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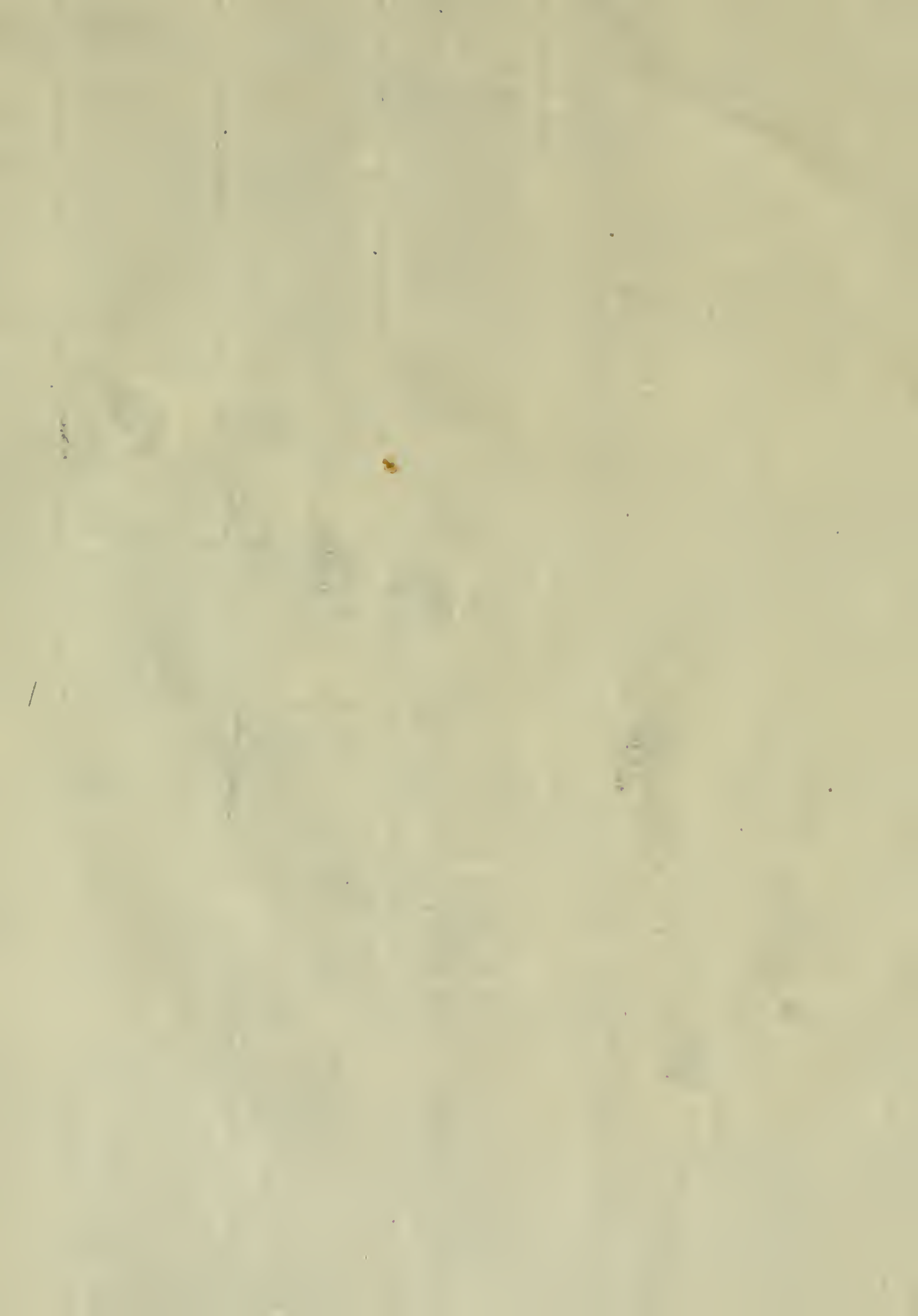

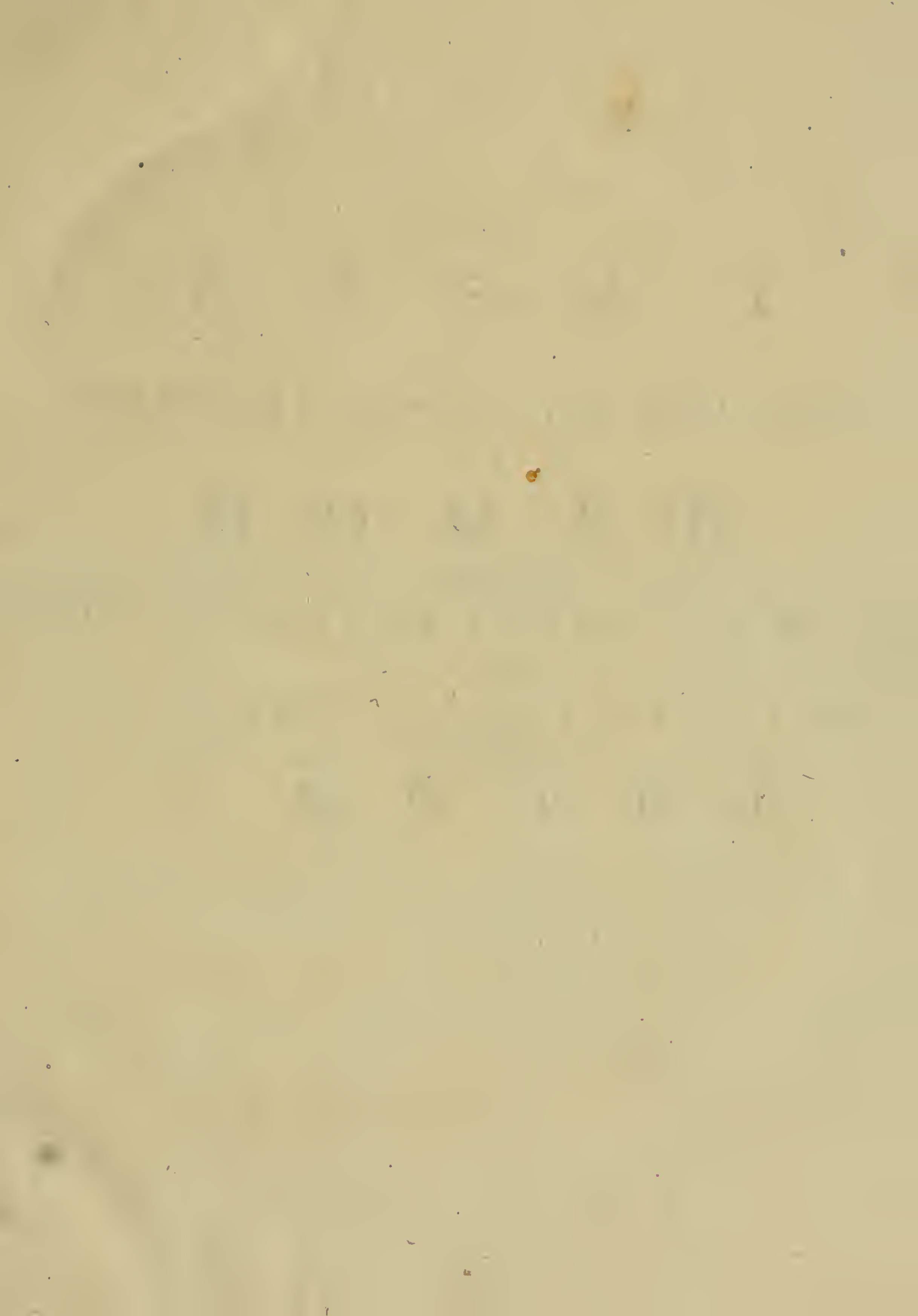

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

ORIGINAL GENIUS AND WRITINGS

OF

HOMER:

WITH

A COMPARATIVE VIEW

OF THE

ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE

OF THE

TROADE.

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AN

ESSAY

ON THE

Original GENIUS and WRITINGS of HOMER:

WITH

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 *Engrav'd by F. Bartolozzi.*

LONDON:

PRINTED BY H. HUGHS;

For T. PAYNE, at the MEWS GATE, and P. ELMSLY, in the STRAND.

MDCCLXXV.

TO THE

READER.

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 Odyſſey 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 πεπον, ει μεν γαρ πολεμον περι τονδε φυγοντες,
> Αιει δη μελλοιμεν αγηρω τ' αθανατω τε
> Εσσεσθ', ΟΥΤΕ ΚΕΝ ΑΥΤΟΣ ΕΝΙ ΠΡΩΤΟΙΣΙ ΜΑΧΟΙΜΗΝ,
> Ουτε κε σε στελλοιμι μαχην ες κυδιανειραν·
> Νυν δ', εμπης γαρ κηρες εφεστασιν θανατοιο
> Μυριαι, ἁς ουκ εστι φυγειν βροτον, ουδ' ὑπαλυξαι.
> 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

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 Odyſſey; 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.

racter 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 Odyssey 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 competition

[d] Madam Dacier, in her Preface to the Odyssey, 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'Odyssée, que la valeur d'Achille est superieure 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 Odyssey; 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 αμεινων, 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 falſhood. The veracity of the heroes of the Iliad and Odyſſey 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 Odyſſey, 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

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 Odyssey 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.

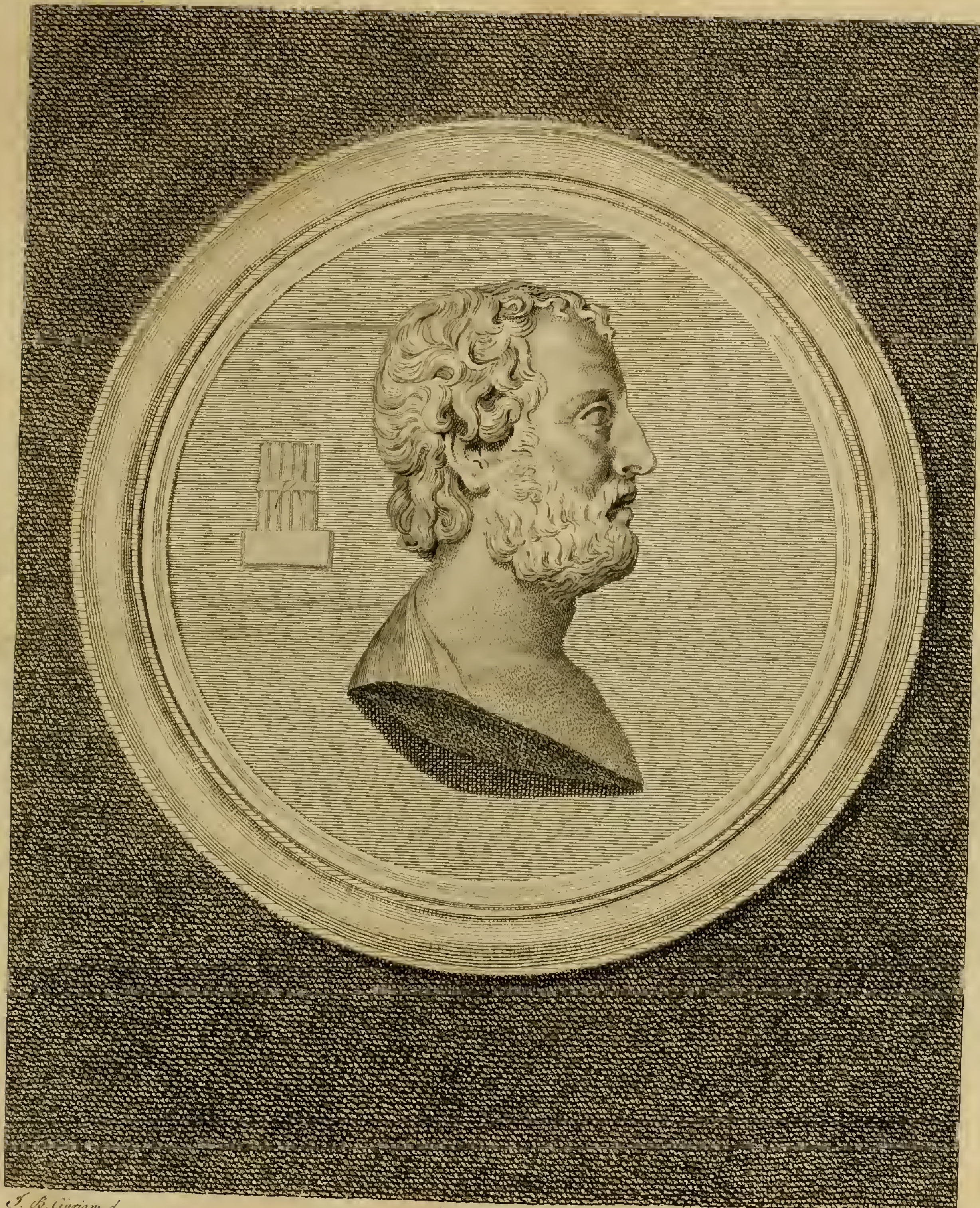
HOMER's Head, to front the Title Page.

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.



J. B. Cipriani d.

Engrav'd by J. Basire

A HEAD OF *HOMER*.

From the Collection of Lyde Browne Esq.r

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

ORIGINAL GENIUS

OF

HOMER.

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 Odyſſey, 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 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

[b] Περην ἁλος, Ηλιδος αντα. 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'extremité de la mer vis "à vis de la cote d'Elide."

to

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 Odyſſey, 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

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, ὁθι 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 ἠελιοιο, or *ſolis con-*
" *verſiones*. M. Perrault inſults the Poet as ignorant of Geography,
" for placing Syros under the Tropic; an error (ſays he) which Com-
" mentators in vain have laboured to defend, by having recourſe to a Sun-
" dial of Pherecydes on which the motions of the Sun (the τροπαι ἠελιοιο)
" 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 τρεπεσθαι ſignifies
" the ſame as δυνειν, 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 conver-
" ſions of the Sun were figured. This indeed would fully vindicate
" Homer; but Bochart and others affirm, that Euſtathius is in an er-

 " ror;

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 πρὸς τροπὰς
" ἠελίοιο, 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 occiduas*
" *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 ἠλιυ 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 Tropique*;
" *bevûë*, ajoute-t-il, *que les Interprêtes 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 Tropique, & 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 *ὀθι τροπαι ἠελιοιο*, 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 ἡλιȣ, 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 *τρεπεσθαι*, 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 ἡλιȣ 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 veritable*
" *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 plûtôt 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 veritable explication; elle merite d'être eclaircie.
" 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 ἠελιοιο, & 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 conſequent, 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,*
" *& 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

 is

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 [e] 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.

[e] Ὡς δ' ανεμοι δυο ποντον ορινετον ιχθυοεντα,
ΒΟΡΕΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΖΕΦΥΡΟΣ, ΤΩ ΤΕ ΘΡΗΚΗΘΕΝ ΑΗΤΟΝ,
Ελθοντ' εξαπινης· αμυδις δε τε κυμα κελαινον
Κορθυεται, πολλον δε παρεξ ἁλα φυκος εχευαν.
Ὡς εδαιζετο θυμος ενι ϛηθεσσιν Αχαιων. 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 allufion, but, if I am not miftaken, a beautiful fea piece: and in order to do juftice to its perfpective, we fhould place ourfelves on the fpot, or in the point of view, where the Painter made his drawing; which will only anfwer to fome part of the Afiatic coaft, or its iflands.

It would be a falfe and affected refinement to fuppofe, that the fimile acquires any additional beauty by the difcovery of a real landfcape in thofe lines. The Poet's purpofe, which was to paint the ftruggle of wavering indecifion in the people, diftracted between a fenfe of honour and of danger, and alternately refolving to fly or to ftay, is, no doubt, completely fatisfied in the general image, which he makes ufe of. But though his meaning went no farther, I am not lefs of opinion, that, upon this occafion, his imagination fuggefted to him a ftorm, which he had feen: and having myfelf had more than once an opportunity of obferving from the coaft of Ionia the truth of this

 picture

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 the

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 ſurpriſed 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

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 queſtion.

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 Odyſſey, 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 Phœnicia 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 of

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 Odyſſey 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 Perſæ, 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, Diomede, 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

more largely into the confideration of the lines, which defcribe this navigation, in order to afcertain their meaning. Though it may carry us a little beyond the object immediately before us, it will only anticipate a fpecimen of his hiftorical accuracy (one of the propofed objects of this Effay), and will fhew how cautious we fhould be not to difturb that delicate connection and thread of circumftances, which are feldom difranged, even by the fmalleft alteration, without endangering his truth and confiftence.

Should we, in this view, ftrip thofe lines of their poetical drefs, and extract a plain narrative or journal from the moft literal and natural conftruction of the whole paffage, it will, with very little paraphrafe, and that entirely furnifhed by the Poet himfelf, produce the following piece of ancient hiftory.

" The demolition of Troy being at length
" accomplifhed, Agamemnon and Menelaus,
" difagreeing about the farther meafures 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, ſailed
" 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 Diomede 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 Crœſus, 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 ſurpriſed 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

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 *ειν Αρικοις*. Now, the *Αρικοι* 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:

Χωρῳ ενι δρυοεντι Υδης εν πιονι δημῳ·

Which he renders,

Χωρῳ ενι δρυοεντ' Ιουδης εν πιονι δημῳ. 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 *ειν αρικοις* 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 exprefsly mention them, has been carried; but never more unreafonably than in the prefent cafe. Is it a fair way of judging to fuppofe, 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 feveral other places not lefs confiderable: or that it was founded after his time, or that he could not, without grofs anachronifm, introduce, in the times of the Trojan war, the name of a city built fo long after?

I fhall not therefore conclude, becaufe the flux and reflux of the Adriatic muft have been matter of particular curiofity to the Afiatic Greeks, that Homer muft neceffarily have mentioned it: for we fee that he takes no notice of the tides of the Euripus, fo much the object of admiration in all times, though this ftreight, where the Grecian fleet firft affembled, is in the midft of thofe countries, which he has defcribed with accuracy.

I muft

I muſt nevertheleſs obſerve, that though ſome marks of moſt other parts of the Mediterranean ſeas are to be found in the Iliad or Odyſſey, 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 Batrachomyamachia be his) are explicit, who makes Phyſignathus 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 Brunduſium, 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

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 potuit, mediis elapſus Achivis,
Illyricos penetrare ſinus 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 ſedeſque 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.

 The

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.) *επιχωριους 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 Diomede'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 North-weſt, 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. l. 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, Thraſyalcis, Ariſtotle, Timoſthenes, Bion.

purpoſe

purpofe upon fuch occafions. Accordingly we find them employed oftener in the Iliad than in the Odyffey. Eurus is never diftinguifhed by an epithet: and Notus only by that of fwift. They are never reprefented as perfons, except in one inftance; they are defcribed by qualities, the reverfe of thofe of their antagonift winds; for Eurus is employed in melting the fnow, which Zephyrus brings down, and Notus covers the mountain-tops with clouds, which it is the bufinefs of Boreas to difpel.

Zephyrus is called hard-blowing, rapid, the fwifteft of all the winds, noify, whiftling or rattling, moift, and is reprefented as bringing rain or fnow.

I find two paffages in the Odyffey, which feem 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 defcription of the Elyfian plain, "where "neither winter's fnow nor rain are feen, but "a continual refrefhing Zephyr blows from

"the

"the ocean;" the other is in the defcription of Alcinous's gardens, where the rich vegetation is afcribed to a conftant Zephyr.

When we recollect (what I have above attempted to prove) that the Zephyr of Homer's country, upon which he muft have formed his familiar ideas of that wind, blew from the mountains of Thrace; and that the two inftances which I have given, are the only ones in which he defcribes the qualities of that wind in a diftant weftern climate, inftead of contradiction and inconfiftence, we difcover an extenfive knowledge of Nature. For, while he is accurate in his accounts of the known appearances of his own country, he accommodates his defcriptions to what he had either heard or feen of diftant parts. To have ufed the gentle Zephyr, in a fimile addreffed to Ionian readers, or to have given the character of feverity to that of weftern 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 it's 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 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 defcribed, that we have no determinate idea of their drefs or perfons.

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 Cyrrheftes at Athens. As this is the only monument of antiquity, that I have feen, where they are fo well executed and fo well preferved, I examined them with a view to thofe conformities between the Poet and the Sculptor, by which we fometimes trace the borrowed idea to its original fource, but with little fuccefs. Whether it was that the Artift was confined to certain ideas by the intended ufe of this tower, which was particularly adapted to the meridian of Attica; or that his invention was inferior to his execution, I fhall not venture to judge; but there is a famenefs of attitude, drapery, and character, in thofe Winds, that would make it very difficult to diftinguifh their names, were they not infcribed 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 cæruleus ſupra caput adſtitit imber,
Noctem, hyemnemque ferens, et inhorruit unda tenebris.
Ipſe gubernator puppi Palinurus ab alta:
Heu quianam tanti 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

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 compleat 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 ſurpriſed 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 lawgiver appealed to this code, in juſtification of

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 Odyſſey 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 Mycaleſſus of Homer become by tranſlation,

"Græa near the main,
"And Mycaleſſia's ample piny plain.

[a] See Pope's obſervations on the Catalogue.

Had

Had it been proper to deſcribe the narrow ſtreight 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 Maſeta'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, Gliſſa 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 ſurpriſingly in

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."

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

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 inconſiſtence 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

the

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 revisal 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 Odyſſey, 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] Νησος επειτα τις εςι πολυκλυςω ενι ποντῳ
Αιγυπτȣ προπαροιθε, Φαρον δε ἑ κικλησκȣσι,
Τοσσον ανευθ', ὁσσον τε πανημεριη γλαφυρη νηυς
Ηνυσεν, ᾗ λιγυς ȣρος επιπνειῃσιν οπισθεν. 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 *Αιγυπτος* in Homer always relates to the Nile.

[c] *Εντευθεν δε (απο Κανωβικου ϛοματος) επι Φαρον την νησον αλλοι ϛαδιοι 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 invectu paulatim eſſe aggeſtam. Proinde illam Ephorus appellat ποταμοχωςον; Herodotus " επικτητον γην, & δωρον τȣ ποταμȣ; Philoſophus τȣ ποταμȣ εργον: atque " ex eo ipſo Æthiopes ſeſe Ægyptiis antiquiores eſſe probabant, quod " cùm Ægyptus olim fuiſſet mare, tandem τȣ Νειλȣ κατα τας αναβασεις " την εκ της Αιθιοπιας ιλυν καταφεροντος, 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, ſalſam ha- " bere & amaram aquam, ac ſi reliquiæ maris in iis ſubſederint. " 4. Denique ad Pharum inſulam, hodiè ſolùm 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 τȣ Τανι- " τικȣ ςοματος, 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 Iſide 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, adeóque curſum navis:

" ——ἡ λιγυς ȣρος επιπνειῃσιν 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: Κονωβος Φαρȣ ϛαδιȣς εικοσι και
" ἑκατον απεχει, καιτοι ναυς πανημερια θεȣσα, ὑπ' ανεμȣ κατα πρυμναν
" πνεοντος, προσθησω δε και λιγεως, ȣκ εικοσι και ἑκατὸν ϛαδιȣς ανυσει μαλι-
" ϛα, αλλ' ισως μαλλον διακοσιȣς και χιλιȣς. 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, & quantùm à
" Pharo diſtabat olim, tantùm, hodiéque diſtat, nempe ſtadia ſeptem,
" aut, ut alii, mille paſſus. Ariſtides ubi ſupra; Καιτοι της μεν επειρȣ
" απεχει Φαρος ἑπτα μαλιϛα ϛαδιȣς. Ammianus lib. xxii. Inſula Pha-
" ros, ubi Protea cum Phocarum gregibus diverſatum Homerus fabu-
" latur inflatius, a civitatis littore mille paſſibus diſparata." BOCHART.

" Homere

made this voyage of Menelaus, with the Odyſ-ſey in my hands, I was ſatisfied, that the Poet's account

" Homere étoit trop ſavant en Geographie pour ne pas ſavoir que
" de ſon tems l'Iſle du Phare n'étoit eloignée de l'embouchure de
" Conope que de ſix 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 exageré 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 douze 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-

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 toûjours 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 replique. 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, τȣ μυθώδȣς χαριν, *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; l. 22. ' Inſula Pharos, ubi Pro- " tea cum Phocarum gregibus diverſatum Homerus fabulatur inflatius, " 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 inconſiſtence is to ſuppoſe, that the Poet " intended to ſpecify the Peluſiac 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,

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 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

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,

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 νυχθημερον; 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 [g] 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-

g Ὡς δ' ὀτ' επι προχοησι διϊπετεος ποταμοιο
Βεβρυχεν μεγα κυμα ποτι ροον. Αμφι δε τ' ακραι
Ηιονες ΒΟΟΩΣΙΝ, ερευγομενης ἁλος εξω.
Τοσση αρα Τρωων ιαχη 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.

ceived from a boat within the Bogas, ſtation-ed there to pilot germes, 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 pe-riſhed 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; eſ-pecially if we conſider the greater diſtance he had to run, in his own ſhips, without boats cal-culated 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 dif-ficult

ficult then for a ſhip to diſengage itſelf from the land.

I flatter myſelf, that this account of the antient and preſent ſtate of the coaſt of Egypt may juſtify 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 ſo long laboured.

HOMER's RELIGION

AND

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 Odyſſey has been ſacrificed to this allegorizing humour. Nothing can be more contrary to our idea of the character of his writings, and to that unbiaſſed 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 relifh, and not from affectation, run any rifk of falling into fuch refinement. However, as great pains have been taken to trace the myfterious knowledge, which the Poet is fuppofed to conceal under this dark allegorical veil, up to his Egyptian education; and as a late ingenious Writer [a] has attempted to fhew the extenfive effects of the Poet's travelling from a country, where Nature governed, to one of fettled rules and a digefted Polity, it may be worth while to take the beft view, we can, of the ftate of learning in Greece and Egypt in Homer's time, in order to fee, what foundation there is for this opinion.

Referring the Reader, for the ftate of Homer's Learning, to a particular fection on that head, I fhall now lay before him my reafons for thinking, that the high compliments, which have been fo long paid to the knowledge and wifdom of the antient Egyptians, have not been

[a] See Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer.

fo

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

own

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 Necos 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.

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

compre-

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 Odyſſey: the immor-

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 deſart 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 ſap 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;

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 Shakeſpeare'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 upon

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 ſollicit 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 Æmathia, 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 Theſſaly, 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 [e] in Greece, which is preſerved there to this day, that Oſſa and

[e] Οσσαν επ' Ουλυμπω μεμασαν θεμεν, αυταρ επ' Οσση
Πηλιον εινοσιφυλλον, ἱν' ȣρανος 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-

 ſalians

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 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

 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 Homer

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 jocularity natural enough from the maſters of the world to ſo diminutive a kingdom.

HOMER's MANNERS.

OF the ſeveral proofs which might be alledged 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 conſiſtence, 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.

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 Seignor, 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 Jeruſalem, 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

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 of

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

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 ſurpriſed to ſee how far diſſimulation and diffidence are carried in that part of the world. He will (2) be ſhocked 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 diſguſted 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 offended 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 conſcientiæ*, 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 Odyssey 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.

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 ma-

giſtrate

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 Odyſſey, 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,

Η και εμοι ταδε παντα μελει, γυναι.

and concludes,

Αλλ' εις οικον ιȣσα, &c.

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 κυριος, 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 Odyſſey, 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 Κρονȣ παῖς ἡν παρακοιτην·
Τοισι δ' ὑπο χθων δια φυεν νεοθηλεα ποιην,
Λωτον θ' ἑρσηεντα, ιδε κροκον, ηδ' ὑακινθον,
Πυκνον και μαλακον, ὁς απο χθονος ὑψοθ' εεργε.
Τῳ ενι λεξασθην· επι δε νεφελην ἑσσαντο
Καλην, χρυσειην, ςιλπναι δ' απεπιπτον εερσαι.
Ὡς ὁ μεν ατρεμας εὑδε πατηρ ανα Γαργαρῳ ακρῳ,
Υπνῳ και φιλοτητι δαμεις, εχε δ' αγκας αχοιτιν.

Iliad. Ξ. 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

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 Odyſſey; 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 ſallies 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

fo many difgufting pictures in Homer, in the prefent manners of the Eaft, and all barbarous countries, as well as among the vulgar of the moft civilized, with whom the tranfition from raillery to blows is fo natural, that the latter feems only a bolder and coarfer expreffion of the firft.

So clofe and fo early an alliance between Wit and Violence is, I muft own, very little to the credit of the former: I fear it is but a bad apology for her to fay, that fhe commenced acquaintance with that rough companion when fhe was very young. But we muft not, from partial obfervations, upon a fubject requiring a more enlarged confideration, draw general conclufions, unfavourable to Homer and ourfelves; for there are fome ftrokes of humour [i] in the Poet, that it will be difficult to refolve into

[i] Of this fort is the comic ftory, which the difguifed Ulyffes tells Eumæus, in the 14th book, of his having forgotten his cloak, when he was on an advanced poft before Troy, in a cold night; and of the arch trick played upon one of the party, who was fent on a fool's errand upon that occafion.

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 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 atchievements 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 the

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 Odyſſey 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;

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 confidered fpeculatively 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 beft fuited the purpofe of their fyftem, according to the more or lefs favourable ideas they had formed of the wifdom of antiquity. It is curious to obferve what notions were propagated on this head upon the revival of letters, when a tincture of ancient fable and Heroic hiftory was received through Italian and French tranflation. We find in [a] Shakefpeare, who drew from thofe fources, an account of the Trojan ftory, 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 Hiftory have undergone. It

[a] See Farmer upon Shakefpeare'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 Odyſſey, 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 ſailing of the Greeks for Troy; relates the operations of almoſt ten years ſiege, or rather block-

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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 Odyſſey 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 Τρωικα Αγαμεμνονος αρχης λυθεισης. Strabo.

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

tion

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 confideration the arguments both for and againft Homer's teftimony; and I fhall conclude with fome obfervations upon Virgil's conduct, under the difficulties, which embarraffed the hiftorical credit of his fubject.

But in order to form a tolerable idea either of the Hiftory or Geography of Troy, it is neceffary to correct a miftake, which has long contributed to the mifreprefentation 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 rifes chiefly from a very early inattention to the different extent of that country at different times, fo that its doubtful limits became proverbial. It may be difficult to remove the impreffions which we receive on this head from ancient authors, particularly from one fo familiar to us, fo much, and fo juftly, admired, and fo thoroughly acquainted with Homer, as Virgil. He not only reprefents the Trojans and Phrygians as the fame

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,

 (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] ſynonimous 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 τȣτ' Ευριπιδȣ,
> Ωι και Σωκρατης τα ΦΡΥΓΑΝΑ ὑποτιθησι.

The true reading is,

> Ὡι Σωκρατης μεν ὑποτιθησι φρυγανα.

 monſtrated

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 falſhood 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

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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 im-

partiality,

partiality, which his patriotiſm did not biaſs, 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 creduloully 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;

> Νυν δε δη Αινειαο βιη ΤΡΩΕΣΣΙΝ αναξει,
> Και παιδες παιδων, τοι κεν μετοπισθε γενωνται·

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

> Νυν δε δη Αινειαο γενος ΠΑΝΤΕΣΣΙΝ αναξει;

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

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 cœlo, 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 Auſonii 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 Odyſſey; 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

ſurely 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 ſunto.
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 retorſit."

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] Pherecydes 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

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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.

red

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 Odyſſey: and we may as well derive the name of Ionian,

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 Ιαονες in Homer's Iliad N. v. 685.

racter, 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 Quinquértium, 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 re-ſpectable 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 Diomede 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 Diomede, 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

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 compleated, 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 Odyssey, 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 aćtion 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 charaćter in the compoſitions of thoſe great Poets, which is the only objećt 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 perfećt 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 conneĉted truth, which is more obſervable in Homer than in Virgil, from the different objeĉts, which thoſe Poets had in view. That it was their intention, both to pleaſe and inſtruĉt, 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 objeĉt 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 Odyſſey 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 Odyſſey. 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

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.

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 Platæa; 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,
"Procubuere." 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 compofitions in Profe.---They fettle his pronunciation by an Alphabet [c] which he did not know, and by characters he never faw. ---For whatever credit his ftory of fixteen letters brought into Greece by Cadmus may deferve, it is allowed, that the twenty-four letters of the Ionian alphabet were not in ufe till after Homer's time.---His Profody [d], or mufical expreffion, muft have been foon corrupted; for it is remarkable that the old chafte Greek me-

[c] Without entering into a debate, whether writing was in common ufe in the days of Homer; let us fuppofe 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 ftops; and accents were of later introduction. And if we may judge from the Sigean infcription, the arrangement by the manner of writing ftated βȣςροφηδον was different and embarraffed.

[d] Much has been written on this fubject; but to fo little purpofe, that even the meaning of that word is not afcertained. It is not clear in what degree the Προσῳδιαι of the ancients belonged to Mufic or to Grammar. If they were at firft entirely mufical (which I think highly probable) at what time were they adopted to fix pronunciation? Could we underftand the real ufe of thofe marks which we call accents, it is probable, that all we fhould learn by it would be to know imperfectly, how Greek was pronounced by thofe who ftudied and taught it as a dead or foreign language.

lody

lody was loſt in refinement, before their other arts had acquired perfection. Could Homer have heard his Poems ſung or recited, even at the Panathenæan Feſtival, I dare ſay, 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 expoſed.---I remember, when I was at Athens, that I ſent for a Greek ſchoolmaſter, 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 loſs to underſtand his own works, read by us, as we were to underſtand one another.

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

tered into its compoſition, or which part of the Greek continent, or iſlands, gave it birth, and firſt diſtinguiſhed it by a name, will ever remain the obſcure queſtions of antiquaries. But ſo far we know, that in its early and unpoliſhed ſtate, it was the language of various independent tribes; who, being all intereſted in the common ſtock, contributed towards its increaſe and improvement, according to their different circumſtances and fortunes. How it got ſo early into verſe and meaſure, and was in that ſhape admitted into the ſervice of Legiſlation, Morality, and Religion, is uncertain. How Proſe compoſition came to be of a later date, introduced perhaps with the uſe of Writing, which brought with it Arts and Philoſophy, and a more chaſte and faithful mode of recording facts, is alſo matter of obſcurity. That their alphabet was borrowed is very clear. Yet their terms of ſcience ſeem to ſhew, that in the ſtudy of Nature they were original. Indeed we have no better guide to the riſe and

 progreſs

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 Marſyas, 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,

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 picturеſque 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 thofe who had conceived fo highly of his knowledge.

I know of no authority to which we can appeal, in this cafe, of equal weight with Homer himfelf. It is principally from him that we have formed our ideas of that famenefs in the purfuits and occupations of mankind in the Heroic ages, which is the genuine character of an early ftage of Society. Trades and Profeffions were as yet fcarcely divided into feparate claffes; nor was that ufeful diftribution of induftry yet imagined, which makes labour light, gives perfection to art, and variety to manners. But then, as the bufinefs and pleafures of life were rude, fimple, and confined, they lay more open to the Poet's obfervation: and as he painted, what he faw, with fo much truth, I fancy, we are too apt to think he knew much more than he painted.

But I wonder, that thofe who have conceived fo highly of the Poet's fcience, fhould 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

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

Odyſſey are apparently addreſſed to an audience; nor is there in either poem any alluſion to Writing. As to Symbolical, Hieroglyphical, or Picture Deſcription, ſomething of that kind was no doubt known to Homer, of which the letter [g], (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 ſent to Montezuma of the landing of the Spaniards was in this Picture Writing. As alphabetical writing is one of the moſt difficult, ſo this method of communicating thoughts by imitation, is one of the moſt obvious of all inventions. The firſt efforts of our infant expreſſion are of the mimetic kind; and the names which different nations have given to the conſtellations are a proof of our natural diſpoſition to communicate and explain our thoughts by help of animal reſemblances.

[g] 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 ϛυλος, 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

ſure 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 ask-ed, 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 alphabet[i]. 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

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

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, Suſarion 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 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 ftriking. And yet, I think, it will not appear infurmountable, if, upon comparing the fidelity of oral tradition, and the powers of memory, with the Poet's knowledge, we find the two firft much greater, and the latter much lefs, than we are apt to imagine.

The Mexicans, who had no alphabet, and whofe picture-writing on the leaves of trees was very infufficient for the purpofe of hiftory, trufted to the memory of their Poets and Orators, from whofe recitals the Spaniards wrote down the accounts which they have tranfmitted. In like manner the hiftorians of Ireland have collected their materials from the lays of their Bards, and Fileas; whofe accounts have been merely traditional.

But the oral traditions of a learned and enlightened age will greatly miflead 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 ac-

count

[k] Ἐ'Μȣσαι Ολυμπιαδες, κȣραι Διος αιγιοχοιο,
Τας εν Πιεριῃ Κρονιδῃ τεκε πατρι μιγεισα

Μνημοσυνη·

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

> Μνημοσυνη, γουνοισιν Ελευθηρος μεδεουσα,
> Λησμοσυνην τε κακων, αμπαυμα τε μερμηραων.
> Εννεα γαρ ὁι νυκτας εμισγετο μητιετα Ζευς,
> Νοσφιν απ' αθανατων, ἱερον λεχος εισαναβαινων·
> Αλλ' ὁτε δη ῥ' ενιαυτος εην, περι δ' ετραπον ὡραι,
> Μηνων φθινοντων, περι δ' ηματα πολλ' ετελεσθη,
> Ἡ δ' ετεκ' εννεα κουρας ὁμοφρονας, ᾗσιν αοιδη
> Μεμβλεται, εν στηθεσσιν ακηδεα θυμον εχουσαις,
> Τυτθον απ' ακροτατης κορυφης νιφοεντος Ολυμπου,
> Ενθα σφιν λιπαροι τε χοροι, και δωματα καλα.
>
> 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, Μȣσαι, ολυμπια δωματ' εχȣσαι·
> (Ὑμεις γαρ θεαι εςε, παρεςε τε, ιςε τε παντα·
> Ἡμεις δε κλεος οιον ΑΚΟΥΟΜΕΝ, ȣδε τι ιδμεν·)
> Οἵτινες ἡγεμονες Δαναων και κοιρανοι ησαν.
> ΠΛΗΘΥΝ δ' ȣκ αν εγω μυθησομαι, ȣδ' ονομηνω,
> Ουδ' ει μοι δεκα μεν γλωσσαι, δεκα δε ςοματ' ειεν,
> Φωνη δ' αῤῥηκτος, χαλκεον δε μοι ητορ ενειη,
> Ει μη Ολυμπιαδες Μȣσαι, Διος Αιγιοχοιο
> Θυγατερες, ΜΝΗΣΑΙΑΘ', ὁσοι ὑπο Ιλιον ηλθον.
>
> Il. B. 484, &c.

> " Pandite nunc Helicona, 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 confifted in little more than an exchange of fuperfluities in kind [m]; coins were unknown; gold, filver, brafs, and iron, were all ufed as marks of riches, but with little knowledge either of their relative value, or of the feparate ufes to which they were afterwards applied in a more advanced ftate of the mechanical arts.

When Proteus takes an account of the numbers of his fea-calves, the manner in which he performs that operation is expreffed by a Greek verb [n], to which there is nothing in our language literally equivalent. When therefore I fay that he fived them, I take the liberty of coining a word, which, correfponding precifely with the old Greek term, will convey to the Englifh reader an allufion to the origin of Arithmetic; for the Greek word, not ufed, that I can find, by any writer after Homer, feems to point out the firft fimple method of Enumera-

[m] See Iliad 7. V. 471. where brafs, iron, fkins, oxen, and flaves, are exchanged for wine.

[n] πεμπασσεται. Od. Δ. v. 412.

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 [o].

Mathematics

[o] 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

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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 ſung, 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.

Monſieur 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 Odyſſey 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 Odyſſey 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 [t]. 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 Odyſſey; the Greek orders were not yet invented; and Priam's palace,

"Rais'd on arch'd columns of ſtupendous fame."

[t] Sardis, the capital of Crœſus, 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 ηελιοιο 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. [x] Euſtathius is of this opinion, as well

[x] See Iliad vi. 168. and vii. 175.

as

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.

ſame

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 catched 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 mimetic

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, 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;

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 ſurpriſed 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 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 Mnesistheus. 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 [e], 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

[e] 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

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 Odyſſey 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 chofe to take [f], became the laws which they were obliged to follow.

Thus the fimplicity, without meannefs or indelicacy, of the Poet's language rifes out of the ftate of his manners. There could be no mean or indelicate expreffion, where no mean or indelicate idea was to be conveyed. There could be no technical terms, before the feparation of arts from life, and of courfe no pedantry, and few abftract ideas before the birth of Philofophy; confequently, though there was lefs knowledge, there was likewife lefs obfcurity. As he could change the form without changing the meaning of his words, and vary their found without altering their fenfe, he was not tempted to facri-

[f] I do not mean that Homer extended his liberty fo far, as to pay no regard to the quantity of words, which ufe had eftablifhed. The abfurdity of fuch a fuppofition is fo obvious, that I wonder it fhould have been admitted for a moment. But he certainly indulged in liberties of this kind to a degree, which could not efcape early animadverfion. * Euclid the elder ufed to fay, It is eafy to be a Poet, if you may lengthen words as you pleafe.

* Ariftot. 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.

CON-

CONCLUSION.

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 inconſiſtence, 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 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 Odyſſey. 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 Chryſippus, 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 Chryſippo & Crantore dicit." HOR.

ſing

ſing 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 Odyſſey: 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

 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 correct hiſtory of human paſſions and affections, that have 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 ſoftenings 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 confcious, and charged with faults which he never committed.

It may be afked, Whether Homer is to be efteemed a Philofopher?

Had the treatife of Longinus upon this queftion reached us, we fhould probably have feen many references to the opinions of antiquity upon this fubject. Strabo does not fcruple to put him in the clafs with Anaximander: and it is curious to fee oppofite fects lay claim to him.

Whatever ftrefs I may lay upon this compliment to the Poet as a Philofopher: it is certainly a very great one to him as a Painter; when we fee the leading writers in Ethics confider Homer and Nature as the fame.

We have refpectable authority for fuppofing, that he has been partial to human Nature in his picture of life; and that he has reprefented men better, than they are. See Ariftot. 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 eye-witneſs, 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.

A

COMPARATIVE VIEW

OF THE

ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE

OF THE

TROADE.

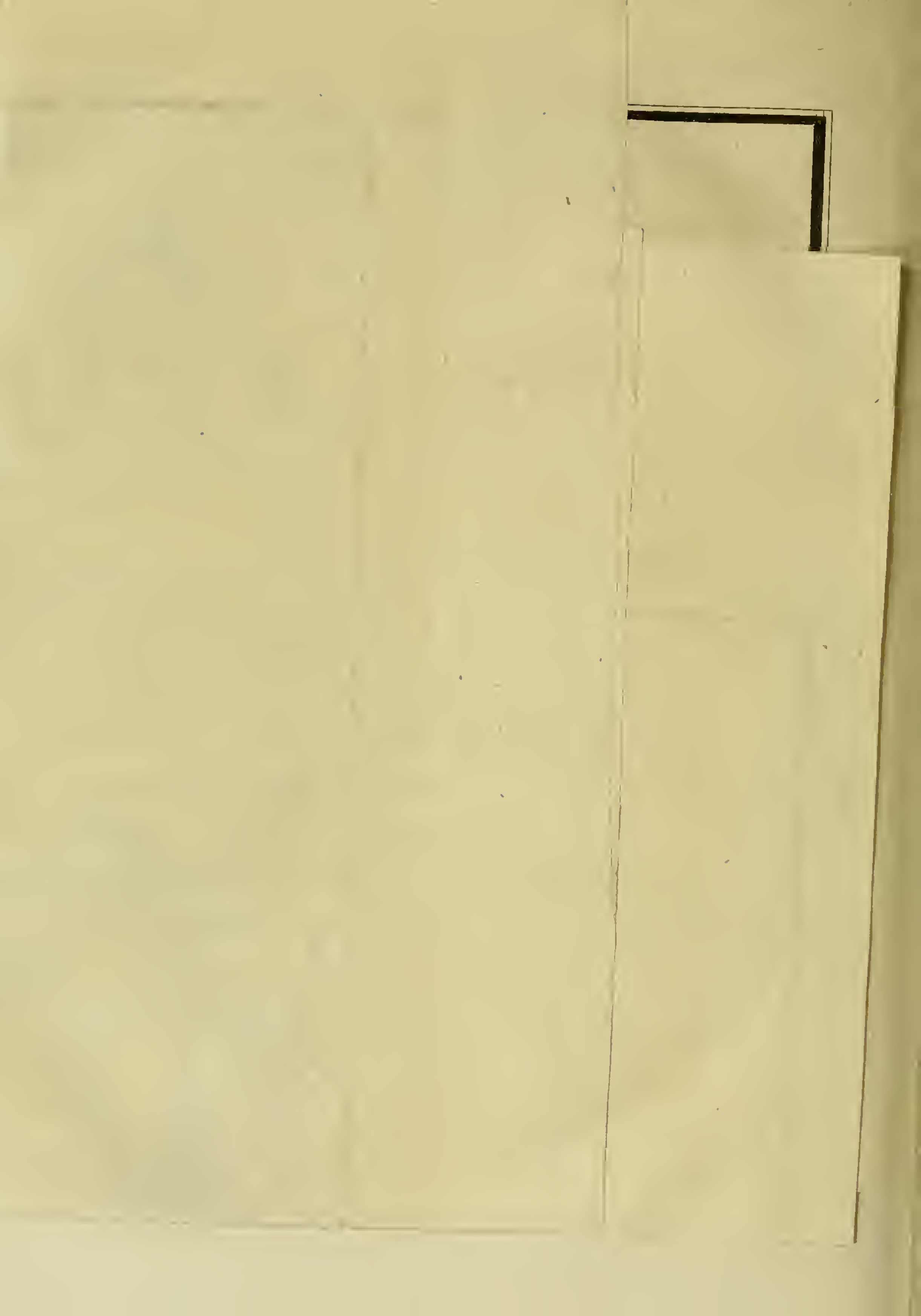
Juvat ire et Dorica caſtra,
Deſertoſque videre locos, littuſque relictum.
Hic Dolopum manus, hic ſævus tendebat Achilles.
Claſſibus hic locus, hic acies certare ſolebat.

Æneid. L. 2.

Fountains of the Scamander
Chiflik
Mount Ida
Okem
Simois
Turcmanli
Amaceli
Ene
ASIA
Chygri
Pinari
Kuskalafi
Cocrulabafs
Troja Nuova
Antient Bridge
Bolqui
ÆGEAN SEA
Tenedos
Mount Ida
Bornabachi
Scamander
Ruins of an Antient Bridge
Palude
Enequi
C. Gianizzeri
The New Castle
C. Barbieri
HELLESPONT
The Old Castle
The New Castle
The Old Castle
Italian and Turkish Miles

Borra delin. Major sc.

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



A

COMPARATIVE VIEW

OF THE

ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE

OF THE

TROADE.

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

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.

THE DESCRIPTION

OF THE

TROADE.

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 Caïcus to the Æſopus 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

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 Ilion, 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 Janiſſari, 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 Rhœteum; 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 Hellefpont, and therefore muft be appropriated to the fea below. Neither the Hellefpont nor the channel have breadth enough to be boifterous: and I muft obferve, that the epithet *infaniens*, which [a] Horace applies to the latter, is very improperly taken in that fenfe. At the fame time nothing can exprefs more happily, than this term, the contrariety of currents, for which that ftreight is remarkable.

In the fame book of the [b] Iliad, Achilles is defcribed as retiring to indulge his refentment upon *the frothy beach*, and as looking upon *the dufky main*. In this paffage we have an extenfive profpect of the fea, whofe waves break upon the fhore: and herein is exhibited a picture, which correfponds with the Ægean fea only; near which we know, that Achilles was ftationed. While this fea is in this manner defcribed; the Hellefpont is either diftinguifhed

[a] Infanientem navita Bofporum
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 land-locked 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] Αγαῤῥοον ἑλλήσποντον. Iliad. M. v. 30. B. v. 845. Αγαν ῥοωδη, ὁ εςι σφοδρα ῥευματα εχοντα. Schol.

ing of wild beafts through the thickets, with the perpetual murmuring of rills, fupplied by a conftant fucceffion of fprings, gave us a very lively idea of the rites of Cybele: for her celebrities ufed to be carried on at the fame late feafon in thefe high woods, amid the noifes and wild fcenery above mentioned.

Mount Gargarus, Cotylus, and Lectum, have only changed their names; and make the fame confpicuous figure, which diftinguifhed them in the Iliad. Pliny indeed obferves, that the rivers mentioned by Homer did not anfwer to the appearances exhibited in his time. This is not to be wondered at in a country, which is very fubject to earthquakes. We find, that in thefe mountains was the great magazine of wood for firing, as well as of timber for other ufes. Of thefe pine-trees both Paris and Æneas built their fleets. Virgil's hero could not have made choice of any fpot fo proper for building his fhips as Antandros, at the foot of Mount Ida. His efcape to it out of the town muft 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,

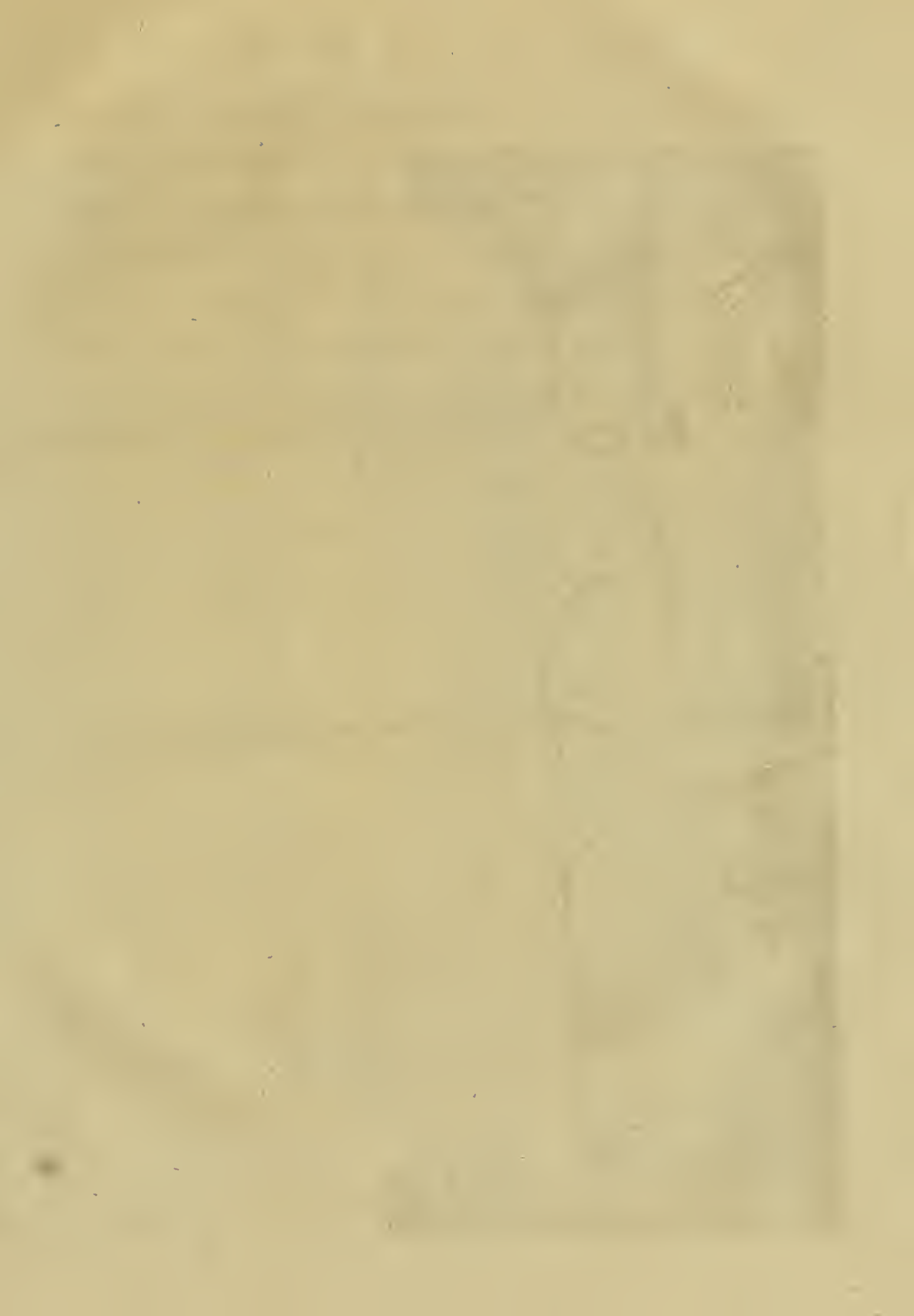
> Claſſemque ſub ipſo
> Antandro, ac Phrygiæ molimur montibus Idæ.

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 baſon, 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 Simoïs 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.

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-

lespont 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

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 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 purpofes both of domeftic convenience and gallantry, as we may conclude from old Neftor's houfe-keeper. In thofe days the females made a confiderable part of the foldiers' plunder; and what is now fo often an officer's ruin, was then an article of his riches. If to this account we add all the children, which we may fuppofe an hundred thoufand Grecian heroes to have produced in ten years, we may reafonably fuppofe that their place of encampment could not contain lefs than one hundred and fifty thoufand perfons. The horfes and chariots muft have occupied a large fpace; and the fhips would demand no inconfider-able extent of ground. They were drawn up, and fecured upon the land among the tents: which is a circumftance not attended to by Mr. Pope. He falls into frequent errors from not having obferved this promifcuous difpofition of the tents and fhipping. It is true, they were mere-ly tranfports, and had no fmall boats belonging to them. As to the tents, we may conclude 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' επ' Οδυσσηος μεγακητεϊ νηι μελαινῃ,
> Ἡ ῥ' εν μεσσατῳ εσκε, γεγωνεμεν αμφοτερωσε·
> Η μεν επ' Αιαντος κλισιης Τελαμωνιαδαο,
> Η δ' επ' Αχιλλῆος, τοι ῥ' εσχατα νηας εϊσας
> Ειρυσαν, ηνορεῃ πισυνοι, και καρτεϊ χειρων.

> 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.

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,

[e] Στενω, Στενω, σε δισσα, και τριπλα, δορος
Αυθις προς αλκην, και διαρπαγας δομων,
Και πυρ αναυγαζουσαν αϊστωτηριον.

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.

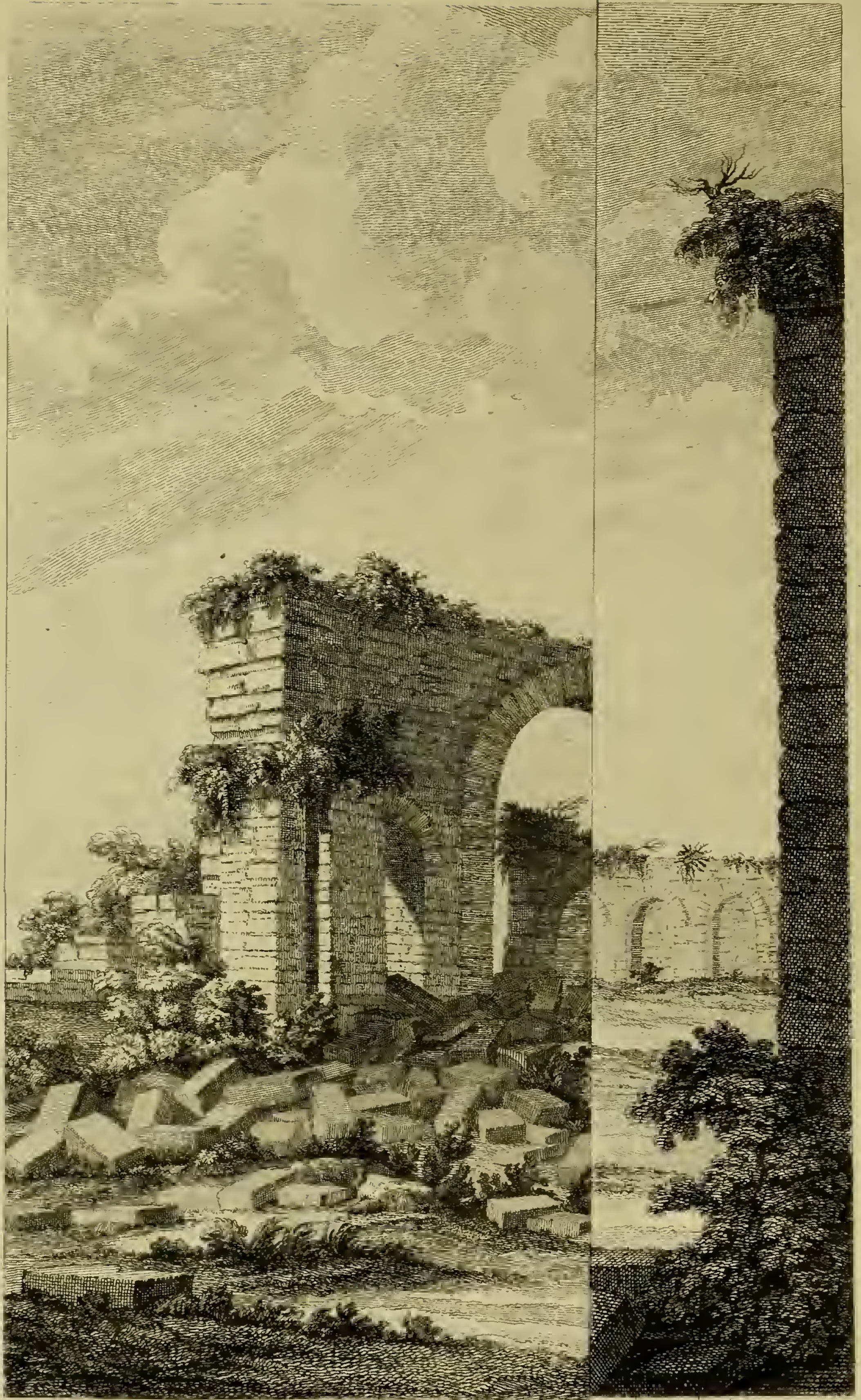
e V. 61.

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 Aſellus, 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 conſumpſit Aſellus.
Hoc fatum Trojæ eſt, aut Equus, aut Aſinus.

However,

ANCIENT RUINS near TROY upon the ÆGEAN SEA.
Suppofed to be the work of ALEXANDER or LYSIMACHUS.


Borra delin
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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 Lyſimachus. 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.*

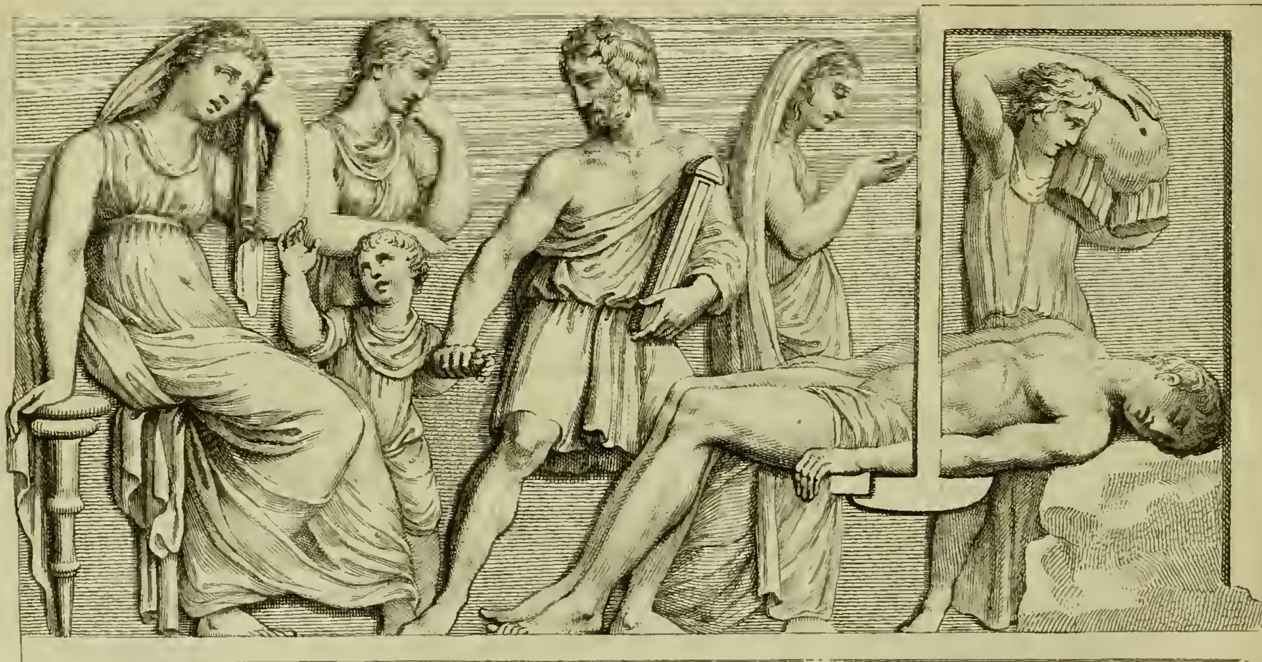
[f] Famâ duce, tendit in undas,
Sigæaſque petit famæ mirator arenas;
Et Simöentis aquas, et Graio nobile buſto
Rhœtion, et multum debentes vatibus umbras.
Circuit exuſtæ nomen memorabile Trojæ,

[f] Lucani Pharſalia. L. 9. v. 953. 961.

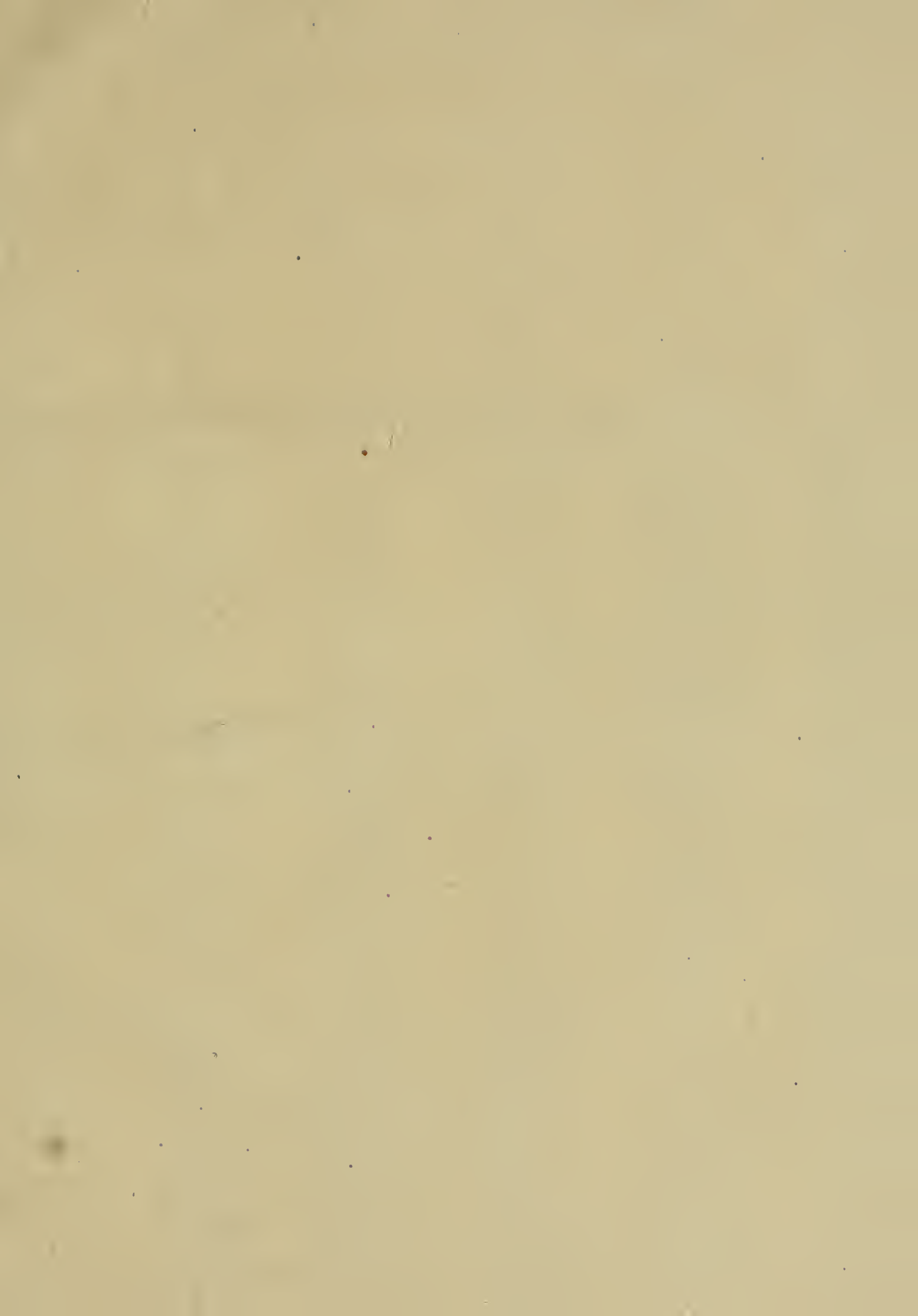
Magnaque

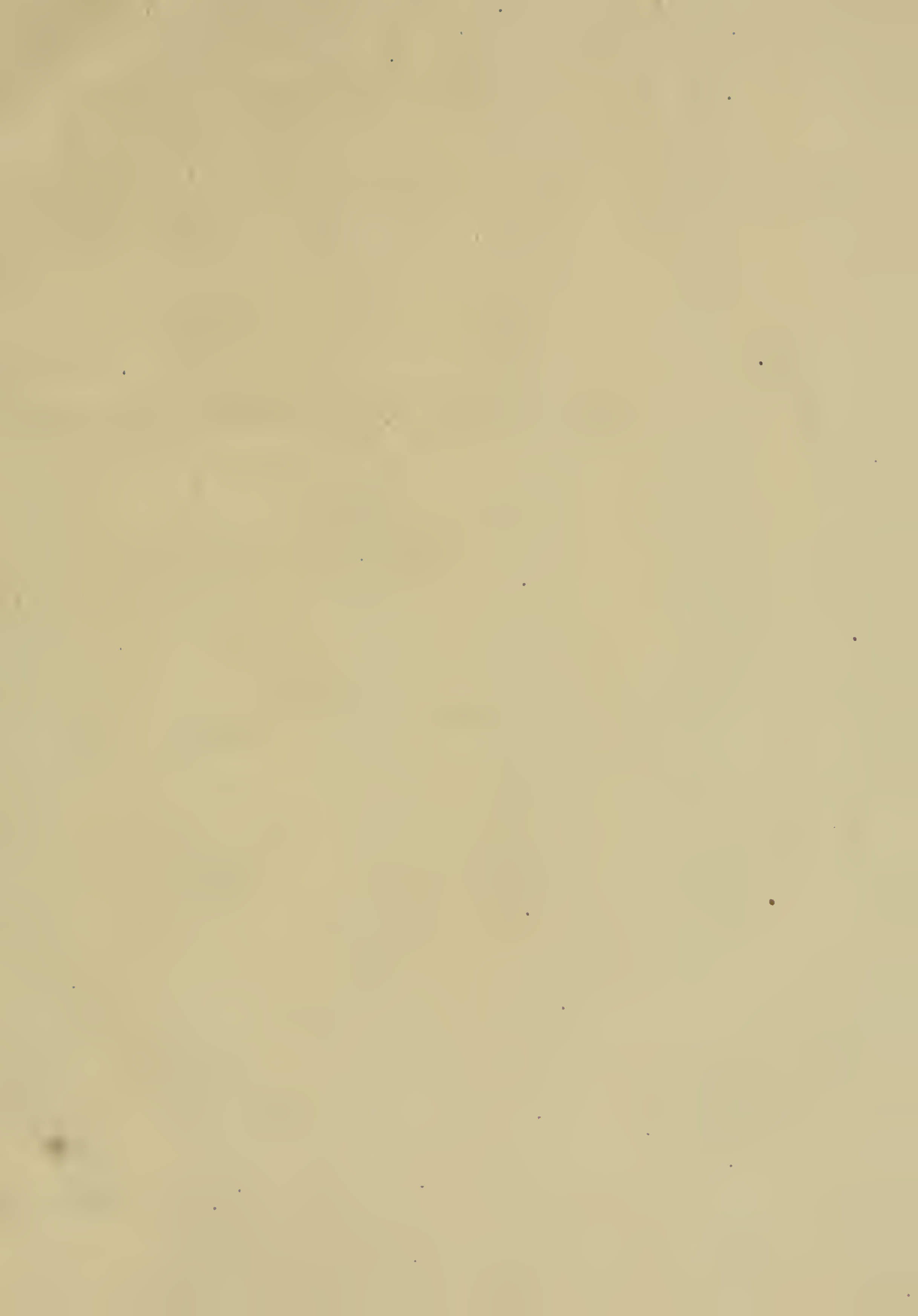
Magnaque Phœbæi quærit veſtigia muri.
Jam ſylvæ ſteriles, et putres robore trunci
Aſſarici preſſere domos, et templa Deorum
[g] Implicitâ radice tenent: ac tota teguntur
Pergama dumetis: *Etiam periere Ruinæ.*

[g] 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 1764 by W. Pars. *Engrav'd by F. Bartolozzi.*





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