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AN
E S S A Y
ON THE
ORIGINAL GENIUS AND WRITINGS
OF
H O M E R:
WITH
A COMPARATIVE VIEW
OF THE
ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE
OF THE
T R O A D E.



J. B. Wynne sc.

Engraved by J. B. Wynne

A HEAD OF HOMER.

From the Collection of Syde Browne Esq.

A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
Original GENIUS and WRITINGS of HOMER:

W I T H
A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE ANCIENT AND
PRESENT STATE OF THE TROADE.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

By the late ROBERT WOOD, Esq;
AUTHOR OF THE DESCRIPTIONS OF PALMYRA AND BALBEC.



Drawn at Ephesus in 1764 by W. Pars

Engraved by F. Bartolozzi

L O N D O N :
PRINTED BY H. HUGHS;
For T. PAYNE, at the MEWS GATE, and P. ELMSLY, in the STRAND.
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T O T H E
R E A D E R.

HAVING, in my Preface to the Ruins of Palmyra, informed the Reader, that one of the objects of our Eastern voyages was to visit one of the most celebrated scenes of ancient story, in order to compare their present appearance with the early classical ideas, we had conceived of them; and particularly, that we proposed to read the Iliad and Odyssæy in the countries, where Achilles fought, where Ulysses travelled, and where Homer sung; I considered myself in some sort accountable to the public, and my friends, for the result of this part of our scheme: and therefore determined to employ my first leisure in throwing together such observations, as this inquiry had furnished; confining my first Essay of this kind to what concerns the Greek Poet.

But, however ambitious I was to engage in the cause of Homer, the difficulties I found as to the manner of doing him justice, greatly embarrassed me. For though our expectations from this object of our curiosity were by no means disappointed, yet I almost despaired of a satisfactory method of conveying to others a tolerable idea of the entertainment, we received from it on the spot. I must acknowledge, that those difficulties may, with great justice, be charged to my own account, rather than

than to that of my subject; for they do not arise so much from a scarcity, as from an exuberance of matter, which crowds upon my choice too abundantly, to admit of that contracted form, in which I think it prudent to make an experiment of public taste, before I venture upon a work of more labour and extent. A review of Homer's scene of action leads naturally to the consideration of the times, when he lived; and the nearer we approach his country and age, the more we find him accurate in his pictures of nature, and that every species of his extensive Imitation furnishes the greatest treasure of original truth to be found in any Poet, ancient or modern.

Desirous, however, of giving some idea of what occurred to us, as travellers through those countries, where Homer had formed his conception of things, I submitted my thoughts upon this head some years ago to the judgment of a friend^a, who, from his peculiar interest in the subject, his known respect for the public, and his approved tenderness for me, had a right to that compliment.

The sketch, which I communicated to him in the form of a Letter, was so fortunate as to meet with his approbation. But while, in compliance with his wishes, I was preparing it for the press, I had the honour of being called to a station, which, for some years, fixed my whole attention upon objects of so very different a nature, that it became necessary to lay Homer aside, and reserve the further consideration of my subject for a time of more leisure.

^a The late Mr. Dawkins.

However,

However, in the course of that active period, the duties of my situation engaged me in an occasional attendance upon a nobleman^b, who, while he presided at his

^b The late Earl of Granville. Being directed to wait upon his Lordship, a few days before he died, with the preliminary articles of the Treaty of Paris, I found him so languid, that I proposed postponing my business for another time: but he insisted that I should stay, saying, it could not prolong his life, to neglect his duty; and repeating the following passage, out of Sarpedon's speech, he dwelled with particular emphasis on the third line, which recalled to his mind the distinguishing part, he had taken in public affairs.

Ω πεποι, ει μεν γαρ πολεμον περι τονδε φυγοντες,
 Αιει δη μελλοιμεν αγηρω τ' αθανατω τε
 Εσσεδ', ΟΥΤΕ ΚΕΝ ΑΥΤΟΣ ΕΝΙ ΠΡΩΤΟΙΣΙ ΜΑΧΟΙΜΗΝ,
 Ουτε κε σε φελλοιμι μαχην ες κυδιανειραν*
 Νυν δ', εμπης γαρ κηρες εφερασιν θανατοιο
 Μυριαι, ας εκ εφι φυγειν βροτον, εδ' υπαλυξαι.
 Ιομεν'

Il. xii. 322.

Could all our care elude the gloomy grave,
 Which claims no less the fearful than the brave,
 For lust of fame, I should not vainly dare
 In fighting fields, nor urge thy soul to war.
 But since, alas ! ignoble age must come,
 Disease, and death's inexorable doom ;
 The life, which others pay, let us bestow,
 And give to Fame, what we to Nature owe.

POPE'S HOM. Il. xii. 387.

His Lordship repeated the last word several times with a calm and determinate resignation: and after a serious pause of some minutes, he desired to hear the Treaty read; to which he listened with great attention: and recovered spirits enough to declare the approbation of a dying Statesman (I use his own words) on the most glorious War, and most honourable Peace, this nation ever saw.

Majesty's

Majesty's councils, reserved some moments for literary amusement. His Lordship was very partial to this subject; and I seldom had the honour of receiving his commands on business, that he did not lead the conversation to Greece and Homer. He desired to see the Letter here mentioned, and was pleased to approve my method of treating his favourite Poet. He advised me to publish the substance of what I had written, changing the epistolary style and form into that of a more regular dissertation; and extending the work, from materials of the same sort (of which I laid a specimen before him) into a more general Commentary upon Homer.

I think, that I am justified in following only the first part of this advice: for I consider it not only respectful to him, for whom I write, but more prudent with regard to myself, to trust these extracts from my eastern observations to the Reader's indulgence, in their present contracted state, before I venture farther, even under the sanction of his Lordship's respectable opinion. If the manner in which this Essay is received, encourages me to proceed, I shall, with more confidence, extend and methodise the work, upon the plan his Lordship proposed; if not, there is already too much of it.

At present we shall confine our inquiry to Homer's Mimetic Powers; for, whether we consider him as Geographer, Traveller, Historian, or Chronologer, whether his Religion and Mythology, his Manners and Customs,

or his Language and Learning, are before us; in these several views his Imitation alone is the great object of our attention. We shall admit his ancient title of Philosopher only as he is a Painter ^c. Nor does it come within our plan to examine his pictures, except so far, as their truth and originality are concerned.

His sanguine admirers may perhaps alledge, that of all poets he stands least in need of this sort of illustration; that the accuracy of his descriptions is too striking to want any comment: which, while it explains, also damps and extinguishes the true spirit and fire of his imagery; and that his natural and unaffected manner carries with it those obvious marks of original invention, which discover (at first sight, or not at all) that the picture has been faithfully taken from life.

Admitting the justness of this encomium in its utmost extent, it will surely be allowed, that he enters most into the spirit of the Copy, who is best acquainted with the Original. If, therefore, we would do the Poet justice, we should approach, as near as possible, to the time and place, when and where, he wrote. This applies more properly to the *Odyssæy*; for, as that Poem is more descriptive of private and domestic life, so its beauties are more local, and its paintings are often of that finished kind, which produces resemblance and cha-

^c See the distinction of the Essay at page 6.

rafter out of very trivial incidents; and these delicate touches, though essentially concerned in making out the likeness, are so minute, as to escape observation, if the copy and original be not confronted.

May not this, in some degree, account for that superiority, which the Iliad has assumed over the Odyssëe for many ages? a superiority, which, if I am not mistaken, must still gain ground, in proportion to our distance from, and ignorance of, the times, which the Poet describes. For, supposing their merit equal, that Poem must longest survive, which abounds most in the great tragic passions, and partakes least of the fluctuating manners of common life. It may, perhaps, be alledged on the other hand, that, in ^d an early competi-
tion

^d Madam Dacier, in her Preface to the Odyssëe, says, “ Il est constant, que le jugement de l’Antiquité sur ses deux Poëmes est, que celui de l’Iliade est d’autant plus beau que celui de l’Odyssëe, que la valeur d’Achille est supérieure à celle d’Ulysse; c’est ce que Platon nous apprend dans le second Hippias, où Socrate dit à Eudicus, qu’il avoit souvent ouï porter ce jugement à son pere Apemantus.” I wish the Reader would turn to the passage, on which this confident appeal to the judgment of Antiquity is founded; I am persuaded, he will see, that Madam Dacier has been mistaken in the single instance, which she produces of an ancient preference of the Iliad to the Odyssëe; and that this learned Lady has not sufficiently attended, either to the grave irony, which is the character of this dialogue, or to the sense of the particular passage to which she alludes. Socrates advances no opinion of his own here, nor does he seriously refer to the opinion of Apemantus; but, for argument’s sake, he slyly suggests a topic, which he knows will engage the sophist’s vanity, and takes occasion thence to exhibit a humorous caricatura of the pedantic presumption,

tion between the two Poems, the judgment of antiquity was favourable to the Iliad. But I believe, that, whatever weight such a preference ought to have, it can be traced no higher than Longinus, whose partiality for this Poem (which, however, is but slightly marked) seems founded, partly in his own genius, and, perhaps, a little in that of his age, when the modes of life differed so much from those of the Heroic times. It is

sumption, bad taste, and absurd reasoning, of that set of men. Nor is the valour of Achilles under consideration in this ridiculous dispute. The word *αμεινω*, which, in its early signification, frequently alluded to mere strength and courage, might indeed have been equivocal, had not all ambiguity been removed, by a thorough explanation, in the subsequent part of the dialogue, where Socrates asks Hippias, which of the two, Achilles or Ulysses, he preferred? and in what the one excels the other? *ποτερον αμεινω; και κατα τι;* Hippias answers the first question by saying, that he thinks Achilles the best (*αριστον*) of the Grecians; and the second, by observing, that he excels as much in plainness and truth, as Ulysses does in duplicity and falsehood. The veracity of the heroes of the Iliad and Odysses being thus ludicrously laid down as the test of their merit (in which that of the two Poems is absurdly involved), Socrates proceeds to demonstrate, with much ironical sophistry, that Achilles has no claim of preference under this title. In short, if any conclusion at all could be drawn from a detached paragraph of this dialogue, with regard to the judgment of Antiquity, upon the merit of those two Poems, it would be rather unfavourable to M. Dacier's opinion, and could only amount to this, that the dogmatical presumption of the Sophists (who had arrogantly assumed a right of decision in every province of Literature) is exposed, on this occasion, by Plato, for preferring the Iliad to the Odysses, upon principles of criticism, equally void of taste and reason. I must also observe, that Aristotle, Horace, and Quintilian, the great professed Critics of antiquity, make no such distinction that I can find; nor does Virgil (the best of all critics on Homer, and his most distinguishing admirer) discover any partiality of this kind.

not extraordinary, that a critic, of his fire and imagination, should prefer a pathetic drama to a moral story, and kindle at pictures of passions, which he had often felt, though indifferent to the representation of manners, he never saw. But I cannot help thinking, that the *Odyſſey*, conſidered in its intereſting character, as a picture of life, muſt have been moſt generally reliſhed, by the age and country, to which it was addreſſed ; and that, if it has contributed leſs to the Author's fame in later times, it is becauſe the peculiar preciſion, and cloſeneſs of its minute representation, as well in manners, as landſcape, muſt find fewer modern judges, in proportion to our ignorance of the private characters, familiar occurrences, and domeſtic ſcenery of the heroic ages : while the *Iliad*, addreſſing itſelf more univerſally to the paſſions, in animated pictures of human nature, appeals more forcibly to thoſe feelings, which are common to every age and country.

I muſt confeſs I am a little ſurpriſed, there ſhould ſtill be ſo large a field open for obſervation, of this kind ; and, particularly, that thoſe who have affected to diſcover ſo perfect a ſyſtem of morals and politics in Homer, ſhould have beſtowed ſo little conſideration upon the character of the times for which this inſtruction was calculated. For, though the Poet's age, and that of his great critic, have never been properly diſtinguiſhed by any author, I have yet met with, I will venture

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ture to say, that they differed as much, with regard to their reigning virtues and vices, their state of police and degree of civilization, their modes and tastes, in short, the great business and leading pleasures of life, as we do in these respects, from our Gothic ancestors in the days of Chivalry and Romance.

I believe the truth is, that Homer's deep political and ethic plan has been carried much farther than he intended: his great merit, as an instructor of mankind, seems to be that of having transmitted to us a faithful transcript, or (which is, perhaps, more useful) a correct abstract of human nature, impartially exhibited under the circumstances, which belonged to his period of society, as far as his experience and observation went. Nor should we think less respectfully of the important moral lessons which may be collected from the Iliad, and still more from the Odyssey: for elegant imitation has strange powers of interesting us in certain views of Nature. These we consider but transiently, till the Poet, or Painter, awake our attention, and send us back to life with a new curiosity, which we owe entirely to the copies which they lay before us. In a judicious collection of those pleasing and instructive sketches of manners, where the artist is happy in his choice, the arrangement, and the truth of his characters have this advantage over real life, that they are susceptible of a more deliberate
 examination

examination and close comparison, than the fleeting and dispersed originals will admit.

Should the fate of the experiment, I am now making, convince me of a common error, of which I have too much reason to be apprehensive, viz. that of mistaking a fondness of my subject for a knowledge of it, I again promise to stand corrected, and to spare at least the Public, if not myself, any further trouble on this head; hoping that my partiality to those romantic scenes of heroic action will meet with some indulgence, especially from those, who can imagine, and therefore, I hope, excuse, that species of enthusiasm, which belongs to such a journey, performed in such society, where Homer being my guide, and Bouverie and Dawkins my fellow-travellers, the beauties of the first of Poets were enjoyed in the company of the best of friends. However wild and unreasonable these feelings may appear to judgments of a more sober cast, I must still confess a return of their influence, whenever I indulge in a grateful review of those happy days, which we passed together, examining the Iliad on the Scamandrian plain, and tracing Ulysses, Menelaus, and Telemachus, through the various scenes of their adventures, with the Odysssey in our hands.

Had I been so fortunate as to have enjoyed their assistance, in arranging and preparing for the Public, the substance of our many friendly conversations on this subject,

ject, I should be less anxious about the fate of the following work. But whatever my success may be in an attempt to contribute to the amusement of a vacant hour, I am happy to think, that though I should fail to answer the expectations of public curiosity, I am sure to satisfy the demands of private friendship; and that, acting as the only survivor and trustee for the literary concerns of my late fellow-travellers, I am, to the best of my judgment, carrying into execution the purpose of men, for whose memory I shall ever retain the greatest veneration. And though I may do injustice to the honest feelings, which urge me to this pious task, by mixing an air of compliment in an act of duty, yet I must not disown a private, perhaps an idle consolation, which, if it be vanity to indulge, it would be ingratitude to suppress, viz. that as long as my imperfect descriptions shall preserve from oblivion the present state of the Troade, and the remains of Balbeck and Palmyra, so long will it be known that DAWKINS and BOUVERIE were my friends.

ROBERT WOOD.

DIRECTIONS to the BINDER.

HOMER's Head, to front the Title Page.

Map of Troy, to front R r 2, or p. 207.

The ruined bridge, to front p. 324.

The ancient bridge below Bornabaschi, to front p. 326.

The ruins near Troja Nova, to front p. 341.

A N
E S S A Y
O N T H E
O R I G I N A L G E N I U S
O F
H O M E R.

ORDER AND DISTRIBUTION OF
THE SUBJECT.

THOUGH the account we have given the Reader of that particular object of our eastern tour, which furnished the subject of this essay, may not have entirely reconciled him to our views; yet, I hope, the following fragment of ancient history will soften the imputation of singularity, or affectation, to which, I fear, our undertaking may, in some measure, be exposed:

as it will, at least, shew, that we were not the first who thought of going to Troy to read Homer.

When Æschines the orator was banished from Athens to Rhodes, by his victorious rival in eloquence, we are told, that one of the amusements of his exile was an excursion to Troy, accompanied by his friend Cymon, in order to examine that celebrated spot, with the Iliad in his hand. We also learn, that a very romantic piece of gallantry, in which his fellow-traveller rashly engaged on the banks of Scamander, in violation of the laws both of decency and hospitality, interrupted the execution of this scheme; and perhaps by these means deprived us of a valuable piece of criticism on the geography of that poem. The Reader, who wishes to see this tale prettily embellished, must look for it in Fontaine: in the mean time, I shall refer him to the annexed note ^a for this curious history, and the authority, upon which it is founded.

His

^a Without vouching for the authenticity of those letters of Æschines, in which this story is contained, I shall take from them the following abstract of it. It was an annual custom at Troy, that the girls,

His attempt, however unsuccessful, suggests this observation in our favour, viz. that about the most refined period of Greek letters, when Homer was best understood, and most relished, an Athenian of distinguished taste, who was his great admirer, had formed such expectations from reading the Iliad on the Scamandrian plain, that he undertook a voyage to Troy expressly with that view.

Whatever the object of our plan was, the Reader is only interested in the fruits which it

girls, who were to be married that year, should, on a certain day, bathe in the Scamander, and consecrate their virginity to the god of that river. Æschines and Cymon were admitted, as strangers, to see this ceremony, at a proper distance. When Callirhoë, a beautiful young lady of a good family, went into the river, and pronounced the words used on that occasion, viz. "Scamander, take my virgin flower;" Cymon, who had concealed himself among the bushes, dressed like a river god, stepped forth, and answered, "The god Scamander accepts your present, and prefers you to all your companions," and retired with her. A few days after, when the new-married couples assisted at the festival of Venus, the travellers also attended upon that occasion; and Callirhoë discovering Cymon, innocently pointed him out to her friend as the god Scamander, to whom she had consecrated her virginity. The affair was by these means discovered, and Æschines and his friend were obliged to make their escape.

may have produced ; and of this he will be best enabled to form his own judgment, by comparing our Survey of the Troade, with the account which he finds of it in the Iliad. If at the same time he will take the pains of extracting from that Poem a mere journal of the siege of Troy, stripped of all poetical embellishments, he will find, that, notwithstanding the great share, which fancy has had in the composition, it contains in general a consistent narrative of military events, connected, and supported, by that due coincidence of the circumstances of time, and place, which History requires.

But as his accuracy is by no means confined to the principal scene of his action, I beg leave, before we come to the examination of our map of Troy, to take a view of that exactness, which runs through his descriptions of every kind. If, upon the whole, the observations which I shall offer on this head have any weight, I think they will support this conclusion ; viz. That however questionable Homer's superiority may be, in
some

some respects, as a perfect model for composition, in the great province of Imitation he is the most original of all Poets, and the most constant and faithful copier after Nature.

I was the more confirmed in this judgment, the more I referred myself back to the state of society and manners of that early period. I therefore examined the materials of the Iliad and Odysssey, not only where they were collected, but, as nearly as possible, in the same order, in the same light, and under the same point of view, in which I imagine they presented themselves to the Poet's choice; making it the chief object of my enquiry to investigate the several circumstances, and various relations of this kind, which may be supposed to have influenced his conception of things.

Though, from what has been already said, the Reader will not expect strict method in this specimen; yet, for the sake of perspicuity, it may not be amiss to lay before him the general order, which I propose to observe in treating my subject.

I shall

I shall begin by offering a few conjectures with regard to HOMER'S COUNTRY. In the next place I shall take into consideration his TRAVELS. These I shall chiefly deduce from his NAVIGATION and GEOGRAPHY; the first will lead to some observations on his WINDS, as the second will introduce a review of that part of Mr. POPE'S TRANSLATION, which relates to this matter: and each of these articles will give me an opportunity of vindicating HOMER from some unmerited Imputations of Inaccuracy. I shall also enter into an examination of his RELIGION, MYTHOLOGY, MANNERS, and CUSTOMS; and, having considered him as an HISTORIAN and CHRONOLOGER, shall take a view of his LANGUAGE and LEARNING: and shall conclude with his pretensions as a PHILOSOPHER; confining myself however, in what I shall offer under these different heads, to what is connected with my subject, and may serve to throw light upon his ORIGINAL GENIUS.

HOMER'S

HOMER'S COUNTRY.

THE opinion of the Ancients in respect to that old subject of controversy, the Place of Homer's Birth and Education, though it coincides, in a great measure, with my judgment on that head, is not so much the object of this inquiry, as it is to learn, if possible, from the Poet himself, where his fancy began to open to the wide field of matter, which he so happily collected and arranged in that wonderful epic form, that still continues to hold the first rank among compositions of genius. What occurs to me, in favour of the most received opinion, that he was an Asiatic, probably an Ionian or Æolian^a, and perhaps of Chios or Smyrna, is as follows.

^a When we consider in how narrow a compass those contiguous countries lie, I believe we shall think it a little too nice to determine that Homer belonged to the latter upon the authority of his language, and some customs which appear Æolian.

If

If we survey his Map of the world with attention, I think we may discover, that his first impressions of the external face of Nature were made in a country east of Greece, at least as far as we may be allowed to form a judgment from his describing some places under a perspective, to which such a point of view is necessary: as for example, when he places the Locrians beyond Eubœa. This piece of geography, though very intelligible at Smyrna or Chios, would appear strange at Athens or Argos.

His description of the situation of the Echinades, beyond Sea, opposite to Elis^b, has something equivocal in it, which is cleared up, if we suppose it addressed to the inhabitants of the Asiatic side of the Archipelago. But if, with Mr. Pope^c, we understand the words beyond Sea

^a *Il. ii. 522.*

^b Περὶν ἄλος, Ηλιδος ἀντα. *Il. ii. 626.*

^c “ And those who view fair Elis o’er the Seas

“ From the blest Islands of th’ Echinades.” *Il. ii. 759.*

Madam Dacier has adopted the Construction for which I contend, without the least idea of applying it to the purpose for which I quote the passage. Her words are, “Ceux de Dulichium et des autres Echinades, de ces Isles sacrées qui sont à l’extrémité de la mer vis à vis de la cote d’Elide.”

to relate to Elis, I think we adopt an unnatural construction to come at a forced meaning; for the old Greek Historians tell us, that those islands are so close upon the coast of Elis, that in their time many of them had been joined to it by means of the Achelous, which still continues to connect them with the continent, by the rubbish, which that river deposits at its mouth, as I have had an opportunity of observing.

I think I can discover another instance of this kind in the fifteenth book of the Odyssæy, where Eumæus, the faithful servant of Ulysses, is described, entertaining his disguised master with a recital of the adventures of his youth. He opens his story with a description of the island of Syros, his native land, and places it beyond or above Ortygia. Now, if we consider that Ithaca was the scene of this conference between Ulysses and Eumæus, it will appear, that the situation of Syros is very inaccurately laid down; for, in reality, this island, so far

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from

from being placed beyond, or farther from, Ithaca than Ortygia is, should have been described as nearer to it. An ingenious friend thinks that *καθυπερθεν* may relate to the latitude; and that Homer meant to describe Syrus, as north of Ortygia: but I cannot help thinking that the application of high to northern latitudes is much later than Homer.

As therefore the same description would have been perfectly agreeable to truth, had it been made in Ionia, is it not reasonable to suppose, that the Poet received his early impressions of the situation of Syros in that part of the world, and had upon this occasion forgotten to adapt his ideas to the spot, to which the scene is shifted?

If my conjecture is thus far admitted, I beg leave to proceed to a further use of it, in attempting to throw some light on this obscure expression, *ὅθι τροπαι ἠελιοιο*. It is important to that part of the Poet's character now under consideration, to have his sense of these words restored,

red, if possible; for they have been urged as an argument of his gross ignorance of Geography, by those, who think they relate to the latitude of Syros, and that this description places that island under the Tropic.

Without entering into that labyrinth^d of learning,

^d Mr. Pope and Madam Dacier's notes will point out to those, who have further curiosity on this head, some of the different explanations which have added perplexity to this passage.

Od. xv. 440. " *There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace*

" *The Sun's diurnal, and his annual race.*

" The words in Homer (says Mr. Pope) are *τροπαι ήελιοιο*, or *solis conversiones*. M. Perrault insults the Poet as ignorant of Geography, for placing Syros under the Tropic; an error (says he) which Commentators in vain have laboured to defend, by having recourse to a Sundial of Pherecydes on which the motions of the Sun (the *τροπαι ήελιοιο*) were designed. The last defence would indeed be ridiculous, since Pherecydes flourished three hundred years after the time of Homer: No one (replies Monsieur Boileau) was ever at any difficulty about the sense of this passage; Eustathius proves that *τρέπεσθαι* signifies the same as *δουειν*, and denotes the setting of the Sun; so that the words mean, that Syros is situate above Ortygia, on that side where the Sun sets, or westerly, *προς τα δυτικα μερη της Ορτυγιας*. It is true, Eustathius mentions a bower, *Σπηλαιον*, in which the conversions of the Sun were figured. This indeed would fully vindicate Homer; but Bochart and others affirm, that Eustathius is in an er-

learning, with which the critics on both sides have so much embarrassed this passage, that it is

“ror; and that Syros is so far from lying to the west, or *προς τροπας*
 “*ἡελιοιο*, that it bears an eastern position both with respect to Ithaca
 “and Delos: How is this objection to be answered? Bochart, p. 411.
 “of his *Geographia sacra*, explains it by having recourse to the bower
 “mentioned by Eustathius, in which the motions of the Sun were
 “drawn. Pherecydes (says Hesychius Milesius) having collected the
 “writings of the Phœnicians; from the use of them alone, without
 “any instructor, became famous in the world by the strength of his
 “own genius: And Laertius writes, that an Heliotrope made by him
 “was preserved in the Island of Syros. Thus it is evident, that he
 “borrowed his knowledge from the Phœnicians, and probably his skill
 “in Astronomy; they being very expert in that science, by reason of
 “its use in their navigation. Why then might there not be a ma-
 “chine which exhibited the motion of the Sun, made by the Phœ-
 “nicians, and why might not Homer be acquainted with it? It is
 “probable that Pherecydes took his pattern from this Heliotrope, which,
 “being one of the greatest rarities of antiquity, might give a great
 “reputation to Syros, and consequently was worthy to be celebrated
 “by Homer, the great preserver of Antiquities. *Fallitur igitur* (says
 “Bochart) *Eustathius, cum vult intelligi, quasi sita sit Syrus ad occidentas*
 “*partes Deli; cum contra Deli ad ortum sit Syrus, non ad occasum; &*
 “*rem sic se habere ex ipso Homero patet, apud quem Eumæus in Ithacâ,*
 “*Syriam asserit esse trans Delum, quo nihil dici potuit falsius, si Syrus sit*
 “*ad occasum Deli.* If this answer appears to any person too studied
 “and abstruse, the difficulty may be solved, by supposing Eumæus
 “speaking of Delos as it lay with respect to Syrus, before he was car-
 “ried

is hard to say, whether Homer has suffered most by his ignorant enemies, or his officious friends;

“ ried from it ; for instance, if Syrus lies on the east of Delos to a
 “ man in Ithaca, both Ithaca and Delos will lie on the west of Syrus
 “ to one of that Island. I would therefore imagine that Eumæus
 “ speaks as a native of Syros, and not as a sojourner in Ithaca, and
 “ then Delos will lie towards the sun-setting, or *προς ἡλίου τροπας*.
 “ But this last I only propose as a conjecture, not presuming to offer
 “ it as a decision.” So far Mr. Pope.—Madam Dacier observes as
 follows :

“ Voici un passage très-important. M. Despreaux, dans ses *Re-*
 “ *flexions sur* LONGIN, a fort bien refuté la ridicule Critique que
 “ l’Auteur du Parallele, homme qui étoit très ignorant en Grec, en
 “ Latin, & sur-tout en Geographie, avoit faite contre Homere, c’est-
 “ à-dire, contre le pere de la Geographie, en l’accusant d’être tombé
 “ dans la plus énorme bevûë qu’un Poëte ait jamais faite : *C’est, dit-il,*
 “ *d’avoir mis l’Isle de Syros & la Mer Mediterranée sous le Tropicque ;*
 “ *bevûë, ajoute-t-il, que les Interprètes d’Homere ont tâché en vain de*
 “ *sauver, en expliquant ce passage du Cadran que le Philosophe Phere-*
 “ *cyde, qui vivoit trois cens ans après Homere, avoit fait dans cette Isle.*
 “ Il n’y a rien-là, qui ne marque l’ignorance grossiere de cet Auteur ;
 “ car il est également faux & qu’Homere ait placé l’Isle de Syros sous
 “ le Tropicque, & qu’on ait jamais voulu justifier ce Poëte, en expli-
 “ quant ce passage du Cadran de Pherecyde qui ne fut fait que trois
 “ cens ans après. Mais je suis fâchée que M. Despreaux, qui réfute
 “ cette malheureuse Critique avec tant de raison & de solidité, ne soit
 “ pas mieux entré lui même dans le véritable sens de ce passage, &
 “ qu’il se soit laissé tromper par une note d’Eustathe, qui lui a per-
 “ suadé

friends; I beg to carry the Reader, for a moment, to the Asiatic side of the Archipelago,
in

“ suadé que ces mots *ὄθι τροπαι ἡελιοιο*, veulent dire que l’Isle de Syros
 “ est au Couchant de Delos ; car c’est ainsi qu’Eustathe l’a d’abord expli-
 “ qué, *κειμενη προς τροπας ἡλιω, ητοι προς τα δυτικα μερη της Ορτυγιας, &c.*
 “ C’est-à-dire, que Syros est située au Couchant du Soleil, au Couchant
 “ de l’Isle d’Ortygie ; Car *τροπεσθαι*, se tourner, se dit du Soleil pour *δύνειν*,
 “ se coucher. M. Despreaux devoit voir que cette explication est in-
 “ soutenable, car il est absolument faux que l’Isle de Syros soit au
 “ Couchant de Delos. Aucun Geographe ne l’a jamais dit. Et
 “ comment Homere auroit-il pû le dire dans le même vers où il a dit
 “ *Ορτυγιας καθυπερθεν*, au dessus de l’Isle d’Ortygie ; ce qui est au dessus
 “ ou au-de-là, de cette Isle par rapport à Eumée qui est à Ithaque, ne
 “ peut jamais être au Couchant. Voici comme en parle le savant
 “ Bochart dans sa Chanaan, Liv. I. Chap. xiv. *Eustathe se trompe quand*
 “ *il veut que par ἡλιω τροπας, on entende le Couchant, comme si l’Isle de*
 “ *Syros étoit au Couchant de Delos, car au contraire elle est au Levant & non*
 “ *au Couchant de cette Isle. C’est la situation que lui donnent les Geogra-*
 “ *phes, & il ne faut que ce vers d’Homere pour prouver que c’est sa véritable*
 “ *position, puisqu’ Eumée, qui est à Ithaque, assure que Syros est au dessus,*
 “ *au de là d’Ortygie, ce qui seroit très-faux si elle étoit au Couchant de*
 “ *Delos ; Eumée auroit plutôt dû dire en deçà. Il falloit donc s’en tenir à la*
 “ *seconde explication qu’Eustathe a ajoutée dans sa même Remarque:*
 “ *D’autres, dit-il, expliquent ce passage en disant que dans l’Isle de Syros*
 “ *il y avoit un autre qui marquoit les conversions du Soleil, c’est-à-dire les*
 “ *Solstices, & qu’on appelloit l’autre du Soleil par cette raison. Et voilà*
 “ *ce qu’Homere entend par ces mots, où sont les conversions du Soleil.*
 “ Voilà la seule véritable explication ; elle merite d’être éclaircie.

“ Nous

in order to examine, whether a view of things under that perspective, offers any appearances, to

“ Nous voyons par ce passage même que les Pheniciens avoient fait un
 “ long sejour dans l’Isle de Syros; il est certain que le nom même de
 “ *Syros* vient des Pheniciens, comme nous le verrons plus bas, & nous
 “ savons d’ailleurs que les Pheniciens étoient très-savans en Astrono-
 “ mie, c’est de-là qu’il faut tirer l’explication de *τροπαι ἡελιοιο*, & il
 “ est aisé de voir que c’est *ἡλιοτροπιον*, l’heliotrope, c’est-à-dire le
 “ Cadran, & par-là Homere nous apprend que les Pheniciens avoient
 “ fait dans cette Isle un Cadran dont le style ou l’aiguille, par le
 “ moyen de son ombre, marquoit les solstices. Et comme c’étoit
 “ une chose fort rare & fort merveilleuse dans ces temps-là, Homere,
 “ fort curieux & fort instruit de tous ces points d’Antiquité, la marque
 “ comme une rareté qui distinguoit cette isle. Bientôt après les
 “ Cadrans furent plus communs. Environ six vingts ans après Ho-
 “ mere, l’Ecriture sainte fait mention, 4 Rois. xx. 2. d’un Cadran
 “ qui étoit à Jerusalem, & qu’on appelloit le Cadran d’Achas, sur
 “ lequel Dieu fit, en faveur de ce Prince, que l’ombre retrograda de
 “ dix degrez. Ce Cadran marquoit les heures, & non les solstices.
 “ Il y avoit donc des Cadrans avant celui de Pherecyde, qui ne fit le
 “ sien à Syros que deux cens ans après celui d’Achas, & trois cens ans
 “ après celui des Pheniciens, & par conséquent, pour expliquer ce
 “ passage d’Homere, on n’a eu recours qu’à ce Cadran des Pheni-
 “ ciens, & nullement à celui de Pherecyde qu’Homere n’a jamais
 “ connu. Il me semble que cela est prouvé. Mais il y a plus en-
 “ core, c’est qu’il y a bien de l’apparence que ce Cadran, que Phe-
 “ recyde fit à Syros trois cens ans après Homere, ne fut fait que sur
 “ les découvertes des Pheniciens; car Hesychius de Milet, dans le
 “ livre qu’il a fait de ceux qui ont été celebres par leur érudition, nous
 “ assure

to which those words can be naturally applied, without violence to their literal meaning.

No part of our tour afforded more entertainment, than the classical sea prospects from this coast, and the neighbouring islands; where the eye is naturally carried westward by the most beautiful terminations imaginable; especially when they are illuminated by the setting sun, which shews objects so distinctly in the clear atmosphere, that from the top of Ida I could very plainly trace the outline of Athos on the other side of the Ægean sea, when the sun set behind that mountain. This rich scenery principally engaged the Poet's attention: and if we consider him as a painter, we shall generally find his face turned this way. In the infancy, and even before the birth of Astronomy, the distinct variety of this broken horizon would

“ assure que Pherecyde, *qui étoit de Syros même, n'eut point de maître,*
 “ *Et qu'il se rendit habile en étudiant quelques livres secretes des Pheniciens*
 “ *qu'il avoit recouvrez. Je me flate que ce passage d'Homere est assez*
 “ *éclairci, & c'est par le secours que M. Dacier m'a donné.*”

naturally

naturally suggest the idea of a sort of Ecliptick to the inhabitants of the Asiatic coast and islands, marking the annual northern, and southern progress of the sun. Let us suppose the Ionians looking south-west from the heights of Chios at the winter solstice, they would see the sun set behind Tenos, and towards Syros, the next island in the same south-west direction: and having observed, that when he advanced thus far, he turned back, they would fix the turnings (*τροπαι*) of the sun to this point. I submit it, as matter of conjecture, whether this explanation does not offer a more natural interpretation of the passage than any, which has yet been suggested.

In pursuance of the same method of illustrating Homer's Writings and his Country from each other, I shall draw some conjectures with regard to the place of his birth, or at least of his education, from his similes. Here we may expect the most satisfactory evidence, that an enquiry of this obscure nature will admit. It

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is from these natural and unguarded appeals of original genius, to the obvious and familiar occurrences of common life, that we may not only frequently collect the custom, manners, and arts of remote antiquity; but sometimes discover the Condition, and, I think, in the following instances, the Country of the Poet.

I shall begin with that beautiful comparison of the wavering and irresolute perplexity of the Greeks, to an agitated sea; and take this passage into consideration the more willingly, as it has given occasion to some severe strictures on the Poet's Geography.

• Ὡς δ' ἀνεμοὶ δυοῦ ποντοῦ ορίετον ἰχθυοῦντα,
 ΒΟΡΕΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΖΕΦΥΡΟΣ, ΤΩ ΤΕ ΘΡΗΚΗΘΕΝ ΑΗΤΟΝ,
 Ἐλθόντ' ἐξαπίνης· ἀμυδὶς δὲ τε κύμα κελαινον
 Κορβυεται, πολλοὺν δὲ παρεῖ ἄλα Φυκὸς ἐχευαν.
 Ὡς ἐδαίζετο θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν.

Il. ix. 4.

As from its cloudy dungeon issuing forth
 A double tempest of the west and north
 Swells o'er the sea, from Thracian's frozen shore,
 Heaps waves on waves, and bids the Ægean roar;
 This way and that, the boiling deeps are tost;
 Such various passions urg'd the troubled host.

POPE.

Here

Here we not only find a happy allusion, but, if I am not mistaken, a beautiful sea piece: and in order to do justice to its perspective, we should place ourselves on the spot, or in the point of view, where the Painter made his drawing; which will only answer to some part of the Asiatic coast, or its islands.

It would be a false and affected refinement to suppose, that the simile acquires any additional beauty by the discovery of a real landscape in those lines. The Poet's purpose, which was to paint the struggle of wavering indecision in the people, distracted between a sense of honour and of danger, and alternately resolving to fly or to stay, is, no doubt, completely satisfied in the general image, which he makes use of. But though his meaning went no farther, I am not less of opinion, that, upon this occasion, his imagination suggested to him a storm, which he had seen: and having myself had more than once an opportunity of observing from the coast of Ionia the truth of this

picture in every circumstance; I cannot help giving it as an instance of the Poet's constant original manner of composition, which faithfully (though perhaps in this case inadvertently) recalls the images, that a particular striking appearance of Nature had strongly impressed upon his youthful fancy, retaining the same local associations, which accompanied his first warm conception of them.

But lest my testimony, as an eye-witness of the exact correspondence of this copy to the original, from which I suppose it taken, should not be satisfactory; I would propose a test of this matter, upon which every Reader will be enabled to form his own judgment. Suppose a painter to undertake this subject from Homer, he will find each object, not only clearly expressed, though within the compass of four hexameters; but its particular place on the canvas distinctly marked; and the disposition, as well as perspective, of the whole ascertained, with a precision of out-line, from which it
is

is impossible to depart. The Thracian mountains must form the back ground, thence the tempest is to burst on the Ægean sea, which has its proper stormy colouring; while the Ionian shore covered with sea-wreck, by a succession of waves breaking on its beach, will make the fore-ground, where the Poet views, admires, and describes the whole.

A curious and attentive observer of Nature is perhaps most liable to retain those marks of locality, which it has been my object to trace in the Poet. An elegant conception of external forms cannot easily divest itself of the precise order and arrangement of objects, with which it has at any time connected the idea of beauty; and this may account for that Ionian point of view, to which Homer's scenery is so much adapted, sometimes even in violation of those rules, which critics have since laid down in regard to unity of place.

We shall find this negligence more excusable, if we credit that probable tradition of
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the wandering Bard's chanting his compositions to his countrymen, in the manner practised at this day in the East: a tradition which is favoured by the dramatic cast of the Iliad and Odyſſey. I have often admired the spirited theatrical action of Italian and Eastern poets, when they recite in the open air, pointing out each object of description in an imaginary scenery of their own extemporaneous creation, but availing themselves at the same time of every real appearance of Nature within view of their Audience, that is applicable to their subject, and connects it, in some degree, with the spot, where the recital is made.

After what has been said on this passage, I should think it needless to mention the censure Eratosthenes passed upon it, had it not been so frequently produced to the Poet's disadvantage, and urged as a proof of his ignorance in geography. The error laid to his charge is, that of making the West wind blow from Thrace. I rest his defence against this accusation upon
the

the obvious answer of Strabo to so strange a piece of criticism ; which is, in substance, that Eratosthenes mistakes the Poet, when he concludes from this passage, that he asserts, as a general proposition, that the West wind blows from Thrace ; the wind here mentioned blows from the Thracian mountains upon the Ægean sea, and must of course be a West wind in respect to Ionia.

For though this may not be exactly true, if we are to talk with the precision of a modern seaman ; yet we should remember, that in Homer's time there were but four points to the compass. I must observe, that there are but two passages in the Iliad, where winds are described as blowing from the Thracian mountains across the Ægean upon the Asiatic coast ; and in both cases Boreas and Zephyrus are employed together.

But to proceed to other instances of the same kind : when the formidable march of Ajax with his corps is compared to a threatening storm

storm coming from the sea, I must observe (as an illustration, not of the obvious beauties of the simile, but of the Poet's country) that this can be no other than an Ionian, or, at least, an Asiatic storm; for it is raised by a West wind, which, in those seas, can blow on that coast alone.

When, again, the irresistible rage of Hector is compared to the violence of Zephyrus buffeting the waves, we are not immediately reconciled to this wind's appearance in that rough character, so little known to western climates, and so unlike the playful Zephyr of modern Poetry. But, before we condemn Homer as negligent of nature, we should see, whether he is not uniform in this representation, and whether this is not the true Ionian character of Zephyrus.

The very next simile of the same book is as much to our purpose, where the numbers, tumult, and eagerness of the Grecian army collecting to engage, are compared to a growing storm,

storm, which begins at sea, and proceeds to vent its rage upon the shore. The West wind is again employed in this Ionian picture; and we shall be less surpris'd to see the same allusion so soon repeated, when we find, that of all the appearances of nature, of a kind so generally subject to variation, there is none so constant upon this coast. For at Smyrna the West wind blows into the gulph for several hours, almost every day during the summer season, generally beginning, in a gentle breeze, before twelve o'clock, but freshening considerably towards the heat of the day, and dying away in the evening. During a stay of some days in this city, at three different times, I had an opportunity of observing the various degrees of this progress, from the first dark curl on the surface of the water, to its greatest agitation, which was sometimes violent. Though these appearances admit of variation, both as to the degree of strength, and the precise time of their commencement, yet they seldom fail entirely. This

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wind,

wind, upon which the health and pleasure of the inhabitants so much depend, is, by them, called the Inbat. The Frank merchants have long galleries running from their houses, supported by pillars, and terminating in a chiosque, or open summer-house, to catch this cooling breeze, which, when moderate, adds greatly to the Oriental luxury of their coffee and pipe.

We have seen how happily the Poet has made use of the growing violence of this wind, when he paints the increasing tumult and agitation of troops rushing to battle; but, in a still silent picture, the allusion is confined to the first dubious symptoms of its approach, which are perceived rather by the colour, than by any sound or motion of the water, as in the following instance :

When Hector challenges the most valiant of the Greeks to a single combat, both armies are ordered to sit down to hear his proposal. The plain, thus extensively covered with shields, helmets, and spears, is, in the moment of this solemn

solemn pause, compared to the sea, when a rising western breeze has spread a dark shade over its surface.

When the Reader has compared the similes, I have pointed out, with the original materials, which I have also laid before him, I shall submit to his consideration, as a matter of doubtful conjecture, whether the Poet, thoroughly familiarized to those Ionian features, may not have inadvertently introduced some of them in the following picture, to which they do not so properly belong. When Eidothea, the daughter of Proteus, informs Menelaus at Pharos of the time, when her father is to emerge from the sea; the circumstance of Zephyrus, introduced in a description of noon, darkening the surface of the water, is so perfectly Ionian, and so merely accidental to the coast of Egypt, that I cannot help suspecting the Poet to have brought this image from home.

It would add no small weight to this reasoning, could I find Virgil on my side of the ques-

tion. His judgment with regard to the Greek Poet deserves more attention, than the highest critical authority we can appeal to on this subject; and if we examine the imitations he has left us of some of the last passages to which I have referred; we shall see, that in each instance, he has omitted the original Ionian circumstance of Zephyrus.

In claiming the sanction of so respectable an opinion, I do not conclude from this omission (what is immaterial to my purpose) that Virgil saw these pictures were Ionian: it is enough that he saw they were not Italian; as every reader must, who considers that Zephyrus is not the stormy wind of that country, and that it does not blow directly on any part of the Italian coast.

In short, though Virgil copied Homer, perhaps, more than is generally imagined, at least more than I have seen pointed out; yet, in the instances before us, he copied him no farther, than he found Homer and Nature to agree;
and

and if he rejected the circumstance, which I call local, and retained only the general beauties of his great master, in so doing, he very properly accommodated himself to the natural history of his own country. Thus the compliment of the Italian to the Ionian Poet is such, as we might expect from the superior judgment of the one to the superior invention of the other.

There is a passage in the *Odyssæy*, where Zephyrus appears as a freezing, and Eurus as a thawing wind. One would think it impossible for a Roman Poet to introduce these winds in this manner, as it is so contrary to their established character in Italy. Yet I am much mistaken if Ovid had not these lines in view, and imitated them, without departing from the ideas of his own climate. Of this the Reader will judge, by comparing them together.

The old fable of a cave in the mountains of Thrace, which was the habitation of the Winds, was most probably taken from Homer.

But

But succeeding Poets, the inhabitants of more western climates, have dropped the particularities of this piece of mythology, which seem to mark it the peculiar growth of Ionia, or that neighbourhood; and are satisfied with the general idea of all the winds dwelling, indiscriminately, in those lofty mountains. Whereas Boreas and Zephyrus are the only Winds he describes as the settled inhabitants of this country; and when, upon one occasion, he assembles them all here, it is at an entertainment in the house of Zephyrus, who appears to be at home, whilst the rest of the company are guests and visitants.

I think, nothing leads us more directly towards the Poet's home, than his general manner of treating countries, in proportion to their remoteness from Ionia, in the style of a traveller, and with that reverence and curiosity, which distance is apt to raise; while this spot, and (which is more remarkable) even the grand scene of action of the Iliad, in its neighbourhood,

hood, seem to have been too familiar and indifferent for description, and are introduced, not upon their own account, but from their inseparable connection with facts. And yet it is very observable, that, whenever they appear, it is always under that exact and just representation, which shews a perfect knowledge of the ground.

Should it be objected, that, notwithstanding the distance of Egypt and Phoenicia from Ionia, we do not find the *speciosa miracula* of the Poet in those countries, nor are they chosen for scenes of the marvellous; it may be answered, that they were too much distinguished, the one by Arts, Commerce, and Navigation, and the other by Fertility, Population, and Science, to have admitted any representations, not coinciding, in some measure, with these notorious circumstances. While the unfrequented southern coast of Italy, with the island of Sicily, and the kingdoms of Alcinous and Ulysses, though not more distant, were less known, and
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of course gave a freer scope to the Poet's fancy.

The *major è longinquo reverentia* is an observation too well founded in Nature to have escaped Homer. And though I may be accused of refinement, should I carry my conjectures on this head so far as to suspect, that it influenced him in chusing the hero of one of his poems from a country very remote from his own; yet I must observe, that, whether it was a matter of accident or choice, of all the Grecian princes, who went to Troy, Ulysses was the most distant; it certainly was a circumstance, which accommodated the Odysssey particularly to an Ionian meridian.

Were I to be guided by the faint lights which History has thrown upon this subject, I should say, that Homer was of Chios or Smyrna; and were I, upon the same information, to take a part in that competition, which has subsisted above two thousand years between these places, I should declare for the first: though,
when

when I collect my evidence merely from the Iliad and Odyssey, I see nothing that can be seriously urged on either side of that question. To say the truth, whatever has been offered, as mere conjecture, to shew that the Poet was an Asiatic, cannot, without refinement, be alledged as a reason to determine whether he was an Ionian or an Æolian, and still less to decide between Chios or Smyrna: if, therefore, I am at all prepossessed in favour of either place, I am ready to give it up for any other part of the Asiatic coast, from Rhodes to Tenedos, which future travellers may, upon more careful examination, find most worthy of that honour ^f.

^f See Homer's Mythology, page 33, 36, for further illustration of his country.

HOMER'S TRAVELS.

AND FIRST HIS NAVIGATION.

HAVING taken a short view of the Poet at home, if, according to our proposed order, we follow him abroad; I think, we shall find him a traveller of curiosity and observation.

If our conjectures with regard to his country are well founded, he lived in an island, or upon the sea-coast. The Asiatic Greeks did not spread into the inland parts of that continent, but confined themselves to the shore, looking towards their mother country with an attachment and respect unknown to later ages.

When the great objects of human pursuit, whether wealth, power, honours, or science, were not to be acquired at home, it is not reasonable to suppose, that a turn of mind like Homer's, should sit down contented with the poverty, ignorance, and inglorious insignificance

cance of his native spot. For though ambition or avarice might not, yet curiosity, which we cannot doubt his possessing in a great degree, would naturally draw him forth into the active scene. An impatient thirst after knowledge was in those days only to be satisfied by travelling. The tranquillity and security essentially necessary to studious retirement were unknown to that state, either of letters or government, at least in Greece. Homer therefore had only the great book of Nature to peruse, and was original from necessity, as well as by genius.

Few countries of the same extent have so much sea-coast as Greece. The intercourse of its inhabitants with other countries, or with one another, was mostly kept up by water. There is no land-journey regularly described, either in the Iliad or Odyssey, except that short one of Telemachus from Pylos to Sparta; and even there Nestor submits to the choice of his guest

the alternative of going by sea, though much the longest way.

In this state of things, and considering how much the various occupations of high and low life were then confined to one rank and order of men, it is not extraordinary, that we should find the Poet so conversant in the language and manners of the sea, and so knowing, as well in the business of the ship-wright as of the sailor. Indeed, it is only by following him through each of those arts, that history is furnished with the earliest account of them. Let us therefore first examine his method of building, and next his manner of navigating a ship.

If we compare the naval force of the different states of Greece at the time of the Trojan war with that of the same countries afterwards, when Ægina, Corinth, and Athens, had turned their thoughts to trade and navigation; we shall find, that their progress as maritime powers did not correspond with the account of their
shipping,

shipping, as it is accurately stated in Homer. It is natural to suppose that Corinth, from its advantageous situation, should be among the first cities on the continent of Greece, after that country began to have a settled government, which would enrich itself by commerce ; and it was undoubtedly a great maritime power. But this was long after the heroic, or, which is the same thing, the mystical age of Greece. When Corinth furnished her quota under Agamemnon, who from the extent of sea-coast, and from the islands under his command, was by far the greatest naval power of that time, she is barely mentioned, without any distinction to point out the consideration which she afterwards acquired in maritime affairs. The fleet, which assembled at Aulis, consisted of open half-decked boats, a sort of galleys with one mast, fit for rowing or sailing. They were launched, and drawn up on the beach occasionally, or fastened on shore, and served as mere transports for soldiers, who were at the same time mariners. There is nothing

thing in Homer that alludes to a regular sea engagement; or that conveys any idea of that manner of carrying on war. Those poles of an extraordinary length, which he mentions, seem to have been used as an offensive weapon against boarding; and may have been of service in landing. When Achilles or Ulysses talk of commanding naval expeditions, and destroying cities with a fleet: or when Hercules is said to have taken Troy with six ships only; the allusion is to the numbers, which they carried to act on shore. Their boats had a rudder, and ballast, but no anchor. The name of it does not occur in Homer; nor was the use of that instrument known. If we may form a judgment from the raft of Ulysses, there was no metal employed; the timbers being fastened by pegs. In short, we know, from good authority, that ship building had not made any great progress in Greece before the expedition of Xerxes. The best accounts that we can collect of the naval engagements of those times is a proof of this.

It

It is, no doubt, difficult to describe and understand accounts of battles. But whoever places himself on the spot where the Persian monarch is said to have viewed the battle of Salamis, and at the same time reads the account, which Herodotus, or that which Æschylus, an eye-witness, gives in his *Perfæ*, of that action; and considers the shoalness of the water, and the small space into which so many ships were crowded, must think contemptibly of the marine engagements in those days.

Agreeably to this account of ancient ships and ship-building, we see, that though Homer's seamen are expert in their manœuvre, yet they are confined to the precautions of that timid coasting navigation, which is at this day practised in the Mediterranean, in slight undecked vessels, unfit to resist the open sea. Their first care is, to venture as little as possible out of sight of land, to run along shore and to be ready to put in, and draw up their ships on the beach,
if

if there is no port, on the first appearance of foul weather.

We find Nestor, Diomedes, and Menelaus, consulting at Lesbos upon a doubt, which this imperfect state of the art alone could suggest. The question was, Whether, in their return to Greece, they should keep the Asiatic coast till they past Chios, which was the most secure, but the most tedious way home ; or venture directly across the open sea, which was the shortest, but the most dangerous ?

I was present at a consultation on the same sort of question, near the same place, and under the same circumstances, as far as they concern the illustration of our present inquiry. It was in the year 1742, that I happened to be on board His Majesty's ship the Chatham, then escorting the Turkey trade from Constantinople to Scanderoon. When we were between Mytelene and Scio, and due north of the latter, in a dark night, with a brisk gale at north-west, our
Greek

Greek Pilot proposed pushing through the channel of Scio; but our officers, not caring to engage so much with the land in that narrow passage, preferred the broad course, and, hawling close up to the wind, left the island of Scio on the larboard side.

If we compare our situation with that of Nestor, Diomedes, and Menelaus, who had the ablest pilot of that age on board, we see, that though our destinations were different, our point under deliberation was so far precisely the same, that we both doubted between the shortest and the surest way. They ventured to sea, though it was most dangerous; we chose it, because it was most safe; and this constitutes one of the great differences between ancient and modern navigation.

As the most respectable Commentators on Homer have, by their different constructions of part of the passage here alluded to, deviated from that plain sense of the Poet, in which, I think, his accuracy consists, I shall enter a little

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more largely into the consideration of the lines, which describe this navigation, in order to ascertain their meaning. Though it may carry us a little beyond the object immediately before us, it will only anticipate a specimen of his historical accuracy (one of the proposed objects of this Essay), and will shew how cautious we should be not to disturb that delicate connection and thread of circumstances, which are seldom disranged, even by the smallest alteration, without endangering his truth and consistence.

Should we, in this view, strip those lines of their poetical dress, and extract a plain narrative or journal from the most literal and natural construction of the whole passage, it will, with very little paraphrase, and that entirely furnished by the Poet himself, produce the following piece of ancient history.

“ The demolition of Troy being at length
“ accomplished, Agamemnon and Menelaus,
“ disagreeing about the farther measures to be
“ taken

“ taken upon that occasion, summoned a coun-
“ cil, in order to state their different opinions.
“ But this was done precipitately, in the even-
“ ing, an unseasonable time for deliberation,
“ when the chiefs, rising from table, and heat-
“ ed with wine, came improperly prepared for
“ considerations of that moment. The event
“ corresponded with the irregularity of such a
“ proceeding; for, the council being assem-
“ bled, Menelaus proposed, that they should
“ embark for Greece: but Agamemnon advi-
“ sed them first to appease the wrath of Miner-
“ va by a hecatomb. This produced a debate,
“ which ended in much altercation between
“ the brothers; so that the assembly broke up
“ tumultuously, without coming to any reso-
“ lution.

“ The Grecian army was, by these means,
“ divided into two parties, one espousing the
“ sentiments of Agamemnon, and the other
“ those of Menelaus. Of the last were Nes-
“ tor, Diomede, and Ulysses; who, having

“ embarked their women and baggage, failed
“ next morning, with a fair wind, for Te-
“ nedos; where they sacrificed to the gods, to
“ grant them a propitious voyage.

“ Here a second dispute arose; for Ulysses’s
“ party, paying court to the commander in
“ chief, returned to Troy. But Nestor, fore-
“ seeing the mischiefs likely to happen, pru-
“ dently continued his voyage the second day,
“ with Diomede, leaving Menelaus behind at
“ Tenedos. However, Menelaus followed
“ and overtook them the same day at Lesbos,
“ where he found them deliberating whether,
“ in that advanced season, it were most advise-
“ able to consult their safety in the slower me-
“ thod of coasting round by Mimas and the
“ Cyclades, or to risk the shorter passage, and
“ make directly for Eubœa.

“ They preferred the most expeditious
“ course, and sailed the third day from Lesbos;
“ and the wind proving very favourable, they
“ made Geræstum that night.

“ Having

“ Having so prosperously accomplished the
“ most dangerous part of their navigation,
“ they offered a sacrifice of thanks to Nep-
“ tune ; and the wind being still fair, they pur-
“ sued their voyage the fourth day along the
“ coast of Greece. As they passed the Su-
“ nian promontory, Menelaus had the misfor-
“ tune to lose his pilot Phrontis, who died sud-
“ denly. Though impatient to see his native
“ country, he stopped here to perform the fu-
“ neral rites, and pay the last duties to his
“ skilful friend ; but Diomedes continued his
“ voyage, and arrived the same day at Argos,
“ being the fourth from his departure from
“ Troy. Nestor took the advantage of the
“ same fair wind, which carried him to Pylos.”

This journal of four days navigation is so entirely Homer, and Homer only, the circumstances of time and distance correspond so exactly with one another, and bore so scrupulous an examination, when we made the same voyage, that I shall not trouble the Reader with
any

any other confutation, either of Eustathius or Madam Dacier's sense of this passage. The first was led into an error by mistaking the meaning of one word, and the last, by mistaking the distance from Lesbos to Eubœa; but both by attending more to grammatical criticism than to the genius and character of the Poet, and of the age when he wrote.

Though, from the general character, by which Homer constantly distinguishes the Phœnicians as a commercial seafaring people, it has been naturally supposed, that he was indebted to that nation for much of his information with regard to distant voyages: yet I think we cannot be at a loss to account for the Poet's acquiring at home all the knowledge of this kind, which we meet with in his works. We know the Ionians were among the earliest navigators, particularly the Phocæans and Milesians. The former are expressly called the discoverers of Adria, Iberia, Tuscany, and Tartessus. They are said to be the first
among

among the Greeks, who undertook long voyages; and we find they had established an intercourse, and even formed close and friendly connections, on the ocean, as early as the time of Cyrus the Great. The Milesians were so remarkable for colonization, that they had founded above seventy cities in different parts of the world, and were respectable at sea long before the Persian invasion. Nor can we, except from the resources of their navigation, and commerce, account for their being a match for the Lydian monarchy, as early as the reign of Gyges; up to which period, from that of Croesus, we can trace these two nations almost constantly at war.

When we consider how far back this leads us, upon explicit historical authority, and without the equivocal and suspicious aid of etymology, upon which Phœnician colonization is so much extended; it does not seem probable that Homer's countrymen should have arrived at so flourishing a state of navigation, so soon after

after his age, without having made some progress towards it before his time.

To what extent navigation was known to him, either from his own experience or the information of others, is rendered difficult to ascertain, by the constant method he follows of preserving some reality in his wildest fictions. The history of the Cimmerians seems to have furnished some of his ideas with regard to the gloomy infernal shades, and the distinguishing features in the Phæacian character are Phœnician. Even where he is most fabulous, he takes the hint from tales propagated before his time, and embroiders his own variations on that extravagance, which had already the sanction of popular credulity. Thus the Poet's genius, though impatient of the limited knowledge of his age, is unwilling to abandon Nature ; and when he seems to desert her, it is in favour of some pleasing irregularity, which vulgar opinion had substituted in her place. This mixture of something, that was either
true,

true, or commonly believed to be so, with regard to the scene of his fabulous narration, is observable in his description of the islands of Circe, Æolus, and, above all, in that of Calypso.

His knowledge of the sun setting in the ocean might fall within the observation even of that confined state of navigation, which we may reasonably allow to his age; for it is probable, that not only the Phœnicians, but the Poet's countrymen, had passed the Pillars of Hercules, and of course could, as eye-witnesses, report such an appearance. But how he could learn that the sun rises out of the ocean, or that the globe is entirely surrounded by water, was so much beyond my idea of his experience, that I continued to attribute this knowledge to guess and conjecture; till upon further consideration I was induced to think, that this account of the ocean, upon which so much of his geographical science is founded, will, if rightly understood, rather convince us of his ignorance up-

on that head ; and that the ocean in his time had a very different meaning, from that which it now conveys. Nor am I surpris'd that, so much later, Herodotus should treat this idea of an ocean, where the sun rises, as a poetical fiction.

The country and manners of Phœnicia and Egypt were so well known to Homer, and so frequently alluded to in his works, that it is needless to point out the particular passages. He also mentions Arabia and Libya, but probably did not know the extensive southern limits : neither were they described particularly by the best of the Grecian Geographers. I should imagine, that he was not a stranger to Judea and its inhabitants : but as the authorities for such an opinion may not interest every reader, I shall refer them, who have any curiosity, to the annexed note ^a.

He

^a There is nothing in Greek or Roman fable more known than the story of Typhon, who was vanquished by Jove's thunder, and buried in
in

He has left us traces of his knowledge of particular places beyond Thebes to the South,
as

in fire and sulphur. The Poets differ about the place, where this Giant was defeated. I am of opinion that the plain of Sodom and Gomorrah was the original scene of this fable. My notions are not merely drawn from the striking similitude between the Greek and Jewish accounts of the impiety which drew down the divine vengeance, but I found my opinion on the testimony of Homer and Hesiod, who place the scene of this fable *εν Αριμοις*. Now, the *Αριμοι* are confessedly the same as the Syrians, as we learn from the Septuagint, Strabo, Josephus, Eustathius, Bochart, and others. There is moreover a line belonging to the passage, I have quoted, which, I believe, is not to be found in any MSS of Homer. We meet with it imperfectly preserved by Strabo; but it has been happily corrected by Dr. Taylor:

Χωρῶ ἐνι δρυοεντι Ἰδης ἐν πιονι δημῶ

Which he renders,

Χωρῶ ἐνι δρυοεντ' Ἰουδης ἐν πιονι δημῶ. Strabo, L. 13, p. 929.

See Taylor's Civil Law, p. 554.

The passage thus restored fixes the bed of Typhon to the spot in the world most adapted to such a fable, and adds such propriety to the simile, that I think it is impossible for any man who has read Homer with pleasure, to visit the Dead Sea and plains of Sodom and Gomorrah, without feeling a lively reflection of this passage. When Virgil carries the scene of this fable to the neighbourhood of Naples, it is evident that he had this passage of Homer in view, and that out of the two words *εν αριμοις* of the Greek Poet he forms Inarime, a name which was afterwards affixed to the little island before called Pithensa

as far as Æthiopia. Beyond this was Æthiopia, the country of the Blacks, divided into two parts, containing most probably, as Strabo thinks, the S. E. and S. W. part of the southern globe, as divided by the Red Sea. But the extremities of the earth here, as elsewhere, are terminated by the river ocean.

That the Euxine or Black Sea was known to Homer, I have not the least doubt; of this his description of the Hippomolgians, and other nations in its neighbourhood, affords sufficient proofs; nor can we draw any conclusions to the contrary, from his neither mentioning this sea, nor Sinope and other cities on its coast. It is strange how far the argument of the Poet's ignorance of places, because he does

Pitheensa, and Anoria. It is at this day called Ischia. Whether this was by mistake or design, is doubtful. However, I think it probable, that Virgil introduced this novelty into the Roman mythology, and entailed it upon his poetical successors, Ovid, Lucan, Claudian, Statius, &c. In this they seem to have acquiesced implicitly without examination: for Pliny roundly asserts (l. 3. c. 6.) the Inarime of Naples to have been so called by the Greek Poet,

not

not expressly mention them, has been carried ; but never more unreasonably than in the present case. Is it a fair way of judging to suppose, that Homer did not know Sinope, a colony founded by his own countrymen, the Ionians, rather than conclude, either that he did not think proper to take notice of this, more than of several other places not less considerable : or that it was founded after his time, or that he could not, without gross anachronism, introduce, in the times of the Trojan war, the name of a city built so long after ?

I shall not therefore conclude, because the flux and reflux of the Adriatic must have been matter of particular curiosity to the Asiatic Greeks, that Homer must necessarily have mentioned it : for we see that he takes no notice of the tides of the Euripus, so much the object of admiration in all times, though this strait, where the Grecian fleet first assembled, is in the midst of those countries, which he has described with accuracy.

I must

I must nevertheless observe, that though some marks of most other parts of the Mediterranean seas are to be found in the Iliad or Odyfsey, yet I could not discover the least trace of the Adriatic in either of those Poems^b; for we find no country mentioned nearer its coast than Thesprotia. If the assertion of Herodotus be true, that this sea was discovered by an Ionian, there may be great propriety in the

^b I may be told, that the evidences by Hesiod, and also by Homer (if the *Batrachomyomachia* be his) are explicit, who makes Phisignathus boast his birth to have been bred upon the banks of the Eridanus. It is true: but this was another river: for the Padus had not acquired its Greek name so early: nor was the story of Phaethon yet invented. Pliny fixes this fable no farther back than Æschylus. Herodotus mentions the name; but in a way, that shews he could not think of any such river in the Adriatic (see Bayer and Polybius): nor can I find that this old historian, who had collected so much of other places, was at all acquainted with this gulph; which, considering its vicinity to Greece and Italy, affords less classical information than any other part of our travels. Supposing Phæacia to have been the same as Corfu, Homer's account of it implies, that he knew nothing farther that way: for they are called *εσχατιαι*, which can only be understood with relation to the east.

Poet's

Poet's silence, as it is a mark of his care to distinguish the state of things in his own age, from that of the times he describes. I must own, that, besides the positive testimony of the oldest profane historian, there are other reasons which incline me to believe, that the coasts of this gulf on either side, above the Ceraunian mountains, was not frequented by the first navigators: though not so distant as many places better known. I shall give the reader the observations upon which this conjecture is founded, as they occurred to me in travelling on the Dalmatian and Italian sides of this gulph, but more particularly in a voyage I made, in May 1742, from Venice to Corfu, in a Venetian ship, the *Ercole e Rosa*, commanded by Captain Rota, a skilful seaman and a good pilot, who had forty years constant experience of that navigation.

The difference between the Dalmatian and Italian coasts of the Adriatic is remarkable; that of Dalmatia is bold and steep, with some
good

good ports for the largest ships; few rivers are discharged on this side of the gulph, the disposition of the ground being such, that almost all the moisture of the adjacent countries is carried into the Danube.

The Italian shore, on the contrary, is low, flat, and shoaly. Here great rivers from the Alps, and rapid torrents from the Apennines, carry much rubbish into the sea, and by these means cause the land to encroach upon it; so that all the harbours, from Venice to Brundisium, are, in some degree, affected by it, according to their vicinity to those rivers and torrents. Ravenna, once the principal harbour, and naval station of the Romans on that side of Italy, being in the neighbourhood of the Po, has been long since choked up, and the place where it was situated is now a league from the sea.

The general navigation of this sea (particularly that part occupied by the Venetians) is regulated agreeably to this description of it.

Ships

Ships avoid the Italian shore, and indeed seldom get sight of it, though in a very clear day I could discover the mountains of Ancona from those of the opposite side. They keep the Dalmatian coast, in sailing for Venice, till they get as high as Rovigno, a considerable town in Istria, where, in summer, they take in a pilot to conduct them across the Gulph to Venice; but, in the dangerous winter months, they keep the coast as far up as Parenzo, ten miles higher, before they steer directly for Venice; and signals are erected alternately at Rovigno and Parenzo, according to the season of the year, to signify at which of those places pilots attend. This is the common method observed by ships bound for Venice; though English vessels, accustomed to a bolder navigation, often despise those precautions.

Causes, so permanent and invariable in their nature, must have always produced like effects; and we may reasonably suppose the Italian shore to have been ever dangerous, and

I

that

that the method of keeping close upon the Dalmatian coast was still more strictly observed in the early and imperfect state of navigation. This is the course which Virgil makes Antenor take; but with this difference, that, not having the advantage of a pilot, by which the navigation is at present abridged, he proceeded along shore to the furthest extremity of the Gulph. This was, no doubt, the Roman course in Virgil's time; but, as the necessity of this circuitous navigation could never occur to those, who are unacquainted with the nature of the Italian and Dalmatian coasts, and have formed their ideas of Antenor's voyage from maps alone, it is not extraordinary, that the Commentators should not have been able hitherto to comprehend the geography of one of the most original descriptions of the *Æneid*. Let us see the passage; the Poet's vindication seems to lie within a narrow compass, and is not foreign to our subject.

Antenor

Antenor potuit, mediis elapsus Achivis,
 Illyricos penetrare finus atque intima tutus
 Regna Liburnorum, & fontem superare Timavi;
 Unde per ora novem, vasto cum murmure montis,
 It mare præruptum, & pelago premit arva sonanti.
 Heic tamen ille urbem Patavi fedesque locavit
 Teucrorum ^c. Æn. i. 242.

A direct course must have brought Antenor
 to Padua, before he could reach the Timavus,
 con-

^c As these lines are before me, I cannot help observing that they are not understood by any Commentator I have seen; and the words *mare præruptum* seem to signify literally the sea, and not figuratively the river Timavus, as they are commonly explained. And that this is not a description of the river running with violence into the sea, but of the sea bursting into the channel, and even the sources of the river, and overflowing the land. I wonder how this escaped so constant a reader, and so perfect a judge of Virgil, as my late friend Mr. Holdsworth, who had been upon the spot, and must have seen that the Timavus is a collection of several springs, joining in one stream, which discharges itself into the sea quietly, after a very short course, when the tide is out; but, when the tide comes in, it not only beats back the fresh water with noise and violence, but overflows the land, rendering the passage impracticable till it ebbs again, as travellers between Vienna and Venice frequently experience. I think, that by restoring this sense of the passage, we recover the peculiar propriety of expression; which is more justly descriptive of the breaking waves of a returning tide, than of the canal of a river, however violent.

contrary to the description in those lines. Various conjectures have been formed to solve this difficulty : some charge Virgil with a mistake in Geography, others change the situation of Padua, rather than give up the Poet ; while a third conjecture, in defiance of the universal testimony of antiquity, and in spite of Virgil's circumstantial description, changes the river, and will have the Brent to be the Timavus of the ancients. But they all agree in the obscurity of the passage. Now, if, as we have stated it, agreeably both to the principle and practice of this navigation, we bring Antenor along the Illyrian shore, he must pass the Timavus, before he arrives at the place of his destination : and his progress will be marked exactly in that

The singularity of this communication of the Adriatic with the sources of the Timavus, and the situation of the river at the head of the Gulph, gave rise to a very ancient vulgar opinion, which tradition has preserved among the common people to this day. They say that the Timavus supplies the Adriatic with water, and they therefore call it the MOTHER of that sea : Polybius took notice of this (see Strabo, lib. v.) *επιχωρις πηγην και μητερα θαλαττης ονομαζειν τον τοπον*, and the peasants at this time call it, La madre del mare.

order,

order, in which it is laid down by the Poet; viz. Illyrium, Liburnia, Timavus, Padua.

But whatever Virgil and the Roman historians may say either of Antenor's or Diomedes's voyage, it is without any authority from Homer, who is so far from taking any notice of the Adriatic, or Ionian gulph (for that was the name under which we might expect to find it in the old writers) that he appears to make Ithaca the boundary of his geographical knowledge that way, and seems to treat Corcyra with that ambiguity, which we have observed him to affect, when he gets into his fabulous regions. And the more I consider the coasts of this sea, its dangerous navigation, and the inhospitality and ferocity of the inhabitants of the north-east coast, at all times, from the Sinus Flanaticus (Gulph of Quarner) to the Acroceraunian mountains inclusively, the more I am inclined to think, it was but imperfectly known to Greece for some time after the Trojan war.

HOMER'S

HOMER'S WINDS.

UNDER the article of Homer's Country, we have anticipated some observations on the Winds of that climate : but his Navigation naturally engages us in a further consideration of this subject. We find only those which blow from the four cardinal points expressly mentioned in the Iliad and Odyſſey. In the ſtorm which Neptune prepares againſt Ulyſſes, ſailing from Calypſo's iſland, they are all introduced in the following order, Eurus, Notus, Zephyrus, and Boreas.

So imperfect a liſt of Winds correſponds with the coaſting navigation of thoſe times, and forbids us to expect more than a general idea of their nature and qualities. Some of the Ancients imagined, that the Poet meant to expreſs a ſubdiviſion of thoſe principal winds by certain epithets ; which they underſtood to convey the
idea

idea (for which it should seem the Greek language had not yet found a name), it is rather to be discovered where he employs two of them together, as in the instances already taken notice of, where Boreas and Zephyrus blow from the Thracian mountains on the Ægean sea; for if we translate them literally, the Northwest, we shall bring that description still nearer to nature and truth ^a.

Taking those Winds in the order in which the Poet has placed them, we find their most remarkable difference of character is, that Eurus and Notus are more mild and gentle, Zephyrus and Boreas more stormy and boisterous. The two first are introduced less frequently than the last; for, as allusions of this kind generally serve to illustrate animated pictures, the characters of Zephyrus and Boreas best suit the Poet's

^a See Martyn's Virgil, 8vo. p. 336. Pliny, H. N. 1. 2. c. 47. See Strabo, p. 608, 609, notes. See Hesiod. Theog. v. 388.

It is extraordinary that Hesiod should omit Eurus, Theog. v. 379, 869. See Strabo, l. 1. p. 28, where the ancient writers upon Winds are mentioned, Thrasylcis, Aristotle, Timosthenes, Bion.

purpose

purpose upon such occasions. Accordingly we find them employed oftener in the Iliad than in the Odyſſey. Eurus is never diſtinguiſhed by an epithet : and Notus only by that of ſwift. They are never repreſented as perſons, except in one inſtance ; they are deſcribed by qualities, the reverſe of thoſe of their antagoniſt winds ; for Eurus is employed in melting the ſnow, which Zephyrus brings down, and Notus covers the mountain-tops with clouds, which it is the buſineſs of Boreas to diſpel.

Zephyrus is called hard-blowing, rapid, the ſwifteſt of all the winds, noiſy, whiſtling or rattling, moiſt, and is repreſented as bringing rain or ſnow.

I find two paſſages in the Odyſſey, which ſeem to give an idea of Zephyrus, different from this general character, and more like the Zephyr of modern poetry. One is in the Poet's deſcription of the Elyſian plain, “ where
“ neither winter's ſnow nor rain are ſeen, but
“ a continual reſreſhing Zephyr blows from
“ the

“the ocean;” the other is in the description of Alcinous’s gardens, where the rich vegetation is ascribed to a constant Zephyr.

When we recollect (what I have above attempted to prove) that the Zephyr of Homer’s country, upon which he must have formed his familiar ideas of that wind, blew from the mountains of Thrace; and that the two instances which I have given, are the only ones in which he describes the qualities of that wind in a distant western climate, instead of contradiction and inconsistency, we discover an extensive knowledge of Nature. For, while he is accurate in his accounts of the known appearances of his own country, he accommodates his descriptions to what he had either heard or seen of distant parts. To have used the gentle Zephyr, in a simile addressed to Ionian readers, or to have given the character of severity to that of western climates, would have been equally incorrect.

Both Zephyrus and Boreas make their appearance as persons; they are equally concerned in kindling the funeral pile of Patroclus, at the prayer of Achilles. Xanthus and Balius, the immortal horses of that hero, are the offspring of Podarge and Zephyrus; a pedigree worthy of Homer's imagination, but, perhaps, like many of his fictions, engrafted upon some tradition, which had popular prejudice on its side. For a strange notion prevailed, that upon the coast of the Atlantic ocean mares were impregnated by the West wind; and however ridiculous this opinion may appear, it has been seriously supported by grave and respectable writers of a more enlightened age. As to the amours^b of Zephyrus and Flora, they are the natural mythology of later poets and of a more western climate, and unknown to Ionia and Homer.

^b Ver erat; errabam: Zephyrus conspexit; abibam.
Insequitur; fugio; fortior ille fuit.

Boreas

Boreas is rapid and violent, but serene and drying; dispels clouds, brings hoar frost and snow, is clear, pure, wholesome, and reviving.

This account of Boreas coincides much more with that of modern poetry, and is in general more agreeable to the experience and observation of western climates, than that of Eurus and Zephyrus.

It has probably been owing to Homer's example, that succeeding Poets and Artists, though in other respects departing from his description of those subjects, often represent Boreas and Zephyrus as persons. Their air and figure are familiar to us in the machinery of modern Poetry, as well as in the works of Painters and Sculptors, who give the character of harsh and aged severity to one, and that of youthful beauty and gentleness to the other; while Eurus and Notus, especially the latter, appear so seldom in a human shape, and are so

imperfectly described, that we have no determinate idea of their dress or persons.

We find the figures of the four principal with the four intermediate Winds, in alto relievo, bigger than life, on the octagon tower of Andronicus Cyrrhestes at Athens. As this is the only monument of antiquity, that I have seen, where they are so well executed and so well preserved, I examined them with a view to those conformities between the Poet and the Sculptor, by which we sometimes trace the borrowed idea to its original source, but with little success. Whether it was that the Artist was confined to certain ideas by the intended use of this tower, which was particularly adapted to the meridian of Attica; or that his invention was inferior to his execution, I shall not venture to judge; but there is a sameness of attitude, drapery, and character, in those Winds, that would make it very difficult to distinguish their names, were they not inscribed over each figure.

I can-

I cannot finish this article without comparing Homer and Virgil as navigators, in order to shew the superior accuracy of the former with regard to those minute circumstances of nature and truth. The winds which Homer employs in his Poem are adapted to the ship's sailing, to which Virgil does not pay the same attention. I shall confine myself to one instance. The description of the departure of Æneas from Carthage is not only inconsistent with truth and possibility, in this respect, but contradictory to itself. He sails in the morning with a West wind, which is very improperly called favourable ^c; but before he is out of sight of Carthage, we find him pursuing his course with a North wind, which is still more contrary to his intended course; when, in the evening, he has gotten clear of the land, the wind changes to the West with every

^c Nate Deâ, potes hoc sub casu ducere somnos?

Nec, quæ circumstant te deinde pericula cernis?

Demens! nec ZEPHYROS audis spirare secundos? Æn. iv. 560.

prognostic

prognostic of a stormy night ; Palinurus, in this situation, orders his men to reef their sails and ply their oars ; but, finding it vain to struggle with this West wind, which was before called favourable, he consults the stars in a very dark night, and concluding that he is not far from the coast of Sicily, steers for that island ^d.

^d Interea medium Æneas jam classe tenebat
 Certus iter, fluctusque atros AQUILONE secabat ;
 Mœnia respiciens, quæ jam infelicis Elisæ
 Collucent flammis : quæ tantum incenderat ignem,
 Causa latet : duri magno sed amore dolores
 Polluto, notumque, furens quid fœmina possit,
 Triste per augurium Teucrorum pectora ducunt.
 Ut pelagus tenuere rates, nec jam amplius ulla
 Occurrit tellus ; maria undique et undique cœlum :
 Olli cœruleus supra caput adstitit imber,
 Noctem, hyememque ferens, et inhorruit unda tenebris.
 Ipse gubernator puppi Palinurus ab alta :
 Heu quianam tantî cinxerunt æthera nimbi :
 Quidve, Pater Neptune, paras ? sic deinde locutus
 Colligere arma jubet, validisque incumbere remis ;
 Obliquatque sinus in ventum, ac talia fatur.
 Magnanime Ænea, non si mihi Jupiter auctor
 Spondeat, hoc sperem Italiam contingere cœlo.
 Nec nos obniti contra, nec tendere tantum
 Sufficimus : superat quoniam fortuna, sequamur.

Quoque

Quoque vocat vertamus iter : nec litora longe
Fida reor fraterna Erycis portusque Sicanos,
Si modo rite memor servata remetior astra.
Tum pius Æneas, Equidem sic poscere ventos
Jamdudum, et frustra cerno te tendere contra :
Flecte viam velis.

Æn. v. 1.

HOMER'S GEOGRAPHY;

AND

POPE'S TRANSLATION.

WE can produce no evidence of Homer's travels so satisfactory, as his geographical accuracy, a thorough examination of which we must reserve for a more enlarged plan of this work, if I should be ever able to complete it. For it would be impossible to give this article the consideration it deserves, without exceeding the bounds which we proposed to this Essay. His map of Greece alone would take a volume to do it justice, especially as we followed Homer through that country, under the direction of Strabo, whose judicious commentary upon the geographical part of the Iliad and Odyssey leaves us less reason to regret the loss of twelve books of Apollodorus the Athenian, with

with twenty-three of Menogenes, and the works of several other writers on this subject; among whom Demetrius of Scepsis composed sixty books on thirty lines of the catalogue. So diffusive and extensive an illustration does not, I confess, give a favourable idea of the work: but as an apology for Demetrius (perhaps a compliment to Homer) I must observe, that he lived within sight of Troy, upon an elevated spot, which commanded a view of the great scene of action; and of course he might be more particularly interested in that minute accuracy of his author, which fell so much under his daily observation.

The Reader will be less surpris'd at those voluminous Commentaries on the Catalogue, if he considers how highly the authority of this venerable record was respected, even by the jurisprudence of those times. In some cities it was by law enacted, that the youth should learn the Catalogue by heart. Solon the law-giver appealed to this code, in justification of

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the Athenian claim against the pretensions of the Megareans, when the right to Salamis was so warmly contested by Athens and Megara. And the decision of that matter was at last referred to five Spartan judges, who, on their part, admitted the nature of the evidence. And the affair was accordingly determined in favour of the Athenians, though by a different reading more favourable to their claim. We find three other litigated cases with regard to territorial property and dominion, which are said to have been determined by reference to this original chart.

That Homer should escape so entire, out of the hands of Lawyers and Grammarians, is a piece of good fortune to letters, upon which his friends have great reason to congratulate themselves. For, considering how cruelly both his compositions and the countries they describe have been tortured by barbarous treatment of various kinds, and the changes they have undergone in so great a length of time, his descriptions

scriptions correspond more with present appearances, than could be reasonably expected.

Not only the permanent and durable objects of his description, such as his rock, hill, dale, promontory, &c. continue in many instances to bear unquestionable testimony of his correctness, and shew, by a strict propriety of his epithets, how faithfully they were copied; but even his more fading and changeable landscape, his shady grove, verdant lawn, and flowery mead, his pasture and tillage, with all his varieties of corn, wine, and oil, agree surprisingly with the present face of those countries.

So remarkable a resemblance between periods so distant from each other would induce us to believe, what is not otherwise improbable, that agriculture is pretty much in the same neglected state, in that part of the world, at present, as it was in the time of the Poet. I doubt much, whether his descriptions of this kind could have so well stood the test of our examination, two thousand years ago, in those

days of elegance and refinement, when nature was probably decked out in a studied dress, unlike the elegant dishabille in which Homer and we found her.

But, I must own that great part of the amusement, which we enjoyed in Homer and Strabo's company, on the spot, arose as much from the investigation, as the discovery of the correspondence and resemblance. Nor can I, for that reason, promise the same entertainment to the Reader, should I live to lay before him our further observations on this head; yet I hope my labour will not be entirely lost, if I can raise the attention of future Commentators and Translators to a matter, which has, I think, been too negligently treated. I cannot, perhaps, more effectually point out the use of a more extensive consideration of this subject, than by shewing how much a neglect of it has been injurious to the Poet's truth, to which I shall at present confine myself.

I chuse

I chuse to take the instances, which I shall produce for this purpose, from Mr. Pope's elegant translation, rather than from others of less merit: because I think they must have more weight, when collected from that quarter, to which the Iliad and Odyssæy have the greatest obligations: for though Madam Dacier comes nearest to the Poet's meaning, I believe it will be acknowledged, that of all the languages we know, in which Homer has hitherto appeared, it is in English alone that he continues to be a Poet.

While, upon this occasion, I shall take that liberty with Mr. Pope, which a free enquiry demands, I shall not forget how much is due to so great an ornament of our country; nor am I insensible of the great merit of his very poetical translation. I could with pleasure enlarge upon his improvements of the original, were the beauties of that work as much connected with my subject, as the ungrateful task of finding fault, in which I happen to be engaged:
but,

but, as the scope of this Essay is to vindicate the truth and consistence of Homer's description, the translation comes properly before us only so far, as it contradicts that character.

Now, though it must be acknowledged, that Mr. Pope is the only translator, who has, in a certain degree, kept alive that divine spirit of the Poet, which has almost expired in other hands; yet I cannot help thinking, that those, who wish to be thoroughly acquainted, either with the manners and characters of Homer's age, or the landscape and geography of his country, will be disappointed, if they expect to find them in this translation. Had Mr. Pope preserved the first; viz. the manners and characters, Homer would have continued to speak Greek to most of his English readers. For, though the disguise of several passages in a modern dress may sometimes proceed from his not being very conversant with ancient life and manners; yet he often purposely accommodates his author to the ideas of those, for whom he

he translates ; substituting beauties of his own (as similar as he can bring them to the original) in the room of those which he despaired of making intelligible.

But as a truly poetical translation could not be effected, even by Mr. Pope, without his “ venturing to open the prospect a little, by “ the addition of a few epithets, or short hints “ of description ;” so “ the most valuable “ piece of geography left us, concerning the “ state of Greece in that early period,” has of course suffered by such liberties ^a ; and, when every descriptive epithet in Homer should have been religiously preserved, Mr. Pope’s alterations have produced a new map of his own, and deprived us of that merit of the original which he called upon us to admire. Thus the Græa and spacious Mycaleffus of Homer become by translation,

“ Græa near the main,
“ And Mycaleffia’s ample piny plain.

^a See Pope’s observations on the Catalogue.

Had it been proper to describe the narrow strait of the Euripus, by the name of the main, yet it is not at all distinguished, by such a situation, from several other places mentioned on this shore; and as to the ample piny plain, we searched for it to no purpose. It is, therefore, matter of doubt, whether it existed in the time of Homer, though mentioned by Statius about a thousand years after. Indeed it would be difficult to assign any reason for the addition in the English, except that the rhyme requires that Græa should be near the main in the first line, and that Mycaleſſia (for so the translator was obliged to write it in order to make out the line) owes both to rhyme and measure her piny plain in the second.

When the additional epithets of the Translator are descriptive of some permanent circumstance, as in those lines;

“ From high Trœzene and Mafeta’s plain,

“ And fair Ægina, circled by the main;”

the description (though not Homer’s, and merely introduced

introduced to help out the rhyme and measure) has probably been always true; but when unauthorised, and without consulting his author, he enriches the picture with the fluctuating and transitory circumstances of husbandry, it is less excusable. Thus when he informs us, that the following two places were famous

“ For flocks Erythræ, Gliffa for the vine ;”

and mentions those

“ Who plow the spacious Orchomenian plain ;

he substitutes the state of those countries in the time of Plutarch and Statius, from whom he takes his account of them, for what it might have been in that of Homer, who connects no such ideas of pasture, vintage, and corn, with those names.

In short, those concise, but descriptive, and therefore interesting, sketches of antient arts, customs, and manners, with which Homer has enlivened his map of Greece, cannot be translated faithfully, and at the same time poetically. Mr. Pope has succeeded surprisngly in

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the latter ; but then his study of a flowing and musical versification frequently betrays him into a florid profusion of unmeaning ornament, in which the object is greatly disguised, if not totally lost ; as when, for the grassy Pteleon of Homer, we have,

“ And grassy Pteleon deck’d with chearful greens,
 “ The bow’rs of Ceres, and the sylvan scenes.”

In the same manner the single epithet, noble, which Homer gives the Cephissus, is extended to a complete landscape.

“ From those rich regions, where Cephissus leads
 “ His silver current through the flow’ry meads.”

He is still more lavish of ornament, when he dresses up the Peneus and leafy Pelion of Homer in as much additional finery, as can be well crowded into four lines :

“ Who dwell where Pelion, crown’d with piny boughs,
 “ Obscures the glade, and nods his shaggy brows ;
 “ Or where thro’ flow’ry Tempe Peneus stray’d,
 “ The region stretch’d beneath his mighty shade.”

Here

Here the Translator gives us a picture, not without its beauties; but beauties so much his own, that they retain little of Homer, either as to the subject, or the manner.

We shall say no more at present of the Catalogue, where Rhætor is green, Lilæa fair, and Cynos rich, without any authority from the original; Anemonia has her stately shining turrets, and Corinth her imperial towers, Parrhasia her snowy cliffs, Tarphe her sylvan seats, and Ætylus her low walls, from Pope, not from Homer.

It is owing to these liberties, that we find the old Poet often loaded with English ambiguity, and even contradiction, for which there is no foundation in the Greek; as where Ithaca is sometimes fair, and sometimes barren, and where, in spite of the sandy coast of Pylos in one place, we have, in another,

“ Alpheus’ plenteous stream, that yields
 “ Increase of harvest to the Pylian fields.”

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Besides

Besides those insuperable difficulties which every poetical Translator of Homer has to encounter, when we consider (what it is our great object at present to point out) that he copied from Nature, and trusted to his own observation, we see how this original method of collecting his materials produces a consistent whole out of corresponding parts, every object of description recurring, though in a new light, yet always agreeable to the first idea, which he conveys of it. And when we also consider, that none of his Commentators, since the time of Strabo, have been at the pains of forming to themselves any distinct idea of his geography; it is not surprising, that, when they lose sight of the original, they should be inconsistent, not only with truth, but with themselves.

However, the Translator's representation of the same scene of action under different appearances, in different parts of the poem, falls less under observation, than when the same description

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tion contradicts itself within the compass of a few lines ; as where we see

“ The great Achilles stretch'd along the shore,

“ Where, dash'd on rocks, the broken billows roar ;”

though, in three lines after,

“ Along the grass his languid members fall :”

and yet, after all, the same description, which puts him to sleep, both on the rocks, and on the grass, awakes him ;

“ Starting from the sands.”

Should we give this sleepy Achilles to a painter, he must be strangely puzzled with the hero's rocky, grassy, sandy couch ; a sort of prevarication (if I may use that expression) impracticable upon canvass.

Thus, while the Poet, by judiciously selecting the mere characterizing circumstances of the object which he describes, leaves us fully impressed with truth and reality ; his Translator, over-studious of embellishment, wanders into inconsistency in search of it : nay, sometimes into sudden

sudden contradiction; as when the same picture of the sea is, in one line,

“ The foaming flood ;

and in that immediately following

“ The level surface of the deep.”

Much of this is, no doubt, owing to that unhappy restraint of English rhyme, which so unworthily engrosses his thoughts, that he not only frequently loses sight of his author, but is sometimes even diverted from a just sense of his beauties, and betrayed into an unfaithful translation, of what he perfectly well understood. Of this distracted attention we find a ridiculous effect in that passage of the Iliad, which expresses Hector's eagerness to retrieve the honour of his brother Paris, who had proposed to decide the war by single combat with Menelaus. The spirit of the original is as justly conceived in Mr. Pope's Note, as it is unhappily misrepresented in his Translation; and
both

both together produce the following contradictory medley ; “ Hector stays not to reply to his brother, but runs away with the challenge immediately, with steps majestically slow.”

When these discordant pictures of the same object are thus closely confronted, the falling off is so striking, that we must, in candour, suppose it the work of different hands hastily revised.

It is impossible to account, in any other way, for some of the inaccuracies of the map of Troy prefixed to the English translation. So capital an error as that of discharging the Scamander into the Ægean sea, instead of the Hellespont, is a striking specimen of the careless and superficial manner in which this matter has been treated. Yet this mistake, material as it is, does not seem to mislead the Translator in other respects : for he is as inconsistent with his own incorrect map, as both he and his map are with the real situation of the ground ; and, by not having ascertained any invariable and fixed idea of the scene of action, either true or false, he
has

has led his author into a labyrinth of contradiction, out of which no imaginable disposition of the scene can extricate him.

Thus, when he supposes that the Greeks had not passed the river before the beginning of the sixth book, it is a necessary consequence of such a supposition, that they were, till then, at some miles distance from Troy. But this is inconsistent with that beautiful digression of the third book, where Priam and Helen see the Grecian leaders so distinctly from the walls of that city, as to distinguish the persons and figures of the leaders from the walls of Troy.

In short, this map would not deserve the few lines, which we bestow upon it, were it not for the respectable name of Pope, who, no doubt, trusted this inferior part of his work to unskilful or negligent hands. I was at a loss to account for so much obvious inaccuracy, collected into so small a compass, till I discovered, besides the mistakes of the draughtsman, a certain method and regularity of error, which could belong to
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the Engraver alone, who, by a piece of negligence, not less unpardonable in the artist than fatal to Geography and Homer, has given a map, which reverses the drawing from which it was engraved, and of course changes the respective situation of all the parts, from right to left, and from left to right; so that the Sigeum stands where the Rhœteum should be, and the Scamander runs on that side of Troy which belongs to the Simois.

How so material an oversight should have remained hitherto unnoticed, or how Mr. Pope could contrive to explain his own reversed map^b, is not to our present purpose. To say more on this head, is needless; to have said thus much, on the only chart which has hitherto attempted to illustrate the principal scene of the action of the Iliad, was unavoidable.

It has been already observed, that while places distant from Ionia are marked more distinctly,

^b See Pope's Letters with regard to this map.

as objects of curiosity, the same attention has not been paid to those in the Poet's neighbourhood. Though we find him thoroughly acquainted with the scenery round Troy, these objects are introduced less upon their own account, than as circumstances connected with the action. This I take to be a principal reason, why the correctness of his map of the Troade, opening thus gradually with the story, has hitherto escaped particular observation; and has been taken for granted, upon slight examination. It is scarce to be expected, that a Translator of Mr. Pope's taste could, in the midst of the poetical beauties of the Iliad, submit to a dull patient attention to its mere topographical accuracy ^c.

But

^c Mr Pope was assisted in this part of his work by Mr. Broom, who supplied most of the notes collected from former Expositors of Homer, to which he added some observations of his own. Mr. Pope adopted the whole, and under his daily revision every sheet was corrected. If Mr. Broom really went through the voluminous Commentaries of Eustathius, as is hinted in the introduction to the notes, he must have done it very superficially; and has added very little to what
had

But I shall not trouble the Reader farther on this head, it being my object, not to condemn the Translation, but to justify the Original; where we do not discover, even in the boldest flights of fancy, that careless contradiction of

had been so judiciously done by Madam Dacier, at the same time not acknowledging how much he was indebted to that very learned lady. As to Eustathius, not to repeat what has been so often said in favour of that treasure of Greek learning, from which almost every later illustration of Homer has been gleaned, I shall only observe my disappointment in finding so little in him for my particular purpose. Though a Bishop, and one who is said to have written in defence of the church, he makes no use of the scriptures in his Commentaries. I take it for granted, that he did not understand Latin, or at least that he had not read Virgil; as he makes no use of him. Though an inhabitant of Greece, he trusts for Homer's geography to Strabo, without any additional observations of his own in respect to places in his very neighbourhood. Nor do I find that he visited Troy, though he lived so near it: nor does he remark the changes, or agreement between either the language or manners of Homer, and those of his own age, which we should naturally expect from one so well qualified and situated for forming a judgment of both. When I add to all this, that his Commentaries, in my opinion, contain the dullest and most insipid, as well as the most ingenious and judicious remarks on Homer, I cannot help suspecting, that he was rather the compiler than the author of those criticisms; and that his principal merit is that of having preserved from oblivion some curious observations of writers, whose works have perished since his time.

circumstances, which History, Poetry, and Romance equally disclaim.

But in vain do we attempt to support Homer's character as a Geographer, unless we can rescue him from some severe imputations of inaccuracy on this head, which have gained too much credit by remaining so long unanswered. The accusation of this sort, which seems to have made the greatest impression, relates to the distance he places the isle of Pharos from Egypt. It is incumbent on me to attempt the Poet's vindication against a charge, which has so materially affected his geographical reputation, that he has, in this instance, been abandoned even by some of his best friends.

DESCRIP-

DESCRIPTION of PHAROS
and ALEXANDRIA.

THE lines which have given occasion to so much censure, are those in the fourth book of the *Odyssæy*, where Menelaus, relating to Telemachus his adventures, describes Pharos as situated a day's sail from Egypt^a. Those who saw that this island was not eight stadia, or an English mile from Alexandria, made strong objections to the accuracy of this description.

^a Νῆσοι ἐπεὶ τὰ τίς ἐστὶ πολυκλυσῶ ἐνὶ πόντῳ
Αἰγυπτῶ προπαροῖθε, Φάρον δὲ ἔκικλησκασί,
Τόσσον ἀνευθ', ὅσσον τε πανημερίῃ γλαφυρῆ ἡμῶς
Ἦνυσεν, ἢ λιγυρῶ ἕρος ἐπιπνευσίῳ ὀπισθεν.

Od. iv. 354.

- “ High o'er a gulphy sea, the Pharian isle
“ Fronts the deep roar of disemboguing Nile:
“ Her distance from the shore, the course begun
“ At dawn, and ending with the setting sun,
“ A gally measures; when the stiffer gales
“ Rise on the poop, and fully stretch the sails.”

His

His friends could not help acknowledging that the distance at which he seemed to place that island from the continent did not correspond with the apparent state of things in their time ; but some of his admirers discovered, in this want of correspondence, a new proof of his extensive observation and exactness. Homer, say they, was well acquainted with the constant accession of land to the Delta, by means of the Nile, which must have gradually shortened the distance of Pharos from Egypt^b; and he made allowance for the effects of this operation, from the time of Menelaus with a view to accommodate his description to the period of the Trojan war^c.

Such was the state of this dispute in the times of the Ptolemies and Cæsars. With how little advantage, either to the Poet or his readers, it has been since carried on, may be

^b The word *Αιγυπτός* in Homer always relates to the Nile.

^c *Εντευθεν δε (απο Κανωβικης ζοματος) επι Φαρον την νησον αλλοι σταδιοι πεντηκοντα προς τοις εκατον.*

Strabo. l. 17. p. 1140.

seen

seen in the annexed note ^d. It is not from books, but from the face of the countries which

^d “ Ægyptum plerique volunt Nili fluminis inveſtu paulatim eſſe aggeſtam. Proinde illam Ephorus appellat ποταμοχωςον; Herodotus “ επικτητον γην, & δωρον τῃ ποταμῃ; Philoſophus τῃ ποταμῃ εργον: atque “ ex eo ipſo Æthiopes ſeſe Ægyptiis antiquiores eſſe probabant, quod “ cūm Ægyptus olim fuiſſet mare, tandem τῃ Νειλῳ κατα τας αναβασεις “ τῃν εκ τῃς Αιθιοπιας ἰλυν καταφερντος; Nilo per exceſſus ſuos limum “ ex Æthiopia afferente, facta eſſet terra continens. Cui rei probandæ “ multa afferunt. Primò quoties Nilus exundat limi alluvionibus, ce- “ dere pelagus, & removeri nonnihil. 2. In Ægypti montibus con- “ chylia reperiri. 3. Puteos & fontes, quotquot ſunt, ſalfam ha- “ bere & amaram aquam, ac ſi reliquiæ maris in iis ſubfederint. “ 4. Denique ad Pharum inſulam, hodiè ſolūm ſeptem ſtadiis, aut “ ad ſummum mille paſſibus, ab Alexandria diſparatam; Homeri ævo “ noctis & diei curſu ab Ægypto diſtaſſe; ut idem teſtatur, Odyſſ. “ lib. iv. ver. 356.

“ Conſtat tamen Ægyptum ſemper in eodem fuiſſe ſitu. Nam, ut “ cætera taceam, Tanis Ægypti olim regia non procul à Tanitico Nili “ oſtio jam extabat tempore Moſis, qui mirabilia fecit in terra Ægypti “ in campo Taneos, Pſal. lxxviii. 12. Quin antiquiſſima urbs He- “ bron, in qua decimus à Diluvio Abraam diu vixit, Gen. xiii. 18. “ & xxiii. 2. nonniſi ſeptennio ante Tanim fuit condita, Num. xiii. “ 23. Itaque fabularis hiſtoria Iſidis, & Ori, & Oſiridis, quâ nihil “ antiquius habent Ægyptii, multorum meminit locorum in infima “ Ægypto; ut quæ illo ævo jam extiterint. Sic in Plutarcho de Iſide, “ Oſiridem legas arcâ incluſum in mare fuiſſe dejectum, δια τῃς Τανι- “ τικῃς ſματις, per Nili oſtium Taniticum, & poſtmodum Buſiride “ ſepultum,

which Homer describes, that I can hope to do him justice. Having, with that view, twice made

“ sepultum, aut, ut alii volunt, Taphosiride : & Orum Buti educa-
 “ tum : & Pelusium oppidum ab Ifide conditum. Sed & Trojanis
 “ temporibus creditur Menelaus Canobum appulisse ; unde Pharus
 “ aberat solùm centum & viginti stadiis. Itaque falsissimum est quod
 “ ab Homero traditur, à Pharo in Ægyptum noctis & diei cursum
 “ fuisse, adeoque cursum navis :

“ ——— ἢ λιγυρὸς ἕρως ἐπιπνευσίν οπισθεν,

“ ——— stridens quam ventus pone sequatur.

“ Navis enim integrum diem vento secundo procedens, eoque stri-
 “ dente & acri, iter emetitur decuplo longius, id est, pro centum &
 “ viginti stadiis stadia mille & ducenta. Id lectorem malo doceri Ari-
 “ stidis verbis in Oratione Ægyptiaca : Κονῶτος Φάρου σταδίων εἰκοσι καὶ
 “ ἑκατὸν ἀπέχει, καίτοι ναὺς πανήμερια θεῶσα, ἵπ’ ἀνεμῶν κατὰ πρυμναὺν
 “ πνεόντος, προσθησῶ δὲ καὶ λιγυρῶς, ἕκ εἰκοσι καὶ ἑκατὸν σταδίων ἀνυσεὶ μαλι-
 “ στα, ἀλλ’ ἴσως μᾶλλον διακοσίους καὶ χιλίους. Sed nec Ægypto quicquam
 “ ex Nili alluvionibus accedere concesserim. Id enim quicquid est
 “ facilè dissipat continua maris agitatio. Proinde cùm Alexandria stet
 “ ab annis ferè bis mille, tamen semper est littorea, & quantum à
 “ Pharo distabat olim, tantum, hodièque distat, nempe stadia septem,
 “ aut, ut alii, mille passus. Aristides ubi supra ; Καίτοι τῆς μὲν ἐπειρῆς
 “ ἀπέχει Φάρος ἑπτὰ μάλιστα σταδίων. Ammianus lib. xxii. Insula Pha-
 “ ros, ubi Protea cum Phocarum gregibus diversatum Homerus fabu-
 “ latur inflatus, a civitatis littore mille passibus disparata.” BOCHART.

“ Homere

made this voyage of Menelaus, with the Odyfsey in my hands, I was fatisfied, that the Poet's
account

“ Homere étoit trop favant en Geographie pour ne pas favoir que
 “ de fon tems l'Isle du Phare n'étoit éloignée de l'embouchure de
 “ Conope que de fix vingts stades, mais comme il avoit ouï dire que
 “ le Nil, à force de traîner du sable & du limon, avoit par succession
 “ de tems beaucoup augmenté le continent par ses alluvions, il a
 “ voulu faire croire qu'anciennement & du tems de Menelaus cette Isle
 “ étoit plus éloignée de la terre & plus avant dans la mer ; il a même
 “ tellement exagéré cette distance qu'il a dit qu'elle étoit tout ce que
 “ pouvoit faire de chemin en un jour un vaisseau & par un bon vent,
 “ c'est à dire, qu'il la fait dix ou douze fois plus grande qu'elle n'est ;
 “ car un vaisseau peut faire en un jour & une nuit quatorze ou quinze
 “ cens stades quand il a le vent bon. Homere, pour rendre sa nar-
 “ ration plus merveilleuse, a donc déguisé la verité, en s'ac-
 “ commodant à ce qu'il avoit ouï dire des embouchures du
 “ Nil & de ses alluvions. Jamais cette Isle n'a été plus éloig-
 “ née du continent qu'elle l'est aujourd'hui, & en voici une
 “ preuve bien certaine, c'est que si elle eût été éloignée du continent
 “ de quatorze cens stades du tems de Menelaus, & qu'en deux cens
 “ cinquante ou soixante ans qu'il y a du tems de Menelaus au tems
 “ d'Homere, elle s'en fût rapprochée jusqu'à six-vingts, les alluvions
 “ auroient augmenté le continent de douzè cens quatre vingts stades
 “ dans cet espace de tems ; & par cette raison, depuis Homere jusqu'à
 “ nous, le continent auroit été si fort poussé, que cette Isle du Phare
 “ se trouveroit aujourd'hui bien éloignée de la mer. Il n'est pas même
 “ possible, comme l'a fort bien remarqué Bochart, que le Nil ait ja-

O

“ mais

account of its length and danger was agreeable to appearances, when he wrote; and that this passage

“ mais augmenté le continent par ses alluvions, car l'agitation de la
 “ mer auroit toujours dissipé plus de sable & plus de limon que le fleuve
 “ n'auroit pû en apporter. Et le même Bochart le prouve par un fait
 “ qui est sans réplique. C'est que cette Isle du Phare n'est éloignée
 “ que de sept stades, ou huit cens soixante & quinze pas d'Alexandrie,
 “ qui est vis-à-vis sur le rivage de la mer à une embouchure du Nil,
 “ & cette distance est aujourd'hui la même qu'elle étoit il y a deux
 “ mille ans; le Nil n'a pas augmenté le continent d'un pouce. Ce
 “ n'est donc point par ignorance qu'Homere a péché, mais il s'est
 “ accommodé à un bruit commun, & il a beaucoup augmenté cette
 “ distance, *τὸ μῦθος χάριν*, pour la fable, comme dit Strabon dans
 “ son 1 Liv.” DACIER.

“ This description of Pharos has given great trouble to the critics
 “ and geographers; it is generally concluded, that the distance of Pha-
 “ ros is about seven stadia from Alexandria. Ammianus Marcellinus
 “ mentions this very passage thus; 1. 22. ‘*Insula Pharos, ubi Pro-*
 “ *tea cum Phocarum gregibus diversatum Homerus fabulatur inflatus,*
 “ *a civitatis littore mille passibus disparata,*’ or, about a mile distant
 “ from the shores. How then comes Homer to affirm it to be distant
 “ a full day's sail? Dacier answers, that Homer might have heard
 “ that the Nile, continually bringing down much earthy sub-
 “ stance, had enlarged the continent: and knowing it not to be so
 “ distant in his time, took the liberty of a poet, and described it as
 “ still more distant in the days of Menelaus. But Dacier never sees a
 “ mistake in Homer. Had his poetry been worse if he had descri-
 “ bed the real distance of Pharos? It is allowable in a poet
 “ to

passage has been misunderstood, for want of due attention to the changes which have happened, both in the situations and names of places, in that part of the world, since the build-

“ to disguise the truth, to adorn his story; but what ornament has he
 “ given his poetry by this enlargement? Bochart has fully proved
 “ that there is no accession to the continent from any substance that
 “ the Nile brings down with it: the violent agitation of the seas pro-
 “ hibit it from lodging, and forming itself into solidity. Eratosthe-
 “ nes is of opinion, that Homer was ignorant of the mouths of
 “ Nile: but Strabo answers, that his silence about them is not an ar-
 “ gument of his ignorance, for neither has he ever mentioned where
 “ he was born. But Strabo does not enter fully into the meaning of
 “ Eratosthenes: Eratosthenes does not mean that Homer was igno-
 “ rant of the mouths of Nile from his silence, but because he places
 “ Pharos at the distance of a whole day’s sail from the continent.
 “ The only way to unite this inconsistency is to suppose, that the Poet
 “ intended to specify the Pelusiatic mouth of the Nile, from which
 “ Pharos stands about a day’s sail: but this is submitted to the cri-
 “ tics.” POPE.

“ The Greek historians have been all condemned by Bochart, a
 “ man of very great learning, for asserting, that the lower Egypt was
 “ a plain made out by the continual congestion of the slime, which
 “ their wonderful river swept along in its course through Æthiopia and
 “ the high country. He has likewise chastised Homer, who favours
 “ that opinion, in his account of the distance of the Pharos from
 “ the land.” Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer.

ing of Alexandria. A proper consideration of this matter will perhaps shew, that a voyage from Pharos to Egypt, in the reign of Proteus, when Menelaus landed in Egypt, and in that of the Ptolemies, conveyed ideas of different courses and different distances.

If proper attention had been paid to the Poet's words, I think that his meaning could not have been so much misrepresented; for he expressly says, that the voyage, which Menelaus took so unwillingly, was from Pharos to the Nile; or, as he calls it, the river *Ægyptus*, *ΑΙΓΥΠΤΟΣ*; and not from Pharos to the land of Egypt. But as some Commentators contend, that the word *ΑΙΓΥΠΤΟΣ* is employed by the Poet to express the country, as well as the river of Egypt, it may be proper to shew, that the island of Pharos must have been at least thirty miles distant from any part of the land of Egypt in Homer's time: though when the Ptolemies reigned, it certainly was not a mile from the capital of that country.

Nor

Nor does the truth of this depend upon any change produced upon this coast by an accession made to the Delta.

It does not give the most favourable opinion either of the taste or policy of the ancient Egyptian kings, that they should execute those stupendous, may I, without offence to other Travellers, add, barbarous monuments of vanity, the Pyramids; and yet leave it to the Greeks to bring the water of the Nile to Alexandria, and give Egypt the use of a commodious harbour. The natural consequences of supplying this spot with water, and, by these means, making it habitable, were of undoubted advantage to the trade and riches, which centered here: and Alexandria, being the great channel and principal mart for Indian commodities, became soon the most populous and magnificent city then known. It seems not to have occurred to the Greek or Roman writers, who are full of encomiums on the splendor of this new Capital, that the ground upon which
it

it stood was, not long before, too insignificant to deserve a boundary, or to be claimed by any country. Yet such was the state of this coast in Homer's days. It made no part of Egypt at that time, when the extent of the inundation of the Nile marked the natural limits of that country. That its connexion with this spot was the work of a more commercial age, is obvious to every traveller, who views that canal at this day; and observes, that the present inhabitants of Alexandria subsist entirely upon the supply of water which it continues to convey once a year from the Nile to the ancient reservoirs, which still subsist to that city; and they are totally separated from the cultivated soil of Egypt by a barren desert, through which the road to Rosetta is marked out by a range of posts, fixed in the sand for that purpose.

Having thus added near thirty miles to the voyage of Menelaus by considering the barren coasts, where Alexandria was afterwards built,
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in the light, that it must no doubt have appeared to him ; let us see, how much nearer we can bring it to the Poet's description, by enquiring into the encrease of that lower part of Egypt in so long a time.

The accession made to the Delta by the mud, which the Nile deposits in the sea, is so evident a matter of fact, that it could not escape the observation of those who have seen and considered that country with the least degree of attention ; nor should I take up a moment of the Reader's time, to prove what has had the uniform testimony of travellers for so many ages, had not the learned Bochart taken it into his head to deny, that any such accession is made to this coast, and had not Mr. Pope, Madam Dacier, and many others, implicitly subscribed to that opinion.

We shall find that this error (with others into which it has led the Commentators on this passage) arose from an indiscriminate application of some observations to the whole coast of
Egypt,

Egypt, which are true only with regard to one part of it ; and from confounding appearances on the coast of Delta with those on that of Alexandria, which are totally dissimilar. For the coast of Alexandria is so far from being sensible of any accession by means of the Nile, that the sea encroaches upon some parts of it, in spite of all the care which has been, and is still taken to keep it out. I have seen the inhabitants much alarmed at the danger of its breaking into their reservoirs of fresh water ; which they have been at considerable expence to prevent. For should either the ancient cisterns of that city, which remain yet sufficiently entire, or the canal, which still continues, as regularly as the Nile overflows, to convey to them their annual and only supply of fresh water, by any accident fail, this spot must be abandoned, and would again become no more a part of Egypt, than it was in the time of Homer or Menelaus.

But

But the very reverse of this is so certain with regard to the sea-coast of Delta, that I will venture to say, it is obvious to the slightest observation on the spot; nor has it been denied by any traveller, that I know, from Herodotus to the present times. It is impossible to look down upon this singular country from the top of the great pyramid, and view this narrow stripe of the most luxuriant vegetation imaginable, hemmed in on each side by the extensive parched deserts of Lybia and Arabia; but so accurately divided from them, that the extremes of sterility and fertility unite without intermixing, and, though contiguous, are so distinct, that a line parallel to the course of the river separates the richest verdure from the most barren sand: I say, it is impossible to view this striking contrast, without inclining to the old opinion, that Egypt is the gift of the Nile.

A more particular examination of this matter puts it out of dispute: the soil is evidently

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the same with the mud brought down by the Nile, and entirely different from the native sand of this country; it extends on each side as far as the Nile overflows, and no farther; its perpendicular depth from the surface diminishes in proportion to its distance from the river; nor is its lateral encroachment upon the Arabian and Libyan deserts more evident, than its gaining upon the sea, as the following facts shew. Those, who sail for the coast of Delta, get into the discoloured water of the Nile, before they see land: and by heaving the lead they find the bottom covered with its mud, which subsides, and acquires consistence, notwithstanding the agitation of the sea. We find, that since the Holy War, and even since the Venetians established themselves here, and by these means acquired a monopoly of the Indian trade, before the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, places, which were on the sea-side, are now at some distance from it within land.

But

But this increase of the Delta must have been proportionably more sensible, as we go back to the time when the island was formed. For Lower Egypt was a deep bay, sheltered by two promontories, the mud brought down by the Nile must have been less dissipated by the agitation of the sea, and must of course have occasioned a quicker accession of land to the Delta, than could be produced since it has been more exposed. We may therefore conclude, that in the course of time, this operation of the Nile will be more and more retarded, till, after a certain projection of the Delta beyond the promontories, it must entirely cease. Those who sail upon the coast discover separate sand hills, formerly islands, but now included in the Delta. Such a barrier at the mouth of the bay must have contributed greatly to the accumulation of that mud, of which the Delta is formed. And if, independently of every other consideration, we attend to the triangular form of the country, and the manner of its increase, it is

plain, that the progress of that increment must become slower, as its base, or north side, grows wider; and that the same quantity of mud, or slime, which has produced a considerable accession in the last five or six hundred years, must have had a greater effect in the same time, in proportion as the base was narrower.

: Upon the whole of this reasoning, it must appear doubtful, whether any part of Lower Egypt existed in the Poet's time; which seems to have been the opinion of ^e Aristotle: but, supposing the south angle of Delta to have been then formed, its distance from Pharos would make above fifty leagues, which may be called a day's sail ^f, agreeably to the general

^e Aristot. Metaph. l. 1. c. 4.

^f See Strabo, l. 1. p. 61. and in Abulfeda. Almegri. Also Costard, p. 8. an hundred Arabian miles.

See Herodotus, l. 4. c. 86.

The cursus *πανημεριος*, 1200 stadia. Aristidis Oratio Ægyptiaca. Theophilus in Ptolemy. Geog. l. 1. c. 9. makes it 1000 stadia.

Herodotus alludes to the *νοχθημερον*; and supposes a ship to sail eighty miles by day, and seventy by night. See Wesseling's notes upon Herodotus, l. 4. c. 86.

proportion,

proportion, which Homer observes between time and distance in his navigation.

Having so far endeavoured to vindicate the Poet, as to the length of this voyage, it may not be improper, while this subject is before us, to say something of its difficulty and danger, which Menelaus mentions with much dread and anxiety. As some account of the navigation of this coast will furnish the best comment on this part of the Poet's description, I shall lay before the Reader a narrative of what fell within my own observation, relatively to this matter.

I sailed, in the morning of the fifth of February, one thousand seven hundred and forty-three, in a French ship, from Latichea in Syria, for Damiata in Egypt. We lost sight of mount Libanus, the highest land on the Syrian coast, that evening, and had a fair view of Cyprus next morning. We got into soundings on the coast of Egypt towards the evening on the third day, and found a slimy bottom, at some
distance

distance from the Bogas. This is the name by which the Arabs call the mouth of the river, where there is a bar or ridge of sand, which changes its form and size, and shifts its position, according to the wind.

Here the sea began to be discoloured with the water of the Nile, and, in another league, as I looked from the round-top of the main-mast, the fresh water appeared like an immense muddy pond, as distinct in colour from the sea as the Soane is from the Rhone immediately after the junction of those rivers below Lyons. And it extended circularly near three leagues outwards from the mouth of the Nile. The river was, at this season, within its banks; but I was told, that the semicircle of fresh water is much more extended, when the Nile overflows Egypt, and that its mixture with the sea is discoverable fifteen or even twenty leagues from shore. I should think that this account was exaggerated by seamen. The first objects, that we saw towards the shore, were the ships at anchor

chor in the road of Damiata. We next got sight of the tops of some palm trees ; and soon after of some buildings. Last of all we discovered the low flat land of Egypt.

Such are the present appearances ; and such, in general, are those, which may be collected from Herodotus. His remarks on the face of this country seem to entitle him to more credit, than he has met with, when he speaks from his own knowledge, and as an eye-witness.

There being no port on the coast of the Delta, ships bound for Rosetta or Damiata anchor in an open road, till their business is done ; exposed to much danger, when the wind blows hard upon that harbourless shore. They are therefore ready to slip their cables, and run to sea for security, upon the first appearance of foul weather.

We had scarce let go our anchor, in company with a Ragusean bound to the same port, when it began to thunder and lighten ; and the wind, suddenly shifting to the north-west, blew hard.

hard. Night approaching, our pressing object was to get off the coast, upon which there is no harbour from Alexandria to Mount Carmel. After three days very blowing weather, we made Cyprus, and got into Limisso, where we were detained three weeks by contrary winds. We sailed again for Egypt the thirtieth, and in two days arrived upon the coast of the Delta.

After the same succession of appearances similar to those already described, we got to our anchoring ground, before the Bogas, in doubtful weather. Here a germe (which is a very strong-built boat of this country, entirely calculated to resist the Bogas), tempted by a reward which custom has established for the first boat, that ventures over upon such occasions, soon boarded us. By this time, things wore so gloomy an aspect, that our captain was preparing, in all haste, to run to sea. To share his fate, or to risk the Bogas, was a point, that called for immediate decision: for neither the germe, or our vessel, could stay a moment. I chose the latter.

It

It is not easy to imagine any thing more awful than the approach to this Bogas in stormy weather. The breakers, which were heard and seen at some distance, had now the appearance of a succession of cascades, which we were to pass through for half a mile. If the most striking and expressive resemblance of a picture to that appearance in nature, which it attempts to represent, is a sufficient proof of the painter's having seen the original, we might conclude, from three ^s lines in the Iliad, that Homer had been in Egypt, and passed this Bogas. One of our boatmen got up to the mast-head; and as his voice could not be heard, he directed our course by repeating signals, which he re-

Ἔ Ὡς δ' ὄτ' ἐπὶ προχοῇσι δῖπτετος ποταμοιο
 Βεβρυχεν μέγα κίμα ποτὶ ῥοόν. Ἀμφὶ δὲ τ' ἀκραι
 Ηῖονες ΒΟΟΩΣΙΝ, ἐρευγόμενης ἄλος ἐξω.
 Τόσση ἀρα Τρωῶν ἰαχὴ γενετ'. Iliad, P. v. 265.

These lines are said to have determined Solon and Plato to abandon Poetry, despairing of ever being able to produce any thing like them. To those, who admire the art of making the sound an echo to the sense, they certainly offer beauties, which are beyond all translation.

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ceived from a boat within the Bogas, stationed there to pilot gerges, in blowing weather, through the breakers on the bar. We struck thrice before we got into smooth water; and had the mortification to pass the wreck of our unfortunate Ragusean fellow-traveller, who had not been able to get off the coast, and perished with his crew upon this bar.

There is a proverbial expression used by the Arab sailors, and adopted by the Franks, who frequent those seas, that “he, who fears not the Bogas, fears not the Devil.” Indeed the present state of this coast seems to justify the extreme reluctance, which Menelaus expresses at undertaking this voyage a second time; especially if we consider the greater distance he had to run, in his own ships, without boats calculated for the Bogas, or seamen experienced in that navigation. We may add, that the coast of Egypt, which now projects so far, formed a deep bay in his time, which must have added to the danger, as it was more difficult

ficult then for a ship to difengage itfelf from the land.

I flatter myfelf, that this account of the antient and prefent ftate of the coaft of Egypt may juftify Homer's account of the length and danger of Menelaus's voyage; and vindicate him from the charge of ignorance on this head, under which he has fo long laboured.

HOMER'S RELIGION

A N D

MYTHOLOGY.

WE cannot well take into consideration Homer's Religion and Mythology, without some notice of his Allegory, which has opened so large a field for ancient and modern speculation. It would be needless to enter into the extravagant fancies and laboured conjectures, by which the sense of the plainest passages in the Iliad and Odyssy has been sacrificed to this allegorizing humour. Nothing can be more contrary to our idea of the character of his writings, and to that unbiaffed attention to the simple forms of Nature, which we admire as his distinguishing excellence. I do not indeed think that those, who read him with

with true relish, and not from affectation, run any risk of falling into such refinement. However, as great pains have been taken to trace the mysterious knowledge, which the Poet is supposed to conceal under this dark allegorical veil, up to his Egyptian education; and as a late ingenious Writer ^a has attempted to shew the extensive effects of the Poet's travelling from a country, where Nature governed, to one of settled rules and a digested Polity, it may be worth while to take the best view, we can, of the state of learning in Greece and Egypt in Homer's time, in order to see, what foundation there is for this opinion.

Referring the Reader, for the state of Homer's Learning, to a particular section on that head, I shall now lay before him my reasons for thinking, that the high compliments, which have been so long paid to the knowledge and wisdom of the antient Egyptians, have not been

^a See Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer.

so well founded as is generally imagined; and I shall draw those reasons from the only sources, which can furnish evidence of this matter; *viz.* first, the monuments which they have left of their taste and genius; secondly, the accounts, which other nations have given of them in these respects.

It would be difficult to form a judgment of their literary merit, without a specimen of their performance in that way: and I do not find that antiquity has transmitted to us even their pretensions to excellence in composition. I must observe, that, though Egypt produced the Papyrus, its use to letters was a Greek discovery. Their hieroglyphics indeed have been long admired as the repository of much wisdom and knowledge; though there seems great reason to think, that they were the production of an infant state of society, not yet acquainted with alphabetical ^b writing. And they have

^b See Divine Legation of Moses.

been

been preserved by means of circumstances, which were peculiar to Egypt. For this country had the driest atmosphere, and the most durable materials. Hence these memorials have been preserved, while monuments of the same early stage of knowledge have perished in other countries.

Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, seem to owe little to Egypt. If the temple of Theseus stands to this day at Athens an undoubted proof of the great perfection of Greek arts, as early as the battle of Marathon : in a climate so favourable to buildings as that of Egypt, where there are still considerable remains to be seen of pyramids of such perishable materials as unburnt bricks, some fragments surely would have been preserved to justify their pretensions. But though we are apt to trace every thing back to Egypt, I believe, in those arts the Greeks are entirely original, and took their ideas from nature alone : and it appears in Sculpture, that the Egyptians stuck to their
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own stiff dry manner, even after they were acquainted with the perfect models of the Greek artists.

Egypt has, no doubt, produced the most stupendous and amazing, but I must add, the most absurd and unmeaning public works, to be seen in any country: I mean pyramids, obelisks, labyrinths, artificial lakes, which are without art, elegance, or public utility. Though jealous of strangers, they took little pains to fortify their frontier: and seem to have placed their security more in hiding, than defending, themselves. And though well situated for commerce, they neglected a good harbour, of which the Greeks shewed the value and importance, as soon as they got possession of this country.

When the Greeks first applied to the study of Nature, and travelled to Egypt (supposed to have been then the School of science) for instruction, we might reasonably expect some favourable accounts of them. But, besides, that what we are told of these early travellers is
obscure

obscure, and suspicious, all we can collect from them does not raise our ideas of Egyptian knowledge. If Pythagoras sacrificed a hecatomb upon finding out the 47th proposition of the first book of Euclid, and Thales an ox on having discovered how to inscribe a rectangled triangle in a circle, after they had studied mathematics in Egypt, the parent of geometry, what opinion does it give us of the knowledge of their masters in that science^c? The obscure account we have of their scheme of joining the Nile and the Red-sea^d, looks, as if they did not understand how to take a level. Nor does it seem unfair to conclude, that this was, like

^c Eustathius formed his system of Greek chronology without applying to Egypt, the seat of learning, whence it came.

^d To whatever degree of perfection and use this work might have been carried by the Persians, Greeks, Romans, or Mahometans, for something is attributed to them all, we have the best authority to believe that neither Sesostris nor Necoꝝ could carry it into execution, though the first was so powerful, and the latter was a great promoter of the Egyptian marine; and had built ports and havens in the Mediterranean and Red Sea; the remains of which existed in the time of Herodotus.

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their other great works, more an object of ostentation than of public utility : for they discouraged navigation and commerce, and neglected a fine harbour on their own coast. It is true we found that their pyramids corresponded exactly with the four cardinal points of the compass ; but how small a degree of mathematics does that require ? and surely Thales having shewn them how to measure the heights of those pyramids by their shadow, is a proof of their little progress in trigonometry.

But let us proceed to a third period of their history, from which we might expect to draw something to form a judgment of their arts and sciences. When the Greeks conquered Phœnicia, Chaldæa, and Egypt, their taste, and of course their curiosity, was at the highest. Whatever accounts that elegant and learned people may have given of the school, from whence they are supposed to have received the rudiments of all their knowledge ; I can find
very

very little said of the learning or arts of Egypt, except what they brought there themselves. Homer was studied with more critical attention in Egypt than in any other country, but it was by Greeks: nor do we find that Zenodotus or Aristarchus, who took so much pains in settling the true readings of his works, under the Ptolemies, drew any illustrations of their author from the productions of the country in which they wrote. Those learned editors superintended the greatest and choicest Library, that had ever been seen, of which Aristotle's valuable collection made a part; yet they have told us nothing of the writers of that country in which it was collected, nor do we find that they left any translations into the Greek, except that of the Bible.

If our enquiries into this period are unsuccessful, we cannot expect much after this country became a Roman province. Strabo, who, with good taste and a sound judgment, was a traveller of curiosity, and a great admirer of an-

tiquity, had a favourable opportunity from his friendship with Ælius Gallus, whom he accompanied as far as Syene and the Æthiopian borders, of knowing what could be learned of this country at that time; but his accounts furnish nothing to induce us to change our sentiments on this head.

For these reasons I am of opinion, that Egypt, though civilized, when Greece was in a state of barbarity, never got beyond mediocrity, either in the arts of peace or war. Nor shall we find this out of the order of things; if we consider the different nature of those countries. The singular advantage of Egypt; was, a climate so temperate, that little cloathing was necessary; and a soil so fertile, that it yielded food with very little labour. And its situation in the tract of the East India trade will account for its riches. But these circumstances, to which it owes antiquity, population, and wealth, are not favourable to genius. Great efforts and happy exertions, either of mind or
body,

body, are not to be expected in a country where Nature has so well provided against hunger and cold, and where an universal sameness of soil, and a constant serenity of sky, afford nothing to awake the fancy or rouse the passions. Compare this with the landscape of Greece, the varieties of her soil, and the vicissitude of her seasons; and we shall not think it extraordinary, that the arts of life should begin in one of those countries, and be carried to perfection in the other.

Having said thus much of the supposed nurse of that mysterious learning, which the Poet is said to have brought from Egypt, and wrapped up in allegory; let us bring the Reader back to his true character as a Painter, and see if we cannot find marks of imitation even in his Religion and Mythology. I believe that a comparative view of the divine truths of his Theology, and the ingenious fictions of his Mythology, will shew, that, as far as he was at liberty, he drew both systems from an accurate and
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comprehensive observation of Nature, under the direction of a fine imagination, and a sound understanding.

As to his Religion, it would be idle, indeed unfair, to introduce a few general observations, which I shall offer on this head, by common-place exclamations, against the gross extravagances of the heathen creed. For though we must acknowledge, that the general conduct of Homer's gods would even disgrace humanity; yet, when we consider the pure and sublime notions of the Divine Nature, which so frequently occur in his writings, it is but justice to such exalted sentiments of the Supreme Being, to pronounce them incompatible with the belief of those ridiculous absurdities, which distinguish the opinions of the multitude from those of the Poet.

He believed the unity, supremacy, omnipotence, and omniscience of the Divine Nature, Creator, and Disposer of all things: his power, wisdom, justice, mercy, and truth, are inculcated in various parts of the Iliad and Odysssey: the
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immortality of the soul, a future state, rewards and punishments, and most of the principles of sound divinity, are to be found in his writings.

This looks much less like the religion of mystery, than of common sense; and those sublime but evident truths want not the illustrations of deep learning. They are obvious to the plain understanding of every thinking man, who looking abroad and consulting his own breast, as Homer did, compares what he sees with what he feels, and from the whole draws fair conclusions.

Even his Mythology, considered with a view to his original character, will discover, if I be not mistaken, some original strokes of the Painter and of his country. It seems to constitute a very distinguishing difference between true and false religion; that while the evidence of the first is universal, of every country, and coextensive with creation, the origin of the latter may be often traced to the local prejudices of a particular soil and climate. Star
worship

worship was the native idolatry of a serene sky and desert plains, where the beauties of the heavens are as striking as the rest of the external face of Nature is dreary and lifeless. In vain should we look for Naiades, Dryades, Oriades, &c. among the divinities of a country, without springs, rivers, trees, or mountains, and almost without vegetation. These were the natural acquisitions of superstition in her more northern progress.

What share Homer had in dressing up and modelling the fables of the Heathen gods, can, at this time, be little more than matter of mere conjecture; it would however be unreasonable to think, that they were of his own creation. I should rather suppose, that the liberties of poetical embellishment, which he may have taken with the popular creed of his time, were strongly engrafted upon vulgar traditional superstitions, which had already laid strong hold of the passions and prejudices of his countrymen; an advantage, which so perfect a judge
of

of human nature would be very cautious of forfeiting. For when the religion of poetry and that of the people were the same, any attempt of sudden innovation in such an establishment would have been a hazardous experiment, which neither a good Citizen nor a good Poet would care to undertake. I shall therefore venture to conclude, that the part of the Poet's fiction, which dishonours his Deities with the weakness and passions of human nature, was founded in popular legends and vulgar opinion, for which every good poet, from Homer to Shakespeare, has thought proper to have great complaisance. Take from that original genius of our own country the popular belief in his ghosts and hobgoblins, his light fairies and his dapper elves, with other fanciful personages of the Gothic mythology; and you see the true foundation of some of the most beautiful fictions, that ever Poet's imagination produced. That Homer carried this too far, and studying to please neglected to instruct, may be very true;

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for though Plato's severity on this head has been criticised, we must find it extremely becoming his zeal for the inseparable interests of religion and virtue, if we consider that he had weighty reasons, which do not reach Shakspeare's mythology, to be alarmed at examples of vice and immorality in the very persons, who were at that time the acknowledged objects of public religious worship.

Though the persons and perhaps some part of the action of his fable might have been originally taken from Egypt and the East: yet we know that his figures, I may say portraits, were his own; and the scenery of his Mythology is Grecian. And (what strengthens our conjectures with regard to his country) of the various perspectives, into which we may attempt to reduce this Greek mythological scenery, the Ionian point of view will appear predominant.

I fear, I may appear prejudiced to my subject, if I look for Nature in this imaginary province,

vince, and expect a regard for truth even in the Poet's fable. Yet I cannot help thinking, that, where his persons are most ideal, his scene is not less real; and that when his subject carries him beyond life, and his Divine agents, or (in the language of criticism) his machinery is introduced, the action is carried on with greater powers, no doubt, and upon a larger scale; but with the same attention to a just proportion, and generally in the same subordination to the invariable laws of time and place. This is a management, which, though it cannot entirely command assent, softens extravagance, and leads the Reader so insensibly to fancy reality in fiction, by rendering both conformable to the same general rules of possibility and consistence, that it is not easy to say, where the Historian ends, or the Poet begins.

And yet I despair of giving satisfaction on this head, within the compass, which I have prescribed to myself: for though the important and frequent use of the machinery, in contributing

so largely to a spirited succession of interesting variety, and especially in relieving the eye from too much of the Scamandrian plain, must be obvious to every attentive reader; yet the easy transition, by which this is effected, can only be discovered by a nicer examination of those classical regions, which gave birth, or at least gave system and maturity, to his fable. If we form to ourselves a just idea of the respective situation, distance, and perspective, of Olympus, Ida, the Grecian camp, &c. we shall find Homer's celestial geography (if I may so call it) so happily connected with his Map of Troy, that the scene is shifted from one to the other naturally, and with a certain mixture of circumstantial truths, which operates unobserved, and throws at least an air of possibility into the wildest excursions of fancy. I shall explain myself by example.

Jupiter, seated on Mount Gargara, the summit of Ida, not suspecting, that any of the gods would violate the neutrality he had so strictly enjoined, turns his eyes from the slaughter up-
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on the Scamandrian plain to the peaceful scenes of Thrace and Mysia. But Neptune, anxious for the distressed Greeks, had placed himself on the top of Samothrace, which commands a prospect of Ida, Troy, and the fleet. Having from hence observed Jupiter turn his back upon the scene of action, he resolves to seize that opportunity of annoying the Trojans. With this view he goes home to Aegos for his armour, and proceeds thence to the field of battle, putting up his chariot and horses between Imbros and Tenedos. At the same time Juno, not less interested in the Grecian cause, discovers from Olympus, what is passing at the ships. And watching the motions of Jupiter and Neptune, she forms her plan accordingly for rendering the operations of the latter effectual, by keeping Jupiter's attention diverted another way. Having with this view procured the cestus or girdle of Venus, she proceeds, first to Lemnos, to solicit the aid of the god of Sleep, and thence to Jupiter on Gargara.

I doubt

I doubt much, whether any Reader has ever suspected, that this fanciful piece of machinery is so strictly geographical, that we cannot enter into the boldness and true spirit of the Poet's conceptions upon this occasion, without a map. But if he examines it in that light, he will be pleased to find, that a view of the land and water here described, under a certain perspective, clears up the action, and converts, what may otherwise appear crowded and confused, into distinct and pleasing variety. He will then see, that the mere change of Jupiter's position, while it introduces a most beautiful contrast between scenes of innocence and tranquillity, and those of devastation and bloodshed, is essential to the episode of Neptune and Juno. He will attend those Divinities with new pleasure, through every step of their progress. The mighty strides of the first, and the enchanting description of his voyage, long admired as one of the happiest efforts of a truly poetical imagination, will improve upon a survey of the original scenery, when its
correspondence

correspondence with the fable is discovered. Juno's stages are still more distinctly marked: she goes from Olympus by Pieria and Æmattia, to Athos; from Athos, by sea, to Lemnos, where, having engaged the god of Sleep in her interests, she continues her course to Imbros; and from Imbros to Lectum, the most considerable promontory of Ida; here leaving the sea, she proceeds to Gargara, the summit of that mountain.

When I attempted to follow the steps of these poetical journies, in my eye, from Mount Ida, and other elevated situations on the Æolian and Ionian side of the Ægean sea; I could take in so many of them as to form a tolerable picture of the whole. But I could not make this experiment with the same success from any station in European Greece. This induces me to suppose the composition to be Asiatic, and that the original idea of Neptune and Juno's journey was most probably conceived in the neighbourhood of Troy.

I must

I must own, that in this sort of inquiry we are apt to indulge our fancy ; and it is not without some apprehensions of falling into this error, that, by way of farther explanation, I risk the following conjecture. When I was in these classical countries, I could not help tracing one of the most ancient pieces of heathen Mythology up to its source, I mean the war of the Titans with the gods. For though the scene of this story lies in old Greece, yet some of its embellishments look very like the production of an Ionian imagination. I have already taken notice of the beauties of a western evening prospect from this coast. When the sun goes down behind the cloud-capped mountains of Macedonia and Theffaly, there is a picturesque wildness in the appearance, under certain points of view, which naturally calls to mind the old fable of the rebel giants bidding defiance to Jupiter, and scaling the heavens, as the fanciful suggestion of this rugged perspective. And we find this striking face of nature
adapted

adapted to so bold a fiction with a fitness and propriety, which its extravagance would forbid us to expect; for it was by no means a matter of indifference, which mountains were to be employed, or in what order they were to be piled, to effect this daring escalade. If we compare Homer and Virgil's account of this matter with the present state of the country, we shall find a variation in their descriptions, which, while it sufficiently distinguishes the Roman copy from the Greek original, will best explain my meaning.

There was an old tradition ° in Greece, which is preserved there to this day, that Ossa
and

° Οσσον επ' Ουλυμπω μεμασαν θεμεν, αυταρ επ' Οσση
Πηλιον εινοσιφυλλον, ιν' βρανος αμβατος ειη. Od. xi. 314.

“ Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam

“ Scilicet, atque Ossæ frondosum involvere Olympum.”

Virg. Geor. i. 281.

Homer's order is “ Olympus, Ossa, Pelion ;” Virgil's is “ Pelion, Ossa, Olympus.” See Strabo and Mad. Dacier; the first is obscure, and the latter seems to have mistaken his meaning. The Thes-

and Olympus were originally different parts of the same mountain, of which the first formed the summit, and the latter the base, till they were separated by an earthquake. It is not improbable that their size and shape, as they appear under an eastern point of view, should have given rise to this tradition, and perhaps suggested to the inventor of the fable, or, if you please, to the Poet, who first adapted it to this Grecian scenery, the order of piling them one upon another. But Virgil, who never saw, or never attended to, this prospect, has deviated both from Homer, and Nature, in placing those mountains so as to form an inverted pyramid.

It must however be acknowledged, that Virgil seldom errs by departing from Homer : if his

salians said, that Neptune made the Valley of Tempe, through which the Peneus flows, alluding to this earthquake ; and Herodotus approves that opinion ; see his *Polyhymnia*, and the Picture of Neptune in *Philostratus*, separating those mountains ; see also *Strabo*, lx. 430, and 531.

machinery

machinery will not bear so scrupulous a review as that of the Greek Poet, it is in general less his fault than his misfortune; nor is the manifest inferiority of the *Æneid*, in this respect, to be laid to his charge. A great part of his scene of action, though it has since acquired no small share of classical fame, was not at that time sufficiently consecrated to the purposes of poetry, by the birth, habitation, intrigues, and achievements of gods and heroes. Nor is the geographical disposition of Latium so favourable to fabulous adventure as that of Greece, where a most pleasing mixture of land and water is wonderfully calculated for a quick succession of scenery, affording more distinct variety than could well be imagined within the same compass. It was here alone that the dull creed of Egypt could be extended, and modeled into that fanciful system of Mythology, which Homer has so effectually entailed upon his poetical posterity, that few of his legitimate sons have ventured to shake off that

T 2 incumbrance ;

incumbrance; and perhaps not one, who has not failed in the attempt. In accommodating this most poetical religion and picturesque country to the plan of the Iliad and Odyſſey, he had only to chuſe and ſhift the rich materials of this engaging fable and romantic ſcenery; ſuſceptible, under his management, even to a dramatic propriety, of the moſt natural, and yet moſt diverſified combinations and tranſitions, that fancy could ſuggeſt. While Virgil, not daring to loſe ſight of his great model, not only brings his gods from Greece, but his ſhepherds from Arcadia, and his ſwans from Cayſter; if Diana dances, it muſt be on the banks of the Eurotas.

That the Roman Poet has many obligations to Homer, is evident to the ſlighteſt peruſal of their different compositions. But the difficulties under which he laboured, in adapting the beauties of the Iliad and Odyſſey to a later age and different meridian, have not, to my knowledge, been obſerved. Whenever Ho-
mer

mer attempted to surprize and astonish his audience with something strange, conforming himself to the known state of the globe in his days, he carried them far west of his own country, to the unfrequented coast of Italy. But Science, unluckily for both Poets, making her progress in the same western direction, had, before Virgil's time, dissipated that darkness (so favourable to the marvellous,) in which Italy was involved, in the heroic ages. The author of the *Æneid* found Circe's island in his neighbourhood, and the country of the *Læstrigones* among the gardens of the Roman nobility. The distance of the scene, which was so convenient to Homer, ceased to have its operation with regard to the Roman Poet, whose countrymen, however credulous of Eastern wonders, had not so much faith in romantic stories of strange adventures nearer home. I dare say the *Ithaca* of Homer never raised a smile in his contemporary audience; though
the

the Romans, to whom this little island was a familiar object in their passage between Italy and Greece, treat it in a style of jocularly natural enough from the masters of the world to so diminutive a kingdom.

HOMER'S

HOMER'S MANNERS.

OF the several proofs which might be alleged in favour of Homer's knowledge of different countries, his lively delineations of national character must have furnished the strongest and most pleasing to those, who lived near his time; whilst the original features of those peculiarities were enough discernible to bear a comparison, with what we find of them in his writings: where, what he has left of this kind, is marked with too much precision, and supported throughout with too much confidence, to allow us to think that he had acquired his knowledge of mankind at home.

But while the eastern traveller finds the vestiges of those characterizing circumstances, which once distinguished the inhabitants of particular tracts, either totally obliterated, or at least too faint to be traced with any tolerable degree

degree of certainty; he will discover a general resemblance between the ancient and present manners of those countries, so striking, that we cannot without injustice to our subject pass it over unnoticed. For perhaps nothing has tended so much to injure the reputation of that extraordinary genius in the judgment of the present age, as his representation of customs and manners so very different from our own. Our polite neighbours the French seem to be most offended at certain pictures of primitive simplicity, so unlike those refined modes of modern life, in which they have taken the lead; and to this we may partly impute the rough treatment which our Poet received from them about the end of the last, and the beginning of this, century. Though I must observe, that if upon that occasion he met with unfair and ungenerous enemies, he also found some warm and respectable friends ^a.

To

^a The principal managers of this controversy were Boileau, Madame Dacier, Boivin, &c. on the side of Homer, and La Motte, Perrault, Fenelon,

To reconcile ourselves to usages and customs so very opposite to our own, is a task too difficult for the generality of mankind; and therefore Homer's manners must ever be liable to exceptions in proportion to their difference from those of his Readers. We may add, that many beautiful allusions to the times, for which he wrote, are irretrievably lost, even to the most conversant in antiquities. However, as we found the manners of the Iliad still preserved in some parts of the East, nay retaining, in a remarkable degree, that genuine cast of natural simplicity, which we admire in his works and the sacred books, it may not be improper to inquire, how such an invariability in the modes

Fenelon, and Fontenelle, &c. who took part against him. Without entering into the merits of a dispute which was carried on with unbecoming acrimony on both sides, we may venture to say, upon the whole, that the Poet was more abused and more complimented upon that occasion than he deserved; and as his enemies charged him with faults he is not guilty of, so his friends discovered beauties in him, of which he never dreamed. But I must observe that the loudest in their abuse of Homer were those, who did not understand the language in which he wrote.

U

of

of life should be peculiar to that part of the world, before we examine how far this resemblance between such distant periods extends.

That so many of the customs of Homer's age, and still more of the antient Jews, should be continued down to the present times, in countries, which have undergone such a variety of political revolutions, is extraordinary. President Montesquieu's manner of accounting for this singular stability of Eastern manners is not at all satisfactory in my opinion. I shall propose a conjecture on this head, which occurred in that part of our travels through Arabia, where we found this resemblance most striking. But that the Reader may form a better judgment on this matter, it will be necessary to lay before him a general view of the interior and uncultivated part of that Peninsula, and its inhabitants.

There is perhaps no country in the world less capable of variation, either for better or worse, than the extensive deserts of Arabia.

The

The former magnificence of Palmyra, which flourished in so remarkable a degree in the midst of those uncultivated plains, though now desolate and in ruins, may appear to contradict this opinion. But if we consider the motives and means which produced a most magnificent and opulent city in so extraordinary a situation, it will remove this difficulty. The first inhabitants of Tedmor could have no temptation to settle there, except on account of the fountain, which we have elsewhere described ^b. This made it, at all times, the most convenient resting-place between the Euphrates and the cultivated parts of Syria on the sea-coast; the possession of which effectually commanded the passage of the desert. For neither troops nor caravans could proceed without the permission of the proprietors of this fountain, of which we had sufficient proof in our journey to this place. For though our camels bore the passage

^b See Ruins of Palmyra.

of the desert very well, our horses and mules were so languid and exhausted by a march of twenty-six hours on those sandy plains, in a hot sun, without a drop of water, that I am convinced they could not have gone much farther. Palmyra, being thus possessed, by situation alone, of the balance both of power and commerce between the eastern and western world, then contending for the empire of the whole, made astonishing efforts to change the face of that country, the only possible way of changing its manners. Water was brought, at incredible labour and expence, from distant mountains, to produce that vegetation, which Nature had denied; but with so little success, that even the attempt, great as it was, has but narrowly escaped ^c oblivion: so that this singular spot has

^c Had those ruins been swallowed up by an earthquake before we saw them, or had the materials been applied to other purposes, which their distance from any town or city has prevented, it would have been a matter of great doubt, whether such magnificence had ever existed there. Hardouin expresses his incredulity on this head in a very laconic

has not only relapsed into its primitive condition and appearance, (the vast ruins excepted,) but has recovered its pristine inhabitants, with their customs, manners, language, and, what is most extraordinary, their traditions. In vain did we attempt to explain to the Arabs any fact recorded on the marbles, which we found there. They treated the account of some of those buildings, which we read to them from the inscriptions, with great contempt, as the invidious contrivance of later times to rob Solomon the son of David (Salman Ebn Doud) of the honour of having erected them. In short, Palmyra and Zenobia are names absolutely unknown at this day to the Bedouins of the desert; where Tedmor and ^d Solomon are the constant subjects of encomium and admiration.

nic manner, without giving any reason for it; talking of those who had given some account of those remains, he says, “*Quorum tamen nollem fidem præstare.*” See his notes on Pliny, lib. v. cap. 25.

^d See Palmyra.

It

It seems universally true with regard to a people habituated to the sweets of unbounded liberty, that they are not easily tempted to resign the roving pleasures of that unhoused free condition for the quiet, ease, security, or even luxuries, of regular society. This observation may be justly applied to the true Bedouin. The Hottentot or Cherokee is not fonder of his native woods, than the wandering Arab is of his sandy domain. As his wants are few, for he knows only those of Nature; so his desires are confined; for he either subdues, or affects to disclaim, those he cannot gratify. Thus Architecture and Agriculture are not merely matters of indifference to him, as things out of his reach; he holds them in contempt, priding himself in his poor tent, under the walls of cities; and despising tillage as a mean occupation, compared with his rambling pastoral life. This aversion to the husbandman is reciprocal, and a shepherd has ever been an abomination to an Egyptian. The Arab respects birth and family, about
which

which the Turks are indifferent; is rather more rigid, than they are, in his expectations of female reserve; is not addicted to their unnatural passion, but agrees with them in their exclusion of women from society. He is temperate, brave, friendly, hospitable, true to his engagements, nice in his point of honour, and, in general, scrupulously observant of the duties of his religion: yet his ideas of plunder and rapine are perfectly conformable to those of the heroic and patriarchal times. Thus is his life strangely divided between deeds of cruelty, violence, and injustice, on the one hand; and the most generous acts of humanity on the other.

Breeding cattle is his profession; hunting and hawking are his principal amusements; while robbery and devastation are not less the objects of his ambition, than of his avarice. He lives constantly in tents; is much on horseback, always armed; and almost constantly meditating enterprize, or consulting retreat. To this state of continual action or alarm his circumstances are

are peculiarly adapted; for his property, his family, his business, his pleasures, and I may add, his laws and his religion (or more properly his courts of justice and places of worship) are as moveable as his person.

The Arabs boast a purer and more unmixed antiquity, than any other nation: history, and the nature of their country, seem to concur in the support of this claim.

According to the Mosaic account, Arabia must have been among those countries, which were first peopled. And there is good reason to believe, that the inland parts of that Peninsula have never been conquered, notwithstanding the claims of so many different nations, who have, all in their turn, reckoned the Arabs among their subjects.

As to the present pretensions of the Ottoman Porte to dominion over Arabia, they seem to rest much upon the same footing with those of former ages. I never travelled in any part of those deserts, where it would not have been
dangerous

dangerous to produce my Turkish firman or passport; and where a janissary, instead of procuring that security and respect, which I experienced from his protection in provinces acknowledging obedience to the Grand Signor, would not have exposed me to abuse and insult. The presents (a term of extensive signification in the East) which are distributed annually by the Bashaw of Damascus to the several Arab princes, through whose territory he conducts the caravan of pilgrims to Mecca, are at Constantinople called a free gift; and considered as an act of the Sultan's generosity towards his indigent subjects; while, on the other hand, the Arab Shecks deny even a right of passage through the districts of their command, and exact those sums as a tax due for the permission of going through their country. In the frequent bloody contests, which the adjustment of those fees produces, the Turks complain of robbery, and the Arabs of invasion. This is the substance of all, that I could procure on this

head by diligent inquiry, not only at Constantinople, and in the desert, but at Damascus. At the last place I had an opportunity of collecting the most authentic information on both sides of the question.

The Arabs of Palestine have the same ideas with regard to that country. They consider it as their hereditary property from the earliest times, notwithstanding many temporary invasions of their right. And though there is now an Aga at Jerufalem, acting under the Bashaw of Damascus, he looks more like a military officer levying contributions in an enemy's country, than the governor of a province, in acknowledged allegiance to the Sultan. He has no influence, no respect paid him, even no security but in his walls, and in his military force. The pilgrims, who do not purchase Arab protection, are frequently plundered within sight of the holy sepulchre, and at the very gates of the capital ^e.

^e See Palmyra for Arabia not conquered.

In this sketch of the interior of Arabia, which has, to the best of my observation, all the accuracy, that so general a description will admit; the Reader will perhaps acknowledge with me (as one cause, which may have contributed towards the uniformity and stability of Oriental manners,) a perpetual and inexhaustible store of the aboriginal modes and customs of primeval life. These are inaccessible to the varieties and fluctuations, which conquest, commerce, arts, or agriculture, introduce in other places; and expand, or contract, their circle of influence on the neighbouring countries, according to their vicinity, their intercourse, and the various revolutions of their respective fortunes.

But it is impossible to do this subject justice, without taking likewise into consideration the manners ^f of the sacred writers, which come so
much

^f American manners might also have a place here, and bear testimony to the truth of Homer's picture of human nature; but though, in some respects, savage manners have full as much dignity, as those

much nearer those of Arabia than Homer's, as they lived nearer that country, and as most of the scenes, which they describe, lie either in it, or contiguous to it. As to the conformity of style and sentiment between those writers, and the poet, it is no more, than what we are to expect in just copies of the same original : nor does it seem at all necessary to account for the agreement from Homer's supposed knowledge of the Jewish learning through the Egyptian priests, as some ingenious men have too loosely conjectured.

To enter into this comparison of the Heroic, Patriarchal, and Bedouin manners, with that minuteness, to which it may hereafter be extended in the journal of my Eastern travels, would exceed the purpose of this abstract. I

of the Heroic, or any age, (for even the Spartan education never carried a sense of honour, contempt of danger, patience of pain, further than some of the Indian tribes); yet in general their stage of civilization is too far short of that, which the Poet describes, to come under our present consideration.

shall

I shall at present content myself with laying before the Reader some of the most striking features in this resemblance, which I shall consider separately.

The traveller, who has time and opportunities of making observations on the manners and customs of those countries, which I have visited in the East, will (1) be surpris'd to see how far dissimulation and diffidence are carried in that part of the world. He will (2) be shock'd at the scenes of cruelty, violence, and injustice, which must necessarily fall within his notice, as he will (3) be charmed with the general spirit of hospitality, which prevails so much more there than in Europe; he will (4) regret the loss of female society, and be disgust'd at the licentious style of pleasantry, which takes place in its room. When he sees persons of the highest rank employed in the lowest domestic duties, he will (5) be offend'd at the meanness of such occupations: and as to the general turn
of

of wit and humour, it will (6) appear either flat and insipid, or coarse and indelicate.

But when he finds similar representations of life in Homer, he will conclude, that they are not the capricious singularities of a particular age or country; but that they may be traced up to some common causes: perhaps to the nature of soil and climate, and to the spirit of that unequal legislation, to which Oriental timidity has hitherto indolently submitted; not daring to assert the natural rights of mankind. Let us now see how far the six general classes, into which I have divided the similarities of the antient Greek and Jewish, and the present Arabian manners (merely in conformity to the order in which observations of this kind occurred in our travels) are connected with the same imperfect state of society.

I. There is nothing more remarkable in the manners of the East, especially to an English traveller, than the degree of refinement, to which

which profound dissimulation is carried in all ranks, but especially among those in power. In the visits and common intercourse of the Great, more attention is paid to the looks than to the words of the company: and the speaker generally weighs, what he is to say, by the countenance of the person he converses with; rather than by his own sentiments or opinion of the question. He accommodates his language much less to truth and matter of fact, than to the private purposes of his hopes or fears. In short, all confidence is destroyed by the despotism of the East. Suspicion begins with the prince, and from him a general diffidence spreads through every rank and order, ending only in the man, who has nothing to fear, because he has nothing to lose. The arts of disguise are in those countries the great arts of life; and the character of Ulysses would form a perfect model for those, who wish to make their way in it with security and respect. A spy, who is secretly employed in other countries,

tries, is here an avowed officer of state. But then, in proportion to the mutual distrust, which so universally prevails in the several departments of government, confidence between individuals, where it exists at all, is carried great lengths; and the Arab history, which is so full of political treachery, abounds also in accounts of private friendships, which do not fall short of those of Pylades and Orestes, Achilles and Patroclus, or David and Jonathan.

II. Cruelty, violence, and injustice, are so evidently the result of defective government, that it is unnecessary to look for any other general cause of the scenes of this sort, with which Homer abounds, in common with other ancient writers, and agreeably to the present manners of those countries. For when every man is, in a great measure, judge in his own cause, vices of this class are not only more frequent, but, *in foro conscientie*, less criminal than in a civilized state, where the individual transfers his resentments to the community, and private injury

jury expects redress from public justice : where the legislature does not engage for our personal security, we have a right to use such means, as are in our power, in order to destroy the aggressor, who would destroy us. In such cases bodily strength and courage must decide most contests, while, on the other hand, craft, cunning, and surprize, are the legitimate weapons of the weak against the strong. We accordingly find, that both the antient and modern history of the East is a continued narrative of bloodshed and treachery ; and in the Heroic times homicide was so common, that we see the poet alluding to a fugitive murderer taking shelter under the roof of a stranger (to escape, not public justice, but the revenge of the relations of the deceased) as a familiar occurrence in life. Some of the favourite personages of the Iliad and Odyssy had fled their country for this crime ; and most of Homer's heroes would, in the present age, be capitally convicted, in any country in Europe, on the Poet's evidence.

Y

III. But

III. But that hospitality should be derived, in any degree, from the same source, may seem a paradox to those who have not observed, that this virtue prevails in most countries, and in the different provinces of each country, very much in proportion to the idleness, poverty, and insecurity, which attend a defective police. As dissimulation may be properly called an Oriental vice, so hospitality will retain the name of an Oriental virtue; and both will prevail in the East, as long as the Arab mode of government continues in that part of the globe. It is some consolation, in so wretched a state of society, that hospitality should be most cultivated, where it is most wanted. In Arabia, the rights of hospitality (so properly called the point of honour of the East) are the happy substitute of positive law; which, in some degree, supplies the place of justice, connecting, by a voluntary intercourse of disinterested offices, those vagabond tribes, who despise legislation, deny the perfect rights of mankind, and set the civil magistrate

gistrate at defiance. A strong instance of the powers of that generous sympathizing principle in the social constitution of our nature, which the wisest government will encourage; and which the most depraved cannot suppress.

IV. We must acknowledge, that this most pleasing feature, in a portrait of Heroic, Patriarchal, and Modern Oriental life, is sadly contrasted by a gloomy part of the picture, which produces the most striking difference between our manners and theirs; I mean, that unnatural separation of the sexes, which precludes the female half from that share in the duties and amusements of life, which the common interests of society demand.

The bad effects of this tyrannical proscription of the most amiable part of the creation (true characteristic of savage life) are only known to those, who experience the happiness of a more liberal distribution of the business, and pleasures of the male and female province, which not only soothes the cares, and enlivens

the joys of the retired, domestic scene : but, in the more active and enlarged sphere of ambition and enterprize, softens ferocity, while it animates indifference, and rouzes into action the noblest powers of the mind. What a blank must we then find in the manners of a country, where that sex, to which Nature seems to have intrusted so extensive an influence over the most active period of our lives, is debased by a most humiliating servitude and banishment, which deprives us of the most powerful motives to great and generous undertakings ! Yet such was the Heroic and Patriarchal state of society ; and such it is, at this day, in the East ; with a difference, however, that is much in favour of Homer's manners : for though the female subordination is strongly marked in the Iliad and Odyffey, yet women seem to make a more considerable part of society there than among the antient Jews ; and certainly much more than the present Oriental restrictions on this head permit.

As

As the influence of a custom so fatal to public and private happiness must have extended, in some degree, to the whole system of Heroic manners; it is impossible to do justice to the original productions of genius in that age, without making allowance for its effects in a true picture of life. Is it not very remarkable, that Homer, so great a master of the tender and pathetic, who has exhibited human Nature in almost every shape, and under every view, has not given a single instance of the powers and effects of love, distinct from sensual enjoyment, in the Iliad^g? though the occasion

^g Mr. Pope has observed, "That pity and the softer passions are not of the nature of the Iliad;" he might have said, that they are not of the character of Homer's manners. Yet, when they are introduced amidst the terrors of death and slaughter, the contrast is irresistible: and a tender scene in the Iliad, like a cultivated spot in the Alps, derives new beauties from the horrors, which surround it. Indeed had he left us but one specimen of this kind, the interview of Hector and Andromache, in the sixth book, this would have been sufficient to shew his entire command over our softest feelings. Should I presume to see a fault in this admired picture, it is one that falls, not upon the Poet, but his manners; and may help to explain my ideas on this matter.

occasion of the war, which is the subject of that poem, might so naturally introduce something of

matter. Andromache having raised our pity and compassion to the utmost stretch, that Tragedy can carry those passions; Hector answers,

Ἡ καὶ ἐμοὶ ταδε πάντα μέλει, γυναῖκα.

and concludes,

Ἀλλ' εἰς οἶκον ἴστα, ἔσθ.

His meaning here was to divert Andromache's attention to other objects, and the expression was meant to convey the utmost tenderness; but has it that effect upon us? is not the English Reader offended at a certain indelicacy in those words, which Homer puts in the mouth of an affectionate husband to his wife, and, in another place, of a most dutiful son to his mother? See Odyss. Φ 350. In short, the whole behaviour of Telemachus to Penelope, however respectful, puts us in mind of the Athenian law, which constituted the son, when he was of age, the *κύριος*, or guardian, of his mother. Indeed that republic seems to have banished women not only from a share of their amusements, but virtues. When an Oration was delivered in honour of those, who died for their country in battle, they were permitted, it is true, to be present: but with what an impolitic mortification to their sex do we find that indulgence disgraced, when Pericles pronounced the funeral oration upon those, who fell in the first year of the Peloponnesian war. For having enforced every argument, that eloquence could suggest upon that solemn and interesting occasion, when he turns to the widows and female relations of the deceased, he addresses

of this kind : nor can I allow the story of Ulysses and Calypso, in the *Odyssæy*, to come up to our ideas of that passion, any more than that of ^h Jupiter and Juno, Mars and Venus, and some other love-scenes of primitive manners. Virgil's age happily supplied him with those pictures, to which Homer was a stranger ; and he availed himself most successfully

addresses them with an unpardonable coldness. He tells them, that he shall say little : that he hopes, that they will not be worse than Nature made them : and that their greatest honour was to have as little, as possible, said of them among the men, either good or bad.

h Η ῥα, και αγκας εμαρπτε Κρονος παῖς ἦν παρακοιτην'
 Τοισι δ' ὑπο χθων δια Φυεν νεοθιλεα ποιην,
 Λωτον θ' ἐρσηεγτα, ιδε κροκον, ηδ' ὑακινθον,
 Πυκνον και μαλακον, ὅς απο χθονος ὑψοθ' εεργε.
 Τω ενι λεξασθην' επι δε νεΦελην ἐσσαντο
 Καλην, χρυσειην, σιλπναι δ' απεπιπτον εερσαι.
 Ὡς ὁ μεν ατρεμας ἐυδε πατηρ ανα Γαργαρω ακρω,
 Υπνω και φιλοτητι δαμεις, εχε δ' αγκας αχοιτιν.

Iliad. Ε. v. 346.

Speluncam Dido, Dux et Trojanus eandem
 Deveniunt. Prima et tellus et pronuba Juno
 Dant signum : fulsere ignes et conscius æther
 Connubiis.

Æneid. L. iv. v. 165.

of

of this opening. For, taking the mere outline of his story from the Greek Poet, he has left us a master-piece in that kind, as much above the original, for elegant expression of all the varieties of that passion, as Dido is superior to Calypso in tenderness and delicacy of sentiment.

Let us not account for this by supposing, with some of his best Commentators, that he considered the passion of love as a weakness unworthy of a Hero. Homer respected Nature too much to despise or suppress any of her genuine feelings. But, in short, this passion, according to our ideas of it, was unknown to the manners of that age. Not only the male characters, particularly that of the Hero of the Iliad, retain the harshness and ferocity of this defect; but the female sphere of action, which is now properly extended, was then confined to the uniformity of servile domestic duties. The Prude and Coquette, with all the intermediate shades of female character, are as much
beyond

beyond Homer's knowledge of life, as his employing royal beauty in the meanest offices of domestic drudgery falls short of the refined attentions of modern gallantry.

Without pursuing this thought to the remote consequences, to which it may lead a more curious enquirer; I shall only attempt to deduce from it an apology, or rather an account of some coarse pictures, which are but too often and too faithfully copied from the manners now under our consideration.

When ideas of love extended little further than animal enjoyment, the Poet, who engaged in this subject, was confined to mere licentious descriptions of female beauty, or to such representations of its effects, as modern delicacy will not suffer.

As the subject, so of course the language, of this passion, was barren and contracted; the simplicity of those times had not yet wandered into circumlocution: the whole vocabulary of love consisting of one explicit term; and, in

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proportion

proportion to the rigour and severity of the female proscription, the expression was careless and indelicate.

But the footing upon which a more rational intercourse of the sexes is now conducted, gives a new turn to society, and has a great share in producing the varieties of modern character; for a certain proportion of voluntary attention in one sex, and of unprescribed reserve in the other, equally unknown to Homer and the East, not only regulate in a great measure the style and tone of what is so variously called good-breeding in private life, but materially influence public virtues, and the happiness of a people. Hence arises a new set of words, as well as ideas; the coarse, the delicate, the decent, the obscene, the forward, the reserved, are relative terms, not only varying as to their former and present signification, but bearing different meanings now in different parts of Europe, as the male and female intercourse is more or less promiscuous and familiar.

While

While I should be sorry, by these observations, to reconcile any Reader to certain indecent pictures of the Iliad and Odyffey; yet still I could wish to distinguish them from some infamous productions of later dates, and more polished countries, for which there is no apology, by throwing the blame, where it chiefly lies, upon the manners of the times, rather than on the painter. It would be great injustice to Homer, not to pay him the compliment which these considerations suggest: I will venture to say, that, upon an impartial view of this part of his character, he will appear to excel his own state of society, in point of decency and delicacy, as much as he has surpassed more polished ages in point of genius.

V. In an age when Rank and Condition are multiplied and subdivided with so much nice and punctilious precision, it is difficult to reconcile ourselves to the simplicity of one uniform set of manners, where the great distinction is that of lord and slave, master and servant:

nor can we bear to see those, who preside in public council, and lead an army to the field, employed in tending their flocks, and dressing their dinners. We are likewise disgusted, when we see queens and princesses employed in the lowest departments of domestic drudgery.

In short, it is impossible to be so much interested in the justest representations of Nature, which we never saw, as in those, which come home to our own experience of life. I cannot help, therefore, observing, that the Pastoral Poetry of an age or country, where Pastoral manners do not prevail, however natural in scenery, must be artificial as to characters; and that the only original pictures of this kind are to be found in the state of society now under consideration.

Let us take a short view of the matter. When the cares, as well as the pleasures of the country were compatible with the highest rank, and the prince and peasant were literally united in the same person; elevation of sentiment and
expression

expression belonged to the Royal Shepherd, and were found in rural life. Hence it is that Oriental Pastoral, though obscure, and defective in the art of composition, affords the boldest flights of genius of this kind; and that Homer stands next in rank for original Pastoral beauties, with less sublimity of sentiment, it is true, and less energy of expression, but more picturesque in his scenery, and more delicate in his manners; advantages over other Poets, which he derived from a finer country, and a less rude period of society. The modern Arab, in whom I have seen the characters of prince, shepherd, and poet united, retains, in his compositions of this kind, the wildness, irregularity, and indelicacy of his forefathers, with a considerable share of the same original glowing imagination, which we could discover, even in their extempore productions, and under the disadvantage of crude and hasty translation.

But when Theocritus, and his imitator, Virgil, wrote each in a more refined age, and for polished

polished courts, the prince and shepherd were so totally separated, that they formed the opposite extremes of society; their pastoral *dramatis personæ* were, of course, taken from the lowest condition in life, to deliver the sentiments and feelings of the highest; an absurdity which the acknowledged beauties of the Greek and Roman Poet cannot make us overlook. Nor were they insensible of this inconsistency; but in attempting to correct it they fell into a worse fault; for it must be allowed, that their characters please least when they are most pastoral, and approach nearest to real life. As to later productions of this kind, being confined to no standard in Nature, they fluctuate between those extremes, according to the fancy of the Poet, the degree of his veneration for the great models of antiquity, or of his prejudices in favour of the manners of his own country. The consequence of this is, that either the language and sentiment are lowered to the condition of the speaker, and become mean
and

and disgusting; or they are borrowed from a higher sphere in life, and offend one of the most established rules in Poetics.

VI. We now come to the sixth and last object of our comparison. There is perhaps no display of the human faculties, with regard to which the taste of different ages and countries coincide so little, as productions of wit and humour, whose genuine spirit is so subtle and volatile in its nature, that it evaporates upon the least change in the circumstances, which produced it, leaving nothing behind but the insipid dregs of low buffoonry.

If such has been the transitory fate of Greek and Roman wit of the best times, we can have little expectations from those rude productions, which are the objects of our present comparison. But as the resemblance of manners, now under consideration, extends to certain comic similarities, which seem to point towards the same despotic origin, whence we have attempted to deduce the most striking features in Oriental

ental life : a farther enquiry into this matter (including what has been said on that gross and abandoned humour, which prevails in a defective state of female society) might furnish some hints towards the true history and real character of Ridicule.

At this time we shall only observe, that imperfect society neither affords the matter or manner necessary to a fair experiment of talents of this kind.

The uniform sameness of primitive life is incapable of the first ; for, while it gives an air of gravity and dignity to manners, it cramps the comic genius, which can only ripen and flourish amidst variety of character. The attentions of rude society are barely sufficient for the necessaries of life ; those of a more advanced period are taken up with its superfluities. Then it is, that false appetites and imaginary wants are created, unknown to Nature, to Homer, and the Bedouin ; arts, trades, professions, multiply ; new distinctions, ranks, and conditions

conditions are produced; and, in short, the various vices, follies, and affectations, of a wealthy, commercial, free people, open an ample field of pleasantry to a Swift, an Addison, or an Hogarth. If we have excelled other countries in this walk of humour, it may be ascribed to our rich diversity of original character, open to every artist, without those restrictions, which seldom check licentiousness without suppressing genius.

As the matter of primitive wit is circumscribed by this barrenness of subject, so its manner is checked by the danger of offending. Thus the first fallies of this kind are either controuled by timidity, or disgraced by roughness, which is so closely connected with actual violence, that they are often exercised together, and called in aid of one another. Hence that illiberal mockery of personal deformity, that ungenerous sneer at poverty, and, above all, that cruel, unmanly irony, and insolent triumph of the conqueror over the vanquished; which form

so many disgusting pictures in Homer, in the present manners of the East, and all barbarous countries, as well as among the vulgar of the most civilized, with whom the transition from raillery to blows is so natural, that the latter seems only a bolder and coarser expression of the first.

So close and so early an alliance between Wit and Violence is, I must own, very little to the credit of the former: I fear it is but a bad apology for her to say, that she commenced acquaintance with that rough companion when she was very young. But we must not, from partial observations, upon a subject requiring a more enlarged consideration, draw general conclusions, unfavourable to Homer and ourselves; for there are some strokes of humourⁱ in the Poet, that it will be difficult to resolve into

ⁱ Of this sort is the comic story, which the disguised Ulysses tells Eumæus, in the 14th book, of his having forgotten his cloak, when he was on an advanced post before Troy, in a cold night; and of the arch trick played upon one of the party, who was sent on a fool's errand upon that occasion.

that

that tyrannical principle, in which, I must confess, the brutal raillery of the Iliad and Odyſſey is too much founded.

As there is no part of this Eſſay to which the obſervations which occurred to me in my Eaſtern travels, particularly in Palæſtine, Egypt, and above all, the interior of Arabia, contribute ſo largely, as to this article of Homer's Manners; ſo there is none, which has coſt me ſo much pains in ſelecting and arranging, out of copious materials, what might be proper for this contracted ſpecimen, which, after all, is imperfect in its preſent ſtate. I ſhall be diſappointed if ſome of the Poet's abler admirers, taking up his defence on this ground, do not anticipate part of what I have further to ſay on this ſubject, when I ſhall attempt to try the truth and conſiſtence of the leading characters of the Iliad and Odyſſey, by that true teſt, viz. the manners of the Heroic age; to the reader who judges of them by the preſent times, the courage of Achilles muſt appear

brutal ferocity, and the wisdom of Ulysses low cunning.

If this short sketch of Heroic life be just, it allows me to conclude with the highest compliment to the powers and extent of Homer's original genius : for I may venture to say, that from the greatest uniformity of simple manners that ever fell to the share of any Poet, he drew the greatest variety of distinct character that has ever been produced by the same hand.

HOMER

HOMER AN HISTORIAN.

FROM what has been already said, Homer must stand unrivalled, as the Father of History: to him we owe the earliest account of Arts, Science, Manners, and Government; and without him, no just ideas can be formed of the state and true character of primitive society. This is not only the most interesting of all historical information, but it is transmitted to us upon the most incontestable authority; for he, who has established the name of Poet in his own age, by just pictures of life; becomes the Historian of posterity, upon the most respectable pretensions. This is a sort of appeal to contemporary evidence, which the dry Annalist cannot claim. I am therefore entirely within my subject, when I attempt to shew, that Homer was a faithful Historian, because he was a correct Painter.

But

But some of the most discerning judges of antiquity did not confine him to these limits; they prefer his authority, even in matters of fact, to that of professed writers of history. The original character of his composition is favourable to this opinion; and so natural and plausible a correspondence between the scene and the action of the Iliad would induce us to think, that he took the first from ocular examination, and the last from the prevailing traditions of the times. His living in the neighbourhood of Troy strengthens this conjecture. It gave him an opportunity, not only of being thoroughly acquainted with that spot, but of collecting circumstantial accounts of the most renowned achievements of the war, perhaps from those who were eye-witnesses of the siege, and had signalized themselves upon the Scamandrian plain; or at least from their children.

Though our object is to establish the credit due to Homer, as an Historian, chiefly upon
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the consistence of his facts, and his general character of truth, yet we may appeal to other authority for this opinion. The most satisfactory information of the early state of Greece, with regard to its Policy, Laws, Manners, Navigation and Strength, is that concise but sensible account which Thucydides prefixes to his History of the Peloponnesian war; and that writer, though a declared enemy to poetical history, forms his opinion of the ancient state of that country from Homer.

That the Ancients differed as to the circumstances of the Trojan war, is well known, and that some variations, even in the accounts of those who were actors in that scene, left the Poet at liberty to adopt or reject facts, as it best suited his purpose, is highly probable. Succeeding Poets would take the same liberty. Indeed the Tragedians, whose subjects are mostly taken from the Trojan story, have departed from Homer in several instances. Euripides chose a subject for one of his plays, which supposes

poses that Helen never was at Troy ; and though he was so fond of that plot as to repeat it, (for his Helen and Iphigenia in Aulis differ very little in this respect) yet we cannot suppose that he would have deserted Homer without any authority. The account, which Herodotus received of Helen and Menelaus from the Egyptian priests, was sufficient ground for him to go upon ; and shews the different ideas which prevailed so early with regard to the Trojan war : yet, when this matter comes to be fairly stated between the Poet and the Historian, I think it will be decided in favour of the first ; not that I would encourage that diffidence in Herodotus, which has been already carried too far. Were I to give my opinion of him, in this respect, having followed him through most of the countries which he visited, I would say, that he is a writer of veracity in his description of what he saw, but of credulity in his relations of what he heard.

But

But there are still other causes which have contributed to perplex Homer's history. As the first Poets took liberties with regard to the Trojan war, so their brother Artists adopted variations which helped to puzzle that story. Polygnotus, who studied the Poets, and took his subjects from the Trojan war, did not always follow Homer : nor do we find, that his account of things has been scrupulously adhered to in some of the ancient pieces of sculpture, where the subjects of the Iliad and Odysssey are represented. As to the Poetry, Painting, and Sculpture of the Romans, I cannot think that they are sufficient authority for Trojan subjects. There is no reason to believe, that Virgil had ever been at Troy ; and though he is so great an admirer, and so constant an imitator of Homer's poetical beauties, it does not appear that he considered him as an Historian, or Geographer, or paid much attention to that accuracy, which is the subject of our present enquiry. Tryphiodorus, Coluthus, and some others, are of still less

weight ; and when we meet with facts related by them, and not mentioned by Homer, they deserve attention only so far, as those writers might have seen antient authors, who are no longer to be found. Nor are Dares Phrygius, or Dictys-Cretensis worthy consideration in any other light, than as forgeries of an age, when they might have had an opportunity of collecting some minute circumstances from books, which are now lost. The Roman Poets took great liberties with the Greek Mythology, and the Heroic History. This is remarkable in Ovid, who worked up those subjects into a system, which, from its connection, and the fanciful additions which he has made, is considered as the most compleat, and, being first put into our hands, is that which we are most acquainted with ; for the general custom of learning Latin before Greek, forms our ideas more upon the Roman Mythology. Were Homer the first Poet taught in our schools, it would be easier to separate his Mythology from the fable of later times.

times. Since the religion of Greece and Rome has been considered speculatively by ingenious writers among the Moderns, who look for deep meaning in every thing that the Antients have left us, they have generally adopted, what best suited the purpose of their system, according to the more or less favourable ideas they had formed of the wisdom of antiquity. It is curious to observe what notions were propagated on this head upon the revival of letters, when a tincture of ancient fable and Heroic history was received through Italian and French translation. We find in ^a Shakespeare, who drew from those sources, an account of the Trojan story, collected from various quarters, and a mixture of Heroic and Gothic Mythology, made up of the traditions of different authorities and different ages.

Such are the adulterations, which both Homer's Fable and History have undergone. It

^a See Farmer upon Shakespeare's learning.

See Bernier and Fourmont. Argonautic Expedition.

is difficult to relieve him from the load of contradictions, with which his successors have embarrassed this matter ; but we may separate his own consistent story ; and, in matters of this obscurity, we may venture to call that the most authentic.

What I have collected with this view, from the Iliad and Odyfsey, may be ranged under a chronological order, consisting of three periods.

The first, anterior to the departure of the Greeks from Aulis, will draw the line between Homer's Mythology and History. This will take in the traditions of that Gigantic race which ended in Eurymedon ; the accounts of the Centaurs and Lapithæ ; of Ixion and Perithous ; of Bellerophon, Perseus, Theseus, and Hercules ; an account of the Calydonian Boar ; the Theban wars ; and the causes and preparations for the siege of Troy.

The next period commences with the failing of the Greeks for Troy ; relates the operations of almost ten years siege, or rather blockade

ade of that city, including the principal action of the Iliad, and ending with the demolition of the town.

The third period begins with that specimen of the whole, which I have already given. It contains the dispersions, various misfortunes, and different establishments of the Greeks, Trojans, and Auxiliaries, and brings us down to Homer's history of his own times. It may throw light on the Æolick, Ionick, and other migrations; and afford some conjectures with regard to the origin of Greek Arts, Manners, and Language.

As the principal action of the Iliad takes in no part of the first period, and very little of the second; and as that of the Odyffey employs a still less portion of the third; the Poet has interspersed the several facts, which are prior or posterior to the duration of either poem, which he marks with the greatest precision, and yet so happily as to produce variety, without injury to that chronological order, of which I find them susceptible,

ceptible, when collected and arranged, so far as I have hitherto made the experiment. To avoid anachronism, it was necessary, that the later events of the last period should be predicted. Among these we find the destruction of Mycenæ ^b, the demolition of the Greek fortifications, the succession of Æneas and his family to the kingdom of Troy, &c. As this last event has been strongly controverted by succeeding writers, it may be necessary to do the Poet justice in a point, which affects him as much in his historical capacity, as those supposed mistakes, with regard to the coast of Egypt, and the situa-

^b Mycenæ. I do not mean, that Homer necessarily alluded to the destruction of Argos, Sparta, and Mycenæ in Δ. v. 53. and still less do I suppose with Eustathius, and some other Commentators, that he means there to prophesy about the destruction of those towns, which happened after the Poet's time. If Homer is to be considered as an Historian, as Virgil is; the destruction, which he has left upon record of these towns, must be that, which happened soon after the time of Agamemnon.

Μετα τα Τρωϊκα Αγαμεμνονος αρχης λυθειςης.

Strabo.

This being upon the return of the Heraclidæ, coincides with what we suppose to have been the age of Homer.

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tion of Pharos, (which we have attempted to set right,) injured him in his geographical character. We shall, at present, confine our further consideration of Homer, as an Historian, to his justification in this particular.

It may appear strange at this time to dispute the voyage of Æneas to Italy; a fact upon which the origin of the Roman empire is so generally founded, which Livy takes for granted, which Dionysius of Halicarnassus pretends to have so fully proved, and which has gained such universal credit for so many ages. I might defend myself from the imputation of either paradox or singularity, by a pretty long list of dissenting voices from those authorities, in which our veneration for Roman antiquity has so implicitly acquiesced. But if a confutation of that fact can be supported by reason and common sense, it will not want the parade of much learned quotation.

I shall state the nature of the evidence on both sides of this question as succinctly as I can;

can ; taking into consideration the arguments both for and against Homer's testimony ; and I shall conclude with some observations upon Virgil's conduct, under the difficulties, which embarrassed the historical credit of his subject.

But in order to form a tolerable idea either of the History or Geography of Troy, it is necessary to correct a mistake, which has long contributed to the misrepresentation of both, by confounding the Phrygians with the Trojans. We found ancient geography no where more perplexed, than in our travels through Phrygia. This intricacy rises chiefly from a very early inattention to the different extent of that country at different times, so that its doubtful limits became proverbial. It may be difficult to remove the impressions which we receive on this head from ancient authors, particularly from one so familiar to us, so much, and so justly, admired, and so thoroughly acquainted with Homer, as Virgil. He not only represents the Trojans and Phrygians as the
same

same people, but confounds the ancient and modern character of the latter; how improperly, the Reader will judge from the following observations, by which I hope to ascertain Homer's sense of this matter.

1. When Helen, upbraiding Venus as the cause of her misfortunes, asks the Goddess, what other favourite she has to indulge at her expence, and if she means to lead her further to some city of Phrygia or Mæonia, she of course distinguishes those countries from the Troade.

2. When Hector complains that the wealth of Troy is carried to Phrygia and Mæonia, it implies the same distinction.

3. In a description of the extent and boundaries of Priam's country, it is expressly distinguished from Phrygia.

4. The Phrygians are numbered among the Trojan auxiliaries in the Catalogue; and are described as living at a distance.

5. Priam mentions his having formerly visited their country.

6, and lastly, The plot of the story of Venus and Anchises, in the hymn to Venus,

C c (which

(which both Lucretius and Virgil seem to have admired), turns chiefly upon this difference of the two countries : The scene is on Mount Ida ; where the goddess is represented as personating a Phrygian girl, and passes with Anchises for the daughter of Atreus, king of that country. She invents a story of the manner of her coming from Phrygia to Troy, and describes the variety of country she passed over in her way. But that her language may not betray her, (which, according to her assumed character should be Phrygian,) she acquaints him, that she was brought up by a Trojan nurse, who taught her the language of Troy, which was as familiar to her as that of her own country.

From the passages, to which I have referred, I think we may conclude, that, at the time of the Trojan war, Phrygia and Troy were distinct countries, governed by princes independent of each other, and using different languages. How soon and by what means the distinction

distinction was lost, is not certain ; probably soon after the Trojan war, at least before the time of the Tragic writers, who, as ^c Strabo observes, confound those names. There is a wretched piece of wit of Mnesilochus preserved, which plays upon the ^d synonymous term of Phrygian and Trojan.

Here I should observe, that the proofs which establish this distinction, deprive me of one of the most favourite arguments of a very powerful advocate for Homer's account of Æneas. Bochart having, with much learned pains, de-

^c Strabo, L. 12. p. 849.

^d It was supposed that Euripides was obliged to Socrates for assisting him in his Tragedies. When his TROES appeared, Mnesilochus, in one of his comic pieces, observed, that Socrates had supplied fuel to kindle the fire of that play : and instead of Τρωες, he calls it Φρυγες for the sake of jingle in the word, and a resemblance to Φρυγιον and Φρυγανον, which signified dry wood, such as a fire is lighted with.

ΦΡΥΓες· εσι καινον δραμα τητ' Ευριπιδυ,
Ωι και Σωκρατης τα ΦΡΥΓΑΝΑ υποτιθησι.

The true reading is,

Ωι Σωκρατης μεν υποτιθησι Φρυγανα.

monstrated a total want of affinity between the Roman and Phrygian language, concludes, that it is incredible that one of those nations should be descended from the other; because, says he, there never was an instance of a colony, that did not retain, if not the whole, at least some traces of the language of the mother country.

This remark is certainly just; but how little applicable to the present case, is unnecessary to observe, if the passages I have produced from Homer have convinced the Reader, that Æneas was not a Phrygian. The argument, which he draws from that well-established fact, viz. That the favourite Gods of Troy were not worshipped at Rome, is more to the purpose, and, I think, unanswerable.

That Æneas and his descendants reigned over the Trojans, after the Greeks had destroyed the Capital of their country, is a fact for which we have Homer's authority; and the manner in which this is expressed in the Iliad, would incline us to suppose, that the
Poet

Poet lived to see the great grandchildren of Æneas. This is a circumstance of such perfect indifference either to the general plan, or any particular embellishment, of his Poem, that he had not the least temptation to depart from the common received opinion on this head. Besides, to deceive in such a case would have been as difficult, as it was useless; for when Homer produced the Iliad, this event was neither a matter of antiquity or obscurity, but notorious, either as true or false, to his contemporaries. He lived in the neighbourhood of Troy, and addressed himself to competent judges of the fact. We cannot suppose, that he would so wantonly prostitute his veracity, as to expose unmeaning falsehood to the obvious conviction of every Reader of his own age and country.

Nor do we find, that this account of the Trojan succession was controverted, till the Romans thought fit to derive their origin from Troy; a matter in which we know the vanity of that nation was much concerned. Yet the
support

support of this pretension rests entirely on Roman authority, which is not only liable to just suspicion, as having an interest in the fact it would establish; but, if we lay aside that consideration, it amounts to no degree of evidence; for the people who deduce a remote origin, upon the authority of their own annals alone, are entitled to no more credit, than the person, who should pretend to relate the circumstances of his birth, and give a journal of his infancy, merely from his own recollection.

But however freely we may treat this imaginary voyage now, it would have been imprudent to have expressed doubts upon so tender a point, at Rome, in the reign of Augustus: and this general prejudice in favour of the subject sufficiently recommended it to the Poet's choice. The more we enter into the state of things, when he wrote, the posture of the Roman affairs, the reigning opinions, civil and religious, both of the Prince and People, and the precise relation in which the Poet stood, as well
with

with regard to the whole, as to some individuals, the more we shall think him peculiarly happy in that choice. Indeed, to those who do not enter into those particulars, many of the beauties of the *Æneid* are lost, for the Roman Poet abounds in pertinent and elegant allusion to his own times, always introduced with strict propriety, and conducted with great judgment. Whatever Homer might have had of this sort, for readers of his own age, is buried in oblivion with the circumstances of his life. And, considering the different genius of the Poets, and of the ages when they lived, we ought not to expect from Homer, and the Heroic times, (could we know them better), any share of that artful and refined compliment, which is the particular excellence of the most polished writer of the Augustan age. The Greek Poet, less courtly, therefore more natural, whose philosophy acknowledged no sect, and whose politics knew no party, ever aims at original resemblance in his pictures, with an impartiality,

partiality, which his patriotism did not bias, and to which, perhaps, his moral gave way. For in the great variety of the Iliad and Odyssey, I see no complimentary preference to his countrymen, and not one perfect character set up as a model for imitation. Now, should it be alledged, that he has followed Truth and Nature, both as to facts and characters, too closely, for what has been since laid down as the ultimate object of the Epic plan, viz. the instruction and reformation of mankind, surely this is much in his favour as an Historian.

But, though Virgil found the voyage of his Hero sufficiently established in the minds of a people credulously predisposed towards this favourite object of national prejudice; he appears to have been very cautious of endangering its credit, by departing from any of the prevailing popular traditions, which related to that event. And though the obscurity and contradiction, in which the incidents of this supposed migration were involved, gave him
scope

scope in the choice of his materials, he made a very sparing use of it; for he seldom ventures to introduce an extraordinary circumstance, that we cannot trace to some previous authority; and he gives some things a place in his poem, for which we can see no temptation, but their contributing to support the truth of his subject.

The divine mission of his Hero offers a ready solution of many of the objections to his establishment in Italy; and is made responsible for all the absurdity and injustice, with which his enemies so naturally charge that undertaking. *Auguriis agimur Divum* is the short account he gives of the desertion of his own country; and much the same apology is made to *Latinus* for the invasion of his. This language is adapted with great propriety to the grand purpose of the Poet, who insinuating to a vain and superstitious people a favourable idea of a late change of government, artfully conciliates reverence and respect to the common origin and

connected interests of their civil and religious constitution; and with this view the pious duties of Faith, Resignation, and Obedience, are highly finished in the character of his predestined Hero.

But though the established religion and public annals of Rome seemed to have tolerably well secured the credit of a fact, which the Emperor's^e vanity was eager to encourage, and popular prejudice not less zealous to support; yet Virgil did not care to trust impartial posterity with Homer's short account of this matter, and discovers the most genuine compliment to the Greek Poet's historical character, in a sly evasion of its authority; for he adopts the passage from the Iliad, and by changing a syllable in one word, he converts the strongest voucher against the voyage of

^e This vanity was strongly marked in Julius Cæsar, who is made to say of himself, by Suetonius, "A Venere Julii, cujus gentis familia est nostra." § 6.

Æneas,

Æneas, into a prophetic testimony in its favour ^f.

^f (ΠΑΝΤΕΣΣΙΝ for ΤΡΩΕΣΣΙΝ), Whether Virgil was the author of this pious fraud, or adopted it from others, is immaterial; I am rather inclined to the first of those conjectures, for reasons which I shall lay before the classical Reader, if he thinks this note worth his perusal. The text, in all the manuscripts hitherto discovered, stands thus;

Νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνεῖαο βίη ΤΡΩΕΣΣΙΝ ἀναξεί,
Καὶ παῖδες παίδων, τοὶ κεν μετοπίσθε γενῶνται·

Strabo says, that those who apply this passage to the Romans; write it thus:

Νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνεῖαο γένος ΠΑΝΤΕΣΣΙΝ ἀναξεί;

Which Virgil translates,

Hic domus Æneæ cunctis dominabitur oris.

This correction was therefore suggested, in order to reconcile Homer to the Roman History. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who has been at most pains to support the Trojan origin of Rome, taking these lines of Homer into consideration, mentions no such reading. We may therefore with probability suppose it to have been thought of after Dionysius and before Strabo. This period coincides with Virgil's time of writing the Æneid, and at that time precisely the Roman conquests authorized a correction of the text, which prophesied their becoming masters of the world.

It was still necessary to soften another striking objection, to which the Hero's settlement in Italy was liable. The colony he was said to have conducted and established there, retained no marks of their Trojan origin; nor did the descendants of those conquerors preserve the least remains of the manners, customs, language, or even name, of their supposed ancestors, at the same time that they differed greatly from them, both in the modes and objects of their worship.

The Romans would perhaps, of all nations, be least sensible of the force of this objection: as no people was ever less bigotted to their own manners, or more apt to adopt those of their conquered enemies. Yet Virgil saw, that so very unnatural a neglect of the mother country, and so unaccountable a compliment to the inhabitants of a new conquest, could not pass unnoticed; he therefore closes the poem with the following piece of machinery, perfectly
well

well calculated for a solution of those difficulties.

As Turnus and Æneas are preparing for the final decision by single combat, Jupiter makes a conciliating overture to Juno, and expostulates with her upon the inutility of endless opposition to the decrees of Fate,

“ Quæ jam finis erit, conjux? quid denique restat?

“ Indigitem Æneam scis ipsa, et scire fateris,

“ Deberi cælo, fatisque ad sidera tolli.

“ Quid struis? &c.”

He then intreats her to desist; and first, putting her in mind of the unhappy lengths, to which her passion had been already indulged, he concludes with a concise and positive injunction to proceed no further;

“ Ulterius tentare veto.”

The goddess, who could retard, but not control, the will of Jove, answers submissively, apologizes for her past conduct, and promises

to

to renounce the cause. But in return she requests

“ Ne vetus indigenas nomen mutare Latinos,
 “ Neu Troas fieri jubeas, Teucrosque vocari,
 “ Aut voces mutare viros, aut vertere vestes, &c.”

Jupiter grants her petitions, and declares,

“ Sermonem Aufonii patrium, moreſque tenebunt ;
 “ Utque eſt, nomen erit : commixti corpore tantum
 “ Subſident Teucri : morem rituſque ſacrorum
 “ Adjiciam ; faciamque omnes uno ore Latinos, &c.”

Here we ſee, that the Poet is obliged to have recourſe to a decree of Jupiter to account for the want of affinity between the language, manners, names, and religions, rites, and ceremonies of Troy and Rome. But he had ſtill other difficulties to encounter. The *Æneid* is like the *Iliad*, full of machinery : and Virgil’s imitation of Homer in this particular lay under two very great diſadvantages. The firſt of theſe, of which we have before taken notice, was,

was, that the scenery of Homer's mythology was fixed in Greece, and adapted to the action of the Iliad. The second was, that the parts, which the Dramatis Personæ of this mythology acted in the Trojan story, were arranged not exactly in the manner most suitable to the purpose of Virgil. For he is by these means deprived of the character in which Minerva appears with so much propriety in the Odyssæy; and is obliged to put his pious legislative Hero under the protection of Venus. This goddess, though very fit to have the conduct of his affairs at Carthage, when he is carrying on an amour with Dido, was not so well qualified to promote his views in Italy, *Dum conderet urbem, inferretque Deos Latio*. Again, Juno having been employed in the Iliad as the inveterate enemy of Troy, takes an active part in the *Æneid* against the establishment of the Roman empire. It is true, the Poet derives from this the happiest allusions to some of the most interesting scenes in the Roman history. But
surely

fully her first appearance in this hostile character, at the opening of the Poem, must have been an awkward circumstance ; when Juno Romana was the favourite Deity of Rome.

Tum vos, O Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne futurum
 Exercete odiis ; cinerique hæc mittite nostro
 Munera : nullus amor populis, nec fœdera funto.
 Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor,
 Qui face Dardanios ferroque sequare colonos ;
 Nunc, olim, quocunque dabunt se tempore vires.

Æneid. L. iv. v. 622.

It was not proper that the Reader should wait for the unraveling of the plot to have this matter explained ; he is therefore apprized in the first book, that this enmity of the goddess is to be converted into protection and regard ; and Jupiter promises,

“ Consilia in melius referet ; mecumque fovebit
 “ Romanos rerum dominos, &c.”

Accordingly, towards the conclusion of the last book this reconciliation is effected :

“ Annuit

“ Annuit his Juno, et mentem lætata retorfit.”

The great point being thus settled, Turnus is killed, and the Poem ends.

From this digression on the conduct of the Roman Poet, with regard to the event which he chose for his subject, I would infer, that, notwithstanding the powerful prejudices of Rome in its favour, he was apprehensive of objections, which might be drawn as well from Homer's authority, as from the incredible singularity of a colony's retaining no traces of the names, language, dress, or religious rites, of their ancestors.

HOMER'S CHRONOLOGY.

THERE seems to have been nothing more extraordinary in the history of Grecian knowledge, than the various modes of computing time; as they prevailed within a narrow compass, and among a people of the same religion and language. But this was long after the age of Homer, in which we discover nothing like a formal calendar. His time is measured by the returns of the sun, moon, and seasons, of light and darkness, labour and rest; but we find no political distribution of it, no weeks, hours, or minutes, no allusion to dials, clepsydræ, or any other mode of computation known before the invention of pendulums, the most exact of all chronometers. His day is subdivided by the occupations which convenience had allotted to the different parts of it in rude society; a mode of computation taken
more

more from Nature than Art, therefore more poetical than accurate.

There was no stated æra in Greece before that of the Olympiads ; therefore no settled Chronology. Nor was this science made use of to arrange and connect events in their due order of time, till after the writings, not only of their oldest, but of their most admired prose historians ^a had appeared : when I imagine the alphabet, though known before, was first applied

^a Pherecydēs of Syrus, and Cadmus of Miletus, supposed to have been the first prose writers, lived about 544 years before Christ. Acusilaüs of Argos, who, according to Suidas, wrote his genealogies from brazen tables, which had been found by his father, is placed near this time. We have none of their works, nor of Epimenides, or Pherecydes of Athens, genealogists, who succeeded them : nor of Hellanicus, who is placed about an hundred years after them. He regulated his Chronology by the succession of the priestesses of Juno at Argos ; and must have been puzzled in reducing facts to order ; as we may guess by his making Hellen nine years old, when Theseus, who was fifty, carried her away. These are facts, of which, I believe, all that we shall ever know, is from Homer. I own, I was a little disappointed, when I found that beauty so far advanced in years, when at Troy, where so much blood was spilled for her sake : and was sorry to learn, that she had been acquainted with Hector for

plied to common use. The Chronicle of Paros, that curious manuscript, which the University of Oxford possesses, seems to be the earliest, as it is the most authentic series of Greek dates upon record. But the author of that collection, who appears not to have lived above two hundred and sixty-five years before the commencement of the Christian æra, takes no notice of the Olympiads. And, though they were adopted by history about this time, we can scarce allow, that chronology was treated scientifically, till the time of Eratosthenes. He first compa-

the space of twenty years. But if it was at all proper that this should be told, the Poet takes the best time for it. Hector is killed; Helen grown old; and, what is worst of all, the Poem near an end.

Timæus of Sicily lived about this time; and attempted to compare and correct the dates of the Olympiads of the Spartan kings, the Athenian Archons, and of the Priestesses of Juno, by one another; and to reconcile the whole to the history, transmitted by the Poets. When we consider, that this was the first attempt, that we know of, to establish an æra; and that it was in the hundred and twenty-ninth Olympiad, what are we to think of the preceding Greek Chronology?

Eratosthenes lived about forty years after Timæus. His calculations are lost; but his epoques are preserved. See Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology.

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red and corrected former calculations and conjectures, and established Epoques in Greece.

I cannot help thinking, that it was unfortunate for letters, that the first among the antients, who undertook to range the facts of Greek History in that order which was adopted by succeeding historians, did not take Homer into his consideration. Whether this ingenious Philosopher, who lived at a time, when the Poet was the object of much blind admiration, might not have been disgusted at the idle compliments paid to his science, we cannot pretend to say: but he certainly took more pains to expose Homer's ignorance, than it is easy to account for otherwise. The respectable authorities to which we have appealed in the preceding section, as vouchers for his facts, may, with equal propriety, be called in evidence, for the order of time in which he has placed them: and the early Chronology of the Greeks must be drawn from the same source which has furnished the first events in their history.

May

May I venture to add, that it is also to be regretted, that Newton, the ornament of our country and of this age, when he took Eratosthenes and the Greek Chronology into consideration, should not have consulted our Poet? Had the relaxations of that great man from more severe and important studies permitted him to consider Homer in the light we have attempted to place him, I am persuaded it would have given him so different an opinion of the Heroic State of arts, that he would not have taken Chiron, or his daughter Hippo, for practical astronomers, upon such slight authority, or have supposed, that, before the siege of Troy, the Greeks had either instruments fit to take an observation, or science to make a proper use of them. On the other hand, he would have found Homer's authority favourable to his limited idea of Greek antiquity: for, notwithstanding the pains which have been taken, to shew the Poet's partiality to his countrymen; he left nothing on record that could flatter the
Grecian

Grecian vanity upon this head. He might have drawn great assistance from him in support of that part of his system, which contracts the distance of time between the Argonautic Expedition and the Siege of Troy. He would indeed have seen the whole Homeric history, antecedent to this last epoch, contained in a very narrow compass, not going much farther back than the birth of Nestor : but he would also have seen that short period so full of consistent facts, that, with whatever degree of poetical exaggeration they have been magnified, the circumstantial connection of the whole is too well ascertained, not to shew that they were founded in events, which had already the sanction of general tradition : and had acquired some share of credit, before the Poet's embellishment gave them a portion of fame ; which they owe more to his genius, than their own importance.

With regard to Homer's age (a matter of as much obscurity, as his country) if we be allowed

lowed to form conjectures upon this head from his writings, we may suppose, that he was born not long after the siege of Troy: and had finished both his Poems about half a century after the town was taken. That, as the first interesting stories he heard, were, when a boy, of the exploits performed there; so in his riper years he had still an opportunity of conversing with the old men, who had been engaged in it: that their immediate descendants were his contemporaries: that he knew their grandchildren; and saw the birth of their great-grandchildren, which made the fourth generation from Æneas. It is true this makes the birth of Homer prior to the Ionic migration, which Thucydides places eighty years after the siege of Troy: in which there is no solid objection. We know, that there were Ionians in Asia, before a colony of that name was brought thither. To this there is no allusion in the Iliad or Odyfsey: and we may as well derive the name of Ionian,

as

as we find it written in ^b Homer, from Javeon the son of Japhet, as from Ion, the son of Xuthus.

I have already observed, that it would have been both difficult and useless for him to have forged that account of the family of Æneas, from which I draw this conjecture with regard to his own age; nor do I believe any testimony can be produced, of equal authority with this passage of the Iliad, for placing him nearer the Trojan war. The reasons why I am induced to fix him precisely to that, rather than to any later period, are these: first, the succession of the great-grandchildren of Æneas to the kingdom of Troy is the latest fact that he has left upon record. The Æolian migration would probably disturb that very generation in their possessions: which I therefore suppose the Poet did not live to see. In the next place; it is the cha-

^b The appellation of *Ἰωνες* in Homer's Iliad N. v. 685.

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rafter,

rafter, indeed I may venture to say it is among the faults of Homer, to be minutely descriptive. He frequently introduces superfluous circumstances of mere precision, rather than leave his object vague and uncircumscribed ; even where a general view of it would have done as well, or perhaps better. In short, his genius for imitation, and his love of truth, seem to carry him too far into the province of painting ; of which one particular privilege is, to be minute and circumstantial, without becoming dull or tedious. I am therefore inclined to think, that, though the time we allude to will, at any period after the birth of his grandchildren, be applicable to the posterity of Æneas, the Poet might have in view that particular generation for the descendants of those, who fought at Troy, with whom he lived and conversed, and who are so distinctly pointed out by this passage, taken in the literal sense. Thirdly, His picture of society agrees best with that early stage of it.

Those,

Those, who bring down Homer as low as ^c Lycurgus, (I fancy, because the idea of an interview between two such personages has something pleasing in it) do not consider, that such a Poet and such a Legislator do not properly belong to the same state of manners. And lastly, his account of persons, and facts, could not have passed through many hands; for his manner, not only of describing actions and characters, but of drawing portraits, looks very much, as if he had been either present, or at least had taken his information from eye-witnesses.

^c It is dangerous to truth, when great men, for want of better materials, catch at any plausible conjecture; to which their admirers give more credit than they intended; as for instance: In the temple of Jupiter at Elis, there was a Disque with the name of Lycurgus inscribed upon it: therefore, says Aristotle, this lawgiver was contemporary with Iphitus, and the first Olympiad. But, says Newton, Aristotle did not consider that the Quinquertium, of which the Disque was one game, was not established till the eighteenth Olympiad. But may we not ask both Aristotle and Sir Isaac Newton, upon what authority they suppose this to have been the Lawgiver's Disque? for the name of Lycurgus was common long before the Spartan was born, and we find it in Homer Il. Z. v. 130. H. v. 142.

I should not presume to oppose this reasoning to historical authority, did I not proceed upon these grounds, that, where the whole is so much conjecture, we may offer what appears most plausible. But as this is the best account that I can get from Homer of himself, so it is the only one that I find in history. We learn from Herodotus, that the Poet became the guest of Mentor, who was personally acquainted with Ulysses.

It may be here requisite that I take some notice of the ancient life of Homer, handed down to us, and ascribed to Herodotus, as I differ from many upon this subject. The life of Homer is supposed by several not to be the genuine production of that Historian. Mr. Pope and Dr. Parnel (for they were both concerned in the Essay) wonder that it should be ascribed to him, as it evidently contradicts his own history. They say, that it is an unsupported minute Treatise, and of small estimation.

I cannot

I cannot help differing greatly from this respectable authority in my opinion of the work. That the events are unsupported is true : and we may add, that they are often trivial and minute. But this does not induce me to think, that they were not collected by Herodotus, who was born in the Poet's neighbourhood ; and would naturally wish to put together all the traditions of his life, which he could learn upon this coast. And as it is impossible to imagine a collection of circumstances, which have less the appearance of fiction, I do not see why we should not suppose, that this was the last and most probable account, the historian could get. As for the observation, that they belong to the lowest sphere in life, I fear, it is suggested by modern distinctions of rank, unknown in those times. When we are told, by way of depreciating this written life, That it is conducted by the spirit of a grammarian ; that there is nothing in it above the life which a grammarian might lead himself : nay, that it is
such

such a one as they commonly do lead, the highest stage of which is to be master of a school; we are treated with objections which arise much more out of a knowledge of modern than ancient times. The character of grammarian was unknown not only to Homer, but to Herodotus: and when it did appear, was much more respectable, than of late; when, by an easy transition, it is connected with the name of schoolmaster, as in the present case, and conveys very false ideas of the state of knowledge and learning. Of the same sort is the stricture upon the extempore verses of this Treatise: which, far from being an argument against it, I take to be the most genuine mark of the age, to which it pretends. When in a written composition, the distinction of verse and prose was of a short standing; what we here called extempore verses, which are so often interspersed in the works of Herodotus, and the oldest of the Greek writers, I suppose to have been quotations from that period of knowledge

knowledge previous to the common use of writing, when prose was confined to conversation, and all compositions were in metre, that they might be more easily remembered.

However, our subject leads us rather to consider the agreement between the action of the Iliad, and the time it employs, than the Poet's age, or the chronological order of those pieces of ancient history, which he has inserted in different parts of his Poem: and I have already ventured to say, that, if we examine the Iliad, as a journal of the siege of Troy, stripped of its poetical embellishments, we shall find it, in general, a consistent narrative of events, related according to the circumstances of time and place, when and where they happened: our map of Troy is proposed as the truest test of this matter.

The action of the Iliad is limited to a number of days, twenty of which pass before the armies engage, four in battles, one in burying the dead, and one in building the fortifications:
the

the remaining days are chiefly employed in the mourning and funeral rites of Patroclus and Hector. As the action is more animated and interesting, his time is more minutely marked and divided; though he is extremely exact in marking time as a circumstance of truth, which gives probability to his description. He is indifferent about any other duration for his action, than that which tradition had assigned it: indeed, the strongest mark of his original character is seen in the manner, in which he treats the circumstances of time and place. For, while he is accurate and consistent with regard to both, it is only by particular examination, that we make this discovery. And it seems never to have entered into his head to give a map of Troy, or a journal of the siege; they are taken for granted, and as things already known. Had this been his view, he has executed it to very little purpose; for I will venture to say, that Bossu, Pope, Dacier, &c. are mistaken as to his time; nor has his scene of action been minutely examined

ned or tolerably understood by any writer, I know of, Strabo excepted.

This exactness extends to his machinery, and in order to do it justice, we must take his gods into the *Dramatis Personæ*: it is also as remarkable by night as by day; and the same rule is observed of marking the circumstance of time and place with more precision, as the action is more interesting. The journey of Priam and the aged Herald to the tent of Achilles, and the excursion of Ulysses and Diomedes to the Trojan camp, are beautiful instances of this. And here let me observe, that the severest struggle for victory happening on the day after those nocturnal exploits of Ulysses and Diomedes, they could not be well absent on so interesting an occasion, when the whole was at stake; yet they do not make their appearance, till they had found time for that repose, which the extraordinary fatigues of the preceding night made necessary; and till the fortune of the day took

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that critical turn, which called for their appearance.

I must own, it requires great patience to acquire a distinct idea of the days of battle : the Reader is hurried with a rapidity, which does not admit of cool observation, through scenes of bloodshed and slaughter ; and though his eye is now and then caught by a detached groupe, or single figure, he admires it separately, without seeing its connection with the whole composition. I have already observed the advantage, which Painting has over Poetical imitation, in conveying clear and distinct ideas, by the help of minute circumstances : yet even in the best painted battle-piece this distinct expression is confined to a few principal figures in the foreground. But, without entering into any apology for Homer (which I think even the rough manners of his age cannot furnish), I will venture to say, that his descriptions of this sort become less tedious, and more interesting, as we
become

become more acquainted with the time and place of the action.

As to that propriety, with which his times and seasons are, in general, adapted to his facts, it will appear through this History, when it comes to be extended in the manner above proposed. The detention of the Greeks at Aulis, and of Menelaus at Pharos, will fall in with the season of the Etesians; which produce the same effects in the same places, and at the same time of the year, to this day. If, contrary to some opinions, I open the Iliad in Summer, it is, because it corresponds with the operations of the tenth year of the siege, which are the subject of the Poem; and because, in a marshy situation, like that of Troy, unwholesome at this day in the hot season, nothing could be more probable and natural than the fever of a crowded camp, when the sun was most powerful: and this I take to have been the plague which Apollo sent among the Greeks. If I reject the opinion of those who

suppose, that the town was taken in Spring; it is, because they are contradicted by various passages in the Iliad. And though we should allow Virgil, or Petronius, (who are called in aid upon this occasion) to be sufficient authority in such a case, still it will not operate in their favour; for though they suppose the town taken about the full moon, this does not decide the season of the year^d; and as Æneas sails, according to Virgil, the very beginning of the Summer, we cannot suppose, that he could cut down his timber, and build a fleet of twenty ships, in a few days. But if we allow him the Winter for that purpose, his operations will agree with probability and Homer.

But

^d Homer tells us at the opening of the Poem, that nine years were completed, and that the tenth was begun. If we suppose this to have been only Gamelion, the first month of the Attic year, it will agree with Homer; and the detention at Aulis, and the plague, will fall in this month.

The commencement of the Attic year is very material to our purpose; as it will authenticate our position, as it began at the end of
Autumn.

But if, laying aside the history of Æneas, and the anachronism of Dido, we examine the subordinate events of the Greek and Roman Poets, stripping them of their poetical dress, we shall find more narrative, precision, and consistence in the first; and that the action of the Æneid, though less varied by incidents, than that of the Iliad or Odyssæy, is not so naturally connected by probable circumstances.

As to its duration, notwithstanding all the Commentators have said to clear it up, it remains vague and unsettled, I fear, contradictory. For Æneas arrives at Carthage in the seventh summer of his voyages; and the next year he solemnizes the funeral games in Sicily, in the seventh year after the destruction of Troy.

Autumn. But will it not be best to see, what was the most material division of the Grecian year, and suppose this to have been the year alluded to by Homer, though not yet reduced to the precision of the civil year? This was variously constituted among the different states of Greece. If this variety existed in Homer's time, why should we suppose him to adopt one year more than another?

See Casini for the commencement of the Attic year.

If

If he is right in the first calculation, he must be at least a year mistaken in the last.

Nor is a want of distinct Chronology the only defect in the account of Æneas's voyages. If we examine them with a view to that chain of consistent circumstances, which are as essential to Poetical as Historical truth, we shall be disappointed. Cassandra had laid open to Anchises the destination of his family for Italy. It is pointed out to Æneas in various manners, but most explicitly foretold by Creüsa's ghost; who not only informs him, that he is to go to Italy, but describes the part of it, where he is to reign. Yet, in a few lines after, we see the Trojans embark, without knowing where to go. Æneas turns his back upon this promised land, and sails for Thrace; which, though in his neighbourhood, he describes as a distant country. The contrivance for his leaving it is forced, unnatural, and against history: and when he sails from thence to Delos, to get information with regard to what had been already explained, it is
with

with a wind, which could not carry him thither.

Should we proceed in examining the whole action of the *Æneid* in this manner, we might observe little inaccuracies of the same kind, which are not to be found so frequently in Homer. But the instances, I have produced in the course of this Essay, are sufficient to shew that difference of character in the compositions of those great Poets, which is the only object of this comparison; for I do not propose it as a test of their merit. Nor are they brought together in the spirit of those Commentators, who think they cannot advance the reputation of the one, but at the expence of the other. I consider Homer and Virgil, as the most perfect models, that any age or country has yet produced; perhaps less different in their genius than their fortunes: for had Virgil written first, I doubt not but Homer would have copied him. Indeed, the importance of meer priority, if properly considered, will appear much greater, than

than we are apt to imagine. Those, who have observed, how small a part of mankind think for themselves, how much our tastes are formed upon authority, and governed by habit, must see the great advantage of getting into possession of universal, unbounded admiration.

Though Homer was born with a genius, that must have figured, if not taken the lead, in any age; and wrote under greater advantages, than ever fell to the lot of any other Poet; there is still a peculiar circumstance of meer good fortune, that attended his productions, to which they perhaps owe more reputation, than to their intrinsic value: viz. that they were presented to the golden age of letters, by the most acute and distinguishing genius of that or any other period; who was in a great measure allowed to judge for the rest of the world, both in matters of Taste and Philosophy, for above two thousand years.

Could I presume to oppose opinions which have been long respected, I should attempt to
account

account for that chain of connected truth, which is more observable in Homer than in Virgil, from the different objects, which those Poets had in view. That it was their intention, both to please and instruct, is not to be doubted : but in what degree these different motives prevailed in each of them, when they did not coincide, has been much disputed. We have been told, that Homer's great object was, to make mankind, and particularly his countrymen, wiser and better ; that the Iliad, in which he teaches the blessings of Order and Union, and the mischiefs of Ambition and Discord, is in this view addressed to the whole Greek Confederacy ; and that, in the Odyssæy he lays down the principles of political prudence for the use of each particular state. We have also heard much of those secrets of Nature, and that Physical Philosophy, which he is supposed to have wrapt up in Allegory ; of that fertility of imagination, which could clothe the properties of elements, the qualifications of

the mind, the virtues and vices, in forms and persons, and introduce them into actions, agreeable to the nature of the things they shadowed^e.

I could wish, that those, who think so highly of the mysterious wisdom of the ancients, and take so much pains to explain their dark mode of conveying profound knowledge, would tell us, by what method they acquired it. I can easily conceive a connection between Mystery and Falsehood or Ignorance; but I do not see, what it has to do with Truth or Knowledge.

When therefore I admit, that one of these Poets had a deeper purpose than the other, I differ totally from those, who give it to Homer, and consider the meaning of the *Æneid*, as more obvious, plain, and simple, than that of the *Iliad*, or *Odyssy*. Nor can I help thinking (without offence to the Father of criticism) that the Greek Poet found great part of his

^e See Pope's Essay on Homer.

moral in his fable ; and did not, like Virgil, invent a fable for his moral. If therefore he only adorned the facts he took from history, they would naturally retain the same consistence in his compositions, which they had already acquired in the opinion of the world : for it is the nature of oral tradition, the only mode of recording events then known, to magnify and embellish, rather than suppress or pervert truth. But Virgil, who intended a panegyric upon his Prince, and a compliment to his country, looked for a fable most suitable to that plan. And we cannot do justice to his invention, without entering into the extent of his views, and the difficulties he had to encounter in carrying them into execution : for, while he copied Nature through Homer, he was to accommodate what he borrowed from both to the fortunes of Rome, and the character of Augustus. That this was his great object, he expressly declares, when he promises his *Æneid* to the world, and unfolds the plan of his Poem.

Such are the considerations I would offer to those, who are fond of comparing Homer and Virgil; not as a discouragement to our making such a comparison, (which is curious and instructive, and affords, I think, the highest of all classical entertainment;) but to shew the caution, with which we should proceed, in order to do justice to both Poets, and to explode that illiberal spirit of criticism, which has so much prevailed among Commentators, that they are constantly complimenting the one, by finding fault with the other.

H O M E R 's

HOMER'S LANGUAGE

AND

LEARNING.

IT is much to be regretted, that those, who are in other respects so well qualified to throw light on this part of our subject, by not taking into their consideration the Poet's age and manners, have not conceived a just idea of the Genius and Character of his Language. Professed scholars, and critics in the Greek tongue, confine their observations principally to its state of perfection ^a, without considering how long
Homer

^a This was not till after the Persian Invasion, when the Greeks were roused to a sense of liberty, to which we may, in a great measure, attribute more great actions and more elegant compositions than any other nation ever produced. The distinction of Greek and Barbarian was unknown to Homer, and his supposed partiality to the former seems to have as little foundation as the political plan of his
Poem.

Homer lived before that period. They compliment him for having enriched his language with the different dialects of Greece ; though the distinction of dialects can be only known to a cultivated, and, in some degree, settled state of language, as deviations from an acknowledged standard ^b.---They point out his Poetical Licences ; forgetting that, in his time, there

Poem. But Æschylus, who fought at Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea ; Sophocles, who was also a soldier ; and Euripides, who was born amidst the triumphs of his country for victories obtained in defence of the rights of a free people, looked down upon the Asiatic character with a conscious dignity and superiority, which, though it breathes through their writings, Homer never felt, and therefore could not express. Virgil did not attend to this distinction, and even the Hero of the Æneid lets slip some allusion to the term Barbarian, which is the effect of this negligence :

“ Quinquaginta illi thalami, spes tanta nepotum,
 “ Barbarico postes auro spoliisque superbi,
 “ Procubere.” Æn. ii. 504.

^b Nor would it be judicious to employ them indifferently. The Bergamasc, Neapolitan, and Venetian dialects, do well on the Italian stage in the mouths of Harlequino, Pulcinello, and Pantalone ; but a Tuscan would never think of enriching his language by using them promiscuously in an Epic Poem.

were

were no compositions in Prose.---They settle his pronounciation by an Alphabet ^c which he did not know, and by characters he never saw. ---For whatever credit his story of sixteen letters brought into Greece by Cadmus may deserve, it is allowed, that the twenty-four letters of the Ionian alphabet were not in use till after Homer's time.---His Profody ^d, or musical expression, must have been soon corrupted; for it is remarkable that the old chaste Greek me-

^c Without entering into a debate, whether writing was in common use in the days of Homer; let us suppose it to have been familiar to him: yet the letters with which he was acquainted were few. If they were the Cadmian; they were all capitals: and there were no stops; and accents were of later introduction. And if we may judge from the Sigean inscription, the arrangement by the manner of writing stated *βερεφιδεν* was different and embarrassed.

^d Much has been written on this subject; but to so little purpose, that even the meaning of that word is not ascertained. It is not clear in what degree the *Προσῳδιαί* of the ancients belonged to Music or to Grammar. If they were at first entirely musical (which I think highly probable) at what time were they adopted to fix pronounciation? Could we understand the real use of those marks which we call accents, it is probable, that all we should learn by it would be to know imperfectly, how Greek was pronounced by those who studied and taught it as a dead or foreign language.

lody

lody was loft in refinement, before their other arts had acquired perfection. Could Homer have heard his Poems fung or recited, even at the Panathenæan Festival, I dare fay, he would have been offended at the elegance, perhaps the affectation, of the Attic accent and articulation ; not to mention the various changes to which Greek pronunciation has been and is daily expofed.---I remember, when I was at Athens, that I fent for a Greek fchoolmafter, and when we read the Iliad together, we could not bear each other's manner of pronunciation. I make no doubt but Homer would have been as much at a lofs to underftand his own works, read by us, as we were to underftand one another.

History cannot point out a period, when the language of Greece, like that of Rome, and of moft other countries, was confined to a fingle ftate, or community. In what proportion it was original ; or of foreign extraction ; in what degree a Northern or Oriental mixture entered

progress of Greek knowledge, than Greek etymology; which is in this respect Greek History. It is curious to trace the language of Homer to its passing into the service of Philosophy: and it is no less so, to find the diction of Plato and Aristotle in common use at this day in the Archipelago. It is indeed disguised: and appears like rich marble friezes of temples, and fragments with inscribed decrees of ancient councils and senates; which are frequently found reversed in the mud walls of a Turkish cottage, retaining in their present humiliation the genuine marks of better times.

It appears from Homer, that, before the siege of Troy, it had spread considerably, not only over the continent, and islands of Greece, but on the Asiatic side of the Mediterranean. We may also conclude from him, that it was the language of Troy^e. Indeed, if we enquire

^e See Strabo, on the affinity of the Thracian and Trojan language.

critically

critically into the history of Greek composition, we must look for their first productions of this kind in the neighbourhood of the Troade, long before Athens had given any indications of the figure she afterwards made in letters.---Orpheus, Musæus, Eumolpus, and Thomyris, were of Thrace; and Marfyas, Olympus, Midas, &c. were of the Ionian side of the Mæander. Totally different from this was the rise and progress of letters at Rome. Her illiterate citizens loved liberty and their country, before they relished science, and discovered a taste for the arts of imitation. And when they turned their thoughts late that way, it was less impulse of Genius, than the striking productions of Greece, which roused them from a lethargy of a most extraordinary duration. Accordingly their first Poets and Philosophers frequently copy and sometimes translate: and their best performances are those, which retain most of the borrowed spirit, by which they were first enlivened.

A language, like that of Greece, formed, at least improved, under the rival patronage of so many separate states, is a singularity, which it is less difficult to account for in a cluster of small islands, almost surrounded by a broken and divided continent. The same distribution of land and water, which, as we have already observed, furnished Homer with so much picturesque scenery, was also well calculated for a variety of little settlements, distinct and independent of each other, within a narrow compass; and therefore capable of an intercourse without jealousy, which the contiguous possessions, and disputable boundaries of an extended plain country would not permit. Besides, the effects of war and conquest could not be felt here: the business of war, as well as of peace, being carried on in Greek, between Grecian and Grecian: so that the language might be enriched, while the country was impoverished.

I cannot help considering those separate nurseries of the Greek language, as a circumstance
which

which most materially promoted its progress, by raising a competition, and secured its duration, by affording refuge and protection from the persecution and discouragements of any particular state; and I think we may venture to reckon the emulation and protection, which this produced, among the causes, that contributed towards carrying Literature in Greece to a degree of perfection which it never reached in any other country.

We shall perhaps find, that the particular period in this progress, which fell to Homer's lot, though not the most advanced, was not, for that reason, the less adapted to the purposes of that original character, now under our consideration: nor will it, upon examination, appear so extraordinary, while manners were rude, when arts were little cultivated, and before science was reduced to general principles, that then Poetry had acquired a greater degree of perfection than it has ever since attained.

We

We have already seen, in our review of Homer's state of society, an uniformity of manners, previous to the distinction of rank and condition, which produced that noble simplicity of language unknown to polished ages. Though the venerable beauties of that antiquated style must, in some degree, strike every Reader; yet we cannot do it justice without looking back to the times it describes; it is only from a knowledge of those early times, that we improve a relish of its beauties, and find an apology for its faults.

As to the Poet's Learning, I must own, that very different accounts are given of it, even by some of his best Commentators; and great pains have been taken to shew, not only that he was extensively acquainted with the arts both of use and elegance, but that he was knowing in the secrets of deep and abstruse science. This opinion has been both credited and supported, from the earliest times. And we find Plato, who admired Homer, as a Poet, taking great pains

pains to confute those who had conceived so highly of his knowledge.

I know of no authority to which we can appeal, in this case, of equal weight with Homer himself. It is principally from him that we have formed our ideas of that sameness in the pursuits and occupations of mankind in the Heroic ages, which is the genuine character of an early stage of Society. Trades and Professions were as yet scarcely divided into separate classes; nor was that useful distribution of industry yet imagined, which makes labour light, gives perfection to art, and variety to manners. But then, as the business and pleasures of life were rude, simple, and confined, they lay more open to the Poet's observation: and as he painted, what he saw, with so much truth, I fancy, we are too apt to think he knew much more than he painted.

But I wonder, that those who have conceived so highly of the Poet's science, should not
have

have attempted to settle a question, which seems so necessary towards forming a just judgment on that head, viz. How far the use of Writing was known to Homer?

We are not far removed from the age, when great statesmen, and profound politicians, did not know their alphabet. I mention this undoubted fact to lessen the Reader's astonishment at any insinuation, that Homer could neither read nor write. Nor will it appear altogether so paradoxical, if we consider, how much the one is the work of genius, and the other of art. Poetry is found in savage life^f; and, even there, is not without those magic powers over our passions, which is the boasted character of its perfect state. But the art of establishing that wonderful intercourse between the senses

^f Strabo, p. 34. tells us, that as poetical composition first appeared with success, Prose only left out the measure; following the Poet in every thing else. By degrees the poetical manner was discontinued, and Poetry, as Plutarch expresses it, at length descended from her car.

of hearing and seeing, by means of arbitrary marks, that have no resemblance to the idea, which is by agreement affixed to them, must have been the result of much deep thought and reflection. I am not surprized that antiquity, however fond of tracing every art up to its Inventor, should attribute that of Writing to the Gods. If the invention of Printing is ingenious, what shall we say to that of Letters? But indeed we treat this invaluable gift of Art, of which we are in constant use, as we do some of the greatest gifts of Nature, which we daily enjoy, without due attention, or proper respect either for the ingenuity or utility of the discovery.

If we consult the Poet on this question, it must appear very remarkable, that, in so comprehensive a picture of civil society, as that which he has left us, there is nothing, that conveys an idea of letters, or reading; none of the various terms, which belong to those arts, are to be found in Homer. The Iliad and

Odyfsey are apparently adreffed to an audience ; nor is there in either poem any allufion to Writing. As to Symbolical, Hieroglyphical, or Picture Description, fomething of that kind was no doubt known to Homer, of which the letter ξ , (as it is called) which Bellerephon carried to the king of Lycia, is a proof. The Mexicans, though a civilized people, had no alphabet ; and the account, which they fent to Montezuma of the landing of the Spaniards was in this Picture Writing. As alphabetical writing is one of the moft difficult, fo this method of communicating thoughts by imitation, is one of the moft obvious of all inventions. The firft efforts of our infant expreffion are of the mimetic kind ; and the names which different nations have given to the conftellations are a proof of our natural difpofition to communicate and explain our thoughts by help of animal refemblances.

ξ *σηματα λυγρα.* Il. vi. 168.

Though

Though I will not conclude, that Homer did not know that which is not taken notice of in his writings (a manner of reasoning which has been carried too far upon other occasions) ; yet I cannot help thinking, his silence on this head of some weight.

There are many evidences to be obtained, which will prove, that Writing came late to Greece. According to Homer, and other early writers, all treaties, stipulations, and contracts, were verbal ; and on this account they were enforced with signs only, and solemn allusions, and appeals to Heaven. The rites of hospitality were held sacred, and were duly commemorated. This was effected, not by any formal deed, and with the ratification of a signet ; but by a mutual present of a tripod, or a sword, or perhaps some arrows : and oftentimes of a robe, or garment. The Ancients were very zealous to keep up the memory of those, who had deserved well of their country : but all the memorial, which they were able to afford, was a

mound of earth over the deceased. This is the whole, that Hector requests, should it be his fate to be slain in single fight: and he desires, that the same may be bestowed upon his adversary, should it be his fortune to kill Ajax. For farther record he trusts solely to tradition; by which he supposes, that his tomb will be distinguished. It was not uncommon to erect a *συλος*, or rough pillar, over those of note, who were buried: and there was sometimes a device: but no mention is made of an inscription. Elpenor had an oar put over him to denote his occupation, but no writing. When, in process of time, this art became known in Greece, it was by no means in general use: for it was attended with much difficulty, as well as uncertainty; being destitute of aspirates, and intervals; and without the benefit of punctuation. The materials too for writing were very rude, and inadequate to the purpose. For want of the necessary helps in arrangement, it was difficult to distinguish words, and sentences, and readily to arrive

arrive at the purport of any composition. These inconveniences are mentioned by Aristotle : and every inscription of early date evinces, that these difficulties subsisted, when learning first dawned. And from hence we may fairly infer, that writing could not have been long introduced, where such rude specimens were exhibited. Josephus rightly observes, that there are no allusions to any written laws in Homer : and that the word *νομος* does not occur as a law in any part of that Poet. The first written laws, of which we can be assured, were those of Draco. Before these times all was effected by memory ; and the histories of ancient times were commemorated in verses, which people took care faithfully to transmit to those, who came after them. They were also preserved in temples, where, upon festivals, the priests and priestesses used to chant them to the people. There were also bards, whose sole province it was to commemorate the great actions of their gods and heroes. Their law was entrusted to verse, and adapted to measure

fure

ture and music. From all which we learn, that all was consigned to memory; and that there was no written record.

If it is asked, At what time then did the Greeks find out the alphabet? for, according to this account of it, the interval between Homer and the Persian invasion was not equal to such a discovery, and after that period the use of Writing was familiarly known in Greece. The answer is, that it was not of Greek invention; and without returning to the obscure history of Cadmus, I shall only observe, that the authority of Herodotus in favour of Phœnicia deserves the more credit, as it contradicts the known vanity of his countrymen. Had it been discovered by them, we should certainly have known more of its history. Besides, the resemblance between the old Eastern and first Greek character seems to put this out of dispute. Now, as the use of an Alphabet, though difficult to find out, when once found is easily communicated, it is not extraordinary, that we should know little about the
time,

time, when it was introduced: which introduction was probably effected not at once; but must have depended not only upon the degree of civilization in the country, and the progress of its own knowledge, but also upon the commencement, the nature, and the extent, of its intercourse and connection with Phœnicia, and the south-east part of the Mediterranean.

But there is a singular circumstance in the History of Greek Literature, which, if properly considered, will, I think, throw some light on this subject. It is allowed on all hands, that Prose writing was unknown in Greece, till long after the Poet's time; and that, down to Cadmus the Milesian, and Pherecydes of Syros, all composition was in verse. After much refined and unsatisfactory modern reasoning on this head, I beg leave to go back to the plain account of it, which Aristotle^h long since sug-

^h Problem Sect. xix. Art. 28.

gested;

gested; when, enquiring why the same word in Greek signified a Song and a Law, he asked, whether it was not because, before the invention of Writing, laws were sung, that they might not be forgotten, according to the practice of the Agathyrsians in his time? It would be difficult to account for so long a priority of Verse to Prose, if we suppose them to have been some time in possession of an alphabetⁱ. It is contrary to the natural order and progress of things, to imagine, that the first essays of alphabetical writing should be made in verse; and even granting its first application was in this way, it is unreasonable to think that it could, for any time, be confined to that species

ⁱ See the Life of Homer, by Herodotus, where Phenias the schoolmaster is said to have taught the children *γραμματα*. See also the epigram upon the sepulchre of Midas. It is scarce worth troubling the Reader with an answer to any person, who may bring these as evidences of Homer's knowing letters. *Σημα* is a monument, or mark of a burial-place, and often to be found in Homer. It was a large heap of earth or stones over the dead. There was oftentimes something added to denote the person's profession: which is a custom still practised in Scotland.

of composition, and that other obvious advantages of a discovery so useful to society should be so long neglected. Before that invention, Verse and Music were very necessary aids to Memory, then solely entrusted with the whole deposit of Law, History, and Religion, till the art of Writing introduced a more easy, faithful, and comprehensive method of recording things. Perhaps we cannot give a better account of the policy of obliging the youths to get by heart Homer's Catalogue, and ordering his works to be publicly recited at the Panathenæan Ceremonies, than by considering them as regulations relative to a state of society ignorant of Writing, or at least unprovided with the materials necessary to reap the benefit of the invention, which were extremely scarce even for ages after that time. If this reasoning be admitted to have any weight, it will allow us to fix the common familiar use of an alphabet in Greece, and prose Writing, to pretty much

the same period, viz. about five hundred and fifty-four years before Christ.

The best account we can collect of the rise and progress of knowledge in Greece corresponds with this state of things. The seven Sages, so much celebrated for their wisdom, have transmitted very little of it to posterity; and all their works consist of a few smart sayings, moral sentences, and scraps of poetry, which oral tradition had preserved. Thales and Pythagoras, whose schools peopled Greece with philosophers, left no writings behind them; the same may be said of Socrates, who lived still later. Thespis wrote no Tragedies, Sufarion no Comedies, and most probably Æsop no Fables. What is more extraordinary, Legislation was considerably advanced before written laws were in use, if we may credit the accounts concerning Charondas and Zaleucus, who lived before Draco, by whom written laws were first produced.

As

As to the difficulty of conceiving how Homer could acquire, retain, and communicate, all he knew, without the aid of Letters ; it is, I own, very striking. And yet, I think, it will not appear insurmountable, if, upon comparing the fidelity of oral tradition, and the powers of memory, with the Poet's knowledge, we find the two first much greater, and the latter much less, than we are apt to imagine.

The Mexicans, who had no alphabet, and whose picture-writing on the leaves of trees was very insufficient for the purpose of history, trusted to the memory of their Poets and Orators, from whose recitals the Spaniards wrote down the accounts which they have transmitted. In like manner the historians of Ireland have collected their materials from the lays of their Bards, and Fileas ; whose accounts have been merely traditional.

But the oral traditions of a learned and enlightened age will greatly mislead us, if from

them we form our judgment on those of a period, when History had no other resource. What we observed at Palmyra puts this matter to a much fairer trial; nor can we, in this age of Dictionaries, and other technical aids to memory, judge, what her use and powers were, at a time, when all a man could know, was all he could remember. To which we may add, that, in a rude and unlettered state of society the memory is loaded with nothing that is either useless or unintelligible; whereas modern education employs us chiefly in getting by heart, while we are young, what we forget before we are old.

When all exertions, not only of the judgment, but of the imagination, depended so much upon memory, the Muses were with peculiar propriety supposed to be the daughters of ^k Mnemosune. This pedigree will perhaps account

^k Μῆσαι Ολυμπιαδες, κεραι Διος αἰγιοχοιο,
Τας εν Πιεργη Κρονιδη τεκε πατρι μνημοσιν

count for Homer's addressing them with such solemnity, when he is going to recite the Grecian and Trojan forces, the names of their commanders, and the number of their ships. This mere arithmetical part of the Iliad is that, which he undertakes with most diffidence; and where he is most solicitous of their aid: though a modern Poet would scarcely think of invoking his Muse on such an occasion. It is true: we find the same invocation in Virgil, when he enumerates the forces of Æneas and Turnus. But besides that his close and constant imitation of Homer will go a great way in accounting for

Μνημοσύνη, γένοισιν Ἐλευθῆρος μέδουσα,
 Ληισμοσύνην τε κακῶν, ἀμπαύμα τε μερμηραῶν.
 Ἐννεα γὰρ οἱ νυκτὰς ἐμισγετο μητιετὰ Ζεὺς,
 Νόσφιν ἀπ' ἀθανάτων, ἱερὸν λέχος εἰσαναβαίνων·
 Ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ ῥ' ἐνίαυτος ἐην, περὶ δ' ἔτραπον ὤραι,
 Μήνων φθίνοντων, περὶ δ' ἡμάτα πολλ' ἐτελεσθη,
 Ἥ δ' ἔειπ' ἔννεα κέρασ' ὁμοφρονάσ, ἧσιν ἀσίδῃ
 Μεμβλεταί, ἐν σῆθεσσιν ἀκηδεὰ θυμὸν ἐχυσάσ,
 Τυτθὸν ἀπ' ἀκροτάτης κορυφῆς νιφροεντος Ὀλύμπου,
 Ἐνθα σφὶν λίπαροι τε χοροὶ, καὶ δάματα καλά.

Hesiod, Theog. v. 52.

this,

this, he copies him in this instance with an exception, which I think favours my conjecture ; for he omits Homer's exaggeration of the difficulty in recollecting the numbers ; though he liked the expression so well, as to adopt it upon two other occasions ¹.

If

¹ The Reader may form his judgment, by comparing the original, and the copy :

Εσπετε νυν μοι, Μῦσαι, ολυμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι·
 (Ἵμεις γὰρ θεαὶ ἐσε, παρέσε τε, ἴσε τε πάντα·
 Ἕμεις δὲ κλεος οἶον ἀκούομεν, ἔδε τι ἰδμεν·)
 Οἵτινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν.
 ΠΛΗΘΥΝ δ' ἔκ αν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι, ἔδ' ὀνομήνω,
 Οὐδ' εἰ μοι δέκα μὲν γλώσσαι, δέκα δὲ ζώματ' εἶεν,
 Φωνῇ δ' ἀρήκτος, χαλκῆσιν δὲ μοι ἠτορ εὐεῖη,
 Εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μῦσαι, Δίος Αἰγιοχόοιο
 Θυγατέρες, ΜΝΗΣΑΙΑΘ', ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον.

Il. B. 484, &c.

“ Pandite nunc Heliconæ, Deæ, cantusque movete :
 “ Qui bello exciti reges ; quæ quemque secutæ
 “ Complerit campos acies ; quibus Itala jam tum
 “ Floruerit terra alma viris ; quibus arserit armis.
 “ Et *meministis* enim, Divæ, & *memorare* potestis :
 “ Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura.”

Æn. vii. 641, &c.

Here

If therefore we take the Poet's account of things, we discover nothing in it that implies the use of Writing. This will appear more clearly from a short state of the kind of knowledge which from his works we may reasonably presume that he possessed.

Without Letters, it may be said, there could be no effectual method, either of ascertaining or promulgating the sense of law; but this corresponds exactly with the wretched state of government, which we have described under the article of Manners.

We are indeed told, that Lycurgus would not write his laws, because minds properly educated, and taught what is right, should not be restrained. But can we suppose, that the Author of the Spartan constitution could have reasoned in this manner? The laws of Za-

Here Virgil omits his

“ Non, mihi si linguæ centum sint oraque centum,
“ Ferrea vox—”

which he introduces, Georg. ii. 42. & Æneid vi. 625.

laucus

laucus were not committed to writing. It is true, that the laws of Solon were engraved either in stone or upon wood, like the Decalogue, and those of the twelve tables. But there seems to have been but one copy of them: and that was for some time deposited in the Acropolis, but was afterwards removed to the Prytaneum for the more easy inspection of the people. While Writing was confined to engraving upon wood, brass, or marble, the art could not well be in very general use. Agreements and contracts, both public and private, were made before witnesses. The conditions of the treaty between the Grecians and Trojans were authenticated only by a solemn verbal convention, to which both armies were witnesses. The tenure and purchase of the Cave at Macpelah, which Abraham bought for himself and his heirs for ever, at the price of four hundred shekels of silver, were ascertained in the presence of Ephron, and the sons of Heth.

Commerce

Commerce consisted in little more than an exchange of superfluities in kind ^m; coins were unknown; gold, silver, brass, and iron, were all used as marks of riches, but with little knowledge either of their relative value, or of the separate uses to which they were afterwards applied in a more advanced state of the mechanical arts.

When Proteus takes an account of the numbers of his sea-calves, the manner in which he performs that operation is expressed by a Greek verb ⁿ, to which there is nothing in our language literally equivalent. When therefore I say that he fived them, I take the liberty of coining a word, which, corresponding precisely with the old Greek term, will convey to the English reader an allusion to the origin of Arithmetic; for the Greek word, not used, that I can find, by any writer after Homer, seems to point out the first simple method of Enumera-

^m See Iliad 7. V. 471. where brass, iron, skins, oxen, and slaves, are exchanged for wine.

ⁿ πεμπασσεται. Od. Δ. v. 412.

M m

tion,

tion, while the operation was confined to the five fingers of one hand, and before the decimal computation, or the arithmetic of two hands, was practised. I do not mean to undervalue Homer's arithmetical knowledge, so much as to measure it exactly by this primitive term; for though it continued to express enumeration in his time, it certainly belonged to a more imperfect state of that art, as we find him use the decimal progression; which has been adopted by all nations, ancient and modern, with very few exceptions. Yet I doubt much, whether the method of counting upon the fingers, here alluded to, was not the only one known to Homer, at least I cannot find in his works any of the terms which denote a farther progress in the science of numbers °.

Mathematics

° To have enumerated the whole army, Homer terms impossible, even with the assistance of the Muses. He leaves it therefore to them, and makes it their department.

Perhaps the barren list of names in Hesiod's Genealogy (I cannot help calling them so) will stand less in need of apology, if we consider,

Mathematics were introduced into Greece by Thales, and the Ionic School; all knowledge, which depends upon that science, must have been very imperfect before that time. When therefore we consider Homer as the father of Geography, we may allow his accurate observation as a traveller, before maps ^p and charts were invented. But we must acknowledge, that Geography, as a Science, was as much unknown to him, as Astronomy^q, on which so much depends.

When

der, that they were addressed to an audience ignorant of the use of writing, which was certainly very little practised, if at all known, at that time.

^p The invention of Anaximander no doubt related to maps; which were drawn upon principles of geometry. But to say, that maps merely tracing distances, and separations of lands, were unknown to Homer, is not my intention. The first idea of landed property pointed out lines and boundaries: and the first travelling must have found the use of marks. Maps of this sort are devised by the very savages of North America. They are delineated upon skins, and the bark of trees: and maps of this sort might probably be known to Homer. But these are no proof of Science.

Anaximander invented Maps. See Strabo.

^q In respect to Astronomy, it is certain that Homer was not acquainted with the planets. What Pope translates a comet, in the beginning

When Ulyſſes launches his ſhip, we find him employ the lever and the inclined plane for that purpoſe ; but are we therefore to ſuppoſe, that he knew the mechanical powers ? or ſhall we not rather conclude, from his building that ſhip with a brazen hatchet, that the uſeful arts were ſtill very imperfect in his time ?

As to the Arts of Elegance, the rank, in which they ſtand in Homer, (perhaps the ſame in which they occur in the natural order of diſcovery) ſeems to be this :

That Poetry had the precedence, the Iliad and Odyſſey ſufficiently demonſtrate ; but, beſides that testimony, we know from the beſt accounts of barbarous and ſavage nations, that the moſt ſucceſſful efforts of genius in rude ſociety are of this kind.

If Homer's Muſic could be ſeparated from

of the fourth Iliad, is plainly a ſtar; which Virgil copies. See Ruæus Georg. 1. v. 365.

Venus was known to Homer and Heſiod, and could not eſcape their obſervation in the moſt ignorant times ; but not as a Planet.

his

his Poetry, which was always fung, and I believe generally accompanied with an instrument, it would claim the second place: but the extraordinary effects, which are recorded of this art in the earliest accounts of it, belonged to the united powers of Music and Poetry. Indeed all instruction, civil and religious, was wrapt up in Melody and Verse^r; and the Priest, who was a Lawgiver, was also a Poet and Musician. This is agreeable to that rude state of society, which we have described, when civilization was addressed more to the passions than the understanding, and men were to be first tamed, in order to their being taught.

Next come the arts of Design; and first, Sculpture. Statues are mentioned in Homer, but without any of that admiration of the art, or compliment to the skill of the artist, which we expect from a person impressed with the beauties of this kind. The shield of Achilles

^r See Aristotle's Politics for singing and writing.

has

has indeed given occasion for people talking very highly of the Poet's knowledge, not only in Sculpture, but in Painting : and it has been attempted to be proved, that it exhibits a full idea of the Art. Those who have curiosity to see how far the ancients were carried (as well as the moderns) by indulging a taste for allegory, may consult Eustathius for the wild conjectures of Damo the learned daughter of Pythagoras, and of Heraclides Ponticus on this shield. But it was reserved for this age to discover in it a full and exact idea of Painting in all its parts; that is to say, in the invention, the composition, and the expression; that it is executed according to the rules of perspective, and observes the three unities, viz. one principal action, one instant of time, and one point of view.

Monfieur Boivin's idea, which suggested this piece of criticism, is ingenious; and if we do not carry it further than he intended, affords a compleat answer to those who objected that
it

it was impossible to engrave the subjects, which are described in this beautiful episode within so narrow a compass, as that of a shield. But, without entering into any observations on this dissertation, I must deny that Painting, as an art, was known to Homer, if we may judge from his works. It may appear extraordinary, considering the present close connection between the sister arts of Poetry and Painting, that the first should have acquired the highest perfection which it has yet attained, before the last had a beginning. Yet I see nothing in the Iliad or Odyssy like the use of the pencil and colours in producing resemblance; no hint of the Clair Obscur, or the art of raising an object on a flat surface, and approaching it to the eye by the management of light and shade. Nor can I find a word in the Iliad or Odyssy to express any thing like such an art. I know it is generally understood, that the same word^s signified originally both to write and to paint.

^s γραφω.

That

That it had both these meanings in later times is true ; but the Poet always applies this word to express incision made by a sharp weapon or instrument ; and it would be easy to shew, from a variety of Jewish as well as Grecian authorities, that the first Writing practised by either of those nations was engraved, and not painted.

The same may be said of Architecture, which, though it owes more to Homer's country, if he was an Ionian, than to any other, seems not to have been known in his time as an art †. I do not mean to say that ornamented convenience or even magnificence of a certain kind was not yet introduced into buildings ; the contrary is evident from many passages in the Poet : but we see no marks of that symmetry and proportion which afterwards distinguished the architecture of Greece from that of Egypt, in the Iliad and Odyssæy ; the Greek orders were not yet invented ; and Priam's palace,

“ Rais'd on arch'd columns of stupendous fame.”

† Sardis, the capital of Cræsus, consisted of a parcel of thatched houses. Herod. L. 5. C. 101.

is of the Translator's building, whose ideas upon this occasion are borrowed from the magnificence of later ages. In short, we do not even find the technical terms of this art in Homer. Sculpture, so far as it had the human figure for its object, arrived soonest at perfection in Greece; and from the tendency of Grecian education towards athletic and manly exercises, had the advantage of elegant and graceful form. Architecture not being the imitation of any model of Nature, could not be so soon established, for want of some universal settled principles: its most perfect style was therefore late.

Homer has been highly extolled for his knowledge of Medicine and Anatomy, particularly the latter; and his insight into the structure of the human body has been considered as so nice, that he has been imagined by some to have wounded his Heroes with too much science^u. This has been confirmed by

^u See Pope's Essay on Homer.

those of the profession, who, finding the Poet correct and learned in his anatomical terms, have not hesitated to pronounce him knowing in their art.

But had they considered, that those were not terms of art in the Poet's days; that he had no other words to express the parts of the human body, than those, which have been since consecrated to a particular profession; and if, at the same time they had observed, that all his anatomical knowledge does not exceed the reach of that curiosity, with which he seems to have surveyed and examined every object in nature, that fell within his observation, they would have suppressed that inconsiderate admiration, which has been lavished on his science; and have paid it, where it is due, to his just conception and happy expression as a Painter.

In the same manner, the words *τροπαι ηελοιο* have, I think, misled those, who, collecting from that expression the Poet's astronomical Science, draw from it conclusions with regard
to

to the time, when he lived. The Tropics, say they, were first known to Thales; but they are mentioned by Homer: therefore the Poet was posterior to the Philosopher.

I have already attempted to restore Homer's sense of this expression; and if, agreeable to the explanation which I have given of the passage, we translate these words the conversions or turnings, instead of the tropics of the sun; that is, if we take a synonymous word from common life, instead of that which, though it belonged to common life in the Poet's time, has been since adopted by science, we shall come nearer to the simplicity of his meaning; and we shall find that the expression implies no more astronomical science, than falls to the share of every peasant, who observes that the sun turns from us in winter, and towards us in summer.

When I learn from Plutarch, that Alexander admired Achilles, and envied him such a Poet as Homer to sing his praises, I can easily give credit to a circumstance so much in character. But when I consider the great improve-

ments in the art of war between the time of Homer and the son of Philip, and yet am told, that the latter consulted the Iliad for military knowledge, I cannot help imputing it to his own affectation, or his Preceptor's pedantry. For Homer's battles, like those of Bourguignon and other painters of that class, exhibit a few distinct figures in the fore ground ; all the rest is unintelligible confusion.

From this short view of what I conceive to have been the compass of Homer's knowledge, I shall venture to offer my opinion, as matter of conjecture, (to more I do not pretend, without a further investigation of this subject) that the art of Writing, though probably known to Greece when the Poet lived, was very little practised there ; that all knowledge at that time was preserved by memory, and with that view committed to verse, till an alphabet introduced the use of prose in composition.

Nor do I propose this entirely without authority. * Eustathius is of this opinion, as well

* See Iliad vi. 168. and vii. 175.

as Didymus, or whoever was the author of the less Scholia. Add to these the testimony of ^y Josephus, who, though not without his national prejudices, was a most respectable judge of this question. He cannot fail of having great weight with those, who will be at the trouble to take a candid and dispassionate view of his answer to Apion. In this treatise he takes notice of the variety of calamities, which had destroyed the records of the Grecians, and introduced great changes in life and society, upon which rival pretensions to antiquity were founded, each tribe and state claiming seniority. He proceeds to observe, in respect to their late and imperfect knowledge of letters, that they, who carried that claim highest, went no farther back than the Phenicians, and Cadmus ^z, from whom they are supposed to have received the use of the Alphabet. At the

^y Contra Apion. lib. i.

^z Jackson, V. 3. p. 133. in contradiction to Eustathius, Plutarch, Ælian, and others.

fame

same time he expressly declares, that they could not produce a single memorial in writing of so old a date, neither in their religious or civil records; and he adds, that the works of Homer, the oldest known production of Greece, were not preserved in writing, but were sung, and retained by memory. If then, with Josephus, we suppose that Homer left no written copy of his works, the account we find of them in ancient writers becomes more probable. It is generally supposed that Lycurgus brought them from Ionia into Greece, where they were known before only by scraps and detached pieces.

Diogenes Laertius attributes the merit of this performance to Solon: Cicero gives it to Pisistratus; and Plato to Hipparchus: and they may possibly have been all concerned in it. But there would have been no occasion for each of these persons to have sought so diligently for the parts of these poems, and to have arranged them so carefully, if there had
been

been a compleat copy. If therefore the Spartan Lawgiver, and the other personages committed to writing, and introduced into Greece, what had been before only sung by the Rhapsodists of Ionia, just as some curious fragments of ancient poetry have been lately collected in the northern parts of this island, their reduction to order in Greece was a work of taste and judgment: and those great names which we have mentioned might claim the same merit in regard to Homer, that the ingenious Editor of Fingal is entitled to from Ossian.

What we have offered on this head may seem injurious to the Poet, as it certainly robs him of a respectable part of his character, which has been long acknowledged, and contradicts that favourite opinion of his learning, which his admirers, ancient and modern, have taken so much pains to propagate. But let us, on the other hand, inquire whether he might not derive some advantages from this illiterate state of things, to compensate that loss.

Perhaps

Perhaps one of the greatest was that of his having but one language to express all he knew. Nor was the particular period of that language, which fell to his lot, less advantageous to him. For if we examine the rise and progress of language, with a view to its application and use, we shall find that the several stages of its advancement are not equally favourable to every display of genius ; and that the useful Artist and the Philosopher will find their account in certain improvements, which rather impede than forward the Poet's views. His business is entirely with Nature ; and the language, which belongs to imperfect arts, simple manners, and unlettered society, best suits his purpose.

If then Homer found the Greek language considerably advanced, without the assistance of writing, its improvements (to which, no doubt, he contributed largely) being entirely addressed to the ear, in a climate, where conception is quick, and the organs of speech capable of nice articulation, it was of course
formed

formed to music and poetry, then closely united.

When the sense was caught from the sound, and not deliberately collected from paper, simplicity and clearness were more necessary. Involved periods and an embarrassed style were not introduced, till writing became more an art, and labour supplied the place of genius. The frequent repetition of entire passages (for which Homer is censured) was not only more natural, but less observable, therefore less offensive; action, tone, and pronunciation, were more essentially concerned in every composition of genius, and all poetry was dramatic; and so far might be ranked among the mimetic arts^a. But I do not see,

^a We are by some informed, that according to Aristotle and the Greek critics, all Poetry is imitation. But if we consider this matter more attentively, we shall find, that a great deal of just ancient criticism is founded in the distinction between what was mimetic, and what was not so in Poetry. Not to trouble the Reader with much quotation (which I wish to avoid, at least for the present) I will refer him to Plato. This Writer, in the third book of his Republic, is very explicit in distinguishing, what is pure narration; and what is

see, why written poetry is to be ascribed to that class : or why Homer's account of the Curetes and Ætolians should be imitation, while the war between the Grecians and Persians, by Herodotus, is to be called narration.

The language which we bring into the world with us is not confined to the organs of speech ; but it is made up of voice, countenance, and gesture. And had not our powers of articulation, that distinguishing mark of our social constitution, suggested a more convenient mode of conveying our ideas, the simple tones of Na-

mimetic, or dramatic. The first is, where the Poet speaks in his own person. The second, when an actor is introduced. He accordingly gives instances out of the Iliad and Odyssey, which poems consist of both. Eustathius, when he begins his Commentary upon the Catalogue, recites this distinction very fully, in order to introduce his observation upon the manner, in which Homer keeps up his spirit in that enumeration of the forces. For it was difficult to be here maintained, as the subject was not of the mimetic or dramatic kind. Aristotle, in his Poetics (C. 24.) compliments Homer particularly, as the only Poet, who knew, how little he should appear himself, and how much he should leave for imitation. Dionysius Halicarnassensis, or whoever was the author of the Treatise upon Homer's Poetry, takes notice of the Poet's transition from the narrative to the mimetic, from the *διηγηματικον* to the *μιμητικον*.

ture,

ture, with the varieties of modulation, which are now assigned to the province of music, might have been applied to the purposes of common life, as we are told they are in some degree among the Chinese. Speaking and singing would differ little, as the original Greek words, which signify both, seem to imply; the human countenance would have not only retained but improved its natural powers of expression, which it is now the great business of education to suppress, and the dumb language of gesticulation would have made a very significant part of conversation.

Such is the language of Nature, without which there could be no language of Compact, the first supplying that communication of ideas which was absolutely necessary to establish the latter; though afterwards falling into disuse, in proportion to the progress and improvement of what was gradually substituted in its stead. But, though banished in great measure from common use, it still retains its powers in the

province of Poetry, where the most finished efforts of artificial language are but cold and languid circumlocution, compared with that passionate expression of Nature, which, incapable of misrepresentation, appeals directly to our feelings, and finds the shortest road to the heart. It was to be found in every production of Genius, and in all poetry; that is to say, all composition was dramatic.

It was therefore an advantage to the Father of Poetry, that he lived before the language of Compact and Art had so much prevailed over that of Nature and Truth.

The same early stage of artificial language may perhaps help us to another ^b reason for a circumstance not less extraordinary in itself, than fortunate to letters; viz. that Homer, though the oldest, is the clearest and most intelligible of all ancient writers. The Greek Vocabulary, though copious in his time, was not yet equivo-

^b See above, where his simplicity and clearness of style is supposed in some degree owing to writing's not having been in use.

cal ; ambiguity of expression was little known before the birth of Science ; when Philosophy, adopting the language of common life, applied known terms to new meanings, and introduced that confusion and obscurity, which still continues to supply matter for polemical writings, and to be the chief support of metaphysical subtlety and refinement.

Could Homer take a view of the various fortunes and changes which his language has undergone in the service of Literature, he would be surpris'd to see so many volumes of controversy about the signification of words, which conveyed to him the most distinct images of things ; and to find, that terms, which, in his time, were universally acknowledged as the signs of certain external objects of sense, should have acquired an additional meaning, which the philosophy and learning of so many ages have not yet been able to settle.

If his language had not yet acquired the refinements of a learned age, it was for that reason

son not only more intelligible and clear, but also less open to pedantry and affectation. For as technical and scientific terms were unknown, before the separation of arts : and till science became the retired pursuit of a few, as there was no school but that of Life, and no philosophy but that of Common Sense ; so we find in Homer nothing out of the reach of an ordinary capacity, and plain understanding : and those who look farther, seem to neglect his obvious beauties.

It may perhaps be thought, that this early state of artificial language, to which we attribute so much of the Poet's clearness and unaffected simplicity, must have cramped him in the variety of his numbers : but the Greek tongue never had more distinct sounds ^c in proportion to its clear ideas, than at this period ; which was therefore precisely the time in this

^c After his poems were introduced at Athens, we find that they were sung and recited, and that Rhapsodists were employed for this purpose.

respect

respect fittest for Poetical expression. It is true, that in its more enriched and polished state, it was the repository of much knowledge, to which Homer was a stranger; but its acquisition of new words was by no means in proportion to that of new meanings, as we have already observed; and the business of literature in all its branches was carried on chiefly upon the original stock.

But, besides that his language was sufficiently copious for his purposes, it had other advantages more favourable to harmonious versification, than ever fell to the lot of any other Poet. I shall first mention the Greek particles; and I cannot help assigning the priority of verse^d to prose in this language, as the reason why it abounds so much more with particles than any other; which are to hexameter verse, what small stones are to a piece of masonry, ready at hand to fill up the breaks and

^d See Aristotle of Sostrates and Mnesticus. See Plato's Ion.

interstices,

interstices, and connect those of a larger size, so exactly as to give a smooth compactness to the whole. And we accordingly find them occur more frequently in the old Poets, and in the early prose writers, who had no poetical models, and artificial helps, upon which they could form their style.

I do not mean to say that Homer's particles were altogether condemned to this mere expletive duty. They contribute very much to the clearness of his meaning, as well as to the length of his verses. And though the great use made of them by the best prose writers may be in some degree owing to an imitation of Homer, we must acknowledge that they have a great share in the connection, and perspicuity, which is remarkable in those early compositions. We find them much used by the first prose writers of the best Greek times, who found them necessary to connection and perspicuity : qualities in an author, which are strangely neglected since those inferior parts of speech have
been

been so much discarded from the fashionable style of most modern languages.

Another great poetical advantage of Homer's language is, that facility with which two or more words connect and join together^c, to the great improvement both of the sound and sense; for it is hard to say, whether the ear is more filled with the harmony, or the mind with the imagery, of those sonorous and descriptive compound epithets, which have an effect in this language, unknown to any other. What was of so much use to Poetry and Homer, has not been without its convenience to Philosophers, and Artists after him. Even at this day the expression in modern languages is enriched by a Greek compound, coined for the purpose of expressing much in a single word.

While

^c When the Rhapsodists recited Homer from written copies, the whole was in capitals, without punctuation, aspiration, or any marks or intervals to distinguish words. This has been the chief cause of the false readings in Homer.

Our account of Greek composition beginning with verse affords a

P p

reason

While to all this we add, that very extensive Poetical licence, which shortens, lengthens, adds, suppresses, changes, and transposes letters and syllables, at the beginning, the middle, and the end of words, we must also consider, that those are not only advantages, which the Greek language possesses above all others; but which, in all probability, Homer enjoyed above all Greek Poets. For when Criticism took its rise as an Art, and Aristotle found in the Iliad and Odyssy those rules of composition, which the Poet drew from Nature, those bounds of Poetical licence were prescribed for others, which his unlimited fancy had freely suggested to himself; and the liberties

reason for the ignorance of the first critics in the etymology of their own language. Plato is so ridiculous upon that head, that it is scarce possible to believe him serious.

I will venture to say, that the etymology of his language is better understood at this day than it was in his time. It also accounts for the great abundance of particles in this language beyond all other languages. The Poets introduced them for helps to measure; and their successors retained them, copying implicitly those, who had gone before them, as the best models for composition.

he

he chose to take^f, became the laws which they were obliged to follow.

Thus the simplicity, without meanness or indelicacy, of the Poet's language rises out of the state of his manners. There could be no mean or indelicate expression, where no mean or indelicate idea was to be conveyed. There could be no technical terms, before the separation of arts from life, and of course no pedantry, and few abstract ideas before the birth of Philosophy; consequently, though there was less knowledge, there was likewise less obscurity. As he could change the form without changing the meaning of his words, and vary their sound without altering their sense, he was not tempted to sacri-

^f I do not mean that Homer extended his liberty so far, as to pay no regard to the quantity of words, which use had established. The absurdity of such a supposition is so obvious, that I wonder it should have been admitted for a moment. But he certainly indulged in liberties of this kind to a degree, which could not escape early animadversion. * Euclid the elder used to say, It is easy to be a Poet, if you may lengthen words as you please.

* Aristot. Poet. C. 22.

fice Truth and Nature to Harmony and Numbers.

Such were the advantages of language, which contributed to make Homer as original in his Expression, as in his Conception ; and (keeping to our idea of him as a Painter) as happy in his Colouring as his Outline ; simple with Dignity ; natural without Indelicacy ; informed without Pedantry ; the most clear and intelligible, as well as the most musical and harmonious, of all Poets.

C O N-

C O N C L U S I O N.

IF our conjectures with regard to the two leading circumstances of Homer's poetical life, viz. his Country and his Travels, founded upon the different ideas he seems to have conceived of men and things, under the various influences of those distinct relations, are at all plausible, considered separately, they will deserve additional credit under a comparative view; for as, on the one hand, the traveller discovers himself to be an Ionian, so, on the other, the Ionian proves himself to be a traveller.

But whether we view this Ionian traveller at home or abroad, whether we attend him in his contemplations on the external beauties of the creation, or follow him into the secret recesses of our own hearts, in either light we trace him by the most natural representations
of

of every characterizing circumstance of truth and reality.

This original mode of composition, so essential to unity of time, place, action, and character, particularly in the Epic, where both the narrative and descriptive parts of an extensive plan, purposely avoiding the formality of historical and geographical order, are more exposed to inconsistency, has, I hope, in some degree been pointed out, by the foregoing loose and indigested observations.

I shall therefore venture to conclude, that the more we consider the Poet's age, country, and travels, the more we discover that he took his scenery and landscape from nature, his manners and characters from life, his persons and facts (whether fabulous or historical) from tradition, and his passions and sentiments from experience of the operations of the human mind in others, compared with, and corrected by, his own feelings.

As

As therefore every sketch of this great Master is an exact transcript of what he had either seen, heard, or felt, it is not extraordinary that the same compositions, which have ascertained, beyond competition, his poetical rank, should not only have decided his superiority as a Geographer, and secured his credit as an Historian, but have procured respect to his Philosophical character, which Strabo would not suffer to be disputed. If an unbounded veneration for his works has carried his claim still higher, his amazing powers of original imitation furnish the only apology I can think of for such extravagance. I mean to say, that those, who found Homer and Nature the same, are, so far, excusable in deriving the principles of all Science from the Iliad and Odyssy. Nature includes them all : her proportions are just and invariable ; whoever paints her true, or any part of her, that is full of action, and applies that action to Times, Places, Persons,
and

and their Signs, will include those Proportions and their Measures without intending it, almost without knowing it, but never without some perception of their propriety and truth ^a.

Such is that faithful mirror of life, which one of the most competent ^b judges of antiquity chose to consult for the rule of his conduct, rather than the abstract systems of speculative writers, unpractised in the world; a compliment, which if it does great honour to Homer, does no less justice to the human character. For, making proper allowance for the Heroic state of society, I do not think, that mankind is unfavourably represented by the Poet; nor do I find that any modern Chrysisippus, or Crantor, has made discoveries, which ought to depreciate so just a picture of mankind. It is flattering to receive, from a hand so correctly formed in Nature's school, those fair and plea-

^a See Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer, p. 314.

^b "Qui, quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,

"Plenius ac melius Chrysisippo & Crantore dicit."

HOR.

sing

ving delineations of a generous sympathy, and social affection, which are interspersed even amidst the horrors of the Iliad, but more frequently in the peaceful and hospitable scenes of the Odyssæy: here and there shaded, I own, with folly and vice enough to put us out of humour with the Poet and ourselves, did he not kindly throw in a comfortable proportion of Philanthropy, which gives both warmth and resemblance to the picture.

Yet so far am I from subscribing to the wild pretensions of that refined criticism, which discovers not only the principles of all Arts and Science, but the most profound system of Ethics and Politics, in Homer, that I consider it to have been of peculiar advantage to his original Genius, that he was not diverted by any hypothesis from a free and impartial examination of things; and that, whatever his plan of Instruction, either moral or political, might have been (for to deny that he had any would be highly unreasonable), his choice of characters for that

Q q

purpose

purpose never carried him beyond Nature, and his own experience of life.

To this unbiaſſed inveſtigation of the different powers of Nature, and the various ſprings of action, not as they are fancied in the Cloſet, tranſcribed from ſpeculative Systems, and copied from books, but as they were ſeen exerted in real life, we owe the moſt correſt hiſtory of human paſſions and affections, that hath ever yet been exhibited under one view; ſo impartially checquered with the good and bad qualities, which enter, in various proportions, into the compoſition of every character, that he has not left us one compleat pattern of moral beauty or deformity.

Nor ſhould we for this reaſon haſtily conclude, that he was negligent of the intereſts of Humanity, or indifferent to the cauſe of Virtue; there is a certain early ſtage in the progreſs of manners when the mind is more effectually rouzed to the duties of ſociety by real than by fictitious examples; and it is eaſier,
perhaps

perhaps wiser, in such a state, to shew us what we may be, than what we ought to be. Such were the times, that fell to Homer's lot. To blame him for the manners of those times, and to find fault with the only materials which he had to work upon, is highly unreasonable.

I must confess, that he sometimes seems to abandon us, to our own fancy, in the labyrinth of his great drama of human action, where so many different paths of life are laid open, not only to the Judgment, but to the Passions of every age, temper, and condition. And here, no doubt, those mimetic powers which characterize his genius carried him too far into promiscuous imitation, where the principal, sometimes the only, merit is that of natural, striking, resemblance. But it would be unfair to say that he had nothing farther in view; for while he flatters our vanity in letting us find our own road through life, he has not left it too intricate for those, who are serious and diligent in search of it. And if we giddily lose

our way in it, it is our own fault: for his Morality will bear as scrupulous a test, as his Religion.

If, after all, the learned Reader finds this method too closely confined to pictures of real life for the Moral epic Plan, I beg he will consider, that it was Homer's object to please as well as to instruct. And though he does not neglect the latter, I must own he seems to have the first principally in view. But, as I have already said, this should be put to the test of that state of Society, to which it was addressed; when barbarous manners, not prepared to receive either plans of Government or systems of Morals, wanted the immediate softening of Music and Poetry; and men were to be tamed before they were taught. It has been the great object of this Essay to carry the Reader to the Poet's Age, and Country; before he forms a judgment of him. I will venture to say, that it has been much owing to a neglect of this consideration, that he has been so often complimented

complimented with beauties of which he was not conscious, and charged with faults which he never committed.

It may be asked, Whether Homer is to be esteemed a Philosopher ?

Had the treatise of Longinus upon this question reached us, we should probably have seen many references to the opinions of antiquity upon this subject. Strabo does not scruple to put him in the class with Anaximander : and it is curious to see opposite sects lay claim to him.

Whatever stress I may lay upon this compliment to the Poet as a Philosopher : it is certainly a very great one to him as a Painter ; when we see the leading writers in Ethics consider Homer and Nature as the same.

We have respectable authority for supposing, that he has been partial to human Nature in his picture of life ; and that he has represented men better, than they are. See Aristot.

Poet.

Poet. C. 2. But of the accuracy of this most interesting part of the Poet's imitation, which has for its object the human mind, and its various operations and affections, every Reader is a judge. And if this matter is to be canvassed by the suffrages of so many ages and countries, to whose feelings the Poet has appealed, the question seems to be decided; and his impartiality established.

But I have already wandered from the humble duty of bearing testimony, as an eyewitness, of the Poet's veracity. If I endeavour to rescue him from errors, not his own, by bringing within the observation of a cursory perusal of his works their truth and consistence, as to time, place, persons, and things; it is as a Traveller only, that I can hope to do him that justice. I shall therefore resume that character, observing the same method in the description of the Troade, that I followed in that of Palmyra and Balbeck; where, after a plain
account

account of the appearance of things as we found them, I left the Reader to judge of our conjectures with regard to their ancient state.



View of ANCIENT TROAS together with the SCAMANDER and MOUNT IDA
as taken anno MDCCCL.

A
C O M P A R A T I V E V I E W
O F T H E
A N C I E N T A N D P R E S E N T S T A T E
O F T H E
T R O A D E.

Juvat ire et Dorica castra,
Desertosque videre locos, littusque relictum.
Hic Dolopum manus, hic sævus tendebat Achilles.
Classibus hic locus, hic acies certare solebat.

Æneid. L. 2.

A
C O M P A R A T I V E V I E W
O F T H E
A N C I E N T A N D P R E S E N T S T A T E
O F T H E
T R O A D E.

IN order to give the Reader a clear and satisfactory account of the ancient and present state of this country, I shall refer him to the annexed Map. This was taken upon the spot, and represents things, as we found them. It must at the same time be compared with the accounts given by Homer; for by these means we shall be enabled to discover the variation, which has happened, since the Poet wrote. The chief difference consists in this; that the

source of the Scamander is now considerably more distant from the Hellespont, than we conceive it to have been at the time, when Homer saw it. In describing these parts, I shall give the reasons upon which I found my opinion about this variation. I make no doubt, but that the face of the country has been considerably changed. This circumstance has been brought about by earthquakes, to which the regions of Asia Minor are extremely subject. I have seen several parts of Ida, and also of Tmolus, which have been evidently separated from the two mountains by the shock of an earthquake. And there are in the plains of the Scamander many pieces of massy rock, that are manifestly detached from the place, where they originally stood. But as alterations of this nature have not been punctually recorded, and are not easily to be ascertained, I have not marked out any variation of ground in the following Map of the country: my chief object being to point out the difference of distance,

tance, which subsists between the source of the river, and the sea. It will therefore be my business to shew, that such an alteration has happened: and at the same time to put it in the Reader's power to judge, by recurring to the journal of the siege in the Iliad, how far the bounds and distances observed by the Poet are consistent with the opposite plan, which I here exhibit.

T H E

THE DESCRIPTION

OF THE

T R O A D E.

JULY the twenty-fifth, 1750, we anchored under the Sigean Promontory in our return to the Greek islands from Constantinople: and going on shore at the mouth of the Scamander, we found, that the country, which is frequently infested with banditti, was at this time so secure, as to afford us an opportunity, without risque, of carrying into execution our scheme of travelling to the source of the river. Upon this information, having hired horses and guides, and landed our tent, servants, and camp-equipage, we performed in a fortnight the journey, which may be traced out in the Map. By this the Reader may see, under one view,

view, the order of our discoveries, without the tedious formality of a journal.

Having, before we landed, visited the whole kingdom of Priam; and upon another occasion seen some of its inland parts, I shall give, in a few words, the best idea that I could form of it upon the whole.

A strait line drawn from the Caicus to the Æfopus would probably very nearly describe the eastern and inland boundary of Priam's dominion. Its circumference, according to this estimate, includes about five hundred English miles. Of this above two hundred afford a maritime coast, which is washed by the Propontis, Hellespont, and Ægean seas. Few spots of this extent enjoy more natural advantages. The climate is temperate and healthful: the hills are covered with woods: and the fertile plains, whether pastures, or corn-land, are well watered. There are mines in the mountains, which have never been sufficiently tried. There are also mineral waters, and hot-baths, of which the natives,

natives, to their great benefit, make use for several disorders. The country produces oil; and some parts were of old famous for wine. The Greeks assured us from experience, that, if the vineyards here were properly cultivated, they would produce a grape not inferior to the Muscadine of Tenedos in its neighbourhood. Its compact peninsular form, and happy situation, together with plenty of timber, and variety of commodious harbours, render it very fit for trade, and navigation.

However, if we may venture to form any judgment upon a matter of such antiquity, it would appear from the few remaining fragments, which afford any light towards the antiquities of this people, that it was a principle both of their civil and religious constitution to discourage navigation; and to favour a taste for agriculture, and domestic industry. An old prophetic admonition was among them in common acceptation against the dangers of commerce, and it is still preserved. And the peculiar

culiar severity, with which their laws treated those who were convicted of stealing an ox, or plough-share, or any implement of husbandry, is also upon record. Though such maxims are not agreeable to the prevailing commercial spirit of modern politics, yet, if we consider the genius and manners of those ancient times, there will appear great propriety in them. Upon looking backwards, we shall find reason to allow, that the happiness of the inhabitants of a region, abundantly supplied with all the real comforts of life within themselves, could not be more rationally consulted, than by keeping their attention at home, recommending inland industry, and discouraging all communication with strangers.

In short, when navigation and piracy were almost synonymous terms, it was very natural for a people abounding with flocks, corn, wine, and oil, those substantial and almost only articles of primitive opulence, to avoid an intercourse, by which they could gain little, and

S f

might

might lose much. For this reason, in those early days, when the law of nations was not advanced into that acknowledged and respectable system, which now countenances a more confidential communication among civilized nations, Egypt, and other rich countries were jealous of strangers. Indeed the fate of the Troade has justified their fears upon this head: for notwithstanding all their precautions, they were thrice conquered and plundered before the time of Homer. And this was effected upon such frivolous pretences, that we may very reasonably suppose, this would not have happened, had they not been richer, than their neighbours. The same temptation was probably the motive of the Æolic migration; a palliating term, under which the Greek historians have thought proper to transmit their unjust invasion of this country. That the first migrations, which we find upon record, into this part of the world, were made upon this principle of removing from poverty to plenty, will

will be easily conceived by the traveller, who sails up the Hellespont. For he cannot but observe, how much the Asiatic side exceeds that of the European both in fertility and beauty.

Though Homer, speaking of the country of Priam, calls it in general Troy, and its inhabitants Trojans; yet when he comes to an exact enumeration of the forces under their several commanders, he distinguishes the people of Ilium, the capital, peculiarly by the name of Trojans. It is in this confined sense, that we call the survey which we made, the Map of Troy. In this probably is included little more than the district which Hector commanded: and of which we shall now attempt to give a more particular description. In doing this, we must refer the Reader to the preceding Map, in which there are two things to be particularly distinguished: the one is the coast of the Troade upon the Ægean sea; the other the coast of the Troade upon the Hellespont.

Before we come to the inland part of our discoveries, it will be proper to give a general idea of these coasts, as they appeared to us, when we were sailing close along the shore. From Cape Baba, the ancient Lectum, to Cape Janiffari, which was the ancient Sigean Promontory, the coast runs almost due north. Upon the first of these Capes there is a castle to defend the country from the Maltese corsairs, whose invasions are so much dreaded by the Turks, that there are few villages to be seen upon the shore, till you come near to the Hellespont. The coast is covered with Valonia trees, a sort of Ilex, whose bark and fruit are used in tanning; and are a matter of commerce. The country is less mountainous, as you go north; till opposite to Tenedos, which we kept upon our left. Here it exhibits a beautiful shelving landscape crowned with woods: and at the same time affords, as people sail by, a fine view of the city Troas, and of the venerable ruins which surround it.

From

From hence, as we still proceed northward, the coast grows steeper, till it at last terminates in the high perpendicular cliff, Cape Janissari, which divides the Ægean sea from the Hellespont. As you turn eastward into this narrow sea, the same Cape terminates by a sudden slope in a beautifully planted plain. Here the Scamander dischargeth itself: and at its mouth is the castle abovementioned, to defend the entrance of the streight. On the opposite side is another erected for the same purpose. From Cape Janissari the flat marshy shore retires, forming a curve, which is terminated eastward by Cape Barbieri. This was the ancient Rhoeteum; and is lower and less abrupt than the Cape above. Dardanium must have been near this spot; as we may judge by the streight, which retains the name of Dardanelle. The castles form the extremity of our Map eastward, which were built for the security of this passage to Constantinople. That on the European side stands, where formerly Sestos was situated: and that

that on the Asiatic is founded upon the ruins of Abydus. This was that Abydus, so famed for the bridge of Xerxes, and for the loves of Hero and Leander.

Having thus described the present appearance of these coasts and seas, we are naturally led to make some inquiry into their history, as it is afforded in the Iliad. I believe, we shall find, upon inquiry, that the Ægean and Hellespontic seas are very truly distinguished there: and that they are seldom mentioned with such epithets, and circumstances, as are indifferently applicable to either. In the beginning of the first book the priest Chryses, after his unsuccessful petition, is represented as returning homeward, and walking in a melancholy mood upon the shore of *the boisterous, or turbulent sea*. The situation of the city Chrysa shews, that the Ægean sea is alluded to in this passage: and this is further manifest from the epithet turbulent, or boisterous: for this term might as well be applied to the Danube or Nile, as to
the

the Hellespont, and therefore must be appropriated to the sea below. Neither the Hellespont nor the channel have breadth enough to be boisterous: and I must observe, that the epithet *insaniens*, which ^a Horace applies to the latter, is very improperly taken in that sense. At the same time nothing can express more happily, than this term, the contrariety of currents, for which that streight is remarkable.

In the same book of the ^b Iliad, Achilles is described as retiring to indulge his resentment upon *the frothy beach*, and as looking upon *the dusky main*. In this passage we have an extensive prospect of the sea, whose waves break upon the shore: and herein is exhibited a picture, which corresponds with the Ægean sea only; near which we know, that Achilles was stationed. While this sea is in this manner described; the Hellespont is either distinguished

^a Infanientem navita Bosporum

Tentabo.

L. 3. Od. 4.

^b L. 1. v. 350.

by

by epithets, which are adapted to that streight only; or pointed out by the circumstances of the camp, and fleet, in its vicinity.

There is something remarkable in the epithet *broad*, which is more than once by Homer given to the Hellespont: for it seems to be improperly applied to a sea, which is narrower than many rivers. And yet this Poet is not single in representing it in this light, for Orpheus speaks of the broad Hellespont. Eustathius and other Commentators have endeavoured to explain this term, but in a manner, I think, not satisfactory. I shall therefore beg leave to offer a conjecture upon this head, which occurred to me upon the spot.

When I was sailing upwards from the Ægean sea into the Hellespont, we were obliged to make our way against a constant smart current; which, without the assistance of a north-wind, generally runs about three knots in an hour. At the same time we were landlocked on all sides; and nothing appeared in
view,

view, but rural scenery : and every object conveyed the idea of a fine river, running through an inland country. In this situation I could hardly persuade myself, that I was at sea : and it was as natural to talk of its comparative great breadth, as to mention its embouchure, its pleasant stream, its woody banks, and all those circumstances which belong to rivers only. The epithet ^c *swift-flowing*, or *rapid*, which the Poet applies to it, (but never to any other sea) shews that he considered it merely as a running stream : and Herodotus, who visited the Hellespont with the curiosity of a traveller, actually calls it a river.

The description given by Homer of Mount Ida corresponds with its present state ; for its *many summits* are still covered with pine-trees, and it abounds with fountains. In a journey, which we made over part of it by night, the constant howling of jackals, and frequent brush-

^c Αγαρρόον ἔλλησποντον. Iliad. M. v. 30. B. v. 845.

Ἄγαν ῥωδῆ, ὃ ἐστὶ σφοδρὰ ρεύματα ἐχόντα. Schol.

ing of wild beasts through the thickets, with the perpetual murmuring of rills, supplied by a constant succession of springs, gave us a very lively idea of the rites of Cybele : for her celebrities used to be carried on at the same late season in these high woods, amid the noises and wild scenery above mentioned.

Mount Gargarus, Cotylus, and Lectum, have only changed their names ; and make the same conspicuous figure, which distinguished them in the Iliad. Pliny indeed observes, that the rivers mentioned by Homer did not answer to the appearances exhibited in his time. This is not to be wondered at in a country, which is very subject to earthquakes. We find, that in these mountains was the great magazine of wood for firing, as well as of timber for other uses. Of these pine-trees both Paris and Æneas built their fleets. Virgil's hero could not have made choice of any spot so proper for building his ships as Antandros, at the foot of Mount Ida. His escape to it out of the town must have

have been by some gate opposite to that, by which the enemy had entered, and got possession of the town. The road from thence to Antandros was the most secure, and the place itself the most retired and safe from the Grecian fleet of any upon the whole coast. Its convenience in respect to ship-building was a necessary circumstance to Æneas; and would naturally strike the Roman Poet: in whose time this port was the mart for the timber of this province. There are however two anachronisms in one line of the Poet's account, when he tells us,

Classemque sub ipso
Antandro, ac Phrygiæ molimur montibus Idæ.

for Antandros was not in those times built; nor was the region of Troas then called Phrygia.

We visited the present source of the Scamander; which springing from the rock, distends itself immediately into a shallow circular basin, of seven or eight feet diameter, under the shade

of a plane-tree. From hence dripping in a small quantity down a romantic woody cliff, it is soon joined by another stream, before it winds into its northern direction. From this source to the present mouth of the Scamander may be about twenty-three miles in a straight line: but far more, if we take in the windings of the river; which for so short a course passes through a great variety of country. From its fountain-head, till it is arrived below Chiflik, it rather tumbles than flows; passing all the way down woody steeps in a rugged and stony channel. From thence to the ruined bridge it glides through a rich plain, till it comes to Ene, the most considerable village in this country, where there is a wooden bridge over it. Not far from hence it receives the Simois amid corn fields, interspersed with fine mulberry-trees. From the ruined bridge to Bornabaschi the course of these united streams lies through a rocky mountainous country, thinly covered with pines, and some other trees; and having
a very



View of the RUINED BRIDGE below the JUNCTION of the two RIVERS.

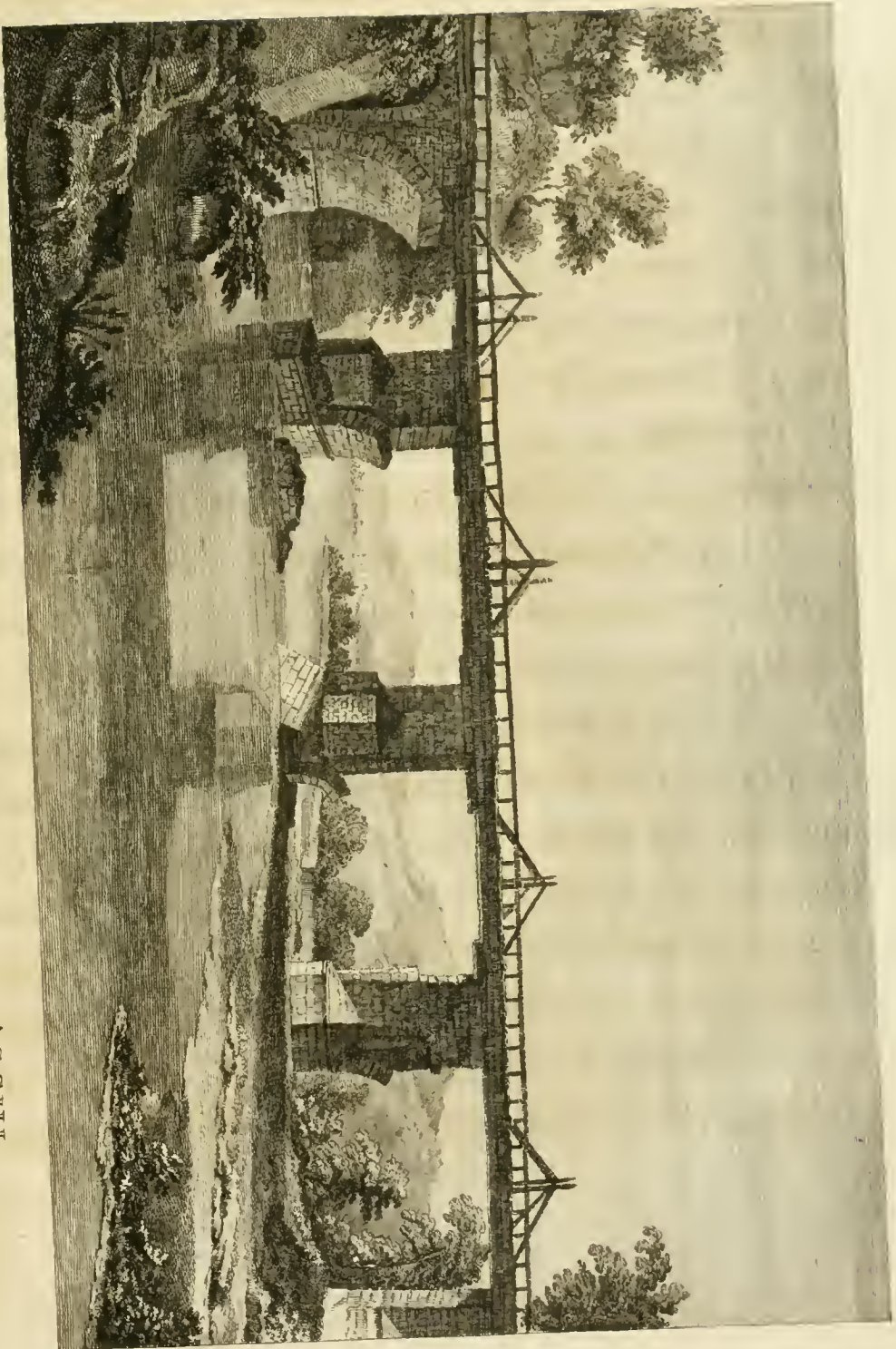
View of the

bridge

a very Alpine appearance. The vale, through which it winds among these hills, is irregular as to breadth : for in some places it takes up little more space, than that, which the river occupies in winter. At the time, when we saw this river, we found it confined to a small part of its channel, which was only filled in the latter season. We accordingly pitched our tent in its dry gravelly bed close to the stream, which was then so small, that a less army than that of Xerxes, might have drank it dry. The river, in this exhausted state, had very fine falls below Chiflik. At Bornabaschi it quits the chain of hills, which it had entered at the ruined bridge, and steals through a marshy flat; which, where it is drained and cultivated, is extremely fertile quite down to the sea. During this last part of its course the current was scarcely perceptible. Bornabaschi signifies *the fountain-head*; and there is a fine rivulet so called. This gives name to the village before

fore mentioned, which consists of half a dozen huts. The water here gushes out of the rock in such quantities, as to form immediately a stream more considerable than any that we saw in the channel of the Scamander. However, hardly any of this water joins that river; but stagnates among the reeds of the marshy plain, notwithstanding a drain has been made by a Turkish governor to carry it downward to the Ægean sea. The plains at the mouths of the Cayster, Mæander, and other rivers of Asia Minor, which are constantly incroaching upon the sea, make exactly the same appearance with this spot. For all these rivers are choked up, and stagnate in summer among the soil and rubbish, which are brought down by their violence in winter. At the time, when we saw the Scamander, it was in its lowest state; and had not water sufficient to support one continued current from its source to the sea. It consisted of a succession of several small streams, produced

VIEW of the ancient BRIDGE below BORNABASCHI.



produced from different springs; all which were absorbed in the gravelly channel, after a short and languid course.

But we could easily see by the breadth of its channel, and the length of the three bridges over it, that it must make a very different appearance in winter. And indeed, though we had not been told by the inhabitants of the dreadful ravages, which its violent equinoctial and winter inundations produce, they were very easy to be conceived, from many evidences before us. For we could observe stones of a considerable size, which had been brought down from the mountain: also shrubs and trees torn up by the roots, together with mud and rubbish of different sorts. Some of the soil was to be seen twelve or thirteen feet from the ground, sticking to trees near the banks, where the overflowing in the rainy season had lodged it. This was particularly to be observed between the ruined bridge, and Bornabaschi; for
here

here the stream is confined, and cannot vent its rage by spreading.

I have been thus particular in describing this river both in its turbulent and in its placid and exhausted state, because I think, that the Reader may find traces of both in the Iliad. The circumstance of a fallen tree, which is by Homer described as reaching from one of its banks to the other, affords a very just idea of its breadth at the season, when we saw it. On the other hand, he could not have employed a more effectual power for the total demolition of the Greek entrenchment, than the same river in its state of violence: and perhaps the furious ravages, and sudden devastations of the Scamander, may have furnished the hint of that very bold allegory.

When we look upon the regions of Troas, as represented in my Map, it will be found, I believe, to differ from the history of the country; as exhibited by Homer. This difference
consists

consists in having the distance of Troy from the sea increased; for the sea, by an accretion of land, is farther off than it was of old. The present town indeed stands upon the sea; but this is not the Troy of Homer: for that was higher up, and looked towards the Hellespont, and not towards the Ægean. I am likewise very certain, that the situation of the Scamander is considerably changed from what it was in the days of Homer: and the reasons for my opinion are these. The hot spring, according to the Poet, was one of the sources of this river: but it is now much lower than the present source, and has no communication with the Scamander. The fountains, whence the river took its rise, were, according to Homer, close by the walls of the city: but the ground about the fountain, which we saw, is too steep and rugged for the situation of a city. Such a situation cannot be made to accord with the pursuit of Hector, and with many other incidents in the Poem. The distance also of the present source from the Hel-

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lespont

Ilespont is far too great to admit of the actions of the day. Not but that the city was far removed from the sea: for the Grecian camp and navy could not be seen, according to the situation allotted by Homer. And perhaps Virgil has been wrong in supposing that the city could be discovered even from a tower: for in that case it would have been needless to have sent Polites to the tomb of Æsyetes to reconnoitre the enemy. Indeed it is probable from the plan, which the Roman Poet gives of Troy, that he never took an opportunity, when he was in Greece, of going over, and visiting this region. Whatever change there may have been in respect to the source of the Scamander, it must have happened, before it was visited by Strabo. He seems to have found things in much the same state, as we have been now describing them: and, comparing them with the account given by Homer, he concludes, that an alteration must have happened since the time of the Poet. I shall therefore venture to fix the ancient source
of

of the river, and the situation of the city itself, lower down than the springs of the Scamander; though higher than the plain: a situation, which seems best to correspond with the description given by Homer.

As to the junction of the two rivers, we leave it as we found it: though we have reason to think, that these rivers were always united before their streams reached to the ruined bridge. To say the truth, the frequent shiftings of these torrents, and the changing of their beds, of which we could perceive marks in this place, leave us in a manner at liberty to fix their junction in any part, which best agrees with the action of the Poem.

That part of the course of the Scamander, of which we have no trace in Homer, is from the ruined bridge to Bornabaschi. There is nothing in the Iliad, which affords us any idea of it: though, from the manner in which the ground lies, it is the only part of the stream,

which we can with tolerable certainty affirm to run precisely in its ancient channel.

At Bornabaschi commences the plain, which reaches to the Hellespont. Of this it is very evident, both from history, and from present appearances, that a great part has been produced since the time of Homer. For the land has been increased by the soil brought down, and lodged at the mouth of the Scamander: just as Egypt has been enlarged by the Nile; and other regions by the rivers, which run through them. The coast of Asia is particularly liable to such increase: and particularly about the Mæander. The island Lade was at no great distance from the coast, and is mentioned by Strabo and Pausanias as lying opposite to Miletus: but it is now joined to the continent. We shall therefore, upon these authorities, venture to cut off some miles from our ancient Map of the Trojan plain.

Having

Having thus reduced the distance between the fountains of the Scamander and the Hellespont to a smaller space; I shall suppose the Grecian camp to have occupied the whole of the sea-coast before the city. To prove the necessity of this extent, it will be proper to consider the numbers of the army, and their manner of encamping. It appears, that the whole of their forces amounted to one hundred thousand men. These were indeed not incumbered with the numerous attendants which are usual in modern armies. They had no train of artillery: and the simple military manners of those times admitted of neither cooks nor footmen. If, however, we take in the article of women, we shall, I believe, find, that they exceed the numbers which on these occasions are usual in our times. It appears of old to have been an uniform custom among military gentlemen to leave their wives at home; and to carry only their mistresses abroad: and these ladies seem to have answered the

the

the purposes both of domestic convenience and gallantry, as we may conclude from old Nestor's house-keeper. In those days the females made a considerable part of the soldiers' plunder; and what is now so often an officer's ruin, was then an article of his riches. If to this account we add all the children, which we may suppose an hundred thousand Grecian heroes to have produced in ten years, we may reasonably suppose that their place of encampment could not contain less than one hundred and fifty thousand persons. The horses and chariots must have occupied a large space; and the ships would demand no inconsiderable extent of ground. They were drawn up, and secured upon the land among the tents: which is a circumstance not attended to by Mr. Pope. He falls into frequent errors from not having observed this promiscuous disposition of the tents and shipping. It is true, they were merely transports, and had no small boats belonging to them. As to the tents, we may conclude from
from

from that of Achilles, that they were a kind of barrack, or hut, constructed for all sorts of weather.

To the front of the camp towards Troy allowance must be made for the great intrenchment. This consisted of a rampart with towers and battlements, and was defended by a ditch with palixados, being much in the style of fortification which prevailed in Europe before the invention of gun-powder. On the side next the Hellespont, there was left a space, between the camp and the sea, sufficient for the assembling of the principal officers upon matters of moment. The extent of this camp, from right to left, is determined by the two well-known promontories upon the express authority of Homer. One extremity reached to the Sigean promontory, where Achilles was stationed; the other to the Rhætean, where Ajax had pitched his tents. The center had been allotted to Ulysses, as being the most convenient for consultation, if they at any time stood

stood in need either of his eloquence or wisdom. Hence, when Agamemnon, upon an emergency, wants to assemble the Grecian chiefs, he repairs to the ship of Ulysses, which was opposite to that hero's tent, and there raises his voice.

^d Στη δ' ἐπ' Οδύσσης μεγακητεῖ νηι μελαινῃ,
 Ἢ ῥ' ἐν μεσσατῷ ἔσκε, γεγωνεμένῃ ἀμφοτέρωσθε·
 Ἢ μὲν ἐπ' Αἴαντος κλισίης Τελαμωνιάδαο,
 Ἢ δ' ἐπ' Ἀχιλλῆος, τοὶ ῥ' ἐσχάτα νηῶν εἴσασ
 Εἰρυσαν, ἠνορέη πισυνοὶ, καὶ καρτεῖ χερῶν.

High on the midmost bark the King appear'd ;
 There from Ulysses' deck his voice was heard :
 To Ajax and Achilles reach'd the sound,
 Whose distant ships the guarded navy bound.^{d)}

In this version Mr. Pope mentions, that the voice of Agamemnon from the centre was heard to the two extremes : and so much is

^d Iliad. Θ. v. 220. The same is said of the goddess Eris. Λ. v. 5.
 certainly

certainly to be inferred from the original. Yet according to our Map, and to the best evidences of antiquity, these extremes could not be less than twelve miles : for such is the distance between the Rhætean and Sigean Promontories : so that the Grecian Monarch, who was equally removed from both, must have been heard six miles each way, which is incredible. We must therefore look upon the Poet's language in this place, as only a bold poetical figure.

THE chief thing to be pointed out, if it were possible to be ascertained, would be the precise situation of the city itself. But this, I fear, is not very easy, as there are not the least remains, by which we can judge of its original position. There has been likewise a great change in the face of the country by earthquakes, and inundations, of which many writers take notice. In how high veneration the history of this city was held, may be known by the many poems, histories, and dissertations, which were composed in its honour. The time of its being taken was looked upon as one of the principal æras in Greece. Indeed it was many times taken, if we may believe the best authors of antiquity. The three first calamities which it underwent are mentioned by Lycophron in the person of Cassandra.

ΣΤΕΝΩ,

° ΣΤΕΝΩ, ΣΤΕΝΩ, σε δισσα, και τριπλα, δορος
 Αυθις προς αλκην, και διαρπαγας δομων,
 Και πυρ αναυγαζισαν αιςωτηριον.

Much I lament, my dear country, your unhappy fate: who are doomed twice, and even three times, to behold an hostile invasion: and to see your edifices ruined, and the wide-wasting fire prevailing.

In this account the Poet alludes to three periods; in which Troy was taken by Hercules, by the Amazons, and lastly by the Grecians under the conduct of the Atridæ. To the invasion by the Amazons Homer alludes; but he is silent about the city falling into their hands, though it is mentioned by other writers. Troy was also taken, as we learn from Plutarch, and Polyænus, by Charidemus Orites: and last of all by C. Fimbria, a Quæstor under Valerius Flaccus in the Mithridatic war.

e V. 61.

X X 2

It

It has been observed by those who have written upon this subject, that an horse had been always ominous to the Trojans. They were first subdued by Hercules, when the dispute was about the horses of Laomedon. The Amazons were all equestrian, and one of their devices was an horse : and when the city was surprized by the Grecians, it was by means of the wooden horse Duris. Lastly, When it fell into the hands of Charidemus, the capture was owing to an horse which fell down in the entrance of the city, and prevented the shutting of their gates. There is an old Latine epigram, made upon some person, whose name seems to have been Afellus, and who had not shewn a proper veneration for the books of Homer. In this there is an allusion to the histories above, which describe the city as being always ruined by an horse.

Carminis Iliaci libros confumpfit Afellus.

Hoc fatum Trojæ est, aut Equus, aut Afinus.

However,



ANCIENT RUINS near TROY upon the ÆGEAN SEA.
Supposed to be the work of ALEXANDER or LYSIMACHUS.

However; this last-mentioned catastrophe of the city, as well as that under Fimbria, could not relate to the ancient Ilium, but to Troja Nova, which was situated at a distance from the former, and was supposed to have been built by Alexander the Great, or at least greatly enlarged by him and Lyfimachus. Of this city there are some noble remains : but of the true and famous Troy there have been no traces for ages : not a stone is left, to certify, where it stood. It was looked for to little purpose as long back as the time of Strabo : and Lucan having mentioned, that it had been in vain searched for in the time of Julius Cæsar, concludes his narrative with this melancholy observation upon the fate of this celebrated city, *that its very ruins were annihilated.*

f Famâ duce, tendit in undas,
 Sigæasque petit famæ mirator arenas ;
 Et Simöentis aquas, et Graio nobile busto
 Rhætion, et multum debentes vatibus umbras.
 Circuit exustæ nomen memorabile Trojæ,

f Lucani Pharsalia. L. 9. v. 953. 961.

Magnaque

Magnaque Phœbæi quærit vestigia muri.
 Jam sylvæ steriles, et putres robore trunci
 Assarici pressere domos, et templa Deorum
 § Implicitâ radice tenent: ac tota teguntur
 Pergama dumetis: *Etiam periere Ruinæ.*

§ Implicitâ radice. In this manner I have taken the liberty to alter the verse: the common reading being, Jam lassâ radice.



Drawn at Ephesus in 1762 by W. Pars.

Engraved by T. Bartolozzi.

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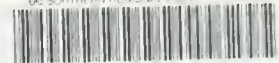
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