuel Comnenus by Nicetas, lib. i.

† Nicet. History of the eastern transactions of the taking of Constantinople, c. 3.

and

and when the war was over, they refused to admit any Greeks into their troops.

The Venetians and French soon after declared for the western empire, and transferred the imperial throne to the earl of Flanders, whose dominions being very distant, could not create any jealousy in the Italians. The Greeks still supported themselves in the east, being separated from the Turks by a chain of mountains, and divided from the Italians by the sea.

The Latins, who found no obstacles in their conquests, met with many in their settlement. The Greeks returned from Asia into Europe, retook Constantinople, and seized the greatest part of the east.

This new empire however was but a faint shadow of the former, and had no solid power for its basis.

It comprehended few territories in Asia, besides the provinces on this side the Meander and Sangar, and most of those in Europe were parcel'd out into small sovereignties.

We may add to this, that during the sixty years the Latins were possessed of Constantinople, the conquered people being dispersed and the victors engaged in war, all commerce was transferred to the cities in Italy, and Constantinople became divested of its riches.

The commerce even of the inland countries was carried on by the Latins. The Greeks *, who were but newly re-established, and were

* Cantacuzen. lib. iv.

likewise alarmed with innumerable apprehensions, became desirous to ingratiate themselves with the Genoese, by granting them a permission to traffic without paying any duties; and as they were unwilling to irritate the Venetians, who had not accepted of peace, but only consented to a truce, these were likewise discharged from the same payments.

Though Manuel Comnenus had suffered the navigation of the empire to decline before Constantinople was taken, yet it could be easily re-established, since commerce still subsisted; but when all maritime affairs became entirely neglected under the new empire, the mischief grew remediless, because the power of the empire was daily declining.

This state, which extended its dominion over many islands, and was intersected by the sea, which likewise surrounded several of its territories, was entirely unprovided of ships. The former communication no longer subsisted between the provinces: the inhabitants * were obliged to shelter themselves in the inland parts from pirates; and when they thought themselves safe in such a sanctuary, they soon found it necessary to retire into the fortresses, to preserve themselves from the hostilities of the Turks.

These barbarous people were at that time engaged in a peculiar war against the Greeks, and might properly be called hunters of men. They

* Pachymer. lib. vii.

sometimes

sometimes marched two hundred leagues into a country to accomplish their depredations; and as they were in subjection to several sultans *, it was impossible to purchase a peace from every tribe; and to procure it from any particular parties, was altogether insignificant. These Barbarians had embraced Mohammedism, and their zeal for that religion strangely prompted them to ravage the christian territories: besides, as they were the most unamiable people on earth †, and married to wives as disagreeable as themselves, the moment they were acquainted with the Grecian women, all the rest of that sex became insupportable to them; and those beautiful females were continually exposed to the brutal passion of these Barbarians ‡. In fine,

* Cantacuzen. lib. iii. c. 96. Pachymer. lib. xi. c. 9.

† This circumstance gave birth to a northern tradition related by Jornandes the Goth: that Phillimer, king of the Goths, having made an incursion into the Celtic territories, found several women who were forcereffes, and drove them to a great distance from his army; after which, those female Magicians wandered in the deserts, where that species of Dæmons, called Incubi, comforted with them, and by their amorous familiarities produced the nation of the Huns. *Genus ferocissimum, quod fuit primum inter paludes, minutum, tetrum, atque exile, nec aliud voce notum, nisi quæ humani sermonis imaginem assignabat.* i. e. A fierce and savage people, who lived sequestered from the rest of mankind, among fens and marshes, ghastly and haggard in their persons, and whose voices were only an imperfect articulation of human speech.

‡ Michael Ducas's hist. of Join Manuel, John and Constantine, c. b. Constantine Porphyrogenitus observes, at the beginning of his extract of the embassies, that when

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they had been always accustomed to invade the properties of other people, and were the same Huns who had formerly involved the Roman empire in so many calamities.

The Turks broke in, like a deluge, upon the shattered remains of the Grecian empire in Asia; and those of the inhabitants who were happy enough to escape their fury, fled before them to the Bosphorus, from whence such as could accommodate themselves with ships, sailed to those parts of the empire that were situated in Europe, which occasioned a considerable addition to the number of the inhabitants, tho' they were diminished in a short period of time: for civil wars began to rage with so much fatality, that the two factions invited several Turkish sultans to their assistance *, with this extravagant and inhuman stipulation, that all the people of the country, who were made captives from the opposite party, should be carried into slavery; by which means each of those factions concurred in the destructions of their own country with a view of ruining their adversaries.

Bajazet having conquered all the other sultans, the Turks would then have acted agreeably to their future behaviour in the reign of

the Barbarians came to Constantinople, the Romans ought to have been very cautious of shewing them the grandeur of their riches, and the beauty of their wives.

* See the history of the emperors John Palæologus and John Cantacuzenus, written by Cantacuzenus.

Moham-

Ch. XXIII. *of the* ROMAN EMPIRE. 309
Mohammed II, had not they been in danger
of extermination by the Tartars.

I am now afraid to describe the miseries
which resulted from these revolutions; and shall
only intimate, that the empire under its last
monarchs, being contracted within the suburbs
of Constantinople, finished its progress like the
Rhine, which shrinks into a rivulet before it
loses itself in the ocean.



A

D I A L O G U E

B E T W E E N

S Y L L A and E U C R A T E S.

SOME days after Sylla had resigned the dictatorship, I was told the reputation I had among the philosophers made him desirous of seeing me. He was at his house on the Tibur, enjoying the first peaceful moments he had ever known. On coming before him, I felt nothing of that confusion which the presence of great men generally occasions in us. And when we were alone, Sylla, said I to him, you have then voluntarily reduced yourself to that middle condition of life, which to most men is an affliction. You have resigned that command which your glory and your virtues gave you over all men. Fortune seems to be vexed that she could not raise you to higher honours.

Eucrates, said he, if the eyes of the whole universe are no longer fixed on me, it is the fault of human things, which have their prescribed limits, and not owing to me. I imagined I had fulfilled my destiny, when I no longer had great things to achieve. I was not made for governing in quiet an enslaved people. I love to obtain victories, to found or overturn

X 4

states,

states, make alliances, punish usurpers : but, as to the little subordinate branches of government, wherein middling geniuses shew themselves to so much advantage, the slow execution of the laws, the discipline of a tame militia, my soul could not employ itself in them.

It is very singular, said I, that you should have mixed so much delicacy with your ambition. We have seen many great men unaffected with the vain pomp and splendor which wait on rulers ; but there have been very few insensible of the pleasure of governing, and of having that respect, which is due only to the laws, paid to their humour.

And I, Eucrates, was never less satisfied, than when I saw myself absolute master in Rome ; when I looked round me, and found neither rival nor enemy. I thought it would be one day said, that I had only chastised slaves. Would you, said I to myself, have no more men in your country capable of being affected with your glory ? And since you establish despotism, don't you clearly see, that no prince can come after you so cowardly and despicable, whom flattery will not equal to you, and adorn with your name, your titles, and even your virtues ?

My lord, you have quite changed the idea I had formed of your conduct. I thought you had ambition, but not a love of glory : I saw very well that you had a high spirit, but I did not suspect that you had a great soul : your
whole

whole life seemed to discover you to be one preyed on by lust of power, and who, full of the most destructive passions cheerfully loaded himself with the shame, the remorse, and even the meanness attached to despotism. For, after all, you sacrificed every thing to your power; you were feared by all the Romans; you discharged, without pity, the functions of the most terrible magistracy that ever subsisted. The senate looked with dread on a defender so relentless. Some one said to you, Sylla, how much Roman blood will you shed? Do you want to command bare walls? You then published those Tables by which the life and death of every citizen were determined.

And it is the shedding so much blood that has enabled me to do the greatest action of my whole life. Had I ruled the Romans with gentleness, what wonder, that weariness, disgust, or caprice should make me resign the government? But I laid down the dictatorship at a time when every one thought I entirely owed my safety to my being invested with it. I appeared before the Romans a citizen in the midst of my citizens, and had the boldness to say to them, I am ready to give account of all the blood which I have shed for the republic; I will answer all who shall come to demand of me their fathers, their sons, or their brothers. Every Roman was silent before me.

This great action which you speak of, appears to me very imprudent. The astonishment, indeed

deed, into which you had just thrown the Romans, was of service to you : but how could you dare to talk of vindicating yourself, and taking for judges persons who had so much to revenge on you ? Supposing your actions had been only severities while you was in power, they became frightful crimes the moment you was out of power.

Do you call crimes, said he, what saved the republic ? Would you have had me quietly see senators betray the senate, for that people, who, imagining that liberty ought to be as extreme as slavery can be, wanted to abolish all authority ? The people, kept under by the laws and the weight of the senate, have always endeavoured to overturn both. But he who is so ambitious as to serve them against the senate and the laws, had always ambition enough to become their master. It is thus we have seen an end put to so many republics of Greece and Italy.

To prevent a like evil, the senate hath always been obliged to employ this untractable people in war. It has been forced, against its inclination, to ravage the earth, and reduce so many nations, whose subjection is a burden to us. At present, when the universe can furnish no more enemies against us, what would be the fate of the republic ? And, without me, would the senate have been able to prevent the people, in their blind fury for liberty, from delivering themselves up to Marius, or to the first tyrant who should have given them hopes of independence ?

The

The gods, who have given to most men a cowardly ambition, have attached to Liberty almost as many evils as to Slavery. But whatever may be the price of this noble Liberty, the gods must be paid it.

The sea swallows up vessels, and lays under water whole countries ; yet it is useful to man.

Posterity will decide of what Rome has not as yet ventured to examine : it will find, perhaps, that I have not shed blood enough, and that all the partisans of Marius have not been proscribed.

I must own, Sylla, you astonish me ; How ! was it to serve your country, that you spilled so much blood ? and had you no attachment but to her ?

Eucrates, said he to me, I had never that predominant love for my Country, of which we find so many examples in the first ages of the republic : and I love Coriolanus, who carried fire and sword to the very walls of his ungrateful city, and made every citizen repent the affront which every citizen had done him, as much as I do him who drove the Gauls from the capitol. I never piqued myself on being the slave, or the worshiper, of a society of my equals : and this so much boasted love is a passion too popular for such a high spirit as mine. All my actions proceeded from reflexion, and principally from the contempt which I entertained for men. You may judge by the manner in which I treated
the

the only great people in the world, how high my contempt was of all others.

I thought that while I was on the earth, I ought to be free. Had I been born among Barbarians, I should have sought to usurp the throne, less to obtain command than to avoid obedience. Born in a Republic, I have acquired the glory of a conqueror, in seeking only that of a free man.

When I entered Rome with my troops, I breathed neither rage nor revenge. I passed sentence, without hatred, but also without pity, on astonished Romans. You were free, said I; and you want to live slaves. No. Die; and you will have the advantage of dying Citizens of a free city.

To deprive of its liberty a city of which I was a citizen, I looked on as the greatest of crimes. I punished that crime; and was little concerned whether I should be the good or the evil genius of the Republic. However, the government of our ancestors has been re-established; the people have expiated all the indignities they put on the nobles; fear has suspended animosities, and Rome never enjoyed such perfect tranquillity.

This it was which determined me to all the bloody tragedies you have seen. Had I lived in those happy days of the Republic, when the citizens, quiet in their houses, presented to the Gods a free soul, you would have seen me pass my whole life in this retreat, which has cost me so much blood and toil.

My

My lord, said I to him, it is well for mankind, that Heaven has been sparing in the number of such men as you. Born for a middling station, we are overpowered by sublime geniuses. One man's being raised above humanity, costs all the rest too dear.

You looked on the ambition of heroes as a common passion; and made no account of any but a reasoning ambition. The insatiable desire of ruling, which you found in the heart of some citizens, made you resolve to be an extraordinary man: love of liberty determined you to be terrible and cruel. Who would have thought, that a heroism founded on principle would be more destructive than a heroism founded on fury and impetuosity? The Roman people, you say, beheld you unarmed, and made no attempt on your life. You have escaped one danger; a greater may await you. A grand offender may one day take advantage of your moderation, and confound you in the croud of a subjected people.

I have acquired a name, said he, which suffices for my safety and the safety of the Roman people. That name prevents all attempts; there is no ambition, which does not stand in awe of it. Sylla lives; and his genius is more powerful than that of all the Romans. Sylla is surrounded by Charonea, Orchomenus, and Signion; Sylla hath given every family in Rome a terrible example within itself: every Roman will have me always before him, and even in his sleep

sleep I shall appear to him covered with blood ; he will imagine he sees the fatal Tables, and reads his name at the head of the proscribed. My laws are murmured at in secret ; they can never be effaced but by floods of Roman blood. Am not I in the midst of Rome ? You will still find with me the javelin I had at Orchomenus, and the buckler I wore on the walls of Athens. Because I have no lictors, am I the less Sylla ? I have the senate, justice, and the laws for me ; my genius, fortune, and glory are for the senate.

I own, said I, that when a person has once made any one tremble, he almost always retains something of the advantage he had over him.

Undoubtedly, said he, I struck men with astonishment ; and that was a great deal. Review in your mind the story of my life : you will see that I have drawn all from that principle ; and that it has been the soul of all my actions. Call to mind my quarrel with Marius : I was stung with indignation to see a man of no name, proud of the meanness of his birth, attempt to pull down the first families in Rome, and confound them with Plebeians ; and at this time I bore all the weight of a great soul. I was young, and I resolved to put myself in a condition to call Marius to account for his insults. For this end, I fought him with his own weapons, that is to say, by victories over the enemies of the Republic.

When I was forced, by the caprice of chance, to leave Rome, I pursued the same plan : I went

to make war on Mithridates; and laboured to destroy Marius by vanquishing the enemy of Marius. While I left that Roman to enjoy his power over the populace, I multiplied his mortifications, and forced him to go every day to the Capitol to return thanks to the Gods for successes which drove him to distraction. I waged a war of reputation against him, a hundred times more cruel than what my legions made on the Barbarian king. Every word I spoke shewed my daringness, and my most inconsiderable actions, always full of haughtiness, were fatal prefaces for Marius. At last Mithridates sued for peace; the terms were reasonable; and had Rome been in quiet, and my fortune not still wavering, I would have accepted them. But the bad state of my affairs obliged me to make the terms still harder; I demanded that he should destroy his fleet, and restore to the kings his neighbours the territories he had taken from them. I leave you, said I, the kingdom of your ancestors; to you, who ought to thank me that I leave you the hand with which you signed an order for the execution of 100,000 Romans in one day. Mithridates was struck motionless, and Marius trembled in the midst of Rome.

This boldness, which was of such service to me against Mithridates, against Marius, against his son, against Thelifinus, against the people, which supported my dictatorship, also protected my life the day I resigned the dictatorship; and that day insures my liberty for ever.

My

My lord, said I, Marius reasoned in the same manner, when covered with the blood of his enemies and of the Romans, he gave proofs of that boldness which you have punished. You have, it is true, a few more victories, and greater excesses on your side. But, in assuming the dictatorship, you set an example of the crime which you punished. This is the example which will be followed, and not that of your moderation, which will only be admired.

When the Gods suffered Sylla with impunity to make himself Dictator at Rome, they proscribed Liberty from it for ever. They must work too many miracles now to root out of the heart of every Roman leader the ambition of reigning. You have taught them, that there is a much surer way to arrive at despotism, and to maintain it without danger. You have divulged the fatal secret, and removed what alone makes good citizens in a Republic too rich and too great, despair of being able to oppress it.

He changed colour, and was silent for a moment. I am only afraid, said he, with emotion, of one man, in whom I think I see many Marius's. Chance, or perhaps a more powerful destiny, made me spare him. My eyes are ever on him, I study his soul, where he hides deep purposes. But if he dare to form the design of commanding men whom I have made my equals, I swear by the Gods, I will punish his insolence.

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