

SAMUEL GOODRICH

FAMOUS MEN
OF ANCIENT
TIMES

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S. G. Goodrich

Famous Men of Ancient Times

PREFACE

The reader of these pages will perhaps remark, that the length of the following sketches is hardly proportioned to the relative importance of the several subjects, regarded in a merely historical point of view. In explanation of this fact, the author begs leave to say, that, while he intended to present a series of the great beacon lights that shine along the shores of the past, and thus throw a continuous gleam over the dusky sea of ancient history, – he had still other views. His chief aim is moral culture; and the several articles have been abridged or extended, as this controlling purpose might be subserved.

It may be proper to make one observation more. If the author has been somewhat more chary of his eulogies upon the great men that figure in the pages of Grecian and Roman story, than is the established custom, he has only to plead in his vindication, that he has viewed them in the same light – weighed them in the same balance – measured them by the same standard, as he should have done the more familiar characters of our own day, making due allowance for the times and circumstances in which they acted. He has stated the results of such a mode of

appreciation; yet if the master spirits of antiquity are thus shorn of some portion of their glory, the writer still believes that the interest they excite is not lessened, and that the instruction they afford is not diminished. On the contrary, it seems to him that the study of ancient biography, if it be impartial and discriminating, is one of the most entertaining and useful to which the mind can be applied.

MOHAMMED

This individual, who has exercised a greater influence upon the opinions of mankind than any other human being, save, perhaps, the Chinese philosopher Confucius, was born at Mecca, in Arabia, A. D. 570. He was the only son of Abdallah, of the noble line of Hashem and tribe of Koreish – descendants of Ishmael the reputed progenitor of the Arabian race.

The Koreishites were not only a commercial people, and rich by virtue of their operations in trade, but they were the hereditary guardians of the Caaba, or Kaaba, a heathen temple at Mecca. The custody of this sacred place, together with all the priestly offices, belonged to the ancestors of Mohammed.

The Mohammedan authors have embellished the birth of the prophet with a great variety of wonderful events, which are said to have attended his introduction into the world. One of these is, that the Persian sacred fire, kept in their temples, was at once extinguished over all Arabia, accompanied by the diffusion of an unwonted and beautiful light. But this and other marvels, we leave to the credulity of the prophet's followers.

Mohammed's father died early, and his son came under the guardianship of his uncle, Abu Taleb. He was a rich merchant, who was accustomed to visit the fairs of Damascus, Bagdad, and Bassora – three great and splendid cities, and Mohammed often accompanied him to these places. In his twelfth year,

Mohammed took part in an expedition against the wandering tribes that molested the trading caravans. Thus, by travelling from place to place, he acquired extensive knowledge, and, by being engaged in warlike enterprise, his imagination became inflamed with a love of adventure and military achievements. If we add to this, that he had naturally a love of solitude, with a constitutional tendency to religious abstraction; and if, moreover, we consider that in his childhood he had been accustomed to behold the wild exercises, the dark ceremonies, and hideous rites of the temple of Caaba – we shall at once see the elements of character, and the educational circumstances, which shaped out the extraordinary career of the founder of Islamism.

It appears that Mohammed was remarkable for mental endowments, even in his youth, for, in a religious conversation with a Nestorian monk, at Basra, he showed such knowledge and talent, that the monk remarked to his uncle, that great things might be expected of him. He was, however, attentive to business, and so completely obtained the confidence of his uncle, as a merchant, that he was recommended as a prudent and faithful young man, to Khadijah, a rich widow, who stood in need of an agent to transact her business and manage her affairs. In this capacity he was received, and so well did he discharge his duties, that he not only won the confidence of the widow, but finally obtained her hand in marriage. This event took place when he was about twenty-five years old, Khadijah being almost forty.

Mohammed was now rich, and, though he continued to

carry on mercantile business, he often retired to a cave, called Heva, near Mecca, where he resided. He also performed several journeys to different parts of Arabia and Syria, taking particular pains to gather religious information, especially of learned Jews and Christians.

For some time, Mohammed, who lived happily with his wife, confided to her his visits to the cave Heva, professing to enjoy interviews with Heaven there, by means of dreams and trances, in which he met and conversed with the angel Gabriel. There is little doubt that his habits of religious retirement and gloomy reflection had unsettled his judgment, and that he now gave himself up to the guidance of an overwrought fancy. It is probable, therefore, that he believed these visions to be of divine inspiration; else, why should he first communicate them, as realities, to his wife?

Soon after this, he informed other members of his family of his visions, and, being now about forty years old, assumed with them, the character and profession of a prophet. Several of his friends, particularly his wife, and his cousin Ali, a young man of great energy of character, yielded to the evidence he gave of his divine mission. Having been silently occupied about three years in converting his nearest friends, he invited some of the most illustrious men of the family of Hashem to his house, and, after conjuring them to abandon their idolatry, for the worship of One God, he openly proclaimed his calling, and set forth, that, by the commands of Heaven, revealed through the angel Gabriel, he

was prepared to impart to his countrymen the most precious gift – the only means of future salvation.

Far from being convinced, the assembly was struck silent with mingled surprise and contempt. The young and enthusiastic Ali, alone, yielded to his pretences, and, falling at his feet, offered to attend him, in good or evil, for life or for death. Several of the more sober part of the assembly sought to dissuade Mohammed from his enterprise; but he replied with a lofty fervor, that if the sun were placed in his right hand, and the moon in his left, with power over the kingdoms they enlighten, he would not, should not, could not hesitate or waver in his course.

Inflamed by the opposition he met with among this assembly, Mohammed now went forth, and, wherever he could find crowds of people, there he announced his mission. In the temples, in the public squares, streets, and market-places, he addressed the people, laying claim to the prophetic character, and setting forth the duty of rejecting idolatry, for the worship of one God. The people were struck with his eloquence, his majesty of person, the beautiful imagery he presented to their minds, and the sublime sentiments he promulgated. Even the poet Lebid is said to have been converted by the wonderful beauty and elevation of the thoughts poured forth by the professed prophet. The people listened, and, though they felt the fire of his eloquence, still they were so wedded to their idolatries, that few were yet disposed to join him.

To aid in understanding the revolution wrought by

Mohammed, it may be well to sketch the condition of the Arabians at that period. The original inhabitants of Arabia, though all of one stock, and occupying a peninsula 1200 miles in length by 700 in width, had been, from time immemorial, divided into a variety of distinct tribes. These constituted petty communities or states, which, often changing, still left the people essentially the same. In the more elevated table lands, intersected by mountain ridges, with dreary wastes consisting of sandy plains, the people continued to pursue a roving life, living partly upon their flocks of camels, horses, and horned cattle, and partly upon the robbery of trading caravans of other tribes. The people of the plains, being near the water, settled in towns, cultivated the soil, and pursued commerce.

The various tribes were each governed by the oldest or most worthy sheik or nobleman. Their bards met once a year, at Okhad, holding a fair of thirty days, for the recitation of their productions. That which was declared to be the finest, was written in gold and suspended in the great temple of Mecca. This was almost the only common tie between the several states or tribes, for, although they nominally acknowledged an emir, or national chief, they had never been brought to act in one body.

The adoration of the Arabians consisted chiefly in the worship of the heavenly luminaries; but they had a great variety of deities, these being personifications of certain powers in nature, or passions in mankind. They were represented by idols of every variety of shape, which were gathered around the ancient temple

of Caaba, at Mecca, a large square edifice, considered as the central point of religion, and the favorite seat of divinity. Their worship was attended with the most horrid rites and shocking ceremonies: even children were sacrificed to the idols, and one of the tribes was accustomed to bury their daughters alive. Except that they fancied the souls of the departed to be transformed into owls, hovering in gloom around the grave, it does not appear that they had the least idea of a future state of existence.

Such was the state of religion among the native Arabians. Among the foreign settlers in the towns there were a few followers of the Greek and Roman philosophy; the Christians were never numerous. These latter were divided into a variety of sects, and those belonging to the Greek church, advocated monasteries, and were addicted to the worship of images, martyrs and relics. Some of these, even elevated the Virgin Mary into a deity, and addressed her as the third person in the Trinity.

Mohammed, while he no doubt looked with horror upon this state of things, having studied the Bible, and clearly comprehended its sublime revelation of one God, conceived the idea of uniting the people of his native land under a religion of which this fundamental principle should constitute the basis. His purpose was to crush idolatry, and restore the lost worship of the true God. How far he was sincere, and how far he was an impostor, we cannot venture to affirm. It is probable that he was a religious enthusiast, deceived by his own fancies, and, perhaps, really believing his own visions. At the outset of his career, it is

likely that he acted in good faith, while he was himself deluded. When he had advanced so far as to see power and dominion offered to his grasp, it is probable that his integrity gave way, and that thenceforward we are to consider him as under the alternate guidance of craft and fanaticism.

Several of the nobles citizens of Mecca were finally converted by Mohammed. Khadijah was now dead, and the prophet had married Ayesha, the daughter of Abubeker, a man of great influence, and who exercised it in favor of his son-in-law. Yet the new faith made little progress, and a persecution of its votaries arose, which drove them to Abyssinia, and caused Mohammed himself to fly for safety to Medina. This flight is called the Hegira, and, taking place in the year 622, is the epoch from which Mohammedan chronology is computed, as is ours from the birth of Christ.

At Medina, whither his tenets had been carried by pilgrims, Mohammed was received with open arms. He was met by an imposing procession, and invested at once with the regal and sacerdotal office. The people also offered him assistance in propagating his faith, even by force, if it should be required. From this moment, a vast field seems to have been opened to the mind of Mohammed. Hitherto, he may have been but a self-deceived enthusiast; but now, ambition appears to have taken at least partial possession of his bosom. His revelations at once assumed a higher tone. Hitherto he had chiefly inculcated the doctrine of one God, eternal, omnipotent, most powerful and

most merciful, together with the practical duties of piety, prayer, charity, and pilgrimages. He now revealed, as a part of his new faith, the duty of making war, even with the sword, to propagate Islamism, and promised a sensual paradise to those who should fall in doing battle in its behalf. At the same time he announced that a settled fate or destiny hung over every individual, which he could not by possibility alter, evade, or avert.

He now raised men, and proceeded, sword in hand, to force the acknowledgment of his pretensions. With alternate victory and defeat, he continued to prosecute his schemes, and at last fell upon the towns and castles of the peaceful and unwarlike Jews. These were soon taken and plundered. But the prophet paid dearly for his triumph. A Jewish female, at the town of Chaibar, gave him poison in some drink, and, though he survived, he never fully recovered from the effects of the dose.

Thus advancing with the tribes settled in his own country, the power of the ambitious apostle increased like the avalanche in its overwhelming descent. Mecca was conquered, and yielded as well to his faith as to his arms. He now made expeditions to Palestine and Syria, while his officers were making conquests in all directions. His power was soon so great, that he sent messages to the kings of Egypt, Persia, and Ethiopia, and the emperor of Constantinople, commanding them to acknowledge the divine law revealed through him.

At last, in the tenth year of the Hegira, he proceeded on a farewell pilgrimage to Mecca. The scene was imposing beyond

description. He was attended by more than a hundred thousand of his followers, who paid him the greatest reverence. Everything in dress, equipage and imposing ceremony that could enhance the splendor of the pageant, and give it sanctity in the eyes of the people, was adopted. This was the last great event of his life.

Mohammed had now become too powerful to be resisted by force, but not too exalted to be troubled by competition. His own example in assuming the sacred character of an apostle and prophet, and the brilliant success which had attended him, gave a hint to others of the probable means of advancing themselves to a similar pitch of dignity and dominion. The spirit of emulation, therefore, raised up a fellow-prophet in the person of Moseilama, called to this day by the followers of Islam "the lying Moseilama," a descendant of the tribe of Honeifa, and a principal person in the province of Yemen.

This man headed an embassy sent by his tribe to Mohammed, in the ninth year of the Hegira, and then professed himself a Moslem; but on his return home, pondering on the nature of the new religion and the character and fortunes of its founder, the sacrilegious suggestion occurred to him, that by skilful management he might share with his countryman in the glory of a divine mission; and, accordingly, in the ensuing year he began to put his project in execution. He gave out that he, also, was a prophet sent of Heaven, having a joint commission with Mohammed to recall mankind from idolatry to the worship of the true God. He, moreover, aped his model so closely as to publish

written revelations resembling the Koran, pretended to have been derived from the same source.

Having succeeded in gaining a considerable party, from the tribe of Honeifa, he at length began to put himself still more nearly upon a level with the prophet of Medina, and even went so far as to propose to Mohammed a partnership in his spiritual supremacy. His letter commenced thus: "From Moseilama, the apostle of God, to Mohammed, the apostle of God. Now let the earth be half mine and half thine." But the latter, feeling himself too firmly established to stand in need of an associate, deigned to return him only the following reply: "From Mohammed, the apostle of God, to Moseilama, the liar. The earth is God's: he giveth the same for inheritance unto such of his servants as he pleaseth; and the happy issue shall attend those who fear him."

During the few months that Mohammed lived after this, Moseilama continued, on the whole, to gain ground, and became at length so formidable, as to occasion extreme anxiety to the prophet, now rapidly sinking under the effects of disease. An expedition, under the command of Caled, the "Sword of God," was ordered out to suppress the rival sect headed by the spurious apostle, and the bewildered imagination of Mohammed, in the moments of delirium, which now afflicted him, was frequently picturing to itself the results of the engagement between his faithful Moslems and these daring apostates.

The army of Caled returned victorious. Moseilama himself, and ten thousand of his followers, were left dead on the field;

while the rest, convinced by the shining evidence of truth that gleamed from the swords of the conquerors, renounced their errors, and fell quietly back into the bosom of the Mohammedan church. Several other insurgents of similar pretences, but of minor consequence, were crushed in like manner in the early stages of their defection.

We have now reached the period at which the religion of Mohammed may be considered as having become permanently established. The conquest of Mecca and of the Koreishites had been, in fact, the signal for the submission of the rest of Arabia; and though several of the petty tribes offered, for a time, the show of resistance to the prophet's arms, they were all eventually subdued. Between the taking of Mecca and the period of Mohammed's death, somewhat more than three years elapsed. In that short period he had destroyed the idols of Arabia; had extended his conquests to the borders of the Greek and Persian empires; had rendered his name formidable to those once mighty kingdoms; had tried his arms against the disciplined troops of the former, and defeated them in a desperate encounter at Muta.

His throne was now firmly established; and an impulse given to the Arabian nation, which induced them to invade, and enabled them to conquer, a large portion of the globe. India, Persia, the Greek empire, the whole of Asia Minor, Egypt, Barbary, and Spain, were eventually reduced by their victorious arms. Mohammed himself did not indeed live to see such mighty conquests achieved, but he commenced the train which

resulted in this wide-spread dominion, and, before his death, had established over the whole of Arabia, and some parts of Asia, the religion which he had devised.

And now, having arrived at the sixty-third year of his age, and the tenth of the Hegira, A. D. 632, the fatal effects of the poison, which had been so long rankling in his veins, began to discover themselves more and more sensibly, and to operate with alarming virulence. Day by day, he visibly declined, and it was evident that his life was hastening to a close. For some time previous to the event, he was conscious of its approach, and is said to have viewed and awaited it with characteristic firmness. The third day before his dissolution, he ordered himself to be carried to the mosque, that he might, for the last time, address his followers, and bestow upon them his parting prayers and benedictions. Being assisted to mount the pulpit, he edified his brethren by the pious tenor of his dying counsels, and in his own example taught a lesson of humility and penitence, such as we shall scarcely find inculcated in the precepts of the Koran.

"If there be any man," said the prophet, "whom I have unjustly scourged, I submit my own back to the lash of retaliation. Have I aspersed the reputation of any Mussulman? let him proclaim my fault in the face of the congregation. Has any one been despoiled of his goods? the little that I possess shall compensate the principal and the interest of the debt." "Yes," replied a voice from the crowd, "thou owest me three drachms of silver!" Mohammed heard the complaint, satisfied the demand, and thanked his

creditor that he had accused him in this world, rather than at the day of judgment. He then set his slaves at liberty, seventeen men and eleven women; directed the order of his funeral; strove to allay the lamentations of his weeping friends, and waited the approach of death. He did not expressly nominate a successor, a step which would have prevented the altercations that afterwards came so near to crushing in its infancy the religion and the empire of the Saracens; but his appointment of Abubeker to supply his place in the function of public prayer, and the other services of the mosque, seemed to intimate indirectly the choice of the prophet. This ancient and faithful friend, accordingly, after much contention, became the first Caliph of the Saracens, though his reign was closed by his death at the end of two years.

The death of Mohammed was hastened by the force of a burning fever, which deprived him at times of the use of reason. In one of these paroxysms of delirium, he demanded pen and paper, that he might compose or dictate a divine book. Omar, who was watching at his side, refused his request, lest the expiring prophet might dictate something which should supersede the Koran. Others, however, expressed a great desire that the book might be written; and so warm a dispute arose in the chamber of the apostle that he was forced to reprove their unbecoming vehemence. The writing was not performed, and many of his followers have mourned the loss of the sublime revelations which his dying visions might have bequeathed to them.

The favorite wife of the prophet, Ayesha, hung over her husband in his last moments, sustaining his drooping head upon her knee, as he lay stretched upon the carpet; watching with trembling anxiety his changing countenance, and listening to the last broken sounds of his voice. His disease, as it drew towards its termination, was attended at intervals with most excruciating pains, which he constantly ascribed to the fatal morsel taken at Chaibar; and as the mother of Bashar, his companion who had died upon the spot from the same cause, stood by his side, he exclaimed, "O mother of Bashar, the cords of my heart are now breaking of the food which I ate with your son at Chaibar." In his conversation with those around him, he mentioned it as a special prerogative granted to him, that the angel of death was not allowed to take his soul till he had respectfully asked permission of him, and this permission he condescendingly granted. Recovering from a swoon into which the violence of his pains had thrown him, he raised his eyes towards the roof of the house, and with faltering accents exclaimed, "O God! pardon my sins. Yes, I come among my fellow-laborers on high!" His face was then sprinkled with water, by his own feeble hand, and shortly after he expired.

The city, and more especially the house of the prophet, became at once a scene of sorrowful but confused lamentation. Some of his followers could not believe that he was dead. "How can he be dead, our witness, our intercessor, our mediator with God? He is not dead. Like Moses and Jesus, he is wrapped in a

holy trance, and speedily will he return to his faithful people." The evidence of sense was disregarded, and Omar, brandishing his scimitar, threatened to strike off the heads of the infidels who should affirm that the prophet was no more. The tumult was at length appeased, by the moderation of Abubeker. "Is it Mohammed," said he, "or the God of Mohammed, whom ye worship? The God of Mohammed liveth forever, but the apostle was a mortal like ourselves, and, according to his own prediction, he hath experienced the common fate of mortality."

The prophet's remains were deposited at Medina, in the very room where he breathed his last, the floor being removed to make way for his sepulchre, and a simple and unadorned monument was, some time after, erected over them. The house itself has long since mouldered, or been demolished, but the place of the prophet's interment is still made conspicuous to the superstitious reverence of his disciples. The story of his relics being suspended in the air, by the power of loadstone in an iron coffin, and that too at Mecca, instead of Medina, is a mere idle fabrication. His tomb at the latter place has been visited by millions of pilgrims, and, from the authentic accounts of travellers who have visited both these holy cities in disguise, we learn that it is constructed of plain mason work, fixed without elevation upon the surface of the ground. The urn which encloses his body is protected by a trellis of iron, which no one is permitted to pass.

The Koran or Alkoran, meaning *the Book*, is a collection of

all the various fragments which the prophet uttered during the period in which he professed to exercise the apostolic office. They were originally written on scattered leaves, but they were collected by Abubeker, two years after Mohammed's death. They are in the purest and most refined dialect of Arabia, and are distinguished by extraordinary graces of style.

The Koran furnishes not only the divinity, but the civil law of the Mohammedans. It professes to contain the revelation of God's will by Gabriel to Mohammed, and through him to mankind. One of the books gives an account of the translation of the prophet by night to the third heaven, upon a winged animal, named Alborak, and resembling an ass, where he saw unutterable things. The great doctrines of the Koran, as before stated, are the existence of one supreme God, to whom alone adoration and obedience are due. It declares that the divine law was faithfully delivered by Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Christ. It declares the immortality of the soul of man, and the final judgment, and sets forth that the good are to dwell in everlasting bliss, amid shady and delicious groves, and attended by heavenly virgins. The hope of salvation is not confined to the Moslem, but is extended to all who believe in God and do good works. Sinners, particularly unbelievers, are to be driven about in a dark burning hell, forever.

The practical duties enjoined by the Koran, are the propagation of Islamism, and prayers directed to the temple of Mecca, at five different periods of the day, together with fasting,

alms, religious ablutions, pilgrimages to Mecca, &c. It allows a man but four wives, though the prophet had seventeen, and it is curious to add that all were widows, save one. It strongly prohibits usury, gaming, wine and pork.

We cannot deny to Mohammed the possession of extraordinary genius. He was a man of great eloquence, and the master of a beautiful style of composition; and he possessed that majesty of person, which, united to his mental qualities, gave him great ascendancy over those who came into his presence. He lived in a dark age, amid a benighted people; yet, without the aids of education, he mastered the religious systems of the day, and took a broad and sagacious view of the moral and political condition of the people of Asia. He conceived the sublime idea of uniting, by one mighty truth, the broken fragments of his own nation, and the destruction of idolatry by the substitution of the worship of one God. It is true, that he sought to accomplish these ends by unlawful means – by imposture, and the bloody use of the sword; we must admit, also, that he was licentious and although we cannot fail to condemn his character, we must acknowledge the splendor of his abilities and allow that while he imposed on his followers, he established a faith infinitely above Paganism, and sprinkled with many rays of light from the fountain of Divine Truth.

BELISARIUS

This celebrated general, to whom the emperor Justinian is chiefly indebted for the glory of his reign, was a native of Germania, on the confines of Thrace, and was born about the year 505. It is probable that he was of noble descent, liberally educated, and a professor of the Christian faith. The first step in his military career was an appointment in the personal guard of Justinian, while that prince was yet heir apparent to the throne.

The Roman or Byzantine empire, at this period, embraced almost exactly the present territory of the Turkish dominions in Europe and Asia Minor, with the addition of Greece – Constantinople being its capital. Italy was held by the Goths; Corsica, Sardinia and Barbary in Africa, by the Vandals.

Justin I., an Illyrian peasant, having distinguished himself as a soldier, had become emperor. His education was of course neglected, and such was his ignorance, that his signature could only be obtained by means of a wooden case, which directed his pen through the four first letters of his name. From his accession, the chief administration of affairs devolved on Justinian, his nephew and intended heir, whom he was reluctantly compelled to raise from office to office, and at length to acknowledge as his partner on the throne. His death, after a languid reign of nine years and a life of nearly fourscore, left Justinian sole sovereign in name, as well as in fact.

In order to appreciate the life and actions of Belisarius, it is necessary to understand the character of the new emperor, during whose long reign his great exploits were performed. The first act of Justinian on ascending the throne, was to marry a dissolute actress, named Theodora, who, though licentious, avaricious, cruel and vindictive, soon acquired an almost complete control over him. His mind was essentially feeble and inconstant, and, though his Christian faith was doubtless sincere, it was less fruitful of virtues than of rites and forms. At his accession his treasury was full; but it was soon exhausted by his profuseness, and heavy taxes were imposed, offices put to sale, charities suppressed, private fortunes seized, and, in short, every act of rapacity, injustice and oppression, practised by his ministers, to support the wasteful magnificence of the court.

The troops of the empire at this period were by no means what they had been in the time of Scipio and Cæsar. They consisted, to a great extent, of foreign mercenaries, and were divided into squadrons according to their country; thus destroying all unity of feeling, and annihilating that national spirit which once made the Roman arms the terror of the world. These hired troops, which greatly outnumbered the native soldiers, marched under their own national banner, were commanded by their own officers, and usually followed their own military regulations. The inefficiency of such mingled and discordant forces, is obvious; yet it was under such a system that Belisarius entered upon his military career.

With a feeble and corrupt government, an ill-appointed and trustless army, the Roman empire was still surrounded with powerful enemies. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a great nation in a condition of more complete debility and helplessness, than was the kingdom of the Cæsars, at the period in which Belisarius appears upon the active stage of life.

Kobad, king of Persia, after a long cessation of hostilities, renewed the war toward the close of Justin's reign, by the invasion of Iberia, which claimed the protection of the emperor. At this period, Belisarius, being about twenty years of age, had the command of a squadron of horse, and was engaged in some of the conflicts with the Persian forces, on the borders of Armenia. In conjunction with an officer named Sittas, he ravaged a large extent of territory, and brought back a considerable number of prisoners.

On a second incursion, however, they were less fortunate; for, being suddenly attacked by the Persian forces, they were entirely defeated. It appears that Belisarius incurred no blame, for he was soon after promoted to the post of governor of Dara, and the command of the forces stationed there. It was at this place that he chose Procopius, the historian, as his secretary, and who afterwards repaid his kindness by a vain attempt to brand his name with enduring infamy.

Soon after Belisarius obtained the command of Dara, Justinian came to the throne, and enjoined it upon his generals to strengthen the defences of the empire in that quarter. This

was attempted, but the Persians baffled the effort. Belisarius was now appointed general of the East, being commander-in-chief of the whole line of the Asiatic frontier. Foreseeing that a formidable struggle was soon to ensue, he applied himself to the raising and disciplining an army. He traversed the neighboring provinces in person, and at last succeeded in mustering five and twenty thousand men. These, however, were without discipline, and their spirit was depressed by the ill success that had long attended the Roman arms.

In this state of things, the news suddenly came, that 40,000 men, the flower of the Persian army, commanded by Firouz, was marching upon Dara. Confident of victory, the Persian general announced his approach, by the haughty message that a bath should be ready for him at Dara the next evening. Belisarius made no other reply than preparations for battle. Fortifying himself in the best manner he was able, he awaited the onset; exhorting his men, however, by every stimulating motive he could suggest, to do honor to the name and fame of Rome.

The battle began by a mutual discharge of arrows, so numerous as to darken the air. When the quivers were exhausted, they came to closer combat. The struggle was obstinate and bloody; and the Persians were already about to win the victory, when a body of horse, judiciously stationed behind a hill by Belisarius, rushed forward, and turned the tide of success. The Persians fled, and the triumph of Belisarius was complete. They left their royal standard upon the field of battle, with 8000 slain.

This victory had a powerful effect, and decided the fate of the campaign.

The aged Kobad, who had conceived a profound contempt for the Romans, was greatly irritated by the defeat of his troops. He determined upon a still more powerful effort, and the next season sent a formidable army to invade Syria. Belisarius, with a promptitude that astounded the enemy, proceeded to the defence of this province, and, with an inferior force, compelled the Persian army to retreat. Obligated at length, by his soldiers, against his own judgment, to give battle to the enemy, he suffered severely, and only avoided total defeat by the greatest coolness and address. Even the partial victory of the enemy was without advantage to them, for they were obliged to retreat, and abandon their enterprise. Soon after this event, Kobad died, in his eighty-third year, and his successor, Nushirvan, concluded a treaty of peace with Justinian.

The war being thus terminated, Belisarius took up his residence at Constantinople, and here became the second husband of Antonina, who, though the child of an actress, had contracted an exalted marriage on account of her beauty, and having filled a high office, enjoyed the rank and honors of a patrician. While thus raised above the dangerous profession of her mother, she still adhered to the morals of the stage. Though openly licentious, she obtained through her bold, decided, and intriguing character, aided by remarkable powers of fascination, a complete ascendancy over Belisarius. It is seldom that a

man is great in all respects, and the weakness of the general whose history we are delineating, was exhibited in a blind and submissive attachment to this profligate woman.

A singular outbreak of popular violence occurred about this period, which stained the streets of Constantinople with blood, and threatened for a time to hurl Justinian from his throne. The fondness of the Romans for the amusements of the circus, had in no degree abated. Indeed, as the gladiatorial combats had been suppressed, these games were frequented with redoubled ardor. The charioteers were distinguished by the various colors of red, white, blue, and green, intending to represent the four seasons. Those of each color, especially the blue and green, possessed numerous and devoted partisans, which became at last connected with civil and religious prejudices.

Justinian favored the Blues, who became for that reason the emblem of royalty; on the other hand, the Greens became the type of disaffection. Though these dangerous factions were denounced by the statutes, still, at the period of which we speak, each party were ready to lavish their fortunes, risk their lives, and brave the severest sentence of the laws, in support of their darling color. At the commencement of the year 532, by one of those sudden caprices which are often displayed by the populace, the two factions united, and turned their vengeance against Justinian. The prisons were forced, and the guards massacred. The city was then fired in various parts, the cathedral of St. Sophia, a part of the imperial palace, and a great number of public and

private buildings, were wrapped in conflagration. The cry of "*Nika! Nika!*" Vanquish! Vanquish! ran through every part of the capital.

The principal citizens hurried to the opposite shore of the Bosphorus, and the emperor entrenched himself within his palace. In the mean time, Hypatius, nephew of the emperor Anastatius, was declared emperor by the rioters, and so formidable had the insurrection now become, that Justinian was ready to abdicate his crown. For the first and last time, Theodora seemed worthy of the throne, for she withstood the pusillanimity of her husband, and, through her animated exhortations, it was determined to take the chance of victory or death.

Justinian's chief hope now rested on Belisarius. Assisted by Mundus, the governor of Illyria, who chanced to be in the capital, he now called upon the guards to rally in defence of the emperor; but these refused to obey him. Meanwhile, by another caprice the party of the Blues, becoming ashamed of their conduct, shrunk one by one away, and left Hypatius to be sustained by the Greens alone.

These were dismayed at seeing Belisarius, issuing with a few troops which he had collected, from the smoking ruins of the palace. Drawing his sword, and commanding his veterans to follow, he fell upon them like a thunderbolt. Mundus, with another division of soldiers, rushed upon them from the opposite direction. The insurgents were panic-struck, and dispersed in every quarter. Hypatius was dragged from the throne which he

had ascended a few hours before, and was soon after executed in prison. The Blues now emerged from their concealment, and, falling upon their antagonists, glutted their merciless and ungovernable vengeance. No less than thirty thousand persons were slain in this fearful convulsion.

We must now turn our attention to Africa, in which the next exploits of Belisarius were performed. The northern portion of this part of the world, known to us by the merited by-word of Barbary, hardly retains a trace of the most formidable rival and opulent province of Rome. After the fall of Jugurtha, at the commencement of the second century, it had enjoyed a long period of prosperity and peace – having escaped the sufferings which had fallen upon every other portion of the empire. The Africans in the fifth century were abounding in wealth, population, and resources. During the minority of Valentinian, Boniface was appointed governor of Africa. Deceived by Ætius into a belief of ingratitude on the part of the government at home, he determined upon resistance, and with this view, concluded a treaty with the Vandals in the southern portion of Spain.

These, embarking from Andalusia, whose name still denotes their former residence, landed at the opposite cape of Ceuta, A. D. 429. Their leader was the far-famed Genseric, one of the most able, but most lawless and bloody monarchs recorded in history. Of a middle stature, and lamed by a fall from his horse, his demeanor was thoughtful and silent; he was contemptuous of luxury, sudden in anger, and boundless in ambition. Yet his

impetuosity was always guided and restrained by cunning. He well knew how to tempt the allegiance of a foreign nation, to cast the seeds of future discord, or to rear them to maturity.

The barbarians on their passage to Africa consisted of 50,000 fighting men, with a great crowd of women and children. Their progress through the African province was rapid and unopposed, till Boniface, discovering the artifices of Ætius, and the favorable disposition of the government of Rome, bitterly repented the effects of his hasty resentment. He now endeavored to withdraw his Vandal allies; but he found it less easy to allay, than it had been to raise, the storm. His proposals were haughtily rejected, and both parties had recourse to arms. Boniface was defeated, and in the event, Genseric obtained entire possession of the Roman provinces in Africa.

Carthage, which had risen from its ruins at the command of Julius Cæsar and been embellished by Diocletian, had regained a large share of its former opulence and pride, and might be considered, at the time of which we speak, the second city in the western empire. Making this his capital, Genseric proceeded to adopt various measures to increase his power, and, among others, determined upon the creation of a naval force. With him, project and performance were never far asunder. His ships soon rode in the Mediterranean, and carried terror and destruction in their train. He annexed to his kingdom the Balearic islands, Corsica and Sardinia; the last of which was afterwards allotted by the Vandals as a place of exile or imprisonment for captive Moors;

and during many years, the ports of Africa were what they became in more recent days, the abode of fierce and unpunished pirates.

With every returning spring, the fleet of Genseric ravaged the coasts of Italy and Sicily, and even of Greece and Illyria, sometimes bearing off the inhabitants to slavery, and sometimes levelling their cities to the ground. Emboldened by long impunity, he attacked every government alike. On one occasion, when sailing from Carthage, he was asked by the pilot of his vessel to what coast he desired to steer – "Leave the guidance to God," exclaimed the stern barbarian; "God will doubtless lead us against the guilty objects of his anger!"

The most memorable achievement of Genseric, the sack of Rome in 455, is an event too much out of the track of our narrative to be detailed here. We can only pause to state, that, after spending a fortnight in that great metropolis, and loading his fleets with its spoils, he returned to Africa, bearing the Empress Eudocia thither, as his captive. She was, at length, released, but one of her daughters was compelled by Genseric to accept his son in marriage.

The repeated outrages of the Vandal king at length aroused the tardy resentment of the court of Constantinople, and Leo I., then emperor, despatched an army against him, consisting of nearly one hundred thousand men, attended by the most formidable fleet that had ever been launched by the Romans. The commander was a weak man, and being cheated into a truce

of five days by Genseric, the latter took advantage of a moment of security, and, in the middle of the night, caused a number of small vessels, filled with combustibles, to be introduced among the Roman ships. A conflagration speedily ensued; and the Romans, starting from their slumbers, found themselves encompassed by fire and the Vandals. The wild shrieks of the perishing multitude mingled with the crackling of the flames and the roaring of the winds; and the enemy proved as unrelenting as the elements. The greater part of the fleet was destroyed, and only a few shattered ships, and a small number of survivors, found their way back to Constantinople.

A peace soon followed this event, which continued uninterrupted till the time of Justinian. Genseric died in 477, leaving his kingdom to his son Hunneric. About the year 530, Gelimer being upon the Vandal throne, Justinian began to meditate an expedition against him. His generals, with the exception of Belisarius, were averse to the undertaking. The same feeling was shared by many of the leading men about the court, and in an assembly, in which the subject was under discussion, Justinian was about to yield to the opposition, when a bishop from the east earnestly begged admission to his presence.

On entering the council chamber he exhorted the emperor to stand forth as the champion of the church, and, in order to confirm him in the enterprise, he declared that the Lord had appeared to him in a vision, saying, "I will march before him in his battles, and make him sovereign of Africa." Men

seldom reject a tale, however fantastic, which coincides with their wishes or their prepossessions. All the doubts of Justinian were at once removed; he commanded a fleet and army to be forthwith equipped for this sacred enterprise, and endeavored still further to insure its success by his austerity in fasts and vigils. Belisarius was named supreme commander, still retaining his title as General of the East.

In the month of June, A. D. 533, the Roman armament, consisting of five hundred transports, with twenty thousand sailors, and nearly the same number of soldiers, became ready for departure. The general embarked, attended on this occasion by Antonina and his secretary, the historian Procopius, who, at first, had shared in the popular fear and distaste of the enterprise, but had afterwards been induced to join it by a hopeful dream. The galley of Belisarius was moored near the shore, in front of the imperial palace, where it received a last visit from Justinian, and a solemn blessing from the patriarch of the city. A soldier recently baptized was placed on board, to secure its prosperous voyage; its sails were then unfurled, and, with the other ships in its train, it glided down the straits of the Bosphorus, and gradually disappeared from the lingering gaze of the assembled multitude.

With a force scarcely one fourth as strong as that which was annihilated by Genseric, about seventy years before, Belisarius proceeded upon his expedition. Having touched at Sicily and Malta, he proceeded to the coast of Africa, where he landed in September, about one hundred and fifty miles from Carthage,

and began his march upon that city. He took several towns, but enforcing the most rigid discipline upon his troops, and treating the inhabitants with moderation and courtesy, he entirely gained their confidence and good will. They brought ample provisions to his camp, and gave him such a reception as might be expected rather by a native than a hostile army.

When the intelligence of the landing and progress of the Romans reached Gelimer, who was then at Hermione, he was roused to revenge, and took his measures with promptitude and skill. He had an army of eighty thousand men, the greater part of whom were soon assembled, and posted in a defile about ten miles from Carthage, directly in the route by which Belisarius was approaching. Several severe skirmishes soon followed, in which the Vandals were defeated.

The main army now advanced, and a general engagement immediately ensued. In the outset, the Vandals prevailed, and the Romans were on the eve of flying, defeated, from the field. A pause on the part of Gelimer was, however, seized upon by Belisarius to collect and rally his forces, and with a united effort he now charged the Vandal army. The conflict was fierce, but brief: Gelimer was totally defeated, and, with a few faithful adherents, he sought safety in flight. Knowing that the ruinous walls of Carthage could not sustain a siege, he took his way to the deserts of Numidia.

All idea of resistance was abandoned; the gates of Carthage were thrown open, and the chains across the entrance of the

port were removed. The Roman fleet soon after arrived, and was safely anchored in the harbor. On the 16th September, Belisarius made a solemn entry into the capital. Having taken every precaution against violence and rapacity, not a single instance of tumult or outrage occurred, save that a captain of one of the vessels plundered some of the inhabitants, but was obliged to restore the spoil he had taken. The soldiers marched peaceably to their quarters; the inhabitants continued to pursue their avocations; the shops remained open, and, in spite of the change of sovereigns, public business was not for a moment interrupted! Belisarius took up his quarters in the palace of Gelimer, and in the evening held a sumptuous banquet there, being attended by the same servants who had so lately been employed by the Vandal king.

With his usual activity, Belisarius immediately applied himself to the restoration of the ruinous ramparts of the city. The ditch was deepened, the breaches filled, the walls strengthened, and the whole was completed in so short a space as to strike the Vandals with amazement. Meanwhile, Gelimer was collecting a powerful army at Bulla, on the borders of Numidia at the distance of four days' journey from Carthage.

Having placed the capital in a proper state for defence, at the end of three months from its capture, Belisarius led forth his army, leaving only five hundred troops to guard the city. Gelimer was now within twenty miles of the capital, having raised an army of one hundred thousand men. No sooner had the Romans taken

up their march toward his camp, than they prepared for battle. The armies soon met, and Belisarius, having determined to direct all his endeavors against the centre of the Vandal force, caused a charge to be made by some squadrons of the horse guards. These were repulsed, and a second onset, also, proved unsuccessful.

But a third prevailed, after an obstinate resistance. The ranks of the enemy were broken; Zazo, the king's brother, was slain, and consternation now completed the rout of the Vandals. Gelimer, under the influence of panic, betook himself to flight; his absence was perceived, and his conduct imitated. The soldiers dispersed in all directions, leaving their camp, their goods, their families, all in the hands of the Romans. Belisarius seized upon the royal treasure in behalf of his sovereign, and in spite of his commands, the licentious soldiers spent the night in debauchery, violence and plunder.

Gelimer fled to the mountains of Papua, inhabited by a savage but friendly tribe of Moors. He sought refuge in the small town of Medenus, which presented a craggy precipice on all sides. Belisarius returned to Carthage, and sent out various detachments, which rapidly subdued the most remote portions of the Vandal kingdom.

Immediately after the capture of Carthage, he had despatched one of his principal officers to Justinian, announcing these prosperous events. The intelligence arrived about the time that the emperor had completed his *pandects*.¹ The exultation of

¹ These were a digest of the civil law of Rome, made by the order of Justinian,

the monarch is evinced by the swelling titles he assumes in the preamble of these laws. All mention of the general by whom his conquests had been achieved, is carefully avoided; while the emperor is spoken of as the "pious," "happy," "victorious," and "triumphant!" He even boasts, in his Institutes, of the warlike fatigues he had borne, though he had never quitted the luxurious palace of Constantinople, except for recreation in some of his neighboring villas.

While the Roman general was actively employed at Carthage, Pharus was proceeding in the siege of Medenus, which had been begun immediately after the flight of Gelimer. Pent up in this narrow retreat, the sufferings of the Vandal monarch were great, from the want of supplies and the savage habits of the Moors. His lot was likewise embittered by the recollection of the soft and luxurious life to which he had lately been accustomed.

During their dominion in Africa, the Vandals had declined from their former hardihood, and yielded to the enervating influence of climate, security and success. Their arms were laid aside; gold embroidery shone upon their silken robes, and every dainty from the sea and land were combined in their rich repasts. Reclining in the shade of delicious gardens, their careless hours were amused by dancers and musicians, and no exertion beyond the chase, interrupted their voluptuous repose. The Moors of

and have been preserved to our time. They contained five hundred and thirty-four decisions or judgments of lawyers, to which the emperor gave the force of law. The compilation consists of fifty books, and has contributed to save Justinian's name from the contempt and reproach which had otherwise been heaped upon it.

Papua, on the contrary, dwelt in narrow huts, sultry in summer, and pervious to the snows of winter. They most frequently slept upon the bare ground, and a sheepskin for a couch was a rare refinement. The same dress, a cloak and a tunic, clothed them at every season, and they were strangers to the use of both bread and wine. Their grain was devoured in its crude state, or at best was coarsely pounded and baked, with little skill, into an unleavened paste.

Compelled to share this savage mode of life, Gelimer and his attendants began to consider captivity, or even death, as better than the daily hardships they endured. To avail himself of this favorable disposition, Pharus, in a friendly letter, proposed a capitulation, and assured Gelimer of generous treatment from Belisarius and Justinian. The spirit of the Vandal prince, however, was still not wholly broken, and he refused the offers, while acknowledging the kindness of his enemy. In his answer he entreated the gifts of a lyre, a loaf of bread, and a sponge, and his messenger explained the grounds of this singular petition. At Medenus, he had never tasted the food of civilized nations, he wished to sing to music an ode on his misfortunes written by himself, and a swelling on his eyes needed a sponge for its cure. The brave Roman, touched with pity that such wants should be felt by the grandson and successor of Genseric, forthwith sent these presents up the mountain, but by no means abated the watchfulness of his blockade.

The siege had already continued for upwards of three months,

and several Vandals had sunk beneath its hardships, but Gelimer still displayed the stubborn inflexibility usual to despotic rulers, when the sight of a domestic affliction suddenly induced him to yield. In the hovel where he sat gloomily brooding over his hopeless fortunes, a Moorish woman was preparing, at the fire, some coarse dough. Two children, her son and the nephew of Gelimer, were watching her progress with the eager anxiety of famine. The young Vandal was the first to seize the precious morsel, still glowing with heat, and blackened with ashes, when the Moor, by blows and violence, forced it from his mouth. So fierce a struggle for food, at such an age, overcame the sternness of Gelimer. He agreed to surrender on the same terms lately held out to him, and the promises of Pharus were confirmed by the Roman general, who sent Cyprian as his envoy to Papua. The late sovereign of Africa reentered his capital as a suppliant and a prisoner, and at the suburb of Aclas, beheld his conqueror for the first time.

With the capitulation of Gelimer, the Vandal was at an end. There now remained to Belisarius but the important task of making the conquered countries permanently useful to the Romans. But, while occupied in this design, his glory having provoked envy, he was accused to Justinian of the intention of making himself king over the territories he had conquered. With the weakness of a little mind, the emperor so far yielded to the base accusation as to send a message to Belisarius, indicating his suspicions. The latter immediately departed from Carthage,

and, taking with him his spoils and captives, proceeded to Constantinople.

This ready obedience dissipated the suspicions of the emperor, and he made ample and prompt reparation for his unfounded jealousy. Medals were struck by his orders, bearing on one side the effigy of the emperor, and on the other that of the victorious general, encircled by the inscription, *Belisarius, the glory of the Romans*. Beside this, the honors of a triumph were decreed him, the first ever witnessed in the Eastern capital.

The ceremony was in the highest degree imposing. The triumphal procession marched from the house of Belisarius to the hippodrome,² filled with exulting thousands, where Justinian and Theodora sat enthroned. Among the Vandal captives, Gelimer was distinguished by the purple of a sovereign. He shed no tears, but frequently repeated the words of Solomon, "Vanity of vanities: all is vanity." When he reached the imperial throne, and was commanded to cast aside the ensigns of royalty, Belisarius hastened to do the same, to show him that he was to undergo no insult as a prisoner, but only to yield the customary homage of a subject. We may pause for a moment to reflect upon the caprices of fortune, which had raised a comedian, in the person of Theodora, to see the successor of Genseric and Scipio prostrate as slaves before her footstool.

Both the conqueror and captive experienced the effects of imperial generosity. The former received a large share of the

² A space where the chariot races were exhibited.

spoil as his reward, and was named consul for the ensuing year. To the Vandal monarch, an extensive estate in Galatia was assigned, to which he retired, and, in peaceful obscurity, spent the remainder of his days.

We must now turn our attention to Italy. Theodoric the Great, the natural son of Theodomir, king of the Ostrogoths, became the master of Italy toward the close of the fifth century. The Gothic dominion was thus established in the ancient seat of the Roman empire, and the king of the Goths was seated upon the throne of the Cæsars.

Theodoric has furnished one of the few instances in which a successful soldier has abandoned warlike pursuits for the duties of civil administration, and, instead of seeking power by his arms, has devoted himself to the improvement of his kingdom by a peaceful policy. Upright and active in his conduct, he enforced discipline among his soldiers, and so tempered his general kindness by acts of salutary rigor, that he was loved as if indulgent, yet obeyed as if severe. He applied himself to the revival of trade, the support of manufactures, and the encouragement of agriculture.

At the death of this great monarch, in 526, his grandson, Athalaric, then only ten years of age, became king. After a nominal reign of eight years he died in consequence of his dissipations, and was succeeded by Theodatus, the nephew of Theodoric. This prince having attained the throne by the murder of Amalasontha, the widow of Theodoric, Justinian regarded

him as an usurper stained with an atrocious crime, and therefore determined to drive him from his throne.

Accordingly, a force of twelve thousand men was despatched to Italy under Belisarius. Landing at Catania, in Sicily, they surprised the Goths, and had little difficulty in reducing the island. Fixing his head quarters at Syracuse, he was making preparations to enter the heart of Italy, when a messenger came to inform him that a serious insurrection had broken out at Carthage. He immediately set out for that place. On his arrival the insurgents fled, but Belisarius pursued them, overtook them, and, though their force was four times as great as his own, they were completely defeated in a pitched battle. Returning to Carthage, the Roman general was informed by a messenger from Sicily that a formidable mutiny had broken out in his army there. He immediately embarked, and soon restored his troops to order and discipline.

The rapid conquest of Sicily by Belisarius struck terror into the heart of king Theodatus, who was weak by nature, and depressed by age. He was therefore induced to subscribe an ignominious treaty with Justinian, some of the conditions of which forcibly display the pusillanimity of one emperor, and the vanity of the other. Theodatus promised that no statue should be raised to his honor, without another of Justinian at his right hand, and that the imperial name should always precede his own in the acclamations of the people, at public games and festivals: as if the shouts of the rabble were matter for a treaty!

But even this humiliating compact was not sufficient for the grasping avarice of Justinian. He required of Theodatus the surrender of his throne, which the latter promised; but before the compact could be carried into effect, he was driven from his throne, and Vittiges, a soldier of humble birth, but great energy and experience, was declared his successor. Establishing his headquarters at Ravenna, the Gothic king was making preparations to sustain his cause, when Belisarius, who had taken Naples, was invited to Rome by Pope Sylverius. Taking advantage of this opportunity, he immediately advanced, and triumphantly entered the "eternal city."

Rome had now been under the dominion of its Gothic conquerors for sixty years, during which it had enjoyed the advantages of peace and prosperity. It had been the object of peculiar care, attention, and munificence, and had received the respect due to the ancient mistress of the world. Still, the people at large looked upon their rulers as foreigners and barbarians, and desired the return of the imperial sway, seeming to forget that they were preferring a foreign to a native government.

Belisarius lost no time in repairing the fortifications of Rome, while he actively extended his conquests in the southern parts of Italy. His military fame was now a host, and most of the towns submitted, either from a preference of the Byzantine government, or respect for the military prowess of the Roman general.

The great achievements of Belisarius strike us with wonder,

when we consider the feeble means with which they were accomplished. His force at the outset of his invasion of Italy did not exceed 12,000 men. These were now much reduced by the bloody siege of Naples, and by his subsequent successes, which made it necessary to supply garrisons for the captured towns.

Vittiges, in his Adriatic capital, had spent the winter in preparations, and when the spring arrived, he set forth with a powerful army. Knowing the small force of Belisarius, he hurried forward towards Rome, fearing only that his enemy should escape by flight. The genius of Belisarius never shone with greater lustre than at this moment. By numerous devices he contrived to harass the Gothic army in their march, but owing to the flight of a detachment of his troops whom he had stationed at one of the towers, to delay their progress, they at last came upon him by surprise.

He was at the moment without the city, attended by only a thousand of his guards, when suddenly he found himself surrounded by the van of the Gothic cavalry. He now displayed not only the skill of a general, but the personal courage and prowess of a soldier. Distinguished by the charger whom he had often rode in battle – a bay with a white face – he was seen in the foremost ranks, animating his men to the conflict. "That is Belisarius," exclaimed some Italian deserters, who knew him. "Aim at the bay!" was forthwith the cry through the Gothic squadrons and a cloud of arrows was soon aimed at the conspicuous mark. It seemed as if the fate of Italy was felt to be

suspended upon a single life – so fierce was the struggle to kill or capture the Roman leader.

Amid the deadly strife, however, Belisarius remained unhurt; and it is said that more of the army fell that day by his single arm, than by that of any other Roman. His guards displayed the utmost courage and devotion to his person, rallying around him, and raising their bucklers on every side, to ward off the showers of missiles that flew with deadly aim at his breast. Not less than a thousand of the enemy fell in the conflict – a number equal to the whole Roman troop engaged in the battle. The Goths at length gave way, and Belisarius, with his guards, reentered the city.

On the morrow, March 12th, A. D. 537, the memorable siege of Rome began. Finding it impossible, even with their vast army, to encircle the entire walls of the city, which were twelve miles in length, the Goths selected five of the fourteen gates, and invested them. They now cut through the aqueducts, in order to stop the supply of water, and several of them, having never been repaired, remain to this day, extending into the country, and seeming like the "outstretched and broken limbs of an expiring giant."

Though the baths of the city were stopped, the Tiber supplied the people with water for all needful purposes. The resources and activity of Belisarius knew no bounds: yet he had abundant occasion for all the advantages these could supply. The relative smallness of his force, the feebleness of the defences the fickleness and final disaffection of the people, the intrigues of Vittiges, and his vastly superior army constituted a web of

difficulties which would have overwhelmed any other than a man whose genius could extort good from evil, and convert weakness into strength.

For a whole year, the encircling walls of Rome were the scenes of almost incessant attack and defence. The fertile genius of Vittiges suggested a thousand expedients, and the number as well as courage of his troops enabled him to plan and execute a variety of daring schemes. Yet he was always baffled by his vigilant rival, and his most elaborate devices were rendered fruitless by the superior genius of the Roman general. At last, on the 21st of March, A. D. 538, foreseeing that Belisarius was about to receive reinforcements, and despairing of success in the siege, Vittiges withdrew his army, suffering in his retreat a fearful massacre, from a sally of the Roman troops.

Vittiges retired to Ravenna, and Belisarius soon invested it. While he was pressing the siege, Justinian, probably alarmed by the threats of the Persian king, entered into a treaty with the ambassadors of Vittiges, by which he agreed to a partition of Italy, taking one half himself, and allowing the Gothic king to retain the other portion. Belisarius refused to ratify this treaty, and soon after, was pressed by the Goths to become their king. Vittiges even joined in this request, and Belisarius had now the easy opportunity of making himself the emperor of the West, without the remotest fear of failure. But he was too deeply impressed with his oath of allegiance, to allow him to entertain a treacherous design toward his sovereign, and he

rejected the tempting offer. The merit of his fidelity under these circumstances, is heightened by the consideration that he had refused the ratification of the treaty, and was well aware that reproach, or even hostility, might await him at Constantinople.

Soon after these events, Ravenna capitulated, and Belisarius became its master. His fame was now at its height; but this only served to inflame the envy of his rivals at Constantinople. These, insidiously working upon the suspicious temper of Justinian, induced him to command the return of Belisarius to Constantinople. With prompt obedience, he embarked at Ravenna, carrying with him his Gothic captives and treasure. After five years of warfare, from the foot of Etna to the banks of the Po, during which he had subdued nearly the same extent of country which had been acquired by the Romans in the first five centuries from the building of that city, he arrived at Constantinople.

The voice of envy was silenced for a time, and Belisarius was appointed to the command of the army now about to proceed against the Persians. The captive monarch of the Goths was received with generous courtesy by the emperor, and an ample estate was allotted to him in Asia. Justinian gazed with admiration on the strength and beauty of the Gothic captives – their fair complexions, auburn locks, and lofty stature. A great number of these, attracted by the fame and character of Belisarius, enlisted in his guards.

In the spring of the year 540, Chosroes or Nushirvan, the

Persian king, invaded the Roman provinces in the east. The next year Belisarius proceeded against him, and took his station at Dara. Here, instead of a well-appointed army, he found only a confused and discordant mass of undisciplined men. After various operations, being baffled by the treachery or incapacity of his subalterns, he was obliged to retreat, and closed a fruitless campaign, by placing his men in winter quarters.

Being recalled to Constantinople, he went thither, but took the field early in the spring, with the most powerful army he had ever commanded. Nushirvan advanced into Syria, but, thwarted by the masterly manœuvres of Belisarius, he was at last obliged to retreat. Soon after, the Roman general being again recalled by Justinian, the most fatal disasters befel the Roman army.

During these Persian campaigns, the political security, as well as the domestic happiness of Belisarius, were shaken by the misconduct of his wife. She had long been engaged in an intrigue with Theodosius, the young soldier newly baptized as an auspicious omen in the galley of the general, upon his departure for Africa. Though told of this, Belisarius had been pacified by the protestations and artifices of Antonina; but while he was absent in Asia Minor, she, being left in Constantinople, pursued her licentious career with little scruple.

Her son Photius, a gallant young soldier, being a check upon her conduct, became the object of her hatred. While at the distance of a thousand miles, during the Persian campaign, he still experienced the malignant influence of her intrigues, and

urged by a sense of duty to his step-father, made him acquainted with his mother's depravity. When she afterwards joined her husband on the frontier, he caused her to be imprisoned, and sent Photius towards Ephesus to inflict summary punishment upon Theodosius. The latter was taken captive by Photius, and borne to Cilicia.

Antonina, by her convenient intrigues in behalf of Theodora, had laid her under great obligations, and obtained the greatest influence over her. The empress, therefore, now interfered to save her friend. Positive injunctions were sent to Cilicia, and both Photius and Theodosius were brought to Constantinople. The former was cast into a dungeon and tortured at the rack; the latter was received with distinction; but he soon expired from illness. Photius, after a third escape from prison, proceeded to Jerusalem, where he took the habit of a monk, and finally attained the rank of abbot.

Belisarius and Antonina were summoned to Constantinople, and the empress commanded the injured husband to abstain from the punishment of his wife. He obeyed this order of his sovereign. She next required a reconciliation at his hands; but he refused to comply with a demand which no sovereign had a right to make. He, therefore, remained at Constantinople, under the secret displeasure of Theodora and Justinian, who only wanted some plausible pretext to accomplish his ruin.

The invasion of Nushirvan, in the ensuing spring impelled the terrified emperor to lay aside his animosity, and restore the

hero to the direction of the eastern armies; but in this campaign, his former offence was aggravated, and the glory of saving the East was outweighed by the guilt of frankness. Justinian was recovering from a dangerous illness; a rumor of his death had reached the Roman camp, and Belisarius gave an opinion in favor of the emperor's nearest kinsman as his successor, instead of acknowledging the pretensions of Theodora to the throne. This declaration inflamed with equal anger the aspiring wife and the uxorious husband.

Buzes, the second in command, who had concurred in these views, was confined in a subterranean dungeon, so dark that the difference of day and night was never apparent to its inmate. Belisarius himself was recalled, with flattering professions of confidence and friendship, lest resentment should urge him to rebellion; but on his arrival at Constantinople, the mask was thrown aside; he was degraded from the rank of general of the East; a commission was despatched into Asia to seize his treasures; and his personal guards, who had followed his standard through so many battles, were removed from his command.

It was with mingled feelings of compassion and surprise, that the people beheld the forlorn appearance of the general as he entered Constantinople, and rode along the streets, with a small and squalid train. Proceeding to the gates of the palace, he was exposed during the whole day to the scoffs and insults of the rabble. He was received by the emperor and Theodora with angry disdain, and when he withdrew, in the evening, to his

lonely palace, he frequently turned round, expecting to see the appointed assassins advancing upon him.

In the evening, after sunset, a letter was brought him from Theodora, declaring that his life was granted and a portion of his fortune spared at the intercession of his wife, and she trusted that his future conduct would manifest his gratitude to his deliverer. The favorable moments of surprise and gratitude were improved by Antonina with her usual skill. Thus, by the artifices of two designing women, the conqueror of armies was subdued, and Belisarius once more became the duped and submissive husband.

A fine of three hundred pounds weight of gold was levied upon the property of Belisarius, and he was suffered for many months to languish in obscurity. In 544, however, he was appointed to the command of the war in Italy, whither he soon proceeded. Here, in his operations against far superior forces, he displayed the same genius as before, and in February, 547, he again entered Rome. He pursued the war with various fortune; but at last, finding his means entirely inadequate to the necessities of the contest, he begged of the emperor either reinforcements or recall. Engrossed by religious quarrels, Justinian took the easier course, and adopted the latter. Thus, after having desolated Italy with all the horrors of war for several years, he now abandoned it, from mere weakness and caprice.

Belisarius returned to Constantinople, and for several years his life affords no remarkable occurrence. He continued in the tranquil enjoyment of opulence and dignities; but, in the year

559, various warlike tribes beyond the Danube, known under the general name of Bulgarians, marched southward, and desolated several provinces by sword, fire, and plunder. Zabergan, their enterprising leader, having passed the frozen Danube in the winter, detached one portion of his army for the pillage of Greece, and the other against the capital.

So sudden and bold an aggression filled Constantinople with helpless and despairing terror. The people and the senators were agitated with fear, and the emperor sat trembling in his palace. In this general confusion and affright, all eyes were turned with hope to the conqueror of Africa and Italy. Though his constitution was broken by his military labors, his heart was alive to the call of his country, and Belisarius prepared to crown his glorious life by a last and decisive battle. He resumed his rusty armor, collected a handful of his scattered veterans, and in the return of martial spirit he seemed to shake off the weakness of decrepitude.

Sallying from the city with three hundred mounted men, he met Zabergan at the head of two thousand cavalry. Selecting a favorable position, he withstood the onset, and, seeming to recover the powers of his youth, he astonished all around him by his intrepidity and skill. After a severe and bloody struggle, the Bulgarians were driven back in the utmost disorder; four hundred fell on the field, and Zabergan himself escaped with difficulty. The whole army of barbarians, amounting to many thousands, were seized with contagious fear, raised their camp, and retreated

to the north.

Belisarius was preparing for a close pursuit, when again his enemies awaked the suspicions of Justinian by suggesting that he was aiming at popular favor with disloyal views. The enthusiastic praises of his heroic conduct, by the people, turned even the emperor's heart to jealousy, and he chose rather to purchase the departure of the barbarians by tribute, than to permit Belisarius to obtain new laurels by chastising their audacity.

From this period, Belisarius continued under the displeasure of Justinian, whose suspicious temper seemed to grow more virulent as his faculties sunk in the dotage of years. In 563, several conspiracies against the life of Justinian were detected, and under torture, some of the domestics of Belisarius accused their master of participation. This testimony, disproved by the long life and the habitually submissive loyalty of Belisarius, was sufficient for his conviction. He was stripped of his fortune, deprived of his guards, and detained as a close prisoner in his palace.

The other conspirators were condemned and executed; but, in consideration of the past services of Belisarius, the decree of death was changed for that of blindness, and his eyes were accordingly put out.³ He was now restored to liberty, but,

³ This portion of the story of Belisarius has been the subject of controversy. It has been doubted by Gibbon and other historians, whether the infliction of blindness upon Belisarius and his beggary, were not mere traditionary fables. But Lord Mahon, in his excellent life of the great Roman general from which we have drawn the preceding account, appears to have established their authenticity. The beautiful tale of Belisarius

deprived of all means of subsistence, he was compelled to beg his bread before the gates of the convent of Laurus. There he stood with a wooden platter which he held out for charity, exclaiming to the passers-by, "Give a penny to Belisarius the general!"

The affecting scene was long impressed upon the recollection of the people; and it would seem that this spectacle of persecuted merit aroused some dangerous feelings of indignation and pity, and he was, therefore, removed from public view. Belisarius was brought back to his former palace, and a portion of his treasures was allotted for his use. His death, which was doubtless hastened by the grief and hardships of his lot, occurred in 565; and Antonina, who survived him, devoted the remains of her life and fortune to the cloister.

In person, Belisarius was tall and commanding; his features regular and noble. When he appeared in the streets of Constantinople, he never failed to attract the admiration of the people. As a military leader, he was enterprising, firm, and fearless. His conception was clear, and his judgment rapid and decisive. His conquests were achieved with smaller means than any other of like extent recorded in history. He experienced reverses in the field; but never did he fail without strong and sufficient reason. His superior tactics covered his defeats, retrieved his losses, and prevented his enemies from reaping the fruits of victory. Never, even in the most desperate emergencies, was he known to lose his courage or presence of mind.

Though living in a barbarous and dissolute age, Belisarius possessed many shining virtues. In the march of his armies, he would avoid the trampling of the corn-fields, nor would he allow his soldiers even to gather apples from the trees without making payment to the villagers. After a victory, it was his first care to extend mercy and protection to the vanquished. The gift of a golden bracelet or collar rewarded any valorous achievement among his troops; the loss of a horse or weapon was immediately supplied from his private funds; the wounded ever found in him a father and a friend. To all, he was open and easy of access, and by his courteous demeanor often comforted, where he could not relieve. From his generosity, one would have deemed him rich; from his manners, poor. His private virtues promoted and confirmed the discipline of his soldiers. None ever saw him flushed with wine, nor could the charms of his fairest captives overcome his conjugal fidelity.

But the most remarkable feature in the character of Belisarius is his steadfast loyalty, and the noble magnanimity with which he overlooked the suspicious meanness and ingratitude of his sovereign. It is impossible to find in history another instance of an individual so strongly induced to rebellion by treacherous treatment or the part of his country, and the opportunity of placing a crown upon his head without the risk of effectual opposition, who refused, from patriotic motives, the double temptation.

That Belisarius had faults, is not to be denied. His blind

submission to his wife displayed great weakness, and led him into most of the errors which are charged upon his public career. In his last campaign in Italy, his wealth having been exhausted by an enormous fine, he endeavored to repair his losses by imitating the rapacity universally practised by other commanders of that period. He thus inflicted upon his memory a serious stain, and showed that, however he was exalted above the age, he was still a man. His whole career affords a striking moral, coinciding with the emphatic language of Scripture, "Put not thy trust in princes."

ATTILA, KING OF THE HUNS

This renowned barbarian was the son of Mandras, and of a royal line. He served in the army of his uncle, Roas, who was king of the Huns. At his death, in 433, he succeeded him, sharing the throne with his brother Bleda. The Huns at this period were very numerous and warlike. They extended over the southern part of Russia, and a considerable portion of the present empire of Austria. Attila's kingdom lay between the Carpathian mountains and the Danube, and was called Pannonia.

At this period, the Roman empire had been for more than a century divided into the Eastern and Western empire. Theodosius II. was now emperor of the former, and Constantinople its capital, while Valentinian III. was emperor of the latter, and Rome, or Ravenna, the seat of his government.

Both branches of the Roman empire were now sunk in the lap of luxury. They were spread over with splendid cities, and enriched with all the refinements of art, and all the spoils gathered from every quarter of the world. These offered a tempting inducement to the fierce and hungry barbarians of the north. Alaric⁴ had shown the way to Rome a few years before, and

⁴ Alaric was one of the most eminent of those northern chiefs who successively overran Italy, during the decline of the Western empire, and the first who gained possession of imperial Rome. He learned the art of war under the celebrated emperor of the East, Theodosius, who curbed the depredations of the Goths. At his death,

taught the weakness of the queen of the world. Constantinople was not likely to be an inferior or more inaccessible prize. Attila's dominions bordered upon those of the two empires, and the distance to either capital was not more than five or six hundred miles.

Among the first achievements of the two brothers, they threatened the Eastern empire with their armies, and twice compelled the weak Theodosius to purchase peace on humiliating terms. They then extended their dominions both east and west, until they reigned over the whole country from the Baltic to the Caspian Sea.

Attila was regarded by the Huns as their bravest warrior, and most skilful general. He performed such feats of valor, and success so uniformly attended his career, that the ignorant and superstitious people were inclined to think him more than mortal. He took advantage of this feeling, and pretended that he had found the sword of their tutelar god, and that with this he intended to conquer the whole earth. Being unwilling to hold a divided sceptre, he caused his brother Bleda to be murdered, and when he gave out that it was done by the command of God, the

Alaric became their leader, and overran Greece, A. D. 396. In the year 403, he entered Italy with a powerful army, but was defeated, and retired to his own country. In 410, he again entered Italy, besieged and took Rome, which he entered at midnight, and gave it up to plunder and pillage for six days. He now led his troops into the southern provinces of Italy, but died suddenly while he was besieging Cozenza. He was buried in the channel of the river Bucente, in Naples, that his remains might not be found by the Romans. To perform the burial, the water of the river was turned out of its course.

event was celebrated with the greatest demonstrations of joy.

Being now sole master of a warlike people, his ambition made him the terror of all the surrounding nations. It was a saying of his own, that no grass grew where his horse had set his foot, and the title of the "Scourge of God" was assigned to him, as characterizing his career. He extended his dominions over the whole of Germany and Scythia. The Vandals, the Ostrogoths, and a part of the Franks, acknowledged his sway, and both the Eastern and Western empires paid him tribute. Historians tell us that his army amounted to 700,000 men.

Having heard of the riches of Persia, he directed his march against it. Being defeated on the plains of Armenia, he turned back, to satisfy his desire of plunder in the dominions of the emperor of the East. Regardless of existing treaties, he laid waste the whole country from the Black Sea to the Adriatic. In three bloody engagements, he defeated the troops sent against him by Theodosius. Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece, were overrun by the savage robber, and seventy flourishing cities were utterly destroyed.

Theodosius was now at the mercy of the victor and was obliged to sue for peace. One of the servants of Attila, named Edekon, was tempted by an agent of the emperor to undertake the assassination of his master, on his return to Pannonia; but, at the moment he was about to accomplish his object, his courage failed him, he fell on his knees before Attila, confessed his criminal design, and disclosed the plot. Constantinople trembled at the

idea of Attila's revenge; but he was contented with upbraiding Theodosius, and the execution of Crisapheus, who had drawn his servant into the scheme.

Priscus, a Roman historian, who was an ambassador to Attila in the year 448, gives an interesting account of the king and his people. He found the palace in the midst of a large village. The royal edifice was entirely of wood: the houses of the Huns were also of wood, sometimes mixed with mortar made of earth. The only stone building was a set of baths. The wooden pillars of the palace were carved and polished, and the ambassador could discover some evidence of taste in the workmanship, as well as barbarous magnificence in the display of rich spoils taken from more civilized nations.

They were soon invited to a sumptuous entertainment, in which the guests were all served upon utensils of silver and gold; but a dish of plain meat was set before the king on a wooden trencher, of which he partook very sparingly. His beverage was equally simple and frugal. The rest of the company were excited into loud and frequent laughter by the fantastic extravagances of two buffoons; but Attila preserved his usually inflexible gravity. A secret agent in the embassy was charged with the disgraceful task of procuring the assassination of this formidable enemy. Attila was acquainted with this, which was the real object of the mission, but he dismissed the culprit, as well as his innocent companions, uninjured. The emperor Theodosius was compelled, however, to atone for his base attempt, by a

second embassy, loaded with magnificent presents, which the king of the Huns was prevailed upon to accept. Theodosius died not long after, and was succeeded by the more virtuous and able Marcian.

Attila was at this time collecting an enormous army, and threatened both divisions of the Roman world at once. To each emperor he sent the haughty message, "Attila, my lord and thy lord, commands thee immediately to prepare a palace for his reception!" To this insult, he added a demand upon the emperor for the remainder of the tribute due from Theodosius. Marcian's reply was in the same laconic style: "I have gold for my friends, and steel for my enemies!"

Attila determined to make war first on Valentinian. Honoria, the emperor's sister, who had been guilty of some youthful error, and was consequently confined in a convent, had sent Attila a ring, offering to become his wife. It was to claim her and half the empire as her dower, that Attila professed to be making these formidable preparations. At last, he appeared to accept the excuse of Theodosius for not allowing his sister to become his wife, and speedily marched with a prodigious force to the westward. He set out in midwinter, and did not pause till he reached the Rhine. Having defeated the Franks, he cut down whole forests to make rafts for his army to cross the river, and now, throwing off the mask, entered Gaul, a dependency of Rome.

The horrors of his march it is scarcely possible to describe.

Everything was destroyed that came in his way. Before him were terror and despair; behind, a broad track marked with desolation, ruin and death. He proceeded in his victorious career, till he reached the ancient town of Orleans. Here an obstinate defence was offered. The combined armies of Rome, under the celebrated Ætius, and the Goths under Theodoric, attacked him here, and compelled him to raise the siege. He retreated to Champaign, and waited for them in the plain of Chalons. The two armies soon approached each other.

Anxious to know the event of the coming battle, Attila consulted the sorcerers, who foretold his defeat. Though greatly alarmed, he concealed his feelings, and rode among his warriors, animating them for the impending struggle. Inflamed by his ardor, the Huns were eager for the contest. Both armies fought bravely. At length the ranks of the Romans and Gauls were broken, and Attila felt assured of victory, when, suddenly, Thorismond, son of Theodoric, swept down like an avalanche from the neighboring heights upon the Huns. He threw them into disorder, spread death through their ranks, and Attila, pressed on all sides, escaped to his camp with the utmost difficulty.

This was the bloodiest battle ever fought in Europe, for 106,000 men lay dead on the field. Theodoric was slain, and Attila, who had gathered his treasures into a heap, in order to burn himself with them in case he was reduced to extremities, was left unexpectedly to make his retreat.

Having returned to Hungary and reinforced his army, he

proceeded to repeat his demand for the hand of Honoria. He mastered the unguarded passes of the Alps, and, in 452, carried devastation into the north of Italy. At last he approached the city of Rome, when a supplicatory embassy met him, Pope Leo I. being at its head. The eloquence of the pontiff, united to prudential considerations, prevailed, and the city was saved; Attila returning to his home beyond the Danube. The Romans looked upon this preservation as a miracle, and they have preserved a legend that St. Peter and St. Paul appeared to the barbarian, and threatened him with instant death, if he did not accept the proffered terms.

Attila now soothed himself by adding the beautiful Ildico to his numerous wives, whom he wedded with all due ceremony. On this occasion he gave himself up to licentiousness, but in the morning after his marriage, he was found dead in his tent, and covered with blood, Ildico sitting veiled by his side. The story went abroad that he had burst a blood-vessel, and died in consequence, but a common suspicion is entertained that he was stabbed by his bride.

The news of Attila's death spread terror and sorrow among his army. His body was enclosed in three coffins, – the first of gold, the second of silver, and the third of iron. The captives who dug his grave were strangled, so that the place of his burial might not be known.

In person, Attila was marked with the Tartar characteristics, from which he, as well as the people of his kingdom, were

descended. He was low in stature, broad-chested, and of a powerful frame. He was dark complexioned, with a few straggling hairs for beard, a flat nose, large head, and small eyes. No one could look upon him, and not feel that he had come into the world to disturb it. The number of persons slain in his battles amounted to hundreds of thousands, yet to so little purpose, that his empire was immediately dismembered upon his death.

NERO

Claudius Cæsar Nero was son of Caius Domitius Ænobarbus and Agrippina, the daughter of Germanicus and wife of the Emperor Claudius, after the death of her first husband. He was adopted by the Emperor Claudius, A.D. 50, and when he was murdered by his wife, four years after, Nero succeeded him on the throne. He possessed excellent talents, and was carefully educated by Seneca and Burrhus. The beginning of his reign was marked by acts of the greatest kindness and condescension, by affability, complaisance and popularity. The object of his administration seemed to be the good of his people; and when he was desired to sign his name for the execution of a malefactor, he exclaimed, "I wish to heaven I could not write!" He appeared to be an enemy to flattery, and when the senate had liberally commended the wisdom of his government, Nero desired them to keep their praises till he deserved them.

But these promising virtues were soon discovered to be artificial, and Nero displayed the real propensities of his nature. He delivered himself from the sway of his mother, and at last ordered her to be assassinated. This unnatural act of barbarity shocked some of the Romans; but Nero had his devoted adherents; and when he declared that he had taken away his mother's life to save himself from ruin, the senate applauded his measures, and the people signified their approbation. Even

Burrhus and Seneca, Nero's advisers, either counselled or justified his conduct. Many of his courtiers shared the unhappy fate of Agrippina, and Nero sacrificed to his fury or caprice all such as obstructed his pleasures, or stood in the way of his inclinations.

In the night he generally sallied out from his palace, to visit the meanest taverns and the scenes of debauchery in which Rome abounded. In his nocturnal riots he was fond of insulting the people in the streets, and on one occasion, an attempt to offer violence to the wife of a Roman senator nearly cost him his life. He also turned actor, and publicly appeared on the Roman stage, in the meanest characters. He had an absurd passion to excel in music, and to conquer the disadvantages of a hoarse, rough voice, he moderated his meals, and often passed the day without eating.

The celebrity of the Olympic games having attracted his notice, he passed into Greece, and presented himself as a candidate for the public honors. He was defeated in wrestling, but the flattery of the spectators adjudged him the victory, and Nero returned to Rome with all the pomp and splendor of an eastern conqueror, drawn in the chariot of Augustus, and attended by a band of musicians, actors, and stage dancers from every part of the empire.

These private and public amusements of the emperor were comparatively innocent; his character was injured, but not the lives of the people. His conduct, however, soon became more censurable; he was guilty of various acts which cannot be even

named with decency. The cruelty of his nature was displayed in the sacrifice of his wives Octavia and Poppæa; and the celebrated writers, Seneca, Lucan, Petronius, &c., became the victims of his wantonness. The Christians did not escape his barbarity. He had heard of the burning of Troy, and as he wished to renew that dismal scene, he caused Rome to be set on fire in different places. The conflagration became soon universal, and during nine successive days the fire was unextinguished. All was desolation; nothing was heard but the lamentations of mothers whose children had perished in the flames, the groans of the dying, and the continual fall of palaces and buildings.

Nero was the only one who enjoyed the general consternation. He placed himself on a high tower and he sang on his lyre the destruction of Troy; a dreadful scene which his barbarity had realized before his eyes. He attempted to avert the public odium from his head, by a feigned commiseration of the sufferings of his subjects, and by charging the fire upon the Christians. He caused great numbers of them to be seized and put to death. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and killed by dogs set upon them; others were crucified; others were smeared with pitch and burned, at night, in the imperial gardens, for the amusement of the people!

Nero began to repair the streets and the public buildings at his own expense. He built himself a celebrated palace, which he called his golden house. It was profusely adorned with gold and precious stones, and with whatever was rare and

exquisite. It contained spacious fields, artificial lakes, woods, gardens, orchards, and every device that could exhibit beauty and grandeur. The entrance to this edifice would admit a colossal image of the emperor, one hundred and twenty feet high; the galleries were each a mile long, and the whole was covered with gold. The roofs of the dining halls represented the firmament, in motion as well as in figure, and continually turned round, night and day, showering all sorts of perfumes and sweet waters. When this grand edifice, which, according to Pliny, extended all round the city, was finished, Nero said that he could now lodge like a man!

His profusion was not less remarkable in all his other actions. When he went fishing, his nets were made with gold and silk. He never appeared twice in the same garment, and when he undertook a voyage, there were thousands of servants to take care of his wardrobe. His continued debauchery, cruelty, and extravagance at last roused the resentment of the people. Many conspiracies were formed against him, but they were generally discovered, and such as were accessory, suffered the greatest punishments. One of the most dangerous plots against Nero's life was that of Piso, from which he was delivered by the confession of a slave. The conspiracy of Galba proved more successful; for the conspirator, when he was informed that his design was known to Nero, declared himself emperor. The unpopularity of Nero favored his cause; he was acknowledged by the whole Roman empire, and the senate condemned the tyrant, that sat on

the throne, to be dragged, naked, through the streets of Rome, whipped to death, and afterwards to be thrown from the Tarpeian rock, like the meanest malefactor. This, however, was not done, for Nero, by a voluntary death, prevented the execution of the sentence. He killed himself, A. D. 68, in the thirty-second year of his age, after a reign of thirteen years and eight months.

Rome was filled with acclamations at the intelligence of this event, and the citizens, more strongly to indicate their joy, wore caps such as were generally used by slaves who had received their freedom. Their vengeance was not only exercised against the statues of the deceased tyrant, but his friends were the objects of the public resentment, and many were crushed to pieces in such a violent manner, that one of the senators, amid the universal joy, said that he was afraid they should soon have cause to wish for Nero. The tyrant, as he expired, begged that his head might not be cut off from his body and exposed to the insolence of an enraged populace, but that the whole might be burned on a funeral pile. His request was granted, and his obsequies were performed with the usual ceremonies.

Though his death seemed to be the source of universal gladness, yet many of his favorites lamented his fall, and were grieved to see that their pleasures and amusements were terminated by the death of the patron of debauchery and extravagance. Even the king of Parthia sent ambassadors to Rome to condole with the Romans, and to beg that they would honor and revere the memory of Nero. His statues were also

crowned with garlands of flowers, and many believed that he was not dead, but that he would soon make his appearance and take a due vengeance upon his enemies. It will be sufficient to observe, in finishing the character of this tyrannical emperor and detestable man, that the name of *Nero* is, even now, the common designation of a barbarous and unfeeling oppressor.

LUCIUS ANNÆUS SENECA

This individual, whose "Morals" are so familiar to us, was born at Corduba, in Spain, six years before Christ. His father was a rhetorician of some celebrity, and a portion of his works has come down to our time. While Lucius was yet a child, he removed from Corduba to Rome, which henceforward became his residence. The son, possessing very promising talents, received the greatest care and attention in respect to his education. He was taught eloquence by his father, and took lessons in philosophy from the most celebrated masters. According to the custom of those who sought to excel in wisdom and knowledge, he travelled in Greece and Egypt, after completing his studies, and his work entitled *Quæstiones Naturales* showed that he made good use of his opportunities during this excursion; it also proves that he was master of the science of his time.

Young Seneca was fascinated with the philosophical speculations of the Stoics,⁵ to which sect he became devoted. He even adopted the austere modes of life they inculcated, and

⁵ The Stoics were the followers of Zeno, a Greek philosopher of Citium. They professed to prefer virtue to everything else, and to regard vice as the greatest of evils. They required an absolute command over the passions, and maintained the ability of man to attain perfection and felicity in this life. They encouraged suicide, and held that the doctrine of rewards and punishments was unnecessary to enforce virtue upon mankind.

refused to eat the flesh of animals; but when the emperor, Tiberius,⁶ threatened to punish some Jews and Egyptians for abstaining from certain meats, at the suggestion of his father, he departed from this singularity. In compliance with his father's advice, who urged upon him the necessity of devoting himself to some kind of business, he adopted the profession of an advocate.

As a pleader, Seneca appeared to great advantage, and consequently excited the envy of Caligula, who aspired to the reputation of an orator. Apprehensive of the consequences, he changed his views, and became a candidate for the honors and offices of the state. He was made prætor, under Claudius, but, being charged with a shameful intrigue with a lady of rank, he was banished to Corsica. Though his guilt was not satisfactorily proved, he continued for five years in exile; during which period he wrote a treatise on Consolation. In this, he seems to draw contentment and peace from philosophical views, and one would fancy that he was elevated by these, above the evils

⁶ Tiberius succeeded Augustus Cæsar, as emperor; at his succession he gave promise of a happy reign, but he soon disgraced himself by debauchery, cruelty, and the most flagitious excesses. It was wittily said of him by Seneca that he was never intoxicated but once, for when he became drunk, his whole life was a continued state of inebriety. He died A. D. 37, after a reign of twenty-two years, and was succeeded by Caligula. For a brief period, Rome now enjoyed prosperity and peace; but the young emperor soon became proud, cruel and corrupt. He caused a temple to be erected to himself, and had his own image set in the place of Jupiter and the other deities. He often amused himself by putting innocent people to death; he attempted to famish Rome, and even wished that the Romans had one head, that he might strike it off at a blow! At last, weary of his cruelties, several persons formed a conspiracy and murdered him, A. D. 41. History does not furnish another instance of so great a monster as Caligula.

of his condition. Yet, unhappily for his reputation in respect to consistency and sincerity, history tells us that, at this period, he was suing to the emperor in the most abject terms for restitution.

Claudius⁷ at length married Agrippina, and Seneca, being recalled, was made preceptor of Nero, the son of Agrippina, who was destined to become emperor. From the favorable traits of character displayed by the pupil of the philosopher in the early part of his career, it might seem that Seneca's instructions had exerted a good influence over him. But an impartial scrutiny of the events of that period has led to the probable conclusion that he was a pander to the worst of Nero's vices. It is certain that he acquired immense wealth in a short period of time, and it appears that this was obtained through the munificence of his royal patron. The latter was avaricious and mercenary, and was likely to part with his money only for such things as ministered to his voluptuous passions.

The possessions of Seneca were enormous. He had several gardens and villas in the country, and a magnificent palace in Rome. This was sumptuously furnished, and contained five hundred tables of cedar, with feet of ivory, and all of exquisite workmanship. His ready cash amounted to about twelve millions of dollars. It appears certain that such riches could not have been acquired by means of Seneca's precepts; and the inference of many of his contemporaries, as well as of posterity, has been,

⁷ Claudius succeeded Caligula in 41, and, after a reign of thirteen years, he was poisoned by his wife, Agrippina.

that the virtue which appears so lovely in his pages was but the decorous veil of avarice, vice, and crime.

For a period after his accession to the throne, Nero's conduct was deserving of praise; but he soon threw off all regard even to decency, and launched forth upon that career which has made his name a by-word and reproach for all after time. Seneca, being accused of having amassed immense wealth by improper means, became greatly alarmed; for he knew the tyrant so well as to foresee that, under color of this charge, he was very likely to sacrifice him, in order to obtain his property. Pretending, therefore, to be indifferent to riches, he begged the emperor to accept of his entire fortune, and permit him to spend the remainder of his days in the quiet pursuits of philosophy. The emperor, with deep dissimulation, refused this offer – no doubt intending in some other way to compass the ruin of Seneca.

Aware of his danger, the philosopher now kept himself at home for a long period, as if laboring under disease. Some time after, a conspiracy for the murder of Nero, headed by Piso, was detected. Several of the most noble of the Roman senators were concerned, and Seneca's name was mentioned as an accessory. Nero, doubtless glad of an opportunity to sacrifice him, now sent a command that he should destroy himself.

It has been a question whether Seneca was really concerned in the conspiracy of Piso. The proof brought against him was not indeed conclusive, but it is obvious that his position might lead him to desire the death of the tyrant, as the only means of safety

to himself; and Seneca's character, unfortunately, is not such as to shield his memory against strong suspicion of participation in the alleged crime.

Seneca was at table, with his wife, Paulina, and two of his friends, when the messenger of Nero arrived. He heard the words which commanded him to take his own life, with philosophic firmness, and even with apparent joy. He observed that such a mandate might long have been expected from a man who had murdered his own mother and assassinated his best friends. He wished to dispose of his possessions as he pleased, but his request was refused. When he heard this, he turned to those around who were weeping at his fate, and told them, that, since he could not leave them what he believed his own, he would leave them at least his own life for an example – an innocent conduct, which they might imitate, and by which they might acquire immortal fame.

Against their tears and wailings, he exclaimed with firmness, and asked them whether they had not learned better to withstand the attacks of fortune and the violence of tyranny. As for his wife, he attempted to calm her emotions, and when she seemed resolved to die with him, he said he was glad to have his example followed with so much constancy. Their veins were opened at the same moment; but Nero, who was partial to Paulina, ordered the blood to be stopped, and her life was thus preserved.

Seneca's veins bled but slowly, and the conversation of his dying moments was collected by his friends, and preserved among his works. To hasten his death, he drank a dose of poison,

but it had no effect, and therefore he ordered himself to be carried to a hot bath, to accelerate the operation of the draught, and to make the blood flow more freely. This was attended with no better success, and, as the soldiers were clamorous, he was carried into a stove, and suffocated by the steam. Thus he died, in the 66th year of the Christian era.

The death of Seneca has been loudly applauded, and has sometimes been pronounced sublime; but this is owing to an ignorance of the time, and inattention to Seneca's own doctrines. With the Stoics, death was nothing; "It is not an evil, but the absence of all evil." This was their creed. With such principles, there could be no fear of death, and consequently, we find that courage to die – if it be courage to encounter that which is not an evil – was common in Seneca's time. "At that period of languor and luxury," says M. Nisard, "of monstrous effeminacies, of appetites for which the world could hardly suffice – of perfumed baths, of easy and disorderly intrigues, there were daily men of all ranks, of all fortunes, of all ages, who released themselves from their evils by death. How was it possible for them to avoid suicide, with no other consolation than the philosophy of Seneca, and his theories on the delights of poverty?"

"Marcellinus⁸ is attacked with a painful but curable malady. He is young, rich, has slaves, friends, everything to make life pleasant: no matter, he conceives the fancy of the pleasure of dying. He assembles his friends; he consults them as if he were

⁸ Seneca, Ess. lxxvii.

going to marry. He discusses with them his project of suicide, and puts it to the vote. Some advise him to do as he pleases; but a Stoic, a friend of Seneca's, then present, exhorts him bravely to die. His principal reason is that he is *ennuyé*. No one contradicts the Stoic. Marcellinus thanks his friends, and distributes money to his slaves. He abstains for three days from all food, and is then carried into a warm bath, where he quickly expires, having muttered some words on the pleasure he felt in dying.

"This pleasure was so little of an affectation, so much had it become the fashion, that some of the austere Stoics thought themselves bound to place certain restrictions upon it. They committed suicide from *ennui*, from idleness, from want of patience to cure themselves of their ills, – for distraction – much in the same way that they killed each other in duels, under Cardinal Richelieu."

Viewed in this light, Seneca's death had nothing in it of the sublime: he yielded but to a fashion; he only practised what was common. If he sincerely believed his professed creed – that death is the absence of all evil – he neither evinced courage nor dignity; if he did not believe, then his conduct displayed but the skilful acting of a part, and under circumstances which mark him with the deepest hypocrisy.

It is impossible to deny that Seneca's works are full of wisdom, though they fall far short of the Christian's philosophy. In his treatise upon benefits, for example, we have the following passage: —

"The good will of the benefactor is the fountain of all benefits; nay, it is the benefit itself, or, at least, the stamp that makes it valuable and current. Some there are, I know, that take the matter for the benefit, and tax the obligation by weight and measure. When anything is given them, they presently cast it up – 'What may such a house be worth? such an office? such an estate?' as if that were the benefit which is only the sign and mark of it, for the obligation rests in the mind, not in the matter; and all those advantages which we see, handle, or hold in actual possession, by the courtesy of another, are but several modes or ways of explaining and putting the good will in execution. There needs no subtlety to prove that both benefits and injuries receive their value from the intention, when even brutes themselves are able to decide this question. Tread upon a dog by chance, or put him in pain upon the dressing of a wound, the one he passes by as an accident, and the other, in his fashion, he acknowledges as a kindness. But offer to strike at him – though you do him no hurt at all – he flies in the face of you, even for the mischief that you barely meant him."

This is all just and true: it makes the heart the seat of moral action, and thus far coincides with the Christian's philosophy. But if there be nothing after death, what sanction has virtue? It may be more beautiful than vice, and consequently preferable, just as a sweet perfume is more desirable than an offensive odor. It is good taste, therefore, to be virtuous. Still, each individual may choose for himself, and without future responsibility, for all

alike must share the oblivion of the tomb. The insufficiency of this philosophy to ensure virtue, is attested by the life of Seneca, as well as that of most of his sect. It resulted in the grossest hypocrisy; an ostentation of virtue, covering up the practice of vice.

For a brief period, Rome now enjoyed prosperity and peace; but the young emperor soon became proud, cruel and corrupt. He caused a temple to be erected to himself, and had his own image set in the place of Jupiter and the other deities. He often amused himself by putting innocent people to death; he attempted to famish Rome, and even wished that the Romans had one head, that he might strike it off at a blow! At last, weary of his cruelties, several persons formed a conspiracy and murdered him, A. D. 41. History does not furnish another instance of so great a monster as Caligula.

VIRGIL

Mantua, the capital of New Etruria itself built three centuries before Rome, had the honor of giving birth to Publius Virgilius Maro. This event happened on or near the fifteenth of October, seventy years B. C, or during the first consulship of Pompey the Great and Licinius Crassus. Who his father was, and even to what country he belonged, has been the subject of much dispute. Some assert that he was a potter of Andes; but the most probable account is, that he was either a wandering astrologer, who practised physic, or a servant to one of this learned fraternity. It is observed by Juvenal, that *medicus, magus* usually went together, and that this course of life was principally followed by the Greeks and Syrians; to one of these nations, therefore, it is presumed, Virgil owes his birth. His mother, Maia, was of good extraction, being nearly related to Quintilius Varus, of whom honorable mention is made in the history of the second Carthaginian war.

It appears that all due attention was paid to young Virgil's education. He passed through his initiatory exercises at Mantua; thence he removed to Cremona, and afterwards to Milan. In all these places he prosecuted his studies with the most diligent application, associating with the eminent professors of every department of science, and devoting whole nights to the best Latin and Greek authors. In the latter he was greatly assisted by his proximity to Marseilles, the only Greek colony

that maintained its refinement and purity of language, amidst the overwhelming influence of all the barbarous nations that surrounded it. At first, he devoted himself to the Epicurean philosophy, but receiving no satisfactory reason for its tenets from his master, the celebrated Syro, he passed over to the academic school, where physics and mathematics became his favorite sciences; and these he continued to cultivate, at leisure moments, during his whole life.

At Milan, he composed a great number of verses on various subjects, and, in the warmth of early youth, framed a noble design of writing an heroic poem, on the Wars of Rome; but, after some attempts, he was discouraged from proceeding, by the abruptness and asperity of the old Roman names.

It is said that he here formed the plan and collected the materials for his principal poems. Some of these he had even begun; but a too intense application to his studies, together with abstinence and night-watching, had so impaired his health, that an immediate removal to a more southern part of Italy was deemed absolutely necessary for the preservation of his existence. He fixed upon Naples, and visiting Rome in his way, had the honor, through the interest of his kinsman and fellow-student, Varus, of being introduced to the emperor, Octavius, who received him with the greatest marks of esteem, and earnestly recommended his affairs to the protection of Pollio, then lieutenant of Cisalpine Gaul, where Virgil's patrimony lay, and who generously undertook to settle his domestic concerns.

Having this assurance, he pursued his journey to Naples. The charming situation of this place, the salubrity of the air, and the constant society of the greatest and most learned men of the time, who resorted to it, not only re-established his health, but contributed to the formation of that style and happy turn of verse in which he surpassed all his cotemporaries.

To rank among the poets of their country, was, at this time, the ambition of the greatest heroes, statesmen, and orators of Rome. Cicero, Octavius, Pollio, Julius Cæsar, and even the stoical Brutus, had been carried away by the impetuosity of the stream; but that genius which had never deserted them in the forum, or on the day of battle, shrunk dismayed at a comparison with the lofty muse of Virgil; and, although they endeavored, by placing their poems in the celebrated libraries, to hand them down to posterity, scarcely a single verse of these illustrious authors survived the age in which they lived. This preponderance of fashion, however, was favorable to Virgil; he had for some time devoted himself to the study of the law, and even pleaded one cause with indifferent success; but yielding now to the impulse of the age and his own genius, he abandoned the profession and resumed with increased ardor the cultivation of that talent for which he afterwards became so distinguished.

Captivated at an early age by the pastorals of Theocritus, Virgil was ambitious of being the primitive introducer of that species of poetry among the Romans. His first performance in this way, entitled Alexis, is supposed to have appeared when

the poet was in his twenty-fifth year. Palæmon, which is a close imitation of the fourth and fifth Idyls of Theocritus, was probably his second; but as this period of the life of Virgil is enveloped in a considerable degree of obscurity, – few writers on the subject having condescended to notice such particulars as chronological arrangement, – little more than surmise can be offered to satisfy the researches of the curious. The fifth eclogue was composed in allusion to the death and deification of Cæsar, and is supposed to have been written subsequently to Silenus, his sixth eclogue. This is said to have been publicly recited on the stage, by the comedian Cytheris, and to have procured its author that celebrity and applause to which the peculiar beauty and sweetness of the poem so justly entitled him.

The fatal battle of Philippi, in which Augustus and Antony were victorious, at once annihilated every shadow of liberty in the commonwealth. Those veteran legions, who had conquered the world, fought no more for the dearest rights of their country. Having been once its protectors, they now became its ravagers. As the *amor patria* no longer inspired them, the treasury of the Roman empire proved inadequate to allay their boundless thirst for wealth. Augustus, therefore, to silence their clamors, distributed among them the flourishing colony of Cremona, and, to make up the deficiency, added part of the state of Mantua. In vain did the miserable mothers, with famishing infants at their breasts, fill the forum with their numbers, and the air with their lamentations; in vain did the inhabitants complain

of being driven, like vanquished enemies, from their native homes. Such scenes are familiar to the conquerors in a civil war; and those legions, which had sacrificed their own and their country's liberty, must be recompensed at the expense of justice and the happiness of thousands. Virgil, involved in the common calamity, had recourse to his old patrons, Pollio and Mecænas;⁹ and, supported by them, petitioned Augustus not only for the possession of his own property, but for the reinstatement of his countrymen in theirs also; which, after some hesitation, was denied, accompanied by a grant for the restitution of his individual estate.

Full of gratitude for such favor, Virgil composed his *Tityrus*, in which he has introduced one shepherd complaining of the destruction of his farm, the anarchy and confusion of the times; and another rejoicing that he can again tune his reed to love amidst his flocks; promising to honor, as a superior being, the restorer of his happiness.

Unfortunately for Virgil, his joy was not of long continuance, for, on arriving at Mantua, and producing his warrant to Arrius,

⁹ Mecænas, a celebrated Roman, who distinguished himself by his liberal patronage of learned men and letters. His fondness for pleasure removed him from the reach of ambition, and he preferred to live and die a knight, to all the honors and dignities that the Emperor Augustus could heap upon him. The emperor received the private admonitions of Mecænas in the same friendly way in which they were given. Virgil and Horace both enjoyed his friendship. He was fond of literature, and from the patronage which the heroic and lyric poets of the age received from him, patrons of literature have ever since been called by his name. Virgil dedicated to him his *Georgics* and Horace his *Odes*. He died eight years B. C.

a captain of foot, whom he found in possession of his house, the old soldier was so enraged at what he termed the presumption of a poet, that he wounded him dangerously with his sword, and would have killed him had he not escaped by swimming hastily over the Mincius. Virgil was, therefore, compelled to return half the length of Italy, with a body reduced by sickness, and a mind depressed by disappointment, again to petition Augustus for the restoration of his estate. During this journey, which, from the nature of his wound, was extremely slow, he is supposed to have written his *Moeris*, or ninth eclogue; and this conjecture is rendered more probable by the want of connexion, perceivable through the whole composition – displaying, evidently, the disorder at that time predominant in the poet's mind. However, on his arrival at Rome, he had the satisfaction to find that effectual orders had been given in his behalf, and the farm was resigned into the hands of his procurator or bailiff, to whom the above pastoral is addressed.

The Sibylline Oracles, having received information from the Jews that a child was to be born, who should be the Saviour of the world, and to whom nations and empires should bow with submission, pretended to foretell that this event would occur in the year of Rome, 714, after the peace concluded between Augustus and Antony. Virgil, viewing this prophecy with the vivid imagination of a poet, and willing to flatter the ambition of his patron, composed his celebrated eclogue, entitled *Pollio*, in which he supposes the child, who was thus to unite mankind

and restore the golden age, to be the offspring of Octavia, wife of Antony, and half sister to Augustus. In this production, the consul Pollio, Octavia, and even the unborn infant, are flattered with his usual delicacy; and the rival triumviri, though a short time before in open hostility, have the honor of equally sharing the poet's applause.

While Pollio, who seems to have been the most accomplished man of his age, and is celebrated as a poet, soldier, orator and historian, was engaged in an expedition against the Parthini, whom he subdued, Virgil addressed to him his *Pharmaceutria*, one of the most beautiful of all his eclogues, and in imitation of a poem of the same name, by his favorite author, Theocritus. This production is the more valuable, as it has handed down to posterity some of the superstitious rites of the Romans and the heathen notions of enchantment. Virgil himself seems to have been conscious of the beauty of his subject, and the dignity of the person whom he was addressing; and, accordingly, has given us, by the fertility of his genius and the brilliancy of his imagination, some of the most sublime images that are to be found in any of the writings of antiquity.

By the advice, and indeed at the earnest entreaty of Augustus, Virgil, in his thirty-fourth year, retired to Naples, and formed the plan of his *Georgics*: a design as new in Latin verse, as pastorals, before his, were in Italy. These he undertook for the interest, and to promote the welfare, of his country. As the continual civil wars had entirely depopulated and laid waste the

land usually appropriated for cultivation, the peasants had turned soldiers, and their farms became scenes of desolation. Famine and insurrection were the inevitable consequences that followed such overwhelming calamities. Augustus, therefore, resolved to revive the decayed spirit of husbandry, and began by employing Virgil to recommend it with all the insinuating charms of poetry. This work took up seven of the most vigorous years of his life, and fully answered the expectations of his patron.

Augustus, having conquered his rival, Antony, gave the last wound to expiring liberty, by usurping the exclusive government of the Roman empire. To reconcile a nation, naturally jealous of its freedom, to this, seems to have been the grand object of Virgil, in his *Æneid*. This poem was begun in the forty-fifth year of the author's life, and not only displays admirable poetical genius, but great political address. Not an incident that could in any way tend to flatter the Roman people into a submission to the existing government, has escaped his penetrating judgment. He traces their origin to the Trojans, and makes Augustus a lineal descendant of *Æneas*. At the command of the gods they obey him, and in return are promised the empire of the world.

So anxious was Augustus as to the result of this poem, that he insisted upon having part of it read before the whole was completed. Gratitude, after threats and entreaties had been used in vain, at length induced its author to comply; and, knowing that Octavia, who had just lost her son, Marcellus, would be present, Virgil fixed upon the sixth book, perhaps the finest part

of the whole *Æneid*. His illustrious auditors listened with all the attention which such interesting narrative and eloquent recital demanded, till he came to that beautiful lamentation for the death of young Marcellus, and where, after exhausting panegyric, he has artfully suppressed the name of its object, till the concluding verse:

"Tu Marcellus eris."

At these words, Octavia, overcome with surprise and sorrow, fainted away; but, on recovering, was so highly gratified at having her son thus immortalized, that she presented the poet with ten *sesterces* for each line; amounting, in the whole, to about ten thousand dollars.

Having at length brought his *Æneid* to a conclusion, Virgil proposed travelling into Greece, and devoting three years to the correction and improvement of his favorite work. Having arrived at Athens, he met with Augustus, who was returning from a victorious expedition to the East, and who requested the company of the poet back to Italy. The latter deemed it his duty to comply; but, being desirous to see as many of the Grecian antiquities as the time would allow, went for that purpose to Megara. Here he was seized with a dangerous illness, which, from neglect, and the agitation of the vessel in returning to Italy, proved mortal, at Brundisium. Thus the great poet died on the twenty-second of September, nineteen years B. C, and

at a period when he had nearly completed his fifty-second year. He expired with the greatest tranquillity; and his remains, being carried to Naples, were interred in a monument, erected at a small distance from the city; where it is still shown, with the following inscription, said to have been dictated by him on his death-bed:

Mantua me genuit; Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc
Parthenope; cecini pascua, rura, duces.

In his will he had ordered that the *Æneid* should be burnt, not having finished it to his mind; but Augustus wisely forbade the destruction of a performance which will perpetuate his name, as one of the greatest of poets. It was, therefore, delivered to Varius and Tucca, Virgil's intimate friends, with the strictest charge to make no additions, but merely to publish it correctly, in the state it then was.

In person, Virgil was tall, and wide-shouldered, of a dark swarthy complexion, which probably proceeded from the southern extraction of his father; his constitution was delicate, and the most trifling fatigue, either from exercise or study, produced violent headache and spitting of blood. In temper he was melancholy and thoughtful, loving retirement and contemplation. Though one of the greatest geniuses of his age, and the admiration of the Romans, he always preserved a singular modesty, and lived chastely when the manners of the people

were extremely corrupt. His character was so benevolent and inoffensive, that most of his cotemporary poets, though they envied each other, agreed in loving and esteeming him. He was bashful to a degree of timidity; his aspect and behavior was rustic and ungraceful; yet he was so honored by his countrymen, that once, coming into the theatre, the whole audience rose out of respect to him. His fortune was large, supposed to be about seventy thousand pounds sterling, besides which he possessed a noble mansion, and well-furnished library on the Esquiline Mount, at Rome, and an elegant villa in Sicily. Both these last, he left to Mecænas, at his death, together with a considerable proportion of his personal property; the remainder he divided between his relations and Augustus, – the latter having introduced a politic fashion of being in everybody's will, which alone produced a sufficient revenue for a prince.

The works of Virgil are not only valuable for their poetic beauties, but for their historical allusions and illustrations. We here find a more perfect and satisfactory account of the religious customs and ceremonies of the Romans, than in any other of the Latin poets, Ovid excepted. Everything he mentions is founded upon historical truth. He was uncommonly severe in revising his poetry – and often compared himself to a bear that licks her cubs into shape.

In his intercourse with society, Virgil was remarkable; his friends enjoyed his unbounded confidence, and his library and possessions in Rome were so liberally offered for the use of those

who needed them, as to seem to belong to the public. Amiable and exemplary, however, as he was, he had bitter enemies; but their revilings only served to add lustre to his name and fame.

CICERO

Marcus Tullius Cicero was born on the 3d of January, 107, B. C. His mother, whose name was Helvia, was of an honorable and wealthy family; his father, named Marcus, was a wise and learned man of fortune, who lived at Apulia. This city was anciently of the Samnites, now part of the kingdom of Naples. Here Cicero was born, at his father's country seat, which it seems was a most charming residence.

The care which the ancient Romans bestowed upon the education of their children was worthy of all praise. Their attention to this, began from the moment of their birth. They were, in the first place, committed to the care of some prudent matron, of good character and condition, whose business it was to form their first habits of acting and speaking; to watch their growing passions, and direct them to their proper objects; to superintend their sports, and suffer nothing immodest or indecent to enter into them, that the mind, preserved in all its innocence, and undepraved by the taste of false pleasures, might be at liberty to pursue whatever was laudable, and apply its whole strength to that profession in which it should desire to excel.

Though it was a common opinion among the Romans that children should not be instructed in letters till they were seven years old, yet careful attention was paid to their training, even from the age of three years. It was reckoned a matter of great

importance what kind of language they were first accustomed to hear at home, and in what manner their nurses, and even their fathers and mothers spoke, since their first habits were then formed, either of a pure or corrupt elocution. The two Gracchi were thought to owe that elegance of speaking for which they were distinguished, to their mother, Cornelia, who was a very accomplished woman and remarkable for the purity of her diction, as well in speaking as writing.

Young Cicero experienced the full advantage of these enlightened views, in his childhood. When he was of sufficient age to enter upon a regular course of study, his father removed to Rome, and placed him in a public school, under an eminent Greek master. Here he gave indications of those shining abilities, which rendered him afterwards so illustrious. His school-fellows carried home such stories of his extraordinary powers, that their parents were often induced to visit the school, for the sake of seeing a youth of such endowments.

Encouraged by the promising genius of his son Cicero's father spared no cost or pains to improve it by the help of the ablest professors. Among other eminent instructors, he enjoyed the teaching of the poet Archias. Under this master, he applied himself chiefly to poetry, to which he was naturally addicted and made such proficiency in it, that, while he was still a boy, he composed and published a poem, called Glaucus Pontius.

After finishing the course of juvenile studies, it was the custom to change the dress of the boy for that of the man, and

take what they called the *manly gown*, or the ordinary robe of the citizen. This was an occasion of rejoicing, for the youth thus passed from the power of his tutor into a state of greater liberty. He was at the same time introduced into the forum, or great square of the city, where the assemblies of the people were held. Here also, they were addressed by the magistrates, and here all the public pleadings and judicial transactions took place.

When Cicero was sixteen years old, he was introduced to this place, with all customary solemnity. He was attended by the friends and dependants of the family, and after divine rites were performed in the capital, he was committed to the special protection of Q. Mucius Scævola, the principal lawyer as well as statesman of that age.

Young Cicero made good use of the advantages he enjoyed. He spent almost his whole time in the society of his patron, carefully treasuring up in his memory the wisdom that fell from his lips. After his death, he came under the instruction of another of the same family – Scævola, the high priest, a person remarkable for his probity and skill in the law.

The legal profession, as well as that of arms and eloquence, was a sure recommendation to the first honors of the republic; for it appears to have been the practice of many of the most eminent lawyers to give their advice gratis to all that asked it. It was the custom of the old senators, eminent for their wisdom and experience, to walk up and down the forum in the morning, freely offering their assistance to all who had occasion to consult them,

not only in cases of law, but in relation to their private affairs. At a later period, they used to sit at home, with their doors open, upon a kind of throne, or raised seat, giving access and audience to all who might come.

It is not surprising that a profession thus practised should be honored among the Roman people, nor is it wonderful that Cicero's ambitious mind should have been attracted by so obvious a road to honor and preferment. But his views were not satisfied with being a mere lawyer. He desired especially to be an orator; and, conceiving that all kinds of knowledge would be useful in such a profession, he sought every opportunity to increase his stores of information. He also attended constantly at the forum, to hear the speeches and pleadings; he perused the best authors with care, so as to form an elegant style; and cultivated poetry, for the purpose of adding elegance and grace to his mind. While he was thus engaged, he also studied philosophy, and, for a time, was greatly pleased with Phædrus, the Epicurean, who then gave lessons at Rome. Though he retained his affection for the amiable philosopher, Cicero soon rejected his system as fallacious.

It was always a part of the education of the young gentlemen of Rome, to learn the art of war by personal service, under some general of name and experience. Cicero accordingly took the opportunity to make a campaign with Strabo, the father of Pompey the Great. During this expedition, he manifested the same diligence in the army that he had done in the forum, to

observe everything that passed. He sought to be always near the person of the general, that nothing of importance might escape his notice.

Returning to Rome, Cicero pursued his studies as before, and about this time, Molo, the Rhodian, one of the most celebrated teachers of eloquence of that age, coming to the city to deliver lectures upon oratory, he immediately took the benefit of his instructions, and pursued his studies with ceaseless ardor. His ambition received an impulse at this time, from witnessing the fame of Hortensius, who made the first figure at the bar, and whose praises fired him with such emulation, that, for a time, he scarcely allowed himself rest from his studies, either day or night.

He had in his own house a Greek preceptor, who instructed him in various kinds of learning, but more particularly in logic, to which he paid strict attention. He, however, never suffered a day to pass, without some exercise in oratory, particularly that of declaiming, which he generally performed with some of his fellow-students. He sometimes spoke in Latin, but more frequently in Greek, because the latter furnished a greater variety of elegant expressions, and because the Greek masters were far the best, and could not correct and improve their pupils, unless they declaimed in that language.

Cicero had now passed through that course of discipline, which, in his treatise upon the subject, he lays down as necessary for the formation of an accomplished orator. He declares that no man should pretend to this, without being acquainted with

everything worth being known, in art and nature; that this is implied in the very name of an orator, whose profession is to speak upon every subject proposed to him, and whose eloquence, without knowledge, would be little better than the prattle and impertinence of children.

He had learnt grammar and the languages from the ablest teachers, passed through the studies of humanity and the polite letters with the poet Archias been instructed in philosophy by the principal philosophers of each sect – Phædrus the epicurean, Philo the academic, Diodorus the Stoic – and acquired a thorough knowledge of the law from the greatest jurists and statesmen of Rome – the two Scævolas.

These accomplishments he regarded but as subservient to the object on which his ambition was placed, – the reputation of an orator. To qualify himself, therefore, particularly for this, he had attended the pleadings of the greatest speakers of his time, heard the daily lectures of the most eminent orators of Greece, constantly written compositions at home, and declaimed them under the correction of these masters.

That he might lose nothing which would in any degree improve and polish his style, he spent the intervals of his leisure in the company of ladies, especially those who were remarkable for elegant conversation, and whose fathers had been distinguished for their eloquence. While he studied the law, therefore, under Scævola, the augur, he frequently conversed with his wife, Lælia, whose discourse he says was tinged with

all the eloquence of her father, Lælius, the most polished orator of his time. He also frequented the society of her daughter, Mucia, as well as that of two of her granddaughters, who all excelled in elegance of diction, and the most exact and delicate use of language.

It is impossible not to admire the noble views which Cicero had formed of the profession to which he was to devote his life. Nor can we withhold praise for the diligence, energy and judgment with which he trained himself for entering upon the theatre of his ambition. If in all respects he is not to be regarded as a model for imitation, still, his example is thus far worthy of emulation to all those who seek to enjoy a virtuous and lasting fame.

Thus adorned and accomplished, Cicero, at the age of twenty-six years, presented himself at the bar, and was soon employed in several private causes. His first case of importance was the defence of S. Roscius, of Ameria, which he undertook in his twenty-seventh year; the same age at which Demosthenes distinguished himself at Athens.

The case of Roscius was this. His father was killed in the recent proscription of Sylla, and his estate, worth about £60,000 sterling, was sold, among the confiscated estates of the proscribed, for a trifling sum, to L. Cornelius Chrysogonus, a young favorite slave, whom Sylla had made free, and who, to secure possession of it, accused the son of the murder of his father, and had prepared evidence to convict him; so that the

young man was likely to be deprived, not only of his fortunes, but, by a more villanous cruelty, of his honor also, and his life.

The tyrant Sylla was at this time at the height of his power. Fearing his resentment, therefore, as well as the influence of the prosecutor, the older advocates of Rome refused to undertake the defence of Roscius, particularly as it would lead them into an exposure of the corruptions of the age, and the misdemeanors of those high in rank and office.

But Cicero readily undertook it, as a glorious opportunity of enlisting in the service of his country, and giving a public testimony of his principles, and his zeal for that liberty to the support of which he was willing to devote the labors of his life. In the management of the cause, he displayed great skill and admirable eloquence. Roscius was acquitted, and Cicero was applauded by the whole city for his courage and address. From this period he was ranked as one of the ablest advocates of Rome.

Having occasion in the course of his pleading to mention that remarkable punishment which their ancestors had contrived for the murder of a parent – that of sewing the criminal alive into a sack, and throwing him into a river – he says, "that the meaning of it was, to strike him at once, as it were, out of the system of nature, by taking him from the air, the sun, the water, and the earth; that he who had destroyed the author of his being, should lose the benefit of those elements whence all things derive their being. They would not throw him to the beasts, lest the contagion of such wickedness should make the beasts themselves

more furious; they would not commit him naked to the stream, lest he should pollute the very sea, which was the purifier of all other pollutions; they left him no share of anything natural, how vile or common soever; for what is so common as breath to the living, earth to the dead, the sea to those who float, the shore to those who are cast up? Yet these wretches live so, as long as they can, as not to draw breath from the air; die so, as not to touch the ground; are so tossed by the waves, as not to be washed by them; so cast out upon the shore, as to find no rest, even on the rocks."

This passage was received with acclamations of applause; yet, speaking of it afterwards himself, Cicero calls it "the redundancy of a juvenile fancy, which wanted the correction of his sounder judgment; and, like all the compositions of young men, was not applauded so much for its own sake, as for the hopes which it gave of his more improved and ripened talents."

The popularity of his cause, and the favor of the audience, induced Cicero, in the course of his plea, to expose the insolence and villany of the favorite, Chrysogonus, with great freedom. He even ventured some bold strokes at Sylla himself. He took care, however, to palliate these, by observing, that through the multiplicity of Sylla's affairs, who reigned as absolute on earth as Jupiter in heaven, it was not possible for him to know everything that was done by his agents, and that he was perhaps forced to connive at some of the corrupt practices of his favorites.

Soon after this trial, Cicero set out for the purpose of visiting Greece and Asia, the fashionable tour of that day with those

who travelled for pleasure or improvement. At Athens he spent six months, renewing the studies of his youth, under celebrated masters. He was here initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, the end and aim of which appear to have been to inculcate the unity of God and the immortality of the soul.

From Athens, he passed into Asia, where he was visited by the principal orators of the country. These kept him company through the remainder of his tour, frequently exercising themselves together in oratorical exhibitions. They came at last to Rhodes, where Cicero applied to Molo, and again became his pupil. On a public occasion he made an address at the end of which, the company were lavish of their praises. Molo alone was silent, till, observing that Cicero was somewhat disturbed, he said, "As for you, Cicero, I praise and admire you, but pity the fortune of Greece, to see arts and eloquence, the only ornaments which were left to her, transplanted by you to Rome."

Soon after Cicero's return from his travels, he pleaded the cause of the famous comedian, Roscius, whom a singular merit in his art had recommended to the familiarity and friendship of the greatest men of Rome. The case was this. One Fannius had made over to Roscius, a young slave, to be trained for the stage, on condition of a partnership in the profits which the slave should acquire by acting. The slave was afterwards killed, and Roscius prosecuted the murderer for damages, and obtained, by composition, a little farm, worth about 800 pounds, for his particular share. Fannius also sued separately, and was supposed

to have gained as much, but, pretending to have recovered nothing, sued Roscius for the moiety of what he had received.

One cannot but observe, from Cicero's pleading, the wonderful esteem and reputation which Roscius enjoyed – of whom he draws a very amiable picture. "Has Roscius, then," said he, "defrauded his partner? Can such a stain adhere to such a man, who – I speak it with confidence – has more integrity than skill, more veracity than experience; whom the people of Rome know to be a better man than he is an actor, and, while he makes the first figure on the stage in his art, is worthy of the senate for his virtues?"

His daily pay for acting is said to have been about thirty pounds sterling. Pliny computes his yearly profit at 4000 pounds; but Cicero seems to rate it at 5000 pounds. He was generous, benevolent, and a contemner of money; after he had raised an ample fortune from the stage, he devoted his talents to the public, for many years, without pay; whence Cicero urges it as incredible that he, who in ten years past might honestly have gained fifty thousand pounds, which he refused, should be tempted to commit a fraud for the paltry sum of four hundred. We need but add that the defence was effectual.

Soon after Cicero's return to Rome, he, being about thirty years of age, was married to Terentia, a lady of good station in life, and of large fortune. Shortly after, he was a candidate for the office of quæstor, in which he succeeded by the unanimous suffrage of the tribes.

The provinces of the quæstors being distributed by lot, the island of Sicily fell to Cicero's share. This was called the granary of the republic, and this year, there being great scarcity at Rome, the people were clamorous for a supply. As it was a part of the duty of the quæstors to supply the city with corn, a difficult duty devolved upon Cicero; for, while he was to see that Rome was adequately furnished, it was necessary to avoid impoverishing the island. He, however, acquitted himself with the greatest prudence and address, displaying courtesy to the dealers, justice to the merchants, generosity to the inhabitants, and, in short, doing all manner of good offices to everybody. He thus obtained the love and admiration of the Sicilians, and, at his departure, they paid him greater honors than had ever been bestowed, even upon their own governors.

In his hours of leisure, Cicero pursued his rhetorical studies, making it a rule never to let a day pass without some exercise of this kind. At the expiration of his year, he left the island, and, on his return to Rome, he stopped at Baiae, the chief seat of pleasure at that time in Italy, and where there was a perpetual resort of the rich and great, as well on account of its delightful situation, as for the use of its luxurious baths and tepid waters.

Pleased with the success of his administration, and flattering himself that all Rome was celebrating his praises, he reached this place, and mingled amongst the crowd. What was his disappointment and mortification, to be asked by the first friend he met, "How long since you left Rome, and what is the news

there?" "I came from the provinces," was the reply. "From Africa, I suppose," said one of the bystanders. "No, I came from Sicily," said Cicero, a little vexed. "How, did you not know that Cicero was quæstor of Syracuse?" said another person present; thus showing his ignorance, while he pretended to be wiser than the rest. This incident humbled Cicero for the time, and made him feel that he had not yet made himself so conspicuous as to live perpetually in the eye of so mighty a city as Rome.

Having now devoted himself to a life of business and ambition, he omitted none of the usual arts of recommending himself to popular favor, and facilitating his advancement to the highest honors. "He thought it absurd," says Plutarch, "that, when every little artificer knew the name and use of all his tools, a statesman should neglect the knowledge of men, who were the proper instruments with which he was to work; he made it his business, therefore, to learn the name, the place, and the condition of every eminent citizen; what estate, what friends, what neighbors he had; and could readily point out their several houses, as he travelled through Italy."

This knowledge was deemed so necessary at Rome, where the people expected to be courted by their public men, that every individual who aspired to official dignities, kept a slave or two in his family, whose sole business it was to know the name and person of every citizen at sight, so that he might whisper them to his master as he passed through the streets, and enable him to salute them familiarly, as particular acquaintances. Such

artifices, which appear degrading in our day, were by no means beneath the practice of one so elevated in his sense of propriety as Cicero.

Having reached his thirty-seventh year, and being therefore eligible to the office of edile, he offered himself as a candidate, and was elected by the people. Before he entered upon its duties, however, he undertook the prosecution of C. Verres, the late prætor of Sicily, charged with many flagrant acts of injustice, rapine and cruelty, during his triennial government of that island. This was one of the most memorable transactions of Cicero's life, and has given him greater fame than any other.

In order to obtain the evidence, he proceeded to Sicily, where he was received with the greatest kindness and favor, though every art was resorted to, by the agents of Verres, to obstruct his inquiries. On his return, he found the most formidable preparations to resist him. Hortensius was engaged for Verres and several of the leading families had taken his part. Cicero, however, produced his witnesses, whose depositions overwhelmed the criminal with such proofs of guilt, that Hortensius had nothing to say for his client, who submitted without defence to a voluntary exile.

From this account, it appears, that, of the seven orations on the subject of this trial, which now remain among the works of Cicero, two only were spoken, and these contain little more than a statement of the whole case. The five others were published afterwards, as they were prepared, and intended to be spoken, if

Verres had made a regular defence.

From the evidence produced, it appears that every species of rapine was practised without scruple by Verres, during his prætorship. Cicero estimated the amount of his plunder at 800,000 pounds sterling, or nearly four millions of dollars. It is shocking to read the black catalogue of this man's crimes; yet, such was the corruption of society, especially among the higher classes, that Cicero, instead of gaining favor by his exposure of these abuses, brought upon himself the hatred and ill-will of the largest portion of the nobility. They doubtless looked upon the public offices as their inheritance, and did not like to see the accustomed privileges of the provincial governors abridged. We may add here that Verres continued long in a miserable exile, deserted and forgotten by his former friends, and was actually relieved in his necessities by the generosity of Cicero. He was afterwards proscribed and murdered by Mark Antony, in order to obtain some fine statues, which he had obtained by robbery, during his government in Sicily, and which he had refused to part with, even in the extremity of his poverty.

From the impeachment of Verres, Cicero entered upon the office of edile, and in one of his speeches gives a short account of its duties. "I am now chosen edile," says he, "and am sensible of what is committed to me by the Roman people. I am to exhibit with the greatest solemnity the most sacred sports to Ceres, Liber, and Libera; am to appease and conciliate the mother Flora to the people and city of Rome, by the celebration of the public

games; am to furnish out those ancient shows, the first which were called Roman, with all possible dignity and religion, in honor of Jupiter, Juno, Minerva; am to take care also of all the sacred edifices, and, indeed, of the whole city."

The people of Rome were passionately fond of the public games and diversions, and the allowance for them being small, the ediles were obliged to supply the rest. Many of them, in their ambition to flatter the people and obtain their favor, incurred such expense in these entertainments, as to involve themselves in ruin. Every part of the empire was ransacked for whatever was rare and curious to increase the splendor of these shows; the forum, in which they were exhibited, was usually beautified with porticoes for the purpose, and these were decorated with the choicest pictures and statues, which Rome, and indeed, all Italy could furnish. Several of the great men of Cicero's time had distinguished their magistracy by their magnificence, some of them having entertained the city with stage plays, in which the scenes were entirely covered with silver. Cæsar, in the sports exhibited upon the occasion of his father's funeral, caused the entire furniture of the theatre to be made of solid silver, so that the wild beasts trod upon that metal.

Unseduced by these examples, Cicero took the middle course, which was suited to his circumstances. In compliance with the custom, he gave three entertainments, which were conducted with taste, and to the satisfaction of the people. The Sicilians gave him effectual proofs of their gratitude by supplying him

largely with provisions for the use of his table and the public feasts he was obliged to provide. Cicero, however, took no private advantage of these gifts, for he distributed the whole to the poor.

Soon after leaving the office of edile, Cicero was chosen prætor; a magistrate next in dignity to a consul. The business of the prætors was to preside and judge in all causes, especially of a public or criminal kind. There were eight of them, and their several jurisdictions were assigned by lot. It fell to Cicero to hear charges of extortion and rapine, brought against magistrates and governors of provinces. In this office, he acquired great reputation for integrity and impartiality – qualities, in the corrupted state of Rome, scarcely to be found, either in public or private life, among men of high stations. While he seemed full of employment as prætor, and attentive to his duties in the senate, Cicero still had a large practice as advocate. It is evident that nothing but ceaseless industry and wonderful facility in the despatch of business, could have enabled him to discharge his multifarious duties, and with such surpassing ability.

His office of prætor having expired, Cicero now fixed his hopes upon the consulship. While he was aiming at this, and resorting to all the ordinary means of attaining his object, by flattering the people, allaying the hostility of the nobles, and strengthening his interest on every hand, he was expending large sums of money in decorating his several villas, especially that of Tusculum, in which he took the greatest pleasure. This was situated in the neighborhood of Rome, and furnished him an

easy retreat from the hurry and fatigue of the city. Here he built several rooms and galleries, in imitation of the schools and porticoes of Athens, in which he was accustomed to hold philosophical conversations with his learned friends. He had given Atticus, a lover of the arts, who resided at Athens, a general commission to purchase for him pictures, statues and other curiosities; and Atticus, having a rare taste in these matters, thus assisted him to embellish and enrich his residence with a choice collection of works of art and literary treasures, of various kinds.

Cicero, being now in his forty-third year, became eligible as consul, and offered himself as a candidate for that high office. As the election approached, his interest appeared to take the lead; for the nobles, envious and jealous of him as they were, were alarmed by the threatening aspect of the times, and saw the necessity of entrusting the consular power to strong and faithful hands. The intrigues of Cæsar, the plots of Cataline, the ambition of Pompey, seemed to heave and convulse the elements of society to its foundation, and portend a storm which threatened the very existence of the state. Thus, by the voices of the people as well as the favor of the patricians, Cicero was proclaimed First Consul, and Antonius was chosen his colleague.

This year, Cicero's father died in a good old age, and he gave his daughter Tullia, in marriage, at the age of thirteen, to C. Piso Frugi, a young nobleman of great hopes and of one of the best families in Rome. He was also much gratified by the birth of a

son and heir to his family.

Cicero had now passed through the usual gradations to the highest honors which the people could bestow, or a citizen desire. He entered upon his trust with a patriotic determination to discharge its duties, not so much according to the fleeting humor, as the lasting interests of the people. The most remarkable event of his consulship was the conspiracy of Cataline, which he detected by his sagacity, and defeated by his courage and address.

Cataline was adapted by art and nature, to be the leader of desperate enterprises. He was of an illustrious family, of ruined fortunes, profligate heart, undaunted courage and unwearied industry. He had a capacity equal to the hardest attempt, a tongue that could seduce, an eloquence to persuade, a hand to execute. His character, compounded of contradictory qualities – of great virtues, mastered by still greater vices – is forcibly drawn by Cicero himself.

"Who," said he, "was more agreeable at one time to the best citizens? Who more intimate at another with the worst? Who a man of better principles? Who a fouler enemy to this city? Who more intemperate in pleasure? Who more patient in labor? Who more rapacious in plundering, who more profuse in squandering? He had a wonderful faculty of engaging men to his friendship and obliging them by his observance; sharing with them in common whatever he was master of; serving them with his money, his interest, his pains, and, when there was occasion, by the most daring acts of villany, moulding his nature to his purposes, and

bending it every way to his will. With the morose, he could live severely; with the free, gayly; with the old, gravely; with the young, cheerfully; with the enterprising, audaciously; with the vicious, luxuriously. By a temper so various and pliable, he gathered about him the profligate and the rash from all countries, yet held attached to him, at the same time, many brave and worthy men, by the specious show of a pretended virtue."

Associated in the plot with Cataline, were about thirty-five individuals as leaders, some of them senators, and all of them men of rank and consideration. Several were from the colonies and the larger towns of Italy. Among the most important of these persons were Lentulus and Cethegus, both patricians, possessing powerful family influence; the two Syllas nephews of the dictator; Cassius, who was a competitor with Cicero for the consulship, and Autronius, who had obtained an election to that office, but was not permitted to hold it, on account of his gross briberies. Julius Cæsar was suspected of being also engaged in the scheme, but it is probable that while he was willing to see it attempted, hoping to be benefited by the convulsion that might follow, he was too wary to commit himself by any overt act of treason.

A meeting of the conspirators was finally held, in which it was resolved that a general insurrection should be raised throughout Italy, the different parts of which were assigned to different leaders. Cataline was to put himself at the head of the troops in Etruria; Rome was to be set on fire in different places at

once, under the direction of Cassius, and a general massacre of the senate, with all the enemies of the conspirators, was to be affected under the management of Cithegus. The vigilance of Cicero being the chief occasion of their apprehensions, two knights of the company undertook to gain access to his house early the next morning, upon pretence of business, and, rushing into his chamber, to kill him in his bed.

But no sooner was the meeting over, than Curius, one of the assembly, and in the interest of Cicero, sent him a particular account of all that had transpired. He immediately imparted the intelligence to some of the chiefs of the city, who assembled at his house that night, and made preparations for the emergency. The two knights came before break of day to Cicero's house, but had the mortification to find it carefully guarded. Cataline had set out in the hope of surprising the town of Preneste, one of the strongest fortresses of Italy, and within twenty five miles of Rome; but Cicero's messenger anticipated him, and when the attack was made the next night, he found the place so well guarded, as to forbid an assault.

Cicero now assembled the senate at the temple of Jupiter, in the capital, where they were accustomed to meet only in times of public alarm, and laid before them the facts which we have narrated. Cataline had returned to Rome, and being a member of the senate, met the charge with profound dissimulation and the most subtle cunning. Cicero, however, poured forth upon him such a torrent of invective, and placed his guilt in so strong a

light, that the conspirator became desperate, made a threatening speech to the senate, and left the hall. That night, he departed and repaired with expedition to head the forces at Etruria. The result of the whole enterprise was, that several of the accomplices were executed, and Cataline himself fell bravely fighting at the head of those troops he had induced to join his cause. Cicero received the thanks of the senate, and the most unbounded applause at the hands of the people.

Cicero's administration being now at an end, nothing remained but to resign the consulship, according to custom, in an assembly of the people, and declare upon oath that he had administered the office with fidelity. It was usual for the consul, under such circumstances, to address the people, and on the present occasion an immense concourse of people met to hear the farewell speech of Cicero. But Metellus, one of the new tribunes, ambitious to signalize himself by some display of that remarkable veto power committed to the tribunes, determined to disappoint the orator and the audience.

Accordingly, when Cicero had mounted the rostrum, and was about to address the people, Metellus interfered, remarking that he who had put citizens to death unheard, ought not to be permitted to speak for himself. This was a reflection upon Cicero, because the associates of Cataline had been executed by a vote of the senate, without the ordinary trial. Cicero, however, was never at a loss, and, instead of pronouncing the usual form of the oath, exalted his voice so that all the people might hear

him, saying, "I have saved the republic and the city from ruin!" The vast multitude caught the sounds, and, with one acclamation, declared, "You have sworn the truth!" Thus, the intended affront of Metellus was turned to the advantage of Cicero, and he was conducted from the forum to his house with every demonstration of respect by the whole city.

It was about this period that Cicero is supposed to have pronounced his oration, still extant, in defence of his old preceptor, Archias. He, doubtless, expected from his muse an immortality of fame; for Archias had sung in Greek verse the triumphs of Marius over the Cimbri, and of Lucullus over Mithridates. He appears, however, to have died without celebrating the consulship of Cicero; and Archias, instead of adding to the fame of the orator, would have been buried in complete oblivion, had not his memory been perpetuated in the immortal pages of his pupil.

Pompey the Great now returned to Rome, in the height of his fame and fortunes, from the Mithridatic war. It had been apprehended that he was coming back to Rome, at the head of his army, to seize upon the government. It is certain that he had this in his power, and Cæsar, with the tribune Metellus, was inviting him to it. But he seemed content, for the time, with the glory he had achieved. By his victories he had extended the boundaries of the empire into Asia, having reduced three powerful kingdoms there, Pontus, Syria and Bithynia, to the condition of Roman provinces, taken the city of Jerusalem, and left the other nations

of the east, as far as the Tigris, tributary to the republic.

For these great services, a triumph was decreed him, which lasted two days, and was the most splendid that had ever been seen in Rome. Of the spoils, he erected a temple to Minerva, with an inscription giving a summary of his victories: – "that he had finished a war of thirty years; had vanquished, slain, and taken two millions one hundred and eighty-three thousand men; sunk or taken eight hundred and forty-six ships; reduced to the power of the empire a thousand five hundred and thirty-eight towns and fortresses, and subdued all the countries between the lake Mœris and the Red Sea."

The spectacle which Rome, at this period, presents is full of warning to mankind. In the very height of her pride and her power, holding the whole civilized world in her grasp, she was still torn with dissensions, and corrupted through every vein and artery of society. With political institutions favorable to liberty, and calculated to promote public and private virtue; yet vice and crime stained the character of public men, while profligacy, in every form, characterized the people at large.

Nor could anything better be expected; for the general policy of the nation was alike wicked and unwise. Instead of seeking prosperity by the peaceful arts of life, they sought to enrich themselves by robbing other nations. War was the great trade of the state; the soldier was a hero; a successful general, the idol of the nation. The greatest plunderer received the greatest honors, and glory was proportioned to the blood spilled and the

spoils obtained. A system so immoral could not fail to debauch the nation, nor was it difficult to see that, from robbing other countries, the victorious general, having attached the soldiery to himself by leading them on to booty, would soon learn to turn his arms against the country. Such had now become the experience of Rome; and the natural course of ambition seemed to be to obtain the command of an army in some of the provinces, gorge the soldiers with plunder, and, having become the idol of the troops, to march upon Rome and seize, by intimidation or force, the sceptre of power. Such a course had been expected of Pompey, and was soon after adopted by Cæsar.

The triumvirate, consisting of Cæsar, Pompey and Crassus, was now formed, and Cicero yielded, for a time, to their power. His patriotism and integrity were obstacles, however, to the success of their schemes, and he became the object of their hatred and persecution. Perceiving the storm that was ready to burst over him, he threw himself at the feet of Pompey and begged his protection. This, however, was refused; and seeing no alternative but to defend himself by force, or retreat till the storm had blown over, he adopted the latter course by the advice of Cato and Hortensius. He left the city, and attended by a numerous train of friends, pursued his way to Sicily.

After his departure, the dissolute Clodius, who had become tribune, caused a law to be passed, denouncing Cicero in violent terms, and forbidding all persons, on pain of death, to harbor or receive him. Immediately after, his houses, both in the city

and country, were given up to plunder; the marble columns of his dwelling on the Palatine hill were carried away by one of the consuls, and the rich furniture of his Tusculum villa, by another. Even the ornamental trees of his plantations were taken up and transplanted to one of his neighbor's grounds. To make the loss of his house in Rome irretrievable, Clodius caused the space to be consecrated to the service of religion, and a temple to be built upon it, dedicated to the goddess of liberty!

Nor did the vengeance of Cicero's enemies stop here. Clodius pursued his wife and children with the same fury, and made several attempts to gain access to his son, then six years old, with the intention of putting him to death. But the child was carefully guarded, and finally removed from the reach of his malice. Terentia took sanctuary in the temple of Vesta, but she was dragged forcibly out, and insolently examined as to the concealment of her husband's property. Being a woman of singular spirit, however, she bore these indignities with masculine courage.

The desolation of Cicero's fortunes at home, and the misery which he suffered abroad, in being deprived of everything that was dear to him, soon made him repent his flight. His suffering was increased on reaching Sicily, for there he found his former friends afraid to receive him, in consequence of the decree of banishment which had been passed at Rome, and which forbade him to remain within four hundred miles of the city. He therefore found it necessary to leave Sicily, and after various changes of

opinion, he resolved to proceed to Thessalonica, in Macedonia. Here he took up his residence with his friend Plaucius, who treated him with the utmost kindness.

Cicero was so dejected by his misfortunes, that he shut himself up in his apartments, and refused to see all company. When his brother, Quintus, was on his way from Asia to Rome, Cicero felt incapable of supporting an interview, and did not see him, so deeply were his feelings affected. At the same time, his letters to his friends were full of regret, complaint and despondency. It is obvious that, in this period of trial, he displayed great weakness of character, though it is probable that his affectionate disposition – his fondness for his children, and love of his friends – rendered separation from them an evil almost worse than death. It would seem, also, that he had so long enjoyed the homage paid to his talents, had so long lived in the blaze of popular favor, that his present exile seemed like being deprived of the very light of heaven.

But the period of his return to Rome was now approaching. Clodius, by a series of the most flagrant outrages, made himself hated at Rome, and finally put himself in opposition to Pompey himself. The people at large were favorable to Cicero, and it was not long before the senate, with great unanimity, passed a resolution favorable to his recall. Pompey urged the measure with ardor, and declared that Cicero ought to be received with such honors, as might atone for the sorrows of his exile.

Preparations were made to obtain the passage of a law

coinciding with the resolve of the senate; but Clodius, with his slaves and a multitude of hired gladiators, resisted the tribunes who sought to gain possession of the market-place, for that purpose. Several bloody encounters followed, and for a time the streets of Rome were deluged with blood. The dead bodies were thrown into the Tiber, which were so numerous as almost to obstruct its channel. Nothing can better show the greatness of Cicero's reputation, than the facts now transpiring in Rome. For several months the attention of the people of that city, and of Italy, was wholly occupied with the question of his recall. The ambassadors of kings, the messengers of princes, – affairs which involved the fate of nations – were all laid aside, till this absorbing subject could be disposed of.

The senate, after long deliberation, and in a full assembly, at last passed a decree for his restoration; Clodius, among four hundred and fifty, giving the only vote against it. When the news reached a neighboring theatre, the air was rent with acclamation. Æsopus, the actor, was performing, at the time, the part of Timolean, banished from the country, in one of the plays of Accius. By a happy change of a few words, and giving the utmost effect to his voice, he directed the thoughts of the audience to Cicero, while he uttered these sentences, "What, he who always stood up for the republic! who, in doubtful times, spared neither life nor fortunes – the greatest friend in the greatest dangers – of such parts and talents! O Father – I saw his house and rich furniture all in flames! O, ungrateful Greeks, inconstant people;

forgetful of services, – to see such a man banished, driven from his country, and suffer him to continue in this condition!" It is not possible to describe the thrilling effect of these words, or the enthusiasm of the people. When Lentulus, the consul, who had taken an active part in Cicero's favor, entered the place, they all rose up, stretched out their hands, and, with tears of joy and loud acclamations, testified their thanks. Several of the senators coming into the theatre, were received with the most deafening applause. Clodius also making his appearance was assailed by reproaches, threats and curses.

Though a decree was now regularly obtained for Cicero's return, Clodius had still the courage and address to hinder its sanction by the popular assemblies. There were several meetings of the senate, and the whole city was shaken to its foundation with the question now at issue. All Italy and indeed many of the remote provinces were thrown into a state of ferment by the struggle, and the mighty interests of the empire were postponed till this important question could be settled. Ptolemy, the king of Egypt, driven from his kingdom, and seeking protection at the hands of Rome, even though a lodger in Pompey's house, could not obtain an audience, till Cicero's cause was decided.

The greatest preparations were now made for submitting the question to the popular assemblies. Never had there been known so numerous and solemn a gathering of the Roman people as on this occasion. The whole country seemed to be drawn together. It was reckoned a sin to be absent. Neither age nor infirmity was

thought a sufficient excuse for failing to lend a helping hand to the restoration of Cicero. The meeting was held in the field of Mars, for the more convenient reception of so vast a multitude. It was an august scene. The senators presided at the polls, to see the ballots fairly taken. The result was that Cicero was recalled from exile by the unanimous suffrage of all the hundreds, and to the infinite joy of the whole city!

Cicero, having been advised of the course of events, had returned as far as Brundisium, where he was met by his daughter Tullia. In a few days he received the welcome intelligence of his recall. Setting out immediately for Rome, he everywhere received the most lively demonstrations of joy from the people. Multitudes were drawn together to congratulate him on his return. The whole road, from Brundisium to Rome, being crowded with men, women, and children, seemed like one continued street. Every prefecture, town and colony throughout Italy decreed him statues, or public honors, and sent deputations to him, with tenders of congratulation. Cicero himself remarks, that Italy brought him back on its shoulders, and that the day of his return was worth an immortality.

Cicero was now restored to his dignity, but not to his fortunes. Restitution had been decreed, and the sum of £22,000 was finally paid him. This he accepted, though it was scarcely more than half what he had actually lost. He now attached himself to the cause of Pompey, but spent several years with little public employment, being chiefly occupied with his rhetorical studies

and the business of an advocate. The turbulent Clodius was at last slain by Milo, and Cicero was thus delivered from his most troublesome enemy.

The senate now conferred upon him the office of pro-consul, or governor, of Cilicia, in Asia Minor, whither he immediately proceeded. He discharged the duties of this office with ability, and, on his return, was decreed a triumph. But he was prevented from enjoying it by the factious opposition of his enemies. On his return, he found Rome agitated with serious disturbances. The rupture between Cæsar and Pompey had taken place, and the horrors of a civil war seemed to be impending over the republic. In vain did he attempt to reconcile the fierce and haughty rivals.

Cæsar advanced upon Rome, and Pompey was forced to fly with the consuls and the senate. Cæsar had met Cicero at Formiæ, and sought to gain him over to his cause, but though convinced that he would prevail in the coming struggle, he felt himself prompted, by a sense of honor to return to Pompey, who had served him so effectually during his exile. After the fatal battle of Pharsalia and the flight of Pompey, he returned to Rome, where he was graciously received by Cæsar.

He now devoted himself to literary and philosophical pursuits, and, soon after, divorced his wife Terentia, an act which has justly subjected him to much reproach. It is true that she was a woman of an imperious and turbulent spirit, expensive and negligent in her private affairs, busy and intriguing in public matters. But these qualities were in some degree compensated by

her devotion to Cicero, and especially by the energy with which she had sought to effect his return during his exile. His letters to her at this period recognise her efforts in his behalf, and are full of the most tender expressions of affection and esteem.

It must be remarked that the nuptial bond was lightly regarded at this period in Rome, and divorces were so common as to be little thought of. Terentia was soon after married to Sallust, the historian, by which it would seem that her separation from Cicero inflicted upon her no disgrace. Cicero would perhaps have been little blamed, were it not that he was soon after married to a young lady named Publilia, of whom he was guardian, and who had been committed to his care by her father's will. She had a large estate, and this was doubtless Cicero's inducement to the match, if not to the divorce of Terentia. It is the suspicion of such motives, in these transactions, that has sullied the fame of Cicero. We may add here, in respect to Terentia, that she was once or twice married after the death of Sallust, and lived to the age of one hundred and three years.

Cæsar, having established himself as dictator, Cicero was induced to assent to his government. Accordingly, he pronounced a famous oration, in which he mingled as much counsel as panegyric for the despot. He was rapidly regaining his former consideration, when the conspiracy of Brutus and his associates terminated the career of the ambitious usurper. Antony now took Cæsar's place, and while he was prosecuting his designs, Cicero returned to his literary occupations. He went

to Greece for a time, but soon returned, and pronounced those famous orations against Antony, which are called Philippics.

Octavius, known as Augustus Cæsar, and the nephew of Julius Cæsar, united his interests with those of Antony, and having obtained the consulate, soon gained an ascendancy over the senate. Cicero, in his retirement at Tusculum, saw that the power having passed into the hands of desperate men, the liberty of Rome was no more. He soon heard that his own name was included among those of the proscribed. He fled immediately to Astura, on the sea coast, where he found a vessel waiting for him.

He here embarked, but contrary winds drove him back to the shore. At the earnest entreaty of his slaves, he embarked a second time, but returned to await his fate at his country seat near Formiæ, declaring, "I will die in my country, which I have more than once saved." His slaves, seeing the neighborhood already disturbed by the soldiers of Antony, endeavored to convey him away in a litter, but soon discovered the assassins, who had been sent to take his life, at their heels. They prepared for resistance, but Cicero, who felt that death was unavoidable, bowed his head before Pompilius, the commander of the murderers, who had once been saved by his eloquence, and suffered death more courageously than he had borne misfortune.

Thus died Cicero, and with him the liberties of Rome. The dynasty of the emperors was built upon the ruins of the republic, and, continuing for five centuries, was finally extinguished in the gloom of the dark ages. Cicero was killed on the 7th December,

43 B. C., at the age of sixty-three. His head and hands were severed from the body, by his murderers, and carried to Antony, who caused the former to be placed upon the rostra in the forum, between the two hands. The odium of these barbarities fell chiefly upon Antony, yet they left a stain of perfidy and ingratitude upon Augustus, which can never be wiped away.

In his person, Cicero was tall and slender, yet his features were regular and manly. He mingled great dignity with an air of cheerfulness and serenity, that inspired both affection and respect. His constitution was naturally weak, but his prudent habits enabled him to support all the fatigues of an active and studious life, with health and vigor. In dress, he avoided singularity, and was only remarkable for personal neatness and appropriateness of attire. In domestic and social life, his demeanor was exceedingly amiable. He was an affectionate parent, a zealous friend, a generous master. Yet he was not more generous to his friends than placable to his enemies. It was one of his sayings, delivered in a public assembly, that "his enmities were mortal, his friendships immortal."

The moral character of Cicero was not blemished by the stain of any habitual vice. He was, indeed, the shining pattern of virtue in an age, of all others, the most licentious and profligate. His great soul was superior to the sordid passions which engross little minds – avarice, envy and malice. His familiar letters, in which he pours out his whole heart, are free from anything base, immodest or vengeful. A uniform principle of benevolence,

justice, love of his friends and his country, is seen to flow through the whole, inspiring all his thoughts and words and actions.

The failings of Cicero consisted chiefly in his vanity and that despondency under adverse circumstances, which seemed unworthy of his character. With these abatements, we must pronounce him a truly great and good man – the glory of Rome, an honor to human nature. His works, a large portion of which are extant, are among the richest treasures bequeathed to us by antiquity, and there are few minds so exalted, even with the advantages of our own time, as not to find instruction in his pages.

CAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR

This celebrated Roman, famous for his intrigues, his generalship, his eloquence and his talents, was born in the year 100 B. C. He was of a good family, and his aunt Julia was wife of Caius Marius, who had been consul. We know little of him in his youth, though it would seem that he early attracted attention by his abilities and ambition. At the age of fifteen, he left his father, and was made a priest in the temple of Jupiter, the year after. At the age of seventeen, he married Cornelia, a daughter of Cinna. By this marriage, and through his aunt Julia, he was allied both to Marius and Cinna, the two principal opposers of Sylla, who had acquired an ascendancy in Rome, and exercised his power with fearful and bloody tyranny. Soon after his marriage, Cæsar became an object of suspicion to the despot; he was stripped of his office as priest of Jupiter, his wife's dower was confiscated, and he, being threatened with death, deemed it prudent to seek safety in flight.

He wandered up and down the country, concealing himself for a time among the Sabines; but at last he escaped by sea, and went to Bithynia in Asia Minor, and sought protection of king Nicomedes. His stay at this place was, however, short. He re-embarked, and was taken, near the isle of Pharmacusa, by pirates, who were masters of that sea, and blocked up all the passages with a number of galleys and other vessels. They asked

him only twenty talents for his ransom. He laughed at their demand, as the consequence of not knowing him, and promised them fifty talents.

To raise the money he despatched his attendants to different cities, and in the meantime remained, with only one friend and two servants, among these people, who considered murder a trifle. Cæsar, however, held them in great contempt, and used, whenever he went to sleep, to send them an order to keep silence. Thus he lived among them thirty-eight days, as if they had been his guards rather than his keepers.

Perfectly fearless and self-possessed, he joined in their diversions, and took his exercises among them. He wrote poems and orations, and rehearsed them to these pirates; and when they expressed no admiration, he called them dunces and barbarians – nay, he often threatened to crucify them. They were delighted with these freedoms, which they imputed to his frank and facetious vein. But as soon as the money was brought for his ransom, and he had recovered his liberty, he manned some vessels in the port of Miletus, in order to attack these corsairs. He found them still lying at anchor by the island, took most of them, together with the money he had paid them, and caused them to be imprisoned at Pergamus.

After this adventure, Cæsar took lessons of Appolonius Molo, of Rhodes, a celebrated teacher of rhetoric, who had been the instructor of Cicero. He here displayed great talents, especially in an aptitude for eloquence, in which he afterwards excelled.

After this, he served under different generals in Asia, and upon the death of Sylla, returned to Rome, where he soon became conspicuous among the aspiring politicians of the day.

Rome was at this time a republic, in which there was a constant struggle for ascendancy between the aristocracy and the democracy – between the privileged few and the people. Sylla had placed the former on a firm footing; for a time, therefore, Cæsar, who courted the people, took no open part, but looked calmly on, waiting and watching for his opportunity. He, however, seized every occasion to please and flatter the people; he gave expensive entertainments to which they were invited; he attached to his person the talented and enterprising young men; he distributed presents, paid compliments, and said a thousand pleasant things, calculated to flatter those whose favor he desired. He also made public speeches on various occasions, in all of which he avowed sentiments which gratified the plebeians. Thus beginning afar off and steadily approaching his object he was ere long in a situation to realize it. Cato, who had watched him carefully, discovered his dangerous ambition, but he could not prevent the success of his schemes.

At the age of thirty-one, he was chosen by the people, as one of the military tribunes, an office which gave him the command of a legion, or division in the army. The year following, he was quæstor, or receiver of public moneys in Spain; and in the year 68, having returned to Rome, he was chosen edile – an office which gave him charge of the public buildings.

In this situation, he had an opportunity to indulge his taste for magnificence and display; at the same time, he gratified the people. He beautified the city with public edifices and gave splendid exhibitions of wild beasts and gladiators.

He was now thirty-five years old, and being desirous of military glory, he sought a command in Egypt. He offered himself as a candidate – but failed. The next year he took his measures more carefully. The corruption of the voters of Rome, at that time, was such as to excite our disgust. On the day of election, there were stalls, openly kept, where the votes of the freemen were bought, with as little shame, as if they had been common merchandise. We hardly know which most to despise, the crafty leaders, who thus corrupted the people, or the venal voters, who abused and degraded the dearest of privileges.

Though Cæsar was from the beginning a professed champion of the democracy, yet the manner in which he treated those whose support he sought, showed that his designs were selfish; that he wished to make the people instruments of his ambition. A man who will flatter the mass; use false, yet captivating arguments with them; appeal to their prejudices; fall in with their currents of feeling and opinion, even though they may be wrong, may profess democracy but he is at heart an aristocrat: he has no true love for the people; no confidence in them; he really despises them, and looks upon them but as the despicable tools of his ambition. Such was Cæsar, and such is always the popular demagogue. While nothing is more noble than a true democrat

– a true well-wisher of the people – and one who honestly seeks to vindicate their rights, enlighten their minds, and elevate them in the scale of society; so nothing is more base than a selfish desire to govern them, hidden beneath the cloak of pretended democracy.

The measures of Cæsar were now so open, and his real character so obvious, that we should wonder at his success with the people, did we not know the power which flattery exerts over all mankind, and that when a man of rank and talents becomes a demagogue, he is usually more successful than other men. It was so, at least, with Cæsar. He courted the populace on all occasions; he distributed money with a lavish hand, particularly among the poorer voters.

After many intrigues, he obtained the office of prætor, at the end of a sharply contested election. This office was one of high dignity and trust. The prætor administered justice, protected the rights of widows and orphans – presided at public festivals was president of the senate, in the absence of the consul, and assembled or prorogued the senate at his pleasure. He also exhibited shows to the people, and in the festivals of Bona Dea, where none but women were admitted, his wife presided.

In obtaining this office, Cæsar achieved a great triumph. He also increased his power, and reached a situation which enabled him still more to flatter the people. An event, however, occurred about this time, which gave him great annoyance. During the ceremonies in honor of the Bona Dea, at his house, a profligate

person, named Clodius, disguised as a woman, gained access to the festivities. This caused a great deal of scandal, and Cæsar divorced his wife, Pompeia, whom he had married after the death of Cornelia.

In the year 63 B. C., a conspiracy, which had for its object the subversion of the Roman government, was detected by Cicero, the orator, then consul. It was headed by Cataline, a Roman nobleman of dissolute habits, whose life had been stained with many crimes. His accomplices were men of similar character, who took an oath of fidelity to the cause, which they sealed by drinking human blood. After the disclosure of the plot, Cataline braved the senate for a time, but five of his associates being seized, he fled to Gaul, where, having raised some troops, he was attacked, and fell, bravely fighting to the last.

When the trial of the five accomplices came on in the Roman senate, there was but a single person who dared to oppose their execution, and this was Cæsar. His courage, moral or physical, never failed him. In policy and war, he often undertook what might seem the most desperate schemes, yet the event usually bore out his judgment, or his skill and energy generally ensured success. In the present case, he failed; though his speech in the senate had a wonderful effect. Even Cicero wavered. As that speech is handed down by Sallust, it is a masterly performance. It gave Cæsar a high place as an orator, he being now regarded as second to Cicero alone. Though he did not obtain his direct object respecting the conspirators, and was driven from his office by

the aristocratic faction, he gained more than he lost, by increased popularity with the plebeians.

In the year 60 B. C., when the time was approaching for the choice of consuls, Cæsar being a candidate, the aristocratic faction saw that they could not defeat his election; they therefore thought to check him, by associating with him Bibulus, one of their own party. When the election took place, Cæsar and Bibulus were chosen. The latter was rather a weak man, and offered no effectual obstacle to Cæsar's schemes. On one occasion, he determined to check his colleague, and for this purpose, resorted to the use of an extreme power, vested, however, in his hands. It was the custom, before any public business, to consult the augurs. These were officers of state, who were supposed to foretell future events.

The augur sat upon a high tower, where he studied the heavens, and particularly noticed comets, thunder and lightning, rain and tempest. The chirping or flying of birds – the sudden crossing of the path by quadrupeds – accidents, such as spilling salt hearing strange noises, sneezing, stumbling, &c. – were all esteemed ominous, and were the means by which the soothsayers pretended to unravel the fate of men and of nations. When these gave an unfavorable report, a consul could stop public business, and even break up the sittings of the senate. Bibulus resorted to the use of this power, and not only declared that the augurs were unfavorable, but that they would be so all the year! This extravagant stretch of authority was turned to ridicule by Cæsar

and his friends, and the baffled consul, in disgust and shame, shut himself up in his own house. Cæsar was now, in fact, the sole consul of Rome.

Pompey the Great was at this period in the full flush of his fame. His military achievements had been of the most splendid character. He was, therefore, a man of the highest consideration, and even superior to Cæsar in standing. The latter, by a series of intrigues, gained his favor, and these two, rivals at heart, both yearning for supreme authority in Rome, entered into a political alliance, which they cemented by the marriage of Julia, Cæsar's daughter, to Pompey. It mattered not, among these unscrupulous politicians, that Julia had long been betrothed to Marcus Brutus. Cæsar, at this time, also took a wife, named Calpurnia, daughter of Piso – a political match, which greatly enlarged his power. Three great men were now at the head of affairs in Rome – Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus – and this union is called in history the First Triumvirate.

Cæsar was, however, the master as well of the senate as of the people. By his influence, an agrarian law was passed, for the division of some public lands in Campania, among the poorer citizens, which he carried by intimidation. Everything gave way before him; even Cicero, who was in his way, was banished. Cæsar's desire was now to have an army at his command: this he obtained, being appointed to the charge of the provinces of Gaul, on both sides of the Alps, for five years.

From this time, the history of Rome presents a striking

parallel to that of the republic of France during Bonaparte's first campaigns in Italy. In both cases we see a weak republic, torn by contending factions, and rather feeding discontent than seeking tranquillity. In both cases we see vast provinces of the distracted republic occupied by a general of unlimited powers – a man of superior genius, desperate resolves, and fearful cruelty – a man, who, under the show of democratic principles and a love of the people, gains a complete ascendancy over the soldiers, that he may lead them on to victory, bloodshed, plunder, and despotism!

We shall not follow Cæsar in the details of his victorious career. It is sufficient to say, that, in nine campaigns, he waged war against the numerous tribes which occupied the present territory of France, Britain, Switzerland, and Germany. Some of these were warlike and populous nations, and frequently brought into the field immense armies of fierce and formidable soldiery. Though often pushed to extremity, by a series of splendid achievements, Cæsar reduced them all to subjection at last. During this period, it is said that he fought nearly a thousand battles, captured eight hundred towns, slew a million of men, and reduced to captivity as many more! If the warrior's glory is estimated by the blood he sheds, the life he extinguishes, the liberty he destroys – Cæsar's crown must be one of surpassing splendor.

Though Cæsar did not visit Rome during this long period, he was by no means ignorant of what was transpiring there. It was his custom to spend his winters in Cisalpine Gaul, that is, on the

southern side of the Alps, about two hundred and fifty miles from Rome. Here he was able to keep up a correspondence with his friends, and to mingle in all the intrigues that agitated the mighty city – the heart of the empire.

Pompey had at length broken through the alliance with Cæsar, and set up for supreme authority. It was now understood that Cæsar had similar views, and Rome began to look with fear and trembling upon the issue that was approaching between these powerful rivals. Pompey succeeded in getting certain acts passed by the senate, requiring Cæsar to quit his army, and come to Rome. The latter saw danger in this, and while he determined to visit Rome, he resolved that his army should accompany him. The southern boundary of his provinces was a small stream, called the Rubicon. When Cæsar came to this, he hesitated. To cross it with his troops, was a declaration of war. Staggered with the greatness of the attempt, he stopped to weigh with himself its evils and advantages; and, as he stood revolving in his own mind the arguments on both sides, he seemed to waver in his opinion. In a state of doubt, he conferred with such of his friends as were by, enumerating the calamities which the passage of that river would bring upon the world, and the reflections that might be made upon it by posterity. At last, upon some sudden impulse, bidding adieu to his reasonings, and plunging into the abyss of futurity – in the words of those who embark in doubtful and arduous enterprises – he cried out, "The die is cast;" and immediately passed the river.

He now travelled with the utmost rapidity, having but about three hundred horse and five thousand foot. The consternation of the whole country was evinced by the movements visible on all hands – not individuals, only, were seen wandering about, but whole cities were broken up, the inhabitants seeking safety in flight. Pompey himself, with his friends, fled from Rome, and Cæsar entered the city, and took possession of the government without opposition.

A senate was hastily assembled, and the forms of law observed, though in obedience to Cæsar's will. He was declared dictator, and then marched to Brundisium, whither Pompey had fled. After many skirmishes, the two armies met on the plains of Pharsalia, a town of Thessaly, in Greece, and a decisive and bloody engagement took place. Pompey was defeated, and, wandering like a distracted man, came at last to Egypt, where he was treacherously murdered. Cæsar followed, as the remorseless eagle pursues its prey, but finding his rival slain, he repaired in triumph to Rome. These events occurred in the year 48 B. C.

After various proceedings, Cæsar was elected consul for ten years, and declared dictator for life. The mask was now thrown off – the despot stood disclosed. Forty senators, incensed at his subversion of the constitution of Rome, entered into a conspiracy to take his life, and, on the 18th of March, B. C. 44, they stabbed him, as he was entering the senate chamber. Proud even in death, Cæsar muffled his face in his cloak as he fell, that his expiring agonies might not be witnessed.

Thus lived and thus died, Julius Cæsar. His talents were only equalled by his ambition. If he sought glory, it was often by worthy means – by valuable improvements, and real benefits. Yet he hesitated not to trample upon life, principles, bonds, rights – upon liberty – his country – everything that stood in the way of his towering wishes.

He left behind him an account of his battles, written from day to day, as events occurred. These are called Commentaries, and furnish a fund of authentic narrative for history, beside being admired for their elegance of style. It was after a victory over Pharnaces, king of Pontus, in Asia Minor, that he used the remarkable words, *veni, vidi, vinci*– "I came, I saw, I conquered." They well express the celerity and decision of his movements. In private affairs he was extravagant of money; his debts at one time amounted to eight hundred talents – almost a million of dollars. These were paid by his friends. In public concerns he did not appear greedy of wealth. As an evidence of the activity and energy of his faculties, it was said that at the same time he could employ his ear to listen, his eye to read, his hand to write, and his mind to dictate. His disposition led him irresistibly to seek dominion; in battle, he must be a conqueror; in a republic, he must be the master. This leading feature in his character is well illustrated, in his saying to the inhabitants of a village, "I would rather be first here, than second in Rome." His character is delineated by an eminent writer, in the following terms: —

"Such was the affection of his soldiers, and their attachment

to his person, that they, who, under other commanders, were nothing above the common rate of men, became invincible when Cæsar's glory was concerned, and met the most dreadful dangers with a courage which nothing could resist.

"This courage, and this great ambition, were cultivated and cherished, in the first place, by the generous manner in which Cæsar rewarded his troops, and the honors which he paid them. His whole conduct showed that he did not accumulate riches to minister to luxury, or to serve any pleasures of his own, but that he laid them up in a common stock, as prizes to be obtained by distinguished valor; and that he considered himself no farther rich, than as he was in a condition to do justice to the merit of his soldiers. Another thing that contributed to make them invincible, was their seeing Cæsar always take his share in the danger, and never desire any exemption from labor and fatigue.

"As for his exposing his person to danger, they were not surprised at it, because they knew his passion for glory; but they were astonished at his patience under toil, so far, in all appearance, above his bodily powers; for he was of a slender make, fair, of a delicate constitution, and subject to violent headaches, and epileptic fits. He had the first attack of the falling sickness at Corduba. He did not, however, make these disorders a pretence for indulging himself. On the contrary, he sought in war a remedy for his infirmities, endeavoring to strengthen his constitution by long marches, by simple diet, by seldom coming under cover. Thus he contended against his distemper,

and fortified himself against its attacks.

"When he slept, it was commonly upon a march, either in a chariot or a litter, that rest might be no hindrance to business. In the daytime he visited the castles, cities, and fortified camps, with a servant at his side, and with a soldier behind, who carried his sword.

"As a warrior and a general, we behold him not in the least inferior to the greatest and most admired commander the world ever produced; for, whether we compare him with the Fabii, the Scipios, the Metelli – with the generals of his own time, or those who flourished a little before him – with Sylla, Marius, the two Luculli, or with Pompey himself, whose fame in every military excellence, reached the skies, Cæsar's achievements bear away the palm. One he surpassed in the difficulty of the scene of action; another in the extent of the countries he subdued; this, in the number and strength of the enemies he overcame; that, in the savage manners and treacherous dispositions of the people he humanized; one, in mildness and clemency to his prisoners; another, in bounty and munificence to his troops; and all, in the number of battles that he won, and enemies that he killed. In less than ten years' war in Gaul, he took eight hundred cities by assault, conquered three hundred nations, and fought pitched battles, at different times, with three millions of men, one million of which he cut in pieces, and made another million prisoners."

Such was Cæsar, one of the greatest, yet worst of men. It appears that after his death he was enrolled among the gods. It

is evident that a people who looked upon such a being as divine, must have worshipped power, and not virtue; and that what we call vice and crime, were, in their view, compatible with divinity.

HANNIBAL

This great man, a native of Carthage, and son of Hamilcar Barca, was born 247 B. C. At this period, Rome and Carthage were rival powers and both seated upon the borders of the Mediterranean Sea. Rome had been in existence about five hundred years, and had already extended her conquests over Italy and a portion of Spain. She had not yet crossed the Alps, to conquer the more northern Gauls or Goths, but she was rapidly advancing in power; and, about a century after, Greece and Asia Minor fell before her. Already her proud eagle began to spread his wing, and whet his beak for conquest and slaughter.

Rome was a nation of soldiers; and, paying little respect to commerce, manufactures and productive industry, she sought to enrich herself by robbing other countries – thus building herself up by the very means which the Goths and Vandals employed, seven hundred years after, for her destruction. Carthage was, in most respects, the opposite of Rome; her citizens were chiefly devoted to commerce and manufactures. The Mediterranean was dotted over with her vessels, and she had numerous colonies in Spain and along the coasts of Africa.

The city of Rome was the centre of the republic and the seat of government. Here all the laws were enacted; here all the military movements and other affairs of state were decided upon. The city was at this time nearly twenty miles in circuit, and defended by

a triple range of walls. The number of its inhabitants was several millions.

Carthage was also a vast city, situated in Africa, about four hundred miles south-west of Rome, the Mediterranean Sea lying between them. It originated with a small colony of people from Tyre, a maritime city in Syria, about a hundred years before Rome was founded by Romulus. It increased rapidly, and became a flourishing place. The city exercised dominion over the whole country around. Its government was a mixture of aristocracy and democracy; the chief men ruling on all ordinary occasions, but sometimes consulting the people.

The Carthaginians were an industrious nation and appear to have had no taste or leisure for the gladiator fights, the shows of wild beasts, the theatrical exhibitions and other amusements, that excited such deep interest among the idle and dissipated Romans. They were, in many respects, exemplary in their morals – even abstinence from wine being required of the magistrates while in office. Their religion, however, was a gloomy superstition, and their punishments were cruel. They even sacrificed children to their gods, in the earlier periods of their history.

Though chiefly addicted to commerce, the Carthaginians paid great attention to agriculture. The rich men laid out their surplus money in cultivating the lands; and in the time of Hannibal, the whole extent of country around Carthage, which was the territory now called Tunis, was covered with vast herds of the finest cattle, fields waving with corn, vineyards and olive grounds. There were

a multitude of small villages scattered over the country; near to the great city, the whole landscape was studded with the splendid villas of the rich citizens. To such a pitch was the art of agriculture carried, that one Mago wrote twenty-eight books upon the subject. These were carried to Rome, after the conquest of Carthage, and greatly increased the knowledge and skill of the Romans, in the science of husbandry.

It was at a period when these two great powers had already extended themselves so far as to come in frequent collision, that Hannibal was born. His father was a general, who had served in Spain and fought against the Romans in the first Punic war. His mind was filled with hatred of that nation; and while Hannibal was yet a boy of nine years old, and about to accompany his father in his Spanish campaigns, he caused him to kneel before the altar, and swear eternal hatred to the Romans.

Asdrubal, the brother of Hamilcar, succeeded, at the death of the latter, to the command of the Carthaginian army in Spain; at his death, Hannibal, now twenty-one years old, was made general of the whole army, as well by the acclamations of the soldiers, as the decree of the Carthaginian senate. He immediately marched against various barbarous tribes in Spain, yet unsubdued, and quickly reduced them to submission.

During the first Punic war, Carthage had lost her finest colonies – the island of Sicily, as well as the Lipari isles – all of which had fallen into the hands of Rome. She had now recovered from the losses of that war, and Hannibal determined to revenge

the injuries Rome had inflicted upon his country. Accordingly, he laid siege to Saguntum, in Spain, a large city subject to Rome, and situated on the Mediterranean, near the present town of Valencia. Faithful to their alliance, and expecting succors from Rome, the people made the most determined resistance for eight months. They were at last reduced to such fearful extremity for food, that they killed their infant children and fed upon their blood and flesh. Filled with a horrid despair, they finally erected an immense pile of wood, and setting it on fire, the men first hurled their women, slaves and treasures into the blaze, and then plunged into it themselves. Hannibal now entered the city, but, instead of finding rich spoils, he only witnessed a heap of ashes. The solitude of that scene might have touched even a warrior's heart. The present town of Murviedo, the site of the ancient Saguntum and the witness of these horrid scenes, still abounds in remains of Roman architecture.

The second Punic war was begun by these proceedings against Saguntum. Hannibal, who had determined upon the invasion of Italy, spent the winter in making his preparations. Leaving a large force in Africa, and also in Spain, to defend these points, he set out, in the spring of the year 218, with eighty thousand foot and twelve thousand horse, to fulfil his project.

His course lay along the Mediterranean; the whole distance to Rome being about one thousand miles by the land route which he contemplated. When he had traversed Spain, he came to the Pyrenees, a range of mountains separating that country

from Gaul, now France. Here he was attacked by wild tribes of brave barbarians, but he easily drove them back. He crossed the Pyrenees, traversed Gaul, and came at last to the Alps, which threw up their frowning battlements, interposing a formidable obstacle between him and the object of his expedition. No warrior had then crossed these snowy peaks with such an army; and none but a man of that degree of resolution and self-reliance which will not be baffled, would have hazarded the fearful enterprise. Napoleon accomplished the task, two thousand years afterwards, but with infinitely greater facilities.

Hannibal, after a march of five months, descended the southern slopes of the Alps, and poured down upon the soft and smiling plains of Italy. The northern portion, called Cisalpine Gaul, was peopled with Gothic tribes, long settled in the country. They were desirous, however, of throwing off the Roman yoke, and therefore favored the Carthaginian cause. Hannibal, whose army had been greatly reduced in his march, especially in crossing the Alps, remained among some of these people for a time, to recruit, and then proceeded southward toward Rome.

On the banks of the river Tessino he was met by a Roman army despatched against him; but, after a bloody conflict, he was victorious. In a few weeks he again encountered the Romans, and again he triumphed. Thus, the whole of Cisalpine Gaul fell into his hands, and these people, relieved from the presence of the Roman army, aided him freely with every kind of supplies.

Rome now presented a scene of the greatest activity. She was

not yet softened by luxuries, or corrupted by indulgence; she did not, therefore, yield to fear, as in after days, when the wild leaders of the north poured down from the Alps, like an avalanche. She was alarmed, but yet she met the emergency with courage and resolution. Every artisan in the city was busy in preparation, the senate were revolving deep schemes; generals held councils of war; soldiers were recruited and trained; the people ran to and fro in the streets, telling the last news, and recounting some marvellous legend of the Carthaginians and their dreaded leader. All was bustle and preparation.

When the spring of the year 217 B. C. arrived, two Roman armies took the field; one under the consul Flaminius, and the other under the consul Servilius. Hannibal first marched against Flaminius, but in passing the swamps of the river Arno, his army suffered greatly, and he himself lost one of his eyes. Soon after this, Flaminius, who was a rash and headstrong man, came up with him on the banks of the lake Trasimenus, and gave the Carthaginians battle. Here, again, the genius of Hannibal triumphed. The conflict was dreadful, and the water of the lake where the armies met, was red with blood. But the Romans were totally defeated.

After this event, a famous general, Quintus Fabius Maximus, was appointed dictator of Rome, and, under his direction, a new policy was adopted. Instead of sending armies to act offensively against Hannibal at a distance, the defensive system of warfare was rigidly observed. This prudent course, adopted by Fabius,

has given a signification to his name; the *Fabian* policy being a term which is used as synonymous with *prudent* policy. It is thought that Washington, in our revolutionary war, imitated this great Roman general.

But the successes of Hannibal and the disasters of Rome, had not yet ended. In the year 216, another battle was determined upon, and Hannibal met the enemy at Cannæ, near the present city of Naples. Here, again, the Romans were defeated with dreadful slaughter. Not less than forty thousand of their soldiers were slain. To this day, the relics of the fight are ploughed up from the ground, and the spot where the battle took place, is called the "field of blood." If the red stain has long since vanished from the soil, time cannot wash out the bloody record from the memory of man.

Beside this fearful carnage, ten thousand Roman soldiers were taken prisoners. The Carthaginian loss was small. We can only account for such events as these, by the supposition that Hannibal, whose army was scarcely half as large as that of the Romans, was a man greatly superior in capacity even to the able and practised generals of Rome, who were sent against him. Nothing in modern times has been witnessed, to compare with his achievements, except those of Napoleon, operating in the same countries, and also contending against disciplined troops and generals long practised in the military art.

The whole of lower Italy was now in the possession of Hannibal. He had entered the country by the north, and, having

passed Rome, was in the southern portion of the peninsula. It would seem that he was now near the consummation of his wishes, and that the imperial city must fall before him; but such was not the event. A defensive system was still observed, and the city being too formidable for attack, Hannibal was obliged to look around for aid. He applied to Philip of Macedon and the Syracusans, but the Romans contrived to keep both occupied at home.

Hasdrubal, the brother of Hannibal, had charge of the Carthaginian forces in Spain, where he conducted the war with ability. In a great battle, he defeated the Romans; and two generals, by the name of Scipio, fell. Another Scipio was sent thither, and he soon recovered in Spain what the Romans had lost there. Hasdrubal now left that country to join his brother, and, crossing the Alps without opposition, reached Italy. Before he could effect the junction he desired, he was met by the Roman forces, his army cut to pieces and he himself slain. Hannibal was now obliged to act on the defensive. Yet he continued to sustain himself here for a series of years without calling upon Carthage for supplies.

Scipio, having finished the war in Spain, now transported his army across the Mediterranean: thus *carrying the war into Africa*, and giving rise to an expression still in vogue, and significant of effective retaliation. By the aid of Massinissa, a powerful prince of Numidia, now Morocco, he gained two victories over the Carthaginians, who were obliged hastily to recall their great

commander from Italy. He landed at Leptis, and advanced near Zama, five days' journey to the west of Carthage. Here he met the Roman forces, and here, for the first time, he suffered a total defeat. The loss of the Carthaginians was immense, and they were obliged to sue for peace. This was granted on humiliating terms by Scipio, called Africanus, after this victory. Hannibal would still have resisted, but he was compelled by his countrymen to submit. Thus ended the second Punic war, 200 B. C, having continued about eighteen years.

Hannibal now applied himself to the reform of abuses in the government of Carthage. In this he was supported by the people, but he incurred the dislike of certain leading men among his countrymen. These, insensible to his great services, and only guided by their jealousy, sent to the Roman authorities certain representations, calculated to excite their suspicion and arouse their anger against him. Ambassadors were accordingly sent to Carthage, to demand his punishment; but Hannibal, foreseeing the storm, fled to Tyre. From this place he went to Ephesus, and induced Antiochus to declare war against Rome, B. C. 196. He had himself but a subordinate command, and when the war, which proved unfortunate, was over, he was compelled to depart, and seek a refuge with Prusias, prince of Bithynia, in Asia Minor. The Romans, being uneasy so long as their formidable enemy was alive, sent to Prusias to demand that he should be given up. Hannibal, now driven to extremity, and sick of life, destroyed himself by poison, B. C. 183, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

We have no accounts of this wonderful man except from his enemies, the Romans, and nothing from them but his public career. Prejudiced as are these sources of evidence, they still exhibit him as one of the most extraordinary men that has ever lived. Many of the events of his life remind us of the career of Napoleon. Like him, he crossed the Alps with a great army; like him, he was repeatedly victorious over disciplined and powerful forces in Italy; like him, he was finally overwhelmed in a great battle; like him, he was a statesman as well as a general; like him, he was the idol of the army; like him, he was finally driven from his country and died in exile. No one achievement of Bonaparte's life was equal to that of Hannibal in crossing the Alps, if we consider the difficulties he had to encounter; nor has anything in generalship surpassed the ability he displayed in sustaining himself and his army, for sixteen years, in Italy, in the face of Rome, and without asking for assistance from his own country.

During this whole period he never once dismissed his forces, and though they were composed of Africans, Spaniards, Gauls, Carthaginians and Greeks – persons of different laws, languages and habits – never was anything like mutiny displayed among them. How wonderful was the genius that held such a vast number of persons – the fiery spirits of so many different nations – subject to one will, and obedient to one authority! Where can we look for evidence of talent superior to this? We cannot doubt that Hannibal, in addition to his great mind, possessed those personal qualifications, which enabled him to exercise powers of

fascination over all those persons who came into his presence; and that, in this respect too, he bore a resemblance to Napoleon.

We may not approve, yet we can hardly fail to admire, the unflinching hostility of Hannibal to Rome. He had been taught this in his childhood; it came with the first lessons of life, and from the lips of a father; he had sworn it at the altar. Rome was the great enemy of his country; and as he loved the last, he must hate the first. His duty, his destiny, might serve to impel him to wage uncompromising war against Rome; for this he lived – for this, at last, he died.

Nor can we believe that this sentiment, which formed the chief spring of his actions, was unmixed with patriotism. Indeed, this was doubtless at its very root. It was for the eclipse that she cast over Carthage, that he would annihilate Rome. It was from a conviction that one of these great powers must give way to the other – that the existence of Rome boded destruction to Carthage – that he waged uncompromising and deadly war upon the former.

That Hannibal was patriotic, is evinced also by the reforms which he sought to effect in the government of his country. These had for their object the benefit of the people at large. For this, he obtained the confidence of the mass, while he incurred the hostility of the few. It is no evidence against him that he fell a victim to the jealousy thus excited, for such has too often been the fate of the lover of his country.

ALEXANDER, KING OF MACEDON

It is now somewhat more than two thousand years since this warrior flourished; yet his image continues to stand out from the page of history in bold relief, seeming not only to claim our attention, but to challenge our admiration. A brief outline of his history may enable us to judge upon what basis this undying fame is founded.

Alexander was born 354 B. C., on the same day that Erostratus destroyed the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, by fire. A wit of the time remarked that "it was no wonder that the temple of Diana should be burnt at Ephesus, while the goddess was at Macedon, attending the birth of Alexander." Plutarch observes that this witticism was frigid enough to have extinguished the flames. Philip, Alexander's father, being absent at the time of his birth, received three messages in one day: the first informed him that his general, Parmenio, had won a great battle; the second, that his horse had gained the prize at the Olympic games; the third, that his wife had borne him a son.

At the time of Alexander's birth, Macedonia, which lay north of Greece, and now constitutes that part of Turkey called Romelia, had become a warlike and powerful kingdom. Philip was not only an able warrior, but an ambitious and sagacious

statesman. He greatly civilized his own people, trained them to arms, and added to his kingdom several adjacent states. By a series of victories and crafty negotiations he had also become the nominal protector, but real master of Greece. It was against the insidious policy of Philip that Demosthenes pronounced his caustic speeches, which gave rise to the term "Philippics."

Although Philip was ruthless in war and unscrupulous in policy, still he was a very enlightened prince. He understood many of the arts, customs and feelings which belong to civilization; nor was he destitute of noble traits of character. We are told that a Grecian, named Arcadius, was constantly railing against him. Venturing once into the dominions of Philip, the courtiers suggested to their prince that he had now an opportunity to punish Arcadius for his past insults, and to put it out of his power to repeat them. The king took their advice, but in a different way. Instead of seizing the hostile stranger and putting him to death, he sent for him, and then caused him to be dismissed, loaded with courtesies and kindness.

Some time after Arcadius' departure from Macedon, word was brought that the king's old enemy had become one of his warmest friends, and did nothing but diffuse his praises wherever he went. On hearing this, Philip turned to his courtiers, and said with a smile, "Am not I a better physician than you are?" We are also told of numerous instances in which Philip treated his prisoners of war with a kindness quite unusual in the barbarous age in which he lived. Though dissolute in private life, as a

prince he was far in advance of his nation in all that belongs to civilization.

No better evidence of his enlightened views can be required than is afforded by the pains he bestowed upon the education of Alexander, his eldest son, and heir to his throne. He obtained for him the best masters, and finally placed him under the care of Aristotle, then the most learned and famous philosopher of Greece, and one of the most extraordinary men that ever lived. It cannot but be interesting and instructive to trace the history of the greatest warrior, who was, at the same time, the pupil of the greatest philosopher, of antiquity.

Alexander was an apt and attentive student, and easily mastered the studies to which he applied. He was somewhat headstrong if treated with harshness, and he resisted, if an attempt was made to drive him. He, however, was docile and obedient when treated gently. It would seem, that, in this at least, he was very much like the clever boys of our own day. He mastered not only matters of science, but polite literature also. He was greatly delighted with Homer's Iliad, and, it is thought, modelled himself upon the warlike heroes of that poem. In after days, even in his campaigns, he took a copy of this work with him, and in the camp, read it at moments of leisure, and slept with it at night beneath his pillow.

Alexander was greatly attached to Aristotle during his pupilage, though he changed both in feeling and conduct towards him afterwards. Philip seems to have formed a high estimate

of the services rendered by Aristotle. The latter being born at Stagira – and hence called the Stagirite – which had been dismantled, Philip ordered it, in compliment to the philosopher, to be rebuilt, and re-established there the inhabitants which had either fled or been reduced to slavery. He also ordered a beautiful promenade, called Mirza, to be prepared on the borders of the river, for the studies and literary conversation of the people. Here were shown, even in the time of Plutarch, Aristotle's stone seats and shady walks.

It is interesting to remark here, that both Philip and Alexander, powerful sovereigns and men of great minds, were yet inferior, in what constitutes greatness, to Aristotle. They treated him, indeed, as their inferior – an object of their patronage; and it is also true, that both Philip and Alexander are remembered at the present day; but the consequences of their actions ceased ages ago. Not so with Aristotle: his books being preserved, have come down to our times, and for two thousand years have been constantly exercising a powerful influence over mankind. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the schoolmaster is infinitely above the prince; the one lives for a generation, the other for all time; the one deals with external things which perish; the other with knowledge, science – principles – which never die. The one is a being of action, the other of mind; the one may be great for a brief space in the eye of vulgar observation, but he is soon quenched in utter oblivion; the other, though his body be dead, still lives by the power of the spirit. It is desirable to impress this

truth on our hearts, for it shows that true glory lies in cultivating and exercising the mind; while, in comparison, it is a poor and mean ambition, which incites us to seek only worldly power or wealth or station.

At an early period, Alexander displayed noble qualities, amid some vices. He was exceedingly ambitious, and when news came that his father had taken some strong town, or won some great battle, "My father will conquer," he exclaimed impatiently "the whole world, and will leave nothing for me to conquer." Though in the light of our Christian philosophy, nothing more wicked than the feelings here displayed could exist, still it accorded with the education he had received, and was an earnest of that love of war and conquest which signalized his after career. It may be stated, also, that Alexander did not value riches or pleasure, in his youth, but seemed to be always excited by a love of glory; he did not desire a kingdom that should afford him opulence and the means of luxury, but one that would bring wars and conflicts, and the full exercise of ambition. A sad portrait this, viewed in the light of our day – yet the very description of a hero, and almost of a god, in the age and country in which he lived.

When Alexander was about twelve years old, a horse was brought for sale from Thessaly called Bucephalus. The price required was about £2,500 sterling, or \$12,000. Yet when any one attempted to mount him, he became restive and unmanageable. Philip was incensed that such a price should be asked for so vicious a beast, but Alexander had observed

him carefully, and saw that he was indeed a noble creature. He therefore wished to try him. His father rebuked him sharply, but the prince persevered, and desired to mount the horse. "If you are not able to ride him upon trial," said Philip, "what forfeit will you pay?" "The price of the horse," said Alexander. This produced a laugh rather at Alexander's expense – but the forfeit was agreed upon, and he ran to the horse. He had observed that he was startled at his shadow, the sun shining very brightly; so he turned his head to the sun, leaped lightly upon his back, obtained a firm seat, and gave the animal the rein. The noble beast felt, with that quick intelligence of which his race is capable, that one worthy to be his master was on his back, and set forward. Finding him inclined to run, Alexander, nothing daunted, but with a spirit as wild and fearless as his own, and no doubt with a bounding and joyous sympathy, gave him the spur, and made him fly over the plain.

Philip and all his courtiers around him were greatly frightened at first, but soon Alexander wheeled Bucephalus about, and rode him back to the place from which he started. The animal was completely subdued; yet there was something in his proud look, as he now stood still before the admiring throng, which seemed to say, "I yielded, but only to one worthy of being a conqueror." Alexander was received by a shout of acclamation – but Philip was overcome by the noble chivalry of his boy, and wept in very joy. "Seek another kingdom, my son!" said he, in the fulness of his heart, "for Macedon is too small for thee!" Such was the

value in those days set upon personal gallantry and courage; and we know that these qualities are of the utmost importance, when hard blows usually decide the fate of empires.

Everything seemed to show that Alexander had very early acted under the idea of being a king, and of pursuing, in that character, a career of conquest. No doubt all around him, the courtiers, his father and mother, and his teachers had thus trained him, and no doubt all this coincided with his natural turn of mind. He not only showed personal courage, but a precocious desire of practical knowledge. When less than twelve years of age, ambassadors came to visit the court of Macedon from Persia. Philip was absent, and Alexander therefore received them with great politeness, and a sobriety quite astonishing. He asked no trifling or childish questions; but made a great many inquiries about the roads to Persia; the distance from place to place; the situation of certain provinces; the character of their king; how he treated his enemies; in what the power of Persia lay, &c. All this astonished the ambassadors, who, in their excitement, exclaimed, "The boasted sagacity of Philip is nothing to the lofty and enterprising genius of his son!" Such, indeed, were the striking qualities of young Alexander, that the people of Macedon, in their admiration, called the youth king, and his father only general!

Philip was pleased with all this, but as Alexander grew older, troubles sprung up between them. Olympias, the mother of Alexander, was a woman of fierce and restive temper, and she

was justly incensed by a foolish marriage which Philip made with a young lady, named Cleopatra. At the celebration of this union there was great festivity, and the king got drunk. Alexander's mind, having been poisoned by his mother, was in such a state of irritation, that he spoke rudely at the feast. Philip drew his sword, but his passion and the wine he had drunk, caused him to stumble, and he fell upon the floor. "See," said Alexander, insolently – "men of Macedon, see there the man who was preparing to pass from Europe into Asia! He is not able to pass from one table to another!" After this insult, he left the table, and taking his mother, they repaired to Epirus.

Here they spent some time, but Philip at last induced them to come back. Other troubles, however, arose, and finally king Philip was slain by Pausanias, whom he had injured. Olympias was thought to have incited the young man to this desperate act, and suspicion of participation fell upon Alexander.

The latter, now twenty years of age, succeeded to his father's throne. His dominion extended over Macedon and the adjacent tribes to the north, including nearly the whole of that territory which now forms a part of Turkey, and lies between Greece, and the Argentaro mountains. Macedonia itself, was far less civilized than the southern parts of Greece: the people were, indeed, men of a different race, being esteemed barbarous, though the kings claimed to have been of Hellenic origin, and even to trace their lineage to Achilles and Hercules. The nation was much softened in its manners by the wise administration of Philip, while, at the

same time, they were carefully trained in the art of war. The surrounding tribes, still more savage than his own people, and often giving exercise to his arms, still served to fill his ranks with the most daring and powerful soldiery.

Greece, too, constituted a part of the kingdom now left to the youthful Alexander. But his father had only conquered, not consolidated into one empire, his vast dominions. Upon his death, the barbarians on the north, and the states of Greece at the south, feeling themselves liberated from a tyrant, and little fearing a youth of twenty, either revolted or showed a disposition to revolt. Alexander's advisers recommended him to give up Greece, and seek only to subdue the barbarous tribes around him, and to do this by mild measures.

Such a course did not suit the young king. He took the opposite course; marched north as far as the Danube, defeating his principal enemy, and thus securing submission to his authority in that quarter. He then pushed southward, and fell upon the restive Thebans, destroying their city, and reducing the place to a mere heap of ghastly ruins! No less than six thousand of the inhabitants were slain in battle, and three thousand were sold as slaves!

In the midst of the horrors which took place immediately after Thebes was taken – fire and the sword, slaughter, rapine, violence, raging on all sides – a party of savage Thracians, belonging to Alexander's army, demolished the house of Timoclea, a woman of high standing and quality. Having carried

off the booty found in her house, and shamefully abused the lady, the captain asked her if she had not some gold and silver concealed. She replied that she had – and taking him alone into the garden, showed him a well, in which she said she had thrown everything of value when the city was taken. The officer stooped to look into the well, when the lady pushed him down, and rolling stones down upon him, soon despatched him. The Thracians, coming up, found what she had done, and, binding her hands, took her to Alexander. When he asked her who she was – "A sister of Theagenes," said she, proudly and fearlessly, – "a Theban general, who fought for the liberty of Greece, against the usurpation of Philip – and fell gloriously at the battle of Cheronæa!" Alexander was so much struck by her noble mien and patriotic sentiments, that he caused her and her children to be set at liberty. Such are the few rays of light, that flash across the dark path of the conqueror!

Greece was soon brought to a state of submission and, as Alexander now contemplated an expedition against Darius, king of Persia, the several states, having held an assembly at Corinth, concluded to furnish their quota of supplies. Many statesmen and philosophers came to Corinth, where Alexander was to congratulate him upon this result; but the king was disappointed to find that Diogenes, the cynic philosopher, was not among the number. As he desired greatly to see him, he went to his residence in the suburbs of the city, to pay him a visit. He found the philosopher, basking in the sun; at the approach of so many

people, he carelessly roused himself a little, and happened to fix his eyes on Alexander – "Is there anything," said the king, condescendingly – "in which I can serve you?" – "Only stand a little out of my sunshine," said Diogenes. This answer produced a laugh among the crowd, who thought it mere vulgarity; but Alexander saw deeper, and, reflecting upon that superiority, which could regard even his presence without surprise, and look with disdain upon his gifts, remarked, "that if he were not Alexander, he would wish to be Diogenes."

Alexander set out, in the spring of the year 334 B. C., upon his expedition against Persia – from which, however, he never returned. He had thirty thousand foot, and five thousand horse, and a supply of money. His troops were well armed, the infantry bearing shields, spears, and battle-axes of iron; the horse were equipped with similar weapons, but defended with helmets and breastplates. The officers all bore swords. The arms of the Persians were similar, though many of their troops used the bow: the forces of Alexander were, however, better provided, better trained, and far more athletic than their Asiatic enemies.

We must pause a moment to look at that mighty power which had now swallowed up Assyria, Babylon, and the countries from the Grecian Archipelago on the west, to India on the east; an extent of territory nearly three thousand miles in length, and comprehending at once the most fertile and populous region on the face of the globe. Such were the power and resources of the Persian empire, that, about one hundred and fifty years prior to

the date of which we are speaking, it had sent an army, with its attendants, of five millions of persons, to conquer that very Greece, which was now preparing to roll back the tide of war, and put a final period to its proud existence.

The reigning king of Persia was Darius III., a weak but conceited monarch, who held his court at the splendid city of Persepolis, which had long been the capital of the empire. His situation was very similar to that of the sultan of Turkey at the present day. The Persians, though their king ruled over almost countless nations, were comparatively few in number. His revenue was derived from the tribute of dependent princes, and the extortions made by his own satraps or governors. His empire, consisting of so many nations, required constant watchfulness, to keep all parts in subjection; and as the Asiatic troops were inferior, he kept in his pay, at all times, a considerable number of renegade Greeks, as soldiers.

Being made aware of the design of Alexander, Darius sent a vast army westward, and marching into Syria himself, determined there to await his enemy. Alexander crossed the Propontis, now Sea of Marmora, which immediately brought him into Asia Minor, and the dominions of Persia. As soon as he landed, he went to Ilium, the scene of the Trojan war, and the ten years' siege of Troy, celebrated in the Iliad. He anointed the pillar upon Achilles' tomb with oil – and he and his friends ran naked around it, according to the custom which then prevailed. He also adorned it with a wreath, in the form of a crown. These

ceremonies are supposed to have been intended to enforce the belief that he was descended from Achilles – a claim which he always maintained.

Meantime, the Persian generals had pushed forward and posted themselves upon the banks of the Granicus, a small river now called Ousvola, which empties into the sea of Marmora. Alexander led the attack upon them by plunging into the river with his horse. He advanced, with thirteen of his troop, in the face of a cloud of arrows; and though swept down by the rapidity of the current, and opposed by steep banks lined with cavalry, he forced his way, by irresistible strength and impetuosity, across the stream. Standing upon the muddy slope, his troops were now obliged to sustain a furious attack, hand to hand, and eye to eye. The Persian troops, cheered by their vantage ground, pushed on with terrific shouts, and hurled their javelins, like snow-flakes, upon the Macedonians. Alexander, being himself distinguished by his buckler and crest, decorated with white plumes, was the special object of attack. His cuirass was pierced by a javelin, at the joint; but thus far he was unhurt. Now he was assailed by two chiefs of great distinction. Evading one, he engaged the other; after a desperate struggle, in which his crest was shorn away, and his helmet cleft to his hair, he slew one of the chiefs, and was saved, at the moment of deadly peril, by the hand of his friend Clytus, who despatched the other.

While Alexander's cavalry were fighting with the utmost fury, the Macedonian phalanx and the infantry crossed the

river, and now engaged the enemy. The effect of a leader's example was never more displayed. Alexander's exhibition of courage and prowess, made every soldier a hero. They fought, indeed, like persons who knew nothing, and cared for nothing, but to destroy the enemy. Some of the Persians gave way and fled. Their hireling Greeks, however, maintained the fight, and Alexander's horse was killed under him – but not Bucephalus. "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war." The fight was, indeed, severe, but at last Alexander triumphed. The victory was complete. The loss of the Persians was twenty-five thousand slain; that of the Macedonians less than fifty.

Alexander had now passed the gates of Asia, and had obtained entrance into the dominions of the enemy. He paused for a time to pay the last honors to the dead. To each, he erected a statue of brass, executed by Lysippus. Upon the arms which were taken and distributed among the troops, he caused this inscription to be made: – "Won by Alexander, of the barbarians in Asia!"

We may pause here to note that Bonaparte seems to have imitated the Macedonian conqueror in this kind of boasting. As he was on his march to Russia, he caused to be graven on a stone fountain at Coblenz upon the Rhine, as follows:

"Year MDCCCXII. *Memorable for the campaign against Russia.* 1812."

The Russian commander, when Napoleon had been dethroned, passing through Coblenz with his troops, caused to be carved, immediately beneath as follows:

"Seen and approved by the Russian commander of the town of Coblentz, January 1, 1814."

It is true that no such speedy retort awaited the Macedonian conqueror, yet he was bound upon an errand which was ere long to put a period to his proud career.

Alexander soon pushed on to the East, and, meeting Darius near the Gulf of Issus, now Aias, and forming the north-eastern point of the Mediterranean, a tremendous engagement took place. Darius was defeated, and more than one hundred thousand of his soldiers lay dead on the field. Darius escaped with difficulty, leaving his tent, and even his wife and daughter, in the hands of the enemy. When the fighting was over, Alexander went to see the tent of Darius. It was, indeed, a curiosity to one like the Macedonian king, little acquainted with eastern refinements. He gazed for a time at the luxurious baths of Darius; his vases, boxes, vials and basins, all of wrought gold; he inhaled the luscious perfumes, and surveyed the rich silk drapery and gorgeous furniture of the tent – and then exclaimed, contemptuously – "This, then, it seems, is to be a king," – intimating that if these were the only distinctions of a king, the title deserved contempt.

While Alexander was thus occupied, he was told that the wife and daughter of Darius were his captives. The queen was one of the loveliest women that was ever known, and his daughter was also exceedingly beautiful. Though Alexander was told all this, he sent word to the afflicted ladies that they need have no

fear; and he caused them to be treated with the utmost delicacy and attention. He refrained from using his power in any way to their annoyance; and thus displayed one of the noblest graces of a gentleman and a man – a nice regard for the feelings of the gentler sex. This anecdote of the conqueror has shed more honor upon his name for two thousand years, than the victory of the Issus; nor will it cease to be cited in his praise, as long as history records his name.

The historians represent Alexander as simple in his tastes and habits at this period. He was temperate in eating, drank wine with great moderation, and if he sat long at table, it was for the purpose of conversation, in which he excelled, though given to boasting of his military exploits. When business called, nothing could detain him; but in times of leisure, his first business in the morning was to sacrifice to the gods. He then took his dinner, sitting. The rest of the day he spent in hunting, or deciding differences among his troops, or in reading and writing. Sometimes he would exercise himself in shooting or darting the javelin, or in mounting and alighting from a chariot in full career. Sometimes, also, he diverted himself with fowling and fox-hunting. His chief meal was supper, which he took at evening, and in a recumbent posture, with his friends around him. He was not fond of delicacies and though they were always found at his table, he usually sent them to others. Such was Alexander during the early periods of his campaigns in Asia.

After various operations, Alexander marched against

Phoenicia and Sidon, which submitted at once. Tyre resisted, but, after a siege of seven months, was taken by storm. Eight thousand Tyrians fell in the onslaught, and thirty thousand captives were sold into slavery. Gaza was now taken, after a siege of two months. Alexander then marched to Jerusalem, to punish the inhabitants for refusing to supply him with men and money. The high priest, Jaddus, went forth to meet the conqueror, attended by the priests and the people, with all the imposing emblems and signs of the Jewish religion. Alexander was so struck with the spectacle, that he pardoned the people, adored the name of the Most High, and performed sacrifices in the temple, according to the instructions of Jaddus. The book of the prophet Daniel was shown to him, and the passage pointed out in which it was foretold that the king of Grecia would overcome the king of Persia, with which he was well pleased.

The conqueror now turned his arms against Egypt, which yielded without striking a blow. Having established the government on a liberal footing, he set out, A. D. 331, to attack the Persian king, who had gathered an army of a million of men, and was now in Persia. About this time, he received a letter from Darius, in which that prince proposed, on condition of a pacification and future friendship, to pay him ten thousand talents in ransom of his prisoners, to cede him all the countries on this side the Euphrates, and to give him his daughter in marriage. Upon his communicating these proposals to his friends, Parmenio said, "If I were Alexander, I would accept

them." "So would I," said Alexander, "if I were Parmenio." The answer he gave Darius, was, "that if he would come to him, he should find the best of treatment; if not, he must go and seek him."

In consequence of this declaration, he began his march; but he repented that he had set out so soon, when he received information that the wife of Darius was dead. That princess died in childbed; and the concern of Alexander was great, because he lost an opportunity of exercising his clemency. All he could do was to return, and bury her with the utmost magnificence.

Alexander, having subdued various places that held out against him, now proceeded in his march against Darius. He found him with his immense army encamped on the banks of the Bumadus, a small river in what is now called Kourdistan. Alexander immediately approached, and prepared for battle. Being near the enemy at night, the murmur of the immense multitude, seeming like the roaring of the sea, startled one of Alexander's friends, who advised him to attack them in the night. The reply was, "I will not steal a victory!"

During that night, though it was foreseen that a dreadful and doubtful battle was to be fought the next day, Alexander, having made his preparations, slept soundly. In the morning, on the field, he wore a short coat, girt close about him; over that, a breast plate of linen strongly quilted, which he had taken in the battle of the Issus. His helmet was of polished iron, and shone like silver. To this was fixed a gorget, set with precious stones. His sword

was light, and of the finest temper. The belt he wore was superb and was given him by the Rhodians, as a mark of respect. In reviewing and exercising, he spared Bucephalus, but he rode him in battle, and when he mounted his back it was always a signal for the onset.

Aristander, the soothsayer, rode by the side of Alexander, in a white robe, and with a golden crown upon his head. He looked up, and lo, an eagle was sailing over the army! His course was towards the enemy. The army caught sight of the noble bird, and, taking it for a good omen, they now charged the enemy like a torrent. They were bravely resisted, but Alexander and his troops burst down upon them like an overwhelming avalanche, cutting their way towards the tent of Darius. The path was impeded by the slaughtered heaps that gathered before them, and their horses were embarrassed by the mangled and dying soldiers, who clung to the legs of the animals, seeking in their last agonies to resist them. Darius, now in the utmost peril, turned to fly, but his chariot became entangled in the slain. Seeing this, he mounted a swift horse, and fled to Bactriana, where he was treacherously murdered by Bessus.

Alexander was now declared king of all Asia, and, though this might seem the summit of his glory, it was the point at which his character begins to decline. He now affected the pomp of an eastern prince, and addicted himself to dissipation. He, however, continued his conquests. He marched to Babylon, which opened its gates for his reception. He proceeded to Persepolis, which he

took by surprise. Here, in a drunken frolic, and instigated by an abandoned woman, named Thais, he set fire to the palace, which was burnt to the ground.

He now marched into Parthia, and, meeting with a beautiful princess, named Roxana, daughter of a Bactrian king, he fell in love with her, and married her. Some time after this, upon some suspicion of the fidelity of Philotas, the son of Parmenio, he caused him to be put to the torture till he died. He then sent orders to have his father, an old and faithful soldier, who had fought under Philip, and who was now in Media, to be put to death, which were but too faithfully executed. This horrid transaction was soon followed by another, still more dreadful. Under the excitement of wine, a dispute arose between Alexander and Clytus, the brave officer who had saved his life at the battle of the Granicus.

Both became greatly excited: taunts and gibes were uttered on either side. Alexander, unable longer to keep down his rage, threw an apple in the face of Clytus, and then looked about for his sword; but one of his friends had prudently taken it away. Clytus was now forced out of the room, but he soon came back, and repeated the words of Euripides, meaning to apply them to Alexander:

"Are these your customs? – Is it thus that Greece
Rewards her combatants? Shall one man claim
The trophies won by thousands?"

The conqueror was now wholly beside himself. He seized a spear from one of the guards, and, at a plunge, ran it through the body of Clytus, who fell dead, uttering a dismal groan as he expired.

Alexander's rage subsided in a moment. Seeing his friends standing around in silent astonishment, he hastily drew out the spear, and was applying it to his own throat, when his guards seized him, and carried him by force to his chamber. Here the pangs of remorse stung him to the quick. Tears fell fast for a time, and then succeeded a moody, melancholy silence, only broken by groans. His friends attempted in vain to console him. It was not till after long and painful suffering, that he was restored to his wonted composure.

Alexander now set out for the conquest of India, then a populous country, and the seat of immense wealth. After a series of splendid achievements, he reached the banks of the Hydaspes, a considerable stream that flows into the Indus. Here he was met by Porus, an Indian king, with an army, in which were a large number of elephants. A bloody battle followed, in which Alexander was victorious and Porus made captive. "How do you wish to be treated?" said Alexander to the unfortunate monarch. "Like a king," was the brief, but significant reply. Alexander granted his request, restored his dominions and much enlarged them, making him, however, one of his tributaries.

The conqueror, not yet satisfied, wished to push on to the Ganges; but his army refusing to go farther, he was forced to

return. On his way back, he paid a visit to the ocean, and, in a battle with some savage tribes, being severely wounded, he came near losing his life. On the borders of the sea, he and his companions first saw the ebbing and flowing of the tide, – a fact of which they were before entirely ignorant. In this expedition the army suffered greatly: when it set out for India, it consisted of 150.000 men: on its return, it was reduced to one fourth of that number.

Coming to a fertile district, Alexander paused to recruit, and refresh his men. He then proceeded, keeping up a kind of bacchanalian fête, in which the whole army participated. His own chariot was drawn by eight horses: it consisted of a huge platform where he and his friends revelled, day and night. This carriage was followed by others, some covered with rich purple silk and others with fresh boughs. In these were the generals, crowned with flowers, and inebriated with wine. In the immense procession there was not a spear, helmet, or buckler, but in their places cups, flagons, and goblets. The whole country resounded with flutes, clarionets, and joyous songs. The scene was attended with the riotous dances and frolics of a multitude of women. This licentious march continued for seven days.

When he arrived at Susa, in Persia, he married a great number of his friends to Persian ladies. He set the example by taking Statira, daughter of Darius, to himself, and gave her sister to Hephæstion, his dearest friend. He now made a nuptial feast for the newly-married people, and nine thousand persons sat down

to the entertainment. Each one was honored with a golden cup.

On his return to Babylon, Alexander determined to make that place his residence and capital, and set about various plans for carrying this into effect. But his mind seemed haunted with superstitious fears. Everything that happened was construed into an augury of evil. The court swarmed with sacrifices and soothsayers, but still, for a long time, peace could not be obtained by the monarch.

At last he seemed to be relieved, and being asked by Medias to a carousal, he drank all day and all night, until he found a fever coming upon him. He then desisted, but it was too late. The disease increased, setting at defiance every attempt at remedy, and in the space of about thirty days he died. Such was the miserable end of Alexander the Great. His wife, Roxana, with the aid of Perdikkas, murdered Statira and her sister, and the empire of the mighty conqueror was divided between four of his officers.

The great achievement of Alexander – the grand result of his life – was the subjugation of the Persian monarchy, which lay like an incubus upon the numerous nations that existed between the Indus and the Euxine sea, and at the same time intercepted the communication between Europe and Asia. It was an achievement far greater than it would be now to overthrow the Ottoman throne, and give independence to the various tribes and states that are at present under its dominion. That he accomplished this work for any good motive, we cannot maintain, for his whole

course shows, that, like all other conquerors, his actions began and terminated in himself.

The character of Alexander has been delineated in the course of this brief sketch. We have not been able to give the details of all his battles, marches, and countermarches. His achievements were indeed stupendous. He crossed the Propontis in 334, and died in 323. It was in the brief space of eleven years, and at the age of thirty-three, that he had accomplished the deeds of which we have given a naked outline. Nor was he a mere warrior. He displayed great talents as a statesman, and many of the traits of a gentleman. His whole life, indeed, was founded upon an atrocious wrong – that one man may sacrifice millions of lives for his own pleasure – but this was the error of the age. As before intimated, considered in the light of Christianity, he was a monster; yet, according to the heathen model, he was a hero, and almost a god.

In seeking for the motives which impelled Alexander forward in his meteor-like career we shall see that it was the love of glory – an inspiration like that of the chase, in which the field is an empire, and the game a monarch. In this wild ambition, he was stimulated by the Iliad of Homer, and it was his darling dream to match the bloody deeds of its heroes – Ajax and Achilles. It is impossible to see in his conduct, anything which shows a regard to the permanent happiness of mankind. He makes war, as if might were the only test of right; and he sacrifices nations to his thirst of conquest, with as little question of the rectitude of his

conduct, as is entertained by the lion when he slays the antelope, or the sportsman when he brings down his game.

Although we see many noble traits in Alexander, the real selfishness of his character is evinced in his famous letter to Aristotle. The latter, having published some of his works, is sharply rebuked by the conqueror, who says to him – "Now that you have done this, what advantage have I, your pupil, over the rest of mankind, since you have put it in the power of others to possess the knowledge which before was only imparted to me!" What can be more narrow and selfish than this? Even the current standard of morals in Alexander's time, would condemn this as excessive meanness.

We must not omit to record the last days of one that figures in Alexander's annals, and is hardly less famous than the conqueror himself – we mean his noble horse, Bucephalus. This animal, more renowned than any other of his race, died on the banks of the Hydaspes. Craterus was ordered to superintend the building of two cities, one on each side of this river. The object was to secure the passage in future. That on the left bank was named Nicæa, the other Bucephala, in honor of the favorite horse, which had expired in battle without a wound, being worn out by age, heat, and over-exertion. He was then thirty years old. He was a large, powerful, and spirited horse, and would allow no one but Alexander to mount him. From a mark of a bull's head imprinted on him, he derived his name, Bucephalus; though some say that he was so called in consequence of having in his forehead a white

mark resembling a bull's head.

Once this famous charger, whose duties were restricted to the field of battle, was intercepted, and fell into the hands of the Uxians. Alexander caused a proclamation to be made, that, if Bucephalus were not restored, he would wage a war of extirpation against the whole nation. The restoration of the animal instantly followed the receipt of this notification; so great was Alexander's regard for his horse and so great the terror of his name among the barbarians. "Thus far," writes Arrian, "let Bucephalus be honored by me, for the sake of his master."

ARISTOTLE

This great philosopher was born at Stagira, or Stageira, in Macedonia, 384 B. C. His father, physician to Amyntas II., king of Macedonia, commenced the education of his son, intending to prepare him for his own profession; and the studies pursued by the latter with this object, doubtless laid the foundation for that lore of natural history, which he displayed through life, and which he cultivated with such success.

Aristotle lost both his parents while he was still young. After their death, he was brought up under Proxenes, a citizen of Mysia, in Asia Minor, who had settled in Stagira. Aristotle testified his gratitude to Proxenes and his wife, by directing, in his will, that statues of them should be executed at his expense and set up as his parents. He also educated their son Nicanor, to whom he gave his daughter Pythias in marriage.

In his eighteenth year, Aristotle left Stagira and went to Athens, the centre of letters and learning in Greece – doubtless attracted thither by the fame of the philosopher, Plato. It appears, however, that during the three first years of his residence there, Plato was absent on a visit to Sicily. There can be no doubt that Aristotle paid particular attention to anatomy and medicine, as appears both from his circumstances in youth, and what we know of his best writings. It is also probable, as is indicated by some statements of ancient writers, that for a space he practised, like

Locke, the healing art; he must, however, from an early age, have devoted his whole time to the study of philosophy and the investigation of nature, and have abandoned all thoughts of an exclusively professional career.

His eagerness for the acquisition of knowledge, and his extraordinary acuteness and sagacity, doubtless attracted Plato's attention at an early period; thus we are told that his master called him "the Intellect of the school," and his house, the "House of the reader;" that he said Aristotle required the curb, while Zenocrates, a fellow-disciple, required the spur; some of which traditions are probably true. We are likewise informed that when reading he used to hold a brazen ball in his hand over a basin, in order that, if he fell asleep, he might be awaked by the noise which it would make in falling. Although Aristotle did not during Plato's life, set up any school in opposition to him, as some writers have stated, he taught publicly in the art of rhetoric, and by this means became the rival of the celebrated Isocrates, whom he appears, notwithstanding his very advanced age, to have attacked with considerable violence, and to have treated with much contempt.

Aristotle remained at Athens till Plato's death, 347 B. C., having at that time reached his thirty-seventh year. Many stories are preserved by the ancient compilers of anecdotes, respecting the enmity between Plato and Aristotle, caused by the ingratitude of the disciple, as well as by certain peculiarities of his character which were displeasing to the master. But these rumors appear

to have no other foundation than the known variance between the opinions and the mental habits of the two philosophers; and particularly the opposition which Aristotle made to Plato's characteristic doctrine of ideas; whence it was inferred that there must have been an interruption of their friendly relations. The probability, however, is, that Aristotle, at whatever time he may have formed his philosophical opinions, had not published them in an authoritative shape, or entered into any public controversy, before his master's death. In his Nicomachean Ethics, moreover, which was probably one of his latest works, he says "that it is painful to him to refute the doctrine of ideas, as it had been introduced by persons who were his friends: nevertheless, that it is his duty to disregard such private feelings; for both philosophers and truth being dear to him, it is right to give the preference to truth." He is, likewise, stated to have erected an altar to his master inscribing on it that he was a man "whom the wicked ought not even to praise."

After the death of Plato, Aristotle left Athens and went to live at the court of Hermeias, prince of Atarneus. He had resided here but three years, when Hermeias, falling into the hands of the Persians, was put to death. Aristotle took refuge in Mytilene, the chief city of Lesbos. Here he married Pythias, sister of Hermeias, and who, being exposed to persecution from the Persians, now coming into power there, he saved by a rapid flight. For the patriotic and philosophical prince Hermeias, Aristotle entertained a fervent and deep affection, and he dedicated to his

memory a beautiful poem, which is still extant. On account of the admiration he expresses of his friend, he was afterwards absurdly charged with impiety in deifying a mortal.

In the year 356 B. C., Philip of Macedon wrote a famous letter to Aristotle, as follows: "King Philip of Macedon, to Aristotle, greeting. Know that a son has been born to me. I thank the gods, not so much that they have given him to me, as that they have permitted him to be born in the time of Aristotle. I hope that thou wilt form him to be a king worthy to succeed me, and to rule the Macedonians."

In the year 342 B. C., Aristotle was invited by Philip to take charge of the education of his son, Alexander, then fourteen years old. This charge was accepted, and Alexander was under his care three or four years. The particulars of his method of instruction are not known to us; but when we see the greatness of mind that Alexander displayed in the first years of his reign, – his command of his passions till flattery had corrupted him, and his regard for the arts and sciences, – we cannot but think that his education was judiciously conducted. It may be objected that Aristotle neglected to guard his pupil against ambition and the love of conquest; but it must be recollected that he was a Greek, and of course a natural enemy to the Persian kings; his hatred had been deepened by the fate of his friend Hermeias; and, finally, the conquest of Persia had, for a long time, been the wish of all Greece. It was, therefore, natural that Aristotle should exert all his talents to form his pupil with the disposition and

qualifications necessary for the accomplishment of this object.

Both father and son sought to show their gratitude for the services of such a teacher. Philip rebuilt Stagira, and established a school there for Aristotle. The Stagirites, in gratitude for this service, appointed a yearly festival, called *Aristotelia*. The philosopher continued at Alexander's court a year after his accession to the throne, and is said to have then repaired to Athens. Ammonius, the Eclectic, says that he followed his pupil in a part of his campaigns; and this seems very probable; for it is hardly possible that so many animals as the philosopher describes could have been sent to Athens, or that he could have given so accurate a description of them without having personally dissected and examined them. We may conjecture that he accompanied Alexander as far as Egypt, and returned to Athens about 331 B. C., provided with the materials for his excellent History of Animals.

Aristotle, after parting with Alexander, returned to Athens, where he resolved to open a school, and chose a house, which, from its vicinity to the temple of Apollo Lyceus, was called the *Lyceum*. Attached to this building was a garden, with walks, in Greek *peripatoi*, where Aristotle used to deliver his instructions to his disciples; whence his school obtained the name of *peripatetic*. It appears that his habit was to give one lecture in the early part of the day on the abstruser parts of his philosophy, to his more advanced scholars, which was called the *morning walk*, and lasted till the hour when people dressed and anointed

themselves; and another lecture, called the *evening walk*, on more popular subjects, to a less select class.

It was probably during the thirteen years of his second residence at Athens, that Aristotle composed or completed the greater part of his works which have descended to our days. The foundation of most of them was, doubtless, laid at an early period of his life; but they appear to have been gradually formed, and to have received continual additions and corrections. Among the works which especially belong to this period of his life, are his treatises on Natural History; which, as has been correctly observed by a late writer on this subject, are not to be considered as the result of his own observations only, but as a collection of all that had been observed by others, as well as by himself.

It is stated by Pliny, that "Alexander the Great, being smitten with the desire of knowing the natures of animals, ordered several thousand persons, over the whole of Asia and Greece, who lived by hunting, bird-catching and fishing, or who had the care of parks, herds, hives, seines, and aviaries, to furnish Aristotle with materials for a work on animals." We are likewise informed that Aristotle received from Alexander the enormous sum of eight hundred talents, – nearly a million of dollars, to prosecute his researches in natural history, – a circumstance which did not escape the malice of his traducers, who censured him for receiving gifts from princes. Seneca, who states that Philip furnished Aristotle with large sums of money for his history of animals, had, doubtless, confounded the father and

son.

Callisthenes, a relation of Aristotle, by his recommendation, attended Alexander in his expedition to Asia, and sent from Babylon to the philosopher, in compliance with his previous injunctions, the astronomical observations which were preserved in that ancient city, and which, according to the statement of Porphyrius, reached back as far as 1903 years before the time of Alexander the Great; that is, 2234 years before the Christian era.

Aristotle had, at this time, reached the most prosperous period of his life. The founder and leader of the principal school of Greece, and the undisputed head of Grecian philosophy, surrounded by his numerous disciples and admirers, protected by the conqueror of Asia, and by him furnished with the means of following his favorite pursuits, and of gratifying his universal spirit of inquiry, he had, probably, little to desire in order to fill up the measure of a philosopher's ambition. But he did not continue to enjoy the favor of Alexander till the end. Callisthenes, by his free-spoken censures and uncourtly habits, had offended his master, and had been executed, on a charge of having conspired with some Macedonians to take away his life; and the king's wrath appears to have extended to his kinsman, Aristotle, as being the person who had originally recommended him. It is not, however, probable that this circumstance caused any active enmity between the royal pupil and his master; even if we did not know that Alexander died a natural death, there would be no reason for listening to the absurd calumny that Aristotle

was concerned in poisoning him. Aristotle indeed appears to have been considered, to the last, as a partisan of Alexander, and an opponent of the democratic interest.

When the anti-Macedonian party obtained the superiority at Athens in consequence of Alexander's death, an accusation against Aristotle was immediately prepared, and the pretext selected, was, as in the case of Socrates, *impiety*, or *blasphemy*. He was charged by Eurymedon, the priest, and a man named Demophilus, probably a leader of the popular party, with paying divine honors to Hermeias, and perhaps with teaching certain irreligious doctrines. In order to escape this danger, and to prevent the Athenians, as he said, in allusion to the death of Socrates, from "sinning twice against philosophy," he quitted Athens in the beginning of the year 322 B. C., and took refuge at Chalcis, in Eubœa, an island then under the Macedonian influence – leaving Theophrastus his successor in the Lyceum. There he died, of a disease of the stomach, in the autumn of the same year, being in the sixty-third year of his age. His frame is said to have been slender and weakly, and his health had given way in the latter part of his life, having probably been impaired by his unwearied studies and the intense application of his mind. The story of his having drowned himself in the Euripus of Eubœa, is fabulous.

The characteristic of Aristotle's philosophy, as compared with that of Plato, is, that while the latter gave free scope to his imagination, and, by his doctrine that we have ideas

independent of the objects which they represent, opened a wide door to the dreams of mysticism – the latter was a close and strict observer of both mental and physical phenomena, avoiding all the seductions of the fancy, and following a severe, methodical, and strictly scientific course of inquiry, founded on data ascertained by experience. The truly philosophical character of his mind, and his calm and singularly dispassionate manner of writing, are not more remarkable than the vast extent both of his reading and of his original researches. His writings appear to have embraced nearly the whole circle of the theoretical and practical knowledge of his time, comprising treatises on logical, metaphysical, rhetorical, poetical, ethical, political, economical, physical, mechanical, and medical science. He likewise wrote on some parts of the mathematics; and, besides a collection of the constitutions of all the states known in his age, both Grecian and barbarian he made chronological compilations relating to the political and dramatic history of Greece.

His works, however, though embracing so large an extent of subjects, were not a mere encyclopædia, or digest of existing knowledge; some of the sciences which he treated of were created by himself, and the others were enriched by fresh inquiries, and methodized by his systematic diligence. To the former belong his works on analytics and dialectics, or, as it is now called, logic; to the invention of which science he distinctly lays claim, stating that "before his time nothing whatever had been done in it." Nearly the same remark applies to his

metaphysical treatise. "But of all the sciences," says Cuvier, "there is none which owes more to Aristotle, than the natural history of animals. Not only was he acquainted with a great number of species, but he has studied and described them on a luminous and comprehensive plan, to which, perhaps, none of his successors has approached; classing the facts not according to the species, but according to the organs and functions, the only method of establishing comparative results. Thus it may be said that he is not only the most ancient author of comparative anatomy, whose works have come down to us, but that he is one of those who have treated this branch of natural history with the most genius, and that he best deserves to be taken for a model. The principal divisions which naturalists still follow in the animal kingdom, are due to Aristotle; and he had already pointed out several which have recently been again adopted, after having once been improperly abandoned. If the foundations of these great labors are examined, it will be seen that they all rest on the same method. Everywhere Aristotle observes the facts with attention; he compares them with sagacity, and endeavors to rise to the qualities which they have in common."

Among the sciences which he found partly cultivated, but which he greatly advanced, the most prominent are those of rhetoric, ethics, and politics. Of rhetoric he defined the province, and analyzed all the parts with admirable skill and sagacity. His treatise on the passions, in this short but comprehensive work, has never been surpassed, if it has ever been equalled, by

writers on what may be termed descriptive moral philosophy. His ethical writings contain an excellent practical code of morality, chiefly founded on the maxim that virtues are in the middle, between two opposite vices; as courage between cowardice and fool-hardiness, liberality between niggardliness and prodigality, &c. His remarks on friendship are also deserving of special notice; a subject much discussed by the ancients, but which has less occupied the attention of philosophers, since love has played a more prominent part, in consequence of the influence of the Germans, and the introduction of the manners of chivalry in western Europe. His treatise on politics is not, like Plato's Republic, and the works of many later speculators on government, a mere inquiry after a perfect state, but contains an account of the nature of government, of the various forms of which it is susceptible, and the institutions best adapted to the societies in which these forms are established; with an essay, though unhappily an imperfect one, on education. This treatise is valuable, not only for its theoretical results, but also for the large amount of information which it contains, on the governments of Greece and other neighboring countries. Throughout these last-mentioned works, the knowledge of the world and of human nature displayed by Aristotle, is very observable; and, although his mind appears to have preferred the investigations of physical and metaphysical science, yet he holds a very high place in the highest rank of moral and political philosophers. Aristotle, it will be remembered, did not lead the life of a recluse; but, as the

friend of Hermeias, the teacher of Alexander, and the head of a philosophical school, he was brought into contact with a great variety of persons, and learned by practice to know life under many different forms, and in many different relations.

Of all the philosophers of antiquity, Aristotle has produced the most lasting and extensive effect on mankind. His philosophical works, many centuries after his death, obtained a prodigious influence, not only in Europe, but even in Asia; they were translated into Arabic, and from thence an abstract of his logical system passed into the language of Persia. In Europe they acquired an immense ascendancy in the middle ages, and were considered as an authority without appeal, and only second to that of Scripture; we are even informed that in a part of Germany his ethics were read in the churches on Sunday, in the place of the Gospels. Parts of his philosophy, which are the most worthless, as his Physics, were much cultivated; and his logical writings were, in many cases, abused so as to lead to vain subtleties, and captious contests about words. The connection between some of his tenets and the Roman Catholic theology, tended much to uphold his authority, which the Reformation lowered in a corresponding degree. His doctrines were in general strongly opposed by the early reformers. In 1518 Luther sustained a thesis at Heidelberg, affirming that "he who wishes to philosophize in Aristotle, must be first stultified in Christ." Luther, however, gave way afterwards, and did not oppose Aristotle, as to human learning. Melanchthon, who was one of the mildest of the

reformers, was a great supporter of Aristotle. Many of his doctrines were in the same century zealously attacked by the French philosopher, Pierre Ramus. Bacon, afterwards, with others of his followers, added the weight of their arguments and authority against him. Aristotle's philosophy accordingly fell into undeserved neglect during the latter part of the seventeenth, and the whole of the eighteenth century. Of late, however, the true worth of his writings has been more fully appreciated, and the study of his best treatises has much revived.

The most valuable of Aristotle's lost works, and indeed the most valuable of all the lost works of Greek prose, is his collection of One Hundred and Fifty-eight Constitutions, both of Grecian and Barbarian States, the Democratic, Oligarchical, Aristocratical, and Tyrannical, being treated separately, containing an account of the manners, customs, and institutions of each country. The loss of his works on Colonies, on Nobility, and on Royal Government; of his Chronological Collections, and of his Epistles to Philip, Alexander, Antipater, and others, is also much to be regretted. He likewise revised a copy of the Iliad, which Alexander carried with him during his campaigns, in a precious casket; hence this recension, called the *casket copy*, passed into the Alexandrine library, and was used by the Alexandrine critics. His entire works, according to Diogenes Laertius, occupied in the Greek manuscripts 445,270 lines.

DEMOSTHENES

This celebrated Grecian orator was born about 384 or 385 years B. C., at a period when Athens had reached the zenith of her literary, and had passed that of her political, glory. Juvenal has represented him slightly, as the son of a blacksmith – the fact being that the elder Demosthenes was engaged in various branches of trade, and, among others, was owner of a sword manufactory. His maternal grandmother was a Thracian woman – a circumstance noticeable because it enabled his enemies, in the spirit of ill-will, to taunt him as a barbarian and hereditary enemy of his country; for the Greeks, in general, regarded the admixture of other than Greek blood, with the same sort of contempt and dislike that the whites of America do the taint of African descent.

Being left an orphan when seven years old, Demosthenes fell into the hands of dishonest guardians, who embezzled a large portion of the property which his father had bequeathed to him. His constitution appears to have been delicate, and it may have been on this account that he did not attend the gymnastic exercises, which formed a large portion of the education of the youths in Greece; exercises really important where neither birth nor wealth set aside the obligation to military service common to all citizens; and where, therefore, skill in the use of arms, strength, and the power to endure fatigue and hardship, were

essential to the rich as well as to the poor. It may have been on this account that a nickname expressive of effeminacy was bestowed on him, which was afterwards interpreted into a proof of unmanly luxury and vicious habits; indeed, the reproach of wanting physical strength clung to him through life; and apparently this was not undeserved. Another nickname that he obtained was that of "Viper." In short, the anecdotes which have come down to us, tend pretty uniformly to show that his private character was harsh and unamiable.

His ambition to excel as an orator is said to have been kindled by hearing a masterly and much admired speech of Callistratus. For instruction, he resorted to Isæus, and, as some say, to Isocrates, both eminent teachers of the art of rhetoric. He had a stimulus to exertion in the resolution to prosecute his guardians for abuse of their trust; and having gained the cause, B. C. 364, in the conduct of which he himself took an active part, recovered, it would seem, a large part of his property. The orations against Aphobus and Onetor, which appear among his works, profess to have been delivered in the course of the suit; but it has been doubted, on internal evidence, whether they were really composed by him so early in life.

Be this as it may, his success emboldened him to come forward as a speaker in the assemblies of the people; on what occasion, and at what time, does not appear. His reception was discouraging. He probably had underrated, till taught by experience, the degree of training and mechanical preparation

requisite at all times to excellence, and most essential in addressing an audience so acute, sensitive and fastidious as the Athenians. He labored also under physical defects, which almost amounted to disqualifications. His voice was weak, his breath short, his articulation defective; in addition to all this, his style was throughout strained, harsh and involved.

Though somewhat disheartened by his ill success, he felt as Sheridan is reported to have expressed himself on a similar occasion, that *it was in him, and it should come out*; beside, he was encouraged by a few discerning spirits. One aged man, who had heard Pericles, cheered him with the assurance that he reminded him of that unequalled orator; and the actor Satyrus pointed out the faults of his delivery, and instructed him to amend them. He now set himself in earnest to realize his notions of excellence; and the singular and irksome methods which he adopted, denoting certainly no common energy and strength of will, are too celebrated and too remarkable to be omitted, though the authority on which they rest is not free from doubt. He built a room under ground, where he might practise gesture and delivery without molestation, and there he spent two or three months together, shaving his head, that the oddity of his appearance might render it impossible for him to go abroad, even if his resolution should fail. The defect in his articulation he cured by reciting with small pebbles in his mouth. His lungs he strengthened by practising running up hill, while reciting verses. Nor was he less diligent in cultivating mental than bodily

requisites, applying himself earnestly to study the theory of the art as explained in books, and the examples of the greatest masters of eloquence. Thucydides is said to have been his favorite model, insomuch that he copied out his history eight times, and had it almost by heart.

Meanwhile, his pen was continually employed in rhetorical exercises; every question suggested to him by passing events served him for a topic of discussion, which called forth the application of his attainments to the real business of life. It was perhaps as much for the sake of such practice, as with a view to reputation, or the increase of his fortune, that he accepted employment as an advocate, which, until he began to take an active part in public affairs, was offered to him in abundance.

Such was the process by which he became confessedly the greatest orator among the people by whom eloquence was cultivated, as it has never been since by any nation upon earth. He brought it to its highest state of perfection, as did Sophocles the tragic drama, by the harmonious union of excellences which had before only existed apart. The quality in his writings, which excited the highest admiration of the most intelligent judges among his countrymen in the later critical age, was the Protean versatility with which he adapted his style to every theme, so as to furnish the most perfect examples of every order and kind of eloquence.

Demosthenes, like Pericles, never willingly appeared before his audience with any but the ripest fruits of his private studies,

though he was quite capable of speaking on the impulse of the moment in a manner worthy of his reputation. That he continued to the end of his career to cultivate the art with unabated diligence, and that, even in the midst of public business, his habits were those of a severe student, is well known.

The first manifestation of that just jealousy of Philip, the ambitious king of Macedon, which became the leading principle of his life, was made 252 B. C., when the orator delivered the first of those celebrated speeches called Philippics. This word has been naturalized in Latin and most European languages, as a concise term to signify indignant invective.

From this time forward, it was the main object of Demosthenes to inspire and keep alive in the minds of the Athenians a constant jealousy of Philip's power and intentions, and to unite the other states of Greece in confederacy against him. The policy and the disinterestedness of his conduct have both been questioned; the former, by those who have judged, from the event, that resistance to the power of Macedonia was rashly to accelerate a certain and inevitable evil; the latter, by those, both of his contemporaries and among posterity, who believe that he received bribes from Persia, as the price of finding employment in Greece for an enemy, whose ambition threatened the monarch of the East. With respect to the former, however, it was at least the most generous policy, and like that of the elder Athenians in their most illustrious days – not to await the ruin of their independence submissively, until every means had been

tried for averting it; for the latter, such charges are hard either to be proved or refuted. The character of Demosthenes certainly does not stand above the suspicion of pecuniary corruption, but it has not been shown, nor is it necessary or probable to suppose, that his jealousy of Philip of Macedon was not, in the first instance, far-sighted and patriotic. During fourteen years, from 352 to 338, he exhausted every resource of eloquence and diplomatic skill to check the progress of that aspiring monarch; and whatever may be thought of his moral worth, none can undervalue the genius and energy which have made his name illustrious, and raised a memorial of him far more enduring than sepulchral brass.

In 339 B. C., Philip's appointment to be general of the Amphictyonic League gave him a more direct influence than he had yet possessed; and in the same year, the decisive victory of Cheronea, won over the combined forces of Thebes, Athens, &c., had made him master of Greece. Demosthenes served in this engagement, but joined, early in the flight, with circumstances, according to report, of marked cowardice and disgrace. He retired for a time from Athens, but the cloud upon his character was but transient for, shortly after, he was entrusted with the charge of putting the city in a state of defence, and was appointed to pronounce the funeral oration over those who had been slain. After the battle of Cheronea, Philip, contrary to expectation, did not prosecute hostilities against Athens; on the contrary, he used his best endeavors to conciliate the affections of the people, but

without success. The party hostile to Macedon soon regained the superiority, and Demosthenes was proceeding with his usual vigor in the prosecution of his political schemes, when news arrived of the murder of Philip, in July, 336.

The daughter of Demosthenes had then lately died, nevertheless, in violation of national usage, he put off his mourning, and appeared in public, crowned with flowers and with other tokens of festive rejoicing. This act, a strong expression of triumph over the fall of a most dangerous enemy, has been censured with needless asperity; the accusation of having been privy to the plot for Philip's murder, beforehand, founded on his own declaration of the event some time before intelligence of it came from any other quarter, and the manifest falsehood as to the source of the information, which he professed to derive from a divine revelation, involves – if it be judged to be well founded – a far blacker imputation.

Whether or not it was of his own procuring, the death of Philip was hailed by Demosthenes as an event most fortunate for Athens, and favorable to the liberty of Greece. Thinking lightly of the young successor to the Macedonian crown, he busied himself the more in stirring up opposition to Alexander, and succeeded in urging Thebes into that revolt, which ended in the entire destruction of the city, B. C., 335. This example struck terror into Athens. Alexander demanded that Demosthenes, with nine others, should be given up into his hands, as the authors of the battle of Cheronea and of the succeeding troubles of Greece;

but finally contented himself with requiring the banishment of Charidemus alone.

Opposition to Macedon was now effectually put down, and, until the death of Alexander, we hear little more of Demosthenes as a public man. During this period, however, one of the most memorable incidents of his life occurred, in that contest of oratory with Æschines, which has been more celebrated than any strife of words since the world began. The origin of it was as follows. About the time of the battle of Cheronea, one Ctesiphon brought before the people a decree for presenting Demosthenes with a crown for his distinguished services; a complimentary motion, in its nature and effects very much like a vote in the English parliament, declaratory of confidence in the administration. Æschines, the leading orator of the opposite party, arraigned this motion, as being both untrue in substance and irregular in form; he indicted Ctesiphon on these grounds, and laid the penalty at fifty talents, equivalent to about \$50,000. Why the prosecution was so long delayed, does not clearly appear; but it was not brought to an issue until the year 330, when Æschines pronounced his great oration "against Ctesiphon." Demosthenes defended him in the still more celebrated speech "on the crown." These, besides being admirable specimens of rhetorical art, have the additional value, that the rival orators, being much more anxious to uphold the merits of their own past policy and conduct, than to convict and defend the nominal object of prosecution, have gone largely into matters of self-defence

and mutual recrimination, from which much of our knowledge of this obscure portion of history is derived. Æschines lost the cause, and not having the votes of so much as a fifth part of the judges, became liable, according to the laws of Athens, to fine and banishment. He withdrew to Rhodes, where he established a school of oratory. On one occasion, for the gratification of his hearers, he recited first his own, then his adversary's speech. Great admiration having been expressed of the latter, "What then," he said, "if you had heard the brute himself?" bearing testimony in these words to the remarkable energy and fire of delivery which was one of Demosthenes' chief excellences as an orator.

A fate similar to that of his rival, overtook Demosthenes himself, a few years later, B. C. 324. Harpalus, an officer high in rank and favor under Alexander, having been guilty of malversation to such an extent that he dared not await discovery, fled to Greece, bringing with him considerable treasures and a body of mercenary soldiers. He sought the support of the Athenians; and, as it was said, bribed Demosthenes not to oppose his wishes. Rumors to that effect got abroad, and though his proposals were rejected by the assembly, Demosthenes was called to account, and fined fifty talents, nearly \$50,000, as having been bribed to give false counsel to the people. Being unable to pay the amount of the fine, it acted as a sentence of banishment, and he retired into Ægina. Like Cicero, when placed in a similar situation, he displayed effeminacy of temper, and an

unmanly violence of regret, under a reverse of fortune.

In the following year, however, the death of Alexander restored him to political importance; for when that event opened once more to the Athenians the prospect of shaking off the supremacy of Macedonia, Demosthenes was recalled, with the most flattering marks of public esteem. He guided the state during the short war waged with Antipater, the Macedonian viceroy, until the inequality of the contest became evident, and the Macedonian party regained its ascendancy. Demosthenes then retired to the sanctuary of Calauria, an island sacred to Neptune, on the coast of Argolis. Sentence of death was passed on him in his absence. He was pursued to his place of refuge by the emissaries of Antipater, and being satisfied that the sanctity of the place would not protect him, he took poison, which, as a last resort, he carried about his person, concealed in a quill.

Most of the speeches of Demosthenes are short, at least compared with modern oratory. He rarely spoke extempore, and bestowed an unusual degree of pains on his composition. That style which is described by Hume as "rapid harmony, exactly adapted to the sense; vehement reason, without any appearance of art; disdain, anger, boldness, freedom, involved in a continued stream of argument" – instead of being, as it would seem, the effervescence of a powerful, overflowing mind, was the labored produce of much thought, and careful, long-continued polish.

If we compare the two greatest orators of antiquity – Cicero and Demosthenes – it may seem difficult to decide between

them. By devoting his powers almost exclusively to oratory, the latter excelled in energy, strength, and accuracy; and as a mere artist, was probably the superior. Cicero, by cultivating a more extended field, was doubtless far the abler lawyer, statesman and philosopher. Of the value of their works to mankind, there is no comparison; for those of Cicero are not only more numerous and diversified, but of more depth, wisdom, and general application. We must also remark, that while the soul of Demosthenes appears to have been selfish and mean, that of Cicero ranks him among the noblest specimens of humanity, whether of ancient or modern times.

If we compare the speeches of these great men with the efforts of modern orators, we shall see that the latter greatly surpass them in range of thought, power of diction and splendor of illustration. The question then arises, why did the orations of Cicero and Demosthenes produce such electrical effects upon their auditors? The reason doubtless was, that they paid the greatest attention to action, manner and tones of voice – thus operating upon their hearers by nearly the same powers as the modern opera. There was stage effect in their manner, and music in their tones, combined with most perfect elocution – and the application of these arts, carried to the utmost perfection, was made to the quick Italians or mercurial Athenians. These suggestions may enable us to understand the fact, that speeches, which, uttered in the less artful manner of our day, and before our colder audiences, would fall flat and dead upon the ear, excited

the utmost enthusiasm, in more southern climes, two thousand years ago.

APELLES

Apelles was a celebrated painter of Cos, a little island in the Egean Sea. The date of his birth is not known, but he painted many portraits of Philip, and was still nourishing in the time of Alexander, who honored him so much that he forbade any other artist to draw his picture. His chief master was Pamphilius, a famous painter of Macedon. He was so attentive to his profession, that he never spent a day without employing his pencil, – whence the proverb of *Nulla die sine linea*. His most perfect picture was the Venus Anadyomene, which, however, was not wholly finished when the painter died.

He executed a painting of Alexander, holding thunder in his hand, so much like life, that Pliny, who saw it, says that the hand of the king with the thunder seemed to come out of the picture. This was placed in Diana's temple at Ephesus. He made another picture of Alexander; but the king, on coming to see it after it was painted, appeared not to be satisfied with it. It happened, however, at that moment a horse, passing by, neighed at the horse in the picture, supposing it to be alive; upon which the painter said, "One would imagine that the horse is a better judge of painting, than your majesty." When Alexander ordered him to draw the picture of Campaspe, one of his favorites, Apelles became enamored of her, and the king permitted him to marry her. He wrote three volumes on painting, which were still extant

in the age of Pliny, – but they are now lost. It is said that he was accused, while in Egypt, of conspiring against the life of Ptolemy, and that he would have been put to death, had not the real conspirator discovered himself, and thus saved the artist. Apelles put his name to but three pictures; a sleeping Venus, Venus Anadyomene, and an Alexander.

Apelles appears to have been not only an excellent artist, but a man of admirable traits of character. Being once at Rhodes, he met with the productions of Protogenes,¹⁰ which so greatly

¹⁰ Protogenes, a painter of Rhodes, who flourished about 328 years B. C. He was originally so poor that he painted ships to maintain himself. His countrymen were ignorant of his merits, before Apelles came to Rhodes and offered to buy all his pieces, as we have related. This opened the eyes of the Rhodians; they became sensible of the talents of their countryman, and liberally rewarded him. Protogenes was employed seven years in finishing a picture of Jalyus a celebrated huntsman, supposed to have been the son of Apollo and the founder of Rhodes. During all this time the painter lived only upon lupines and water, thinking that such aliment would leave him greater flights of fancy; but all this did not seem to make him more successful in the perfection of his picture. He was to represent in this piece a dog panting, and with froth at his mouth; but this he could never do with satisfaction to himself; and when all his labors seemed to be without success, he threw his sponge upon the piece in a fit of anger. Chance alone brought to perfection what the utmost labors of art could not do; the fall of the sponge upon the picture represented the froth of the mouth of the dog in the most perfect and natural manner, and the piece was universally admired. Protogenes was very exact in his representations, and copied nature with the greatest nicety; but this was blamed as a fault by his friend Apelles. When Demetrius besieged Rhodes, he refused to set fire to a part of the city, which might have made him master of the whole, because he knew that Protogenes was then working in that quarter. When the town was taken, the painter was found closely employed, in a garden, finishing a picture; and when the conqueror asked him why he showed not more concern at the general calamity, he replied, that Demetrius made war against the Rhodians; and not

delighted him that he offered to purchase the whole. Before this, Protogenes was entirely unappreciated by his countrymen, but the approbation of one so distinguished as Apelles, brought him into notice, and his fame soon became established.

Another story of Apelles is told as having given rise to the well-known maxim, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*: Let the shoemaker stick to his last. Apelles placed a picture, which he had finished, in a public place, and concealed himself behind it, in order to hear the criticisms of the passers-by. A shoemaker observed a defect in the shoe, and the painter forthwith corrected it. The cobbler came the next day, and being somewhat encouraged by the success of his first remark, began to extend his censure to the leg of the figure, when the angry painter thrust out his head from behind the figure, and told him to keep to his trade.

Apelles excelled in grace and beauty. The painter, who labored incessantly, as we have seen, to improve his skill in drawing, probably trusted as much to that branch of his art, as to his coloring. We are told that he only used four colors. He used a varnish which brought out the colors, and at the same time preserved them. His favorite subject was the representation of Venus, the goddess of love, – the female blooming in eternal beauty; and the religious system of the age favored the taste of the artist.

Apelles painted many portraits of Alexander the Great, who, we are told, often visited his painting room. It is not easy to

reconcile his rambling life with this account, unless we suppose that Apelles followed him into Asia; a conjecture not altogether improbable, if we read the account of the revelries at Susa, after Alexander's return from India, and of the number of all kinds of professional artists then assembled to add to the splendor of the festival.

DIOGENES

This eccentric individual was a native of Sinope, a city of Pontus, and born 419 B. C. Having been banished from his native place, with his father, upon the accusation of coining false money, he went to Athens, and requested Antisthenes, the Cynic,¹¹ to admit him among his disciples. That philosopher in vain attempted to drive away the unfortunate supplicant. He even threatened to strike him; but Diogenes told him he could not find a stoic hard enough to repel him, so long as he uttered things worthy of being remembered. Antisthenes was propitiated by this, and received him among his pupils.

Diogenes devoted himself, with the greatest diligence, to the lessons of his master, whose doctrines he afterwards extended and enforced. He not only, like Antisthenes, despised all philosophical speculations, and opposed the corrupt morals of his time, but also carried the application of his principles, in his own person, to the extreme. The stern austerity of Antisthenes was repulsive; but Diogenes exposed the follies of his cotemporaries with wit and humor, and was, therefore, better adapted to be the censor and instructor of the people, though

¹¹ The Cynics were a sect of philosophers, founded by Antisthenes, at Athens; they took their name from their disposition to criticise the lives and actions of others. They were famous for their contempt of riches, their neglect of dress, and the length of their beards. They usually slept on the ground.

he really accomplished little in the way of reforming them. At the same time, he applied, in its fullest extent, his principle of divesting himself of all superfluities. He taught that a wise man, in order to be happy, must endeavor to preserve himself independent of fortune, of men, and of himself; and, in order to do this, he must despise riches, power, honor, arts and sciences, and all the enjoyments of life.

He endeavored to exhibit, in his own person, a model of Cynic virtue. For this purpose, he subjected himself to the severest trials, and disregarded all the forms of polite society. He often struggled to overcome his appetite, or satisfied it with the coarsest food; practised the most rigid temperance, even at feasts, in the midst of the greatest abundance, and did not consider it beneath his dignity to ask alms.

By day, he walked through the streets of Athens barefoot, with a long beard, a stick in his hand, and a bag over his shoulders. He was clad in a coarse double robe, which served as a coat by day and a coverlet by night; and he carried a wallet to receive alms. His abode was a cask in the temple of Cybele. It is said that he sometimes carried a tub about on his head which occasionally served as his dwelling. In summer he rolled himself in the burning sand, and in winter clung to the marble images covered with snow, that he might inure himself to the extremes of the climate. He bore the scoffs and insults of the people with the greatest equanimity. Seeing a boy draw water with his hand, he threw away his wooden goblet, as an unnecessary utensil. He

never spared the follies of men, but openly and loudly inveighed against vice and corruption, attacking them with keen satire, and biting irony. The people, and even the higher classes, heard him with pleasure, and tried their wit upon him. When he made them feel his superiority, they often had recourse to abuse, by which, however, he was little moved. He rebuked them for expressions and actions which violated decency and modesty, and therefore it is not credible that he was guilty of the excesses with which his enemies reproached him. His rudeness offended the laws of good breeding, rather than the principles of morality.

On a voyage to the island of Ægina, he fell into the hands of pirates, who sold him as a slave to Xeniadēs, a Corinthian. He, however, emancipated him, and entrusted to him the education of his children. He attended to the duties of his new employment with the greatest care, commonly living in summer at Corinth, and in the winter at Athens. It was at the former place that Alexander found him at the road-side, basking in the sun; and, astonished at the indifference with which the ragged beggar regarded him, entered into conversation with him, and finally gave him permission to ask him a boon. "I ask nothing," answered the philosopher, "but that thou wouldst get out of my sunshine." Surprised at this proof of content, the king is said to have exclaimed, "Were I not Alexander, I would be Diogenes." The following dialogue, though not given as historical, is designed to represent this interview.

Diogenes. Who calleth?

Alexander. Alexander. How happeneth it that you would not come out of your tub to my palace?

D. Because it was as far from my tub to your palace, as from your palace to my tub.

A. What! dost thou owe no reverence to kings?

D. No.

A. Why so?

D. Because they are not gods.

A. They are gods of the earth.

D. Yes, gods of the earth!

A. Plato is not of thy mind.

D. I am glad of it.

A. Why?

D. Because I would have none of Diogenes' mind but Diogenes.

A. If Alexander have anything that can pleasure Diogenes, let me know, and take it.

D. Then take not from me that you cannot give me – the light of the sun!

A. What dost thou want?

D. Nothing that you have.

A. I have the world at command.

D. And I in contempt.

A. Thou shalt live no longer than I will.

D. But I shall die, whether you will or no.

A. How should one learn to be content?

D. Unlearn to covet.

A. (*to Hephæstion.*) Hephæstion, were I not Alexander, I would wish to be Diogenes.

H. He is dogged, but shrewd; he has a sharpness, mixed with a kind of sweetness; he is full of wit, yet too wayward.

A. Diogenes, when I come this way again, I will both see thee and confer with thee.

D. Do.

We are told that the philosopher was seen one day carrying a lantern through the streets of Athens: on being asked what he was looking after, he answered, "I am seeking an honest man." Thinking he had found among the Spartans the greatest capacity for becoming such men as he wished, he said, "Men, I have found nowhere, but children, at least, I have seen in Lacedæmon." Being asked, "What is the most dangerous animal?" his answer was, "Among wild animals, the slanderer; among tame, the flatterer." He expired 323 B. C., at a great age, and, it is said, on the same day that Alexander died. When he felt death approaching, he seated himself on the road leading to Olympia, where he died with philosophical calmness, in the presence of a great number of people who were collected around him.

None of the works of Diogenes are extant; in these he maintained the doctrines of the Cynics. He believed that exercise was of the greatest importance, and capable of effecting everything. He held that there were two kinds of exercise, – one of the body, and one of the mind, – and that one was of little use

without the other. By cultivation of the mind, he did not mean the accumulation of knowledge or science, but a training which might give it vigor, as exercise endows the body with health and strength.

PLATO

It has been remarked by Coleridge, that all men are born disciples either of Plato or Aristotle: by which he means that these two great men are the leaders in the two kinds of philosophy which govern the thinking world, – the one looking into the soul, as the great well of truth; the other, studying the outward world, and building up its system upon facts collected by observation. The truth is doubtless to be found by compounding the two systems.

Plato was born at Athens, in May, 429 B. C. He was the son of Ariston and Perectonia. His original name was Aristocles, and it has been conjectured that he received that of Plato, from the largeness of his shoulders: this, however, is improbable, as Plato was then a common name at Athens. Being one of the descendants of Codrus, and the offspring of a noble, illustrious, and opulent family, he was educated with the utmost care; his body was formed and invigorated with gymnastic exercises, and his mind was cultivated and trained by the study of poetry and of geometry; from which two sources he doubtless derived that acuteness of judgment and warmth of imagination, which stamped him as at once the most subtle and flowery writer of antiquity.

He first began his literary career by writing poems and tragedies; but he was disgusted with his own productions, when,

at the age of twenty, he was introduced into the society of Socrates, and was qualified to examine, with critical accuracy, the merit of his compositions, and compare them with those of his poetical predecessors. He, therefore, committed them to the flames. During eight years he continued to be one of the pupils of Socrates; and though he was prevented by indisposition from attending the philosopher's last moments, he collected, from the conversation of those that were present, and from his own accurate observations, very minute and circumstantial accounts, which exhibit the concern and sensibility of the pupil, and the firmness, virtue, and elevated moral sentiments of the dying philosopher.

After the death of Socrates Plato retired from Athens, and, with a view to emerge his stores of knowledge, he began to travel over different countries. He visited Megara, Thebes, and Elis, where he met with the kindest reception from his fellow-disciples, whom the violent death of their master had likewise removed from Attica. He afterwards visited Magna Græcia, attracted by the fame of the Pythagorean philosophy, and by the learning, abilities, and reputation of its professors, Philolaus, Archytas, and Eurytus. He then passed into Sicily, and examined the eruptions of Etna. He visited Egypt, where the mathematician Theodorus, then flourished, and where he knew that the tenets of the Pythagorean philosophy had been fostered.

When he had finished his travels, Plato retired to the groves of Academus, in the neighborhood of Athens, and established

a school there; his lectures were soon attended by a crowd of learned, noble, and illustrious pupils; and the philosopher, by refusing to have a share in the administration of political affairs, rendered his name more famous and his school more frequented. During forty years he presided at the head of the academy, and there he devoted his time to the instruction of his pupils, and composed those dialogues which have been the admiration of every succeeding age. His studies, however, were interrupted for a while, as he felt it proper to comply with the pressing invitations of Dionysius, of Syracuse, to visit him. The philosopher earnestly but vainly endeavored to persuade the tyrant to become the father of his people, and the friend of liberty.

In his dress, Plato was not ostentatious; his manners were elegant, but modest, simple, and without affectation. The great honors which were bestowed upon him, were not paid to his appearance, but to his wisdom and virtue. In attending the Olympian games, he once took lodgings with a family who were totally strangers to him. He ate and drank with them, and partook of their innocent pleasures and amusements; but though he told them his name was Plato, he did not speak of the employment he pursued at Athens, and never introduced the name of that great philosopher, whose doctrines he followed, and whose death and virtues were favorite topics of conversation in every part of Greece. When he returned to Athens, he was attended by the family which had so kindly entertained him; and, being familiar with the city, he was desired to show them the

celebrated philosopher whose name he bore. Their surprise may be imagined, when he told them that he was the Plato whom they wished to behold.

In his diet he was moderate; and, indeed, to sobriety and temperance in the use of food, and abstinence from those indulgences which enfeeble the body and enervate the mind, some have attributed his preservation during a terrible pestilence which raged in Athens at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war. Plato was never subject to any long or lingering indisposition; and, though change of climate had enfeebled a constitution naturally strong and healthy, the philosopher lived to an advanced age, and was often heard to say, when his physicians advised him to leave his residence at Athens, where the air was impregnated by the pestilence, that he would not advance one single step to gain the top of Mount Athos, were he assured of attaining the longevity which the inhabitants of that mountain were said to enjoy. Plato died on his birth-day, in the eighty-first year of his age, about the year 348 B. C. His last moments were easy, and without pain; and, according to some authors, he expired in the midst of an entertainment; but Cicero tells us that he died while in the act of writing.

The works of Plato are numerous; with the exception of twelve letters, they are all written in the form of dialogue, in which Socrates is the principal interlocutor. Thus he always speaks by the mouth of others, and the philosopher has nowhere made mention of himself, except once in his dialogue entitled

Phædon, and another time in his Apology for Socrates. His writings were so celebrated, and his opinions so respected, that he was called divine; and for the elegance, melody, and sweetness of his expressions, he was distinguished by the appellation of the Athenian bee. His style, however, though commended and admired by the most refined critics among the ancients, has not escaped the censure of some of the moderns. It is obvious that the philosopher cannot escape ridicule, who supposes that fire is a pyramid tied to the earth by numbers; that the world is a figure consisting of twelve pentagons; and who, to prove the metempsychosis and the immortality of the soul, asserts that the dead are born from the living, and the living from the dead. The speculative mind of Plato was employed in examining things divine and human; and he attempted to ascertain and fix not only the practical doctrines of morals and politics but the more subtle and abstruse theory of mystical theogony – the origin of the gods, or divine power. His philosophy was universally received and adopted in ancient times, and it has not only governed the opinions of the speculative part of mankind, but it continues still to influence the reasoning, and to divide the sentiments of the moderns.

In his system of philosophy, he followed the physics of Heraclitus, the metaphysical opinions of Pythagoras, and the morals of Socrates. He maintained the existence of two beings – one self-existent, and the other formed by the hand of a pre-existent, creative god and man. The world, he maintained, was

created by that self-existent cause, from the rude, undigested mass of matter which had existed from all eternity, and which had ever been animated by an irregular principle of motion. The origin of evil could not be traced under the government of a deity, without admitting a stubborn intractability and wildness congenial to matter; and from these, consequently, could be demonstrated the deviations from the laws of nature, and from thence, the extravagant passions and appetites of men.

From materials like these were formed the four elements, and the beautiful structure of the heavens and the earth; and into the active but irrational principle of matter, the divinity infused a rational soul. The souls of men were formed from the remainder of the rational soul of the world, which had previously given existence to the invisible gods and demons. The philosopher, therefore, supported the doctrine of ideal forms, and the pre-existence of the human mind, which he considered as emanations of the Deity, and which can never remain satisfied with objects or things unworthy of their divine original. Men could perceive, with their corporeal senses, the types of immutable things, and the fluctuating objects of the material world; but the sudden changes to which these are continually liable, create innumerable disorders, and hence arise deception, and, in short, all the errors of human life. Yet, in whatever situation man may be, he is still an object of divine concern, and, to recommend himself to the favor of the pre-existent cause, he must comply with the purposes of his creation, and, by proper care and diligence, he can recover

those immaculate powers with which he was naturally endowed.

All science the philosopher made to consist in reminiscence – in recalling the nature, forms, and proportions, of those perfect and immutable essences, with which the human mind had been conversant. From observations like these, the summit of felicity might be attained by removing from the material, and approaching nearer to the intellectual world; by curbing and governing the passions, which were ever agitated and inflamed by real or imaginary objects.

The passions were divided into two classes: the first consisted of the irascible passions, which originated in pride or resentment, and were seated in the breast; the other, founded on the love of pleasure, was the concupiscible part of the soul, seated in the inferior parts of the body. These different orders induced the philosopher to compare the soul to a small republic, of which the reasoning and judging powers were stationed in the head, as in a firm citadel, and of which the senses were the guards and servants. By the irascible part of the soul, men asserted their dignity, repelled injuries, and scorned danger and the concupiscible part provided the support and the necessities of the body, and, when governed with propriety, gave rise to temperance. Justice was produced by the regular dominion of reason, and by the submission of the passions; and prudence arose from the strength, acuteness, and perfection of the soul, without which other virtues could not exist.

But amidst all this, wisdom was not easily attained; at their

creation all minds were not endowed with the same excellence; the bodies which they animated on earth, were not always in harmony with the divine emanation; some might be too weak, others too strong. On the first years of a man's life depended his future character; an effeminate and licentious education seemed calculated to destroy the purposes of the divinity, while the contrary produced different effects, and tended to cultivate and improve the reasoning and judging faculty, and to produce wisdom and virtue.

Plato was the first who supported the immortality of the soul upon arguments solid and permanent, deduced from truth and experience. He did not imagine that the diseases and death of the body could injure the principle of life, and destroy the soul, which, of itself, was of divine origin, and of an incorrupted and immutable essence, which, though inherent for a while in matter, could not lose that power which was the emanation of God. From doctrines like these, the great founder of Platonism concluded that there might exist in the world a community of men, whose passions could be governed with moderation, and who, from knowing the evils and miseries which arise from ill conduct, might aspire to excellence, and attain that perfection which can be derived from a proper exercise of the rational and moral powers. To illustrate this more fully, the philosopher wrote a book, well known by the name of the "Republic of Plato," in which he explains, with acuteness, judgment, and elegance, the rise and revolution of civil society; and so respected was

his opinion as a legislator, that his scholars were employed in regulating the republics of Arcadia.

It was a characteristic of Plato's mind, that he united a subtle intellect to a glowing fancy. As an illustration of his style, we may mention the passage in which he shows the operation of the three principles in the human being – mind, soul, and body – or the three powers of intellect, spirit, and matter. It occurs in the dialogue of Phædrus, where he endeavors to illustrate the doctrine that the mind or reason should be the governing faculty.

The soul is here compared to a chariot, drawn by a pair of winged steeds, one of which is well-bred and well-trained, and the other quite the contrary. The quiet horse, the Will, is obedient to the rein, and strives to draw its wilder yoke-fellow, the Appetite, along with it, and to induce it to listen to the voice of the charioteer, Reason. But they have a great deal of trouble with the restive horse, and the whole object of the journey seems to be lost, if this is permitted to have its way. In this allegory, it is shown that the object of Reason, in exacting obedience, is not merely that discipline and subordination which constitute the virtues of man, but to keep the mind in a state to rise to the contemplation and enjoyment of great and eternal truths. In other words, a man must be in a moral state, before he can place himself in a religious state, so as to enjoy the *summum bonum*, or greatest good. What, then, is this greatest good? or, in the language of Plato, its *idea*? – for, with him, *idea* and *essence* are synonymous. This is God – not his image, but his nature, which

is the sovereign good. Thus the greatest happiness of man was placed by Plato in a mysterious union of the soul with this source of goodness. How near an approach to Christian communion with God, is this?

However fantastic many of the details of Plato's system may seem, and however illusory its whole machinery must appear, when viewed in the light of modern criticism, one thing is to be observed, – that the great results of his philosophy are true. He struggled through the thick mists of his age, and discovered the eternal existence of Deity; he perceived and established, on grounds not to be controverted, the immortality of the soul. He placed true happiness where philosophy and religion place it – in the ascendancy of the spirit over the body – the subjugation of the passions to the dominion of reason and virtue. It appears that the germs of these great truths had already manifested themselves in the minds of Pythagoras, Socrates, and others; and Plato borrowed from them many of his noble ideas. But he systematized what they had left in a crude state; he gave a more clear and distinct utterance to what his great master, Socrates, had dimly conceived, and ineffectually struggled to announce. He reached the highest point, in the search after divine knowledge which has ever been attained, without the direct aid of inspiration. In the gradual development of God's will to man, he was one of the great instruments. Yet, in reviewing his works, we see how imperfect was still his knowledge of things divine, and what fearful shadows would rest upon the world, if Plato were our

only guide. How dark, uncertain, mysterious, would be the ways of God – the destinies of man – if left where the philosopher left them!

SOCRATES

Socrates was born at Athens 468 B. C. His father, Sophroniscus, was a sculptor of humble reputation and in moderate circumstances. He educated his son to his own profession, in which it appears that the latter made considerable proficiency. He did not, however, devote himself wholly to this pursuit, but spent a large share of his time in reading the works of philosophers. Crito, an intimate friend, supplied him with money to pay the masters who taught him various accomplishments, and he became an auditor of most of the great philosophers who visited Athens, during his youth. By these means, he received the best education which an Athenian youth could command in those days.

In the early part of his life, he wrought at his trade, so far as to earn a decent subsistence. Receiving a small property at his father's death, when he was about thirty years of age, he devoted himself entirely to philosophical pursuits. His habits were simple and economical; his dress was coarse, and he seldom wore shoes. By his frugality, he was thus able to live without labor, and yet without being dependent upon others.

With regard to his public life, it appears that he served his country faithfully as a soldier, according to the duty of every Athenian citizen. He took part in three campaigns, displaying the greatest hardihood and valor. He endured, without repining,

hunger and thirst, heat and cold. In a skirmish with the enemy, his pupil, Alcibiades, fell wounded in the midst of the enemy. Socrates rescued him and carried him off, for which the civic crown was awarded as the prize of valor. This reward, however, he transferred to Alcibiades. In another campaign he saved the life of his pupil, Xenophon, whom he carried from the field on his shoulders, fighting his way as he went.

At the age of sixty-five, he became a member of the council of Five Hundred, at Athens. He rose also to the dignity of president of that body; by virtue of which office, he for one day managed the popular assemblies and kept the key of the citadel and treasury. Ten naval officers had been accused of misconduct, because, after the battle of Arginusæ, they had omitted the sacred duty of burying the slain, in consequence of a violent storm. Their enemies, finding the people disposed to acquit them procured by intrigue, the prorogation of several assemblies. A new assembly was held on the day when Socrates was president; and the citizens, instigated by bad men, violently demanded that sentence of death should be pronounced on all the accused at once, contrary to law. But the menaces of violence were unable to bend the inflexible justice of Socrates, and he was able afterwards to declare, on his own trial, that ten innocent men had been saved by his influence.

When Socrates formed the resolution of devoting himself to the pursuit of divine and human knowledge, the sophists, a set of arrogant philosophers, were perverting the heads and corrupting

the hearts of the Grecian youth. He therefore put himself in opposition to these false guides, and went about endeavoring to instruct everybody in a wiser and better philosophy than that which prevailed. He was, in fact, an instructor of the people; and, believing himself an ambassador of God, he was occupied from the dawn of day in seeking persons whom he might teach either what is important to mankind in general, or the private circumstances of individuals. He went to the public assemblies and the most crowded streets, or entered the workshops of mechanics and artists, and conversed with the people on religious duties, on their social and political relations; on all subjects, indeed, relating to morals, and even on agriculture, war, and the arts. He endeavored to remove prevailing prejudices and errors, and to substitute right principles; to awaken their better genius in the minds of his hearers; to encourage and console them; to enlighten and improve mankind, and make them really happy.

It is manifest that such a course must have been attended with great difficulties. But the serenity of Socrates was undisturbed; he was always perfectly cheerful in appearance and conversation. In the market-place and at home, among people and in the society of those whom love of truth and virtue connected more closely with him, he was always the same. It cannot be doubted that a happy physical and mental temperament contributed to produce this equanimity. But it was, likewise, a fruit of self-discipline and the philosophy he taught. He treated his body as a servant, and inured it to every privation, so that moderation was to him

an easy virtue; and he retained in old age his youthful vigor, physical and mental. He was kind as a husband and a father. Though his wife, Xantippe, was a noted shrew, he viewed her as an excellent instrument of discipline, and treated her with patience and forbearance.

Although the Greeks at this time were zealously devoted to their heathen mythology, Socrates was a sincere worshipper of the Supreme Being; yet, from his care not to offend his weaker brethren, he observed, with punctilious exactness, the religious uses which antiquity and custom had consecrated. He was constantly attended by a circle of disciples, who caught from him the spirit of free inquiry, and were inspired with his zeal for the highest good, for religion, truth and virtue. The succeeding schools of philosophy in Greece are therefore justly traced back to him; and he is to be regarded as the master who gave philosophical investigation among the Greeks its highest direction. Among his most distinguished disciples were Alcibiades, Crito, Xenophon, Antisthenes, Aristippus, Phædon, Æschines, Cebes, Euclid, and Plato. From the detached accounts given us by Xenophon and Plato, it appears that he instructed them in politics, rhetoric, logic, ethics, arithmetic, and geometry, though not in a systematic manner. He read with them the principal poets, and pointed out their beauties; he labored to enlighten and correct their opinions on all practical subjects, and to excite them to the study of whatever is most important to men.

To make his instructions attractive, they were delivered, not

in long lectures, but in free conversations, rendered interesting by question and answer. He did not reason *before*, but *with* his disciples, and thus exercised an irresistible power over their minds. He obliged them to think for themselves, and if there was any capacity in a man, it could not fail to be excited by his conversation. This method of question and answer is called the *Socratic method*. The fragments of his conversations, preserved by Xenophon, often leave us unsatisfied; Plato alone has transmitted to us the genuine spirit of this method; and he was therefore viewed by the ancients as the only fountain of the Socratic philosophy, – a fact which has been too much disregarded by modern writers.

Socrates fell a victim to the spirit of bigotry, which has sacrificed so many persons, who were in advance of the age. The document containing the accusation against him was lodged in the Temple of Cybele, as late as the second century of the Christian era. The following is a translation: – "Melitus, son of Melitus, accuses Socrates, son of Sophroniscus, of being guilty of denying the existence of the gods of the republic, making innovations in the religion of the Greeks, and of corrupting the Athenian youth. Penalty, – death."

Melitus, who was a tragic writer of a low order, was engaged as an accuser in this affair, by the wealthy and more powerful enemies of Socrates. Amongst them were Anytus and Lycon, the former a rich artisan and zealous democrat, who had rendered very important services to the republic, by aiding Thrasybulus in

the expulsion of the thirty tyrants, and in establishing the liberty of his country. The latter was an orator, and therefore a political magistrate, to which office the Athenian orators were entitled, by virtue of the laws of Solon.

Socrates was seventy years of age when summoned to appear at the Areopagus. The news of this event did not excite much surprise, as the people had long expected it. Aristophanes, the celebrated comic poet of Athens, had previously undertaken, at the instigation of Melitus, to ridicule the venerable character of the philosopher; and when once he was calumniated and defamed, the fickle populace ceased to revere the man whom they had before looked upon as a being of a superior order.

The enemies of Socrates were of two classes, – the one consisted of citizens who could not help admiring his genius and virtue, but who regarded him as a dangerous innovator and subverter of public order. They were ready, with him, to acknowledge that some reformation might be made in the tenets of Paganism; that the gods and goddesses were not patterns of virtue; and that the conduct of the sovereign of the skies, himself, was far from exemplary; but, said they, the thunders of Jupiter exercise a salutary influence over the minds of some, and the pains of Tartarus still operate as a bridle upon the passions of others. To bring in question the ancient faith, was at once to attack the institutions of the republic at their base, and excite revolution. The philosophy of Socrates, even though true, must be suppressed; for the life of one man is not to be put in the

balance with the repose of a whole people, – with the safety of the country. It is better that Socrates should die, than Athens perish. Such was the reasoning of one portion.

The other class was composed of the superstitious and bigoted, – of the vicious and imbecile, – who were daily exposed to the censures and sarcasms of the philosopher; in fine, of that set of narrow, jealous-minded men, who looked upon the welfare and fame of their neighbors with envy and with malice. The race that had exiled Aristides, because he was great, was ready to condemn Socrates, because he was wise. The friends and disciples of the great philosopher saw the danger that menaced him, and with anxiety and fear they crowded around their master, supplicating him to fly, or to adopt some means of defence; but he would do neither. Lysias, one of the most celebrated orators of the day, composed a pathetic oration, which he wished his friend to pronounce, as his defence, in the presence of his judges. Socrates read it, praised its animated and eloquent style, but rejected it, as being neither manly nor expressive of fortitude. The anxiety and trouble of avoiding condemnation appeared to him of little moment, when compared to the performance of his duty in upholding to the last moment, the truth of his principles and the dignity of his character.

Socrates, though both eloquent and persuasive in conversation, was not capable of addressing a large assembly; therefore, on the day of his trial, he asked permission of his judges to use the means of defence to which he had been

accustomed; namely, to speak familiarly with, and ask questions of, his adversaries.

"Athenians," he said, in commencing, "I hope I shall succeed in my defence, if, by succeeding, good may result from it; but I look upon my success as very doubtful, and, therefore, do not deceive myself in that respect. But let the will of the gods be obeyed."

The two chief accusations against Socrates, were firstly, that he did not believe in the religion of the state; secondly, that he was guilty of corrupting the minds of young men, and of disseminating the disbelief of the established religion.

Socrates did not reply, in a direct manner, to either of these charges. Instead of declaring that he believed in the religion of his country, he proved that he was not an atheist; instead of refuting the charge of instructing youth to doubt the sacred tenets of the law, he declared and demonstrated that it was morality which he taught; and instead of appealing to the compassion of his judges, he did not disguise the contempt in which he held the means practised by parties accused, who, in order to excite sympathy and compassion, brought their children and relations to supplicate, with tears in their eyes, the mercy of the judges. "I, also, have friends and relations!" he said, "and, as to children, I have three, – one a stripling, the other two in childhood; yet I will not allow them to come here to excite your sympathy. Why will I not do so? It is not caused by stubbornness, nor by any disdain I have for you. For my honor, for your honor, for that of

the republic, it is not meet that, with the reputation, whether true or false that I have acquired, I should make use of such means to procure your acquittal. Indeed, I should be ashamed if those that distinguish themselves for wisdom, courage, or any other virtue, should, like many people that I have seen, although they have passed for great men, commit actions the most grovelling – as if death were the greatest misfortune that could befall them, and that, – if their lives were spared, – they would become immortal!"

When Socrates had ceased speaking, the judges of the Areopagus found him guilty, by a majority of three. On being demanded, according to the spirit of the Athenian laws, to pass sentence on himself, and to mention the death he preferred, Socrates, conscious of his own innocence, replied, – "Far from deeming myself guilty, I believe that I have rendered my country important services, and, therefore, think that I ought to be maintained in the Prytaneum at the public expense, during the remainder of my life, – an honor, O Athenians, that I merit more than the victors of the Olympic games. They make you happy in appearance; I have made you so in reality."

This reply in the highest degree exasperated his judges, who condemned him to die by poison. When the sentence was passed, Socrates remained, for a few minutes, calm and undisturbed, and then asked permission to speak a few words.

"Athenians," he said, "your want of patience will be used as a pretext by those who desire to defame the republic. They will tell you that you have put to death the wise Socrates; yes, they will

call me wise, to add, to your shame – though I am not so. If you had but waited a short time, death would have come of itself, and thus saved you from disgracing yourselves. You see I am already advanced in years and must shortly die. All know that in times of war, nothing is more easy than saving our lives by throwing down our weapons, and demanding quarter of the enemy. It is the same in all dangers; a thousand pretexts can be found by those who are not scrupulous about what they say and do. It is difficult, O Athenians, to avoid death; but it is much more so to avoid crime, which is swifter than death. It is for this reason that, old and feeble as I am, I await the latter, whilst my accusers, who are more vigorous and volatile, embrace the former. I am now about to suffer the punishment to which you have sentenced me; my accusers, the odium and infamy to which virtue condemns them."

"What is going to happen to me," he added, "will be rather an advantage than an evil; for it is apparent, that to die at present, and to be delivered of the cares of this life, is what will best suit me. I have no resentment towards my accusers, neither have I any ill-will against those who condemn me, although their intention was to injure me, to do all in their power to do me harm. I will make but one request; when my children are grown up, if they are seen to covet riches, or prefer wealth to virtue, punish and torment them as I have tormented you; and if they look upon themselves as beings of importance, make them blush for their presumption. This is what I have done to you. If you do that, you

will secure the gratitude of a father, and my children will ever praise you. But it is time that we should separate; I go to die, and you to live. Which of us has the best portion? No one knows except God."

When he had finished, he was taken to prison and loaded with chains. His execution was to have taken place in twenty-four hours, but it was postponed for thirty days, on account of the celebration of the Delian festivals. Socrates, with his usual cheerfulness and serenity, passed this time in conversing with his friends upon some of the most important subjects that could engage the mind of man. Plato relates, in the dialogue entitled *The Phedon*, the conversation which took place on the day preceding his death. That dialogue, without exception, is the most beautiful that the Greeks have left us. We can give only those passages which are more immediately connected with his death.

"After the condemnation of Socrates," says *Phedon*, "we did not allow a day to escape without seeing him, and on the day previous to his death, we assembled earlier than usual. When we arrived at the prison door, the jailor told us to wait a little, as the Eleven were then giving orders for the death of Socrates."

Speaking of the fear of death, Socrates said, "Assuredly, my dear friends, if I did not think I was going to find, in the other world, gods good and wise, and even infinitely better than we are, it would be wrong in me not to be troubled at death; but you must know that I hope soon to be introduced to virtuous men, –

soon to arrive at the assembly of the just. Therefore it is that I fear not death, hoping, as I do, according to the ancient faith of the human race, that something better is in store for the just, than what there is for the wicked."

The slave who was to give Socrates the poison, warned him to speak as little as possible, because sometimes it was necessary to administer the drug three or four times to those who allowed themselves to be overheated by conversation.

"Let the poison be prepared," said Socrates, "as if it were necessary to give it two or three times;" then continued to discourse upon the immortality of the soul, mixing in his arguments the inspiration of sentiment and of poetry.

"Let that man," said he, "have confidence in his destiny, who, during lifetime, has renounced the pleasures of the body as productive of evil. He who has sought the pleasures of science, who has beautified his soul, not with useless ornaments, but with what is suitable to his nature, such as temperance, justice, fortitude, liberty, and truth, ought to wait peaceably the hour of his departure, and to be always ready for the voyage, whenever fate calls him."

"Alas! my dear friend," said Crito; "have you any orders for me, or for those present, with regard to your children or your affairs?" "What I have always recommended to you, Crito," – replied Socrates, "to take care of yourselves, – nothing more. By doing so, you will render me a service, my family, and all who know you."

After Socrates had bathed, his children and his female relations were brought into his presence. He spoke to them for some time, gave them his orders, then caused them to retire. After he returned, he sat down upon his bed, and had scarcely spoken, when the officer of the Eleven came in and said, "Socrates, I hope I shall not have the same occasion to reproach you as I have had in respect to others. As soon as I come to acquaint them that they must drink the poison, they are incensed against me; but you have, ever since you came here, been patient, calm, and even-tempered, and I am confident that you are not angry with me. Now, you know what I have told you. Farewell! Try to bear with resignation what cannot be avoided." Saying these words, he turned away, while the tears were streaming from his eyes.

"I will follow your counsel," said Socrates. Then turning to his disciples, he continued, "Observe the honesty of that poor man. During my imprisonment, he has visited me daily, and now, see with what sincerity he weeps for me!" When the slave brought the poison to Socrates, the latter looked at him, and said, "Very well, my friend, what must I do? for you know best, and it is your business to direct me."

"Nothing else but drink the poison; then walk, and when you find your limbs grow stiff, lie down upon your bed." At the same time, he handed the cup to Socrates, who took it without emotion or change of countenance; then looking at the man with a steady eye, he said, – "Tell me, is it allowable to make a drink-offering

of this mixture?" "Socrates," the man replied, "we never prepare more than what is sufficient for one dose."

"I understand you," said Socrates; "but nevertheless, it is lawful for me to pray to God that he may bless my voyage, and render it a happy one." Having said so, he raised the cup to his lips, and drank the poison with astonishing tranquillity and meekness. When Socrates looked around and saw his friends vainly endeavoring to stifle their tears, he said, "What are you doing, my companions? Was it not to avoid this, that I sent away the women? and you have fallen into their weakness. Be quiet, I pray you, and show more fortitude."

In the mean time, he continued to walk, and when he felt his legs grow stiff, he lay down upon his back, as had been recommended. The person who gave Socrates the poison, then came forward, and, after examining his legs and feet, he bound them, and asked if he felt the cord. The dying philosopher answered, "No;" and feeling himself with his hand, he told his disciples, that "when the cold reached his heart, he should leave them."

A few minutes afterwards, he exclaimed, "Crito, we owe a cock to Esculapius; do not forget to pay the debt." These were the last words of Socrates. Such was the end of the great philosopher; and it may be truly said that he was one of the wisest, best, and most upright of all the Athenians.

In personal appearance Socrates was disagreeable: he had a sunken nose, and his eyes protruded so as to give him a strange

appearance. It is supposed that he knew the shrewish temper of Xantippe, before he married her, and sought the alliance that she might give exercise to his patience. She tried every means to irritate him, and finding it impossible to rouse his anger, she poured some dirty water upon him from a window. "After thunder, we generally have rain," was the only remark the philosopher deigned to make. Many other anecdotes are handed down, which show the wonderful command Socrates had acquired over himself.

ALCIBIADES

This eminent Athenian general and statesman, was born about 450 B. C. Descended on both sides from the most illustrious families of his country, – born to the inheritance of great wealth, – endued with great personal beauty and the most brilliant mental qualities, – it seemed evident, from his early youth, that he would exert no slight influence over the counsels and fortunes of Athens. His father, Cleinias, was killed at the battle of Cheronæa, and being thus an orphan, he was placed under the wardship of his uncle, Pericles. The latter was too much engaged in affairs of state to bestow that care upon Alcibiades, which the impetuosity of his disposition required. In his childhood he showed the germ of his future character. One day, when he was playing at dice with some companions in the street, a wagon came up; he requested the driver to stop, and, the latter refusing, Alcibiades threw himself before the wheel, exclaiming, "Drive on, if thou darest!"

He excelled alike in mental and bodily exercises. His beauty and birth, and the high station of Pericles, procured him a multitude of friends and admirers, and his reputation was soon injured by the dissipation in which he became involved. He was fortunate in acquiring the friendship of Socrates, who endeavored to lead him to virtue, and undoubtedly obtained a great ascendancy over him, so that Alcibiades often quitted his

gay associates for the company of the philosopher.

He bore arms, for the first time, in the expedition against Potidæa and was wounded. Socrates, who fought at his side, defended him, and led him out of danger. In the battle of Delium, he was among the cavalry who were victorious, but, the infantry being beaten, he was obliged to flee, as well as the rest. He overtook Socrates, who was retreating on foot. Alcibiades accompanied him, and protected him.

For a considerable time he took no part in public affairs, but on the death of Cleon, 422 B. C., Nicias succeeded in making a peace for fifty years, between the Athenians and Lacedæmonians. Alcibiades, jealous of the influence of Nicias, and offended because the Lacedæmonians, with whom he was connected by the ties of hospitality, had not applied to him, sought to bring about some disagreement between the two nations. The Lacedæmonians sent ambassadors to Athens. Alcibiades received them with apparent good-will, and advised them to conceal their credentials, lest the Athenians should prescribe conditions to them. They suffered themselves to be duped, and, when called into the assembly, declared that they were without credentials. Alcibiades rose immediately, stated that they had credentials, accused them of ill-faith, and induced the Athenians to form an alliance with the Argives. A breach with the Lacedæmonians was the immediate consequence. Alcibiades commanded the Athenian fleet several times during the war, and devastated the Peloponnesus.

He did not, however, refrain from luxury and dissipation, to which he abandoned himself after his return from the wars. On one occasion, after having a nocturnal revel, in the company of some friends, he laid a wager that he would give Hipponicus a box on the ear; which he did. This act made a great noise in the city, but Alcibiades went to the injured party, threw off his garments, and called upon him to revenge himself by whipping him with rods. This open repentance reconciled Hipponicus, who not only pardoned him, but gave him afterwards his daughter, Hipparete, in marriage, with a portion of ten talents – about ten thousand dollars. Alcibiades, however, still continued his levity and prodigality. His extravagance was conspicuous at the Olympic games, where he entered the stadium, not like other rich men, with one chariot, but with seven at a time – and gained the three first prizes. He seems also to have been victor in the Pythian and Nemæan games. By these courses he drew upon himself the hatred of his fellow citizens, and he would have fallen a sacrifice to the ostracism, if he had not, in connection with Nicias and Phæax, who feared a similar fate, artfully contrived to procure the banishment of his most formidable enemy.

Soon afterwards, the Athenians, at the instance of Alcibiades, resolved on an expedition against Sicily, and elected him commander-in-chief, together with Nicias and Lamachus. But, during the preparations, it happened one night that all the statues of Mercury were broken. The enemies of Alcibiades charged him with the act, but postponed a public accusation till he had set sail,

when they stirred up the people against him to such a degree, that he was recalled in order to be tried. Alcibiades had been very successful in Sicily, when he received the order to return. He prepared to obey, and embarked, but on reaching Thurium, he landed, and, instead of proceeding to Athens, concealed himself. Some one asking him, "How is this, Alcibiades? Have you no confidence in your country?" – he replied, "I would not trust my mother when my life is concerned, for she might, by mistake, take a black stone instead of a white one." He was condemned to death in Athens. When the news reached him, he remarked – "I shall show the Athenians that I am yet alive."

He now went to Argos; thence to Sparta, where he made himself a favorite by conforming closely to the prevailing strictness of manners. Here he succeeded in inducing the Lacedæmonians to form an alliance with the Persian king, and, after the unfortunate issue of the Athenian expedition against Sicily, he prevailed on the Spartans to assist the inhabitants of Chios in throwing off the yoke of Athens. He went himself thither, and on his arrival in Asia Minor, roused the whole of Ionia to insurrection against the Athenians, and did them considerable injury. But Agis and the principal leaders of the Spartans became jealous of him, on account of his success, and ordered their commanders in Asia to cause him to be assassinated.

Alcibiades suspected their plan, and went to Tissaphernes, a Persian satrap, who was ordered to act in concert with the

Lacedæmonians. Here he changed his manners once more, adopted the luxurious habits of Asia, and soon contrived to make himself indispensable to the satrap. As he could no longer trust the Lacedæmonians, he undertook to serve his country, and showed Tissaphernes that it was against the interest of the Persian king to weaken the Athenians; on the contrary, Sparta and Athens ought to be preserved for their mutual injury. Tissaphernes followed this advice, and afforded the Athenians some relief. The latter had, at that time, considerable forces at Samos. Alcibiades sent word to their commanders, that, if the licentiousness of the people was suppressed and the government put into the hands of the nobles, he would procure for them the friendship of Tissaphernes, and prevent the junction of the Phœnician and Lacedæmonian fleets.

This demand was acceded to, and Pisander was sent to Athens; by whose means the government of the city was put into the hands of a council, consisting of four hundred persons. As, however, the council showed no intention of recalling Alcibiades, the army of Samos chose him their commander, and exhorted him to go directly to Athens and overthrow the power of the tyrants. He wished, however, not to return to his country before he had rendered it some services; and therefore attacked and totally defeated the Lacedæmonians. When he returned to Tissaphernes, the latter, in order not to appear a participator in the act, caused him to be arrested in Sardis. But Alcibiades found means to escape; placed himself at the head of the Athenian

army; conquered the Lacedæmonians and Persians, at Cyzicus, by sea and land; took Cyzicus, Chalcedon, and Byzantium; restored the sovereignty of the sea to the Athenians, and returned to his country, whither he had been recalled, on the motion of Critias.

He was received with general enthusiasm; for the Athenians considered his exile as the cause of all their misfortunes. But this triumph was of short duration. He was sent with one hundred ships to Asia; and, not being supplied with money to pay his soldiers, he saw himself under the necessity of seeking help in Caria, and committed the command to Antiochus, who was drawn into a snare by Lysander, and lost his life and a part of his ships. The enemies of Alcibiades improved this opportunity to accuse him, and procure his removal from office.

Alcibiades now went to Pactyæ in Thrace, collected troops, and waged war against the Thracians. He obtained considerable booty, and secured the quiet of the neighboring Greek cities. The Athenian fleet was, at that time, lying at Ægos Potamos. He pointed out to the generals the danger which threatened them, advised them to go to Sestos, and offered his assistance to force the Lacedæmonian general, Lysander, either to fight, or to make peace. But they did not listen to him, and soon after were totally defeated. Alcibiades, fearing the power of the Lacedæmonians, betook himself to Bithynia, and was about to go to Artaxerxes, to procure his assistance for his country. In the meantime, the thirty tyrants, whom Lysander after the capture of

Athens, had set up there, requested the latter to cause Alcibiades to be assassinated. But Lysander declined, until he received an order to the same effect from his own government. He then charged Pharnabazes with the execution of it. Alcibiades was at the time with Timandra, his mistress, in a castle in Phrygia. The assistants of Pharnabazes, afraid to encounter Alcibiades, set fire to his house, and when he had already escaped the conflagration, they despatched him with their arrows. Timandra buried the body with due honor.

Thus Alcibiades ended his life, 404 B. C., being about forty-five years old. He was endowed by nature with distinguished qualities, a rare talent to captivate and rule mankind, and uncommon eloquence, although he could not pronounce the letter *r*, and had an impediment in his speech. He had, however, no fixed principles, and was governed only by external circumstances. He was without that elevation of soul which steadily pursues the path of virtue. On the other hand, he possessed that boldness which arises from consciousness of superiority, and which shrinks from no difficulty, because confident of success. He was a singular instance of intellectual eminence and moral depravity. His faculty for adapting himself to circumstances enabled him to equal the Spartans in austerity of manners, and to surpass the pomp of the Persians. Plutarch says, that "no man was of so sullen a nature but he would make him merry; nor so churlish but he could make him gentle."

DEMOCRITUS

Democritus, one of the most remarkable of the philosophers of antiquity, was born at Abdera, a maritime city of Thrace, 460 B. C. He travelled over the greatest part of Europe, Asia and Africa, in quest of knowledge. Though his father was so rich as to entertain Xerxes and his whole army, while marching against Greece, and left his son a large fortune, yet the latter returned from his travels in a state of poverty. It was a law of the country, that a man should be deprived of the honor of a funeral, who had reduced himself to indigence. Democritus was of course exposed to this ignominy; but having read before his countrymen his chief work, it was received with the greatest applause, and he was presented with five hundred talents, – a sum nearly equal to half a million of dollars. Statues were also erected to his honor; and a decree was passed that the expenses of his funeral should be paid from the public treasury.

These circumstances display alike the great eminence of the philosopher, and an appreciation of genius and learning on the part of the people, beyond what could now be found in the most civilized communities of the world. Where is the popular assembly of the present day, that would bestow such a reward, on such an occasion?

After his return from his travels, Democritus retired to a garden near the city, where he dedicated his time to study

and solitude; and, according to some authors, put out his eyes, to apply himself more closely to philosophical inquiries. This, however, is unworthy of credit. He was accused of insanity, and Hippocrates, a celebrated physician, was ordered to inquire into the nature of his disorder. After a conference with the philosopher, he declared that not the latter, but his enemies were insane. Democritus was so accustomed to laugh at the follies and vanities of mankind, who distract themselves with care, and are at once the prey to hope and anxiety, that he acquired the title of the "laughing philosopher," in contrast to Heraclitus,¹² who has been called the "weeping philosopher." He told Darius, the king, who was inconsolable for the loss of his wife, that he would raise her from the dead if he could find three persons who had gone through life without adversity, and whose names he might engrave on the queen's monument. The king's inquiries after such, proved unavailing, and the philosopher discovered the means of soothing the sorrows of the sovereign.

He was a disbeliever in the existence of ghosts; and some

¹² Heraclitus flourished about 500 years B. C. He was a native of Ephesus; and being of a melancholy disposition, he spent his time in mourning and weeping over the frailties of human nature, and the miseries of human life. He employed himself for a time, in writing different treatises, in which he maintained that all things are governed by a fatal necessity. His opinions, in some things, were adopted by the Stoics. He became at last a man-hater, and retired to the mountains, so as to be entirely separated from his fellow-men. Here he fed on grass, which brought on a dropsical complaint: to get cured of this, he returned to the town. He established his residence on a dunghill, hoping that the warmth might dissipate his disease; but this proved ineffectual, and he died in his sixtieth year.

youths, to try his fortitude, dressed themselves in hideous and deformed habits, and approached his cave in the dead of night, expecting to excite his terror and astonishment. The philosopher received them unmoved, and, without hardly deigning to bestow upon them a look, desired them to cease making themselves such objects of ridicule and folly. He died in the one hundred and fourth year of his age, B. C. 357.

All the works of Democritus, which were numerous, are lost. He was the first to teach that the milky way was occasioned by a confused light from a multitude of stars. He may be considered as the parent of experimental philosophy; in the prosecution of which he was so ardent, that he declared he would prefer the discovery of one of the causes of the works of nature, to the diadem of Persia. He is said to have made artificial emeralds by chemical means, and to have tinged them with various colors; he likewise found the art of dissolving stones and softening ivory.

He was the author of the atomic theory; he viewed all matter, in which he included mind, as reducible to atoms; he considered the universe to consist only of matter and empty space. The mind he regarded as round atoms of fire. He argued that nothing could arise out of nothing; and also that nothing could utterly perish and become nothing. Hence he inferred the eternity of the universe, and dispensed with the existence of a Creator.

He explained the difference in substances by a difference in their component atoms; and all material phenomena, by different motions, backward or forward, taking place of necessity. He did

not seem to perceive that under this word, *necessity*, he concealed a deity. He explained sensation by supposing sensible images to issue from bodies. In moral philosophy, he only taught that a cheerful state of mind was the greatest attainable good.

The theories of Democritus appear absurd enough in our time, but philosophy was then in its infancy. His struggles after light and truth display the darkness of the age, and the ingenuity of the philosopher. They may also teach us by what a process of mental toil, for centuries piled upon centuries, the knowledge we possess has been attained. The school he established, was supplanted, about a century after, by that of Epicurus.

PERICLES

This celebrated man, born about 498 B. C., was an Athenian of noble birth, son of Xantippus and Agariste. He was endowed by nature with great powers, which he improved by attending the lectures of Damon, Zeno, and Anaxagoras. Under these celebrated masters, he became a commander, a statesman, and an orator, and gained the affections of the people by his great address, and well-directed liberality. When he took a share in the administration of public affairs, he rendered himself popular by opposing Cimon, who was the favorite of the nobility; and, to remove every obstacle which stood in the way of his ambition, he lessened the dignity and the power of the court of Areopagus, whom the people had been taught for ages to respect and venerate.

He continued his attacks upon Cimon, and finally caused him to be banished by the ostracism. Thucydides also, who had succeeded Cimon on his banishment, shared the same fate, and Pericles remained, for fifteen years, the sole minister, and, as it may be said, the absolute sovereign of a republic which always showed itself so jealous of her liberties, and which distrusted so much the honesty of her magistrates. In his ministerial capacity, Pericles did not enrich himself, but the prosperity of Athens was the object of his administration. He made war against the Lacedæmonians, and restored the temple of Delphi to the care of

the Phocians, who had been illegally deprived of that honorable trust.

He obtained a victory over the Sicyonians near Nemæa, and waged a successful war against the inhabitants of Samos. The Peloponnesian war was fomented by his ambitious views, and when he had warmly represented the flourishing state, the opulence and actual power of his country, the Athenians did not hesitate to undertake a war against the most powerful republics of Greece – a war which continued for twenty-seven years, and was concluded by the destruction of their empire and the demolition of their walls. The arms of the Athenians were, for some time, crowned with success; but an unfortunate expedition raised clamors against Pericles, and the enraged populace attributed all their losses to him. To make atonement for their ill-success, they condemned him to pay fifty talents.

The loss of popular favor did not so much affect Pericles, as the death of all his children. When the tide of disaffection had passed away, he condescended to come into the public assembly, and viewed with secret pride the contrition of his fellow-citizens, who universally begged his forgiveness for the violence which they had offered to his ministerial character. He was again restored to all his honors, and, if possible, invested with more power and more authority than before; but the dreadful pestilence which had diminished the number of his family, and swept away many of his best friends, proved fatal to himself, and about 429 years B. C., in his seventieth year, he fell a sacrifice

to that terrible malady which robbed Athens of so many of her citizens.

Pericles was forty years at the head of the administration; twenty-five years with others, and fifteen alone. The flourishing state of the country under his government, gave occasion to the Athenians publicly to lament his loss and venerate his memory. As he was expiring and apparently senseless, his friends, that stood around his bed, expatiated with warmth on the most glorious actions of his life, and the victories which he had won – when he suddenly interrupted their tears and conversation, by saying, that in mentioning the exploits he had achieved, and which were common to him with all generals, they had forgotten to mention a circumstance, which reflected far greater glory on him as a minister, a general, and above all, as a man: "It is," said he, "that not a citizen in Athens has been obliged to put on mourning on my account."

The Athenians were so affected by his eloquence that they compared it to thunder and lightning, and, as if he were another father of the gods, they gave him the title of Olympian. The poets said that the goddess of persuasion, with all her charms and attractions, dwelt upon his tongue. When he marched at the head of the Athenian armies, he observed that he had the command of a free nation, who were Greeks and citizens of Athens. He also declared that not only the hand of a magistrate, but also his eyes and his tongue, should be pure and undefiled. There can be no doubt that Pericles was one of the most eloquent orators and

sagacious statesmen of Greece.

Yet, great and venerable as his character may appear, we must not forget his follies. His vicious partiality for the celebrated courtesan, Aspasia, justly subjected him to the ridicule and censure of his fellow-citizens. The greatness of his talents and his services, enabled him to triumph over satire and reproach for the time, but the Athenians had occasion to execrate the memory of a man, who, by his example, corrupted the purity and innocence of their morals, and who, associating licentiousness with talents and public virtue, rendered it almost respectable.

Pericles lost all his legitimate children by the pestilence already mentioned; and to call a natural son by his own name, he was obliged to repeal a law which he had made against spurious children, and which he had enforced with great severity. This son, named Pericles, became one of the ten generals who succeeded Alcibiades in the administration of affairs, and, like his colleagues, he was condemned to death by the Athenians, after the unfortunate battle of Arginusæ.

ARISTIDES

This great Athenian general and statesman, who took so conspicuous a part in the deliverance of Greece from the Persians, and who has come down to us with the enviable surname of The Just, was the son of Lysimachus and born about the year 550 B. C. We know little of the steps by which he rose to eminence. He was one of the ten generals of the Athenian forces, when they fought with the Persians at Marathon. According to the custom, each general held command of the army for one day, in rotation. Aristides, perceiving the disadvantages of this system, prevailed on his colleagues to give up their command to Miltiades. To this, in a great measure, must be attributed the memorable victory of the Greeks upon that occasion.

The year after this, Aristides was archon; and the ambitious Themistocles, desiring to get rid of him privately circulated a charge that Aristides was aiming at sovereign power. He succeeded finally in causing him to be exiled by the ostracism – a vote of banishment, in which the Athenians used shells for ballots. While the voting, upon this occasion, was going on, Aristides was among the people; a rustic citizen, who did not know him, came up and asked him to write the name of Aristides upon the shell with which he intended to vote. "Has he ever injured you?" said Aristides. "No," said the voter, "but I am tired of hearing him called the '*Just!*'"

Aristides left Athens, with prayers for its welfare. He was recalled at the end of three years, and, forgetting his injury, devoted himself with ardor and success to the good of his country. In the famous battle of Platea, he commanded the Athenians, and is entitled to a great share of the merit of the splendid victory gained by the Greeks. He died at an advanced age, about 467 B. C. He was so poor that the expenses of his funeral were defrayed at the public charge, and his two daughters, on account of their father's virtues, received a dowry from the public treasury, when they came to marriageable years.

The effect of so rare an example as that of Aristides, was visible even during his lifetime. The Athenians became more virtuous, in imitating their great leader. Such was their sense of his good qualities, that, at the representation of one of the tragedies of Æschylus, when the actor pronounced a sentence concerning moral goodness, the eyes of the audience were all at once turned from the players to Aristides. When he sat as judge, it is said that the plaintiff in his accusation – in order to prejudice him against the defendant – mentioned the injuries he had done to Aristides. "Mention the wrong *you* have received," said the equitable Athenian. "I sit here as judge; the lawsuit is yours, not mine." On one occasion, Themistocles announced to the people of Athens that he had a scheme of the greatest advantage to the state; but it could not be mentioned in a public assembly. Aristides was appointed to confer with him. The design was to set fire to the combined fleet of the Greeks, then lying in a

neighboring port, by which means the Athenians would acquire the sovereignty of the seas. Aristides returned to the people, and told them that nothing could be more advantageous – yet nothing more unjust. The project was of course abandoned.

The character of Aristides is one of the finest that is handed down by antiquity. To him belongs the rarest of all praises, that of observing justice, not only between man and man, but between nation and nation. He was truly a patriot, for he preferred the good of his country to his own ambition. A candid enemy, an impartial friend, a just administrator of other men's money – an observer of national faith – he is well entitled to the imperishable monument which is erected in that simple title, The Just!

ÆSOP

This celebrated inventor of fables was a native of Phrygia, in Asia Minor, and flourished in the time of Solon, about 560 B. C. A life of him was written by a Greek monk, named Planudes, about the middle of the fourteenth century, which passed into circulation as a genuine work, but which is proved to have been a mere fiction. In that work, Æsop is represented as being hunch-backed, and an object of disgust from his deformity. There appears to be no foundation whatever for this story. This invention of the monk, no doubt, had for its object, to give eclat to the beauties of Æsop's mind, by the contrast of bodily deformity.

Throwing aside the work of Planudes, we are left to grope in obscurity for the real history of the great fabulist. After the most diligent researches, we can do little more than trace the leading incidents of his life. The place of his birth, like that of Homer, is matter of question; Samos, Sardis, Cotiæum in Phrygia, and Mesembria in Thrace, laying claim alike to that honor. The early part of his life was spent in slavery, and the names of three of his masters have been preserved: Dinarchus, an Athenian, in whose service he is said to have acquired a correct and pure knowledge of Greek; Xanthus, a Samian, who figures in Planudes as a philosopher, in order that the capacity of the slave may be set off by the incapacity of the master; and Iadmon or Idmon, another Samian, by whom he was enfranchised.

He acquired a high reputation in Greece for that species of composition, which, after him, was called Æsopian, and, in consequence, was solicited by Cræsus to take up his abode at the Lydian court. Here he is said to have met Solon, and to have rebuked the sage for his uncourtly way of inculcating moral lessons. He is said to have visited Athens during the usurpation of Pisistratus, and to have then composed the fable of Jupiter and the Frogs¹³ for the instruction of the citizens.

Being charged by Cræsus with an embassy to Delphi, in the course of which he was to distribute a sum of money to every Delphian, a quarrel arose between him and the citizens, in consequence of which he returned the money to his patron, alleging that those for whom it was meant were unworthy of it.

¹³ "The frogs, living an easy, free life everywhere among the lakes and ponds, assembled together one day, in a very tumultuous manner, and petitioned Jupiter to let them have a king, who might inspect their morals, and make them live a little honester. Jupiter, being at that time in pretty good humor, was pleased to laugh heartily at their ridiculous request; and, throwing a little log down into the pool, cried, 'There is a king for you,' The sudden splash which this made, by its fall into the water, at first terrified them so exceedingly, that they were afraid to come near it. But, in a little time, seeing it remain without moving, they ventured, by degrees, to approach it; and, at last, finding there was no danger, they leaped upon it, and, in short, treated it as familiarly as they pleased. But not contented with so insipid a king as this was, they sent their deputies to petition again for another sort of one; for this they neither did nor could like. Upon that Jupiter sent them a stork, who, without any ceremony, fell to devouring and eating them up, one after another, as fast as he could. Then they applied themselves privately to Mercury, and got him to speak to Jupiter in their behalf, that he would be so good as to bless them again with another king, or to restore them to their former state. 'No,' says Jove, 'since it was their own choice, let the obstinate wretches suffer the punishment due to their folly.'"

The disappointed party, in return, got up the charge of sacrilege, upon which they put him to death. A pestilence which ensued was attributed to this crime, and in consequence they made proclamation, at all the public assemblies of the Grecian nation, of their willingness to make compensation for Æsop's death to any one who should appear to claim it. A grandson of his master, Iadmon, at length claimed and received it, no person more closely connected with the sufferer having appeared.

It is a question of some doubt, whether Æsop was the inventor of that species of fable which endows the inferior animals, and even inanimate objects, with speech and reason, and thus, under the cover of humorous conceit, conveys lessons of wisdom; and which, from their pleasant guise, are often well received where the plain truth would be rejected. The probability is, that, if not the originator of such fables, Æsop was the first who composed them of such point as to bring them into use as a powerful vehicle for the inculcation of truth. At all events, there is abundant proof that fables, passing under his name, were current and popular in Athens, during the most brilliant period of its literary history, and not much more than a century after the death of the supposed author. The drolleries of Æsop are mentioned by Aristophanes in terms which lead us to suppose that they were commonly repeated at convivial parties. Socrates, in prison, turned into verse 'those that he knew;' and Plato, who banishes the fictions of Homer from his ideal republic, speaks with high praise of the tendency of those of Æsop.

Many of the fables in circulation among us, under the name of Æsop, are not his; – indeed, it is probable that but a small portion of them can trace their origin back to the Phrygian. A good fable, as well as a good story, however it may originate, is apt to be attributed to one whose character it may suit – and thus it happens that the same smart sayings are credited, in different countries, to different individuals; and thus, also, we see that many of the fables which we assign to Æsop, are credited, by the Mohammedans, to their fabulist, Lokman.

The value of fables, as instruments of instruction, is attested by Addison, in the following words. "They were," says he, "the first pieces of wit that made their appearance in the world; and have been still highly valued, not only in times of the greatest simplicity, but among the most polite ages of mankind. Jotham's fable of the Trees is the oldest that is extant, and as beautiful as any which have been made since that time. Nathan's fable of the Poor Man and his Lamb is likewise more ancient than any that is extant, excepting the above mentioned, and had so good an effect as to convey instruction to the ear of a king, without offending it, and to bring the 'man after God's own heart' to a right sense of his guilt and his duty. We find Æsop in the most distant ages of Greece. And, if we look into the very beginning of the commonwealth of Rome, we see a mutiny among the common people appeased by the fable of the Belly and the Members; which was indeed very proper to gain the attention of an incensed rabble, at a time when perhaps they would have torn to pieces any

man who had preached the same doctrine to them in an open and direct manner. As fables took their birth in the very infancy of learning, they never flourished more than when learning was at its greatest height. To justify this assertion, I shall put my reader in mind of Horace, the greatest wit and critic in the Augustan age; and of Boileau, the most correct poet among the moderns; not to mention La Fontaine, who, by this way of writing, is come more into vogue than any other author of our times."

"Reading is to the mind," continues the writer, "what exercise is to the body: as, by the one, health is preserved, strengthened, and invigorated, by the other, virtue, (which is the health of the mind,) is kept alive, cherished and confirmed. But, as exercise becomes tedious and painful when we make use of it only as the means of health, so reading is too apt to grow uneasy and burdensome, when we apply ourselves to it only for our improvement in virtue. For this reason, the virtue which we gather from a fable or an allegory, is like the health we get by hunting, as we are engaged in an agreeable pursuit that draws us on with pleasure, and makes us insensible of the fatigues that accompany it."

In modern times, La Fontaine has given us an admirable collection of fables, and the artist Grandville has added a new charm to them, by a very happy conceit. With infinite wit, he has dressed up the wolves, foxes, and other animals which figure in the fables, in human attire, yet so skilfully as to seem natural – thus aiding the imagination, in conceiving of the actors

and speakers in the fables, as performing their several parts. By the aid of his magical pencil, even trees, kettles and kegs assume an appearance of life, and seem to justify the wit and wisdom which they are imagined to utter. The humor of these designs is inimitable; and thus not only is greater effect given to the particular fables illustrated, but greater scope, to the fable generally. We are indebted, in this country, for a most excellent translation of La Fontaine, with many of Grandville's designs, to Professor Wright.

"But not contented with so insipid a king as this was, they sent their deputies to petition again for another sort of one; for this they neither did nor could like. Upon that Jupiter sent them a stork, who, without any ceremony, fell to devouring and eating them up, one after another, as fast as he could. Then they applied themselves privately to Mercury, and got him to speak to Jupiter in their behalf, that he would be so good as to bless them again with another king, or to restore them to their former state. 'No,' says Jove, 'since it was their own choice, let the obstinate wretches suffer the punishment due to their folly.'"

SOLON

Solon, one of the seven wise men of Greece, was born at Salamis, 637 B. C. and educated at Athens. His father was one of the descendants of king Codrus, and, by his mother's side, he reckoned among his relations the celebrated Pisistratus. After he had devoted part of his time to philosophical and political studies, Solon travelled over the greatest part of Greece; but at his return home he was distressed at beholding the dissensions among his countrymen.

All now fixed their eyes upon him as a deliverer, and he was unanimously elected archon. He might have become absolute, but he refused the dangerous office of king of Athens, and, in the capacity of lawgiver, he began to make a reform in every department of the government. The complaints of the poorer citizens found redress; all debts were remitted, and no one was permitted to seize the person of his debtor, if he was unable to make payment. After he had established the most salutary regulations in the state, and bound the Athenians by a solemn oath that they would faithfully observe his laws for the space of one hundred years, Solon resigned the office of legislator, and removed himself from Athens. He visited Egypt, and the court of Cræsus,¹⁴ king of Lydia – celebrated for his wealth, and the

¹⁴ Cræsus was the fifth and last of the Mermadæ, who reigned in Lydia, and during his time he passed for the richest of mankind. He was the first who made the Greeks

vanity of desiring to be esteemed the happiest of mankind. He here declared to the monarch that an Athenian, who had always seen his country flourish – who had virtuous children, and who fell in defence of his native land, had a happier career than the proudest emperor on the globe.

After ten years' absence, Solon returned to Athens; but he had the mortification to find the greatest part of his regulations disregarded, through the factious spirit of his countrymen and the usurpation of Pisistratus. Not to be longer a spectator of the divisions that reigned in his country, he retired to Cyprus, where he died at the court of king Philocyprus, in the eightieth year of his age. The laws of Solon became established in Athens, and

of Asia tributary to the Lydians. His court was the asylum of learning; and Æsop, the famous fable-writer, among others, lived under his patronage. In a conversation with Solon, Cræsus wished to be thought the happiest of mankind; but the philosopher apprized him of his mistake, and gave the preference to poverty and domestic virtue. Cræsus undertook a war against Cyrus, the king of Persia, and marched to meet him with an army of 420,000 men, and 60,000 horse. After a reign of fourteen years he was defeated, B. C. 548; his capital was besieged, and he fell into the conqueror's hands, who ordered him to be burnt alive. The pile was already on fire, when Cyrus heard the conquered monarch exclaim, "Solon! Solon! Solon!" with lamentable energy. He asked him the reason of his exclamation, and Cræsus repeated the conversation he once had with Solon, on human happiness. Cyrus was moved at the recital; and, at the recollection of the inconstancy of human affairs, he ordered Cræsus to be taken from the burning pile, and he was afterwards one of his most intimate friends. The kingdom of Lydia became extinct in his person, and the power was transferred to Persia. Cræsus survived Cyrus. The manner of his death is unknown. He is celebrated for the immensely rich presents which he made to the temple of Delphi, from which he received an obscure and ambiguous oracle, which he interpreted in his favor, but which was fulfilled in the destruction of his empire.

their salutary consequences can be discovered in the length of time they were in force in the republic. For above four hundred years they flourished in full vigor, and Cicero, who was himself a witness of their benign influence, passes the highest encomiums upon the legislator, whose superior wisdom framed such a code of regulations.

It was the intention of Solon to protect the poorer citizens; and by dividing the whole body of the Athenians into four classes, three of which were permitted to discharge the most important offices and magistracies of the state, and the last to give their opinion in the assemblies, but not have a share in the distinctions and honors of their superiors; the legislator gave the populace a privilege, which, though at first small and inconsiderable, soon rendered them masters of the republic, and of all the affairs of government. He made a reformation in the Areopagus, increased the authority of the members, and permitted them yearly to inquire how every citizen maintained himself, and to punish such as lived in idleness, and were not employed in some honorable and lucrative profession. He also regulated the Prytaneum, and fixed the number of its judges to four hundred.

The sanguinary laws of Draco were all cancelled except that against murder; and the punishment denounced against every offender was proportioned to his crime; but Solon made no law against parricide or sacrilege. The former of these crimes, he said, was too horrible to human nature for a man to be guilty of it, and the latter could never be committed, because the history

of Athens had never furnished a single instance. Such as had died in the service of their country, were buried with great pomp, and their families were maintained at the public expense; but such as had squandered away their estates, such as refused to bear arms in defence of their country, or paid no attention to the infirmity and distress of their parents, were branded with infamy. The laws of marriage were newly regulated; it became an union of affection and tenderness, and no longer a mercenary contract. To speak with ill language against the dead, as well as against the living, was made a crime; for the legislator wished that the character of his fellow-citizens should be freed from the aspersions of malevolence and envy. A person that had no children was permitted to dispose of his estates as he pleased; females were not allowed to be extravagant in their dress or expenses; licentiousness was punished; and those accustomed to abandoned society, were deprived of the privilege of addressing the public assemblies. These celebrated laws were engraved on several tables; and that they might be better known and more familiar to the Athenians, they were written in verse.

If we consider the time in which Solon lived, we shall see occasion to regard him as a man of extraordinary wisdom and virtue. Nearly all the systems of government around him were despotic. That government should be instituted and conducted for the benefit of the governed; and that the people are the proper depositories of power – principles recognised in his institutions – were truths so deeply hidden from mankind, as to demand an

intellect of the highest order for their discovery.

Nor are his virtues and humanity less conspicuous than his sagacity. While repealing the bloody code of Draco, he substituted mild and equitable laws; he shunned the harsh and savage system of Lycurgus, which sacrificed all the best feelings of the heart, and the most refined pleasures of life, in order to sustain the martial character of the state; and while he sought to soften the manners, he strove to exalt the standard of public and private virtue, not only by his laws, but by his conversation and example. He was thus, not only the benefactor of Athens and of Greece, but – as one of the great instruments of civilization throughout the world, and especially as one of the leaders in the establishment of free government – mankind at large owe him a lasting debt of gratitude.

LYCURGUS

This Spartan lawgiver is supposed to have been born about 900 B. C. He was the youngest son of king Eunomus, and was entitled to the throne upon the death of his brother, Polydectes; but he relinquished it in behalf of his unborn son, and administered the government in his name. By the wisdom of his measures, he won general esteem; and his noble disinterestedness raised his glory to a height which awoke envy against him in the minds of some of the most distinguished Spartans, who now conspired against him. Partly to escape the danger which threatened him, and partly to gratify the desire of seeing foreign nations, and learning their manners, he left Sparta, and travelled in various countries.

After visiting Crete, and admiring the wise laws of Minos, he went to Iona. The effeminate and luxurious life of the inhabitants, and the feebleness of their laws, which formed a striking contrast with the simplicity and vigor of those of Crete, made a deep impression upon him. Here, however, he is said to have become acquainted with the poems of Homer, which he collected and carried to Greece. From hence he is said to have travelled into Egypt, India, and Spain; but this seems improbable.

In the meanwhile, the two kings who succeeded him at Sparta, Archelaus and Charilaus, were esteemed neither by the people nor by the nobility; and, as there were no laws sufficient to

maintain the public tranquillity, the confusion passed all bounds. In this dangerous situation, Lycurgus was the only man from whom help and deliverance could be expected. The people hoped from him protection against the nobles, and the kings believed that he would put an end to the disobedience of the people. More than once, ambassadors were sent to entreat him to come to the assistance of the state.

He long resisted, but at last yielded to the urgent wishes of his fellow-citizens. At his arrival in Sparta, he found that not only particular abuses were to be suppressed, but that it would be necessary to form an entirely new constitution. The confidence which his personal character, his judgment, and the dangerous situation of the state, gave him among his fellow-citizens, encouraged him to encounter all obstacles. The first step which he took, was to add to the kings a senate of twenty-eight persons, venerable for their age, without whose consent the former were to undertake nothing. He thus established a useful balance between the power of the kings and the licentiousness of the people. The latter at the same time obtained the privilege of giving their voice in public affairs. They had not, however, properly speaking, deliberative privileges, but only the limited right of accepting or rejecting what was proposed by the kings or the senate.

The Spartans conformed in general to the institutions of Lycurgus; but the equal division of property which he effected, excited among the rich such violent commotions, that the

lawgiver fled to the temple, to save his life. On the way, he received a blow, which struck out one of his eyes. He merely turned round, and showed to his pursuers his face streaming with blood. This sight filled all with shame and repentance; they implored his pardon, and led him respectfully home. The person who had done the deed, a young man of rank, and of a fiery character, was given up to him. Lycurgus pardoned him, and dismissed him, covered with shame.

After having thus formed a constitution for Sparta, Lycurgus endeavored to provide for its continuance. He made all the citizens take a solemn oath that they would change nothing in the laws which he had introduced, before his return. He then went to Delphi, and asked the gods whether the new laws were sufficient for the happiness of Sparta. The answer was, "Sparta will remain the most prosperous of all states as long as it observes these laws." He sent this answer to Lacedæmon, and left his country forever. He died of voluntary starvation, and ordered his body to be burned, and the ashes scattered in the sea, lest they should be carried to Sparta, and his countrymen be released from their oath.

Though the patriotism of Lycurgus appears to have been of the most exalted nature, his institutions were exceedingly barbarous, in many respects. He cherished no such thing as family ties, but required everything to yield to the good of the state. The children did not belong to the parents; feeble children were destroyed; meals were all taken in common; unmarried men

were punished. Thus the private liberty of the people was taken away, and they were made slaves, in their daily habits, thoughts and feelings, to that power which was called the state. The design of the lawgiver seemed to be to rear up a nation of soldiers – not for conquest, but for defence. He would not permit Sparta to be encircled with walls, preferring that its defence should depend on the arms of the citizens. The men were wholly trained for martial life. Sensibility to suffering, and the fear of death, were treated with contempt. Victory or death, in battle, was their highest glory; cowardice was attended with the most deadly shame.

The difference between the institutions of Lycurgus and those of Solon, may be seen in their results. The Spartans became a stern and haughty nation of soldiers; but they have left nothing behind but their story, to instruct mankind; while the Athenians, exalted by the genial breath of liberty, continue to this very hour to be the admiration of the world, for their literature, their arts, and their institutions.

HOMER

The Iliad is often spoken of as the greatest production of the human mind; yet it has been seriously questioned whether such a person as Homer ever lived! This paradox is to be explained by admitting, that, although the Iliad is a wonderful performance for the time and circumstances of its composition, still, it is by no means entitled to the supremacy which scholastic fondness assigns to it; and that the doubts thrown upon its authorship are but the mists engendered in the arena of hypercriticism.

By Homer, we mean the author of the Iliad, whatever may have been his true name. The period at which he flourished is matter of doubt, but it is fixed by the Arundelian Marbles,¹⁵ at 907 B. C., which is probably not far from the true date. A great many tales are handed down to us, in relation to him, which are mere fictions. The only well established facts, in his life, are that he was a native of Asiatic Greece, and a wandering poet, or rhapsodist, who went about the country reciting his compositions, according to the custom of those times. The story of his being blind is without authority.

¹⁵ These Marbles consist of a large collection of busts, statues, altars, inscriptions, mutilated figures, &c., formed by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, in the early part of the seventeenth century, and presented to the University of Oxford, by Henry Howard, the earl's grandson. They were obtained in various parts of Greece; many are of great antiquity and of great value, as well for the light they shed upon history as upon the arts, customs, and manners of past ages.

Such are the meagre facts which can be gathered amid the obscurity of that remote age in which Homer lived. There is something painful in this barrenness, – and we almost feel that the critics, in exploding the fond fictions which antiquity has woven around the name of the great poet, have performed an ungracious office. They have indeed dissipated fables, but they have left us little but darkness or vacuity in their place. Such is the yearning of the mind, in respect to those who have excited its emotions, and created an interest in the bosom, that it will cherish even the admitted portraitures of fiction and fancy, rather than content itself with the blank canvass of nothingness. The heart, as well as nature, abhors a vacuum.

The fictitious history of Homer – which, however, is of some antiquity, and has passed current for centuries – is briefly as follows. His mother was named Critheis: she was married to Mæon, king of Smyrna, and gave birth to a child, on or near the banks of the river Meles, from which circumstance he was called Meles genes. The mother soon died, and he was brought up and educated under the care of Mæon. The name of Homer was afterwards given to him, on account of his becoming blind.

The legends proceed in general to state that Homer himself became a schoolmaster and poet of great celebrity, at Smyrna, and remained there till Mentès, a foreign merchant, induced him to travel. That the author of the Iliad and Odyssey must have travelled pretty extensively for those times, is unquestionable; for besides the accurate knowledge of Greece which these works

display, it is clear that the poet had a familiar acquaintance with the islands both in the Ægean and the Ionian seas, the coasts of Asia Minor, Crete, Cyprus, and Egypt – which still bear the names he gave them – and possessed also distinct information with respect to Lybia, Æthiopia, Phœnicia, Caria and Phrygia.

In his travels, as the legends say, Homer visited Ithaca, and there became subject to a disease in his eyes, which afterwards terminated in total blindness. From this island he is said to have gone to Italy, and even to Spain; but there is no sign, in either of the two poems, of his possessing any definite knowledge westward of the Ionian sea. Wherever he went, Homer recited his verses, which were universally admired, except at Smyrna, where he was a prophet in his own country. At Phocæa, a schoolmaster, of the name of Thestorides, obtained from Homer a copy of his poetry, and then sailed to Chios, and there recited these verses as his own. Homer went soon after to the same place, and was rescued by Glaucus, a goatherd, from the attack of his dogs, and brought by him to Bolissus, a town in Chios, where he resided a long time, in the possession of wealth and a splendid reputation.

According to Herodotus, Homer died at Io, on his way to Athens, and was buried near the sea-shore. Proclus says he died in consequence of falling over a stone. Plutarch tells a different story. He preserves two responses of an oracle to the poet, in both of which he was cautioned to beware of the young men's riddle; and relates that the poet, being on a voyage to Thebes, to attend a musical or poetical contest at the feast of Saturn, in that city,

landed in the island of Io, and, whilst sitting on a rock by the seashore, observed some young fishermen in a boat. Homer asked them if they had anything, and the young wags, who, having had no sport, had been diligently catching and killing as many as they could, of certain personal companions of a race not even yet extinct, answered, – "As many as we caught, we left; as many as we could not catch, we carry with us." The catastrophe of this absurd story is, that Homer, being utterly unable to guess the riddle, broke his heart, out of pure vexation; and the inhabitants of the island buried him with great magnificence, and placed the following inscription on his tomb: —

Here Homer, the divine in earthly bed,
Poet of Heroes, rests his sacred head.

The general theory in regard to the poems of Homer, is that they were composed and recited by him, to the people living upon the islands and the main land along the coasts of Asia Minor. At that time books were unknown, and it is a question whether even the art of writing was then practised. Homer, therefore, published his poems in the only way he could do it – by oral delivery. Whether his verses were sung, or only recited, we cannot determine; but there is no doubt that he obtained both fame and maintenance by his performances.

So deep was the impression made by the poet, that his verses were learned by heart, and preserved in the memories

of succeeding rhapsodists and minstrels. His reputation was diffused over all Greece; and Lycurgus, who had heard of his compositions, is supposed to have taken pains, during his travels, to have them written down, and to have brought them in a collected form to Greece. They were, however, still in fragments, and the task of arranging and uniting them was performed by Pisistratus, with the help of the poets of his time. In this way, they received nearly the form they now possess; the division of each of the two epics into twenty-four books, corresponding with the letters of the Greek alphabet, being the work of the Alexandrian critics, some centuries after. It must be remembered, however, that although the poems of Homer were thus committed to writing in the time of Pisistratus, they continued to be recited by the rhapsodists, who were much favored in Greece, and in this way alone, for several centuries, were popularly known. It is probable that in these recitations, there was a good deal of dramatic action, and that they possessed something of the interest which belongs to theatrical representation.

The vicissitudes to which Homer's reputation and influence have been subject, deserve notice. From the arrangement of the Iliad and Odyssey, in the time of the Pisistratidæ, to the promulgation of Christianity, the love and reverence with which the name of Homer was regarded, went on constantly increasing, till at last public games were instituted in his honor, statues dedicated, temples erected, and sacrifices offered to him, as a divinity. There were such temples at Smyrna, Chios, and

Alexandria; and, according to Ælian, the Argives sacrificed to, and invoked the names and presence of, Apollo and Homer together.

But about the beginning of the second century of the Christian era, when the struggle between the old and the new religions was warm and active, the tide turned. Heathenism, says Pope, was then to be destroyed, and Homer appeared to be the father of those fictions which were at once the belief of the Pagan religion, and the objections of Christianity against it. He became, therefore, deeply involved in the question, not with that honor which had hitherto attended him, but as a criminal, who had drawn the world into folly. These times, however, are past, and Homer stands on the summit of the ancient Parnassus, the boast and glory of Greece, and the wonder and admiration of mankind.

The Iliad, with the exception of the Pentateuch and some others of the books of the Old Testament, is the most ancient composition known. It is interesting not only as a splendid poem, but also on account of the light it throws upon the history and manners of the remote ages in which it was written. We are struck with the similarity of the customs of the Asiatic Greeks to those of the Hebrews, as set forth in the Bible; and also with the fact that the Jupiter of Homer rises to that unchecked omnipotence assigned to Jehovah.

The design of the Iliad seems to be to set forth the revenge which Achilles took on Agamemnon, for depriving him of his mistress, Briseis, while engaged in the siege of Troy – with the

long train of evils which followed. The admirers of Homer have pretended to discover in the work the most profound art in the construction of the poem, and have hence deduced rules for the formation of the epic poem; but nothing is more clear than that, in the simple lines of Homer, the poet had no other guide than a profound knowledge of human nature and human sympathies; and that he only sought to operate on these by telling a plain story, in the most simple, yet effective manner. The absence of all art is one of the chief characteristics of the Iliad; – its naturalness is the great secret of its power.

That this poem is the greatest of human productions – a point often assumed – is by no means to be received as true. It strikes us with wonder, when we consider the age in which it was composed, and we feel that Homer was indeed one of the great lights of the world. The following passage, one of the finest in the Iliad, is full of truth, nature and pathos – and it shows that the heroes of Troy, nearly three thousand years ago, had the same feelings and sympathies as those which beat in the bosoms of our time; yet we can point to a great number of passages in modern poems, far, very far superior to this. The scene represents Priam – who has come to the Greek camp for the purpose of redeeming the body of his son Hector – as addressing the chieftain, Achilles:

"Think, O Achilles, semblance of the gods!
On thy own father, full of days like me,
And trembling on the gloomy verge of life:
Some neighbor chief, it may be, even now,

Oppresses him, and there is none at hand,
No friend to succor him in his distress;
Yet doubtless, hearing that Achilles lives,
He still rejoices, hoping day by day,
That one day he shall see the face again
Of his own son from distant Troy returned.
But me no comfort cheers, whose bravest sons,
So late the flower of Ilium, all are slain.
When Greece came hither, I had fifty sons;
Nineteen were children of one bed; the rest
Born of my concubines. A numerous house!
But fiery Mars hath thinned it. One I had,
One, more than all my sons, the strength of Troy,
Whom standing for his country thou hast slain, —
Hector. His body to redeem I come;
Into Achia's fleet bringing myself
Ransom inestimable to thy tent.
Rev'rence the gods, Achilles! recollect
Thy father; for his sake compassion show
To me, more pitiable still, who draw
Home to my lips (humiliation yet
Unseen on earth) his hand who slew my son!

"So saying, he awakened in his soul regret
Of his own sire; softly he placed his hand
On Priam's hand, and pushed him gently away.
Remembrance melted both. Rolling before
Achilles feet, Priam his son deplored,
Wide slaughtering Hector, and Achilles wept

By turns his father, and by turns his friend
Patroclus: sounds of sorrow filled the tent."

Beside the Iliad, another epic, divided into twenty-four books, and entitled the Odyssey, with a number of smaller pieces, are attributed to Homer, and doubtless upon good and substantial grounds. The Odyssey is a tale of adventures, like Robinson Crusoe, and Sinbad the Sailor, heightened by an object, and dignified by a moral far above these works. It tells us what befel Ulysses, in returning from the siege of Troy to his home in Greece; and is wrought up with wonderful powers of invention and fancy. It is esteemed inferior, on the whole, to the Iliad, and an eminent critic has said, that, in the former, Homer appears like the rising, and in the latter, like the setting sun.

CONFUCIUS

This greatest of Chinese philosophers was born in the petty kingdom of Lú, now the province of Shántung, in the year 549 B. C. – the same year that Cyrus became king of the Medes and Persians. The Chinese, in their embellishments of his history, tell us that his birth was attended with heavenly music, filling the air; that two dragons were seen winding over the roof; that five old men appeared at the door, and after consulting together, suddenly vanished; and that a unicorn brought to his mother a tablet in his mouth. It is also related that when he was born, five characters were seen on his breast, declaring him to be "the maker of a rule for settling the world." These and other marvels are a part of the established biography of the philosopher, as received by the Chinese.

The father of Confucius, who was a magistrate of the district where he lived, died when the son was but three years old. The latter was poor and unknown during his youth – though his gravity and attention to study attracted the attention of his townsmen. When he approached manhood, he was esteemed remarkable for his wisdom, and equal to the learned men of the country in his knowledge of antiquity.

At the age of seventeen he received an appointment as clerk in the grain department of the government; and so attentive was he in his trust, as, two years after, to be advanced to the general

supervision of the fields and parks, and the breeding of cattle. About this time he was married, and two years after, his only son was born. Upon this occasion, Lord Cháu the governor of Lú, sent him two carp as a present, and accordingly Confucius named his son Lí or Carp. His humor went even farther, and he gave the boy the additional title of Piyü, or Uncle Fish.

At the age of twenty-four, Confucius lost his mother, whom he buried in the same grave with his father, who had been dead some time. He then resigned his office, that he might mourn three years for his mother, according to the ancient custom of the country. This practice had fallen into neglect, and, consequently, the example of Confucius, in following the holy custom of the fathers of the country, gained him great renown for his piety. His reputation was thus extended, and his example began to be followed.

The three years of his mourning were not lost – for he then devoted himself to study. He diligently examined the books of the old authors, seeking to discover the means by which the ancient kings and sages sought to attain the perfection of morals. The result was, a conviction that the social virtues were best cultivated by an observance of the ancient usages of the country; and accordingly he resolved to devote his life to them, and to their permanent establishment in China. This great work he accomplished; and if we consider the effect he has produced on the most populous nation of the globe, and during a space of nearly two thousand years, we shall perceive the mighty

consequence of his labors. The actual amount of influence he has exercised, perhaps exceeds that of any other human being, save Aristotle alone.

Appearing to have a clear view of his great work, Confucius entered upon it with systematic diligence. He resolved to establish schools where his philosophy should be taught to pupils who would go forth and spread his doctrines through the empire. He also proposed to write a series of books, setting forth his views. All these things he lived to accomplish.

The greater part of the life of Confucius was passed in travelling, visiting the courts of the petty princes, whose states then constituted the empire under the sovereign of the Chán dynasty. This course was, as might be expected, fruitless in reforming these states, but it diffused a general knowledge of himself and his doctrines, and procured him scholars. The prince of Tsí was the first who invited him to his court, and received him with distinction. This potentate heard him with pleasure, and applauded his maxims; but, to the chagrin of Confucius, he continued to live in luxury, and to allow his ministers to oppress his subjects and abuse their power. He, however, offered him for his maintenance the revenue of a considerable city, which the philosopher thought proper to decline, alleging that he had done nothing to merit such a recompense. After sojourning a year in Tsí, and seeing that his discourse produced no effect to reform the abuses and evils of the country, he left it, and visited some of the principal cities of China.

On the road between Tsí and Chin, he fell into a difficulty. The prince of Wú having attacked Chin, the lord of Tsú came to his relief, and sent an invitation to Confucius to join him; but the other party, fearing that he would do them a disservice, sent people to intercept him. They surrounded him in the wilderness, and would have starved him to death, had not a friend come to his relief, after a detention of seven days. After this narrow escape, he returned home and the prince of Lú gave him a carriage, two horses and a servant, with which he set off for King-yang, the capital of the empire. Here he passed his time in observing the forms of government, the condition of the people and their manners, and how the rites and ceremonies of the ancient kings were regarded. He held several interviews with the ministers of the court, was permitted to visit the emperor's ancestral hall, and other sacred places, and had access to the archives of the kingdom, from which he was allowed to take extracts.

One object in the visit of Confucius to the capital, was to see Láutz', the founder of the Táu sect, or Rationalists, who lived in a retired place, some distance from court. This old philosopher, accustomed to visits from men of all ranks, received Confucius and his disciples with indifference. He was reclining on an elevated platform, and hearing that his visitor had come to hear from his own mouth an exposition of his tenets, and to ask him about *propriety*, he roused himself to receive him. "I have heard speak of you," says he, "and I know your reputation. I am told that you talk only of the ancients, and discourse only upon

what they taught. Now, of what use is it to endeavor to revive the memory of men of whom no trace remains on the earth? The sage ought to interest himself with the times in which he lives, and regard present circumstances; if they are favorable, he will improve them; but if, on the contrary, they are unfavorable, he will retire and wait tranquilly, without grieving at what others do. He who possesses a treasure, will try to have everybody know it; he will preserve it against the day of need; this you will do if you are a sage. It seems, judging by your conduct, that you have some ostentation in your plans of instruction and that you are proud. Correct these faults, and purify your heart from all love of pleasure; you will, in this way, be much more useful than seeking to know what the ancients said."

Láutz' also observed, "A discreet merchant keeps his affairs to himself as if he knew nothing; an excellent man, although highly intelligent, demeans himself like an ignorant man." Confucius remarked to his disciples, "I have seen Láutz'; have I not seen something like a dragon?" On leaving him, Láutz' said, "I have heard that the rich dismiss their friends with a present, and the benevolent send away people with a word of advice; whoever is talented, and prying into everything, will run himself into danger, because he loves to satirize and slander men; and he who wishes to thoroughly understand recondite things will jeopard his safety, because he loves to publish the failings of men." Confucius replied, "I respectfully receive your instructions," and thus left him. Láutz' advice seemed directed

against a too inquisitive philosophy, and meddling too much in the affairs of the world; he was rather of the Budhistic school of quietists, while Confucius wished men to endeavor to make each other better.

Confucius, like Aristotle and other masters, used to teach his disciples while walking with them, deriving instruction from what they saw. Once, while walking with them by the bank of a stream, he stopped from time to time to look very intently at the water, until their attention was excited, and they were induced to ask him the reason of his conduct. He replied, "The running of water in its bed is a very simple thing, the reason of which everybody knows. I was, however, rather making a comparison in my own mind between the running of water and doctrine. The water, I reflected, runs unceasingly, by day and by night, until it is lost in the bosom of the mighty deep. Since the days of Yáu and Shun, the pure doctrine has uninterruptedly descended to us: let us in our turn transmit it to those who come after us, that they, from our example, may give it to their descendants to the end of time. Do not imitate those isolated men, (referring to Láutsz',) who are wise only for themselves. To communicate the knowledge and virtue we possess, to others, will never impoverish ourselves. This is one of the reflections I would make upon the running of water."

This peripatetic habit, and the aptitude for drawing instruction from whatever would furnish instruction, was usual with the philosopher, and he seldom omitted to improve an occasion.

Once, when walking in the fields, he perceived a fowler, who, having drawn in his nets, distributed the birds he had taken into different cages. On coming up to him to ascertain what he had caught, Confucius attentively remarked the vain efforts of the captive birds to regain their liberty, until his disciples gathered round him, when he addressed the fowler, – "I do not see any old birds here; where have you put them?" "The old birds," said he, "are too wary to be caught; they are on the look-out, and if they see a net or a cage, far from falling into the snare, they escape, and never return. Those young ones which are in company with them, likewise escape, but such only as separate into a flock by themselves, and rashly approach, are the birds I catch. If perchance I catch an old bird, it is because he follows the young ones."

"You have heard him," said Confucius, turning to his disciples; "the words of this fowler afford us matter for instruction. The young birds escape the snare only when they keep with the old ones; the old ones are taken when they follow the young. It is thus with mankind. Presumption, hardihood, want of forethought, and inattention are the principal reasons why young people are led astray. Inflated with their small attainments, they have scarcely made a commencement in learning, before they think they know everything; they have scarcely performed a few virtuous acts, and straight they fancy themselves at the height of wisdom. Under this false impression they doubt nothing; they rashly undertake acts without consulting

the aged and experienced, and thus, securely following their own notions, they are misled, and fall into the first snare laid for them. If you see an old man of sober years so badly advised as to be taken with the giddiness of a youth, attached to him, and thinking and acting with him, he is led astray by him, and soon taken in the same snare. Do not forget the answer of the fowler, but reflect on it occasionally."

Having completed his observations at the capital, Confucius returned, by the way of Tsí, to his native state of Lú, where he remained ten years. His house now became a sort of lyceum, open to every one who wished to receive instruction. His manner of teaching was to allow his disciples or others to come and go when they pleased, asking his opinion on such points, either in morals, politics, history, or literature, as they wished to have explained. He gave them the liberty of choosing their subject, and then he discoursed upon it. From these conversations and detached expressions of the philosopher, treasured up by his disciples, they afterwards composed Lun Yü, now one of the Four Books. Confucius, it is said, numbered upwards of three thousand disciples, or perhaps we ought to call them advocates or hearers of his doctrine. They consisted of men of all ranks and ages, who attended upon him when their duties or inclinations permitted, and who materially assisted in diffusing a knowledge of his tenets over the whole country. There were, however, a select few, who attached themselves to his person, lived with him, and followed him wherever he went; and to whom he entrusted

the promulgation of his doctrines.

After several years of retirement, Confucius was called into public life. The prince of Lú died, and his son, entertaining a great respect for the philosopher, and esteem for his instructions, invited him to court, in order to learn his doctrines more fully. After becoming well acquainted with him, and reposing confidence in his integrity, the young ruler committed the entire management of the state to him; and the activity, courage, and disinterested conduct which he exhibited in the exercise of his power, soon had the happiest effect upon the country. By his wise rules and the authority of his example and his maxims he soon reformed many vicious practices, and introduced sobriety and order, in the place of waste and injustice. He occupied himself with agriculture, and regulated the revenue and the manner of receiving it; so that, in consequence of his measures, the productions of the state were increased, the happiness of the people was extended, and the revenue considerably augmented.

He carried his reforms into every department of justice, in which, soon after he entered upon his duties as minister, he had an opportunity of exhibiting his inflexibility. One of the most powerful nobles of the state had screened himself from the just punishment due to his many crimes, under the dread of his power and riches, and the number of his retainers. Confucius caused him to be arrested, and gave order for his trial; and when the overwhelming proofs brought forward had convinced all of his guilt, he condemned him to lose his head, and presided himself

at the execution. This wholesome severity struck a dread into other men of rank, and likewise obtained the plaudits of all men of sense, as well as of the people, who saw in the minister a courageous protector, ready to defend them against the tyranny of men in power.

These salutary reforms had not been long in operation, before the neighboring states took alarm at the rising prosperity of Lú; and the prince of Tsí, who had recently usurped the throne by assassinating its occupant, resolved to ruin the plans of Confucius. To this end he appointed an envoy to the young prince, with whose character he was well acquainted, desiring to renew the ancient league of friendship between the two countries. This envoy was charged with thirty-five horses, beautifully caparisoned, a large number of curious rarities, and twenty-four of the most accomplished courtesans he could procure in his dominions. The scheme succeeded; before these seductive damsels, the austere etiquette of the court of Lú soon gave way, and fetes, comedies, dances, and concerts, took the place of propriety and decorum. The presence of the sage soon became irksome to his master, and he at last forbid him to come into his sight, having become quite charmed with the fair enchantresses, and no longer able to endure the remonstrances of his minister.

Confucius, thus disgraced in his own country, and now at the age of fifty, left it, and retired to the kingdom of Wei, where he remained more than ten years, without seeking to exercise any public office, but principally occupied with completing his

works, and instructing his disciples in his doctrines. During his residence in Wei, he frequently made excursions into other states, taking with him such of his disciples as chose to accompany him. He was at times applauded and esteemed, but quite as often was the object of persecution and contempt. More than once his life was endangered. He compared himself to a dog driven from his home: "I have the fidelity of that animal, and I am treated like it. But what matters the ingratitude of men? They cannot hinder me from doing all the good that is appointed me. If my precepts are disregarded, I have the consolation in my own breast of knowing that I have faithfully performed my duty." He sometimes spoke in a manner that showed his own impression to be that Heaven had conferred on him a special commission to instruct the world. When an attempt was made on his life, he said, "As Heaven has produced such a degree of virtue in me, what can Hwántúi do to me?" On another occasion of danger, he said, "If Heaven means not to obliterate this doctrine from the earth, the men of Kwáng can do nothing to me."

At the age of sixty-eight, after an absence of eighteen years, Confucius returned to his native country, where he lived a life of retirement, employed in putting the finishing hand to his works. In his sixty-sixth year, his wife died, and his son, Piyü, mourned for her a whole year; but one day overhearing his father say, "Ah! it is carried too far;" he dried up his tears. Three years after this, this son also died, leaving a son, Tsz'sz', who afterwards emulated his grandfather's fame as a teacher, and became the

author of the Chung Yung, or True Medium. The next year, Yen Hwui, the favorite disciple of the sage, died, whose loss he bitterly mourned, saying, "Heaven has destroyed me! heaven has destroyed me!" He had great hopes of this pupil, and had depended upon him to perpetuate his doctrines.

An anecdote is related of him about this time of life, which the Chinese regard as highly creditable to their sage. Tsz'kung, one of his disciples, was much surprised one morning to meet his master at the door, dressed with much elegance and nicety. On asking him where he was going, Confucius, with a sigh, replied, "I am going to court, and that too, without being invited. I have not been able to resist a feeling which possesses me to make a last effort to bring a just punishment upon Chin Chen, the usurper of the throne of Tsí. I am prepared by purification and fasting, for this audience, so that if I fail, I shall not have to accuse myself." On presenting himself, he was received with respect, and immediately admitted to an audience; and the prince of Lú asked him what important affair had called him from his retirement. Confucius, replied: "Sire, that which I have to communicate, alike concerns all kings. The perfidious Chin Chen has imbued his hands in the blood of his legitimate sovereign, Kien. You are a prince; your state borders upon Tsí; Kien was your ally, and originally of the same race as yourself. Any one of these reasons is sufficient to authorize you to declare war against Chin Chen, and all of them combined make it your duty to take up arms. Assemble your forces and march to

exterminate a monster whom the earth upholds with regret. This crime is such that it cannot be pardoned, and, in punishing it, you will at once avenge an outrage against heaven, from which every king derives his power; against royalty, which has been profaned by this perfidy; against a parent, to whom you are allied by ties of blood, alliance and friendship."

The prince, convinced of the criminality of Chin Chen, applauded the just indignation which inspired the heart of Confucius, but suggested that before he entered upon such an enterprise, it would be best to confer with his ministers. "Sire," said the philosopher, "I have acquitted myself of a duty in laying this case before you; but it will be useless to insist upon it before your ministers, whom I know are disinclined to enter into my views. Reflect, I pray you, as a sovereign, upon what I now propose, and consult only with yourself as to its execution. Your servants are not sovereigns, and have no other than their own ends to gain, to which they sometimes sacrifice the good of their master and the glory of the state. I have no other end in view than to support the cause of justice; and I conjure you, by the sacred names of justice and good order, to go and exterminate this miscreant from the earth, and, by restoring the throne of Tsí to its rightful owner, to exhibit to the world your justice, and strike a salutary terror into the hearts of all who may wish to imitate this successful villany." On leaving, the prince said to Confucius, "I will think seriously on what you have said, and, if it be possible, will carry it into execution."

Towards the end of his days, when he had completed his revision of the Five Classes, he, with great solemnity, dedicated them to Heaven. He assembled all his disciples and led them out of the town to one of the hills where sacrifices had been usually offered for many years. He here erected a table, or altar, upon which he placed the books; and then, turning his face to the north, adored Heaven, and returned thanks upon his knees, in a humble manner, for having had life and strength granted him to enable him to accomplish this laborious undertaking; he implored heaven to grant that the benefit to his countrymen from so arduous a labor might not be small. He had prepared himself for this ceremony by privacy, fasting and prayer. Chinese pictures of this scene represent the sage in the attitude of supplication, and a pencil of light, or a rainbow, descending from the sky upon the books, while his scholars stand around in admiring wonder.

In his seventy-third year, a few days before his death, leaning upon his staff, Confucius tottered about the house, singing out,
—

"The great mountain is broken!
The strong beam is thrown down!
The wise man is decayed!"

He then related a dream he had had the night before, to his pupil, Tsz'kung, which he regarded as a presage of his own death; and, after keeping his bed seven days, he died on the 18th day of the second month, and was buried in the same grave with his

wife. Tsz'kung mourned for him six years in a shed erected by the side of his grave, and then returned home. His death occurred 479 B. C., the year of the battle of Plataea, in Greece, and about seven years before the birth of Socrates. Many events of great importance happened during his life, in western countries, of which the return of the Jews, and building of the second temple, Xerxes' invasion of Greece, the expulsion of the kings from Rome, the conquest of Egypt, and establishment of the Persian monarchy in its fullest extent, were the most important.

Posthumous honors in great variety have been conferred upon Confucius. Soon after his death, the prince of Lú entitled him *Ní fú*, or father Ní; which under the reign of Lintí, of the Hán dynasty, 197 B. C., was changed to *Ní kung*, or duke Ní, and his portrait was ordered to be hung up in the public school. By the emperors of the Tang dynasty it was made *sien shing*, the ancient sage. He was next styled the royal preacher, and his effigy clad in king's robes, and a crown put on its head. The Ming dynasty called him the most holy ancient teacher, Kungtsz', which title is now continued to him. His descendants have continued to dwell in Shántung province, and the heads of the family have enjoyed the rank of nobility, being almost the only hereditary noblemen in the empire out of the imperial kingdom. They are called Yenshing kung. In the reign of Kánghí, one hundred and twenty years ago, the descendants of the sage numbered eleven thousand males; the present is said to be the seventy-fourth generation. The chief of the family is commonly called the "holy duke,"

and enjoys all the honors of a prince. Whenever he visits the court, the emperor receives him with almost the same respect and ceremony as he does ambassadors from foreign countries. P. Amiot relates that he was honored with a call from him, upon one of his visits to court. "He was a pleasant and modest man, whom knowledge had not filled with conceit. He received, when he came to our house, some religious books, which we offered him in exchange for some Chinese books he gave us. His name was Kung Chauhán, and he was of the seventy-first generation in direct descent from the sage, – in all probability the oldest family in the world, of which the regular descent can be traced." In the *Life of Confucius*, written by Amiot, which forms one of the volumes of the *Mémoires sur les Chinoises*, there is a brief account of each of these heads of this family, with notices of other distinguished persons belonging to the house.

In every district in the empire there is a temple dedicated to Confucius, and his name is usually suspended in every school-room in the land, and incense is burned before it morning and evening by the scholars. Adoration is paid to him by all ranks. In 1457, Jentsung, of the Ning dynasty, set up a copper statue of the sage in one of the halls of the palace, and ordered his officers, whenever they came to the palace, to go to this room, and respectfully salute Confucius before speaking of the affairs of state, even if the monarch were present. But this custom was represented to another emperor as tending to the worship of images, like the Budhists; and on that account the

memorialist represented that simple tablets, inscribed with the name of him who was worshipped, were much better. This advice was followed; the statues of Confucius and his disciples were suppressed, by order of the emperor Chítsung, in 1530, and simple tablets have since been set up in the temples erected to his name.

The writings of Confucius, as might be expected are held in great veneration, and regarded as the best books in the language. He revised all the ancient books, containing the precepts of the kings and emperors of former times, and left them pretty much as they are at the present day. He explained the Yi King, or Book of Changes, commented upon the Lí Kí, or Book of Rites, and compiled the Shí King, or Book of Odes. He composed the Shú King, or Book of Records, and the Chun Tsaú, or Spring and Autumn Annals, – so called, it is said, because the commendations contained therein are life-giving, like spring, and the reproofs are life-withering, like autumn. The books are collectively called the Wú King, or Five Classics. The Híáu King, or Memoir on Filial Duty; the Chung yung, or True Medium; the Tái Hióh, or Superior Lessons, and the Lun Yü, or Conversations of Confucius, are all considered, by the Chinese, as containing the doctrines of the sage; the first one is sometimes ascribed to his own pen. The last three, with the work of Mencius, constitute the Sz Shü, or Four Books, and were arranged in their present form by Ching fútsz, about eight hundred years ago.

The leading features of the morality of Confucius are,

subordination to superiors, and kind, upright dealing with our fellow-men. From the duty, honor, and obedience owed by a child to his parents, he proceeds to inculcate the obligations of wives to their husbands, of subjects to their prince, and of ministers to their king, while he makes him amenable to Heaven. These principles are perpetually inculcated in the Confucian writings, and are imbodyed in solemn ceremonials, and apparently trivial forms of mere etiquette. And, probably, it is this feature of his ethics which has made him such a favorite with all the governments of China for many centuries past, and at this day. These principles, and these forms, are early instilled into young minds, and form their conscience; the elucidation and enforcement of these principles and forms is the business of students who aspire to be magistrates or statesmen; and it is no doubt owing in great part, to the force of these principles on the national mind and habits, that China holds steadfastly together – the largest associated population in the world. Every one is interested in upholding doctrines which give him power over those under him; and as the instruction of his own youthful days has given him the habit of obedience and respect to all his superiors, so now, when he is a superior, he exacts the same obedience from his juniors, and public opinion accords it to him. The observance of such principles has tended to consolidate the national mind of China in that peculiar uniformity which has been remarked by those who have known this people. It has also tended to restrain all independence of thought, and keep

even the most powerful intellects under an incubus which, while they were prevented by outward circumstances from getting at the knowledge of other lands was too great for their unassisted energies to throw off. It cannot be doubted that there have been many intellects of commanding power among the Chinese, but ignorance of the literature and condition of other nations has led them to infer that there was nothing worthy of notice out of their own borders, and to rest contented with explaining and enforcing the maxims of their sage.

Confucius must be regarded as a great man, if superiority to the times in which one lives is a criterion of greatness. The immense influence he has exercised over the minds of his countrymen cannot, perhaps, be regarded as conclusive evidence of his superiority; but no mind of weak or ordinary powers could have stamped its own impress upon other minds as he has done. He never rose to those sublime heights of contemplation which Plato attained, nor does his mind seem to have been of a very discursive nature. He was content with telling his disciples how to act, and encouraging them to make themselves and others better, by following the rules he gave; not leading them into those endless disquisitions and speculations, upon which the Greek moralists so acutely reasoned, but which exercised no power over the conscience and life. The leading features of his doctrines have been acknowledged by mankind the world over, and are embodied in their most common rules of life. "Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God," is a direction of inspired

Writ; and, so far as he knew these duties, he inculcated them. He said little or nothing about spirits or gods, nor did he give any directions about worshipping them; but the veneration for parents, which he enforced, was, in fact, idolatrous, and has since degenerated into the grossest idolatry.